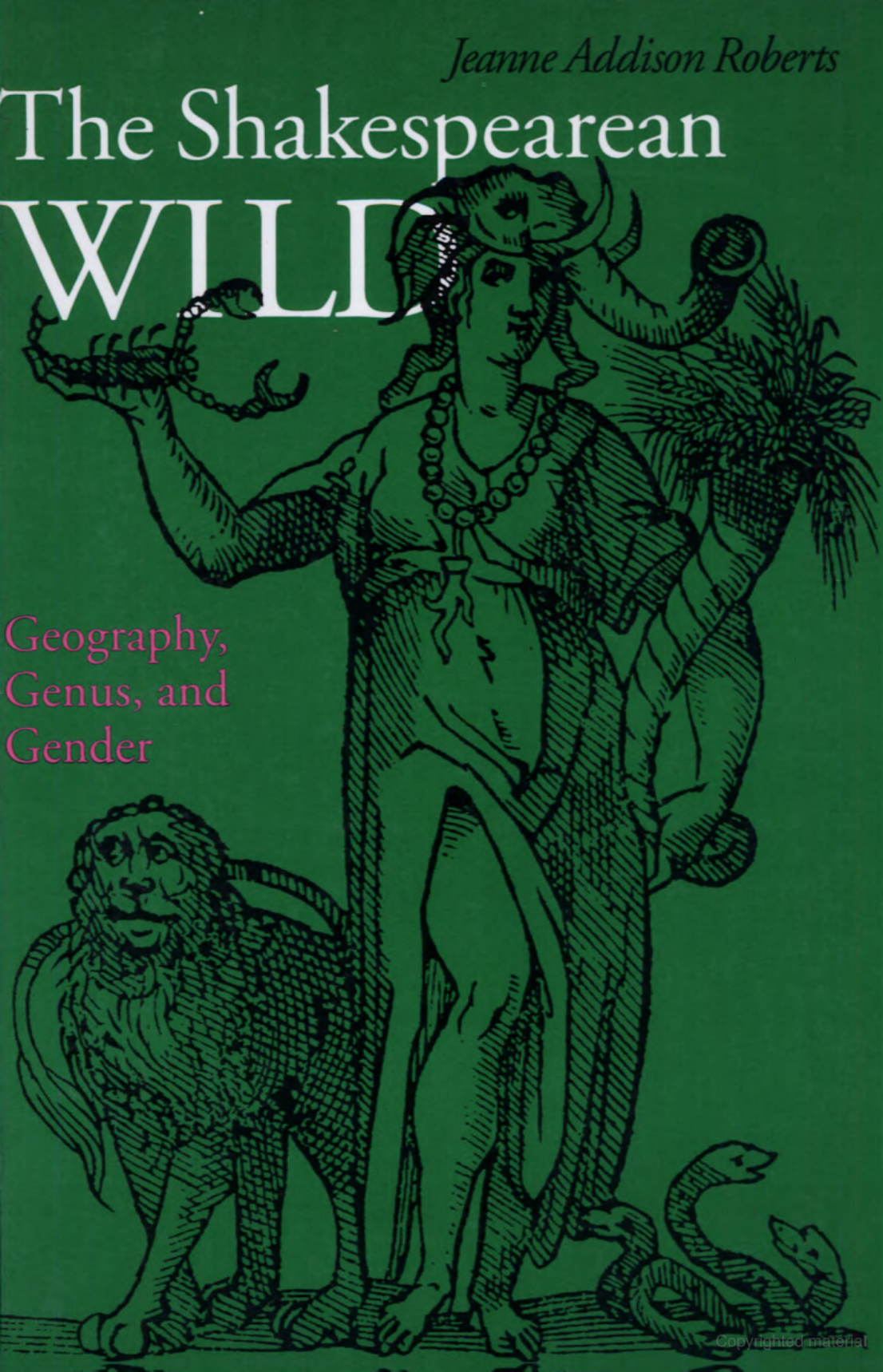
Jeanne Addison Roberts

The Shakespearean WILD

Geography, Genus, and Gender



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Introduction

A story told about Thales (and sometimes about Socrates) reports that he declared himself grateful to Fortune for three blessings: that he "was born a human being and not one of the brutes ... a man and not a woman ... a Greek and not a barbarian." (The very order is illuminating—women are above animals but below barbarians.) Page duBois, in discussing fifth-century B.C. Greek society, sees this statement as reflecting a paradigm of early Greek definition of culture. She concludes, "The other—alien, female, bestial—is excluded ... from culture and set at the boundaries of the city to define it as a circle of equals." Although she does not use the term, her picture evokes an image of the peripheral groups as inhabiting a Wild.[1] (I have capitalized the words *Culture* and *Wild* to emphasize the special sense in which I am using them.) Culture thus becomes identified with the central "equals," Greek male humans. DuBois further suggests that this model was threatened by the ambiguous position of women (excluded yet necessary), eroded by the Peloponnesian war, and supplanted by the Platonic/Aristotelian model of the "Great Chain of Being" (4–6). The picture imagined earlier, however, is a forerunner of some current anthropological models of societies and remains extremely useful in analyzing subsequent Western culture.

Shakespeare's England differs from fifth-century Greece in having a female ruler, in its somewhat more fluid boundaries between male and female, its rigidification of the human/animal hierarchy, and its multiplication of the varieties of potentially invasive "barbarians." Still, the Cultural center remained

male, and the rulers (in spite of the obvious exceptions), recorders, and interpreters of that Culture were and have continued to be overwhelmingly male. Forces outside that ethnic human male Cultural core were and have continued to be thought of as parts of the Wild.[2]

The Wild seems to be envisioned by Shakespeare as inhabited by strange and untamed creatures, fascinating and frightening, offering the lure of the hunt with the goal of capturing or killing the Wild's imagined denizens, but at the same time as providing a reservoir of necessary resources for the maintenance of Culture. Slaves, wives, and beasts of burden are to be drawn from the Wild. Shylock, Othello, women, and domesticated animals are incorporated into Shakespeare's Culture, but they never quite shed their foreignness or become totally trustworthy. Shylock is never more than marginal. Othello retains the taint of the "Old black ram"; the "woman's part" elicits both lust and revulsion; the "harmless" cat is tolerated as "necessary" but the dog is scorned as fawning and hypocritical; the monkey becomes the symbol of lust and the instrument of Jessica's betrayal of her semiacculturated father. Even when domesticated inhabitants are admitted provisionally into the bounds of Culture, their space becomes ghettoized, and the male seems to fear being engulfed by the requisite cohabitation. In his central Cultural position he preserves a fantasy of freedom in an idyllic male Wild which excludes intruders, except possibly as prey, and celebrates the pleasures of warfare as sustained and glorified by the complementary delights of male camaraderie and male rivalry. The male Wild offers escape from the complexities and confines of Culture. Sometimes it superimposes itself over a vision of the perils of the female Wild, erasing its unknown threats and ambiguities. Although Shakespeare reflects the traditional Culture/Wild distinctions, he also often proves gratifyingly capable of subverting and transcending them in ways I hope to demonstrate.

There have been several recent efforts to define and diagram the relation of male Culture to female Wild. I have used duBois, Sherry Ortner, and Edwin Ardener; but since none of their diagrams is wholly satisfactory, I have designed my own, more complex, model, which I will use in this work.

Page duBois suggests that Thales's imagination of the subject of *polis* Culture might be diagrammed as a circle of equals (Greek male humans) surrounded by "others" or the Wild (animal, barbarian, female) set at the boundaries as defining entities. But as duBois points out, this picture involves some ambiguities because females must at some point become, however briefly, part of

the *polis* (4–6). The same problem complicates Sherry Ortner's provocative argument (1973) that woman is to man as nature is to culture, an argument which, like duBois's, seems to imply separate spheres for male and female. These spheres might be diagrammed, simply but not wholly satisfactorily, as two discrete circles.[3]

Ortner later modified her argument to suggest that women are seen as *closer* to nature than men. She describes something like a diagram of the relationship: "We may envision culture ... as a small clearing within the forest of the larger natural system. From this point of view, that which is intermediate between culture and nature is located on the continuous periphery of culture's clearing; and though it may thus appear to stand both above and below (and beside) culture, it is simply outside and around it" (1974:85).

In reaction to Ortner, Edwin Ardener developed a modified diagram for society which shows overlapping rather than separate spheres for male and female ("Problem Revisited" 23).

Ardener explains that ABCD is an unbounded field, metaphorically the Wild, in which "circle *x*, *plus* the unshaded overlap of circle *y*, is the model of society where the male model is dominant." For men, the shaded portion of circle *y* is mysterious, identified with the Wild, whereas for women the crescent portion of circle *x* is a sort of ambiguous male Wild whose contents (modified) have become familiar through literature and legend. Ardener comments on the "fortuitous homology" between the purely ideational concept of Wild as a field against which "society" is defined and "that part of the actual territorial world which is not socially organized—the 'wild.' " He adds, "It is a mere confusion that [the 'wild'] may ... also be walkable into, and be found to contain sounding cataracts and unusual beasts" (23–24, 30). But such fortuitous homologies provide the very stuff of literature. Indeed, since the ideational is merely reflected in literary works as a construct of a literary imagination, the "walkable into" natural settings of drama are already metaphorical. I will suggest that ideational and metaphorical Wilds are inextricably linked and that in

Shakespeare the one frequently serves as a metaphorical exploration of the other. Wild forest, Wild animals, and Wild men and women provide insights into the structure of male Culture, which is defined and threatened by them.

Ardener's diagram is helpful in suggesting a model for the relationship between dominant and muted, male and female cultures, and in resolving the ambiguities of duBois's and Ortner's models by showing women both inside and outside Culture. And Ortner's geographical image is suggestive of my own approach. But neither picture is wholly satisfactory. They omit the animal and barbarian elements so important in Thales's self-definition, and they understate the complexity of Culture/Nature relationships.

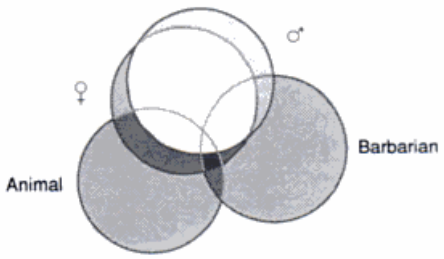
DuBois posits that Thales's world picture was superseded by the concept of the Great Chain of Being, a model with which virtually all students of the Renaissance have been indoctrinated as basic to their study. This design, which, as A. O. Lovejoy convinced us, was accepted "through the Middle Ages and down to the late eighteenth century," was based on a principle of unilinear gradation incorporating a chain "composed of ... an infinite number of links ranging in hierarchical order from the meagerest kind of existents ... to the highest possible kind of creature" (59). This diagrammatic picture is useful in its clear hierarchical structure and its inclusion of animals and barbarians, and admittedly the concept of the Chain is often helpful in Shakespeare. It seems to lie behind Luciana's moral injunctions to her sister in *The Comedy of Errors* (2.1.15–25), Kate's advice to women in *The Taming of the Shrew* (5.2.136–79), and, if ambiguously, behind Ulysses' famous speech on order in *Troilus and Cressida* (1.3.78–137). E. M. W. Tillyard made it one of the keystones of his influential, though currently unfashionable, *Elizabethan World Picture.*

Both the Chain and the World Picture are quintessentially male constructs, rooted in Aristotle, codifier of patriarchal theory, and committed to a Christian teleology, which often seems foreign to the more cyclically oriented female. Carol Gilligan has suggested that because of their early conditioning, men see the world in terms of ladders and naturally assume hierarchies, whereas women, shaped by different conditioning, are more likely to see (and be seen) in terms of nets or webs (62). Female readers, if they can be freed from immasculation, that is, the internalization of male values, may see patterns not readily apparent to the usual male.[4]

The patterns perceived by Lovejoy and Tillyard are indubitably there in Shakespeare's works; but because he was a creative artist and not a philosopher,

a poet of intense "negative capability," and, as we now see him, a man of profound ambivalences, there is much else there as well. Critics inevitably choose what they need. New Historicists and Cultural Materialists are right to reject the simplistic dependence on earlier paradigms. For feminists, too, those paradigms are of primarily negative value, illuminating by omission or by oblique reference the marginal, the partially repressed, the hidden premises, and the terrors of the texts. In their assumptions that Nature and order are coterminous, such systems seem to have tamed the Wild. But the untamed Wild is also there in Shakespeare's works, and I am concerned to discover and explicate it.

My own suggested model of the play worlds, an attempt to combine the male Cultural center with the Wilds of female, animal, barbarian, and even the semivisible male Wild modifies duBois with Ardener and incorporates some element of the hierarchy implied in the male view.



This model is intended to represent a male perspective and to be suggestive rather than precise. Its unshaded area is male-defined Culture. In its shaded portions it shows areas defined as Wild by a dominant white male Culture, indicating considerable overlap between male, female, and animal, and male, female, and barbarian. Female, animal, and barbarian all participate marginally in male Culture. The barbarian world partakes of both male and female Wilds in addition to its own; the animal world overlaps with the female Wild and also adds its own. The lightly shaded male Wild, impinging on but never coinciding with the female Wild, contains, as we have seen, imagery of male fantasies outside of the model of Culture but relatively accessible in male literature—images of warfare, male bonding, and the hunt.

Using this stylized diagram merely as a suggestive model, I will examine the frontiers of Culture in Shakespeare's works as they impinge on the three others identified by Thales: the female Wild, often associated with the malign and benign forces of the green world; the animal Wild, which offers, by contrast with Culture, the reassurance of special human status and, through its similarity

to Culture, the threat of loss of that status; and the barbarian Wild populated by marginal figures such as the Moor and the Jew as well as various hybrids. In each world are figures that threaten the clarity of Cultural definition but also provide visions of possible new modes of being. Because barbarian or outsider characters like Othello, Shylock, and Cleopatra have been treated insightfully and extensively in other works (especially those of Leslie Fiedler, Marilyn French, and Janet Adelman),[5] I have devoted little space to them here, focusing rather on the metaphorical language and stage imagery that reveal glimpses of worlds behind the overt stage world. Finally, I consider certain male and female characters as revealing projections of suppressed fears and fantasies which haunt the Cultural constructs of the male psyche. The males I have chosen to discuss represent, often almost schematically, such figures as lover, husband/cuckold, and father, negotiating between Culture and the various Wilds—particularly the female. The female figures are recurring archetypes—maid, wife, widow, or more mythically virgin, whore, and crone—which seem to personify both positive and negative poles of male stereotypes of women. I have limited my discussion to Shakespeare's comedies, tragedies, romances, and "Venus and Adonis" and have treated them very selectively. The effort to look with new eyes has frequently led me to focus on plays about which there is relatively little criticism and to pay proportionately less attention to much analyzed works.

The Wild in Shakespeare is associated with Amazons, Scythians, cannibals, and undomesticated animals. Unexplored continents provide mental images of untamed Wilds. Perhaps the most inclusive and evocative single image of the Shakespearean Wild is Africa, the dark continent, locus in the Renaissance mind of plenitude and undisciplined riot, of mystery and menace, the exotic and the erotic. It is the home of lions, tigers, elephants, apes and monkeys, and crocodiles. It fuels the passions of Othello and Cleopatra. Cesare Ripa's illustration (Fig. 1) is richly suggestive, with its black Venus portrayed against a natural landscape, a figure with provocatively bared leg, with elephant tusks on her head and a lion and three serpents at her feet, offering in one hand wheat sheaves and in the other a scorpion.[6] In Shakespeare, the imagined Africa is linked with all varieties of the Wild—barbarian, female, and animal. It produces the villainous Aaron the Moor of *Titus Andronicus*, the childlike Prince of Morocco, seduced by gold and happily banished by Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, the noble but ultimately savage Othello, and above all the fatally fascinating Cleopatra. Africa is the original home of the foul witch Sycorax of *The Tempest*

1. *Africa*. Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*. Rome, 1603, p. 337. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

and the site of the exile of Alonzo's daughter Claribel. Ethiope is a term of opprobrium, usually associated with women, as in *Love's Labor's Lost* (4.3.116), *As You Like It* (4.3.35), *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (2.6.26), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (5.4.38), and as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when Lysander scorns Hermia for her dark complexion (3.2.257). It becomes part of a figure of exotic beauty, however, as Romeo envisions Juliet hanging "upon the cheek of night / As a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear" (1.5.45–46). Africa is a rich repository of "golden joys" (*Henry IV, Part II*, 5.3.100), but it is clearly beyond the borders of male European Culture, and the points at which it impinges are points of potential conflict and danger, as in the opposition of Caesar's masculine Rome to Cleopatra's feminine Egypt.

America, with its more freshly evolved Renaissance traditions, similarly offers visions of a Wild female eroticism and plenitude combined with the fearful specter of cannibalism, danger, and death. Cesare Ripa suggests these qualities (Fig. 2) with his voluptuous seminude woman, depicted with a bow and arrow and the severed head of an enemy and a crocodile behind her feet. Ripa's representation of Nature (Fig. 3) is similarly ambivalent. Nature is depicted as a nude woman with swollen breasts flowing with milk, signifying nurture and abundance, but on her hand sits a vulture, suggesting the imminence of devouring death and reminding one of the cyclical pattern of Nature, which destroys as well as sustains corruptible bodies. As late as 1758–60 Johann Georg Hertel in his new edition of Ripa's *Iconologia* printed an illustration of "Earth" (Fig. 4) based on Ripa's 1603 description, which shows Earth's participation with Nature and fertility in her proximity to forest and waterfall. But in the background the Earth opens to swallow those who rebelled against Moses.

Such ambivalences are at home in drama. Its dialectical nature makes it a particularly useful forum for the exploration of such Cultural assumptions, uncertainties, and dilemmas as those set up by the Culture/Nature opposition; and Shakespeare constantly uses drama as such a forum. The most obvious vehicle of the dialectic is, of course, dialogue, with its potential for playing out the counterpoint of opposing ideas; but dramatic settings, characters, and metaphoric language offer subtler forms of multiple vision, serving, like dialogue, to counterpose conflicting values and to confirm or challenge traditional patterns. The dialectic between the fluid "picturing" of language and the embodied imagery of the stage is an important energizing force in drama, enabling it to adapt itself to generation after generation. Stage pictures pin

2. *America. Cesare Ripa, Iconologia.* Padua, 1611, p. 360. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

3. *Natura*. Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*. Padua, 1611, p. 374. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

4. *Earth. Cesare Ripa: Baroque and Rococo Imagery.* Ed. and trans. Edward A. Maser. New York: Dover, 1971. (Repr. of Johann Georg Hertel, *Historiae et Allegoria* . . . . Augsburg, [1758–60].)

down meaning, but verbal images, in their ability to excite multiple and disparate visions in different readers and auditors, maintain a power to generate new meanings. The interplay between the two kinds of imagery creates an unstable equilibrium between being and becoming which is unique to drama. Such power can be enlisted in the search for new dimensions of the human.

It is, I suspect, apparent from the above that my primary interest is in Shakespeare and women and in how the construction of Culture and Wild shapes our perceptions of females. There is, indeed, an underlying question: how can women learn to read the sacred literary texts by male authors without being either seduced into total acceptance of their world or so alienated as to reject their world altogether? This question has concerned feminist Shakespeareans intensely for the last fifteen years. Various approaches have been attempted with varying degrees of success. And serious questions impede our progress.

The first question, which may initially seem simple-minded, is, Can we define *women* in ways that do not reduce them to predictable and restrictive Cultural traditions? The very term *female perspective* is suspect, as is the idea that women read as a group. Various important modern critics, beginning most notably with Simone de Beauvoir, have argued vigorously and persuasively against such essentialist theories of femininity.[7] Later critics have posited that binary oppositions such as male/female always serve the purposes of hierarchy and that, by accepting patriarchal definitions of women as "other," women become instruments of patriarchal power. Michel Foucault has contended that the obsessive modern discourse on sexual roles and differences is a relatively recent development dating from the seventeenth century and that we need to learn to free ourselves of such "disciplining" distinctions to establish or reestablish a heterogeneous liberation that will permit the arrival of that "day, perhaps, in a different economy of bodies and pleasures [when] people will no longer quite understand how the ruses of sexuality, and the power that sustains its organization, were able to subject us to that austere monarchy of sex" (*Sexuality* 159).

I am sympathetic to this antiessentialist position, and I can imagine progress toward achieving its goals. I have nonetheless chosen in this work to adopt the views of Nancy Chodorow and Dorothy Dinnerstein that Western patriarchal society—itself a Cultural construct, but a long-standing one—and especially the patriarchal family have fostered certain predictable patterns of male and female identity. My definition of female is thus based on the admittedly simplistic but ubiquitous distinction of genders according to reproductive

function and on the assumption that this distinction was as powerful in Shakespeare's day as in our own. The study of male writers may always entail such dichotomies. I also posit the even more controversial premise that we can begin to analyze these patterns, regularly depicted in traditional literature from a male point of view, from a female perspective which observes from a position primarily outside the cultural center. Because of centuries of conditioning, this is, of course, extremely difficult, perhaps impossible; but the hope is that the resistance to male stereotypes and a gradually increasing awareness of female potentialities, combined with the self-conscious development of alternative values, may serve to open new vistas.

In attempting to develop a female perspective on Shakespearean drama, we must address a second important question: were there any women on the Shakespearean stage? Some modern critics have paid particular attention to the impact of boy actors in "female" roles. Lisa Jardine concludes of boys playing "women" such as Julia, Portia, and Rosalind that "these figures are sexually exciting *qua* transvestied [sic] boys, and that the plays encourage the [presumably male] audience to think of them as such." She adds that they "reveal nothing of 'real' womanly feelings" (29, 33). Stephen Orgel has similarly emphasized the erotic appeal to the men in the audience of boy actors in female roles ("Nobody's Perfect").

In line with Foucault's premises, Stephen Greenblatt has approached the question of boy actors from a somewhat different angle. Basing his hypothesis on Renaissance theories that women are unfinished men and that thus "there are not two radically different sexual structures but only one—outward and visible in the man, inverted and hidden in the woman," Greenblatt develops the idea that "Shakespearean women are ... the representation of Shakespearean men, the projected mirror images of masculine self-differentiation." He goes on to elaborate: "Men love women precisely *as representations*, a love the original performances of these plays literalized in the person of the boy actor. . . . We have a theater that reveals, in the presence of the man's (or boy's) body beneath the woman's clothes, a different sexual reality. The open secret of identity—that within differentiated individuals is a single structure, identifiably male—is presented literally in the all-male cast" (77, 92, 93).

Jardine, Orgel, and Greenblatt all suggest, then, that the primary identity of Shakespearean "women" is male and that their appeal is as males to males, although Greenblatt acknowledges "the fictive existence of two genders and

the [importance of] friction between them." I do not deny the possibility, even the probability of transvestite eroticism on Shakespeare's stage, but surely the artist's imagination of females—witches, wives, and crones as well as romantic heroines—has some further dimensions, a basic element of otherness stronger perhaps than any sense of similarity. I argue that Shakespeare's women are neither male nor female but may be understood as projections of male fantasies of the Wild female other. Animals and barbarians are similarly constructed in ways that serve the needs of patriarchal Culture. Attempting to see these figures from a perspective that acknowledges this premise can be illuminating to both male and female audiences.

In a curious way Greenblatt's analysis of a form of Renaissance essentialism that denies distinct genders conforms to the long tradition of Shakespeare criticism before the last decade. Neoclassical, romantic, and Victorian critics regularly celebrated Shakespeare's astonishing representations of "universal human" values, and it has only very gradually become apparent that those "universal" values were axiomatically male values. Only very recently in feminist literary criticism have women begun to extricate themselves from the spell of that vision.

Feminist literary criticism has flourished most notably and perhaps most easily in dealing with works by women, especially those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when an emerging feminist consciousness often began to free itself from "immasculation," that internalization of patriarchal values that marks much women's writing of earlier periods.[8] Modern feminist critics working in the Renaissance, also concerned with writing by women, have opened up new windows on the period by rediscovering previously forgotten works by women and by writing about the lives, education, influence, and perceptions of women.[9] But all students of the Renaissance return repeatedly and inevitably to the work of the white male writers who have constituted the canon enshrined in the Western Cultural heritage and in our educational bastions.

The work of Shakespeare in particular is the perennial mystery that feminist Renaissance scholars have circled and recircled in the attempt to find insights useful to the feminist enterprise. They have tried to analyze the degree of his affiliation to patriarchy, his attitude toward women and his uses of them as characters, his psychological conditioning, and his relationship as a male to his historic moment. Probably all feminist critics, but indubitably all of a certain

age, are hampered in their efforts by the immasculation ensured by readings of Shakespeare shaped by generations of male critics, male teachers, and patriarchal values. Obviously, critical generations change, as the history of Shakespeare criticism abundantly attests, but historically the changes have offered few occasions for women to formulate unmediated critical responses or at least to achieve the freshly imagined engagement that feminist critics are currently attempting. We are in the process of trying to reimagine Shakespeare even as we work at the larger enterprises of rewriting the Renaissance, reshaping family life, and restructuring political and economic realities. I should like to emphasize that reimagining Shakespeare does not necessarily mean rejecting him. On the contrary, he remains for many of us our most valuable and varied resource.

Reimagining Shakespeare has taken different directions. There have been attempts with varying success to claim Shakespeare as a proto-feminist,[10] to highlight and critique the formation in the plays of male identity,[11] to focus narrowly and specifically on women characters,[12] and to analyze the relation of gender to genre.[13] Most feminist studies retain some sense of the value of Shakespeare as a consummate artist, but a few seem to conclude that feminists must jettison him altogether.[14]

In this book my interests are closest perhaps to those of the critics who have studied the patterns of male identity. I approach the works of Shakespeare by taking as given the assumption that they are products of male imagination, centered in a male-defined conception of Culture, and that they record overtly and subliminally confrontations with the surrounding Nature or Wild, conceived as the world of females, animals, and barbarians. My study includes consideration of the lures and primordial memories of the Wild, as well as of its terrors and threats to Cultural boundaries. Although this is not primarily a historical study, I have used illustrations available to Shakespeare's period with the belief that they not only illuminate Shakespeare but also force a recognition of assumptions and connotations that are still operative.

My purpose, then, is to explore some of the areas of the Wild as they are represented by Shakespeare and in particular to examine them as projections of male vision. *Male vision* is, of course, like *female vision*, a term fraught with problems. That the central Cultural vision of Shakespeare's works is that of a white (as opposed to barbarian) male human (as opposed to animal) of Renaissance England is, on one level, self-evident, but questions immediately arise from the premise. Can males be lumped together any more than females? Is

Shakespeare a typical white male? To what extent does he represent Renaissance England? Rather than attempt to answer these probably unanswerable questions, I am consciously opting for a simplistic generalization that depends on a belief that there has been a historical continuity of male values dating from classical times and still dominant in our culture. My hope is to help in the process of exposing, appraising, and changing responses to Shakespeare based on those values—responses that have prevailed for so long that they have come to seem universal.

The human essentialism that celebrates universal values has been a powerful force in past Shakespeare criticism. It enabled Darwinians to deal comparatively easily with received notions of the Great Chain of Being[15] and has helped even non-English audiences at least vaguely cognizant of Shakespeare's ethnocentrism and chronological and geographical locus to demonstrate remarkable facility in accepting and exploiting the poet's depictions of foreigners, outsiders, and barbarians. In spite of its historical eminence and traditional usefulness, however, I believe that women readers and audiences of Shakespeare must now try to extricate themselves from traditional patriarchal modes and develop their own values in responding to the plays. I recognize that my argument substitutes a kind of male/female essentialism for human essentialism, but it seems a justifiable risk.

Although the patriarchal system has shaped Western Culture for millennia, feminists, most recently Gerda Lerner in her landmark work *The Creation of Patriarchy*, have persuasively argued that it is a historic construct, not rooted in some mysterious "human nature," and is neither necessarily universal nor unalterable.[16] Indeed, it is the goal of the feminist enterprise to rethink this history, to imagine a world in which women are central, and ultimately to alter the patriarchal system.

This system has traditionally, even in disparate circumstances, shaped male and female development in different ways. Modern feminist theorists such as Nancy Chodorow and Dorothy Dinnerstein, modifying Freud, have argued that basic male/female differences are generated in Western societies by the universal practice of early child nurture by women—mothers and others—and the more distant authority of fathers and other male presences.[17] Infants' experience of union with a benign and seemingly powerful female is followed by divergent experiences for males and females in relating to this primary attachment—experiences that cultivate in the male an independent spirit and residual

contempt for and fear of the female, whereas for females a less violent separation encourages powers of relationship, tainted nonetheless by contempt for females and a conviction of their own inferiority. Although it is doubtless possible to imagine exceptions to these patterns, and although later development obviously complicates and modifies early experiences, these theories seem to me to provide a credible explanation for observed phenomena. The theories illuminate the effects if not the origins of patriarchy and help to show why the Western patriarchal tradition has tended to identify Culture as male. Historically conditioned as it is, the tradition dominates all of Western written history. My intention in this work is to listen to the most powerful English voice in this tradition with a new ear—to chart some of the characteristics of his visions of Culture and hear clues to the characteristics of the suppressed Wild, both what it contains and what it is imagined to contain.

The following pages, then, reveal a search for clues in Shakespeare to the imagination of human Culture: the use of landscape, animal forms, hybrids, and human figures—male and female—reflections of the Wild that define the Cultured by their difference. What I hope will emerge is some small progress toward a new understanding of how male psychological development conditions worldviews, how traditional intellectual concepts may change, and how psychological dimensions, personified in stage characters, may play out recurring male visions of gender. In Shakespeare these visions are sometimes evoked and abandoned, frequently in process of evolution, occasionally progressive throughout the works, often expressive of the unique play worlds of the works in which they appear. I am concerned to acknowledge and delineate male-centeredness but also to discover how the plays may variously engage both male and female audiences.

Chapter 1 deals with Natural landscapes. *Titus Andronicus* and *Venus and Adonis*, both early works, play out the association of the female with the forest, revealing a barely repressed fear of and revulsion to the mysterious "other" and emphasizing the importance of male Culture and male rivalry over erotic attraction. Later plays, beginning with *As You Like It*, show increasing demystification of the forest Wild and increasing certainty of the primacy of male Culture, while continuing to focus more on male preoccupations than on relations with the female. In this chapter I focus strongly on early works, in which the forest Wild seems central and actively operant, and skim lightly over later plays that banish or suppress the Wild landscape. I believe that this shift in geographical emphasis is the result of a shift in the central concern of the

works. Whereas the early plays deal with the mating of young lovers—the male's foray into the mysterious female forest—the later plays focus on the problems generated by having incorporated Wild creatures uneasily into Culture. Once the male is enmeshed with the precariously "domesticated" Wild, emphasis shifts toward fears of unbridled lust, infidelity, infertility, entrapment, intractable virginity, incest, and, above all, the menace of women who are not primarily sex objects but cronelike reminders of death (witches, Lady Macbeth, Goneril and Regan, Volumnia, Cymbeline's Queen, Paulina, and Sycorax). The Wild landscape of the later plays is not the fertile forest but the sterile heath, the isolated island, the foreign outpost, the treacherous sea, or the rocky "desert" place. Some of the struggles of these plays are treated in later chapters.

Modern scholars have demonstrated the progressive constriction of female roles in society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, paralleling this development with the rise of Puritanism, the decline of Catholic hegemony, and the growing domination of Nature. Some have also linked these developments with an accelerated revulsion from and fear of women, manifested most flagrantly in widespread witch burnings.[18] Shakespeare's evolution in depicting male control of Nature and women seems to parallel what was actually happening in seventeenth-century society. In this regard he is a man of his time, but the disappearance of the Wild forest seems to signal in Shakespeare the suppression rather than the defeat of the formidable forces of the Wild.

Chapter 2 explores Shakespeare's use of animals in ways both conventional and innovative. Although women are not central in this chapter, their pervasive association with animals makes them constantly relevant. I deal here particularly with plays that feature a heavy concentration of animal figures, references, and images. I show how the conventional animals of *The Taming of the Shrew* are used unexpectedly to express character transformations and to provide an original and ingenious early variation on the expected pattern of strict hierarchy. I also show how animal markers such as snakes and lions occur at transitional points of plays and seem to facilitate evolving visions, sometimes bridging boundaries of Culture and Wild. The chapter traces the abandonment of the comic alazon, defined by Northrop Frye as "someone who pretends or tries to be something more than he is" (*Anatomy* 39). This figure is personified in such man/animal hybrids as Bottom and the Falstaff of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, but the alazon vanishes when he begins to seem too threatening to be funny. The chapter also examines both the erotic and the violent suggestiveness of the love hunt.

The erosion of man/animal, male/female, and male/barbarian boundaries through hybrid metaphors in such plays as *Troilus and Cressida* and *Timon of Athens* prepares for the terrifying collapse of man/animal boundaries that leads to the descent into madness in *King Lear* and to the horizontalizing of the vertical Chain of Being in *King Lear* and the later plays. Considerable evidence in other Renaissance works points to a parallel weakening of the chain image in other writers so that again Shakespeare's evolution seems to echo what was happening in Renaissance thought, although it runs counter to the trend toward male domination of female Nature outlined in Chapter 1.[19] Animals and barbarians encroach on male Culture even as it moves to confine the female. In this chapter I deal particularly with plays that feature a heavy concentration of animal figures, references, and images.

Finally, in Chapter 3 I take up depictions of the problems of males in confronting the female Wild, not primarily epitomized by landscape or entangled with animals but embodied by female figures themselves. These problems are expressed in schematic representations of both males and females. Embodiments of the conflicting aspects of the maturing male as he attempts to preserve Culture while he encompasses the necessary female Wild are presented in especially interesting ways in *The Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Two Noble Kinsmen*. *The Comedy of Errors* shows the effort to harmonize male lover with husband. In *Much Ado* Benedick labors to integrate his scattered "five wits" and to overcome the fear of cuckoldry which seems to loom so large in male Culture, while Palamon, Arcite, and Theseus of *Two Noble Kinsmen* play out in graphic detail components of male struggle for mastery of the female. The Wild that is tamed in that play is in the male imagination of the mysterious and threatening region of male-female unions.

In the last section of this chapter, I focus on the imagined female, both as Shakespeare's characters reveal her and as the plays preserve traces of the archaic memory of the Triple Hecate. The clichés of virgin, whore, and crone as male images of the female are pervasive throughout Shakespeare, but three plays interest me particularly as early and late studies. The early *Comedy of Errors* depicts these clichés with curious flatness and almost archetypical clarity. The ending brings them together in a very uneasy union. *All's Well That Ends Well* recapitulates the struggle—again with a less than wholly satisfactory conclusion. The late romance *The Winter's Tale* addresses the problems yet again in a final scene strikingly similar to that of *The Comedy of Errors*; but in this play

"Roberts's criticism reflects important changes in twentieth-century approaches to Shakespeare. [She] explores Shakespeare's work as the product of a 'Culture' defined by white, Christian, European males, one that places other men, women, and animals in 'the Wild' and considers them mysterious outsiders. Using magnificent illustrations from emblem books, Roberts shows that Culture displaces its unacknowledged desires and anxieties, all that fascinates and frightens, onto this Wild . . . [an] enthralling book . . . enjoyable and richly rewarding."—*Shakespeare Quarterly*

"A lively, witty essay on Shakespeare and Renaissance culture. . . . While its thesis definitely places it into the Anglo-American feminist camp, the otherwise committed may avail themselves of rich, insightful readings of mythological allusions and generic modulations in Shakespeare's works."—*Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature*

The Shakespearean Wild brims with mystery and menace, the exotic and erotic; with male and female archetypes, projections of suppressed fears and fantasies. The reader will see how the male vision of culture—exemplified in Shakespeare's work—has reduced, distorted, and oversimplified the potentiality of women.

Jeanne Addison Roberts, a professor of literature at American University, is the author of *Shakespeare's English Comedy: "The Merry Wives of Windsor" in Context* (Nebraska 1979).

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