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Narrative, Narrative Theory, Drama: the Renaissance

In a recent study of narrative in twentieth-century drama the author claims that effective narrative in drama is a relatively new phenomenon, or that its psychological and dramatic importance is something that modern dramatists have seized on more than their predecessors (Morrison 3-4; see Rees, Pagnini, Segre, Watkins). The choric stage manager in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* is a good example of the central use of narrative in a modern play. Wilder himself says that in the 1920s he began to resent the discrepancy between his belief in novels by Joyce, Proust and Thomas Mann and hundreds of plays he read and his disbelief in the "imaginative narration" of plays in performance (Wilder viii, 5-7, 29-31, 49-52, 64). Without denying the importance of narrative in modern drama, this collection will suggest that playwrights have always valued and used narrative with dramatic results. Wilder's stage manager confronts the audience with its own self-conscious participation in the theatre just as the Chorus to Shakespeare's *Henry V* does. Shakespeare and Wilder play variations on the same convention. But too many critics have forgotten or undervalued the importance of narrative in drama. Narrative is not a compact filler the dramatist uses when tired or suddenly aware that the play is getting too long. The contributors to this collection seek to redress this neglect as well as to explore other related aspects of narrative, drama and genre during the Renaissance.

This Introduction will elaborate its title, moving from narrative to narrative theory to drama, but will do so between two sections, the present of the contributors (who discuss narrative, narrative theory and drama) and the past of Renaissance writers (who discussed these same subjects). We should be able to observe relations between our times and the early modern period. This introductory essay will consider the classical, medieval and modern contexts for the Renaissance. It will also suggest that narrative in the drama possesses four primary functions: exposition, suggestion, compression and address. Exposition consists of commentary and explanation, suggestion of description and reports of off-stage action, compression of action that would be protracted if represented, and speech

of a chorus addressing the audience or another character or of a character telling a story to another character with that character in mind or being overheard by the audience or another character. Not all the essays concentrate on narrative in drama, so that they will also be examined in light of their contribution to narrative and drama separately.

THE CONTENTS

The scholars in this collection approach narrative, narrative theory and drama in various ways. The collection explores the interaction between narrative and dramatic genres and pays particular attention to the Renaissance. It attempts to contribute to literary theory by refining notions of genre and narrative. The scholars represented here have all produced provocative essays. It has been a pleasure to work with the contributors. They speak eloquently for themselves, but, like a presenter, my role is to act as a guide. Although all the essays have historical and formal dimensions, their emphasis usually tends more towards form or history. Three groups of essays emerge within the collection. The first relates narrative and genre to history and explores connected aspects of Renaissance literature such as ritual, dramatic design, social conflicts expressed in the text, and subjectivity. The second concentrates on the formal relation between narrative and genre. The third provides commentary on seminal and recent works about the theme of this issue and an annotated bibliography on the subject of this special issue. This classification of historical, formal, and review contributions is heuristic, serving as a means of analysing this collection of essays, but I have resisted imposing it on the collection, so that the essays appear in the chronological order of the works they discuss.

The first group of essays has important implications for narrative and genre but also suggests wider ramifications. These essays all share an interest in history as a means of informing literary interpretation. Narratives and rituals of language perform private and public roles in poetry, the novel, and theatre. The boundaries between the private and the public, the subjective and the objective, the narrative and the theatrical become intricate and overlap. History needs form as much as form needs history. In language we find the narrativization of social, political, economic and religious elements and the influence of those forces on literary form.

In what he calls a dramatization of the absence of a discipline — "historical semiotics" — Thomas M. Greene discusses ritual in narrative terms. He argues that the shifting status of the ritual or ceremonial sign in society also affects the literary imagination. He implies that the shift from referential to relational semantics during the Renaissance (a shift that has been so reinforced in our century that public ceremonies now seem empty) bears on the representation and narrativization of ceremony and ritual

across genres. Greene looks at ritual in public ceremonies, which are socially symbolic acts with their own theatrics and narratives, in terms of the new power of the centralizing monarchy. The movement from magical semiotics in the Middle Ages to an increasingly disjunctive semiotics during the Renaissance, Greene demonstrates, is reflected in literary representations. Writers incorporate ceremonies into their narratives and plays, and these ceremonies appear more vulnerable in Renaissance texts as opposed to medieval ones, although in these early modern texts there remains a vestigial hope in the power of ceremony. Paradoxically, Greene says, the questioning of ceremony during the Renaissance allows a space to play with ceremonial symbols. Nor is the nature of narrative the sole domain of narratology no matter how much that study has contributed to the field. Greene discusses ritual in narrative terms. If he speaks about "the changing sign" as "the symbolic act employed in ceremonial and ritual performance," he notes that the "symbolic ceremonial act" does not play the dominant role it did in the Renaissance. There is, then, a certain anthropological as well as semiotic interest in the narrative of the individual and community. Greene reminds us that in the Middle Ages the sacraments are like essential events in the life of a Christian, implying that they punctuate this living narrative until there is a "special drama," when in the sixteenth century the ritual act is called into question. He cites examples that suggest that "a kind of crisis confronted the communal, performative sign." From a different vantage than that of Michel Foucault, Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen and Fredric Jameson, and more akin to Richard Waswo's view, Greene looks at ritual in the narrative and theatrical qualities of public ceremonies. Waswo has drawn attention to the Renaissance semantic shift and has related it to the shift in our century from referential to relational semantics (3-83). Greene argues that this shift in signification affects the literary imagination, especially in the way writers extemporize ceremonies of their own. He asks how these narratives incorporate into themselves the crisis in ritual and signification in which there is an emptying out of the sign. By using "magic," Dante, according to Greene, looks back to the traditional sacraments and ahead to the invented rituals of the Renaissance. By "magic" Greene signifies "the use of signs, words, gestures, objects, and images to represent that which they attempt to bring into being." It is the "art which uses representation to effect an end." The wine is the blood in the eucharist. In the *Decameron* the great number of the dead empties out the sign by making the funeral service a "mockery." In discussing Erasmus' *Convivium religiosum* Greene says that it "rests on the fragile hope that the scriptural word will induce ritual union." A "nostalgia for power which ritual tends to invoke" occurs in the rewriting and improvisations of ritual in the sixteenth century. Greene traces in Rabelais a conflict between demystification and nostalgia and cites the

soldiers' pillage of the vineyard in chapter 27 of *Gargantua* as an instance of the former and the banquet aboard ship in chapters 64 and 65. These texts improvise and play creatively with ceremonial symbols as a result of the questioning of symbols in the Renaissance, although Greene thinks this improvised ceremony shallow because it "is patched together, extemporized, *bricolé*." Shakespeare and Cervantes parody ceremony while showing its tragedy. This kind of narrative structure also affects Shakespeare's *Richard II* because Richard has too blind a faith in symbols and enacts a "formalist heresy." Richard's "auto-divestiture" might be said to dramatize the limits of ceremonial power, the breakdown of the continuity which a coronation is supposed to ensure.¹ Bolingbroke, on the other hand, is subject to the realist heresy because he believes that the coronation has no power in and of itself, and Henry V speaks of ceremony empty of meaning and low on magical efficacy. Don Quijote's "investiture" into the chivalric order travesties faith in ceremony: for Greene, it anticipates the death of ceremony and the deep human need for it. He argues that Cervantes' novel is "a tragedy of failed magic." At the close of Book One of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser holds out hope, in Greene's view, that a space exists where the ludic present can play with the "lost semiotics" of the past.

Harry Levin examines three scenes from the final act of *Richard III* in light of dramatic genres. His analysis of these scenes follows from his reminder that they occur in a history play. "History," Levin reminds us, is related to story, is often the same word as story in Romance languages, is associated with the early English novel, and was expected to be a narrative rather than a dramatic form. Levin says that in Tudor England, which was consolidating patriotism within a nationalistic ideology, chronicle and play conflated into the English history play. Narrative, then, is an integral part of this dramatic form. Levin's insight suggests that we might consider the English history play as a kind of dramatic narrative or narrative drama. He also argues that loose construction in the plays arose because in the adaptation the playwright had to crowd so much into it. A.W. Schlegel called Shakespeare's dramatic histories a national epic, and Levin thinks that the epic quality of the history play might explain why film, which has "distended the epic," was such a good medium for Olivier's *Richard III* and *Henry V*. Because the epic narrates war, dramatization of epic matter is difficult because "its agon had to be mainly elocution" aided by "dramaturgic convention." Whereas the epic and Shakespeare's epic theatre represent individual heroics in war, it is, Levin avers, for the novels of Stendhal, Hugo, Thackeray, and Tolstoy to narrate the complex experience of the Napoleonic wars. Shakespeare's history plays reflect "an accumulation of narrative sources" of Polydore Vergil, Thomas More, Holinshed and Edward Hall. According to Levin, *Richard III* is, in Hugo's terms, a grotesque that derives

from Shakespeare's romantic strain and is, like the Vice, Iniquity, the commentator and mischief-maker in the morality plays. *A Mirror for Magistrates*, which included "monologues narrating the falls of princes," provides Shakespeare with narrative material to translate into the theatre. Levin examines two monologues in *Richard III* to examine the success of Shakespeare's translation. He argues that Clarence's report to the Keeper is like Thomas Sackville's general "induction" to *A Mirror for Magistrates*. Nor is Clarence's dream mentioned in the chronicles, and Levin also notes that *Richard III* goes beyond its narrative source by revivifying the murdered characters and by extending the dream to Richmond. In the Battle of Bosworth Field Shakespeare uses an old technique that is much used in classical drama and later in French neoclassical drama: "Nearly all of the fighting, except for a short but crucial pantomime, will take place offstage and be verbally relayed." (This narrative technique is what I call suggestion.) Narrative expands what theatre can do and it allows the playwright to choose his emphasis with more flexibility. Sometimes Shakespeare does not make obvious narrative choices and decides to reverse his usual narrative practice in his plays. Although *Richard III* makes great use of narrative, it acts out dream in contrast to most of Shakespeare's plays, where, Levin says, dreams are often recounted but seldom performed. *Cymbeline* is an exception, Levin notes, but *Richard III* goes beyond its narrative source by resurrecting murdered characters and by extending the dreamwork to Richmond. In a famous line, Richard forgoes his kingdom for a horse, a verbal evocation that makes up for the lack of horses on the Elizabethan stage. Levin gives examples of how messengers and other characters in other Shakespearean plays expand the equestrian demands of chivalric action with equestrian rhetoric. Richmond's immediate response to Richard's death is a simple narrative: "The day is over, the bloody dog is dead." Thus begins, Levin says, the official Tudor ending, which was topical for the audience and had a strong political message as Richmond was the first Tudor. In looking at the play as a tragedy and in terms of Aristotle's catharsis, Levin says that terror outweighs pity but it might have been otherwise if Shakespeare had represented more directly the murders of the young princes. Levin also looks at aspects of *Richard III* in terms of Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*, which helps us to think about Shakespeare's use of narrative and dramatic effect in light of classical and modern historical perspectives.

The relations between narrative and wider historical and cultural concerns have important implications for Spanish and French culture of the seventeenth century. Antonio Gómez-Moriana, whose main emphasis is on the Spanish texts, *Don Quijote* and *Don Juan*, seeks to demonstrate that literature, particularly in periods of crisis, must take account of itself in relation to the non-literary and literary because the different literary processes are

part of a system of discourse in the society. With this hypothesis in mind, one can view *Don Quijote* as interdiscursive, an experiment of many genres and many social discourses (see Gómez-Moriana, 1977). Cervantes' novel expresses the disparate and conflictual elements of a society in the crisis of epistemological rupture. Gómez-Moriana points out the gap between the narrator's relation of the knight's first "sortie" and Don Quijote's imagined view of the same event. He finds other ironic gaps between the narrator's observations and those of Don Quijote and other characters. Literature, according to Gómez-Moriana, breaks the boundaries of discursive formations that belong almost exclusively to various fields of knowledge, from fiction and different social practices. It also submits these discourses to an examination, makes them supple, opposes them and offers a plural and contradictory vision of society that generates and maintains them. He also says that within literature the novel probably constitutes the privileged place of this "essay" of diverse constituents of a society's discursive system. But in giving the novel a privileged place in the debating of ideas (as Paul Morrison later does), Gómez-Moriana makes the important point that there is not one place for interdiscursive experimentation, for this experiment can be effected equally in a dramatic text and in a lyric. *Don Quijote* and *Don Juan* emphasize in their language the symptoms of the crisis in interpretation in Spain of the Counter-Reformation, a conflict between two systems of interpreting the world. As in Thomas Greene's analysis, in Gómez-Moriana's the loss of shared meaning during the Renaissance changes assumptions about narrative and the practice of literary representation. The performance of the sign becomes a locus for historical change. Gómez-Moriana calls attention to the antagonism between the feudal and the bourgeois in Cervantes, a precursor to the commentary of Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) of the historical role that the bourgeoisie played in the struggle against feudalism. But, Gómez-Moriana reminds us, where Marx and Engels erred is in ignoring that this historical process is not yet finished because today we still live with many of the elements of feudal, patriarchal, and idyllic institutions that the bourgeoisie attempted to bring low. Gómez-Moriana observes that the promises and the oaths of Don Juan to his victims share something with the promises and oaths that Juan Haldado, a peasant, addresses to his valet Andre in the presence of Don Quijote. The lack of such an ideological community — where, according to sociologists, a reciprocity of perspectives exists — allows Juan Haldado's persiflage and Don Juan's deceit. Shared convictions, along with the performative acts of language, effect, in Austin's view, what they enounce, a perspective that Gómez-Moriana applies to the two texts he examines and finds that they embody the two crucial and conflicting worldviews of the Counter-Reformation in Spain. Gómez-Moriana modifies and builds on Austin's

work by examining the views of Shoshana Felman, Harald Weinrich, and others. Whereas Tirso seems to reproduce the objective contradictions that criticism discovers in the verbal usages of his time, according to Gómez-Moriana, Cervantes appears to participate in a process of becoming conscious of these contradictions while making a contribution to it with his work. Cervantes's art is dialogical whereas Tirso's is monological because the former distances himself from his art whereas the latter is implicated in his. This difference has, for Gómez-Moriana, implications for genre and aligns Cervantes with Molière (who, like Tirso, represents Don Juan's story). Both Cervantes and Molière use irony. Cervantes succeeds in transforming the chivalric epic into the novel and in reducing to the grotesque the values of the feudal mentality. Gómez-Moriana's apt observation suggests something he does not pursue, the generic and narrative implications of satire, which might further his comparison between Cervantes and Molière, especially in regard to *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, whose action plays out its oxymoronic and ideologically contradictory title.

Just as Harry Levin compares modern and Renaissance representations of history and tells us that Bertolt Brecht singled out the scene at Bosworth Field in *Richard III* as a theatre replete with alienation-effects, Paul Morrison wants to emphasize the historical differences between Shakespeare and us. (Gómez-Moriana, on the other hand, seems to regard distancing as a means of placing the sender and receiver of discourse outside the space of the ideological realization of represented discourses). For Morrison, Shakespeare is not our contemporary, as Jan Kott said in the 1960s (a position addressed directly and indirectly in the review essays of Linda Woodbridge and Robert Rawdon Wilson). Morrison discusses *Hamlet* and Racine's *Phèdre* in terms of what he calls "generic dispensation" and Foucault's view of the history of literary forms "and the history of the social construction of subjectivity" (see Howard, and McCallum's review of Greenblatt). He argues that the novel has displaced the drama from the centre of our literary culture because of form and "subjectivity" and that whereas *Hamlet* resists this displacement, *Phèdre* anticipates it. In Morrison's view *Hamlet* searches for a genre and anticipates a novelistic or discursive subjectivity, but *Hamlet*, which is a Renaissance play and not a proto-novel, will not grant him this untheatrical interiority and subjectivity. *Hamlet*, according to Morrison, attempts to guard against an identification of being and interiority. Contrary to received opinion among English-speaking critics, Racine's *Phèdre* is closer to the novel than *Hamlet* is. Action in *Phèdre* most often takes the form of narratives or *révélés*, for, in accordance with decorum, only the servants should act. The relation between genres, epic and tragedy, and the role of praxis and narrative, Morrison implies, depend on socially constructed views of class. *Hamlet* and *Phèdre* complicate Aristotle's and

Goethe's distinctions between the narrative and the dramatic, between epic and the novel and tragedy. Both plays show themselves in ways distant from each other and from us. According to Morrison, in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, Wilhelm differentiates between the drama and the novel only to absorb *Hamlet* to the novelistic. But *Hamlet* and its protagonist are notoriously difficult to assimilate. Morrison notes that Hamlet identifies himself with drama but speaks with an anti-theatrical prejudice. Hamlet also identifies the body with the theatre, which, in Derrida's view, is a fallacy or delusion of our phonocentric culture. If in Morrison's theoretical nexus the novel is displacing the drama, it seems that the subject is doing the same to the self (or at least the self is becoming fragmented and uncertain). Hamlet conceives of himself, Morrison avers, as a dramatic text in a play that "insistently thematizes the discrepancy between text and performance, script and acting." Hamlet revises Claudius' letter so that it seals the fates of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but, in Morrison's view, his relation to the text is purely "theatrical or performative, not opposed to it." *Phèdre* does not fill up the stage with dead bodies as *Hamlet* does (see Barthes 1963, 24). For instance, we learn of Hippolyte's disfigured body through Thérémène's *récit* (see Genette 1980, 33; Ekstein 111-21). Morrison observes that the *bienséances* that relegate the body to "this discursivity" distances Racine's play from Shakespeare's. *Phèdre* protects itself, Morrison says, against the monstrous showing against which Aristotle warns. Morrison emphasizes the importance of narrative in Racine's work: "all praxis, all action, tends to gain access to Racine's stage only in the forms of 'récits de ses nobles exploits,' as Hippolyte terms Thérémène's stories of his father." Like Barthes, Morrison thinks that *Phèdre* does not permit interiority, and he also suggests that Racine's play awaits, however secretly, a "translation" into another genre.

The second group of essays focuses on narrative and genre mainly from the perspective of form. The essays by Keir Elam and Richard Young demonstrate the flexibility of genres. Elam and Robert Rawdon Wilson examine the interaction of genres. Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani outlines the history of defining genres, noting similarities between rhetorical, philosophical and formalist methods. Wilson's essay considers the interaction of genres and the nature of fictional universes. These essays also provide subtle readings of Renaissance texts: Mathieu-Castellani concentrates on *Le Heptaméron*, Elam on *As You Like It*, Wilson on *Hamlet*, and Young on *Fuenteovejuna*.

In Mathieu-Castellani's essay it is difficult to separate her discussion of genre in its relation to narrative because her goal is to examine the short story in the Renaissance. Rather than examine the socio-historical or ideological aspects of content, as many recent critical works have done, she

proposes to construct a poetics of the short story after taking into account constant traits of the narrative genre (see also Mathieu-Castellani 1987). These traits she takes to be structural and formal thematics and, most notably, the groups of methods that constitute the distinguishing trait of the genre. Mathieu-Castellani also says that it is necessary for her to define genre and narrative genre. Even though her emphasis is on formal problems, she distinguishes between sixteenth-century and twentieth-century notions of genre. The problematics of genre, Mathieu-Castellani argues, were renewed in the 1920s, most importantly with the Russian Formalists and later by reception theorists. Like Paul Zumthor, she says that genre embraces groups or historical families of texts practising the same writing which allows us to perceive their continuity, inscribed in the genre's historical and constituent series. Mathieu-Castellani calls attention to the groundwork laid by the Russian Formalists, especially in their effort to disengage internal laws from generic poetics and in their notion of the distinguishing trait or "la dominante," that which specifies the groups first synchronically and then diachronically, thereby providing formal and historical homologues and variables. In summarizing this balance between the formal and the historical, Mathieu-Castellani provides a guideline to her own work as well as to that of the Russian Formalists: "Impossible de définir une oeuvre hors de son genre, impossible de définir ce genre hors du système des genres de son époque, et de son aire culturelle." She says that genre, as critics in the school of reception theory remind us, is also an element in the process of reading. The reader helps to produce the meaning. The Renaissance notion of genre, Mathieu-Castellani suggests, is not formulated in the poetic arts, and the concept itself remains vague. She says that the narrative genre that attracted analysis during the Renaissance is usually the epic and that prose narrations, such as short stories and novels, seem to be excluded from poetics. Although Mathieu-Castellani states that the rhetorical model was not used much in genre theory during the early modern period, she notes that authors and theoreticians in the sixteenth century were under the influence of rhetoric. In addition to superimposing the rhetorical classification of the types of discourse — deliberative, judicial and demonstrative on three literary genres: narrative, dramatic and lyric, she distinguishes the latter (see Demers's essay). Mathieu-Castellani observes that this generic triad of epic, lyric and drama was elaborated by Kant, Goethe, and Hegel. For Hegel, she says, epic is an expression of the nation and is objective (the novel being a modern form of the epic), whereas the lyric is subjective and the drama synthesizes the objective and the subjective. In this scheme narrative represents the desire to know, lyric to feel and drama to know and feel. Besides these two triadic models (the rhetorical and the metaphysical), she adds a third (the linguistic), all of which represent three different ways of recording the same trait of narrative — its

relation to the objective world. Mathieu-Castellani is exploring ground which is important for this collection because Levin, Gómez-Moriana and Morrison also discuss the role of epic and the novel in relation to drama. The brief narrative or short story is, she says, not as syncretic as the novel, which absorbs complex epic, poetic and dramatic forms, and is more concentrated on a principal effect. Mathieu-Castellani analyzes, for the most part, the *Decameron* and the *Heptaméron*. She enumerates Boccaccio's models for the short story, some of which are historiographical. This emphasizes the ambiguous relation between history and story in the word "histoire." Veridicality is a quality in historiography to which the short story aspires. Like Gómez-Moriana, Mathieu-Castellani emphasizes the plural voices in Renaissance texts, and, more specifically, she says that the novelty of the *Heptaméron* is in the emergence of a critical discourse in many voices, of a commentary that disrupts the coherence of narrative language. The short story integrates, Mathieu-Castellani asserts, ancient and medieval narrative and didactic genres and transposes their functions in the structure of a new genre, fixed by the *Decameron*. Like Greene, she considers Boccaccio's work to be an important example of change and innovation and relates it and other works to linguistics and to the structure of ancient exchange or magic. A narrative and generic contract develops in the short story. She interprets, to use Genette's terms, the mode as the content: "la manière de rapporter une histoire sera en elle-même une histoire." The relation between the narrator and the narratee, Mathieu-Castellani says, is erotic, and she thinks that the new status of the narrator as seducer has its beginnings in the Renaissance, and particularly in the *Heptaméron*, where the gift and counter-gift occurs between narrators and narratees of both sexes.

Keir Elam discusses the effect of a narrative source on the play that incorporates it (as do Levin and Young). In Elam's view, Shakespeare's *As You Like It* lifts its *fabula* or story material and much of its plot from its source, Thomas Lodge's *Rosalinde*, which in turn borrows its *fabula* from its medieval source, *Gamelyn*, while shifting focus from events to their setting, ordering and language. Even though at the levels of *fabula*, or underlying story, and actual plot, Shakespeare follows the inherited narrative pattern of Lodge's *Rosalinde* quite faithfully, he elaborates the narrative material with radical divergences, as can be seen in an examination of any parallel episode, like the wrestling match. Lodge's "pastoral romance," according to Elam, combines the story stuff and action of romance with the plot and discourse of pastoral. Elam argues that through the "narrational surface" of Lodge's work, which is given to the pastoral tendency of balancing binaries is the ternary structure of romance. Elam says that romance narrates a fantastic green world whereas pastoral tells a story of a nostalgic golden world.

Theocritus, Tasso and Sidney represent this last world (see Slight's essay). Romance is also "subject to the unanswerable laws of magic," the wish or belief that the impossible is possible, which is a concern in the essays of Thomas Greene and Mathieu-Castellani. *As You Like It*, Elam notes, begins with this backward-looking rhetoric, a sad retrospective on world history, but also takes this moment to recount the same *fabula* Lodge, and, before him, *Gamelyn* did. Just as Thomas Greene talked about a shift in ceremonial symbols in Renaissance rituals and how that change was represented in the compensatory invented rituals in literary texts and just as Gómez-Moriana discovered a social conflict expressed in the literary language of Renaissance Spain, so too does Elam find oppositions and disjunction in the text, by asserting that Shakespeare opposes "semantic rupture" to the "romantic rapture" of pastoral. This opposition transforms the iconic to the ironic and so works against pastoral nostalgia. Like Greene, who finds hope in the present's ability to transform playfully the past, Elam finds reason for optimism in the paradox that by rupturing the "sclerotic aspects of pastoralizing rhetoric," Shakespeare liberates the golden poetics of the pastoral by realigning it with the green poetics of romance (see my review essay). Rosalind says she is a magician at the end of the play and she stage-manages events, and the contrast between the ironic Rosalind and the goddess Hymen heightens, in Elam's view, the "otherness" of the green world. The shift towards the romance paradoxically brings pastoral back to its magical and ludic roots: quoting Northrop Frye, Elam avers that "mythical Orphic magic" lies behind romance, pastoral and drama. In a combination that might seduce the audience, Shakespeare does away with nostalgia "in favour of the forward-looking assertion of the erotic, the ludic and the magical potential of the drama in a freshly re-invented pastoral romance mode." Like Mathieu-Castellani, Elam suggests a relation between magic and eroticism in the appeal of a genre during the Renaissance. Another dimension of Elam's essay is his elaborate theoretical notes. Here, he remarks that according to Aristotle drama creates its fictional world by the direct representation of events within the dramatic world and not by narration from without. Narrative information, Elam states, is usually provided to the audience through the interactions of characters who comprise the fictional world. Elam reminds us, as he does elsewhere, that in the comedies the world-creating reflexivity of dialogue is a way of expelling the story-teller from story-telling and is thus much more than a conventional narrative short-cut (not a simple example, to use my terminology, of compression). This reflexivity is, in Elam's view, a primary source of rhetorical vitality. Elam's theoretical notes and the body of his essay build on and extend his earlier comments in *Shakespeare's Universe of Discourse* on the relation between narrative and drama in pastoral and comedy as well

as, more specifically, in *As You Like It*. Elam suggests that the idea that nature manifests itself as a language to the uninitiated belongs to the philosophical Platonism and pastoral drama of Renaissance Italy and its imitations in England. Shakespeare's Orlando acts out Duke Senior's bibliographical trope, where the trees become books containing books, to be written upon and to be read. In this essay Elam takes this earlier analysis as a contextual background to his foregrounded discussion of the relation between pastoral and ritual.

Robert Rawdon Wilson states that one of the purposes of his essay is to argue that the problem of semiotic partitioning goes beyond disparate narrative domains within drama to the internal structure of embedded narratives. This reorientation of Renaissance drama that Wilson proposes should enable critics to ask new questions about this familiar territory because previous critical methods, as all methods must, occluded questions they were not designed to make possible. Perhaps the most important question, or at least the one with the widest implications, that Wilson asks relates to the consequences of the existence of self-contained narratives within dramatic action. Even the briefest narratives, Wilson maintains, build fictional worlds, which he later discusses in detail. Wilson gives three reasons for paying close attention to embedded narratives. First, dramatic action appears particularly vulnerable to interruption. Second, the narratees in drama represent the narrator in full view of the audience, so that in the reception their physical presence and facial expressions complicate semiotic analysis. Third, it is time to correct the scholarly tradition of Renaissance drama and Shakespeare studies that has so elevated drama that this generic priority has become ideological. Shakespeare, Wilson argues, shows a widespread, sophisticated and playful awareness of the potential of narrative. For Wilson, narrative supplements, interrupts and shifts attention away from dramatic action. While displaying an impressive allusive range, Wilson's essay concentrates on narrative theory, possible and fictional world theory and *Hamlet*. It argues that embedded narratives in plays should be analyzed as narratives. The conventions of narrative, which he examines, are all related but distinct. When lamenting the lack of theoretical and critical attention given to narrative in Shakespeare's plays, Wilson notes the exceptions to this rule and mentions some of the work on *Othello*. He also includes Othello's casting a spell over the Venetian Senate, as well as the Hamlet Senior's commanding narrative, as an example of commanding attention through narration. Ross Chambers has called Othello's narrative in Brabantio's house a *locus classicus* "of storytelling as an event that presupposes a situation and mobilizes social relationships so as to give it performative force" (Chambers 1984, 4-8. Cf. Chatman 95, 134-35 and Rabinowitz 154-57). Wilson maintains that narratives create worlds, focalize

the experience of worldhood, play with their own potential, and draw attention to narrative and as narration. Narrative is plastic and can represent simultaneously other discursive modes like exposition, argument and description. In the plays Shakespeare, according to Wilson, uses the simultaneity of narrative to great effect. Wilson also asserts that narratives in drama disrupt the action and give it the consequences of plural worldhood, in the meantime calling attention to the narrower, but more vivid, scope of drama. He evokes the idea of fictional worlds and in doing so discusses the complex permutations of possible and actual worlds and their relations to texts (see Bruner; Hart 1988). The relation between narrative and drama perturbs their mutual boundaries and, for Wilson, enriches Shakespeare's play. The play-within-the-play in Shakespeare, and paradigmatically "The Mousetrap," are embedded narratives that illustrate the minimal detail and incompleteness of fictional worlds. Before applying his theoretical framework to *Hamlet*, Wilson uses the idea of the "minimality" of a fictional world to explicate various examples from Renaissance literature, the most striking of which, in Wilson's estimation, is chapter 26 of the second part of *Don Quixote*. In this chapter the knight is aware that he is watching a puppet-show but is carried away by its coherence and definition. The bareness and basics of a puppet show, as Don Quixote knows, can create a world that is so satisfying that he knowingly gets caught up in the illusion. This example shows, according to Wilson, that minimal detail does not seem to prevent the imaginative reconstruction of a world. He suggests that Borges' "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" is a modern illustration of the Paradox of the Puppet Show where the audience or narratee knowingly gets caught up in the illusion of the fiction. In discussing *Hamlet* Wilson extends the views of Maynard Mack and Harry Levin on the importance of questions in the play by suggesting that a narrative is a possible response to a question, such as Horatio's "telling" reply to Marcellus' query in which the scholar unfolds much of the background of the play (1 i). To redress the relative neglect of the so-called Player King's speech — the first extensive modern analysis is Levin's (1959) — Wilson proceeds to look at the passage using a method that involves a distillation of recent narrative theory. Hamlet asks the Player King to recite Aeneas' tale of the last hours of Troy. Both characters then provide a double narrative, interrupted by Polonius' commentary, that Wilson says represents a complex paradigm of the problem of fictional worldhood. "Aeneas' Tale to Dido" exemplifies, in Wilson's view, the self-conscious narrativity that pervades *Hamlet*. He says that a covert reflexivity in every narrative shows the difference between story and discourse, the what and how of story-telling. Wilson suggests that the Ghost's narrative shows how narrative depends on a suggestiveness that is greater than what can be realized in a

given narrative (1 v; see my discussion of suggestion). The Ghost's narrative stresses the distinction between a story and its narrativization and makes a number of metanarrative comments, especially in emphasizing the auditor's or narratee's role. Wilson then doubles back to "Aeneas' Tale to Dido," which, among other functions, shifts attention to a remote elsewhere, to the fall of Troy and the death of Priam. In summing up the complex use of narrative of Shakespeare's plays, Wilson says: "Not only may old tales be told and retold, but their internal focalizations can be transferred from the character to the voice of the narrator (a voice which may be *played* only), to the narratee, and then to the audience (the always-necessary empirical ears) that hears, or overhears, the narrative being told." That most Shakespearean critics have not noticed or accepted the significance of narrative in plays might, as Wilson implies, be understood better in relation to the classicists and their opponents in Renaissance Italy, Spain and France, where questions of time, place and decorum bore directly on the role of narrative in the drama. More generally, based on classical assumptions, Johnson, Voltaire and T.S. Eliot found some fault with Shakespeare, whereas, on romantic grounds, Goethe, the Schlegels and Keats praised Shakespeare's aesthetic. Like Mathieu-Castellani, Wilson warns of taking old models to be natural and of using them so exclusively that they block our vision when interpreting literary texts (cf. Berry and Woodbridge). The model that Wilson offers is "Aeneas' Tale to Dido" because it suggests a more comprehensive view of Shakespearean narrative, one that involves perturbation of the play's linearity within it, conceptual disruption and a shift from dramatic action to the plural worldhood of narrative.

Building on the postmodernist observation that art is now less about life than about how art represents it, Richard Young suggests that metatheatre and metafiction are products of postmodernism that muddy the distinctions between literary genres. The Aristotelian principle for separating genres is based on the means of delivery and not on the type of discourse. Young adopts this textual and structural methodology while realizing that it leaves one in a vulnerable position, especially as a result of recent work in the semiotics of theatre (see Elam 1980). Definitions of genres that are based on the characters, Young says, are full of problems. Dialogue is as much a feature of epic and the novel as it is of the drama, and, Young says, the genres may not be separated because they have or lack a narrative voice. He asserts that in the drama the primary narrator is expressed through stage directions and in performance through choric figures and characters who narrate. The work of a modern Spanish playwright, Antonio Buero Vallejo, illustrates, according to Young, the differences between text and performance and the potential for narrative in both. Young also says that drama and epic are just as figurative as lyric. It is only a matter of emphasis

— of character discourse in the drama, narrator discourse in the epic and figurative discourse in the lyric — because the three literary genres share the same means of expression. The exploitation of the conventions or modes of discourse, Young argues, has partly led to the hybrids, theatrical novels and narrative theatre. In comparing primarily the contemporary novels of Manuel Puig with Lope de Vega's *Fuenteovejuna*, Young observes the close relation between, if not overlap of, narrative and drama. The quest for the autonomy of the narrated world, achieved by an elimination of the basic narrative voice, Young says, is found in Puig and is as old as Cervantes. If earlier novelists in this century wanted to liberate the narrator from the author, Puig, according to Young, frees the characters from the narrator, so that interior monologues and conversations occur without the mediation of the narrator. He also argues that the classification of Puig's *El beso de la mujer araña* is difficult because it has characteristics of drama and does not tell a story in the certain presence of a narrator (see Chambers 1991, 182-83, 213-33). Young's analysis of this novel is suggestive for viewing drama as narrative because the conversation of the two characters, Valentin and Molina, is "an act of narration," an unmediated dialogue that takes up eleven of the "novel's" sixteen chapters. And there are other dialogues in this text. For Young, the characters become their own narrators: dialogue can be narration and all texts "have ways of constituting themselves as narratives." This text has been translated into a play, film and musical, so that its generic ambiguity is extended. In this polyphonic novel Puig plays with narrative conventions and makes it difficult to apply the Aristotelian notion that genre is partly defined by the author's intention. Young suggests that we can think about Molina and Valentin as narrators who tell their tale collectively and simultaneously but fragmentarily. They introduce characters and become characters in their own stories. The connection between *El beso de la mujer araña* and *Fuenteovejuna* is that they are examples of the overlap between narrative and drama because in Puig's novel the dialogues may be considered as narratives under certain circumstances and Lope de Vega's play has an implied narrative origin or structure. In Spain during the Renaissance, Young asserts, plays were almost narrative because of a hesitancy over staging, but, after the success of Lope, they became performance texts. The sources of the *comedia* often came from Italian plays whereas those for the *auto sacramental* derived from biblical narratives. Young argues that a narrative source underlies most Renaissance Spanish drama. Like Shakespeare, Lope borrowed from romances, chronicles and other narrative sources. Young maintains that the Spanish romance is already a dramatic form of narrative because character discourse (like Puig's) plays an important part in it (see Logan and Teskey). This practice of literary mutation — taking one form of narrative and translating it into another —

occurs in the writing of medieval and Renaissance Spain, which Young relates to the structuralist distinction between story and discourse (*histoire* and *discours*) and to intertextuality (see Chatman 19). *Fuenteovejuna* has a narrative source. Young also considers two types of prologue — one meant for the reader, the other as part of the performance. He considers prologues in light of the practice of Juan del Encina and Bartolomé de Torres Naharro. In the latter's plays published in *Propalladia* we can observe a use of the Prologue that Young thinks derives from Roman comedy but that lessens the autonomy of the play and its characters. Unlike Shakespeare, whose Chorus in *Henry V* is a famous example of ingenuity in comparing story and theatrical representation (Levin and Wilson also discuss it), Lope does not, Young says, use prologues or choruses in his plays, so that this aspect of narrative is only vestigial in his drama. Nevertheless, these prologic and epilogic traces can reduce, Young maintains, the autonomy of the characters and make them elements in the playwright's discourse. The roles of characters in *Fuenteovejuna* exhibit roles as narrators that are like those of Valentin and Molina in Puig's novel. In these two texts three other types of narrative occur. The first is distinguished by a story about the narrators' past to which they refer. The second is about a tale from which they are absent. The third is the narrators being self-conscious about narration. Lope's characters occasionally "identify themselves as narrators" and they cast their discourse "in the verse form traditionally associated with narrative." When *Fuenteovejuna* includes narrated romances, Lope extends the scope of his story in the theatre to include events that are more effectively narrated, so that Young's assertion would be in keeping with the practice of many playwrights and with the views of many critics since classical antiquity. Lope's inclusion of the romances makes, in Young's estimation, the very act of narration a part of the plot. Young realizes that his comparison between these two texts is arbitrary and ironic. Nevertheless, although the texts of Puig and Lope are distinct, they share similarities in respect to "inscribing themselves in different literary genres" as do all literary works. Still, Young wonders whether there is any difference between the general theatrical convention that Lope practises in one of his *comedias* from the metafictional device in Puig's novel where figures in a tale in which they participate tell tales while telling the tale in which they participate.

Even though these two groups of essays differ in emphasis in their discussions of narrative in history and form, they also share concerns. The study of narrative in drama and in other genres is various and changing. These methods coexist in various divisions in the literary geography and suggest a plurality of worlds that arise from "ontological landscapes" (Pavel 1986, 139 and Hart 1988). *Explication du texte*, literary history, structuralism, post-structuralism, new historicism and other methods all concern

themselves with questions of genre, and the relation between writer and reader/audience. Although the essays in this collection are diverse, there is an interesting convergence of interest in the social or collective implications of narrative. Thomas Greene advocates a collective study of "historical semiotics"; Mathieu-Castellani discusses the ideology of genre; Levin looks at the narrative and theatricality of *Richard III* in its literary and social context and relates it to our own by connecting the play with Artaud's theatre of cruelty and Brecht's alienation effect; Elam argues that in *As You Like It* Shakespeare transforms the narrative of pastoral through that of romance and so works against the death-wish of nostalgia in favour of a more restorative and social genre; Wilson asks for critical understanding of narrative in the drama among Shakespearians and, more generally, suggests a theoretical openness to pluralism that fictional world theory encourages; Morrison examines narrative and drama in the context of the history of literary forms and the social construction of subjectivity; Gómez-Moriana argues that society is plural and conflictual and hierarchizes antagonistic elements and regularizes their conflicting interests, all of which must be taken into account, along with temporal and social dimensions, when considering discourse analysis and semiotic games that go beyond mimetic reproduction; and Young looks at how to the "post-modernists" art has become more how it represents life than life itself.

The third group of contributions is comprised of a note on Renaissance epic and narrative, several review essays that explore vital and related areas of Renaissance studies and an annotated bibliography on the topic of the special issue. Joanne Dempsey's brief commentary on the Renaissance epic is suggestive about the debts that the English epic owed to the Italian epic. She suggests how Spenser's use of narrative is related to Ariosto's and Tasso's. The Renaissance epic poets' imitation of Virgil, Dempsey says, demonstrates a concern with the historical and personal dimension of human experience. Dempsey connects the momentousness of time with the structure of narrative. As Morton Bloomfield notes, both are sequential, and epic is motivated from within the narrative, whereas romance is a dialogic encounter. In Dempsey's view, Tasso's theory of *imitatio* can be used as the crucial text with which to examine a kind of episode or "movement" in the epic-romances of Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser, moments that instruct or reveal to the hero direction in his wandering, that change his perception of time and place (see Ferguson 1983, 54-136). These moments, Dempsey argues, reveal the poet's participation in history and, as Tasso suggested, the ability of intellect to receive form. The first group of review articles — E. Hollis Berry on Thomas Pavel's *The Poetics of Plot*, Camille Wells Slights on Heather Dubrow's *Captive Victors*, Pamela McCallum on Stephen Greenblatt's *Shakespearean Negotiations*, and Patricia Demers on Patricia

Parker's *Literary Fat Ladies* — all demonstrate the diversity of Renaissance studies. They discuss among other subjects move grammar, genre, methodology, new historicism, and the relation among rhetoric, gender, and history.

Much new work discusses Shakespeare and his English contemporaries. E. Hollis Berry points out that Thomas Pavel fuses literary studies and linguistics and thereby offers a novel approach to difficult areas such as the place of plot in literary studies. Pavel, according to Berry, allows for a poetics of plot in drama and film whereas many other theorists, like Mieke Bal and Gerard Genette, do not. She says that Pavel wishes to clarify the social and historical implications, as well as the practical implications, of plot in dramatic texts of the English Renaissance, such as *Tamburlaine*, *Part One* and *King Lear*. Berry observes that Pavel recognizes the difficulties in proposing a grammar in the field of narratology because the paucity of grammatical research in this area, but that he offers his system as an improvement over earlier work because of the explicitness of plot-advance, the role of characters individually and in groups, and the connections between plot and its meaning. Pavel attempts to solve the problem of linking actions with characters or groups of characters by using aspects of game theory. He suggests, Berry says, that plots are strategic clashes that require for understanding more than sequences of anonymous action. To contextualize plot, Pavel argues for the necessity of knowing the character or group that performs the action as well as its reason and effect. Berry says that Pavel has left vague the analogy between sentence and plot structure because the insolubility of the problem of whether plot is a language, syntax or dialect. In this grammar Pavel uses, according to Berry, the concept of move from game theory to demonstrate the story's progressive logic. Pavel's emphasis, then, is to limit semantic considerations to those aspects that make understanding of the plot possible. More specifically, Berry asserts, Pavel's analysis is valuable in the consideration of narrative as a system of hierarchical and non-linear dependencies and an examination of period styles.

Camille Wells Slight's examines Heather Dubrow's discussion of rhetoric, and, more specifically, the use of paradoxical and contradictory tropes in Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry, where the characters in the narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, as well as the speaker in the sonnets, are captive victors, both victorious and victimized. Dubrow, says Slight, is interested in domination in love and language and in the ambiguities of vulnerability and power in personal relations and the individual psyche. Slight states that Dubrow shows how characters use language to dominate others while being entrapped by it. A significant aspect of the thesis in Dubrow's book is the ambiguity between victimizer

and victim. Perhaps the central trope that Dubrow discusses in relation to Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* is the oxymoronic syneciosis (or contraposition), which George Puttenham defines as a scheme that takes "two contrary words and tieth them together." Slight uses this trope as an illustration that Dubrow thinks that rhetorical figures can characterize a whole society. For instance, the tensions in syneciosis express Tarquin's condition as a captive victor and reveal the conflict between individual and society. While Dubrow, according to Slight, examines rhetorical patterns that explore moral, psychological and aesthetic issues, she also aptly uses contemporary theory. For Slight, Dubrow's interest is in character and the representation of power and sexual politics during the Renaissance as well as our modern responses to these representations. Slight also calls attention to Dubrow's useful accounts of Shakespeare's transformations of generic conventions but wishes that the author had said more about narrative strategies.

One of the greatest contributions that Stephen Greenblatt has made to Renaissance studies, in Pamela McCallum's view, remains his rethinking of the rhetorical strategies that were used to construct the "individual" in Elizabethan and Jacobean texts. But she thinks that Greenblatt's work has much wider implications than those Shakespearean and Renaissance scholars can draw from his work. His emphasis on historicism provides, McCallum suggests, a historicist corrective to a formalist bias in post-war literary criticism and theory. The methodological Introduction to *Shakespearean Negotiations* sets out Greenblatt's notion of a poetics of culture, which McCallum summarizes as an examination of society's use of networks of discourses to shape its cultural practices and to express the social power of aesthetic form. McCallum finds helpful Greenblatt's extension of the dramatic text as a social enactment into a critical examination and reconstruction of the fragments of neglected cultural networks that are inscribed in these texts. The best Greenblatt's critic can do is to trace the circulation of this social energy of the textual constrictions that have arisen from collective and historical pressures because the new historical critic cannot revivify and relive the historical moment. Greenblatt's author, McCallum says, participates in a complex system of negotiations (note the business terms), which enacts anxiety, the primary emotional and social state in Greenblatt's world. In the chapters that follow the first, Greenblatt explores the circulation of social energy in ways that McCallum finds dazzling and concentrates these explorations on questions of authority — its construction as well as the challenges to it and their recontainment. The second chapter, "Invisible Bullets," becomes, for her, paradigmatic of Greenblatt's interpretation. That the English colonist, Thomas Harriot, would record the potentially subversive voices of the Indians demonstrates

that the representation of subversion is part of the discourse of authority. Greenblatt likens this strategy to Hal's self-representation as prince and subversive as a means to become the authority of king. McCallum examines Greenblatt's emphasis on historicism, yoking the marginal and the central and his use of cultural poetics in interpreting Shakespeare. She describes the narrative strategy of Greenblatt's *Shakespearean Negotiations* as one that allots priority to the "non-literary" cultural or social text because it sets the terms for the decipherment of the "literary text." From McCallum's point of view, Greenblatt's concept of textual reception does not allow for a reader who is engaged with the social energy in the text, so that, recalling Walter Benjamin, McCallum suggests that our own anxieties, moments of danger, may condition our engagement with texts from the past.

Literary Fat Ladies, Patricia Parker's collection of essays, explores, according to Patricia Demers, the connections between textuality and the female body as well as order, governance and disposition in language and politics. Like McCallum, Woodbridge and Wilson, Demers must address the relation between a collection of essays and a coherent argument. She concludes that Parker's collection is not as joined and unified as Parker's introduction claims. Demers discusses Parker's rhetorical and feminist reading of texts that are often from the Renaissance, especially the use of copia, amplification, deferral and other expansive tropes to represent female and feminized bodies. Parker, says Demers, focuses on the structural force of conventional figures, rather than rely too heavily on contemporary theories of rhetoric, as a means of breaching the impasse between formalism and historicism. Demers suggests that Parker takes her impetus for the title essay from *écriture féminine* because in this kind of writing women attempt to recover their place in discourse when traditionally discourse has exploited them. Although Demers finds Parker's work provocative and engaging, she thinks that Parker's portrait of Rahab as a fat lady, which underpins her inquiry into the ways in which Shakespeare's females and feminized characters put up and bring down partitions, is sketchy and does not consider how women writers of the Renaissance, like Mary Wroth and Katherine Philips, appropriate male-dominated conventions without containment. Demers praises Parker's interrogation of the narrative positioning of women, which is especially manifest in the last essay of the collection, where women appear after, and therefore inferior to, men. Parker is impressively allusive, according to Demers, when exploring male anxieties about the threat of women moving from the private to the public sphere.

Controversy surrounded, in the year of the four hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, the appearance of the translation of Jan Kott's declaration that Shakespeare is our contemporary. Owing to this controversy (as late as 1969 Patrick Crutwell was rejoining in the *Yale Review*) and,

consequently, to the potential interest that always surrounds Kott's work, I have asked Linda Woodbridge and Robert Rawdon Wilson to comment on his newest book, *The Bottom Translation*. Although both these review essays agree on significant points, Woodbridge tests Kott's interpretative claims and questions whether he is our contemporary, whereas Wilson mainly explores Kott's theoretical notions of translation. Like Clifford Geertz, Woodbridge questions essay collections, such as Kott's, for potentially not displaying a unified argument or a rationale. Many of Woodbridge's reservations about Kott's book have much to do with the collection of the essays into a book and with what she perceives to be a less provocative work than Kott's famous book of nearly three decades ago. Geertz criteria for collecting essays, which Woodbridge evokes, is that a collection is a retrospective exhibition and that the essays should appear as they were without revision or should be replaced with an entirely rewritten article getting the subject right. She is concerned that Kott has revised phrases but not the argument. Woodbridge also implies that the style and structure of Kott's essays belie incidental "translation." Nor, notes Woodbridge, is Kott's contribution to source study novel. Shakespeareans, especially the editors of the New Arden Shakespeare, Woodbridge says, noticed the connections between the *Aeneid* and *The Tempest*, between Bottom and Saint Paul, years ago. Woodbridge also thinks that Kott has employed hasty generalizations that are not supported by convincing evidence. For instance, she counters Kott's claim that in Shakespearean tragedy history is regicide and a parade of rightful rulers and usurpers by pointing out that this claim is untrue in regard to six of the ten tragedies and by citing her counter-examples. In Woodbridge's view, Kott has not considered contemporary scholarship enough. For her, Kott's essay on *Doctor Faustus* is old stuff because it adopts (or adapts?) a position similar to Una Ellis-Fermor's, that Faustus is a heroic and doomed transgressor against an unloving God. Woodbridge clearly opposes her own idea of translation, style, evidence and criticism to Kott's.

Kott's theory of translation and his use of carnival interest Wilson, who also considers closely his analysis of *Ran*. This analysis, which appears at the end of *The Bottom Translation* in an appendix of three occasional pieces, is, in Wilson's view, central to the main line of Kott's argument. Wilson questions some of Kott's use of contemporary critical theory, especially why he drops Baxtin after the second chapter, why, like other critics, he neglects Baxtin's emphasis on language's social context and on the diachronic and the synchronic (in the discussion of polyphony in the late novel), and why he does not distinguish between the historical phenomenon of carnival and the textual phenomenon of carnivalization. Kott's post-structural position rubs against Baxtin's insistence on authorial volition. Wilson welcomes, nonetheless, a consideration of translation, which, in its extended sense,

applies to hermeneutics as well as to the transmission of one language into another. Wilson says that *Ran* illustrates Kott's general thesis that literature translates into other literature and, in doing so, becomes different but remains the same. Motives and narratives, according to Kott, are translated into different conventions, acquire new functions and undergo changes in importance, but the originals can be perceived and grasped as a structure that limits, but does not entirely determine, translated versions. Kott notes the *Aeneid*, the *Metamorphoses* and the Bible as important structural codes for Renaissance writers. Wilson presents Kott's central distinction as that between *translatio* and *transcriptio*, between the reworking of discourse in which structure remains constant while symbolic and iconic imagery undergoes change and the giving of new meanings to old images without changing them. Wilson summarizes the relation between translation and carnival in Kott's book and title: in carnivalesque literature the images of the top are translated into those of the bottom — reason and official voices are borne across to popular comedy, travesty and carnival mockery. Kott, in Wilson's view, concerns himself most with translation between texts, as between *The Tempest* and *Ran*. Appealing to narratology as a means of illuminating Kott's view of translation, because the study of narrative distinguishes between the what and the how of the story, Wilson says that Kott's concept of translation also implies the deconstructive position that literature is an endless intertextual field where continuity and repetition occur independently of authorial intention and the more traditional idea that authors consciously appropriate prior literary texts. The messages of Hermes, Wilson implies, are intricate but occupy a central place in literary operations. It may be, however, that, as Wilson suggests, interpretation is the wrong thing to do with theory because its application leads to conflict within hermeneutics. Even though Wilson finds some faults with Kott's translation from theory into criticism, he thinks that in this text Kott has partially translated himself beyond his position in his famous book of 1964.

The remainder of the third group of contributions comments on more general concerns about narrative in Renaissance Europe and now. My own review essay shifts the emphasis from Shakespeare and English narrative and drama to a more European view of those subjects by looking at works that also include discussions of language, genre, and narrative on the continent like Richard Waswo's *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance*, Walter Cohen's *Drama of a Nation*, George Logan's and Gordon Teskey's collection, *Unfolded Tales: Essays on Renaissance Romance*, and Nina Ekstein's *Dramatic Narrative: Racine's Récits*. Elizabeth Richmond's "Annotated Bibliography of Narrative Theory and Renaissance Drama," along with "An Opening Remark," further demonstrates the variety of methods and the increasing interest in narrative in the past thirty years. In

the "Opening Remark" she cites Derrida's view of genre as a means of avoiding too strict a categorization of genre. She also suggests that narratological methodology can provide an opening into Renaissance dramatic texts. Richmond calls attention to the seminal issue on narrative in *Communications* in 1966 but warns that, after considering the novel, narrative theory is not in a finished state that can be applied to Renaissance drama. "Narration," Richmond reminds us, derives from roots that imply a trade of verbal material, but she calls attention to the variety of theories that account for that transmission. She also emphasizes the earlier French applications of narratology to Renaissance drama and the necessity that Renaissance scholars adapt notions like intertextuality and narrative voice in the dramatic context because of the heterogeneity of plays. Richmond sets up five criteria for her selection of items in her bibliography. The whole vast field of narrative and narrative theory cannot be covered, so that she concentrates on texts that are fundamental or that advance these fields, especially as they relate to theatre in general and to the Renaissance and its drama in particular. Taking into account the theoretical diversity and developing nature of narratology and the study of narrative in drama, Richmond has provided selections and annotations that are judicious, balanced and informed. She surveys the various positions without giving prominence to one. Just before publication, Richmond supplemented her impressive bibliography and brought it as up-to-date as is possible in a printed publication. This annotated bibliography should be helpful in teaching and research for a long time to come.

In our time narrative theory and theory of fiction are often connected to our fascination with the novel. It is no surprise that Renaissance scholars should apply these interests to drama, which was so dynamic in that period. The contributors to this issue have furthered a collective study of narrative in the drama and in other related genres and subjects of the Renaissance. This collection is like a prologue that looks ahead to comparative studies which will serve us to understand more about the matters raised in this "prologue."

NARRATIVE — ANCIENT AND MODERN

Even though no one agrees exactly on what constitutes narrative, here are a few basic definitions. Narrative, according to Gerald Prince, must represent events. Along with William Labov and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, he maintains that narrative should recount "at least two real or fictive events (or one situation and one event)" (Rimmon-Kenan 1-5; see Adam 3-38, and Cohan and Shires 1-20, esp. 1). Prince interprets events and makes sense of them, also illuminating "temporality and humans as temporal beings." A

more elaborate definition occurs in Uri Margolin's discussion of what literary narrative is:

It is a text, or verbal artefact, produced by an author in a particular situation of literary communication, utilizing and modifying elements from an available repertory of artistic procedures and textual models; it is one or more macro speech acts or utterances of the constative or representative type, produced by one or more posited textual speakers (narrators) and consisting of several propositions containing action descriptions and referring to one or more individuals (narrative agents) in some possible world(s). (181)

Margolin's emphasis is on the relation between authoring, narrating and the narrated from the point of view of the narrative act or utterance, which, as he defines it, is an act that involves at least a speaker, a proposition and a situation.

Situation is precisely where Ross Chambers picks up the debate on narrative (1984, 3-4f.). He argues that with the waning of structuralism it has become apparent that meaning does not inhere in discourse and its structures but is contextual, derives from the function of the pragmatic situation where discourse occurs. Chambers argues that a story can have different points when it is told in different contexts. It is difficult to separate stories from their telling. He refers to Barbara Herrnstein Smith's observation that a story is someone relating something else to someone (213-36). Literary theory and criticism should, Chambers implies, pay more attention to the performative function of storytelling rather than limit themselves, as they have done, to the study of narrative structure and the discourse of narration as if they were both a set of internal relations free of contexts. Consequently, Chambers argues, we possess a grammar of stories (Propp, Greimas, Bremond, Todorov, Prince, and others) and a rhetoric of narration (Booth, Genette), but not a situational view of narrative. Narrative rhetoric explores the relation between story and discourse, and Seymour Chatman, as Chambers suggests, has synthesized and extended the grammar and rhetoric of narrative. Chambers calls for a shift in narrative and narrative theory that he wishes to help establish in *Story and Situation*:

But what is lacking is recognition of the significance of situational phenomena — of the social fact that narrative mediates human relationships and derives its "meaning" from them; that, consequently, it depends on social agreements, implicit pacts or contracts, in order to produce exchanges that themselves are a function of desires, purposes, and constraints. ... the implications of the contextual nature of meaning for the analysis of *narrative texts themselves* remain to be explored; and the main title of this book, echoing Chatman's, is meant to focus attention onto the need, not simply to read texts

in situation (which is inevitable) but also to read, in the texts, the situation that they produce as giving them their "point." (4)¹

Here, Chambers cites Othello's storytelling in the house of Brabantio as a *locus classicus* of a past literary creator realizing what contemporary critics have not, that storytelling has performative force by virtue of a presupposed situation and mobilized social relations (5-6). For Chambers, Othello's speech performs social civility and courtship, and its retelling in the council chamber is a judicial defence that confirms Brabantio's accusation. The power of Othello's tale to seduce and of its retelling to exonerate gives his narrative a magical property, the ability to charm. (In this collection Greene, Mathieu-Castellani and Elam have particularly focused on the magic of narrative.) But Chambers does not stop here. Unlike Gerald Prince, he takes the study of narrative beyond the prose tale and the novel to drama itself. Although Prince allows for many oral and written forms of narrative, he argues that a play on stage is not one of them: "a dramatic performance representing (many fascinating) events does not constitute a narrative either, since these events, rather than being recounted, occur directly on the stage" (1987, 58-60). Chambers, on the other hand, argues that the property of the theatre is that "words" can never be proffered there independently of a represented context, so the audience of *Othello* sees the Moor working his verbal charms through the *situational* power of his noble presence, and they also undergo the seduction of his magnetic personality, much as the Duke does" (5). Drama then presents the "presence" of the character of the speaker. In the chamber scene, Shakespeare has, Chambers says, weighted the balance in favour of Othello by providing a political situation in which the Senate needs Othello, so that, without these contextual circumstances, Othello's tales would be less telling and his magical power less potent. Although Chambers and others have suggested the importance of narrative in the drama, more needs to be done and the division between drama and narration persists. Before exploring the relation between narrative and drama further, it would be helpful to look briefly at some of the background to this apparent opposition.

Narrative is as much a social as a formal act. The word "history" in Renaissance England meant a story about the past and a story. For the Romans, *historia* allowed for the possible narrative when facts were absent. Tacitus, like Herodotus and Thucydides, includes rhetorical speeches based

1 Thomas Pavel (1990, esp. 354) does not argue for a contextual study of narratives, which he says has been successfully made before, but seeks to defend some aspects of formalism and narratology, which are closely related, because of contextualist and historicist critiques. He offers, instead, what he calls "a historical approach to narrative."

on, in the absence of evidence, the premise — if that person were in that situation, what would he say? This practice is in keeping with the passage in Aristotle's *Poetics* where he discusses the probable and improbable in history. Whereas Michael Grant argues that Tacitus was indebted to Greek historical writing, which "owed its very existence to Homer and the Greek epic poets" and also later came under the influence of Athenian tragedy, and whereas A.R. Burn says that "Herodotus ... used literary sources when available," M.I. Findley argues that Thucydides learned from Herodotus that a historian could learn about politics and moral issues by studying events and not relying on the abstractions of philosophy and the myths of poetry. But Findley also admits that Thucydides often accepted the poets' "main narratives" as "historical fact," that he did not make the most of documentary evidence, that at 1.22 of *The Peloponnesian War* he admits that because neither his informants nor he could remember the precise speeches, he made the speakers say what the situation warranted as in the famous Funeral Oration he gave to Pericles (Grant 10, Burn 26, Findley 15-32). Traditionally, history, epic poetry and drama shared narrative techniques and could not be readily separated. In Greece and Rome these narratives were often rhetorical.

Even though Plato distinguishes between diegesis and mimesis, between narrative and dialogue, not all modern critics agree with that distinction or with Prince that drama in performance cannot be narrative. In recent theoretical debates a division has continued between those like Gerard Genette (1988) who think of narrative as being separate from drama and those like Thomas Pavel (1976, see 1990) who consider the possibility of dramatic narrative. Genette thinks that the distinction between telling and showing is misleading, and although he admits that fiction can be mimetic, he does not want to admit that drama can be diegetic (see Bal 1977). He defines narrative as "verbal transmission" and thinks it is legitimate that those who study the mode of narrative rather than its content claim to be narratologists as opposed to those like Propp, Bremond, Greimas, the Todorov of the *Grammaire du Decameron* who examine content and those like Barthes (1966), Chatman (1978), Prince (1982) and Shlomith Rimmon (1983) who try to straddle content and mode. This straddling of content and mode often means that the theorist considers narrative what Genette defines as extranarrative: drama, film, comic strip, *roman-photo*. According to Genette, there are no narrative contents. To substantiate that claim, he cites Aristotle's view that the story of Oedipus possesses the same tragic quality in narrative or dramatic form, so that this story is amenable to any kind of representation, and we call it narrative because we encounter it in a narrative mode (16-17, 44-45). Even though Genette criticizes Pavel for advocating dramatic narrative, Genette in his earlier work has discussed

narrative in drama. He may have changed his mind, but some of his previous analyses of plays are helpful. Genette admits the importance of the opposition between story time or *erzählte Zeit* and narrative time or *Erzählzeit* as it relates to film and oral narrative. He cites as an example of the literary level of drama the narrative of Thérémène, where he tells of Hippolytus' death, in Racine's *Phèdre* (cf. Genette 1980, 33 and Ekstein 111-21). Some of the resistance to drama on the part of Genette and others occurs, as he implies, because of Aristotle's supremacy over Plato in making mimesis dominate diegesis. Genette reminds us that whereas Plato appealed for a purely narrative art, Aristotle upheld the superiority of the purely mimetic. Aristotle canonized tragedy as the supreme genre. His authority helped drama to exercise great influence over narrative to the extent, Genette argues, that the word "scene" is used to describe the basic form of narrative in the novel and that until the end of the nineteenth century that scene was a pale imitation of the dramatic scene (1980, 173). Although Genette's subordination of drama or separation of narrative from the theatre is comprehensive and thoughtful, it reveals his self-consciousness about some of the motivations for such a move. He occasionally cites examples from drama to enhance an understanding of his point. Genette asserts that the curiosity of the intradiegetic listener, or the character hearing the tale within the text, is only a pretext to answer the reader's curiosity, a function similar to that of expository scenes in classical drama (1980, 232). If Genette compares the oracle in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* to the narrative of love in Proust's *Un Amour de Swann* as narration as power, cunning and destiny, he says that in Balzac, as in Molière, meaning rather than style determine verbal features of character (1980, 183, 243). Without belabouring the point, I want to demonstrate that even those who oppose drama and narrative admit some interplay and overlap. Genette's desire for division between narrative and drama, while claiming for narrative dramatic force, faces the implicit opposition of Chatman (1978), who places fiction and film side-by-side in the subtitle of his important study, and meets with the explicit difference of Derrida (1980), who cites Genette in his parody of genre study as the Law and, more specifically, the code that genres shall not be mixed. The debates over genre that interpretations of Aristotle helped provoke in the Renaissance seem to be replayed in new configurations.

It is, however, too narrow to assume that on one level drama is not narrative or that narrative is not an important part of plays. Dramatic texts are written and are read and heard. A.C. Bradley locates the theatre in the mind when he complains about the impossibility of playing *King Lear* and so makes the written text performative in the reader's reception. Harley Granville-Barker attempts to combine his experience as playwright and critic in examining plays. Whereas new critics like Robert Heilman concentrate on

the play as poem or as written text, a director like John Barton emphasizes the acting of Shakespeare's text. In connection with the semiotics of theatre, Keir Elam discusses the interplay of written or dramatic and theatrical or performance texts. Whether the two types of textual structure for plays belong to the same field of investigation is a concern for Elam, who observes that others like Gianfranco Bettetini, Marco De Marinis and Franco Ruffini rule out the written or dramatic text. Elam reminds us that unlike the analyst of literature, myth or plastic arts, the critic or theorist of theatre must take into account two dissimilar, although related, texts, one composed for the theatre and the other produced in the theatre. He argues that plays involve fictional, logical, linguistic, structural, communicational codes (1980, 3; see 1984). Semioticians of the theatre, like Elam, attempt in a different way to account for the whole, intricate production and consumption of theatrical texts.

To use a deconstructive argument, one might say that the Western tradition since Plato has given priority to the oral over the written, has been phonocentric, but that writing actually precedes the oral. Derrida criticizes the tradition that makes voice the source of the living, immediate and truthful as opposed to writing as the dead, distant and refractory. In a Derridean or grammatological analysis one might argue that the oral or performative text comes after the written text and relies on it or even that the oral text is written, whereas a traditionalist might say that performance is the only true way to experience a play because the actors present themselves immediately and give the audience an immediate connection between the intention and the meaning of language that is as "natural" as that link in conversation in everyday life. The Derridean interpretation of the play as text would dismantle the binary oppositions of oral and written and thus complicate our ideas of text and language. This view would mean that drama can use and be narrative as much as any other genre. Derrida deconstructs Artaud's theatre of cruelty with its desire to restore the existence of the flesh and the essence of being (1976, 43; see 1967, 343-68). Recently, using a method he describes as tectonics and which he says is a historical approach to narrative (which differs from new historicist and Marxist methodology), Thomas Pavel has tried to look briefly at the relation between narrative and drama in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Pavel contrasts classical plays with Renaissance plays, especially those before 1630. Whereas, Pavel argues, Greek classical tragedy derives from Dionysian mysteries, whose liturgical structure displays long lyric sections and few episodes, European drama, during the Middle Ages and until the beginning of the seventeenth century, borrowed from narratives and organized its episodes like epic genres. The vernacular theatre treated many characters and lines of action, which, in Pavel's view, were often indistinguishable from narratives except for the dialogue form. Pavel maintains that singing a song

or telling a story was a more important opposition during that time than the division between narrated and enacted stories. Classical French drama, Pavel argues, is an attempt to separate theatre from narrative, especially romance, by returning to the model of Greek tragedy, which did not seem to use narrative sources. Only Racine, and this only between 1667 and 1677, did manage to avoid romance sources in favour of classical models. But then the novel, like Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678), began to use dramatic style (Pavel 1990, 355-58). Although not identical, drama and narrative interact: narrative can be dramatic and drama can be narrative. The question of genre also connects the narrative and the non-narrative during the Renaissance.

NARRATIVE, DRAMA, AND GENRE — THE RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance is not the period when drama and narrative first interact, but it is a time in which drama flourishes and has come to influence the making and study of subsequent literature. Although some historians and younger scholars in English studies often prefer the term "early modern period" to the Renaissance and comparatists often refer to seventeenth-century Baroque, I have chosen to continue with the general and recognizable word, "Renaissance" (see Ferguson 1986, xvi-xvii). As the vexed problem of periodization is not my primary concern here, I shall use the term "Renaissance" with a looseness akin to Shakespeare's use of "tragedy" and with a pragmatic and purposeful vagueness that allows for the differences in time of the rediscovery of the classics in Northern and Southern, Western and Eastern Europe and a period when Medieval, Renaissance, and Cartesian views and models coexist. Given the emphasis of this volume, the blurriness is, I hope, enabling and heuristic and not simply negligent. The Renaissance is taken to mean a loose historical period which began in the late fourteenth century in Italy and continued into the second half of the seventeenth century in various parts of Europe. Although such a definition does not meet general agreement as it once might have, it is generous in recognizing the similar relations of native and vernacular to the classical in Italy, Spain, England, the Netherlands, France and elsewhere with various emphases and at different times during this period.

Aristotle's *Poetics* is a familiar place to begin when discussing drama, narrative and genre during the Renaissance (Carlson 37-111). Italian writers are the first to discuss systematically his views of literature. In *Librum Aristotelis de arte poetica explicationes* (1548) Francesco Robertello changes Aristotle's focus a little when he considers imitation in tragedy from the actor's and writer's points of view and in doing so concentrates on performance and the creation of the script (Carlson 39). Lodovico Castelvetro's *Poetica d'Aristotele vulgarizzata e sposta* (1570) also shifts

Aristotle's emphasis on the text and its structure to the audience and insists that a performance of a play creates greater pleasure in the audience than reading it, whereas Aristotle equates the pleasures of performance and reading (Carlson 48, see Greene 171-96). Castelvetro thinks that the scope of drama, as opposed to that of epic, is restricted and so militates against multiple actions although he acknowledges that the audience wants them. It is not surprising that Castelvetro prefers action to narration on the stage, but he does think that horrible and cruel actions should be narrated rather than staged not because of decorum but because they cannot be performed with verisimilitude. In the 1570s and 1580s respectively, Alessandro Piccolomini and Orazio Ariosto defend a new tragedy that can be free in invention and plot but that should be based on known stories. Like Philip Sidney, Giordano Bruno argues that no rules govern poetry. The *farsa* and the tragicomic pastoral occasion a debate between innovators like Battista Guarini and classicists or traditionalists like Giasone Denores. Guarini's *Il pastor fido* (1590), a tragicomic pastoral, gained success in Italy and elsewhere. This new genre, which prospers from the 1580s onwards, upset Denores, who invokes Plato on the difficulty for one writer to succeed at tragedy and comedy. Aristotle on the purity of genres, and Cicero on the folly of mixed genres. Guarini redefines the classical idea of verisimilitude to argue for mixed genres as a more accurate imitation of reality. This critical debate is complex and persists into the battle between ancients and moderns that lasts to the mid-eighteenth century and that, in some form, never seems to go away (Carlson 49-55).

In Spain during the Renaissance, Italian ideas spread rapidly and, contrary to the distain that François Bertaut and some other Frenchmen of the mid-seventeenth century display in regard to Spain's dramatic accomplishment, the Spanish understand the relation of their own native tradition to the classics but often favour the former. In the preface to *Propaladia* (1517) Bartolomé de Torres Naharro redefines drama from the classic definitions of tragedy and comedy and shows independence from the ancients. Most European treatises on poetry in the Renaissance treat plays like poems. As early as in the time of Boethius, tragedy is considered as a narrative and not a dramatic genre. Alonso Lopez Pinciano's *Philosophia antiqua poetica* (1596), however, discusses at length drama as performance. In the *siglo de oro*, according to Marvin Carlson, two groups — the moralists and classicists — beset the playwrights, the first because of the Spanish drama's corrupting influence, the second because of its putative disregard for the rules of ancient drama. Carlson also notes that one of the most famous attacks on the theatre, which occurs in chapter 48 of the first part of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, owes much to Pinciano (57-61). Although Cervantes might share with the Canon or the Curate these deprecatory views of the

native drama, for he gestures towards Spanish society by listing in this chapter plays by Lope de Vega, Cervantes and other practising playwrights, the author places these opinions in the mouths of characters, so that their opinions come to the reader through a specific story and situation that is fictional. This attack might contain as much irony as it does conviction. Cervantes might be satirizing these satirists of ecclesiastical and secular verse. Can clerics advise playwrights on playwriting? The answer in this narrative consideration of drama might be an ambivalent yes and no. Similarly, some critics sometimes forget that Hamlet, not Shakespeare, gives directions on drama to the players. It is the privilege of narrative and drama to claim to reflect the world or to disclaim any relation between word and world, but whatever the relation, it is refractory. Later, in the prologue to *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses* (1615) and in one of his eight comedies *El rufián dichoso* Cervantes takes and represents respectively different views that are closer to Lope de Vega's. In the prologue to *El peregrino en su patria* (1604) and later in *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (1609), Lope — who is, in the traditional view, one of the butts of Cervantes' attack — says that the Spanish would never have accepted the classical rules for drama. The debate between *uso* and *arte*, custom and the classical rules, continues in the works of Barrada and Cascales among others. Important for our purposes is the work of the playwright Tirso de Molina, whose *Cigarrales de Toledo* (1621) responds to Cascales (see Gómez-Moriana's essay). Tirso's work is organized like Boccaccio's *Decameron*, as a group of stories and conversations among men and women who have left Toledo. Most importantly, Tirso wants the playwright to enjoy the same freedoms as the storyteller, especially the right to represent a unified action in as many locations or times as is necessary. Through the privilege of narrative, he argues for that privilege for drama. (Pavel [1990] mentions the close relation between prose narrative and drama in French plays of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). Tirso also allows for the mixing of genres, and the mingling of comic and serious characters while asserting that verisimilitude does not have to follow history closely. Imagination is the poet's means of transforming history and nature, and Tirso also argues for historical context by saying that modern plays better suit modern audiences than classical plays do (Carlson 62-65). The power of the representations of Spanish drama weaken the effect of the arguments of the classicists: the native tradition prevails.

In England, Nicholas Grimald's preface to *Christus Redivivus* (1541) discusses the decorum of diction and justifies his variety of scenes in the practice of Plautus in the *Capivi* while William Bavande's *The Good Ordering of the Common Weal* (1559), a translation from the Latin of the Italian Montanus, recommends that classical stories must illustrate a moral

lesson (Carlson 77-79). Jonas Barish has discussed at length the attacks on and defences of the theatre in the course of Western history and includes a discussion of the works of those, like John Northbrooke and George Whetstone, who participate in the controversy in England. It does little good, then, to repeat Barish's work, except to say that the objections of Plato and the Church Fathers to mimesis are alive and well in the Renaissance. The battle between historical and fictional narration over the question which is the more true and moral, continues in George Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) and Sidney's *Defence of Poetry* (1595). This last essay is well enough known that it will suffice to mention that, for Sidney, poetry affirms nothing as it expresses imagination but, paradoxically, it is moral through its use of poetic justice. Sidney follows Aristotle in placing tragedy over epic but puts poetry above philosophy and history (9-20; Ferguson 1983, 137-62). Ben Jonson in his various prefaces and inductions and in *Timber or Discoveries* defends his practice in light of the classics. Jonson, as is well-known, is ambivalent about Shakespeare's accomplishment because of his neglect of the classical rules of drama. Without diminishing Sidney or Jonson, Carlson correctly points out the former's debts to Aristotle, Plato, Horace, Scaliger and Minturno and the latter's to Seneca, late classical theory and to his erudite Dutch contemporary, Daniel Heinsius, whose words sometimes appear translated verbatim in *Timber* (82, 86-7). It is to the summation of classical rules in *Poeticarum institutionum libri tres* of the Dutch critic, Geraldus Vossius, that D'Aubignac and other French classicists turn when working out their classical ideas of drama.

Neoclassical ideas take a long time to dominate French literary theory and practice during the Renaissance. Nonetheless, they are always present. Regnaud Le Queux's *Instructif de la seconde rhétorique* (1501) argues for decorum in the miracle play or chronicle play while Charles Estienne's prefatory letter to his second edition of his translation of *Gl'ingannati* — *Les abusez* (1548) — says that the French should follow the Italians in using the classical rules. The Pléiade poets, led by Du Bellay, advocate classical models for French literature but in the French language as opposed to Latin (see Ferguson 1983, 18-53). In the 1550s Jacques Peletier recommends a characterization that would conform to character types: this decorum he calls *bienéance*, an idea that becomes central to French neoclassicists in the seventeenth century. During the 1560s Aristotle becomes important to French critics, but neoclassicism does not take hold in France until well into the seventeenth century. According to Carlson, Laudun's *L'Art poétique français* (1598) takes a more flexible view of classical rules than Vauquelin's *L'Art poétique* (1605) (67-74). Alexandre Hardy and other playwrights continue to defy classical rules. In the preface to *Ligdamon et Lidias* (1631)

Scudery says that he has read all the authorities on drama but has ignored them in order to please his public (Carlson 90, 93). The success of Corneille's *Le Cid* (1637) begins a famous controversy over the use of classical rules in French drama. In *Observations sur le Cid* (1637) Scudery anonymously attacks Corneille, who defends his practice. The anonymous *Traicté de la disposition du poème dramatique* argues for freedom to imitate any action in any appropriate way to respond to the needs of a more complicated modern world. Although the *Sentimens de l'Académie française sur la tragi-comédie du Cid* (1637) does not agree with some of Scudery's criticisms, it is harder on Corneille, especially in regard to how much action can be represented in a day and to the ethics of the play, and it maintains that drama should teach virtue through decorum, verisimilitude, propriety and poetic justice (Carlson 94-96). D'Aubignac furthers the neoclassical position and writes a practical guide to writing plays, *La pratique du théâtre* (1657). Even though d'Aubignac praises Corneille and cites his works as illustrations, Corneille writes three prefaces to the three-volume edition of his works (1660), in which he disagrees with much in French neoclassical theory. In the first essay Corneille still asserts that Aristotle is the central authority on drama but says that the primary objective of plays is pleasure and prefers the necessary to the probable in his discussion of verisimilitude. The second looks at catharsis and the third treats the unities, where he argues for flexibility about how many events can be represented, how many locations in a city are desirable and how a neutral room might permit private conversations (Carlson 98-103).

Molière is less given to theory than Corneille, although he is not adverse to stating his views. The preface to *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1659) is the first place that Molière mentions ideas that persist throughout his career: the public is the absolute judge of plays; the representation of the play is more important than learned if not pedantic criticism of drama; comedy is a worthy genre (Jouanny, ed. 193-94). In the "Avertissement" to *Les Fâcheux* (1662) Molière says that he is not concerned with the rules of laughter but that he may one day publish his remarks on his plays in which he will cite Aristotle and Horace. For the moment, Molière, who may have only projected a critical document in order to satirize those like Corneille who think criticism important, will listen to his public: "En attendant cet examen, qui peut-être ne viendra point, je m'en remets assez aux décisions de la multitude, et je tiens aussi difficile de combattre un ouvrage que le public approuve, que d'en défendre un qu'il condamne" (I 365). Not surprisingly, Molière comes under attack for this anti-critical position. In *La Critique de l'École des femmes* (1663) Molière has Dorante defend the playwright's work against Lysidas' claim that Aristotle and Horace would condemn Molière. More specifically, Dorante defends Molière's characters as inconsistently

consistent and says that dramatic action can involve monologues and narratives or *récits*. In answer to the Marquis' challenge to respond to him, Dorante defends narrative in drama:

Premièrement, il n'est pas vrai de dire que toute la pièce n'est qu'en récits. On y voit beaucoup d'actions qui se passent sur la scène, et les récits eux-mêmes y sont des actions, suivant la constitution du sujet; d'autant qu'ils sont tous faits innocemment, ces récits, à la personne intéressée, qui par là entre, à tous coups, dans une confusion à réjouir les spectateurs, et prend, à chaque nouvelle, toutes les mesures qu'il peut pour se parer du malheur qu'il craint. (vi 1 509)

This view holds that the narratives are action in drama and that they allow the audience to use them as a kind of comic catharsis. The debate soon dwindles to the Marquis singing a monosyllabic refrain of sounds rather than listen to Dorante and Uranie.

In *L'Impromptu de Versailles* (1663) Molière also celebrates the comic spirit, only this time he calls one of his characters Molière and makes his troupe the literal dramatis personae if not then protagonists of the piece (1 517). This play enters the controversy over Molière's plays directly yet through a fictional world. Molière makes himself part of the aesthetic controversy by participating in his practical aesthetic. Even though there is a gap between Molière the person and Molière the character, the playwright chooses the dramatic form to rupture or alter the means of controversy. He translates the pamphlet and essay of his opponents to a royal performance for Louis XIV, a means of empowerment and protection. The king becomes part of the story, particularly when in the last speech of the play Molière tells Bejart of the king's good grace towards them. This is a more indirect dramatic and narrative enclosure of involvement than the giving of the golden ball to Queen Elizabeth in George Peele's *Arraignement of Paris*, although that play is more mythological and the characters do not represent the actors who play them. In the preface to *Le Tartuffe ou l'Imposteur* (1669) Molière expresses outrage over the virulent attack on his play. He also wonders how people can create maxims to limit the subjects that comedy can represent, especially as comedy originated in the religion of the ancients and as Spanish festivals still mix comedy and religion, and so on (see Levin [1986]). In defending and exalting comedy, Molière says: "Si l'emploi de la comédie est de corriger les vices des hommes, je ne vois pas par quelle raison il y en aura de privilégiés" (1 629, see 628-32). He tries to answer the charges against comedy — the Church Fathers condemned it — and the Platonic notion that representation — in this case comic mimesis — corrupts the soul. Molière relates a story of the king asking the prince why Molière's comedy offends people more than the irreligious Italian farce, *Scaramouche*. The prince replies that it is because, as opposed to that farce, which

represents something these people never worry or preoccupy themselves about — heaven and religion — Molière's comedy portrays the people themselves and they cannot suffer that. This narrative once again appeals to the authority of Molière's royal supporters and protectors as a means, perhaps, of maintaining a space for his audience. The polemical and narrative preface helps to negotiate a place for the play in the world. After this point, Molière does not participate in the debate on drama.

Racine, Boileau, and others continue the discussion in the 1670s. Like Corneille and Molière, Racine suffers attacks and in prefaces to the plays defends himself and his dramatic practice. In the preface to *Mithridate* (1673) he is proud that most historians agree with his representation of Mithridate, but in the second preface to *Andromaque*, he says he has changed historical fact to conform with the modern view of Andromaque. The preface to *Bérénice* (1674) claims that only verisimilitude can move an audience in tragedy, but only once — in the preface to *Phèdre* — does he praise tragedy's moral purpose: "Ce que je puis assurer, c'est que je n'ai point fait où la vertu soit plus mise en jour que dans celle-ci. Les moindres fautes y sont sévèrement punies" (31). In the prefaces to *Alexandre* (1666) and *Britannicus* (1670) he defends his use of the unities of time and place because even at Racine, the neoclassical dramatist par excellence, some would throw the book: more often than not that book is Aristotle's *Poetics* or some strict neoclassical interpretation of it. Rapin's *Réflexions sur la poétique* (1674), Boileau's *Art poétique* (1674) and Saint Evremond's "Sur nos comédies" (1677) and "De la comédie anglaise" (1677) all contribute to the debate on classical rules in the drama and comment implicitly or explicitly on the role of narrative in plays. Rapin attacks Italian and Spanish writers for going beyond verisimilitude. He extends the idea of *bienéance*, which Peletier first discussed in the 1550s, to include social and moral as well as linguistic decorum. Like Aristotle, he favours tragedy over epic and comedy and prefers Greek to French tragedy because it is verisimilitudinous. Unlike Rapin, Boileau emphasizes pleasure over morality. He rejects the Spanish plays because they do not follow the unities and he places verisimilitude over historical truth. Although, as Carlson notes, Saint-Evremond concurs with the main assumptions of French neoclassicism, he also takes pleasure in the achievements of the Italian, Spanish and English drama (109). If he admires Aristotle, he does not think that he can regulate theatre in all times and places. Saint-Evremond dislikes the practice of some of his contemporaries to substitute long discourse and tears for action (cf. Carlson 99-111 and Ekstein 1-10, 83). It seems that he prefers mimesis to diegesis.

In Italy, Spain, England, the Netherlands and France, playwrights and critics battle over the nature of the role of classicism in Renaissance culture. A significant part of that debate centres on Aristotle's *Poetics* and its

implications for genre. Is tragedy greater than epic, drama better than narrative? What is the role of narrative in drama? Should genres be mixed? Should an author shape his stories according to the critics' rules and if so should they be ancient or modern critics? How moral should these stories be or should they give pleasure or can they do both? Some writers, like Sidney and Bruno, argue for poetic freedom and prefer poetic narrative to historical narrative. Molière defends narrative in drama, which was especially necessary to maintain the unities but which some neoclassical critics, like Saint-Evremond, criticize despite its use for unifying the place, time and action of the play. For the most part, those who write about drama, and many who discuss poetry generally, follow Aristotle in valuing tragedy above epic. This preference for drama over narrative is deeply embedded in the critical and theoretical heritage of many European countries, so that it is not surprising that it still appears late in our century in theoretical discussions.

THE FUNCTION OF NARRATIVE IN DRAMA

The question of narrative's function in the drama is not a new one. It has long been recognized that classical drama uses narrative extensively. The apparent development of Greek tragedy from one actor to two then three actors in addition to the chorus implies that narrative was needed to enhance the scope of the play. The exposition, reports of offstage action, chorus, parabasis, and other dramatic conventions all rely on narrative. Owing to the nature of the Greek theatre, which limited locale or settings, and owing to the general tendency in classical drama to represent actions in a sharply circumvented time, exposition in classical Greek plays tended to narrate in detail previous actions and the background for characters. The categories that this Introduction examines — exposition, suggestion, compression and address — arise inductively from the use of narrative since classical times. They are cognitive and overlap, and are used for a more ready apprehension of narrative. Although each age has its own theatrical conditions, these categories of narrative function recur in recognizable forms.

EXPOSITION

Exposition, which consists of commentary and explanation, may occur at the opening of a play, in choric speeches, in characters' dialogue or in various dispersed parts of the dramatic text. Narrative influences the reader and theatre audience in a similar way, except for the real and imagined differences between dramatic and non-dramatic works. When narrative is dispersed in the text, it is like Osiris, until it can be pieced together in the imagination of the reader or audience. In the satires of Rabelais and Swift,

the essays of Montaigne, the novels of ideas of Dostoevskij and Mann and the drama of ideas like Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure* and the *drame à thèse* of Ibsen and Shaw, the role of exposition as commentary and debate is the motivating force of, and not some impediment to, action. Some critics classified as problem plays or problem comedies some of Shakespeare's plays because their action did not resolve the questions raised in the characters' debates, and T.S. Eliot thought that *Hamlet* failed because it lacked an objective correlative (a matter of decorum, for Eliot, as if the talk and the action of that play could be balanced in the same way he imagined classical plays to be) (Boas, Eliot, Lawrence). Unlike these critics, I consider the friction between the spoken action of narrative and the physical action of events to be productive and to represent the frustration that often occurs when people compare their wishes and motivations with their actions. Exposition has a psychological dimension as well as a social and political one. Private desires and public necessities often conflict. Conflict, as the critical cliché goes, is necessary for successful drama. Rather than be extraneous, exposition, and the narrative of which it is a function, is dramatic and represents one of the techniques in the repertoire of playwrights.

Although the French have long discussed the importance of the *récit*, and hence of narrative, in Racine, in the English-speaking world we have forgotten the crucial role of narrative in drama (see Ekstein). A generation or two ago the function of exposition in Greek drama was a commonplace. This function was not, however, always praised. In a handbook, *The Art of Drama* (1935), Fred Millett, who is co-author with Gerald Eades Bentley, compares the expositions in Euripides' *Hippolytus* and Racine's *Phèdre*, both of which treat a similar story (182-83). Despite Millett's knowledge of the subject, he displays, like Samuel Johnson, an impatience for direct narrative. This impatience characterizes many critic's attitude to narration. Millett says:

The Greeks were sometimes content to open their dramas with a dramatic monologue. This at its worst was a perfunctory summary of the events preceding the first represented action with which it was necessary for the audience to be acquainted. At best it could indicate the nature of the drama that was to follow, establish the atmosphere, suggest the conflict out of which the plot was to rise, and the lines which the conflict was likely to take. (182)

Millett praises Aphrodite's opening soliloquy in Euripides' *Hippolytus* for specific applications of what he thinks best in the Greek use of exposition and contrasts it with Racine's more modern exposition in *Phèdre*, which raises three problems — is Theseus alive or dead? Hippolytus' love for her father's captive and enemy, Phèdre's enmity to Hippolytus — that are split and diffused structurally and resolve themselves at different points in the

drama. Millett is not certain which of the dramatists' expositions is more effective, although his rhetoric seems to favour that of Euripides (182). Similarly, Laurence Olivier thought that the narrative about the Salic Law at the beginning of *Henry V* was boring to a modern film audience and so used burlesque and clownish acting to save it from the tedium of an Elizabethan debate on succession and imperial designs. The scene was good film, but this success probably tells us as much about the translation of Elizabethan into modern taste as it does about the translation of a play into film. The same translating occurs in Millett's evaluation of exposition in classical drama: the Greeks valued narrative in drama in various forms, including the monologue, whereas Millett thinks of narrative as serving drama.

Another point that Millett raises, and that narrative theory will later take up, is the dispersion of a narrative throughout the text. Millett's discussion demonstrates that it is difficult to generalize about any group of texts, for he discusses how sometimes Greek playwrights wanted to delay the disclosure of facts about the pre-history of the drama but had to reveal something of the situation at the beginning of, and at appropriate points in, the play. He thinks that such a delayed exposition in the play faces the danger of being vague and incomplete or risks boredom when the pre-history is at last revealed. The risk can be worth it because Millett cites Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* as the supreme example of delayed exposition (183).

The delayed and splintered story of the Ghost in *Hamlet* is also a wonderful example of exposition in a complex situation. Barnardo and Marcellus retell the story about the Ghost's appearance to Horatio, who is a sceptical narratee (I i). The Ghost actually interrupts Barnardo's tale about the Ghost and serves as a dumb show that tests in dramatic fashion Horatio's very scepticism. The speech of the narration and of the characters' address to the Ghost contrasts with his silence and his motions, thereby making the scene more dramatic through this tension. Shakespeare chooses different ways — telling and showing — to demarcate the living and the dead. The Ghost will not heed Horatio's command to speak to him. Barnardo, Marcellus and Horatio provide commentary on the silence and the Ghost's thwarted speech, which never happens because the cock crows. In the next scene Claudius addresses the court with an account of the mourning and marital and political consequences of the death of Hamlet Senior, whose Ghost occupied the stage and the narrative of the previous scene (I ii). This narrative is interrupted by Claudius' concern for Laertes, before the new king can return to Hamlet, the principal narratee of the scene, who shares with the audience his biting reception of Claudius' words, thereby making it another narratee. Gertrude and Hamlet quarrel over the proper way to interpret and react to Hamlet Senior's death. Claudius tries to mediate.

Hamlet publicly makes up with his mother but, in a soliloquy, tells the story of his own doubt about his mother's hasty marriage after his father's death. Shakespeare interrupts this solitary narrative to the audience with the arrival of Horatio, Marcellus and Barnardo, which, after pleasantries, leads back to the theme of the death of Hamlet Senior and to another narrative about the appearance of the Ghost, this time by the once-sceptical Horatio. This narrative is mainly for Hamlet's benefit, although it provides for the audience yet another description of, and point of view on, the Ghost and the death of Hamlet Senior. In the stichomythic exchange, in which Hamlet questions the three tellers about their polyphonous tale about the Ghost (Shakespeare splits it among them), the playwright buries a narrative that Hamlet will uncover here and for the rest of the play and will complicate as he becomes an active narratee who plays out the consequences of the dispersed story and becomes part of it. Hamlet becomes the subject of the exchanges between Polonius, Laertes and Ophelia (I iii). In the next scene Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus encounter the Ghost and enact a drama like that in the opening scene between speech and silence, until Hamlet follows the Ghost who has beckoned him (I iv). The Ghost's "narrative" continues in the next scene, when Hamlet refuses to go on until the Ghost speaks, which he does, as he tells his story. This tale includes the suggestion that he could tell a harrowing story, which is part of the tale he relates, a kind of *invitio* or *ennoia*, a type of *eclipsis* in which an attempt to withhold information implies it (I v). The Ghost's horrible narrative affects the rest of the play and, subsequently, is never far out of mind. Like Hamlet, we remember the Ghost according to his command. Hamlet and the Ghost make Horatio and Marcellus swear not to tell the tale of what they have seen. As a result of the Ghost's narrative, Hamlet announces his strategy of putting on an antic disposition. The narrative dispersion is so complex as to exceed the space I have to consider it, but in one scene alone we can observe its operation in Hamlet's reading a book with the theme of death in mind and with his antic behaviour in full display. The same can be observed in Hamlet's suggestion to the Players that they play "The Murder of Gonzago" with Hamlet's interpolation of twelve to sixteen lines, and Hamlet's soliloquy, "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I!", which includes Hamlet's plot or story to have the players trap the king with a play "something like the murder of my father" (II ii). Although other examples proliferate, the play-within-a-play, which includes Hamlet's narrative commentary, combines narration and dumb show in a manner that parallels and amplifies the two meetings with the Ghost (and the additional reported sighting) (III ii). Shakespeare combines the dumb show, Hamlet's commentary, and a highly stylized play with narrative speeches, with the reactions of Claudius, Gertrude and other characters as a means of showing the close relation, and tension, between showing and telling, the teller, tale and audience. There are

two audiences, on the stage and within the theatre. The narrative is performed in word and deed and dispersed, so that the boundaries between the dramatic and the narrative are blurred. Each augments the other. The Ghost's appearance in Gertrude's chamber, where Hamlet is aware of his presence while his mother is not, and where the prince kills Polonius, a player in his youth, by mistaking him for Claudius, begins another story — one of revenge, which also picks up the revenge narratives of Laertes and Fortinbras (III iv). It takes the rest of the play to play out the tale as well as the play (see Wilson, 1984; his essay, and Morrison's essay).

SUGGESTION

Narrative allusiveness and illusion of reference to a greater fictional world lies at the core of suggestion. These allusions can be a word or a phrase that refers to a person or a place in mythology or history or to other unrepresented times, places, words and actions in the "lives" of the characters. Suggestion is a form of compression but this is not its primary goal. Whereas compression hastens the action along instead of allowing the play to become bogged down with too much showing, suggestion is a world-building function that attempts to make the most of the limitations of a play, the enormous gap between word and world, what happens in nature and society and what can be said about it or in an adjacent symbolic verbal universe. The references to Antony's youth in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* are primarily suggestive because they are more a means of building up Antony's heroism and honour (as opposed to showing them) than a way of avoiding scenes of, or a play on, the life of the young Antony. Shakespeare uses narrative to make the dramatic parts of Antony's life more dramatic. In *Julius Caesar* Antony is significant in his own right but is more important as a site of conflict between the worlds of Caesar and Brutus. Description or reports of off-stage action intensify the dramatic experience.

But descriptions of off-stage action may have social, political and religious motivations that vary from period to period. No violence occurs on stage in Greek tragedy, so that messengers report murders and other violent acts that happen off-stage. The *eccyclema*, one of the machines in the Greek theatre, revealed the dead bodies of the victims of this off-stage violence. In Greek tragedy narrative is indispensable and not a poor excuse for dramatic representation. The Greek chorus has many functions. The members of the chorus can be minor or major characters, or they can report events and comment on them as they do when they meet Prometheus in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* and say that new rulers reign in heaven and with new customs Zeus rules. (144-52). Sometimes the Chorus speaks as one person, sometimes as a collective (180-88). It can be a collective narratee, characters to whom the tale is told, or an audience. The Chorus asks Prometheus to

unfold the entire story, to tell them on what charge Zeus has taken and punished him, and to instruct them if no harm will come with the telling (196-99). Telling becomes dramatic: it creates as much tension as it does provide information. If this brief section of one Greek tragedy can suggest complex narrative functions for the Chorus, a study of the extant Attic tragedies would greatly complicate our notions of narrative in classical drama.

Medieval drama can also include the suggestion of biblical allusion, symbolism and typology. The following are primarily examples of suggestion but also include functions like address. *The Second Shepherds' Pageant* from the Wakefield Corpus Christi Cycle begins with a succession of three shepherds telling about the sorry state of the world and the oppression they face. Although only the first shepherd soliloquizes, the second and third speak as if they were alone and only when the first makes his presence known to the second and they together to the third, does the soliloquizer acknowledge that the audience is not simply overhearing him or that he is speaking directly to it. These tales of woe represent the atmosphere and the problem of the play. The weather is bad, the world is fallen. Like Mak, the shepherd who will steal their sheep, the world is in need of Christ's redemption. The shepherds must forgive Mak as Christ forgives them. Without the opening narrative, which enlarges the misery of the shepherds through allusion and natural tropes, the typology of the play's structure is much less effective. Narrative is also a guide, to shift metaphors, in the morality plays. In *The Castle of Perseverance* the suggestion of Christian theology is a primary narrative function but exposition and address also play important roles. The two Vexillators tell of the story of Mankind, who is born naked and will be naked at death, and of his relation to God, Mary and the Good and Bad Angels and how, with great difficulty, sinful Mankind will overcome the Castle of Perseverance with virtues. They also address the audience and speak directly to them as dear and faithful friends about the staging of the play and hope for God's grace and that Christ will keep actors and audience from the fiends. Besides telling the great Christian story, the two Vexillators announce that the play will be performed in a week's time at a certain location, so that the dramatic practice separates the Banns from the main body of action in time and place. When the play proper begins, Mundus then Belial then Caro then Humanum Genes then the Bonus Angelus and the Malus Angelus all speak at length in ways that introduce them to the audience (in talking stage directions), and tell their stories so as to characterize themselves and as a means of setting up the main conflict in the play — the fight between good and evil over humankind's soul. The

story is about the temptations of this world and the necessity to overcome them to attain salvation in the next world.²

Renaissance playwrights draw on the convention of messengers' reports in classical drama and explore the role of narrative in their own works. In Ben Jonson's *News From the New World Discovered in the Moon*, a masque presented at court before James I in 1620, the two heralds dangle their news before three other characters interested in narratives or documents (in their case, written ones) — a printer, a chronicler and a factor. The narratees' very preoccupation with news — with narrative — becomes a premise and part of the plot because by expressing their interest they further and frustrate the heralds' narratives by suspending them. Narrative remains important for the visual show of a masque. The narratives of Mithridate's final battle (lines 1558-1638) and of Hippolyte's death (V vi), in Racine's *Mithridate* (1673) and *Phèdre* (1676) respectively, reveal how suggestive and detailed reports of off-stage events can become (Ekstein 16). Beyond messages, news and reports, other narrative devices are self-consciously narrative, such as the use of letters and comments about the narrative itself. Marlowe opens *Edward II* (ca. 1591-92) with Gaveston, the king's favourite, reading Edward's letter and providing the audience with commentary on it. An example of metanarrational awareness to which I return is Dorante's defence of narrative in the drama in *Critique de l'École des femmes* (1663) (scene vi). The act of narration in the play can call attention to the way a play is presented to the audience as well as to the role of narrative in our making sense. In particular, Jonson and Molière raise respectively the question of the dependence on news and the importance of story-telling in the drama.

2 The four narrative functions — exposition, suggestion, compression and address — work in concert. The openings of *Mankind* and *Everyman* illustrate the interplay of the four categories. When in *Mankind* Mercy opens the play by telling about God's sacrifice of Christ, by exhorting the audience to rectify their conditions with humility and reverence and to incline themselves to Christ, by introducing himself as Mercy and by explaining his role in their salvation through Christ from the temptations of this world, Mischeffe interrupts and challenges him by belittling his preaching and his language and by using parodic verse and doggerel Latin. The conflict begins between good and evil and after about one hundred and forty lines Mankind enters with his spade, kneels at the feet of Mercy but soon suffers an onslaught from the figures of temptation. *Everyman* opens with a messenger who acts as a prologue. He addresses the audience, points a moral lesson with a warning to Man, and asks them to listen to what God, who is calling Everyman to a general reckoning, will say. God's narrative is an amplification of the Messenger's. After he speaks of his own suffering on the cross and of human disobedience, of his hope for his people and the mercy he offers them, he summons death. The human and divine narratives introduce the conflict that humans can live through God's mercy or die in unrepentant sin.

COMPRESSION

Like an epic poet who begins his poem in *medias res*, the playwright often foreshortens the action of the play through narrative. This substitution of telling for showing (although all plays show their telling on stage and tell their showing in print) constitutes an effective means by which to give the play movement. In stories this movement is narrative drive. This compression differs only from suggestion in degree and emphasis. Paradoxically, this compression leaves to the imagination the supposition of fuller fictional worlds. In Jean Racine's theatre, *réécits* are generally found in the first and fifth acts because classical conventions like decorum or *bienséances* and unity of time and place require exposition and denouement *réécits* (Ekstein 4). Similarly, compression can be a means of explanation. A narrative can tell about what happened, so that compression can also be expository, although its primary function is to abbreviate the action. Some expositions, as in the prince's soliloquies in *Hamlet* and the debate among the Greek generals in *Troilus and Cressida*, revel in their own verbal web and explore verbal action in opposition to physical action. In the Renaissance, where humanists like Erasmus, Colet and More celebrate an active life as opposed to a contemplative monastic life, tensions can occur between the desire to act and the contemplation of that desire or a repulsion against it. *Hamlet* is a textbook case.

A playwright uses compression more as a means of foreshortening action than as a way of contemplating something is happening. Seneca prefaces his *Hippolytus*, or *Phaëdra* with an argument, which provides the background to the story, another narrative filter. This argument allows Hippolytus in the opening speech to assign the tasks of the day to his followers and thereby create an atmosphere for the play through evocative tropes describing nature in detail and to move the action forward through talk of future action. Nonetheless, as we can observe in Racine's case, the very compression can become an aesthetic with ontological, epistemological and political implications. Are life and knowledge ordered, so that plays and other works of art should reflect that order, or are these aesthetic objects ways of wishing away, supplementing or answering disorder in the world? Why is it better to leave violence off-stage? Does the playwright and his society want to dissuade people from violence by not showing it on stage or do they want to pretend it is remote and not central to life?

ADDRESS

Narrative in the drama also has the primary function of address. This address can be indirect, like Volpone's soliloquy in which he addresses directly the day briefly and then his gold at length and in doing so addresses

his audience indirectly and by implication (1 i 1-33). The narrative function of address can also occur directly in dialogue but with an effect similar to a soliloquy, where the character ostensibly reviews his thoughts but speaks before an audience. In Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex* the king, the Messenger and the Herdsman discuss past events. When the king finds out from the reluctant Herdsman that he is the child of King Laius and therefore the son of his wife, Oedipus exclaims in an anagnorisis that all his terrible troubles will come clear now. This recognition he shares indirectly with the audience, for whom this tragic tale is ultimately uttered. The strophe and antistrophe of the Chorus comment on the events they have heard while they share the stage with Oedipus alone. They speak directly in their commentary to Oedipus but also for the benefit of the audience. Another example of an address that is direct but also indirect is Matbeth's response to Seyton's news about Lady Macbeth's death, which the audience overhears:

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing. (V v 24-8)

This generalization about how life is a meaningless dramatic narrative is Macbeth speaking to himself in a private meditation meant for the public consumption of Seyton and the soldiers as well as the theatre audience. This speech reveals a self-conscious narrativity as much as a self-conscious theatricality.

But there is a narrative continuum between indirect and direct address. Perhaps one of the most direct forms of direct address is the *parabasis*. It is the best-known function of the Chorus in old comedy. After the agon, the two rival actors withdrew and the Chorus came forward to sing its *parabasis* or principal song in which the playwright often attacked members of the audience by name. In *The Clouds* the leader of the Chorus addresses the audience and proceeds to boast of the playwright's talents and to curry favour with the audience. One of the boasts is that he only had to attack Cleon once to bring him low (500-600).³

3 I am not arguing that these four functions occur separately. The categories reflect the emphasis that is put on each function. Other functions occur in the passage noted in *The Clouds*. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* the dialogue between the Chorus and the Herald about the fall of Troy reports offstage action and leads the Chorus to say that the Herald's tale shows that he himself was wrong. Part of Clytaemnestra's response to the Herald's long speech is to ask why she should listen to him rather than to Agamemnon. After the Herald praises Clytaemnestra's vaunt of loyalty to her husband, the Chorus wants to hear about the story of Menelaus. The Herald is self-consciously rhetorical

The Prologue is another convention that can represent address, often a direct address to the audience, in concert with other functions. Plautus and Terence based their plots on those of the Greek new comedy, and, like their Greek forerunners, they used conventions to advantage. The self-conscious theatricality of an appeal to the author is one of the conventions of dramatic narrative. When the Prologue to Plautus's *Menaechmi* introduces to the audience the playwright in person on the stage and not as he appears through the words in his books, he calls attention to the dual nature of a play. The Prologue then summarizes the plot but only does so after a seeming parody of such a convention because he says what comic poets often do and has fun with the vagaries of time and place. The locale is only somewhere when the action happens there onstage, in this case among Sicilian Greeks rather than the usual Athenians. After narrating the plot, the Prologue states the locale and mentions the different characters who can live in the house. Plautus represents the play through a narrative filter. In Terence's *Adelphoe* the Prologue defends the author against what the author considers to be the critics' unfair reception of his work. The Prologue defends against the charges that Plautus and Terence plagiarized specific plays of new comedy. This story of reception becomes a polemical filter through which we experience the play. In this defence the Prologue says how proud he is that Terence has won the praise of the nobles and the valiant Roman people as a whole. The Prologue also tells the audience not to expect the plot because the old men that first come on stage will disclose part of the story as they play their parts. Micio and Demea, the old men, tell that tale in Act One. With a wish that the good will of the audience will give the author energy to write, the Prologue ends his speech.

The direct address of Prologues and Epilogues in Renaissance drama can be used for nationalistic and political reasons. The case of the Chorus to Shakespeare's *Henry V* is well-known in this regard, and I have discussed it elsewhere (See 1991a, 1991b). Another fine example of this political mythmaking in narrative, which amplifies and points out the dramatic representation, occurs when the figure of Fame acts as an epilogue in Miguel de Cervantes' *El cerco de Numancia* (ca. 1585-87). After the Spanish

about his method of mixing good news of the Greek victory with the terrible news of the subsequent storm. Nevertheless, he represents the storm by telling about it. The Chorus then comments on the fall of Troy and engages Agamemnon on his version of events. Clytaemnestra then steps forward and tells her story of suffering and loneliness and says that part of her pain derived from false stories or rumours about Agamemnon's fate. (This narrative of pain is uttered with some dark irony considering her plans for the imminent murder of her husband.) She, along with Agamemnon, help to create in their exchange a triumphant return full of splendour that the conventions of the Attic theatre would not allow to be represented on stage.

boy, Marius, has vowed not to let the Romans conquer him, he jumps from the wall of the besieged Numantia for the love of his country. During the course of the play, Scipio, who had destroyed Carthage and thus won the name Africanus, now conquers Numantia, thereby gaining a second surname — Numantius. He is the last character to speak. He praises the boy for having so much valour in his breast and says that Spain has gained undying glory by such a heroic act, explicitly saying that the boy's suicide lays low all Scipio's victories and raises the youth to heaven in an apotheosis. This translation shows by implication a mere boy beating the Romans at their own game — suicide with honour — and reaching a Christian heaven. At the height of the Spanish empire, just before the defeat of the Armada, Cervantes has Scipio narrate a myth beloved to all European countries during the Renaissance (that that particular country is the true successor to Rome). The myths of Brute or Brutus after the Fall of Troy founding a specific European country (and not just Britain) is a variation on this theme. Here, Spain will be greater than Rome. In case the audience misses the point, Cervantes adds a peroration to a peroration, the epilogic Fame to the eulogizing Scipio. Fame picks up where Virgil's *Fama* left off. Fame wants all nations to proclaim throughout the world Marius' great sacrifice for Spain, which is clearly proleptic. This deed foretells the valour of Spaniards in coming centuries. Fame sings in immortal rhyme the example of an unconquered spirit in Numantia and remembers this bravest of unconquered nations. Fame also mentions that its speech is giving a sad story a happy ending, implying the comic ending of a new imperial power out of a denial of its earlier defeats. This is rewriting the colonial past for the imperial future. Fame's very narrative operation, however, can, by implication, be used in the future by other so-called unconquered nations to mythologize their defeat of the conqueror, Spain. Another Scipio will have to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Spain's victory will become like Rome's — a thing of the past. And so this kind of narrative address opens up the play to political meanings but even in its explicit commentary cannot control the ambivalence towards its direct designs.

Narrative and drama often relate to each other in terms of genre. The conventions of telling and showing, no matter how distinct, overlap during the Renaissance. The essays in this collection explore the nature of narrative and drama in formal and historical analyses, as well as suggest adjacent and contingent areas of exploration in Renaissance studies. Besides providing exciting theoretical discussions and evocative interpretations of Renaissance

texts, the essays, review essays, and the annotated bibliography show a great range of allusion and methodologies that take into account Italian, English, Spanish, and French texts and contexts. The contributions should make the vigorous debates in narrative and Renaissance studies more engaging and should suggest ways in which more scholars can become involved in the study of the use of narrative in dramatic texts.

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