

**November 28.** Lecture on "Shakespeare's Marian Heroines" for Angel Foundation  
Pattern in Shakespeare's Carpet – hinted at by Henry James, TS Eliot,

but not developed by them, as neither of them committed to Catholic recusancy,  
based on Hippolyta's "growth to something of great constancy" (MD v.1)

Newman's "convergence of independent probabilities" (*Grammar of Assent*)

Chesterton's "by every sort of convergent common sense" (*Chaucer*)

Not only revealed in terms of triplets, joyful, sorrowful, glorious mysteries of Rosary  
according to comedies, tragedies, tragi-comedies – omitting histories (First Folio).

But also in terms of themes – pilgrimages, friars, liturgy, prayers, grace  
centring on devotion to Mary, rejected by Protestants as "Mariolatry"

contrast between Virgin Mary and Virgin Queen Elizabeth.

Going back to three early comedies (CE, TGV, LLL)

CE Antipholus S to Luciana, "Less in your knowledge and your **grace** you show not/  
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth, divine". TGV Proteus, Song to Silvia,

Who is Silvia? What is she/ That all our swains commend her?/ Holy, fair, and wise  
is she,/ The heaven such **grace** did lend her/ That she might admired be." LLL,

Boyet to Princess of France, "Be now as prodigal of dear **grace**/ As Nature was in  
making **graces** dear." Cf. Mary as *Mater Gratiae, Sedes Sapientiae*.

Then to RJ alone of three plays of 1595 (omitting MD and R2)

Romeo on Juliet, "She whom I love now/ Doth **grace** for **grace** and love for love allow"

Cf. John i. "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Juliet shows  
The divinity of her love as *agape*, My bounty is as boundless as the sea." (not *eros*).

Among mature comedies with odd names (MA, AL, TN) only two (MA, AL)

MA Benedick, "Till all **graces** be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my  
**grace**", tricked into love for Beatrice (as in Dante), AL Orlando's poems on trees  
about Rosalind, "Therefore Heaven Nature charged/ That one body should be filled/  
With all **graces** wide enlarged." – looking forward to T Ferdinand on Miranda.

Adding MV Portia seen in terms not of grace but of mercy, "The quality of mercy..."

looking forward to MM Isabella in early Jacobean age, "No ceremony that to great  
ones 'longs.../ Become them with one half so good a grace/ As mercy does."

Cf. Mary as *Mater Misericordiae (Salve Regina)*

But sudden shock with H, "Frailty, thy name is Woman!" and TC (Cressida).

Then in Jacobean age, pattern becomes clearer with ideal heroines in Passion plays

Esp. Desdemona, seen by Cassio as "divine", hailed with Angelic Salutation (Luke i)

"Hail to thee, lady, and the **grace** of heaven,/ Before, behind thee, and on every hand/  
Enwheel thee round", Interceding for Cassio, as praised by Iago (if in temptation)

"She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in Her goodness not to do more than she is requested." Cf. *Memorare* of St Bernard.  
 Her apology to Cassio, "My advocacy is not now in tune." Cf. *Advocata* in *Salve*.  
 Cordelia in KL, rather Christ-figure than Mary-figure, as when welcomed by France,  
 "Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor,/ Most choice, forsaken, and most loved, despised." And in death at end, with dead body held by sorrowing Lear as in *Pieta*. But on her return home, "She shook/ The holy water from her heavenly eyes".  
 Instead of heroine in M, as Lady M is villain, three kings share description of grace,  
 Duncan as "**gracious** Duncan", Edward "full of **grace**", Malcolm, "by **grace** of **Grace**"  
 By the side of MM as "problem comedy" AW Helena as miracle-worker and pilgrim,  
 She heals King of France with remedy from father, attributed to "the greatest **Grace** lending **grace**". She goes as pilgrim after her prodigal husband the Count,  
 assisted by Countess, "He cannot thrive/ Unless her prayers, whom heaven delights to hear/ And loves to grant, reprieve him from the wrath/ Of greatest justice."  
 Then there follows a gap with Roman plays, from JC to AC and Cor, plus TAthens  
 Ended by 3/4 tragi-comedies (Per. Cym. WT, and then T)

Sh takes over from George Wilkins in 1608, popular play in printed quartos,  
 but rejected by editors of First Folio, presented with KL for recusants in 1610  
 Per. ideal heroine in Marina (born at sea, Cf. *Stella Maris*, Star of the Sea).  
 After long separation from sorrowing father, reunited at Mitylene, on ship,  
 "Thou that begett'st him that did thee beget" (by restoring him to life)  
 Cf. *Tu quae genuisti tuum sanctum genitorem*, from *Alma Redemptoris Mater*.  
 Cym. Ideal heroine in Imogen, characterized by prayer, rather than grace,  
 Praying for Posthumus morn, noon and midnight – hours of the *Angelus*  
 before going to bed, "To your protection I commend me, gods"  
 Cf hymn for Compline, "*Te lucis ante terminum rerum Creator poscimus.*"  
 called "divine", "angel".

WT Queen of Leontes, "the **gracious** Hermione", daughter Perdita (*gratia*)  
 Time (after 16 years), "Perdita, now grown in **grace**/ Equal with wondering."  
 Difference between above tragi-comedies and T where no separation  
 Miranda, ideal heroine, always with father Prospero in land of exile,  
 Name combining two titles of Mary as Virgin Mother in Litany of Loreto,  
*Mater Admirabilis* and *Virgo Veneranda*, echoed by lover Prince Ferdinand,  
 "Admired Miranda!/ Indeed, the top of admiration, worth/ What's dearest  
 To the world./... But you, O you!/ So perfect and so peerless, are created/  
 Of every creature's best." (recalling Benedick in MA, Orlando in AL)