THE MORAL UNIVERSE OF ALEXANDRE HARDY'S TRAGEDIES

by

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ABSTRACT

The object of the present study is to analyse and interpret Hardy's achievement in the field of tragedy. Critics have generally recognised the importance of his vast output of plays in the development of French drama in the seventeenth century, while denigrating the literary merit of his works. The only full-scale study of this dramatist, Rigal's *Alexandre Hardy et le théâtre français à la fin du XVIe siècle et au commencement du XVIIe siècle*, is devoted largely to a consideration of his life and of theatrical conditions at this time, to a comparison of his plays with those of his precursors and followers, and to an examination of source material. The present study compares the plays one with another to determine what features they have in common, attempting to arrive thereby at Hardy's conception of the structure and function of tragedy. The text followed is that of Stengel's re-edition. The plays are analysed under the headings of plot and action, theme, and character.

The first chapter studies Hardy's use of stage spectacle, presented action and reported action, and shows that, contrary to popular misconception, he does not indulge in gratuitous or excessive horror and violence on the stage. Rather he presents a situation in which the tragic hero is offered a choice of courses of action, the outcome of which will be fortunate or unfortunate according to the course chosen. The typical pattern of the action of a tragedy by Hardy is, therefore, a rising and falling, or falling and rising motion about a central
scene of conflict. Sometimes this pattern is seen in the life of a single hero, sometimes the contrasting fortunes of two characters are presented.

In the second chapter the moral principles of the protagonists are examined to determine the basic theme of the tragedies, which is found to be broadly political. Hardy presents a number of types of king, ranging from the tyrant to the perfect monarch, and renders this traditional ideological contrast in a series of discussions of the problems of kingship arising from a particular dramatic situation. Justice, clemency, the rule of law and service to the state are the guiding principles of the good king. A second, and more original aspect of this political theme, that of legitimacy and the right of conquest, is found in some of the tragedies.

The third chapter shows that Hardy presents dynamic heroes who strive to attain an ideal of personal gloire. Some heroes fail to arrive at this ideal because they succumb to their passions at a crucial moment; others acquire personal fulfilment only to become aware of a greater sense of service to others. A moral dilemma arises from the conflict between the ideal of personal honour and that of the king's duty to the state. The latter is achieved only by self-abnegation, and one may establish a hierarchy of heroes, ranging from Hérode, in whom subjection to the passions leads to destruction of the personality, to Cirus, the embodiment of self-sufficiency.

In the conclusion to this study the moral framework of Hardy's tragedies is shown to lie in the self-sufficiency and
will to perfection of the hero who recognises only honour and justice as immutable principles external to himself. It is a conception of tragedy which includes not only degradation and despair, but also optimism and the exaltation of the human spirit.

Plot summaries of Hardy's ten tragedies are given in an appendix.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER ONE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Technique</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER TWO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme: Kingship</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER THREE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character: The Hierarchy of Heroes</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The name of Alexandre Hardy is known to every student of French drama in the early seventeenth century. Critics usually refer to his prolific output of tragedies, comedies, tragi-comedies and pastorals, the forms which, during the second half of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the seventeenth, gradually established themselves as the major genres, and which were modelled on what the writers of the period understood to be the classical forms of drama. The critics speak of Hardy's dramatic sense, of his ability to present spectacle on stage, and of his archaic language and awkward style. At this point they generally abandon consideration of his plays. Indeed, when one learns that Hardy "was without genius, taste, or style"\(^1\), or that he was an "auteur très fécond, mais illisible"\(^2\), one is inclined not to read any further. Yet his nineteenth-century editor, Stengel, saw in him a direct precursor of Corneille\(^3\),


\(^3\) "Unmittelbare Vorläufer"; see title page of Stengel's re-edition: *Le Théâtre d'Alexandre Hardy*. 5 vols. (Marburg, 1884). This is the edition cited in the following pages. In quoting from Hardy's plays, I shall follow the example set by Rigal of modernising and standardising the spelling as far as this is possible. The text of Stengel's re-edition reproduces the errors present in the original edition, and Rigal takes him to task for this procedure. "C'est là le seul point sur lequel nous aurions envie de chicaner le savant et consciencieux éditeur. Pourquoi reproduire jusqu'aux fautes mêmes du texte
while Rigal, the most important critic of Hardy's work, claims that: "Hardy est le point de départ unique de tout le mouvement qui a suivi. Le théâtre du Moyen Âge étant oublié, la tragédie savante du XVIe siècle ne l'étant guère moins, c'est de Hardy qu'on paru partir les deux courants -- classique et ir régulier -- entre lesquels allait se diviser la littérature dramatique. Certes, lui-même est inexplicable pour qui ne connaît pas l'histoire antérieure de notre théâtre; mais enfin lui-même étant donné, il suffit à en expliquer l'histoire postérieure". 

Clearly, if Hardy played such an important role in the evolution of French drama as Stengel and Rigal imply, he should have received more critical attention than he has. In fact not one major study of Hardy's theatre has been published in the last eighty years. One possible explanation is that Rigal's thesis is sufficiently definitive as to discourage further examination.

de Hardy? Ce texte est-il si précieux? Et croit-on Hardy si agréable à lire qu'on puisse impunément soumettre à d'inutiles épreuves les curieux qui en entreprennent la lecture?" ("Le théâtre d'Alexandre Hardy. Corrections à la réimpression Stengel et au texte original," Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur 13 [1891], 204.) Hardy himself had some remarks to make on this subject. The first three volumes of his Théâtre were published in Paris by Jacques Quesnel, but he committed the preparation of the fourth volume to David du Petit Val in Rouen, "vu que les précédents me font rougir de la honte des imprimeurs, auxquels l'avarice fit trahir ma réputation, étant si pleins de fautes, tant à l'orthographe qu'aux vers, que je voudrais de bon cœur effacer jusques à la mémoire". (Théâtre, IV, 4).

of the plays of an admittedly minor dramatist. Modern theories of criticism advise us to beware, however, of the term definitive, and indeed, when we consider the aim and scope of Rigal's study, we realise that it presents more a personal theory of the development of the French drama in the early years of the seventeenth century and Hardy's place in this movement, than an examination of the plays themselves.

To say that is not in any way to denigrate Rigal's work. It remains the essential study of Hardy's theatre, and has not been superseded. In an indirect sense it was epoch-making, for it was largely in an attempt to refute Rigal's exaggerated claims on Hardy's behalf that Lanson pursued his own research into the history of Renaissance and early seventeenth-century drama which enabled him to establish that Hardy was by no means the only active dramatist at this period. In fact, Hardy "n'est pas celui qui fait de la tragédie un spectacle populaire. ... Hardy n'eut de ce côté aucune initiative à prendre. Il fit, -- plus brillamment, si l'on veut, -- ce que l'on faisait avant lui". It is tempting to speculate that Lanson's efforts to counter Rigal's thesis led the great critic to formulate his own masterly Esquisse d'une histoire de la tragédie française (New York, 1920). Lancaster follows the same line of approach

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5 Gustave Lanson, "Études sur les origines de la tragédie classique en France. Comment s'est opérée la substitution de la tragédie aux mystères et moralités," Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France 10 (1903), 435.
when he suggests that "the French classical tragedy might have developed as it did, had Hardy never existed. ... The fact is that Hardy's contribution to the evolution of tragedy was important, but it is a mistake to suppose that he was the only link between the type of tragedy that flourished in the sixteenth century and that which was produced by Corneille and his contemporaries". As for recent biographical studies, an examination of seventeenth-century archives, business agreements, bills of sale, marriage contracts and the like, has enabled Mme Deierkauf-Holsboer to write a "Vie d'Alexandre Hardy"; but in truth her article tells us more about the hardships of a particular troupe of actors and the material conditions of the French theatre at this period than it does about the career of the dramatist. Perhaps the most important conclusion to be drawn from her study is that between 1612 and 1622 Hardy was absent from Paris, and that it was during this time that the genres which dramatists were trying to establish (tragedy, comedy, tragi-comedy and pastoral) finally found favour with audiences in the capital, apparently without assistance from Hardy.


It is clear that the critics referred to have been concerned more with the history of the French theatre in the seventeenth century and with Hardy's place in it than with an examination of his plays themselves. Rigal does, admittedly, study the plays, and his analyses remain interesting to read and important. However, to the modern scholar they are unsatisfactory from two points of view. First, they tend to be too personal in that Rigal stresses certain scenes or aspects of the plays (usually the pathetic or scabrous ones) while skimming over or even ignoring others which he does not find so moving or so morally shocking. Secondly, he uses a comparative approach in evaluating Hardy's plays in relation to his source material and to the work of the dramatists who preceded or followed him, and who treated the same subject. Thus he compares Hardy's *Didon se sacrifiant* with Jodelle's dramatisation of the same subject, and Hardy's *Mariamne* with Tristan's play of the same name. This approach, at once comparative and historical, has led several critics to consider aspects of Hardy's plays in relation to those of other dramatists. As early as 1890, Jules Béraneck was comparing Hardy and Seneca, claiming that the Latin dramatist provided Hardy with a source of dramatic situations and a model of dramatic techniques. There have as well been studies of Cervantes' influence on Hardy, of Hardy's influence on Corneille,

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of Hardy's place in the development of pastoral drama and of the tragi-comedy\(^9\). The historical method employed by Rigal and the other critics is not, of course, without value, and a knowledge of the history of the development of French drama during this period is essential to any understanding and appreciation of Hardy's tragedies.

Hardy, unlike the majority of his contemporary playwrights, was closely involved with the theatre over a period of more than thirty years. Born about 1570\(^10\), he was presumably a native of Paris because he applies the epithet "Parisien" to himself on the title pages of the volumes of his published plays, and it is thought that he was the son of quite well-to-do and important bourgeois parents. His strong grasp of the classics is probably evidence of a solid education. He seems to have begun writing plays between 1590 and 1595, though why he chose to make a career of this activity is not clear. It is certain that he acted in as well as wrote plays, and that he became the poète à gages of a troupe of actors led by Valleran le Conte. This was in 1598, so that Hardy may be called the first professional

\(^9\) These works are listed in the bibliography.

\(^{10}\) The brief biographical sketch given here is based on Mme Deierkauf-Holsboer's reconstruction of Hardy's life, but we should note the amount of supposition compared with the small number of facts for which there is documentary evidence.
playwright of the French theatre. Valleran le Conte was the leader of one of the *troupes errantes* which toured France at this time, there being no established theatre in any of the major cities. He seems to have attempted twice to set up a permanent company in Paris, first between 1598 and 1600, and again between 1606 and 1612; Hardy was presumably with the company in the capital during these periods. Financial difficulties forced the troupe to take to the road again in 1612, and it seems to have been absent from Paris for ten years. During this time Valleran le Conte died, and Pierre le Messier, dit Bellerose, took over the leadership of the troupe. Alexandre Hardy continued, as *poète à gages*, to furnish the actors with plays. It is known that he was with the troupe in Marseilles in 1620; presumably he accompanied the actors when they returned to Paris, probably in 1622. At this time the position of permanent playwright to a company of actors was at best precarious. He was paid a certain sum for each play he wrote, and the play then became the property of the troupe, the author having no further claim on it. Thus it happened that Hardy was involved in complicated legal wrangling with Bellerose when the dramatist decided he wanted to publish his plays. He finally managed to persuade the actor-director to allow him to publish some of them, presumably those no longer in the repertory, and he may have written others especially for publication. However that may be, in 1623 appeared the cycle of eight tragi-comedies which make up *Théagène et Chariclée*, and between 1624 and 1628 the
five volumes of his *Théâtre* were published. The troupe of Bellerose left Paris again in 1626, and Hardy offered his services to the troupe of Claude Deschamps, sieur de Villiers, who in 1627 accepted him as *poète à gages*, under contract to write six plays a year for six years. It is possible that *Les Ramonneurs*, a prose comedy preserved in manuscript and published recently by Austin Gill, is one of the plays written by Hardy for Villiers. The following year saw the exchange of polemics between Hardy and two young poets, Jean Auvray and Pierre du Ryer, which culminated in the publication of Hardy's *Berne des deux rimeurs de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne*. The old poet died, perhaps in Paris, perhaps on tour with Deschamps' company, probably in 1632. By his own account and according to the testimony of others, he wrote about six hundred plays during a career of some forty years, an average of fifteen plays a year. The published plays include tragedies, tragi-comedies and pastorals; it seems extremely likely that he wrote comedies as well. Thus he contributed to all the recently established genres, but he seems not to have written any *histoires saintes* of the type of Boissin de Gallardon's *Saint Vincent* (1618), nor political and religious *pièces à thèse* such as the *Miroir de l'Union belgique* (1604) of Pierre Lancel and Claude Billard's

Henry le Grand (1612).

We shall be concerned in the following pages solely with Hardy's tragedies. The poet applied the term "tragédie" to twelve of his extant plays, namely Alcméon, Coriolan, Didon se sacrifiant, Lucrèce, Mariamne, Méléagre, la Mort d'Achille, la Mort d'Alexandre, la Mort de Daire, Panthée, Scédase and Timoclée. At first glance, it would appear reasonable to accept his classification and study these twelve works. However, Hardy himself seems to have been in doubt about how to classify some of his plays, the line of demarcation between tragedy and tragi-comedy being quite vague in his day. On the title-page, Aristoclée is termed a tragi-comedy, while in the "Argument" it is called a tragedy. The same is true of Procris, and this play, together with Alceste and Ariadne ravie, is called a tragi-comedy on the title-page, while the running title is tragedy. M. T. Herrick considers that these three plays follow the pattern of tragedy with a happy ending, though it is difficult to see how Procris, which ends with the murder of the heroine and the attempted suicide of her husband, fits this criterion.

12 Théâtre, IV, 83.
13 Ibid., I, 172.
In fact, one cannot distinguish between Hardy's tragedies and tragi-comedies on the basis of their dénouement alone. Some tragedies have an ending which is neither sanglant nor funeste, for example Timoclée, while some tragi-comedies have a violent ending, for example Aristoclée. Nor is the rank of the principal characters a decisive factor: the hero of Scédase belongs to the middle-class, while in some tragi-comedies, for instance Phraarte and Alceste, kings and even gods are the central figures. A distinction on the grounds of source material seems more fruitful, and this is the basis of Rigal's classification of the plays. He divides them into four main categories. First the tragedies, which include all those classified as such by Hardy and which are taken from classical sources. The playwright found his source material in Plutarch (Scédase, Coriolan, the Alexandre trilogy), Xenophon (Panthée) and Josephus (Mariamne). Didon se sacrifiant is of course based on Vergil, and la Mort d'Achille on Dares and Dictys, though Rigal sees some influence from the mediaeval Roman de Troie or from a sixteenth-century adaptation of a mystère based on the roman. As for the Greek, as opposed to Trojan, bias in his tragedy, Hardy may have gone to Mussato's Achilleid composed in Latin. It is clear that Hardy accepts the sources sanctioned by his sixteenth-century predecessors, and that these sources are basically historical. On the other hand, the source for

\[ 15 \] Rigal, Hardy, pp. 314-19.
Méléagre is Ovid; the subject is thus mythological, as is that of Alcéméon. The criterion of source used by Rigal excludes from the group of tragedies Lucrece, which is based on a contemporary novel. Because their source is a mythological account, Rigal would include Alcèste, Procris and Ariadne ravie in a second category of "pièces mythologiques", together with le Ravissement de Proserpine and la Gigantomachie. He would divide his third category, tragi-comedies, into three sub-sections: those "en plusieurs journées": Théagène et Chariclée; tragi-comedies "de sujet antique": Arsacome, Aristoclée, Gésippe and Phraarte; and tragi-comedies "de sujet moderne": all the rest, including Lucrece. His final category includes Hardy's five pastoral plays. Rigal is himself aware of the deficiency in this system of classification: "En résumé, l'origine historique, mythologique ou romanesque des sujets, le caractère heureux ou triste des dénouements, telles semblent être les deux principales marques d'après lesquelles Hardy classait ses pièces; mais aucune des deux n'est décisive, et on ose à peine dire que leur réunion le soit. Aussi les groupes entre lesquels Hardy a réparti ses œuvres sont-ils nettement distincts dans leur ensemble, mais certains détails de la répartition sont contestables, et quelques changements y pourraient être apportés sans inconvénient. Si Hardy avait une théorie des genres, elle était quelque peu vague et flottante."

16 Rigal, Hardy, p. 227.
The main difficulty as regards the classification of Hardy's tragedies and tragi-comedies centres around Scédase, Alcméon and Lucrece, and any solution that may be suggested is bound to be to some extent arbitrary. Lancaster, after briefly summarising the subjects of Hardy's tragedies taken from familiar and frequently used classical sources, adds that "the other three tragedies deal with persons that are less well known. Alcméon recounts the terrible vengeance of a wife for her husband's infidelity. She drives him mad, causes him to kill their children and to be killed by her brothers, who are in turn slain by him. Scédase is equally brutal, a sort of tragédie bourgeoise derived from Plutarch's account of the rape and murder of two girls by their father's guests, his vain efforts to get revenge, and his suicide. Lucrece has nothing to do with Livy's heroine or with any character so chaste. It is a melodrama of unknown source, a sort of tragi-comedy of infidelity and revenge with an unhappy ending." 17 Elsewhere Lancaster describes Lucrece as "a sort of Romantic tragedy of blood and revenge that reminds us of Dumas père." 18 Similarly, Rigal considers that "Lucrece, qui porte le nom de tragédie, n'est qu'un drame vulgaire et passablement

17 Lancaster, History, I, 1. pp. 47-48. Lancaster's efforts to be concise lead to obscurity in his summary of Alcméon. What happens in the dénouement is that Alcméon fights with and kills the brothers, but is mortally wounded and dies as a result.

18 Ibid., I, 1, p. 64.
repugnant, traité avec autant de cynisme que d'habileté"\textsuperscript{19}.

The same critic's observations about \textit{Alcmeon} are equally noteworthy in this context: "S'il n'est peut-être pas, dans son théâtre tragique, de pièce dont la lecture soit aussi rebutante, il n'en est pas non plus qui montre aussi nettement ses procédés, et la curieuse position qu'il avait prise entre le drame populaire et la tragédie savante"\textsuperscript{20}.

The terms used by Lancaster and Rigal to qualify these plays are significant: they are "tragédie bourgeoise", "melodrama", "drame vulgaire" or "populaire". But these terms denoting a mixed genre were unknown to Hardy, and one can understand the problem of classifying a play such as \textit{Aristoclée}, which belongs to a mixed genre that is not precisely tragi-comedy because it has an unhappy ending. As we have seen, he shows a similar hesitancy in the case of three of the plays classified by Rigal as "pièces mythologiques". \textit{Procris} is as "répugnante" and "rebutante" as \textit{Lucrece} or \textit{Alcmeon}, and also deals with marital infidelity. \textit{Ariadne ravie} is again comparable in this respect, since it treats the abandonment of Ariadne on the isle of Naxos and her rescue by and marriage to Bacchus. The ending of the play is not merely happy, but farcical, with Pan and Silenus acting the buffoon. On the other hand, \textit{Alceste}, which is classified by Hardy as a tragi-comedy, is at least

\textsuperscript{19} Rigal, \textit{Hardy}, p. 498.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 395.
partly concerned with conjugal love and, as I shall show in the chapters which follow, its central theme is serious, its protagonists noble in sentiment and deed while, most important, the pattern of the action is similar to that of Hardy's other tragedies.

We have seen that Hardy himself had some difficulty in distinguishing between plays he called "tragédies" and those he called "tragi-comédies". It is also clear that the criteria for classifying his tragedies suggested by Hardy's commentators do not produce entirely satisfactory results either. The social status of the protagonists or the happy or unhappy ending do not comprise distinctive features. Rigal's basic criterion of classical source material excludes *Lucrèce* from the list of plays that Hardy called "tragédies". It is noteworthy that the terms Rigal uses to describe *Alcéméon* imply that he found this play comparable with *Lucrèce*. Lancaster goes further and studies these two plays, together with *Scédase*, as a group apart from the other tragedies. Indeed, from the point of view of the sentiments expressed by the characters and the violent deeds presented on stage, they resemble more closely the tragedies of blood-and-horror of some of Hardy's contemporaries than they do plays such as *Panthée*, *la Mort d'Alexandre* and *la Mort de Daire*, or even *Marieane* and *Timocléé*. In these works, as in the other tragedies, Hardy presents characters of royal lineage and of noble sentiments and deeds, while the themes are more serious than the violent sexual passion or adultery
which dominate Alcmeon, Lucrece and Scédase. I shall adopt the position implied in Lancaster's study and set these three plays apart from Hardy's other tragedies in which the characters, themes and pattern of action are comparable from play to play. For this reason, Alcmeon, Lucrece and Scédase will not be included in the chapters which follow. On the other hand, the criteria I have suggested require that Alceste be considered among Hardy's tragedies. We may therefore establish as follows the list of plays to be studied: Alceste, Coriolan, Didon se sacrifiant, Mariamne, Méléagre, la Mort d'Achille, la Mort d'Alexandre, la Mort de Daire, Panthée and Timoclée. These are the plays which will be analysed in the following pages in an attempt to discover Hardy's conception of tragedy.\(^{21}\)

Hardy's contribution to the development of the pastoral and the tragi-comedy has been discussed by Marsan and by Lancaster\(^ {22}\). The importance of his contribution to the development of tragedy has been referred to frequently by critics, but has not been analysed in sufficient detail. Hardy's tragedies are not generally of the blood-and-horror type, such as la Tragédie mahommétiste or un More cruel (both anonymous), or the more

\(^{21}\) Summaries of the plots of these plays will be found in the appendix.

sensational of the tragedies of a Claude Billard or a Chrétien des Croix. Nor are they in the style of a Garnier or a Montchrétien, though they bear a much closer resemblance to this type of drama. As the critics point out, Hardy's tragedies bring dramatic action and a sense of crisis to what was the static and elegiac form of the Renaissance tragedy. A summary of the plots of Hardy's tragedies will suffice to show that the intrigue is more developed, more lively than is usual in sixteenth-century tragedy. If this were all Hardy accomplished, his place in the history of the development of French tragedy would be assured, but it would be a comparatively minor one, since we now know (though Rigal did not) that Hardy was only one among a number of dramatists active at this time who were trying to produce a more lively stage spectacle and plot. As Pierre-Aimé Touchard reminds us, however, "il ne faut pas ... confondre l'intrigue et l'action: l'action, c'est le mouvement général qui fait qu'entre le début et la fin de la pièce, quelque chose est né, s'est développé, est mort. L'in­trigue n'est que le squelette de l'action. Elle peut être des plus compliquées et l'action demeurer nulle."  

23 Cf. for example Rigal, Hardy, p. 398; Deierkauf-Holsboer, "Vie d'Alexandre Hardy", p. 336; Lancaster, History, I, 1, pp. 64-65; Lanson, Esquisse, pp. 45-46.  

It is my intention to show that Hardy was not only aware of the need for spectacle, but also that he had a dramatic style of his own, in the sense that he had a clear and coherent conception of the tragic action. If critics have been unable until now to understand his conception of tragedy, it is because they have persisted in comparing Hardy's tragedies either with those of the Renaissance dramatists, or, more unjustly, with those of Corneille, Racine and other dramatists of the "classical" theatre. It is perhaps inevitable that one should make such comparisons if one adopts the historical approach to literary criticism. But few writers of this period offer such a good opportunity as Hardy for the application of critical methods centred on a close reading of the text rather than on the dramatist's life and times. As we have seen, very little is known about his career, while he has left a substantial corpus of plays. Among the very few facts of which we are certain are the dates of publication of these plays, but we do not know the date of their composition. For a critic concerned with sources and influences, such a lack of information is crucial and much speculation on the subject has been the result. Rigal offers his opinion on this question, as do Lancaster and Mme Deierkauf-Holsboer. The results of all this effort are discouraging: the most that can be said is that the majority of Hardy's

25 Rigal, Hardy, pp. 73-82; Lancaster, History, I, I, p. 45; Deierkauf-Holsboer, "Vie d'Alexandre Hardy", p. 379.
tragedies were probably written before 1610. This lack of knowledge about the dramatist's career and the dates of composition of his plays becomes, however, a positive advantage when one applies the method of enquiry I intend to follow, for I shall not be tempted to compare Hardy's tragedies any more than strictly necessary with those of his predecessors and followers. If Rigal's critical method is that of the literary historian, and consists in taking a "horizontal" view of the plays, in putting them in the perspective of the history of the French drama at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the method I shall adopt, in broad terms structural, may be called "vertical", for it consists in putting Hardy's tragedies one on top of the other, of comparing them one with another, to see what features they have in common.

The criteria for the classification of Hardy's plays discussed above go back ultimately to action, character and thought, the three most important elements of the six constituent parts into which Aristotle divides tragedy (the other three being diction, spectacle and melody), and the ones which he analyses in most detail. Melody will not concern us; it is unlikely that musical accompaniment was provided for Hardy's tragedies, and even if it were, it would remain merely a "pleasurable accessory of tragedy"\(^{26}\) rather than an indispensable

element. The problems presented by Hardy's diction -- vocabulary
and syntax, literary style, and the construction of dialogue --
cannot be disposed of so summarily, since the language clearly
constitutes an integral part of the dramatic production. The
play could not exist without the dialogue; but it is the means
of realisation of the drama rather than part of the conception
itself. The language and syntax of Hardy's tragedies will not
therefore occupy a place in this study as a separate element of
analysis.

The other categories by which Aristotle analyses tragedy
cannot be disposed of so briefly as that of melody or diction.
Spectacle, it is true, receives only passing mention in Aristotle's
treatise, since he regards it simply as an instrument of the
dramatic imitation. In actual fact, spectacle is not usually
gratuitous, but is a means of underlining the action; it will
therefore be treated as a part of this element of the drama.
There remain, then, the three fundamental constituent elements:
action, character and thought. Aristotle devotes the major
part of his treatise to an examination of them, and they will
form the basis of my study of Hardy's tragedies. Of course,
any division of this material is arbitrary, since the three
elements are combined to constitute a single dramatic action.
"Le spectacle et le chant constituent ce que nous appelons la
mise en scène; l'élocution le style littéraire. Pour ce qui
est des trois autres parties, il semble qu'on puisse difficilement
les séparer sans arbitraire. Fable, caractères et pensée sont
While admitting, then, that a play is an organic unity defying logical analysis, we must still try to make such conceptual distinctions for the purposes of this study. Accordingly, in the first chapter I shall attempt to show that there is a general structural pattern that can be distinguished in all the tragedies, that this constituted for Hardy the tragic action, and that it is unified in the sense that all the incidents and episodes are focussed on a moment of decision for the hero. As has just been suggested, this aspect of analysis must include a discussion of spectacle, the stage setting of the plays. More than a mere "accessory of tragedy", it is important insofar as theatrical decoration influenced the structure of the plays. Rigal has dealt fully with this aspect of Hardy's theatre, and his theory of the décor simultané, supported by an impressive array of examples and documents, remains for the historian of the theatre possibly the most valuable part of his work. In general, Hardy manipulates the effects of surprise and suspense with skill, and his ability to move his characters about the stage is probably unequalled at this period. I hope to show that these effects are not usually the result of a desire simply to amuse the audience, but are subordinated to the

27 Touchard, Dionysos, p. 79.
exigencies of the action and intended to arouse certain emotions in the spectators.

These emotions will be of the proper sort if the tragic hero is confronted with problems of sufficient seriousness and magnitude; in the second chapter I shall try to show that the hero's dilemma is concerned with the practical application of certain moral principles. These principles are involved in a single theme, or set of themes, which corresponds roughly to what Aristotle called thought in his analysis of tragedy. This central theme is, in Hardy's tragedies, political. Usually the question of the just rule or misrule of a monarch provides the central problem, though the public role of a warrior is the point at issue in some plays. In both cases, the hero is expected to regulate his conduct according to certain fixed principles.

Finally, I shall examine the character of the tragic hero and show how he is defined by his awareness of these principles and by his actions. We shall see that Hardy establishes a strict gradation of heroes, and that his conception of the character of the tragic hero is the single aspect of his plays which most clearly distinguishes them from those of his predecessors. It is this element, in fact, which links Hardy most directly to the conception of tragedy which was to be developed by dramatists later in the seventeenth century.
CHAPTER ONE

DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE

Rigal's general description of the dramatic action in Hardy's plays remains basically sound, provided his opinion of Hardy's innovatory role in the development of French drama be viewed with caution:

Hardy, toutes proportions gardées, procède déjà comme Corneille: il conserve les conventions anciennes, mais le corps de sa tragédie est bien nouveau; sous les oripeaux on sent le drame. N'est-ce pas en ses pièces, en effet, qu'on trouve pour la première fois, d'une façon suivie et systématique, une action soutenue, du spectacle, des actes et des scènes bien enchaînés? N'est-ce pas la première fois que les intérêts en jeu sont débattus sur la scène même? que les personnages en lutte se rencontrent et se mesurent devant nous? que les scènes à faire sont faites? Nous avons cité et nous pourrions citer encore d'autres réformes: suppression des choeurs, multiplication des scènes, monologues abrégés, dialogue plus coupé, nombre des personnages accru; tout cela n'a qu'une moindre importance, ou plutôt tout cela n'est qu'une conséquence du changement que nous venons de signaler, et qu'un mot, en apparence paradoxale résumera: la tragédie devient enfin du théâtre.

The same critic remarks that the unities of time and place are not observed in Hardy's tragedies, but adds that, "si, au lieu des unités de lieu et de temps, nous cherchons l'unité d'action, brusquement les proportions changent. Timoclée renferme deux pièces ... ; il y a deux crises qui s'engendrent l'une l'autre dans Méléagre; Hardy fait même une crise de Coriolan, qui devient une histoire dans Shakespeare; il fait une crise de Didon, qui devient un roman dans Scudéry. Enfin

1 Rigal, Hardy, p. 398.
Hardy est, sur ce point, beaucoup plus régulier que Garnier. Subsequent critics have tended, with minor modifications and changes of emphasis, to repeat Rigal's opinion. Indeed, Forsyth insists on this synthesis of what he calls Renaissance and baroque techniques in Hardy's tragedies, but doubts that the dramatist was aware of the importance of this procedure. One may deny that Hardy often achieved a satisfactory synthesis; but it cannot be doubted that he knew what he was trying to do. This I hope to demonstrate by considering Hardy's tragedies from the point of view of dramatic technique, with the purpose of showing that there is a generally consistent pattern to the action in the plays.

The plot analyses of the tragedies reveal that Hardy's choice of source material and of the elements to dramatise are different from those of his mediaeval and Renaissance predecessors. Rigal emphasises a number of these differences; note need be taken of only a few of the more significant ones. For any tragic

2 Ibid., pp. 399-400.


dramatist whose material is not entirely fictitious, the choice of the point of time at which to begin the dramatisation is important. Any historical or quasi-historical account of the life of a hero (or nation) will contain a number of episodes which could be dramatised. Some will lend themselves to comedy, others to tragedy, yet others to heroic drama. In the historical account, these episodes will blend one into another, or be now comic, now tragic, now heroic by turns, like the mediaeval mystery plays. If the tragic author begins his dramatisation too early in the historical account, he is likely to give the wrong tone or emphasis to his play, or at least to the opening scenes. This is Rigal's criticism of Shakespeare's Coriolanus: the first half of the play is heroic drama rather than tragedy. Nor must the playwright begin too late, otherwise the crisis is past and what remains is elegy. This is the general criticism of Renaissance tragedy.

Compared to Jodelle, Hardy chooses to start his account of the Dido and Aeneas story at a slightly earlier stage; in Hardy's play, Aenée is not yet irrevocably resolved to leave Carthage when the action begins. He is still prone to vacillate, to be assailed by doubts. He knows the decision must be made, but for the present he is unable to make it. Coriolan, having decided to teach the insolent Roman mob a lesson, temporarily postpones acting on this decision in face of the arguments of his mother. Hardy begins the action of his version of Panthée much earlier in the story than does his contemporary, Claude
Billard. In the latter's play, Abradate has already allied himself to Cyrus' cause when the play opens; in Hardy's play the beginning coincides with Cyrus' victory over the Lydians. *La Mort d'Achille* begins at the moment when the hero decides to propose marriage to Polixène; in Mussato's version, the marriage is already arranged when the play opens. Hardy's *Alceste*, apart from adding a great deal of material to Euripides' *Alcestis* story, starts with the Hercules episode rather than that concerning the heroine. *Méleagre* presents two events in the life of the hero. The first concerns the hunt for and the killing of the boar; but we do not see a dramatised account of the ravages of the monster and only the slightest reference is made to the reason for Diana's anger (*Méleagre*, 9-10). Instead, the first act is taken up with the petitions of Méleagre's subjects and his decision to take strong measures to rid his country of the beast. These examples serve to illustrate Hardy's concern with quickly capturing the interest of the audience. Where the hero makes, or is about to make, or postpones making a decision, the audience is at once curious to know what the outcome of his resolution (or irresolution) will be; the premises of the action are immediately stated. In the case of *Panthée* and *Alceste*, the appearance of the heroine is delayed by a scene involving another major character; the audience anticipates the entrance of the heroine, while Hardy is able to introduce an important aspect of the main theme of the play.

It should not, then, be assumed that Hardy's choice of
starting point is in any way haphazard. Although he was aware of the need for a rapid introduction to the action of his plays, it cannot, however, be said that he always achieved it. For instance, *Mariamne* and *la Mort d'Alexandre* open with the appearance of a protatic ghost who recounts the misdeeds of the king, speaks in generalities about the events of the play that is to follow, and predicts the downfall of the tyrant. The opening scene of *la Mort d'Achille* is similar, though the awakening Achille seems unaware of the warnings of the ghost of Patrocle, whose speech is thus directed solely at the audience. The prologue does not really state the premises of the action, which, as we learn in the ensuing scene between Achille and Nestor, will be concerned with the conflict between the hero's love for Polixène and his loyalty to the Greek cause. Similarly, the ghost of Aristobule, while predicting the outcome of *Mariamne*, has no influence on the action, which stems ultimately from a clash of personality and will between Hérode and Mariamne, and immediately from the seizure by Salome\(^5\) of an opportunity to destroy the heroine. Alexandre's pride and ambition, described by the ghost of Parménion in the prologue to *la Mort d'Alexandre*, are seen clearly in the discussion which follows between the king and his advisers. Furthermore, Alexandre does not seem especially overweening in this play, and his death is the direct result of the conspiracy of Antipatre and his sons. In other words, the appearance of a prologising ghost in Hardy's

\(^5\) Hardy spells the name without the final accent; see *Mariamne*, 193-94, rhyme *homme* -- *Salome*. 
tragedies is a traditional Renaissance-type device. One may compare the use of Archidame as a protatic figure in the first scene of Scédase, where his speech has nothing to do with the events to be seen on stage, where he does not mention any of the characters in the action, but in which he deplores in general terms the corruption of Spartan virtue by gold and luxury. The prologue defines the theme of the play and suggests a moral that might be drawn. Of a similar type is the appearance of the ghost of Théagène in Timolée, which serves merely to introduce the heroine and the traditional discussion of the efficacy of dreams which follows — as Rigal says, "un prologue placé au troisième acte!" Such a device may be termed rhetorical, since its purpose is to establish the emotional tone of the play, one of foreboding and despair, and not to carry forward the action.

A corresponding device, used to underscore the dénouement, is the formal lament with which Hardy ends many of his tragedies. The essential function of the lament in sixteenth-century tragedy was to afford a vehicle whereby the surviving personages might express in rhetorical terms their reaction to the catastrophe. Often the reaction is that of Hécube in Garnier's la Troade, who awaits with trepidation what the future will bring. In Hardy's tragedies, however, the formal lament tends to be rather more than a device of this nature. Anne and the Choeur lament

6 Rigal, Hardy, pp. 392-93.
the death of Didon, Panthée that of her husband. Volomnie utters a formal lament over the body of Coriolan, while Sisigambe regrets the murder of her son Daire. In these four instances the formal lament is coupled with a death-wish on the part of the survivor, and in the case of Panthée suicide in fact follows. The hackneyed nature of this device can be seen most clearly in Coriolan and la Mort de Daire, where a change of scene is required to introduce the lamenting mother. The lament is particularly superfluous in the latter play in that a new personage is introduced in the last scene of the play, while the action of the tragedy is complete without this scene. However, in la Mort d'Achille and la Mort d'Alexandre the formal lament is combined with a panegyric on the hero, but is not precisely the end of the action, since both these plays are "open-ended", in the sense that the repercussions of the action are seen as projected into the future. This is also the pattern of the action of la Mort de Daire, which is why the introduction of Sisigambe is superfluous. On the other hand, the lamenting Volomnie and Panthée both remind us of their vital role in the action, Volomnie stating that she alone was able to bend Coriolan's hatred of Rome, Panthée that she had induced Abradate to ally himself with Cirrus. Furthermore, Panthée's suicide produces another lament and panegyric by Cirrus, which constitutes the real ending of the play. Structurally, Panthée and Coriolan are closed, in that there is no projection of the action beyond the ending of the play. The lament is therefore an appropriate
ending, even though it is a commonplace formula, and in these instances it is slightly more than a mere rhetorical flourish. Anne also accuses herself of responsibility for Didon's death because she had encouraged her sister's love for Aeneé and she wishes to commit suicide in her turn, only to be restrained by Barce and the Choeur. She must take up the reins of government where they have been irresponsibly dropped by Didon. In this way, the lament and death-wish lead into a commentary on the theme and action of the play and are not entirely superfluous. Hérode's lament is less for Mariamne than for himself, and constitutes an emotional pendant to the hallucinations which precede it.

The formal lament as a dramatic device with which to end a tragedy may be regarded as a counterpart to the stereotyped prologue. It has been suggested that such devices are disturbing only when they are not integrated into the structure of the action of the play. One might mention in this context other devices that underscore the dramatic mood and heighten suspense: dreams, prayers, presages, portents and omens. Dreams are reported in a number of the plays, for example in Didon se sacrifiant (I,2; IV,3), Panthée (IV,1), and Méléagre (V,2), and in these instances they are introduced simply for rhetorical effect to heighten a mood of fear and trepidation. The appearance of Mercure in a dream to Aeneé (Didon, IV,1), on the other hand, is of importance in the development of the action, since it marks the moment of decision for Aeneé and a change of fortune
for the hero, which brings about as a direct consequence the death of Didon. In other words, Hardy was able in this case to take a traditional device and use it to dramatic advantage.

The prayer is another device which Hardy uses extensively at the beginning of his tragedies. Aeneé prays to Jupiter in the monologue which opens Didon se sacrifiant; Mléagre prays to Diana to remove the scourge she has sent his kingdom; Cirus thanks Apollo for his victory in Panthéé; Daire also prays to Apollo to preserve the Persian empire. The device is again purely rhetorical, designed to set the emotional atmosphere and fill in the background of the story. This observation is true also of the prayers frequently uttered during the course of the action of the tragedies. The prayer comes to a character's lips at times of stress, and indicates an emotional rather than a religious state. Only in the case of Didon se sacrifiant is one made conscious of the action fulfilling some divine plan, and we have seen how important is the appearance of Jupiter's emissary later in the play.

The presages in Hardy's plays are usually rather vague presentiments of evil, as when Achille, going to meet the Trojans for the marriage ceremony at the temple, suddenly stumbles.

D'où vient qu'un pied glissé, tout le poil me hérissé?
L'oeil me tourne ébloui, j'ai le cœur palpitant;
Que d'augures mauvais survenus à l'instant!

(Achille, 1262-64)

Cf. Rigal, Hardy, p. 270, n. 3.
Similarly, Coriolan is disturbed by "cent présages mortels" (Coriolan, 1079) as he awaits to be summoned before the Volscian council. In such instances, the device is employed, like the dream, simply to create an emotional atmosphere; it has no necessary function in the action. The case is somewhat different in la Mort d'Alexandre, where the action of the first half of the play consists mainly of a succession of prophecies and portents. Compared to the presages noted above, these warnings are either more explicit -- do not enter Babylon on pain of death! -- or, if allegorical, may be interpreted as direct threats to Alexandre's position and prestige as king. In other words, the traditional device of the omen is here integrated into the action, which could hardly exist without the presages.

In contrast to these verbal devices, which may or may not advance the action, we should note the skilful use Hardy makes of visual enactment to enliven dramatic interest. It has been a commonplace among literary historians to castigate Hardy for the excessively violent, the horrific and the crudely salacious events that he presents on stage. "Nous n'exigeons assurément pas du poète tragique qu'il termine chaque pièce par 'le crime puni et la vertu récompensée', mais ce que nous pouvons lui demander c'est un peu moins de brutalité, tranchons le mot, de bestialité dans les sentiments de ses personnages. Pour eux l'amour, c'est l'acte physique; ils le disent sans vergogne.
... Non, Hardy est inexcusable bien qu'on veuille rejeter la faute sur les moeurs du temps". It should not be thought that Béraneck was taking a prudishly "nineteenth-century" view of Hardy's plays. For example, Raymond Lebègue states that, "toutes [les tragédies] nous font voir au moins une action violente ou un cadavre; les violences et les spectacles macabres y sont bien plus nombreux que dans le théâtre de Garnier. D'autre part, on peut noter dans ses pièces un grand nombre de paroles, de gestes et de situations contraires à la décence ou à la moralité sexuelle". The English commentator, F. K. Dawson, is of a similar opinion. "The common factor in all [Hardy's] subjects seems to be that they are concerned with violence and horror; which means, of course, that they are swathed in an atmosphere which could loosely be termed Senecan. In this, they are no different from the vast majority of tragedies written about this time, not only in France but in Italy and Spain, countries to which the French writers were in the habit of turning for guidance". It cannot be denied that the language of some of Hardy's characters is at times violent. The threat though not always the fact of violence is present in these plays, but is all the more effective and less distracting for

8 Béraneck, Sénèque et Hardy, p. 17.


the reason that it is suggested and not represented.

It is not within the scope of this study to compare Hardy's tragedies with those of his predecessors and contemporaries, but Lebègue may again be cited as giving a summary of the tendencies of the drama at this period. "Nous avons suffisamment montré qu'au début du XVIIe siècle, si quelques auteurs de tragédies cachaient encore au public les actions violentes et macabres, la grande majorité d'entre eux les étalaient sur la scène et recherchaient l'horreur avec autant de zèle que les dramaturges anglais et les auteurs de nos vieux mystères". It is left to Lancaster to emphasise Hardy's comparative restraint in this matter of stage violence. "Fighting and killing are seen on the stage. ... Words and situations that would have shocked subsequent theater-goers are not unusual. Yet the coarseness of Hardy's tragedies has been exaggerated. There is nothing inDidon, Panthée, or Daire to offend the most delicate sensibilities. The plays in which his brutality exceeds that of Shakespeare, for example, are very few".

While emphasising spectacle (though with comparative discretion), Hardy is, in fact, judicious in his choice of material to represent or to report. Thus he does not dramatise, or even mention, the scene in which Panthée arms Abradate,

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11 Lebègue, "La tragédie 'shakespearienne'", p. 396. For a summary of the plays of the "grande majorité", see: Lancaster E. Dabney, French Dramatic Literature in the reign of Henri IV. (Austin, 1952); Forsyth, Tragédie française; and Lancaster, History, I, 1 and 2.

12 Lancaster, History, I, 1, p. 51.
while he presents in Didon se sacrifiant such apparently irrelevant episodes as those involving Iarbe and Jule. But the scenes with Didon's rejected suitor and Aenée's son provide an amplification of, and a commentary on, the central action involving the hero and heroine, while the scene of the arming of Abradate, though it involves the heroine, contributes nothing to the action which will see her take her own life. Hardy does not present the boar hunt in Méléagre on stage, and it should not be assumed that he could not have done so, since a contemporary dramatist, Boissin de Gallardon, staged the hunt, presumably using a similar decorative system\textsuperscript{13}. Furthermore, Hardy was able to present on stage scenes of considerable movement and violence, such as the battles in la Mort d'Achille and Timoclée, and even the presentation of the boar would not have proved difficult for a dramatist who, in Alceste, brings on stage Cerberus, the three-headed guardian of hell. But if the boar hunt were staged, we should not have the messenger's report with its emphasis on Méléagre's courage and its praise of the king. The brutal slaying of Hypparque in Timoclée is presented dramatically\textsuperscript{14}, but not the no less brutal murder of

\textsuperscript{13} Rigal, Hardy, p. 313.

\textsuperscript{14} Rigal assumes that the murder of Hypparque is represented on stage: see his suggestions for the mise en scène of this play, Hardy, p. 385, n. 3. In fact, there is nothing in the text to indicate that the cries of the dying soldier are not heard from off-stage, and that the murder is represented, any more than was the rape of Timoclée earlier in the play.
Daire, nor the poisoning of Alexandre. Hardy does, however, present the death agony of the two kings, because he is concerned to show how these noble characters meet their end. Achille and Coriolan both die on stage, because the death of these two heroes is the climax of the action; but we do not see the execution of Mariamne, because the culmination of the action of this play lies in Hérode's reception of the report of his wife's death.\(^1\)

In general, however, Hardy does emphasise stage action rather than reported events in order to produce the *scènes à faire* that Rigal remarked upon. These are the scenes in which violent physical actions follow the violent emotions expressed in the dialogue: Didon throws herself at Aenée's feet, storms, curses him; Hérode works himself into a towering rage; Coriolan is murdered. Hardy was aware of the need for movement about the stage, and uses the capabilities of the *décor simultané* to his advantage.\(^2\) Rigal insists on the importance of a knowledge of the system of stage-setting current in a dramatist's lifetime for acquiring a true appreciation of his plays. "Selon que le

\(^1\) Again, it should not be assumed that Hardy could not have staged this scene, since Schelandre presents the execution — or near-execution — of the heroine in *Tyr et Sidon* (1628 version), and her last-minute rescue from the scaffold by Belcar is the culminating incident of this *romanesque* plot.

système adopté pour la mise en scène sera celui de la décoration simple et immuable, ou celui de la décoration changeante, ou celui de la décoration multiple, l'auteur coupera différemment sa pièce, choisira différemment les parties de l'action qui doivent paraître sur le théâtre, et celles qui doivent être dérobées aux yeux des spectateurs; il aura un art dramatique différent.\(^\text{17}\). The *décoration multiple* represents several different locations simultaneously; thus the décor for *la Mort d'Achille* will represent Achille's tent and Agamemnon's tent in the Greek camp, the king's council chamber in Troy, and the Temple of Apollo, while the action of *la Mort de Daire* takes place in various parts of Daire's camp, in Alexandre's, and in an open area with a stream and a hillock for the scene in which Daire dies (V,1), though the two camps are considered as being situated in different localities in Persia as the action progresses. In this decorative system the actor would either speak his lines in the place represented, chamber or tent, or else would first appear in that place before moving towards the centre of the stage while speaking, so that the audience would know in which particular place the action was supposed to be progressing. The *Mémoire de Mahelot* gives a series of stage designs using this decorative system\(^\text{18}\), while Rigal

\(^{17}\) Rigal, Hardy, p. 185.

appends to his analysis of each of Hardy's plays an imagined décor simultané.

It will be noted that Hardy's scene changes generally indicate a change of locality, but they can also be used to suggest a lapse of time. For example, in act four scene one of Coriolan, Valérie decides to ask Volomnie to intercede with Coriolan, in the second scene Amfidie soliloquizes on his changed attitude towards the Roman general, in the third Volomnie agrees to Valérie's request, and at the beginning of the fourth Coriolan addresses the Conseil des Volsques. The third scene was probably included mainly to indicate a lapse of time and two different locations in Antium (Amfidie's house, the council chamber) between scenes two and four. In the same way, scene three of the fourth act of la Mort de Daire (Alexandre in council with his generals) is used to indicate the passage of time between scene two, at the end of which Besse and Nabarzane promise to put a guard around Daire's tent, and scene four, in which the traitors enter the tent with their soldiers to bind the king. Scene one of act four of Mariamne, apart from being the prison scene so popular for its spectacular effect with early seventeenth-century dramatists, also serves to indicate a lapse of time between the last scene of act three, in which Hérode orders Mariamne to be held for further questioning, and the beginning of act four scene two, when Hérode soliloquizes on the problem of what action to take against the queen.
A decorative system of this type is conducive to considerable flexibility and fluidity of movement, so that there is no need for the dramatist to observe the unity of place, and, in fact, every inducement for him not to do so. In skilful hands, the system can be used to produce spectacular effects, such as the crowd and battle scenes mentioned above. The scene of action can switch rapidly from place to place, for example from Daire's camp to Alexandre's, from Achille's tent to Agamemnon's, from Rome to Antium in Coriolan, using a technique of cutting from scene to scene that is almost cinematographic. In Hardy's tragedies there are some examples of the use of another cinematographic technique that Jacques Scherer has called "travelling". Thus Achille is seen talking to the messenger as he walks from his tent towards the Temple of Apollo to meet Polixène and her brothers. The messenger is the first to see the Trojans:

Regardez là-devant: ce nuage poudreux
Près du Temple élevé, je crois que ce sont eux.

ACHILLE
Il n'y a point de doute, au milieu je remarque
De mon heureux destin la désirable Parque.
J'aperçois, j'aperçois de loin mon orient
Darder sur moi les rais de son beau front riant. ...
Retirez-vous, amis, m'attendant à l'écart:
Sa déité m'absout de craindre du hasard.
(Achille, 847-52; 855-56)

Though Hardy does observe it in, for example, Didon se sacrifiant and Mariamne; at least, he observes it to the same extent that Corneille does in le Cid.

Scherer, Dramaturgie, pp. 179-80.
As we have already seen, in act four scene two of the same play, Achille stumbles as he is making his way to the temple a second time and comments on this evil omen. In *La Mort de Daire*, Polistrate has heard the dying words of Daire and sets out to report to Alexandre (V, 1). In the next scene Alexandre is conferring with his captains, when Polistrate approaches to announce that Daire "vient d'expirer ici près" (*Daire*, 1339), and he gives a brief account of the Persian king's death, concluding with the words: "Sire, voilà son corps qui mesure l'arène" (*Daire*, 1378). It seems that, during the time of the report, Alexandre, Polistrate and the generals have been moving from Alexandre's tent to the spot where Daire's corpse is lying.

Another technique used quite extensively by Hardy, and which is comparable to "travelling", further demonstrates the possibilities for fluid movement afforded by the décor simultané. In *Coriolan*, for example, the first scene of act one ends with the Edile summoning the hero to the Forum. Coriolan and the Edile set out, Volomnie speaks four lines, and then Licinie is seen addressing Coriolan in the name of the Roman people. One imagines that, as Volomnie is uttering her brief prayer to Jupiter, Coriolan is passing from one location (his house) to another (the Forum), where the people are already assembled.

Act five of *La Mort d'Alexandre* opens with an ode by the Choeur d'Argyraspides in which the soldiers resolve to go and see their king for the last time. Alexandre and his counsellors are then seen in discussion, which is interrupted by a noise outside the
An attendant announces that the Choeur d'Argyraspides is asking for an audience, which Alexandre grants, and the soldiers troop in. Clearly, a spectacular effect would be produced by the appearance of such a group of soldiers. It is an effect which Hardy seems to have sought, for he repeats it, with a variation, in the other plays of the Alexandre trilogy. This time, however, instead of the chorus moving across stage to speak to the king, the king goes to address his troops. In Timoclée the debate between Alexandre and his generals in act four scene one, ends with the king saying:

Mais allons aux soldats derechef confirmer
Ce qui, bien qu'animés, les peut plus animer.

(Timoclée, 1539-40)

The next scene opens with an ode by the Choeur de Soldats macédoniens in which they express their eagerness for the imminent onslaught on Thebes and their impatience that Alexandre has not yet addressed them and given the order to attack. But at last he appears:

Le voici, compagnons, qui, portant le présage
D'une proche victoire écrit en son visage,
Nous la vient commander.

(Timoclée, 1584-86)

Alexandre then harangues his army. The same technique is used

Théâtre, IV, 77. The lines are misnumbered 1054-55.
in *la Mort de Daire*, but the scene is possibly even more spectacular. At dawn on the morning of the battle of Arbela, Alexandre is summoned from his tent by the reproaches of Parménion that he should be sleeping at such a time. After some discussion, the king calls to his attendants to prepare his armour ("vous autres là-dedans, mes armes vitement", *Daire*, 404), and retires to his tent to don it. The *Choeur d'Argyraspides* sings an ode praising Alexandre's leadership, and concludes:

> Mais le voici, soldats, qui les périls étrange,  
> Nous menant exercer aux ordinaires jeux,  

(Daire, 435-36) as he reappears to address them.

One imagines Alexandre suddenly appearing before them wearing resplendent armour: the flap of his tent is perhaps raised. The use of a curtain which is raised at a given moment of the action to reveal a room or similar space is studied by Scherer, and certain scenes in Hardy's tragedies would seem to demand the use of some such decorative accessory. This is particularly true of the first scene of act three of *la Mort d'Alexandre*, where a page is discovered trembling with fear in front of Alexandre's throne room. As the king approaches, the page warns him:

> Que ta Majesté, Sire, ores ne s'aventure  
> De passer cette porte et d'en faire ouverture.  

(Alexandre, 557-58)

22 *Dramaturgie*, pp. 175-79. Scherer makes the distinction between the *tapisserie* which covered temporarily "un compartiment du décor", and the *rideau* which hid "l'ensemble de la scène". It is unlikely that the *rideau d'avant-scène* was used in Hardy's day to indicate divisions between acts: see Védier, *Origine et évolution*. 
Alexandre sends for the high priest and, when Aristandre arrives, orders the page to open the door:

Ouvre vite, ne tiens mes esprits suspendus,
Rien que signes mauvais d'heure à autre entendus.  
(Alexandre, 567-68)

Presumably a curtain is drawn at this point to reveal to the audience the strange and sinister figure of Denis in the throne room beyond. One is tempted to imagine a strikingly spectacular effect at the end of the first scene of Coriolan. The Edile summons the hero to the Forum; Volomnie speaks four lines; then Licinie addresses Coriolan in the name of the Roman people. A curtain is perhaps raised at the end of Volomnie's speech to reveal the Forum with the assembled Sénat and Choeur des Romains sitting in judgement on the hero.

Other scenic effects seem to be indicated by the text. Coriolan's banishment from Rome is decided by vote. The Choeur des Romains orders the Edile to take and to count the vote:

Edile, dépêchez, par chacune lignée
Alllez de l'arrogant querir la destinée.  
(Coriolan, 257-58)

While this is being done, the Sénat and Coriolan briefly express their anxiety, and then Licinie announces the result of the vote:

Suivant l'ordre ancien, par le récit des lois
Ta condamnation ne passe que de trois.  
(Coriolan, 271-72)

How is the vote conducted? Are marks made on a paper, or a paper or token put in a vase? Is it by a show of hands? The vote may be given by word of mouth, whispered to the Edile.
However that may be, some sort of spectacular effect would be achieved by the voting procedure. At the end of the first scene of *Alceste*, Junon sees Hercule approaching and disappears, so as not to be found scheming with Euristée:

Parle bas, le voici; je regagne les airs.

**EURISTEE**

Dieux! comme en un clin d'oeil visible je la perds!
Quel soudain tourbillon, quel nuage l'emporte?
Pouvoir digne vraiment du titre qu'elle porte.

*(Alceste, 139-42)*

How would Junon be made to vanish? A machine could be used, and, indeed, Junon had earlier spoken of "going down" to Euristée's palace:

Procédon à l'effet qui me descend légère
Sans vouloir employer Iris, ma messagère,
De l'Olympe au palais d'Euryste, que voici,
Comme je désirais, qui s'achemine ici.

*(Alceste, 57-60)*

Towards the end of the same play, Cerbère, the three-headed guardian of Hades, appears on stage at least once, and possibly twice. The monster may be on stage during act four scene two, while Charon is trying to bargain with Hercule for its release. It is certainly present in act five scene one, because Admète refers to it: "Que veut ce monstre affreux?" *(Alceste, 1227).*

The many examples of scenic effects given in the preceding pages will perhaps indicate to what extent a practical dramatist such as Hardy was able to exploit the potentialities of the contemporary decorative system. The flexibility of movement afforded by the décor simultané would also help the playwright solve the problem of motivating the entrances and exits of his
characters. After all, no linking of scenes is required, in contrast to the strictly classical system of the later seventeenth century. On the contrary, Hardy has sometimes to interpolate scenes to separate two distinct appearances of the same character, as has already been noted.

Hardy normally uses to advantage this opportunity for freer movement, but occasionally the entrances of his characters are not well motivated. Thus in the opening scene of *Didon se sacrifiant* Aenée, after a soliloquy of sixty-three lines, suddenly exclaims: "Ha! n'aperçois-je pas /Achate et Palinure avancer sur mes pas?" (*Didon*, 63-64) There is no indication that Aenée has summoned his advisers so that he may consult them. The entrance of Panthéé to Araspe in act two scene one, seems also to rest purely on chance. Araspe explains that he has fallen in love with his captive in a long soliloquy which is interrupted when, "la voici" (*Panthée*, 269), she enters. Similarly, the dialogue between Junon and Euristée in the first scene of *Alceste* is interrupted when, "le voici" (*Alceste*, 139), Hercule appears for no apparent reason. In *la Mort d'Alexandre*, the king has been disturbed by the appearance to him in a dream of the ghost of Parménion, and soliloquizes briefly about this vision. Fortunately he does not have long to brood on these matters, for:

Perdix et Antigone, amis que j'idolâtre, 
Me viennent à propos tous ces soucis rabattre. 

(*Alexandre*, 73-74)

Coriolan opens the tragedy of which he is the hero with a
soliloquy about the injustice and ingratitude of the Roman people, and is interrupted when "ma mère me vient accoster soucieuse" (Coriolan, 74).

It will be seen that, in each of these instances, the awkward entrance occurs near the beginning of the play (the first act of Panthée really serves as an introduction to the main action), where the necessity of getting the action moving clashes with the convention of beginning the tragedy with a prologue, delivered either by a protatic figure or by the main character in soliloquy. This convention is also responsible for the awkward transitions from monologue to dialogue elsewhere in the plays. After the speech of the ghost and Hérode's opening monologue, Phérore begins to speak at line 125 of Mariamne. Has he been present during the whole of the king's speech? Has he just at this moment entered? If he has just entered, for what purpose has he come? The dialogue which follows suggests no answer to these questions. At the beginning of the third act of the same play, Hérode rushes out of his apartment cursing Mariamne. He rants for some twenty lines, and then Salome comments on her brother's anger. Has she been on stage all the time? Does she enter at this point?

These entrances are admittedly not well motivated. But elsewhere Hardy uses the resources of the décor simultané to advantage to conduct the action simultaneously in two places a short distance apart. In the first scene of act four of la Mort de Daire, Patron warns the king of the plot of Besse and
Nabarzane, and it seems from a short speech by Besse at the end of this scene that the traitor has been in hiding close by, watching, but unable to hear what Patron had said:

O Grec malicieux, tes gestes, ton visage
Du dessein révélé me donnent un présage.
Tu informais le roi, fixe d'attention
Dessus la vérité de notre intention.

(Daire, 961-64)

In the final act of Timoclée, the heroine dismisses Phaenisse as Hypparque enters. The nourrice utters a short soliloquy as she retires (ll. 2047-54). A scene follows in which Timoclée arouses the avarice of Hypparque, and they go to find the treasure in the well. Phaenisse, who has been standing at a distance observing, but apparently unable to hear, comments on the suddenly amicable relations between her mistress and the Macedonian soldier. Her soliloquy is cut short by the cries of Hypparque, dying in the well.

The use of traditional devices and of spectacle discussed in the preceding pages may enhance the action, but cannot be a substitute for it. The play must be well conceived from the outset and have a central focus to achieve its proper dramatic impact. Hardy effects this by constructing the action around a key scene, which is usually that in which the main characters confront one another in debate. In Didon se sacrifiant, it is the interview between Didon and Aenée (III,1). In Panthée, the scenes in which Cirus releases his captive, and in which Panthée persuades Abradate to change sides, form a complementary pair.
(III,1,2). In *la Mort d'Achille*, the crucial scene is that in which Achille angrily rejects the advice of his Greek friends (II,3). In *Coriolan*, the scene in which Volomnie comes to Antium to plead with her son (IV,4) marks the turning point of the action. In *Mariamne*, the two key scenes are those in which Hérode and Mariamne confront one another (III,1; IV,2), but the second is especially important. In *la Mort d'Alexandre*, the whole of the third act, in which Alexandre is assailed by portents and the pleas of his wife and refuses to listen to any of them, is crucial for understanding the action of the play. It will be seen that these scenes occur approximately in the middle of the play, and mark a turning point in the fortunes of the protagonist. It is, in fact, analogous to the peripety required by Aristotle in complex plots: "A Peripety is the change from one state of things within the play to its opposite of the kind described, and that too in the way we are saying, in the probable or necessary sequence of events." The probability or necessity which produces the peripety is generally a conflict within the character of the hero: a conflict between two emotions, between moderation and violent impulse, between a duty to oneself and a duty to a higher ideal. Sometimes the peripety involves the contrary fortunes of two protagonists, and the probability which produces it arises from a conflict between these personages. In either case, the change of fortune will

be seen to be the result of an interaction of character and event. Given what we have learned of the hero's character in the first part of the play, his behaviour is such as we might expect in a certain situation. The change of fortune is usually from good to bad in tragedy; but in Hardy's plays it can be the opposite; or it can be different for each of two protagonists.

According to Aristotle, the peripety may or may not be accompanied by a discovery, which is, "as the very word implies, a change from ignorance to knowledge, and thus to either love or hate, in the personage marked for good or evil fortune"\(^24\). But, as H. T. Barnwell has pointed out, while it is not necessary that the characters of the tragedy achieve awareness, it is essential that the spectators become enlightened.

The action takes place in the mind of the spectator. ... But this action is not conveyed to us logically or intellectually, but emotionally. The spectator in the theatre experiences the play on three levels. First, he is made at least partially aware of the real situation while the characters on the stage remain most of the time in ignorance: he can foresee the consequences of their mistakes. Yet, secondly, he is at the same time identifying himself with the characters and feeling as they do -- with them he shares hopes and fears and disillusionments. This is empathy, the result of the characters being, as Aristotle says, men like ourselves. We pity them, we fear for them, but these emotions are not ends in themselves -- they are what brings us, thirdly, to awareness of the limitations of our condition, and that awareness ... is what constitutes the Tragic.\(^25\)


Thus the audience stands at an ironic distance from the stage in that it is less surprised by the incidents of the plot than the hero is: but it is involved in the final discovery which constitutes the tragic action. It is this awareness that enables the audience to see the pattern of events presented in the tragedy.

The pattern of the action of a tragedy by Hardy may be represented as a rising and falling (or sometimes a falling and rising) movement about the central incident in the intrigue. If we consider Méléagre from this point of view, we will note that the crucial scene is that in which the prize is awarded to Atalante (III,2). This scene marks the high point of triumph and joy in the play. Not only do the hunters celebrate the killing of the boar but all, especially Thésée, praise Méléagre's part in the chase, thus underlining the insistence of the messenger's report in the previous scene on Méléagre's fulfilment of his duty as king. But this scene also marks the beginning of the decline to the catastrophe. Méléagre shows signs of falling in love with Atalante, a development which had been prepared in act two scene two by his appreciative praise of "ce beau teint délicat, doux et fatal aimant" (Méléagre, 412). His love sways his judgement, he is less than impartial in his apportionment of honour, a fact that the sharp-eyed Lincee quickly recognises: "l'affection, loin de ce prix vainqueur, /Consacre volontiers à ses grâces ton coeur" (Méléagre, 643-44).
Plexipe and Toxée are thus given cause for jealousy, and the motivation is provided for the falling movement of the action in the second part of the play. Méléagre remains blind to the end to the causes of his downfall; in his case there is no "change from ignorance to knowledge". As far as Méléagre is concerned, the audience is more involved in the discovery than the hero is, and this is perhaps why Hardy chose to end his tragedy with a scene in which Altee comments on the action. We may call it pointing the moral of the story, for, in fact, Altee is simply underlining the discovery that the spectators should have made for themselves: that certain ill-judged deeds can have fatal consequences for the agent.

A similar rising and falling movement may be seen in the action of la Mort d'Achille, although the angle of ascent and descent are shallower than in Méléagre, and a particular resonance is added because of the greater complexity and nobility of Achille's character. Achille is essentially admirable until he rejects the advice of his friends and sets up his own judgement against their recommendations of prudence. He falls victim to Trojan perfidy, but without becoming fully aware of the reasons for his downfall. In this play also the moral is pointed in the final scene during the panegyric on the hero. Ajax recalls that Achille's reasons for wishing to marry Polixène were based not merely on love, but also on a desire to unite the warring nations. The nobler aspect of Achille's motivation creates a resonance which is prolonged
after his death, for it is in his wish to end the war that he approaches most closely to true piety. However, peace can only return with the destruction of the evil that is Troy, and the mission of Ulysse to fetch Pyrrhus serves to project the action of the play into the future.

The action of these two plays is marked by a rising followed by a falling movement, and it might be assumed that a play that ends with the death of the hero presents the tragic action par excellence. But the resonance that lingers after Achille's death assures us that the noblest part of the hero's character has not been destroyed, while the death of Méléagre is exemplary in a quite different way: he has become a non-hero who has lost sight of his ideals and for that reason must die. The action of three other plays may also be represented by a falling and a rising movement. In his pride and rage, Coriolan descends to the cruelty of wishing to destroy his country, his friends and his family. Volomnie reminds him of his patriotic and filial obligations, and Coriolan's discovery of his error coincides with the peripety (IV,4). In the final act Coriolan makes amends for his past mistakes. He is killed as a result, but peace is restored and the greatness of Rome assured.

The action of Timoclée is comparable, although Alexandre does not fall as far below his own ideals as Coriolan. Thebes may be controlled by an evil form of government which deserves to be eradicated, but Alexandre, divided between the need to punish rebellion and the need to rule justly, allows personal
considerations to impair his judgement. After the many hesitations which occupy the first half of the play, he decides that the city shall be destroyed with the utmost cruelty (IV,1). This is the peripety. After addressing his troops, Alexandre does not appear on stage again until the final scene of the play. Already he is beginning to regret his hasty decision, but it is only in listening to Timoclée's story that he comes to a full awareness of his error. By his treatment of her he reverses the downswing of the action. The ensuing rising movement is continued in his decision to make immediate preparations for the invasion of Persia, and it will reach its culmination in la Mort de Daire. Alexandre is the main character of the play: the Timoclée thread of plot is introduced mainly to allow Alexandre to reverse the movement of the action and to bring about the discovery.

Timoclée closes on a rising note, with the promise of a glorious future for the hero. La Mort d'Alexandre is also "open-ended", but the final tone is more ironic. The falling movement of the action can be plotted in the first three acts: Alexandre's acceptance of flattery (I); his anger at Apollodore's consultation of the oracles and his threat to torture the second Mage (II); his cruel treatment of Denis (III). All these actions are unworthy of the ideal of kingship that Alexandre is trying to attain, but which he is prevented from achieving by the impulsiveness of his nature. After his poisoning, the action begins an upward movement as Alexandre, aware of the nobler
imperative and of the lack of time at his disposal, strives to establish the well-being and security of his subjects. The play might be considered to continue its upward movement as Perdice repeats Alexandre's dying wish that the kingdom remain united until his son can carry on Alexandre's reign. In fact, the audience remembers how quickly the generals fell out, and how soon after his death Alexandre's dream of empire and universal peace was dissolved.

A feature of the plays studied above is that there is only one central character. In Hardy's other tragedies there are at least two main characters, and the action of this group of plays may be represented as a simultaneous rising and falling movement in which there is a double outcome, unfortunate for one protagonist, fortunate for the other. In at least two of these plays yet greater glory is held in prospect for the surviving protagonist. This is most obviously the case in la Mort de Daire. The Persian king is not presented as a bad monarch, but the action shows the steady decline of his fortunes until his death. The fortunes of Alexandre, on the other hand, are clearly in the ascendant, and if the lines of movement cross at any point, it is immediately after the battle of Arbela, when the traitors begin their plotting to overthrow Daire (III,1).

This may be considered the peripety. For Alexandre there can be no discovery; he has always been conscious of his own greatness

26 Aristotle does not consider this to be a suitable ending for tragedy: pp. 51-52.
and fitness to rule. For Daire, the discovery comes just before his death, with his acceptance of Alexandre as a worthy successor and the placing of the destiny of his empire in the Macedonian's hands. The play ends with Alexandre's fortunes still on the upward line of movement.

In the same way, Didon se sacrifiant ends with the promise of greater glory for Aenée, while Didon, on the descending line of movement, commits suicide. The peripety is much clearer in this play than in la Mort de Daire: it is the scene in act three when the hero and heroine confront one another; while the appearance of Mercure makes Aenée conscious of his destiny (IV,1). Didon never becomes fully aware of the reasons for her downfall, which is why the Chœur and the messenger append a moral in the last scene of the play. The action of the play lies not in Didon's suicide, but in Aenée's decision to leave. Aenée is thus the central figure of the action, Didon's fate being in a sense peripheral, since it depends on his decision. The tragedy is not primarily concerned with Didon's death, but with the problem of saying farewell.

The action of Alceste might be considered to be projected into the future, in that the steady upward progress of Hercule towards apotheosis can be followed throughout the action, and will be achieved after the play has ended. By contrast, the chain of events involving Admète and Pluton is quite complex, since each of the kings is subjected to a rising and falling movement of the action. For Admète, it falls when Alceste dies and he despairs of recovering her; it rises when his wife is
returned to him. For Pluton, the action rises as Alceste and Thésée come under his sway and falls when they are taken from him. The peripety for both kings is the same incident, the taking of Alceste from one king and the restoring of her to the other. This peripety is brought about by Hercule, which is why his thread of the story is central to the action of the play. No discovery is made by either Admète or Pluton: the character of neither king changes or develops in the play; and Hercule has always been aware of his fitness to be deified. It will be noted that, in this play alone, the peripety does not arise from some fault of character; this is perhaps why Hardy considered the play to be a tragi-comedy rather than a tragedy. Hercule is a deus ex machina: at the moment he touches upon the destinies of the two kings their fortunes change. Any discovery the audience may make is likely to spring from a subconscious response to this messianic figure, for the central action of the play is the hero's descent into hell and his symbolic defeat of death.

In the plays we have just considered, the surviving protagonist has been on the upward line of movement; in Mariamne it is Hérode, the protagonist on the descending line, who survives while the heroine dies. It is perhaps for this reason that Mariamne is generally considered the most "tragic" of Hardy's tragedies. Though the outcome is reversed, the lines of movement of the action are the same as in the other plays. Hérode, on the descending line, has committed every crime of tyranny and finally murders his wife. Mariamne, on the ascending
line, has become increasingly outraged by the evil and corruption represented by Hérode without having made a stand against him. Finally she combats this evil openly, and is destroyed in the process, in the same way that Coriolan is destroyed in his violent reversal of the plunge into sin. The peripety for Hérode and Mariamne, the point at which their two lines of movement touch, is the confrontation between them in the fourth act. Awareness of his own evil comes, at least in part, to Hérode after the messenger's report in the final scene of the play, a discovery which unhinges his mind. The play remains essentially moral: Hardy is not cynically showing us the triumph of evil. Mariamne's execution is, paradoxically, a fortunate outcome for her, in that she has constantly sought death as the only release from marriage to a man she abhors. By contrast, Hérode is the true victim of his own faulty decisions, and is thus the central character of the tragedy.

The last play to be considered in this group is Panthée, which could well be subtitled la Clémence de Cirus, for it is this aspect of the intrigue which forms the central action of the play. Admittedly, Cirus virtually ceases to take an active part in the play after the first scene of act three, but it is his decision in this scene which provides the peripety both for himself and for Panthée. Cirus is presented with an opportunity to practise the precepts of clemency he has advocated in a situation which affects him closely. After a moment's hesitation, he chooses the merciful course of action. He has moved
definitely on to the rising line of movement, and, like Aenée, he ceases from this moment to be the protagonist of a drama and moves into the ranks of the semi-divine heroes. Peripety and discovery are simultaneous for Cirus. The secondary action, involving Panthée, takes a downward swing at this same point, for the heroine's sense of gratitude towards Cirus causes her to compromise her principles and, what is worse for the outcome, to involve Abradate in her fall. This leads to the final catastrophe. For Panthée, of course, the discovery does not occur until she hears of the death of her husband. What awareness is the audience intended to arrive at? Presumably Hardy does not wish us to condemn Panthée for choosing to swear allegiance to such a worthy king as Cirus. Perhaps we are expected to conclude that to make the correct choice for the wrong reasons can still lead to disaster.

The unity of action in Hardy's tragedies now becomes apparent. It is organised about a central peripety. Everything that precedes it is a preparation for the change of fortune, and this preparation takes place in the character of the protagonist. Everything that follows is a direct consequence of the peripety. The protagonist is presented either implicitly or explicitly with the choice of a course of action to follow, and the fortunate or unfortunate outcome depends on the choice that he makes. Furthermore, this choice is defined by the ideals that he professes, while the potentialities of his own
character determine the extent to which he attains or falls short of these ideals. The choice is not necessarily made rationally: a Méléagre or an Achille reacts emotionally to a certain situation. The protagonist may attempt, like Coriolan, Alexandre or Daire, to redress the effects of a wrong choice when it is too late to save his own life. The rise or fall of the protagonist sometimes entails, or is juxtaposed to, a contrary movement of the action for another character, so that in some tragedies there is a double outcome. Lanson saw clearly enough in which area of Hardy's tragedies their dramatic power lies. "Il découvre le tragique des volontés en conflit, l'intérêt dramatique de la psychologie, il s'aperçoit que l'émotion s'accroît et que l'action s'anime quand les victimes luttent, et quand les sentiments sont combattus par d'autres sentiments"27.

We have observed with what generally sure judgement Hardy selects and arranges his source material, and with what a good sense of the dramatic he organises the stage spectacle. He is inevitably inhibited to some extent by the undramatic devices of the conventions of Renaissance tragedy, but he manages notwithstanding to present the action directly to the spectator through the stage spectacle, rather than through reports. Hardy was not alone among contemporary dramatists in this endeavour, but what is significant in his achievement is his subordination

27 Lanson, Esquisse, p. 46.
of the spectacle to a definite structural pattern which can be seen in all his tragedies. Good fortune or disaster for the hero depend on a moment of decision, and, what is of capital importance for the development of seventeenth-century tragedy, the motivations for the action are situated firmly in the psychology of the characters.
CHAPTER TWO
THEME: KINGSHIP

Literary historians have assumed from the seemingly gratuitous construction of Hardy's plays that there could not be a unifying theme in his theatre. It has been recognised that, as far as his tragedies are concerned, Hardy stands somewhat apart from the main stream of dramatic production at this period, which developed, if one may generalise, the romanesque themes of sexual love and revenge in an atmosphere of brutality and violence. Rigal suggests that romantic or sexual love is an important and by no means unusual theme in several of the tragedies; but he takes note of "la Mort de Daire et la Mort d'Alexandre, tragédies sans romanesque et sans amour; Coriolan, dépourvue aussi d'amour et consacrée à la glorification de la piété filiale; Mariamne, dont quelques mots malsonnants ne doivent pas nous faire méconnaître la noble sévérité; Panthéée surtout, que l'affection conjugale la plus pure anime tout entière". To this list I would add Alceste, a play not classified as a tragedy by Rigal; thus romantic love is not an important theme in more than half of Hardy's tragedies. Lancaster is of the opinion that, though sexual love may be the most important element of Hardy's tragedies, "in Daire and Coriolan it is completely lacking and in Alexandre it is of very minor significance"; in these plays ambition is stressed, while the desire for revenge, patriotism and admiration are also to be found

1 Rigal, Hardy, p. 668.
among the thematic material\(^2\).

A more recent study of the French drama of this period sees in vengeance the predominant theme of tragedy, tracing its persistence from Aeschylus onwards; yet the author concedes that "les pièces dans lesquelles Hardy a utilisé [ce] thème d'une manière significative et originale sont peu nombreuses"\(^3\). Béranecck despaired of finding any unity of thought at all: "Hardy est un poète absolument impersonnel, un compilateur de première force; il rend les idées qu'il a prises, telles quelles, sans se donner la peine de les marquer de cette empreinte originale qui fait le charme et la grandeur d'un poète"\(^4\). Without claiming "grandeur", or even great originality for Hardy, I would suggest that under this apparent inconsistency of thought there is a single broad theme which runs through all his tragedies, sometimes subordinated to other themes, or apparently so, but always present. This general theme might be called dianoia in the Aristotelean sense: "thought ... is shown in all [the characters] say when proving or disproving some particular point, or enunciating some universal proposition"\(^5\). We must consider, then, the moralistic and polemical attitudes

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\(^3\) Forsyth, *Tragédie française*, p. 335.

\(^4\) Béranecck, *Sénèque et Hardy*, p. 15.

and utterances of the characters, which involves a study, not of the character as an individual (this will be treated in the next chapter), but of the conception he has of his own role in the play, his expressed motives for his course of action. A dialectic will thus be established between the main characters, from which may be deduced the broad philosophical basis for tragedy. One may approach a study of this theme by considering the principal roles in Hardy's tragedies.

The eponymous heroes of six of the tragedies are of royal lineage (Didon, Méléagre, Mariamne, Daire, Alexandre, Alceste); in three of the remaining works kings take important roles. In Timoclée, Alexandre plays a more extensive part than the heroine; Cirus appears in four of the five acts of Panthée; while Agamemnon and Priam have significant roles in la Mort d'Achille. The action of Coriolan alone, set in republican Rome, is not concerned with kings. Several of the tragedies involve more than one royal personage: Aenée in Didon se sacrifiant, Hérode in Mariamne, Alexandre in la Mort de Daire, Admète, and even Pluton, in Alceste, both Agamemnon and Priam in la Mort d'Achille.

Now, there is nothing unusual in Hardy's choice of kings as the principal characters of tragedy; on this aspect of the drama a well-established tradition, hallowed by theoreticians and dramatists alike, had come down from the Renaissance theatre and was to remain active long after Hardy's death. The confrontation of kings within one play is, however, less usual, and is
a distinctive feature of Hardy's tragedies. Furthermore, the conflict between the various monarchs takes place on a level of political ideology; in no case is rivalry in love a motivating factor, and only in the case of Coriolan is personal revenge the dominating reason for action. Even Coriolan is the victim of a struggle for power between factions in Rome, and to this extent the play is a political drama. In Alceste and la Mort de Daire the contrast between political ideologies forms the basis of the whole conflict of the drama; in the other plays the development of character or a struggle on an apparently more personal level between the characters takes place against a background of political activity in which all of the protagonists are involved. It is this political factor which I see as the unifying feature of Hardy's tragedies, and it is this theme that I propose to examine in the following pages.

This study may be divided into two parts, two aspects of the broad theme of kingship. There is the traditional contrast expressed in countless sententiae in Renaissance drama between good kingship and tyranny. Compared with his precursors, Hardy makes sparing uses of such sentences, and does not overburden his plays with abstract discussions of kingship. Rather he gives us discussions of the problems of kingship arising from a particular situation, thus attempting to render in dramatic terms this traditional subject. The ideological contrast between

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6 Théophile, Au Sieur Hardy: "Détestant la pointe et le fard/ Qui rompt les forces à la Muse", in Hardy, Théâtre, I, 11.
the good king and the tyrant is sharply defined and well suited to dramatic treatment. The second aspect of this political theme is, however, of a more equivocal nature: it is the contrast between legitimacy and the right of conquest, between the natural prince and the usurper, an aspect which is susceptible of finer variations of treatment. For the natural prince may also be a tyrant: is it therefore lawful to depose him? Is the conquering prince always to be opposed by the people subjected to his rule? How can the usurper legitimise his regime? These questions seem to be of romanesque and thus more modern origin, and are connected with the concept of absolutism, a topic of much concern for Hardy's contemporaries.

If we now pass to an examination of the principles of good kingship and their corruption by the tyrant, we note how, in terms of the drama, the tyrant is clearly a compelling stage type. Though his role may be reduced to a few essential and easily recognisable features, because of his position of authority he will take a decisive part in the action. His deeds are, moreover, calculated to provoke a strong emotional reaction in the audience, since he will pose the immediate threat to the pathetic hero-type favoured by the Renaissance dramatists, and to the "romantic" hero of many early seventeenth-century

dramas. Hardy's concept of this role remains essentially that of his predecessors and contemporaries. The tyrant is the man who values power for its own sake, and will do anything to retain it. This principle is expressed most clearly in general terms by Besse:

Le plaisir de régner, seule et vraie ambroisie
Qui repaît Jupiter entre les immortels,
Rend ses effets ici, chez les monarques, tels:
L'ardente affection vouée au diadème
N'abandonne les rois dans le sépulcre même;
Tous ils perdront plutôt la lumière du jour
Que de diminuer cet idolâtre amour.
(Daire, 694-700)

As an example of the application of the principle of the lust for power to a particular situation, we may take the accusation levelled by Licinie at Coriolan. Speaking on behalf of the Roman people, Licinie claims that

nous connaissons ton humeur déloyale
Briguer la tyrannie, ardemment l’affecter,
Que le frein de nos lois ne savait arrêter;
Qui, du peuple ennemi, affaiblis sa puissance,
Désirant le courber sous ton obéissance.
(Coriolan, 182-86)

The appeal of such an accusation, whether true or false, to the assembled Roman people is apparent: it is interesting to notice that, in the subsequent action of the play, Coriolan in fact displays some of the characteristics of the tyrant, principally cruelty. Hardy gives his clearest embodiment of

Nabuchodonosor, in Garnier's Les Juifves, is perhaps the best-known representative of this type in sixteenth-century French tragedy. One may also cite the king in Théophile's Pyrame et Thisbé, Tiribaze in Schelandre's Tyr et Sidon, and the wielders of authority in countless tragi-comedies of the early seventeenth century.
the type of the tyrant in the role of Hérode, and, in soliloquy at the beginning of *Mariamne*, the king expresses the main principles of his conduct. First among these is his seizure and maintenance of power: Hérode has

Tous obstacles franchi, toutes difficultés,  
Pour atteindre le faîte envié d’un empire.  
(*Mariamne*, 84-85)

A mythological reference frequently made by Hardy is to the monster-slaying exploits of Hercules. Alexandre claims that, in punishing traitors to his reign, he would have to be another Hercules dealing with a hydra-headed monster (*Alexandre*, 719-20). Cirus also refers to this labour of Hercules, sent by Jupiter to rid the world of the scourge of tyrants, "cet hydre qui pullule avec l’ambition" (*Panthéée*, 12). Among Hardy’s more curious creations is the role of Pluton, who is depicted as the ruler of a conventional earthly kingdom, striving to defend the frontiers against the incursions of Hercule, "ennemi des tyrans, et vengeur de leurs crimes" (*Alceste*, 918). Pluton himself is presented as a tyrant who realises that he can expect no willing support from his subjects in defending his kingdom.

O frivole conseil, que l’ennemi j’attende,  
Présumant commander ceux que la peur commande,  
Ceux de qui le courage, aux talons dévalé,  
Voudraient mon ennemi dans le trône installé.  
(*Alceste*, 881-84)

Charon remarks that he has overheard the shades, who are held in subjection by force ("de force obéissantes"), muttering about rebellion. He has made a note of the names of the ring-leaders, so that they may be punished as soon as the danger to the state has passed (*Alceste*, 985-89).
The exercise of power by fear and by force is typical of the tyrant, and is presented as a theme in several of Hardy's tragedies. During the important discussion of kingship in la Mort de Daire, the cynical Besse claims that a king will stop short of no crime in maintaining his authority:

En matière d'état, les pires actions Qui lui peuvent servir sont des perfections. (Daire, 631-32)

Cratère advises Alexandre that, on principle, a king should begin his reign by striking fear into the hearts of his subjects, lest they think the monarch is afraid of them (Timoclée, 95-100). By contrast, the ghost of Parménion, in enumerating Alexandre's crimes of injustice and ingratitude towards his older generals and advisers, claims that the king has now become a tyrant, ruling by fear and earning the hatred of his subjects, "tyran qui plante aux siens la haine avec l'effroi" (Alexandre, 24). In this respect as in others, Hardy's most fully developed example of the tyrant is Hérode. When Phérore and Salome insinuate that Mariamne is inciting his subjects to revolt, Hérode quotes, as proof that he can keep his people in order, examples of his concept of justice:

Ma justice exercée est un mors suffisant, Des exemples passés rendu sage à présent, (Mariamne, 255-56)

the "ma" underlining the personal aspect of this concept. In the second act, Mariamne complains bitterly of the hardship of being married to such a tyrant. The nourrice tries to defend the king; his royal title assures his deeds of a certain virtue.
Mariamne counters this argument with sarcasm: "sa vertu consistant /Aux meurtres perpétrés dessur les innocents" (Mariamne, 475-76).

The tyrant exercises his cruel authority by means of fear. Thus he works upon the passions of his subjects, for he himself is subject to his passions. The effect of this subjection is underscored by Cirus, who, in urging his troops to pursue and destroy the Lydians, compares the enemy to

Cerfs, que conduit un cerf nourri dans les délices,
Un voluptueux prince, esclave de tous vices.
(Panthéé, 21-22)

The first scene of act two of Didon se sacrifiant presents Iarbe "embrasé de fureur, de vengeance et de haine" (Didon, 285), and his emotional outburst may be contrasted with the self-control displayed by Aenée, a comparison between the two kings which is not, however, developed in the play. Plexipe, outraged by Méléagre's awarding the trophy of the chase to Atalante, decries

Cet inique tyran que l'univers abhorre,
Et qu'un aveugle feu de luxure dévore,
(Méléagre, 709-10)

and, while Atalante defends the "volonté libérale" of the king, Toxée sees in this same deed "un plaisir tyrannique" (Méléagre, 827, 830). The Choeur d'Aténiens claims that Philippe received the just reward (assassination) of the king who cannot control his passions and thus becomes an oppressor (Timoclé, 885-88). The tyrant will not escape the vengeance either of men or of the gods: the ghost of Parménion warns Alexandre of the fate
that is in store for him.

Tu te rendis le ciel inféchible dès l'heure ...
Que, seigneur absolu de mille nations,
Tu restas néanmoins serf de tes passions.

(Alexandre, 13, 15-16)

Alexandre dies at the hands of Antipatre and his sons, and Antipatre regards himself as the instrument of fate (Alexandre, 265-76). Regicide in such circumstances is not sacrélegious, but condoned. The **nourrice**, trying to dissuade Altée from avenging the death of her brothers, argues that "Jupiter seul punit les offences des rois" (Méléagre, 1071). However, Altée carries out her revenge, seeing in her action the hand of divine retribution at work ("O favorable ciel, que ta justice est grande!") Méléagre, 1242), and in the death of Méléagre a warning

Afin de retenir sous le frein du devoir
Quiconque le permet pardessus son pouvoir,
Quiconque ne sait pas comme un sceptre on manie.

(Méléagre, 1247-49)

Cirus claims that the subjects of a bad monarch can and should rebel against his authority:

Aussi pour mon regard, je tiens qu'un populaire
Peut légitimement, ains qu'il se doit distraire
Du servage importun d'un indigne seigneur
Qui veut de son empire ensevelir l'honneur,
Qui ne craint d'employer l'autorité royale
Es plaisirs dissolus d'une vie brutale.

(Panthée, 81-86)

The ghost of Aristobule promises Hérode that his fate will serve as "un affreux exemplaire" (Mariamne, 65) to kings who might model their conduct on his, and it is to Hérode that we should once again look for the outstanding example of the pernicious effect of the passions on kingship. In the trial
scene (act three), we see the extremes to which they lead him. Angered because Mariamne has refused "le devoir d'une femme au mari" (Mariamne, 716), he is prepared to believe her guilty of plotting to poison him and demands to know her motives. Mariamne unwittingly implicates Soème, and Hérode summons his chancellor and the Eunuque, his confidant, to be brought before him. Soème does not deny that he revealed Hérode's secrets to Mariamne, and the Eunuque confirms this; but both indignantly refute the accusation that the chancellor and the queen were guilty of adultery. Mariamne would be incapable of such conduct. However, Hérode is not really concerned with the infringement of his royal authority and the disclosure of his secrets, but only with his personal relations with Mariamne. Acting upon cruel impulse, and regardless of truth or justice, he orders that Soème and the Eunuque be tortured until they confess to the adultery and then be executed. Salome had earlier in the play advised Hérode that his infatuation with Mariamne was prejudicial to his function as king. Though Salome's motives are suspect to say the least, her advice, taken at its face value, is sound; Hérode is

Pris d'une fênesie aveugle, qui messied
A votre âge, en quiconque en un trône se sied,
Maîtrise des bouillons d'une jeunesse folle,
Sur le théâtre humain jouant un moindre rôle
On vous excuserait; mais monarque vieillard,
Votre honneur, votre vie, et nous tous en hasard ...

(Mariamne, 207-12)

Phéreor echoes his sister's words when, after Mariamne's condemnation to death, he praises Hérode's decision, by which he has regained mastery over himself and brought security to
the state.

Quels voeux n'avons-nous faits, de crainte retenus,
Que Mars ne s'endormit au sein d'une Vénus?
Que les allèchements de sa beauté sorcière
Regagnassent sur vous leur puissance première,
Coup qui n'importerait, pardonnant l'attentat,
Que de votre ruine, et celle de l'état.  

(Mariamne, 1425-30)

Hérode has, in fact, demonstrated complete lack of self-control in his treatment of Mariamne, but Phérore's sycophantic tone in these remarks suits him well in his role as flatterer.

It is obvious that the flatterer is important in this context. The king wields supreme power: he depends nevertheless for information and advice upon his counsellors. Such a situation is bound to encourage those ministers anxious for personal advancement or fearful for their heads. The tyrant, swayed by his emotions and anxious to hear only praise of his judgement, is naturally more likely to be influenced by flattery than other kings. The relationship of Hérode and Phérore is by no means unique, either in Hardy's theatre or in that of his predecessors and contemporaries. Panthée is afraid that her complaint about Araspe's behaviour will fall on deaf ears, since Araspe is Cirus' favourite and confidant and a word of flattery from him will sway the king's judgement (Panthée, 404-08). Priam, having given his unwilling consent to his sons' treacherous plan to

murder Achille, has to listen to the fulsome flattery of his wisdom by Déiphobe, who acclaims in the king the second founder of Troy and the restorer of the city's glory (Achille, 421-27). Despite the ghost of Parménion's warning to Alexandre that he has so far become a slave to his passions "jusques à t'enivrer du venin des flatteurs" (Alexandre, 19), and that a dire fate awaits him, the king is only too willing to accept the praises of Perdice in the scene which follows.

Maurice Baudin refers to the phenomenon in seventeenth-century drama of the "shifting of responsibility" for evil acts from the king to a minister -- a consequence of the heightened sense of decorum surrounding the king in seventeenth-century literature. Hardy does not temper his picture of the king's role with nuances of this sort; his monarchs are in general responsible for their own decisions, good or bad. As Baudin points out, Hérode may attempt, in the final act of Mariamne, to shift responsibility for the death of the queen to Salome and Phérole, but in fact Mariamne is condemned because of Hérode's suspicions of her adultery, not because of the accusation of poisoning. Priam is depicted not so much as a bad king, but rather as a weak one, who, in face of the arguments of Pâris and Déiphobe, finally abrogates all authority and responsibility for the murder of Achille. "Priam regrette la faute qu'il a commise; plus le moment de la trahison approche, ...

plus il est torturé par la honte et la douleur. Au moment où ses fils vont partir pour le temple, il les supplie de renoncer à un acte exécrable, qui attirera tôt ou tard la vengeance du ciel"\textsuperscript{11}.

\begin{quote}
Allez, contre mon gré un meurtre je permets  
Qui saignera, vengé, dessus nous à jamais; 
Remuez les enfers, le ciel, la terre et l'onde, 
Seul je vais dévorer mon angoisse profonde.  
\textit{(Achille, 1215-18)}
\end{quote}

Agamemnon, favouring rigorous treatment of Achille, accepts the advice of the majority of his fellow commanders that the hero be treated gently and with sympathy, and asks Nestor to bring Achille before the council on the following day to explain his intentions \textit{(Achille, 291-98)}. That Agamemnon's decision is correct is shown by the truculence of Achille when questioned by his peers: he alone is a disruptive element among the Greek leaders \textit{(Achille, 693-704)}. In the first scene of \textit{Timoclé}, Alexandre is presented with opposing arguments by Cratère and Perdice, but the king alone is responsible for the choice of the course of action which leads to the catastrophe. In \textit{la Mort de Daire}, Alexandre's advisers are all agreed upon the line of action to follow, and the king merely has to choose between the more daring or the more prudent course. By contrast, Daire has authority taken away from him by the conspirators when he refuses to act against his principles; unlike Priam he retains his sense of responsibility even though he is no longer able to act in accordance with it. Perdice and Antigone flatter

\textsuperscript{11} Rigal, \textit{Hardy}, p. 322.
Alexandre in *la Mort d'Alexandre*, but their advice cannot affect the outcome of the play, which has already been irreversibly determined by the king's previous tyrannical decisions. Both Achate and Palinure bolster Aenée's decision in *Didon se sacrifiant* to leave Carthage and establish his kingdom in Italy. Didon herself shows complete lack of responsibility as she waits upon Aenée's decision; when she finally does decide on a course of action (to destroy the Trojans), it is dictated by her emotions rather than by an objective assessment of the situation (*Didon*, 1319-26). Àdmète agrees to Alceste's decision to die instead of him, accepting her argument that it is the action of a responsible king (*Alceste*, 503-14). The tyrant Pluton, on the other hand, accepts the advice of Rhadamante and Charon in dealing with the threat to his state, but, rather like Priam, abrogates responsibility for the outcome:

> Vous auteurs en aurez la première infamie,  
> Et contre le poison d'une langue ennemie,  
> Opposez de rempart, j'attesterai toujours  
> Qu'en courage abondant je manquai de secours.  
> (*Alceste*, 1013-16)

In *Panthée*, the nourrice offers Cirus advice on how to deal with Araspe, but, as the king points out:

> Mon conseil ne dépend de celui d'une femme,  
> Et ma juste censure, ès actes de diffame,  
> Marche d'ordre réglé comme l'astre du jour;  
> (*Panthée*, 471-73)

his decision will be his own responsibility, made in accordance with fixed principles. Méléagre neither asks for nor receives advice on the resolution of his problems. Thus the responsibility
for action rests squarely on the shoulders of the king in Hardy's tragedies, and the outcome of the action depends on the principles followed by the king in accepting this responsibility.

The "principles" of tyranny have been examined above. The tyrant is dominated by his passions. As far as his relationship with his function as king and with his subjects are concerned, we can see that, valuing power for its own sake and pursuing it for his own ambitious ends, he will keep his subjects in submission by force, by the cruelty and injustice of his reign causing them to fear and hate him. Apparently so powerful, the tyrant will paradoxically be open to the blandishments and cajolery of the sycophantic courtier; but Hardy makes it clear that though the king may try to shift responsibility for the catastrophe to his advisers, unless he relinquishes power he alone is responsible for the outcome, good or evil, of his actions. Thus it is not treasonable for his subjects to rise up against the tyrant's rule, as in the threatened revolt of the shades in *Alceste*, and it is regicide in name only to assassinate such leaders.

As might be expected, the principles of good kingship are diametrically opposed to those of the tyrant. The latter values and exercises power for its own sake; by contrast, the good king sees as his highest function his duty to the state. It is a duty of which Aenée is fully conscious. He has a
sacred trust to re-establish Troy in Italy, and it is of his duty to preserve his subjects that Achate and Palinure remind him in the first scene of Didon se sacrifiant. "Comme Aenée voit que le bonheur ou la perte d'un peuple dépendent de la résolution qu'il prendra, il consulte, avant de la prendre, ses fidèles compagnons Achate et Palinure". In the opening scene of the play in which he appears, Méléagre prays to Diane that his people not be punished for the sins of their king:

Diane, désormais fléchible, prends pitié
D'un peuple, pour son roi trop longtemps châtié. ...
Rêpête sur moi seul, comme plus criminel,
Qui me voue au pays, le délit paternel.
(Méléagre, 3-4; 27-28)

The messenger, in giving his report of the boar hunt, insists upon the major part Méléagre plays in killing the beast. At the sight of the monster the other hunters had scattered; only the king had stood his ground,

Méléagre, qu'époint cette royale envie
D'affranchir ses sujets, ou de perdre la vie.
(Méléagre, 529-30)

Méléagre is performing his royal duty, of which the Choeur de peuple and the Troupe de paysans had reminded him (Méléagre, 71-72; 109-12), to protect his subjects from external danger. Pâris employs the same argument in persuading Priam to permit the murder of Achille:

Sire, remémorez le devoir d'un bon prince,
Sensible des premiers au mal de sa province,
(Achille, 1161-62)

12 Ibid., p. 274.
and is thus able, by a sort of moral blackmail, to persuade his father to agree to a course of action of which he disapproves. Before the battle of Arbela, Masée assures Daire that his troops recognise his qualities of kingship — his paternal concern for the well-being of his subjects, and his willingness to lay down his life in their service,

Monarque en qui reluit la pure affection
D'un père vers ses fils mise à perfection,
Vrai pasteur, qui daignez, belle et royale envie,
Pour les peuples commis n'épargner votre vie.

(Daire, 339-42)

In spite of the accusations of the ghost of Parménion and the reasons given by Antipatre and his sons for plotting regicide, Alexandre is presented as a king mindful of his duty to protect his people. He is not afraid of death; his only concern is to leave his kingdom safe and strong, thus to establish the security of his subjects:

Autre appréhension ne trouble ma constance,
Ne m'agite l'esprit faible de résistance,
Que celle qu'un bon prince est obligé d'avoir,
Un prince qui, vivant, désirera pourvoir
Aux désordres prévus ...
Si le destin jaloux ne donne à son désir
De mettre en sûreté ses peuples à loisir.

(Alexandre, 529-33; 535-36)

Before Alexandre departs for the fatal banquet, Roxane pleads with him to heed the repeated warnings he has received, and to consider the fate of his subjects, which is the first concern of the good king (Alexandre, 761-64). Admète similarly has no personal regrets about dying in accordance with the oracle; "père commun des miens", he is only sorry that he will not see the kingdom he has ruled in exemplary fashion attain its apogee
in a golden age (Alceste, 233-44). Alceste appeals to Admète's sense of duty in persuading him to live:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{J'appellerais ta gloire indiscrète offusquer,} \\
\text{Si tu te pouvais faire au péril remarquer} \\
\text{Qu'il fallût racheter par la mort volontaire} \\
\text{Ton peuple, d'un servage ennemi tributaire:} \\
\text{Au front d'une bataille inconnu s'exposer,} \\
\text{Lors un roi ne se doit que l'honneur proposer;} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(Alceste, 503-08)

but to submit to this useless death in response to an oracle is to abdicate his responsibilities. In the soliloquy with which he opens the fifth act, Admète confesses that only his sense of duty towards his subjects has prevented his committing suicide to join Alceste in death (Alceste, 1125-30).

The contrast between Admète's attitude to kingship and that of Pluton is apparent; the shades, unwilling subjects, are ready to revolt against Pluton at the first opportunity. On the other hand, Euripile assures Admète of the loyalty and love of his people. If destiny will permit them to die in place of the king,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mille se trouveront au lieu d'une victime,} \\
\text{Mille vous souilleront de leur sang magnanime,} \\
\text{Mille de nous, voués au salut de leur roi,} \\
\text{Regarderont venir la Parque sans effroi.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(Alceste, 453-56)

Indeed, the good king cannot reign without the good will of his subjects. Daire, in refusing Patron's offer of protection against the traitors, says that all his followers, including the innocent, would feel themselves equally under suspicion if he

\[13\text{ What Alceste appears to mean here is: "Je dirais que tu offusquerais indiscrètement ta gloire ... "}
\]
sought refuge among the Greek mercenaries. The king would prefer to die "beaucoup plus que trembler sous la haine des miens"
(Daire, 941-48). He repeats these sentiments to his confidant Artabase:

Mon esprit, en cent parts contraires divisé,
Ne sait comment éteindre un discord attisé,
Et mon meilleur, hélas! serait de ne plus être,
Si mal-voulu des miens, si misérable maître.
(Daire, 1071-74)

A concept of kingship based on a paternalistic relationship between king and subjects can only be effective as long as the latter are sure of the wisdom of the king's rule and are willing, loyally and devotedly, to accept his decisions. Daire's misfortune is not that he is a bad king, but that he is an unsuccessful one, a situation which affords Besse and Nabarzane the opportunity to argue that the alternative principles of kingship which they propose, those of expediency, are at least as valid as Daire's. "Daire inspire la sympathie par sa tristesse noble et sans abattement, par cette défiance de l'avenir qui ne l'empêchera pas de faire jusqu'au bout son métier de roi"14.

The good king has the right to expect his subjects to fulfil their duty and to submit to his authority; he can punish them if they rebel against him. Alexandre's punishment of the unruly Thebans provides the action of Timoclée. The king offers more than once to forget the past if the Thebans will accept

14 Rigal, Hardy, p. 365.
his authority:

L'incomparable honneur des monarques du monde,
Afin que sa clémence au courage réponde,
Comme de vaincre plus en la Grèce lassé,
Offre au peuple thébain un oubli du passé,
Pourvu qu'en son devoir il rentre dessus l'heure,
Que le désir chez lui de rébellion meure.

*(Timoclée, 1281-86)*

The Thebans refuse, and Alexandre destroys the city; he destroys at the same time a system of government which is always shown in an unfavourable light in Hardy's tragedies, the republican form which, though democratic in name, is tyrannical in practice under the rule of the demagogues Phoenix and Prothyre, Démosthène and Phocion. "Hardy ... a voulu raconter cette heure décisive de l'histoire grecque, où les Phénix et les Démosthène, c'est-à-dire le passé, ont livré leur dernier combat au Macédonien, c'est-à-dire l'avenir; où la liberté des cités helléniques a dû succomber pour mieux assurer le triomphe de l'hellénisme".

Perdicce, in advising Alexandre to deal leniently with the revolt of the Thebans and Athenians, reminds the king of his father's reason for moderation in his treatment of the Greeks:

Ce Philippe, l'honneur des monarques du monde, ...
Trembla, victorieux, repensant au danger
Où Mars en un clin d'œil fut prêt de le plonger,
Où le précipitait l'éloquence vénale
D'un simple harangueur, aux crédules fatale.

*(Timoclée, 105, 107-10)*

Alexandre decries the ingratitude of the two cities which, "sous un joug de tyrans innombrables serviles" *(Timoclée, 294)*, have refused to recognise or to accept the benevolence of his rule.

The conditions that he presents to the Athenian ambassadors are that they break off their alliance with Thebes and deliver the demagogues to him for punishment:

Le dernier s'accomplit au supplice exemplaire
Des harangueurs qui font gloire de me déplaire,
Que le peuple crédule écoute à son malheur,
Tellement que, punis, mon repos est le leur;
Athènes purgera l'odieuse vermine
Qui trouble son état, le dévore et le mine:
Sous l'aristocratie elle fleurit après,
Et ne redoute plus nos belliqueux apprêts.

(Timoclée, 325-32)

His condition for raising the siege of Thebes is similar: that the citizens hand over to him Phoenix and Prothyre (Timoclée, 1287-90). As the first act of the play was devoted to Alexandre's deliberations with his counsellors, so the second presents the demagogues Démosthène and Phocion advising the Athenians on the course of action to be followed in the current situation. As Cratère and Parménion had advised Alexandre to act with vigour, and Antipatre and Perdice had advocated prudence and moderation, so Démosthène represents the "war" party in Athens, and Phocion the "peace" party. Démosthène argues that Athens should actively resist Alexandre in the interests of national honour and prestige, while Phocion, anxious to avoid bloodshed and misery, advocates appeasement in Athens' present weak military and economic situation. However, the parallelism between the two scenes goes no further; for, whereas in the first act Alexandre had been able to maintain the debate on a purely military and political level, to balance the opposing arguments (he accepts neither the extreme position of Cratère nor that of Perdice), and to act
decisively on them, the debate between Démosthène and Phocion is constantly degenerating to a level of personal vilification, despite the efforts of Léonide to placate the two demagogues. "En vain Léonide intervient-il pour calmer la dispute qui s'échauffe entre les deux orateurs. À chaque fois qu'il donne ses sages conseils, la discussion redevient purement politique, mais, à chaque fois, elle retombe vite aux personnalités." Both Démosthène and Phocion are somewhat grotesquely caricatured, and the scene, though rather long, is lively and amusing, and could be read as a satire by Hardy of the democratic process. Similarly, Pheonix and Prothyre are shown appealing not to reason, but to mass emotion as they harangue the Thebans and encourage them imprudently to reject Alexandre's offers of leniency (Timoclée, III, 2, 3). These scenes serve to illustrate Antipatré's prediction that Thebes and Athens, both ruled by demagogic factions, cannot long remain in agreement.

Peu d'attente suffit à rompre l'harmonie,
A semer du discord l'amère zizanie
Entre ces deux cités, comparables de sort
À ceux qu'en même barque environne la mort,
Qui donnent au péril la haine mutuelle
Pour affranchir l'horrur d'une fin si cruelle,
Mais qui, sur le rivage et récous au danger,
Ainsi qu'au précédent sont prêts de s'égorger.

(Timoclée, 245-52)

In only three of Hardy's tragedies do the people, take a significant part in the stage action. We have seen Méléagre's subjects demanding the protection from the ravages of the boar which it is the king's duty to provide. The demagogues of

16 Ibid., p. 388.
Thebes and Athens have been considered above. Part of the interest of Coriolan lies in the presentation of the struggle for political power in Rome between the Sénat, representing the aristocracy, and the Tribuns, representing the people. In the second scene of act one, Licinie enumerates the crimes against the "bien du public" (Coriolan, 164) of which Coriolan stands accused. Firstly, he had advised the Sénat to refuse a gift of wheat which would have been distributed among the people; the second accusation is that Coriolan is seeking to overthrow the established laws which recognise the sovereignty of the people and to gain complete political power, in other words, to make himself king. In reply, Coriolan says that he advised the refusal of the gift of wheat in case the people became accustomed to dictating their will to the Sénat; Coriolan, as a patrician, is defending the aristocratic principle of government. As for the vague accusation of wishing to seize power, Coriolan denies it indignantly and with scorn. Licinie accuses Coriolan of further discrimination against the people in the distribution of booty from a town he had captured, and, although Coriolan again vehemently refutes this accusation, the Choeur des Romains feels that he is beginning to succumb before these attacks ("notre rogue lion commence à s'abaisser: /Gardons-le de pouvoir jamais se redresser", Coriolan, 251-52). Meanwhile, the senators mutter that they should rally round Coriolan, the first of their number:

Lâches, souffrirons-nous un chaos déréglé?
Un peuple de fureur, envieux, aveuglé,  
Du premier du Sénat balancer la fortune?  
Nous lairrons-nous en lui fouler en sa rancune?  
Il faut, s'il est besoin, unanimes mourir,  
Mourir tous à ses pieds, ou bien le secourir.  

(Coriolan, 259-64)

However, they do nothing, and while the Choeur des Romains gleefully hurl insults at Coriolan as he leaves to go into exile, the Sénat expresses its fear that this first taste of power will embolden the Tribuns to usurp complete authority (Coriolan, 291-300). "Hardy, par une intention digne de Shakespeare, montrait ce Sénat s'excitant à défendre Coriolan, le laissant banir sans oser bouger, puis, resté seul sur le forum après le départ des forcenés proscripteurs, s'accusant de sa faiblesse et de son ingratitude"17.

Coriolan, in reviewing his trial and banishment, sees that, if the popular party has unjustly attacked him in order to gain power, his own party also is guilty of failing to give him support: "l'un seulement est plus, l'autre moins criminel" (Coriolan, 328). He determines to have his revenge; and the authority of the Tribuns, who were so confident in the period of peace and prosperity won for them by Coriolan's victories, crumbles before his onslaughts. It is left to the Sénat to reassume power, and it does not fail to remind the Choeur des Romains that it had warned the people of the consequences of their attacking Coriolan. The Tribuns had been too concerned with pursuing their own factional interests in destroying the

17 Ibid., p. 329.
power of the *Sénat* to consider the damage to the public interest.

Le Sénat pour néant vous remontrait la perte
Qu'apportait un tel homme à sa ville déserte,
Qu'un jour il se pourrait de l'outrage venger,
Au public intérêt, et au commun danger;
Nous n'en fûmes pas crus, ains lors vous fites gloire
D'obtenir, l'exilant, sur le Sénat victoire.

*(Coriolan, 593-98)*

If Coriolan has appeared to do the greater harm to the common people than to the aristocrats, it is only to sow discord between them in order better to subjugate them. The two factions must now act together in trying to re-establish peace *(Coriolan, 615-24)*; but it is the *Sénat* which takes the initiative in sending the ambassadors to make further overtures to Coriolan *(Coriolan, 689-96)*.

This is not the full extent of Coriolan's conflict with the common people. In the final act of the play, Amfidie accuses Coriolan of treachery to the Volscian cause. His arguments are ostensibly addressed to the *Conseil des Volsques*, but at the crucial moment of the trial, when Coriolan confesses that he was less than whole-hearted in his devotion to the cause of destroying Rome, Amfidie appeals directly to the assembled Volscian people: "vous voyez qu'il confesse à plein sa perfidie" *(Coriolan, 1209)*. The *Choeur des Volsques* clamours for Coriolan's death, and, indeed, is so inflamed by Amfidie's arguments as to take the law into its own hands and murder Coriolan on the spot. Amfidie, whose motive for seeking Coriolan's death is personal envy rather than public service,
asks the **Conseil** to excuse the people for carrying out what would in any case have been the verdict of the council.

Le peuple n'a rien fait, justement mutiné,  
Qu'executer du ciel un arrêt destiné;  
Ne se voulant, tyran, déposer de l'office,  
Il l'y devait contraindre avec ce sacrifice;  
Louez-le donc de l'acte, au lieu de le blâmer,  
Au lieu de le cuider de propos réprimer.  
(*Coriolan*, 1219-24)

The irony of the situation is that Coriolan, embittered by his unjust treatment at the hands of the Roman populace, is the victim of an arbitrary act by the Volscian people.

In Hardy's plays, popular rule is presented as misrule. It pursues factional interests rather than the common good; it is unprincipled in seizing power and capricious in wielding it; and it is subject to panic in times of crisis. It is, in fact, tyranny of the worst kind. Aristocratic rule is better, if only because the nobles have the experience of leadership in battle; but the aristocracy should stand firmly behind a strong leader, preferably one whose ultimate authority cannot be questioned: in other words, a king. The inconsistency of the people's reactions to events must be counter-acted by the king's strict administration of justice and application of the rule of law. The tyrant is unable to deal impartially with the people, given the selfish basis of his seizure of power and the fear by means of which he dominates his subjects. **Hérode** has risen, after a long and difficult struggle, from obscurity to kingship:
His idea of justice is cruel repression, and in Mariamne's trial he is not as impartial as he promises to be:

Neutre en cette action me porter je proteste,
Quoiqu'elle me regarde, et que seul offensé
Je me pusse venger sans le droit balance.

(Mariamne, 1280-82)

Mariamne points out that this is an untenable position:

"quiconque est juge ensemble et partie on recuse" (Mariamne, 1328). The tyranny of the demagogues consists in their ignorance of justice and duty (Timoclée, 295-96), for justice is a divine attribute and a terrible responsibility and must be respected as such by the king.

Celui triomphe plus qui triomphe du vice,
Sous son autorité n'admettant l'injustice,
Que si de l'univers il maniait le frein.

(Panthée, 189-91)

The law is above the king, and he must be strictly impartial in meting out justice. In dealing with her case, Alexandre promises Timoclée that

Juge sans passion, vous obtenez de moi
Tout ce que l'on saurait de l'équité d'un roi.

(Timoclée, 2282-83)

The more just the king, the more he realises that divine justice is tempered by divine mercy. Alluding to the familiar Homeric image of the two "tonneaux" containing good and evil
fortune, Alexandre comments on Jupiter's impartiality in his dealings with mortals, but adds that "sa clémence toujours succède à sa justice" (Timoclée, 2248). Cirus makes an oblique reference to the image of the wheel of fortune when, at the height of a resounding victory, he determines upon moderation:

Or de peur d'irriter fortune à double face,
La fortune obtenue il faudra modérer,
De sorte qu'elle n'ait de quoi se colérer:
Pityables, cléments à la tourbe captive,
La clémence jamais de son fruit ne nous prive,
Elle attire les coeurs par un céleste aimant,
Et va des plus félons la rancune charmant.

(Panthée, 90-96)

Alexandre applies the precept of clemency to a particular situation, for after having, as "juge sans passion", recognised as excusable Timoclée's murder of Hypparque and restored her freedom, he goes beyond the strict requirements of justice and orders that her plundered property be given back while all admire and pay hommage to her virtuousness.

Ma clémence ne peut se choisir favorable
Sujet plus que le sien aux âges mémorable.

(Timoclée, 2324-25)

Timoclée as a play is very much concerned with clemency as an aspect of kingship. Alexandre is aware of the principles of good kingship which his anger with the Thebans leads him to betray. Recognising that he has been less than faithful to these principles, he tries to rectify the situation by an act of mercy, thus acquiring a higher conception of and a greater insight into the principles of good kingship. Early in the play Alexandre had discussed the problem of clemency with his advisers, Cratère and Perdice offering opposing arguments.
Alexandre claims that he has given the Greeks proof of the
clemency of his regime and his desire to be moderate:

\[
\text{N'exiger que le nom de simple capitaine [i.e. not king]
Donne de ma clémence une preuve certaine,
Clémence qui les veut en leurs lois maintenir.} \\
\text{(Timoclée, 141-43)}
\]

Cratère argues that the time for clemency is past, since it
encourages the seditious factions which severity would crush
(Timoclée, 161-64). To this argument Perdice replies that,
if cruel repression by a king in his own kingdom causes his
subjects, who are used to royal domination, to rise up against
him, what chance is there that republics (the Greek city-states)
will not do the same (Timoclée, 169-78)? The safest foundation
for a state is the benevolence of the king's rule:

\[
\text{Mais comment asservir? Avec une douceur
Qui jette des états le fondement plus sûr.} \\
\text{(Timoclée, 199-200)}
\]

Hardy does not suggest that there is any easy answer to
the problem of clemency. To gain the loyalty and affection of
his subjects, the king must show himself to be merciful and
forgiving, but there seem always to be subjects ready to take
advantage of his trust and leniency. The fate of Alexandre and
Daire makes one ask oneself whether the repressive measures
advocated by Hérode and Cratère are not the safest solution.
The poisoned Alexandre regrets that his incomparable clemency
has brought nothing but ingratitude, conspiracy and revolt
against him, and has finally led to his assassination by traitors
(Alexandre, 982-90). Patron is influenced by instances of
Daire's past clemency in offering the king asylum among the
Greek mercenaries. We have already noticed Daire's reasons for rejecting the offer; but Besse, who has observed the conversation from a distance and suspects that Patron has informed the king of the plot, resolves to deceive Daire by admitting everything and feigning repentance:

une hypocrite feinte,
Comme l'âme envers lui de repentance atteinte,
Ce simple naturel remettra dans nos rets.

(Daire, 965-67)

He will use Daire's observance of the principle of clemency to bring about the king's downfall, an ironic situation which is played out in the scene which follows. Artabase tells Besse and Nabarzane, who are waiting for an audience with Daire, that the king is no longer angry with them. He praises Daire's clemency, a quality which assures him the loyalty of his subjects (Daire, 990-96). Besse and Nabarzane say that they have come expressly to affirm their repentance and to beg the king's forgiveness, and when Daire enters Besse throws himself on his mercy, praising in exaggerated terms his clemency, wisdom and magnanimity.

Monarque aussi clément que sage et magnanime,
Exorable, pardonne un téméraire crime,
Qui prosterne l'auteur à ces sacrés genoux,
Résolu de finir sa vie ou ton courroux.

(Daire, 1009-12)

Daire forgives the traitors willingly, assuring them that he has always held mercy to be the highest principles of good kingship:

la vertu qui décore les rois
Consiste à pardonner, béins, autant de fois
Que le coupable vient reconnaître sa faute.

(Daire, 1023-25)
Besse and Nabarzane effusively swear their loyalty and, in order to prove it, Besse says that they will place a guard of their own men around Daire's tent. The result will be, of course, that Daire will become their prisoner and that Patron and the Greeks will be prevented from helping him. But the king has not been deceived and, after the conspirators leave, he condemns their treachery. He cannot decide on what action to take in this situation. He will not seek refuge with the Greeks, for he would appear unjustly to cast suspicion upon the innocent, and though he contemplates suicide, he rejects this as an act of cowardice; besides, it would be to desert those who remain loyal to him (Daire, 1075-80). Daire, in a weak position and unable to exert authority by a show of strength, retains his dignity and nobility of character because he remains true to the principles of good kingship. Unfortunately, in order that the idealistic morality of such a social structure work, everyone, king and subject alike, must accept it. Besse and Nabarzane corrupt these ideals to their own ends because they do not understand the principle which underlies them.

Clemency is not the prerogative of kings alone, but is required of any peacemaker. Volommie, in pleading with her son to cease his assaults on Rome, asks Coriolan not to forget his obligations to the Volsques, but to arrange peace between the two sides.

Equitable censeur de nos discussions,
Je ne te voudrais pas conseiller, mal-aprise,
De trahir ceux qui t'ont leur puissance commise,
Non plus que de vouloir ton pays ruiner;
Tu dois, fidèle à l'un, à l'autre pardonner,
De deux extrémités moyennant un remède:
Au regard des vertus la clémence précède.
(Coriolan, 1008-14)

Similarly, Priam praises in Achille the peacemaker as much as
the warrior:

Qui tient des valeureux le suprême degré,
Qui tient le contre-poids en l'une et l'autre armée,
Autant de sa vertu que de sa renomée,
Qui, clément, s'humilie à rechercher, vainqueur,
Ceux qui n'ont tantôt plus ni d'espoir ni de coeur.
(Achille, 1148-52)

Both Coriolan and Achille are murdered in their pious efforts
to secure peace; but we should not conclude that Hardy regarded
with scepticism or even pessimism the efforts of the peacemaker,
or considered that the ideals of the king who attempts to rule
mercifully are bound to be frustrated. As we have seen,
Coriolan is the victim of a corrupt political system and the
enmity of a jealous rival; Achille is the victim of a breach of
good faith. Priam expresses the principle energetically: good
faith is as essential to dealings between states as it is to the
relations between king and subjects.

La foi sur les vertus pare une royaute:
Sans elle l'univers serait-une brigandage,
Nous la devons tenir, fût-ce à notre dommage.
(Achille, 1140-42)

Cirus assures Panthéé that he is not behaving cynically in
pardoning Araspe, and as a sign of his good faith he sets his
captive free without ransom and arranges to reunite her with
her husband. In fact, it is Araspe who has acted in bad faith
and has threatened to bring into disrepute Cirus' regime, giving
the king a reputation for favouritism and injustice:

ou vole en public l'éclat d'une injustice,
Où mon autorité sert de voile à son vice, ...
Je doute quels tourments il n'a point mérités.
(Panthée, 443-44, 446)

Indeed, since Araspe enjoys Cirus' favour, he merits greater punishment, and should not enjoy the benefit of the king's natural inclination to clemency (Panthée, 447-50). Cirus yields, however, to the pleas of the nurse and to his own tendency to be merciful: he forgives Araspe and treats Panthée, rather as Alexandre treats Timoclée, with honour and respect, thus gaining her loyalty and that of Abradate.

The king's relations with his subjects define the goodness or tyranny of his reign. The king must be aware of his duty to the state and subordinate his personal desires and ambitions to the common good. He will weigh carefully the arguments for and against a certain course of action in a given situation, will come to a decision, based on fixed principles, about the action to be taken, and will accept responsibility for the outcome. Men of such strength of will and personality, though almost as rare in Hardy's tragic theatre as in life, are nevertheless depicted as necessary to the perfect functioning of the state. Even a somewhat less then perfect king is preferable to the alternative, the chaos of democratic government, characterised by polemics, indecision and recriminations. The king's subjects owe him their obedience and loyalty in return for the justice and clemency of his reign; the tyrant's subjects may lawfully
rebels against him, but it is never less than treason and sacrilege for the good king's subjects to try to depose him. Alexandre is among the kings who are undeservedly assassinated. In a speech in the first act of *la Mort d'Alexandre*, he acknowledges that his reign has been less than perfect and that he has occasionally been guilty of undue violence, but that this has been the result of anger, that it has never been voluntary or premeditated, and that such moments have quickly passed. He swears that his aim has always been to establish universal peace and harmony, and that he has never been inclined towards cruelty, but always towards clemency (*Alexandre*, 137-44). Antigone says that, in observing these principles, Alexandre has deserved to become the ruler of the universe. In this the king resembles Jupiter, whose goodness exceeds his power, and who gains the allegiance of men by his "traitement humain" and by his beneficence. His greatness consists in his good kingship rather than in his military prowess (*Alexandre*, 145-54). Circe also makes important statements about the principles of good kingship in the first scene of *Panthée*, but, unlike Alexandre, he is not murdered for his pains. Priam is well aware of these principles, but he is too old and too feeble to resist the arguments based on expediency advanced by his sons. Admète is presented as the good king deservedly beloved of his subjects; when he learns that he has to die, his first concern is for their well-being. The contrast within the same play is with the tyrant Pluton.
This reciprocal relationship of service and loyalty between king and subjects lays the foundation for the concept of absolutism, a subject also commented on by some of Hardy's kings. For example, Agamemnon, while accepting complete responsibility in deciding on how to deal with Achille, asks his fellow Greek commanders to bear witness that he does not abuse his authority:

Vous, généreuse fleur, vous, guerriers indomptés
Qui, colonnes, du faix une part supportez,
Arbitres, publiez qu'insolent je n'abuse
Du pouvoir absolu, si après on m'accuse.

(Achille, 619-22)

In other words, Agamemnon has no intention of allowing his personal animosity towards Achille to cause him to commit a tyrannical deed. Méléagre, presented as a good king ready to lay down his life to serve his people at the beginning of the play, becomes a tyrant and is justifiably murdered at the end. He is an absolute monarch, there is no questioning his authority; but it is only in the second half of the play, during his rapid decline towards tyranny and when his actions have become extremely arbitrary, that he asserts the principle of absolutism. Thus Méléagre cries out against the action of Flexipe and Toxée,

Ces rebelles géants à l'âme déloyale,
Qui négligent, pervers, l'autorité royale,
Qui foulent ma puissance, oSENT à son mépris
Prendre où je l'ai donné ce victorieux prix;

(Méléagre, 929-32)

but in the lines which immediately follow he praises Atalante's beauty in such a way as to suggest that his decision in awarding the prize was not based on the best kingly principles of reason and impartiality. When Atalante pleads with Méléagre not to
treat his uncles too harshly, the king replies that the good of the state requires that he preserve his absolute authority (Méléagre, 965-66), and after he has put Flexipe and Toxée to the sword, Méléagre affirms the justice of his action in that it restores his authority as king.

Ces ravisseurs punis, de leur témérité
Possèdent justement le loyer mérité;
Mon vouloir maintenant n'a plus qui le contrôle. (Méléagre, 1019-21)

The absolute monarch is given great power, but his duty is to use that power in the best interests of the state, and in accordance with the principle of justice. He remains the first servant of the state, he must recognise the supremacy of the rule of law, and thus he must not allow personal considerations to influence his decisions and lead him to act arbitrarily. If he does, he becomes a tyrant, and as such may be lawfully deposed.

One should repeat at this point that there is nothing in Hardy's analysis of the principles of kingship which is original or unique. The same arguments may be found in the plays of his predecessors and, indeed, of the dramatists who followed him. I hope, however, to have shown the extent of Hardy's concern with this theme, and the persistence and consistency with which he treats it. When Lancaster writes that "Hardy cannot be called, like Corneille, a political dramatist"\(^\text{18}\), I must disagree

with him. Nor is this the end of Hardy's concern with this theme, for we have now to consider an aspect which he was among the first dramatists to treat, that of legitimacy and the right of conquest, and the associated problems of liberty and patriotism. In this context we must study the statements made about their roles by the conquering kings and by those affected by their conquest, as well as the relations between conqueror and conquered.

Hardy presents four illegitimate kings in his tragedies, of whom one, Alexandre, appears in three plays. It is a matter of semantics whether one calls these kings conquerors or usurpers; Hérode is a usurper because he is a tyrant of humble birth, whereas Alexandre, Aenée and Cirus are hereditary kings who are expanding their empires, and who are among the more admirable of Hardy's royal personages. Aenée's role as conquerer is not examined in *Didon se sacrifiant*; he has, after all, not yet founded his empire. Nevertheless, he makes repeated references to the necessity of founding a new kingdom in Italy, and it is his decision to resume his role as conqueror and to leave Carthage which provides the action of the play. The other three monarchs are presented as conquerors (or usurpers) in conflict with legitimate kings or their supporters. Their problems are essentially those of any king, with the addition of others peculiar to their own situation as illegitimate rulers. Hérode has seized power by extirpating a line of monarchs, replacing their good kingship by his own tyranny. Cirus has
dropped a bad, if legitimate king from Lydia to establish his own just reign. Alexandre is presented in a more equivocal position, since, while he is essentially a good king, his conquest is at the expense of another benevolent ruler, Daire.

The methods employed by Hérode in usurping the kingship are those that one would expect, given the tyrannous features of his subsequent reign. In the prologue to Mariamne the ghost of Aristobule tells how Hérode had perjured the trust placed in him by murdering the rightful king, Hyrcane, who had abdicated in his favour, and had then murdered Aristobule, Hyrcane's son and thus legitimate successor to his realm (Mariamne, 7-21).

Hérode's account of his rise to power is, as one might imagine, rather different. He has by his own efforts made himself king, "où premier je me sui de ma race fait luire" (Mariamne, 86), and can have no scruples about putting to death potential rivals for the throne. As a matter of expediency he has eradicated an ancient line of kings.

In a century in which absolute rule and the divine right of kings were to become established political principles, such a course of action might be considered excusable, particularly if,
as Hérode does, the monarch brings internal stability and military prestige to his kingdom. These are the arguments employed by the nourrice in objecting to Mariamne's continued hostility to Hérode's reign: he is king, the king's word is law, and has now been accepted by the Judaeans.

Pilote nécessaire à l'état éprouvé,  
Chacun qui le blâmait l'a depuis approuvé.  
Entreprendrez-vous donc dessus une commune,  
De force accommodée à sa bonne fortune?  
(Mariamne, 487-90).

Mariamne insists that his reign is none the less illegal and tyrannical ("roi contre tous les droits des gens et de nature", Mariamne, 473), and later in the play the queen reminds Hérode that a man born to the kingship and conscious of its principles would have been incapable of committing Hérode's crimes: "un naturel généreux et royal /Ne saurait consentir à rien de déloyal" (Mariamne, 1023-24). Hérode's fault seems, then, to be not so much his usurpation of the throne, not even his replacement of the benign rule of "ces princes naturels, ces pasteurs débonnaires" (Mariamne, 21) by the cruelty and repression of his tyranny; his main shortcoming is the lowliness of his birth compared with that of the hereditary monarchs he has deposed, and his consequent inability to comprehend the true bases of the king's power and how he should exercise it.

Cirus, by contrast, is nothing if not aware of the principles of good kingship, as is shown in the opening speeches of Panthée. With the entrance of the heroine there ensues a brief discussion of the relative merits of the legitimate king and of the conqueror.
Panthée claims that the natural prince, even if he is a tyrant, is preferable to the usurper. Cirus replies that, once the people's rancour has abated, they will accept a conqueror provided he prove himself to be a benevolent monarch (Panthée, 135-44). The remainder of the first half of the play is devoted precisely to Cirus' efforts to prove to Panthée that he is fit to be king. In this instance the conqueror quickly establishes his worthiness; the question is whether the conquered people will accept his rule. The problems of liberty and patriotism, so important for Panthée and for Abradate who are both essentially noble and loyal characters, are fully debated in the interview between them. Panthée repeats to her husband Cirus' offer of an honourable position in his service; Abradate replies that he would accept, were his first duty not to liberate his country. While Panthée recognises the demands of patriotism:

On doit, je le confesse, au pays un amour Charitable et pieux jusques au dernier jour,  
(Panthée, 625-26)

she argues for prudence in the face of an invincible power. Abradate objects that Cirus could never really trust a traitor or turn-coat (i.e. Abradate), but Panthée repeats that there can be no treason to a country that is completely conquered and to a cause that is already lost. Abradate's final objection is on a more personal level: granted his desire to serve his country as a patriot is thwarted, he would rather serve any master than Cirus.
Au pis, nous avons plus d'honneur à nous ranger
En la sujétion du plus vil étranger,
Servir la cruauté des peuples de Borée,
Celle des Nasamons en l'Afrique altérée,
Que de prêter le col au fâlon ravisseur
De notre liberté.

(Panthée, 689-94)

Panthée insists that Cirus is not like other conquerors: his reign is founded on good faith, and his conquest has been achieved without cruelty (Panthée, 694-96). Thus she manages to persuade Abradate to serve a usurper who is a good king. Indeed, as Panthée points out to Abradate's herald, to be subject to a king such as Cirus is the greatest liberty.

Ces fers, mon grand ami, dessous un tel seigneur
Sont une liberté magnifique d'honneur.
Les favoris des dieux tombent en mon désastre,
Pareils captifs ne sont nés que sous un bon astre.

(Panthée, 529-32)

The good king is deserving of one's loyalty, which overrides patriotism. That is to say, the absolute monarch embodies the state; provided he is acting in the best interests of the state it is to him that the subject owes his allegiance. To serve such a king is true liberty. This is why the expressions of love of liberty and of patriotism uttered by Phaenisse (Timoclée, 1133-40) and by the Choeur de Thébains (Timoclée, 1695-98), so admirable taken in the abstract, are mistaken when considered in the particular situation; for Alexandre is not a tyrant, but has tried as far as possible to preserve the ancient liberties of the Greek city-states. Similarly, Antipatre exhorts his sons to aid him in poisoning Alexandre:
Trois gouttes vengeront les outrages soufferts  
De tant de preux guerriers qui peuplent les enfers,  
Nous libérés d'un joug d'horrible servitude;  
Afin que ses pareils, fuyants l'ingratitude,  
Apprennent à garder les bornes du devoir,  
Et faire au bien public servir leur grand pouvoir.  

(Alexandre, 363-68)

One might, however, ask who is the more conscious of the public good, Alexandre who is trying to weld together many disparate races into one empire (Alexandre, 137-39), or Antipatre, who is trying to maintain power in the hands of, and for the benefit of, one group of subjects, the aristocracy. Hardy's preference is, as usual, for the monarchic ideal.

Such a preference raises problems when two good kings are in conflict, as in la Mort de Daire. Besse and Nabarzane are clearly even more guilty in deposing and assassinating Daire than are Antipatre and his sons in poisoning Alexandre; they do not even have a personal wrong to avenge. Alexandre swears over the corpse of Daire to pursue and punish with the utmost severity the two criminals (Daire, 1379-88). In that case, how does one excuse Alexandre's relentless hounding of the Persian king across half of Asia? Rigal seems vaguely aware of the problem when he compares Hardy's tragedy with that of his predecessor, Jacques de La Taille, but he offers no solution to it. In Hardy's play

Alexandre joue maintenant un rôle aussi important que celui de Daire, et ... le sujet même de la tragédie est changé. Là où La Taille s'était uniquement proposé de nous montrer Daire trahi, puis chargé de chaînes et réduit, avant de mourir, à confier le soin de sa vengence à ses ennemis, Hardy a voulu de plus nous montrer l'ancien maître
If, as Baudin suggests, the role of the conqueror is of romanesque provenance, we have at least a partial explanation for the expansion of Alexandre's role in Hardy's play. We can see in his treatment of the theme of *la Mort de Daire* as clearly as anywhere that, though the origins of Hardy's tragedy are in the sixteenth-century drama, his plays prefigure the seventeenth-century tragedy as it was to develop. His Alexandre and Cirus are distant prefigurations of Scudéry's Cirus in *Le Grand Cirus* and of Racine's Alexandre in his treatment of this legend. They are also, of course, related to the many conquerors of seventeenth-century romanesque tragi-comedy, not least to Hardy's own Phraarte. But Phraarte finds in love his inspiration for conquest, whereas Cirus' motivation is purely political. In the same way, Hardy's Alexandre is by no means spurred on by love in his conquest of the Persian empire. Bubace assures Daire that Alexandre, "moins vaillant que chaste" (*Daire*, 99), 19 *Hardy*, p. 363.
has not seduced the Persian princess, whom he holds captive, nor will he have allowed any insult to be offered to her "pudique repos", in the same way that Cirus is courteous in his treatment of Panthée.

Hardy seems to have set himself the task of justifying purely in political terms the victory of Alexandre, the hero of the future, over Daire, the hero of the past. Daire expresses in the first speech of the play his desire to hand on his empire to a legitimate heir (Daire, 19-20), but, with his queen dead and his mother and daughter captive, he despairs of being able to secure the succession. Only a natural prince can rally his subjects to oppose the attacks of the usurper. However, after Bubace has assured him of Alexandre's nobility of character and fitness to be king, Daire prays to the gods either that he may regain for Persia its ancient prosperity, or else,

Si de vous ma prière au besoin se méprise,
Si la force succombe au faix de l'entreprise,
Qu'à l'insigne vertu de ce preux Macédon
Mon trône désormais demeure le guerdon,
Qu'il y soit seul assis successeur en ma place.

(Daire, 121-25)

After the battle of Arbela, when Alexandre controls virtually the whole of Persia, the Macedonian king realises that his task is not yet finished, that he must, as in some vast chess game, pursue and capture Daire, for as long as the natural prince remains free, then rebellion by the Persians against Alexandre's rule remains legitimate.
Non qu'une cruauté m'en provoque l'envie,
Mais l'appréhension de voir que peu à peu
L'étincelle restée allumée un grand feu. ...
Je ne désisterai que Daire ne soit pris,
Que sa prise en mes mains n'assure son empire.
(Daire, 842-44; 876-77)

Towards the end of the play, Alexandre repeats his explanation of why the capture of Daire is so important to the stability and legitimacy of his conquest:

Car toujours les sujets aiment, originaires,
Leurs princes naturels comme lui débonnaires,
Et eux vivants, à peine on les saurait ranger
Sous le mors, bien que doux, d'un seigneur étranger;
A la révolte enclins, révolte légitime,
Pareil feu que sa cause éteinte ne supprime.
(Daire, 1325-30)

Though Alexandre does not yet know it, his cause is already won. In the previous scene we have heard Daire confer upon Alexandre the succession to the throne in asking that the conqueror avenge the murder of the legitimate king; and Polistrate is in no doubt as to the importance of his message as he hurries off to report Daire's dying words.

Avertissons le roi de si bonne nouvelle,
Lors libéré du soin qui le tient en cervelle,
Vu qu'en Daire abattu, son empire debout
N'a plus de corrival dont il ne vienne à bout.
(Daire, 1309-12)

Alexandre's right of conquest is now affirmed; but the duration of his empire is not yet assured. To do that, he must accomplish what Daire was incapable of: provide an heir to the empire and establish a dynasty. The conqueror's regime always remains slightly illegitimate and precarious; but his son may be accepted as a natural prince. It is with the problem of securing the succession that the king is concerned in la Mort
d'Alexandre. The play is as lacking in action and movement as any Renaissance tragedy, and much more so than is usual with Hardy. The first three acts present a series of prophecies and portents of Alexandre's death; the final two acts show us the slow and agonising death itself. Unlike la Mort de Daire, the action of this play is, quite literally, the death of Alexandre; but the play is not lacking in interest. One commentator, after analysing the play, concluded: "telle est cette tragédie sans intrigues, sans incidents, sans péripéties, sans amours combattus, qui ... se soutient par la seule admiration".

There are two prophecies and three presages of the king's death in the play, and after each one Alexandre makes a significant statement about kingship in general or his own reign in particular. The two prophecies both occur in the first act. The protatic ghost utters the first, and near the end of the act a Mage warns Alexandre not to enter Babylon, for he is destined to die there. Alexandre replies that it is indifferent to him whether he live or die,

鹂芳 qu'un successeur, mon courage héritant,
N'aille le frein du monde à quelque autre quittant,
Pourvu que sa valeur mes desseins accomplisse.

(Alexandre, 239-41)

The presages begin after the scene with the conspirators in act two. A second Mage gives an account of the sacrifice and divination in Babylon, while the portents follow in rapid succession in the third act. The scene in which Denis is

discovered sitting in the royal robes on the throne already suggests that a criminal will succeed Alexandre. This fear is intensified when Plistarque reports the killing of the lions by the goat, for, while Alexandre is afraid that he will be struck down by "quelque lâche main", he is much more concerned that

\[
\text{après ma mort (malheur qui serait pire)} \\
\text{Un successeur indigne usurpe cet empire.} \\
\text{(Alexandre, 697-98)}
\]

Roxane pleads with Alexandre to be prudent and mindful of his duty as king to his subjects, but when these appeals have no effect, she adds that the king's death will bring about her own and that of their child which will shortly be born.

\[
\text{Me voilà, désastreuse, au veuvage réduite,} \\
\text{Qui me rendrait la mort agréable, sinon} \\
\text{Ce fruit prêt à sortir, doux présent de Junon,} \\
\text{Que tu fais avorter, inhumain parricide,} \\
\text{Possible autre phénix qui naîtrait d'un Alcide.} \\
\text{(Alexandre, 798-802)}
\]

Alexandre is sufficiently shocked by this thought to promise to leave Babylon the following day. After his poisoning, Alexandre shows much more intense concern with leaving an heir to the throne. He knows that he is too close to death to serve his subjects further; he would like to be sure that his kingdom is left in the hands of a prince who will continue his benevolent reign. Fortune has been kind to him, except in this one respect, that he has no legitimate heir (Alexandre, 1147-48)\(^{21}\). The queen enters for her final interview with the king, and expresses

\(^{21}\) Théâtre, IV, 77. The lines are misnumbered 1047-48.
her determination to immolate herself after his death. Alexandre replies that she must accept the fact of his death, and tells her that the child she bears will provide consolation for his loss and security for her future position ("ancre de ta fortune, il l'arrête à bon port," Alexandre, 125922). Roxane continues to fear threats to her safety, particularly from Statire, Daire's daughter, whose offspring would be legitimate pretenders to the throne and who could claim allegiance from Daire's former subjects.

La haute extraction royale de Statire
En ce profond souci, à juste droit, me tire,
Des sujets naturels, pour la gratifier,
Ne feindront, inhumains, de me sacrifier.  
(Alexandre, 1277-8022)

Alexandre repeats his assurance that the Macedonians will continue to protect her against a popular revolt until such time as the people's loyalty can be placed in his as-yet-unborn son.

Nos Macédoniens avec une parole
Rendront, n'en doute pas, sa vindicte frivole.
Quel besoin de parole, un fruit conçu de moi
T'oblige, après ma mort, leur service et leur foi.  
(Alexandre, 1281-8422)

So Alexandre dies. The irony of the situation is that the disintegration of the empire which he had feared and half predicted is accomplished shortly after his death, even though he leaves his subjects a legitimate heir, and in spite of the admonition of his dying words to his generals:

Mon empire assez grand vous suffit, divisé,
Pourvu qu'à l'amiabl e on y ait avisé,
Et qu'aucun successeur de ma couche ne sorte.  
(Alexandre, 1303-0523)

22 Ibid., IV, 80.
23 Ibid., IV, 81.
It is the final affirmation of the monarchic ideal. Honourable though they may be, the aristocrats do not have the greater vision, the profound conception of duty that is the sign of the true king, and as a result let the empire disintegrate. The tragedy of *la Mort d'Alexandre* lies not in the king's death, but in the frustration of this ideal.

We should not, however, close our consideration of Hardy's treatment of this theme on such a pessimistic note. It is true that, in *Didon se sacrifiant* for example, the queen dies without leaving a natural successor; it is true that, if she had married Iarbe, they could have founded a universal empire (*Didon*, 2012-18). Would the empire of two monarchs as unstable in their emotions and as unconcerned with their duty to their subjects as Didon and Iarbe have long observed the principles of good kingship? On the other hand, *Aeneé* has set sail, faithful to his sacred trust to found his kingdom in Italy.

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Là se doit restaurer le mur dardanien, ...
Arrêter des Troyens la vagabonde fuite,
Là mon espoir Ascagne, Ascagne mon souci,
Redoutable, régner sous un ciel adouci,
Laissant de race en race une splendeur d'empire
Par tout où le soleil fait ses flammes reluire.

(*Didon*, 43, 46-50)

The vision of the monarchic ideal remains, as in Rome it was once achieved.

One may argue that Hardy has done no more than repeat the political sentiments expressed by Plutarch, Xenophon, Vergil, and other historians and moralists of antiquity, and that in
any case this conception of the monarchic ideal was foremost among the political debating points in the early seventeenth century. The fact remains that, from the stock of legend and history that was the dramatist's source material, Hardy chose certain stories with a political content, and dramatised them in such a way as to emphasise a particular political message. For instance, Méleagre combines two episodes from the life of the legendary hero, the story of the hunt of the Calydonian boar and the hero's death at the hands of his mother. Hardy could have made a romanesque tragi-comedy out of the first episode, a Renaissance-style tragedy out of the second. Instead he combined the two and emphasised certain features of Méleagre's role. I hope to have shown that there is a unifying theme, the problem of kingship, which links the two parts and provides a coherent overall conception for the drama. Similarly Alcèste combines the stories of the heroine and Hercules. Admittedly, Hardy found a good precedent in the original Euripidean play, but he has modified and greatly extended the role of Hercule, modified that of Admète, and included the episode with Pluton. Rigal regrets that, in Panthée, Hardy did not include the scene, found in Xenophon, in which the heroine arms her husband who is setting forth to fight the Lydians. Hardy's contemporary, Claude Billard, dramatised this episode, which remains one of the more memorable scenes in his tragedies. Hardy chose not to include it because such a display of conjugal love is

\[24\] Rigal, Hardy, p. 296.
irrelevant to the main theme of his tragedy. In Timocleé, a play of an even more disjointed appearance, all the episodes touch upon the unifying point. The play is based on passages from three separate works of Plutarch; in each case the moral message is different. It was left to Hardy to impose his own theme on the resulting drama. Finally, Hardy combines in la Mort de Daire two threads of plot, the fate of two monarchs, to present his most complex and profound treatment of the theme of kingship. That he was not merely drawing on the stock of moral platitudes and sentences available to all sixteenth-century dramatists is shown by his presentation of the conqueror as a good king. For Jean de La Taille, the "vrai sujet" of tragedy "ne traite que de piteuses ruines des grands seigneurs, que des inconstances de fortune, que de banissements, guerres, pestes, famines, captivités, exécrables cruautés des tyrans". Such elements are also found in Hardy's tragedies. But while Daire's fate is deplorable, Alexandre's prospects are good; while Didon is immolating herself, Aeneé is sailing to found a great empire in Italy; and Cirus can look forward to a prosperous future. Political idealism and optimism of this nature were unknown in sixteenth-century tragedy; they were to be developed in the middle years of the seventeenth century with the great political tragedies of Corneille. It is noteworthy that Hardy had already treated such topics in his tragedies in the first decades of the century.

25 "De l'art de la tragédie", preface to Saül le furieux. (Cited by H.W. Lawton, Handbook of French Renaissance dramatic theory. [Manchester, 1949], p. 70.)
CHAPTER THREE

CHARACTER: THE HIERARCHY OF HEROES

The protagonists of Hardy’s tragedies are, with one exception, noble or even royal. There is nothing unusual about this choice of character-type: Hardy is writing within a well-established convention. The themes of Hardy’s tragedies, as was shown in the previous chapter, are serious, usually involving matters of state: Hardy is again following a tradition in his choice of subject. However, in his choice of characters Hardy does not present simply good kings or wicked tyrants. As was noted in chapter two, there are examples of the just king (Cirus) and of the tyrant (Hérode). But into which category does one fit protagonists who are not heads of state (Achille, Coriolan)? What, in a word, is the unifying feature which, transcending the theme of kingship, underlies the character of the hero in general in Hardy’s tragedies?

As one reads the plays, one is made aware that the moral qualities referred to most frequently by the central characters or mentioned most often in describing them, are "vertu", "grandeur", "honneur", "magnanimité". These terms are used by both good kings and tyrants, by kings and by simple warriors, by women as by men. Aenée claims that:

La gloire au plus haut prix j'ai toujours acheté,
Ennemi du repos, ennemi des délices;

(Didon, 120-21)

and Didon also refers to this quality:

Ma pudeur est éteinte, et sa première gloire,
Qui m'élevait au ciel dans un trône d'ivoire.

(Didon, 679-80)
In his very first speech, Cirus calls upon the sun, "bel astre de nos jours, favorable à ma gloire" (Panthée, 1), to behold the great victory the king has won. In the same play, Abradate speaks of the misfortunes that have befallen him:

Il n'y a point de maux que l'homme de constance
Ne puisse surmonter avec sa résistance,
Alors que du naufrage il recourt son honneur.

(Panthée, 551-53)

Atalante asserts that "ma gloire est ma seule raison" (Méléagre, 240), and Thésée asks rhetorically of the assembled warriors:

Que n'exécuterait en sa guerrière ardeur
Une troupe qui n'est que gloire, et que candeur?

(Méléagre, 363-64)

Alexandre can face the prospect of death steadfastly, for:

N'imaginez, amis, que la parque épouvante
Un qui laisse, immortel, sa gloire survivante;

(Alexandre, 525-26)

and Hérode braves the ghost of Aristobule which has appeared to him in a prophetic dream:

Quelque démon jaloux de l'honneur de ma gloire
Ramène des horreurs funèbres en mémoire,
Tâche d'intimider un effroi de la peur
Un qui, présent, résout les périls en vapeur.

(Mariamne, 69-72)

An important characteristic of Hardy's protagonists seems, therefore, to be their sense of personal "gloire". In its simplest terms, it means for the men military prowess and the observance of an ideal of courage and steadfastness in battle; for the women it means chastity ("pudeur"). As such, there is nothing original in the idea, and Hardy is again writing within dramatic tradition. But the concept as we find it developed
in Hardy's tragedies is far from being so straightforward.

"Gloire" is not a fixed entity. All of Hardy's tragic heroes, and many of his secondary characters, have a clear conception of this quality as an ideal. But, as an ideal, it is not easily attained, and once he acquires it, the hero has to strive constantly to maintain and to increase it. Some of Hardy's protagonists never develop to the full this quality; most of them, having once arrived at the ideal, fail to live up to it, and fall back in varying degrees; some two or three pass beyond the concept of personal honour to a yet greater ideal. A study of the principal characters of Hardy's tragedies will enable us to arrive at a working definition of the concept of "gloire" as Hardy appears to use the term, and to understand the various actions and faults of character which threaten its attainment.

One way of working towards this definition is to examine terms normally placed in antithesis to it. The immediate threat to the "gloire" of the hero is presented by the 'baser' impulses. It is seen as a more spiritual quality, while the passions are physical; this in fact represents the traditional dualistic conception of man's nature. Nestor refers to this dichotomy in describing Achille's predicament to the assembled Greek leaders:

L'âme et le corps en lui paraissent divisés:
L'âme tend aux sentiers de la vertu brisés,
Le corps penche rebelle au vice qui le flatte;
Mais, qu'usant de moyen le pire ne s'abatte,
Nestor claims that the basic goodness of Achille's character will incline him towards honour, and he is correct in this assessment, though by an ironic twist this very nobility of character leads to Achille's death. Agamemnon states more clearly Achille's basic fault:

Porté du bien public, j'entame une querelle,
J'ose un homme, de soi farouche et furieux
Qu'amour aura privé de jugement et d'yeux,
J'ose reprimander devant tous sa manie.

(Achille, 614-17)

The clear-sighted exercise of intellect ("jugement") can lead a man into the path of virtue, whereas it is intellectual blindness ("manie") for him to be inclined to vice. A decision on a course of action to follow must be the result of a weighing of alternatives; a faulty choice can, and in tragedy does, prove fatal, even when it is made, as in Achille's case, from the best of motives.

The passion which threatens the hero's judgment is often that of a physical love, but by no means always. Anger at a slight offered his self-esteem causes Alexandre to act rashly in Timoclée; Coriolan allies himself with the Volsques in anger at the impugning of his honour; Hérode, whose main passion is his love for his wife, is impelled by the rejection of his love to react violently in anger against Mariamne. It is obvious that, in the case of Hérode, love is transformed into hatred
(Mariamne, 1235-42), and if, in the case of Alexandre and Coriolan, we may say that their anger is a manifestation of their hatred for certain political factions and the values they embody, it may be concluded that the passions of physical love and hatred lead to faulty judgements and are therefore potentially fatal, whereas the spiritual or intellectual love of "gloire", based on good judgement, can lead the hero to complete fulfilment of the heroic purpose.

Let us first study the lower line of unreason, in which we may observe progressive stages of degradation. In his funeral oration for Achille, Ménélas points out the dangers of love for the hero; it detracts from the glory of his deeds by destroying his reason:

Amour de tes beaux faits a voulu triompher ...
Meurtrier du flambeau de [ta] sainte raison.

(Achille, 1647, 1652)

The nourrice urges Altée to moderate her anger by the exercise of reason (Méléagre, 1057-60). By abandoning himself to passion, the hero is led to commit unworthy acts: for example, from anger stem deeds of cruelty. In advising the Volsques to continue their siege of Rome, Coriolan describes with obvious pleasure the torments of starvation and the terrors of pestilence from which his enemies must be suffering (Coriolan, 958-70). Similarly, Alexandre determines to deal harshly with the Thebans who have dared to insult him (Timoclée, 1427-32). It is left to Cirus to emphasise how the abandonment of reason to passion
is the first link in a chain leading the hero to cruelty and cowardice:

Il faut que la raison nos actions tempère,
Leur servant d'un flambeau d'éternelle lumière;
D'elle l'humanité s'engendre aux braves coeurs,
Otant la cruauté de leurs gestes vainqueurs,
Cruauté, proprement mère de couardise.

(Panthée, 515-19)

The warrior not fully in control of his passions can also feel envy. Thus Amfidie regrets his hasty action in accepting Coriolan's offer of alliance in the struggle against Rome, and feels that his honour has been obscured by that of the Roman general and his authority over the Volsques undermined (Coriolan, 829-40). But envy is only the first stage of a chain-reaction leading to vindictiveness and the desire for revenge:

Que j'endure l'affront? O gouffres de Ténare,
Ravissez-moi plutôt à votre prince avare:
Je n'affecte le jour qu'à cause de l'honneur,
Et ne saurais souffrir compagnon ni seigneur.

(Coriolan, 841-44)

Passionate and unconsidered actions on the part of the hero can call forth equally violent reaction on the part of characters with whom he comes into contact. Such situations are fruitful of dramatic conflict, and it is not surprising to find them frequently in Hardy's tragedies; they lead to the acts of vengeance that one finds in many of the plays. Blinded by his love for Atalante, Méléagre rages against the envy of his uncles, Flexipe and Toxée. The latter pointedly reminds the king of the original passion which underlies the conflict:

L'aveugle passion qu'un aveugle produit,
Nos esprits occupés facilement séduit.

(Méléagre, 983-84)
Nevertheless, Méléagre kills his uncles, despite Atalante's pleas that he not be carried away by his anger, and his deed kindles Altée's anger and desire for revenge. Achille, blinded by love, delivers himself into the vengeful hands of Pâris and Déiphobe, who justify the murder by saying that the gods, offended by Achille's impiety, have inflicted this passion upon him in order that he may fall victim to the Trojans (Achille, 395-400). Among the arguments presented by Antipatre and his sons to justify regicide is impiety: Alexandre has claimed descent from the gods (Alexandre, 882-84), and the conspirators declare themselves to be the agents of divine vengeance. The ghost of Parménion refers also to the impious nature of Alexandre's ambition:

Monarque de qui l'heure fut égal au courage,
Les dieux veulent punir l'intolérable outrage
De ton ambition, qui, brasier dévorant,
Va, l'univers conquis, à leur trône aspirant.  
(Alexandre, 1-4)

Alexandre denies that he ever asserted his immortality: he had merely allowed the belief to be spread so that the barbarian races would accept more willingly his rule (Alexandre, 937-56). Nevertheless, it is this presumed vanity of Alexandre, rather than his manifestly real acts of violence, that serves as a justification for his murder.

The intemperate nature of their actions, typified by Alexandre's summary condemnation to death of Denis or by Méléagre's putting his uncles to the sword, causes the other personages to mistrust these victims of passion. Their inconsistent and
irrational deeds give rise to the charge that they have acted in bad faith. This is the tenor of Amfidie's indictment before the Conseil des Volsques. Coriolan, "fardé dans le courage, hypocrite, infidèle" (Coriolan, 1125), has espoused their cause only to prosecute his own quarrel with Rome, and is now preparing to betray them.

The accusations of bad faith are usually levelled by mistrustful enemies, but sometimes the protagonists accuse themselves of betraying their own best interests. Panthée feels that she has violated her patriotic duty in collaborating with the conqueror Cirus, Mariamne that she has betrayed her father and her brother in marrying their murderer. "Didon est constamment animée par deux sentiments: le violent amour qu'Enée lui inspire, et le repentir qu'elle éprouve d'avoir été infidèle à Sichée"¹.

Un juste repentir du voeu que j'ai faussé
Tient un glaive pendant sur ma tête haussé,
(Didon, 155-56)

she cries, and the remorse that assails her is typical of that felt by many of Hardy's heroes. Not only do the "pathetic" heroes (Didon, Panthée, Mariamne) suffer from remorse, but Coriolan, Alexandre and Hérode also express repentance for their actions.

Remorse is seen as the natural outcome of yielding to the passions, and as the final stage in the degradation of the

¹ Rigal, Hardy, p. 272.
hero. Because of her faithlessness, Didon must kill herself:

Didon, pauvre Didon, ne sens, ne sens-tu point
De tes impiétés le remords qui t'époint?
Qui ne s'apaisera, paravant que Sichée
Voie couler ton sang sur sa couche tachée!

(Didon, 1337-40)

After the sack of Thebes, Alexandre recognises the causal link between passion and repentance ("Un plaisir au remords ne fait qu'ouvrir la porte", Timoclée, 2193), and he does not quickly forget this remorse. Near the end of his life he refers to:

la vieille rancoeur du demi-dieu thébain
Pour sa belle cité que foudroya ma main.
Combien ce repentir m'afflige depuis l'heure,
Voire, et m'affligera jusqu'à tant que je meure.

(Alexandre, 119-22)

Volomnie visits the camp of the Volsques to plead with Coriolan, and towards the end of her harangue she notices that he seems stricken with remorse ("Tu ne me répends mot, tu pâlis du remords", Coriolan, 1039). Hérode acknowledges that the blindness of his passion has resulted in his feeling of repentance for the death of Mariamne ("une aveugle colère /[Mɔ]/ comble de remords", Mariamne, 1523-24). In her lament over the corpse of Abradate, Panthéée speaks of her "crime imprudent" and of her feelings of remorse for having caused his death, but determines to make expiation by her own death (Panthée, 1021-24). Panthéée has already warned Araspe against yielding to passion ("La volupté toujours nous laisse un repentir", Panthéée, 351), and the nourrice draws the general inference that repentance is passion's own worst punishment in pleading with Cirus to treat Araspe leniently:
Je jugerais pour moi, selon l'expérience,  
Qu'un remords a déjà pressé sa conscience,  
Plus cruel que tourment qu'on lui puisse inventer.  
(Panthée, 467-69)

Nestor draws the same conclusion, that an act of conscience on Achille's part will cause him to repent of his unwise actions (Achille, 713-16).

Violent love, violent hate and violent anger lead to unreasonable conduct. Once these impulses begin to dominate the hero, they lead him to behave rashly and with cruelty or cowardice, or to commit acts conceived in envy. Such deeds, apart from inciting the victims of the hero's crimes to acts of vengeance, lead inevitably to remorse. While not original in this analysis, Hardy presented an essentially consistent ethical view of human nature in a number of important plays written over a period of several years. Moralists of this period and commentators on the classical authors expatiate upon this somewhat gloomy philosophy. But Hardy was not a moralist, and to suggest that the aspects indicated above give a complete picture of the hero's character would be unjust to the subtlety that often distinguishes Hardy's dramatic art. His are dynamic people in dramatic situations, reacting to events and interacting with each other, and in attempting to analyse them, to "fix" them, one inevitably loses some of this sense of character in action.

Hérode, for example, is not simply a vindictive monster: if he were, he would not be overcome with remorse at the end of
the play. Tyrannical he may be, but we are told that he has shown considerable military ability in acquiring his kingdom (Mariamne, 149-51; 825-56). He has dealt ruthlessly with friends and relations in his rise to power, and yet he genuinely loves his wife (Mariamne, 165-70). His love is, indeed, only too violent: it changes readily into hate when calumny of Mariamne is added to her scornful rejection of his love. In the "accusation" scene (III, 1), Hérode is more concerned with trying to establish whether Mariamne has committed adultery than with the charge of her plotting to poison him. This insult to his sexual pride results in his cruel treatment of Soème and the Eunuque and the violence of his language to Mariamne. However, in a soliloquy at the beginning of the trial scene (IV, 2), the king shows himself still to be torn between love and the desire for vengeance. He feels that, whatever decision he comes to, he will regret it. If only Mariamne would show less hostility to him, he would be willing to forget the past; but he knows that his present treatment of her will only make her hate him more. To secure his own safety he must destroy her; but in so doing he destroys himself. Hérode resolves to find a middle way in this dilemma. If Mariamne continues to refuse to admit her guilt, then she will die; if she confesses, then Hérode will forgive her and gladly take her back as his wife. Even as Mariamne is brought before him, Hérode is seized with compassion for her, but resolves to harden his heart (Mariamne, 1235-78). Later in the same scene, in private
audience with Mariamne, Hérode tells his wife that he wishes to save her in spite of herself, that he still loves her, and that if she will only confess to the crime he will forgive her. Shifting in his entreaties to the "tu" form, he almost pleads with her to save herself. Mariamne's only reply is scornfully to hurl his past crimes in his face, and Hérode, furious, orders that she be executed the following day.

If I have dwelt at some length upon these indecisions and self-examinations, it is not in any sense an attempt to excuse Hérode's conduct. He remains the most complete and the most powerful portrait of the tyrant in Hardy's theatre. Hérode's soliloquy illustrates dramatically the vanity and weakness of his character, faults upon which Phérore and Salome act in their roles as flatterers. Less hauteur on Mariamne's part would save her life; yet this is an essential feature of her character, and the clash of the two personalities (Hérode's and Mariamne's) provides much of the dramatic interest of the play. Hérode's character is, moreover, consistent: the violent passions and indecision he displays in the treatment of his wife complement the cruelty and injustice of his reign. Among Hardy's tragic heroes, Hérode alone suffers from hallucinations (in the final scene), and conventional as this device may be, it should be regarded as a measure of the depths of despair and remorse into which his violent passions have plunged him. As Jacques Morel has so cogently observed:
Les personnages de Hardy ... sont animés par des passions violentes et incoercibles, amour, haine, jalousie, ambition, désir de vengeance. Contrairement à ceux de Garnier, ces héros agissent beaucoup, et refusent d'être les jouets de l'événement prêt à les écraser: ce sont des héros du défi. Les menaces qui pèsent sur eux leur sont connues, grâce aux songes, apparitions, prophéties et oracles qui leur sont adressés. Mais ils s'aveuglent eux-mêmes sur leur destin, ou affectent de n'en pas tenir compte et prétendent trouver leur plein accomplissement dans la seule réalisation de leurs désirs immédiats. Ainsi transforment-ils toute menace extérieure en une fatalité intérieure et profonde, celle de la passion, mais une passion lucide dans son désespoir qui fait d'eux des êtres responsables, et non plus les victimes d'une insurmontable destinée ou de fautes anciennes et regrettées. L'acceptation, voire la revendication de leurs faiblesses fait d'eux les ancêtres de Médée, de Cléopâtre, du Ladislas de Rotrou et même du Néron de Racine.  

This assessment, though it represents a generalisation too broad to include all of Hardy's tragic heroes, may certainly be applied to the character of Hérode and, in its general outlines, to many of the playwright's other dramatic creations. 

With Méléagre Hardy depicts someone similar to Hérode, but at an earlier stage of development, in the process of becoming a victim of passion. Because Méléagre is not subject to the same indecision and ultimate remorse as Hérode the presentation of his character lacks subtlety and depth and is thus, dramatically, less interesting. Hardy shows us the exact moment of this change from reason to passion. In presenting the trophy to Atalante, Méléagre is, according to Lincee, inspired more by love than by a strict sense of justice:

Dis mieux que son éclair ton tonnerre précède,
Ou que ta courtoisie à sa beauté le cède,

Ou que l'affection, loin de ce prix vainqueur,
Consacre volontiers à ses grâces ton coeur.
(Méléagre, 641-44)

Thus Méléagre initiates the series of acts of passion which results in his death. Presented at the beginning of the play as the epitome of good kingship, Méléagre degenerates at the end of the play into a person who deserves to be killed, because he has allowed his passions rather than a strictly impartial appraisal of the facts to influence his decisions.

Hardy presents in Coriolan a similar degradation of character, if not as complete. This hero remains, however, an altogether nobler personage than Méléagre, because he feels remorse at the end of the play, and tries to make amends for his ill-judged hostility to Rome. Méléagre allows passion (his love for Atalante) to overcome his sense of piety, of duty to the state; with the hero of Coriolan, it is his sense of personal honour that conflicts with his piety to produce anger and the subsequent degradation of the hero. In the long soliloquy which opens the play, Coriolan describes how, in saving Rome from the Corioli, he had been conscious primarily of the public good, secondly of his "gloire", and not at all of personal gain. Now he regrets his empty honour, which has given birth to the envy of the common people who demand his death. He finds it a source of shame that they should call him to question, and he vows to avenge this insult (Coriolan, 37-73). If "le héros de Hardy est certainement inférieur à celui de Plutarque, ... [néanmoins] les traits distinctifs de son caractère sont bien ce qu'ils
doivent être: l'orgueil, le mépris du peuple, l'amour filial.\(^3\)

Coriolan thus reveals that his aristocratic pride is in conflict with patriotic duty. Volomnie urges Coriolan to contain his anger, and to submit, if only temporarily, to the wishes of the "multitude":

\[
\begin{align*}
&Hélas, ne veuille donc croire à ta passion. \\
&Cède pour un moment, et la voilà contente, \\
&Et tu accoiseras une horrible tourmente, \\
&Qui Rome divisée ébranle à ton sujet: \\
&La piété ne peut avoir plus bel objet.
\end{align*}
\]

(Coriolan, 80-84)

Coriolan's reply, as he leaves to face his accusers, is that he is willing to do anything, provided his honour is not impugned (Coriolan, 149). But it is nonetheless called into question: he is accused of misappropriating public funds, and reacting with hauteur and scorn for those of humbler birth than himself, he finds himself exiled. Coriolan is thus set upon the path of degradation: to the faults of pride and anger he adds inflexibility, lack of magnanimity and neglect of his patriotic duty, as well as cruelty. He does not become envious, as does Amfidie, but the Volscian general remains, with his highly developed sense of "gloire", one pole of attraction for Coriolan. The other pole, that of piety, is represented by Volomnie, who seeks out her son in the enemy camp to plead with him to consider the consequences of his continued enmity (IV,4). He has punished Rome enough, she declares; in arranging peace between Rome and the Volscians he will gain even greater honour as a peacemaker.

\(^3\) Rigal, Hardy, p. 327.
Speaking for herself, she cannot wish that her son not be victorious, yet his victory must result in his mother's death in the general destruction of Rome; Coriolan would thus be guilty of matricide.

The stern logic of his mother's argument reminds Coriolan that patriotic and filial duty are more important than "gloire". Caught in the dilemma which has resulted from his initial ill-advised act, he now feels remorse. Accused by Amfidie before the Conseil des Volesques of treachery, Coriolan replies that he doubts if anyone could have resisted this appeal of piety which made him step aside from the path of duty:

 Lois! je ne sache aucun de vous qui n'eût fléchi,  
Et par la piété de son devoir gauchi.  
(Coriolan, 1207-08)

Volomnie draws the same conclusion when, awaiting with foreboding news of Coriolan, she emphasises the tragic irony of a situation in which Coriolan's sense of piety will have been the cause of his death (Coriolan, 1255-60).

The traits of character of the admirable hero are implicit in the play just mentioned. He should possess valour and a sense of self-esteem, patriotism and piety, as well as magnanimity and self-control. Coriolan possesses in fact all these traits, except the last: his character thus becomes complex and a psychological conflict develops within him. Pride and anger lead him to act rashly, and he remains blinded by these passions until his mother makes him aware of the tragic dilemma of his situation. He then makes an honourable decision which brings about his death.
Achille, like Coriolan, makes an ill-considered decision because of a flaw in his character, but Coriolan, because he recognises his own guilt the sooner and faces death with greater self-awareness, attains greater stature as a tragic hero. This is not to say that Achille is not essentially the nobler character. Blinded by love, Achille delivers himself into the hands of the treacherous Trojans: he is too magnanimous to conceive of acting in bad faith:

Onc je n'estimerais de valables excuses,
D'argument légitime à violer sa foi:
Je n'y consentirai jamais quant est de moi.  
(Achille, 698-700)

He makes this remark to the council of Greek leaders in an important scene (II,3) which shows that Achille is not only deceived by his love, he is self-deceived, unwilling to recognise the truth of the situation. He is aware that his actions infringe upon his obligations to the Greeks as well as being potentially damaging to his honour, but he refuses to accept this realisation. He reacts in a furtive, guilty manner when questioned about his passion, which indicates his awareness of his fault.

Early in the play, however, Achille expresses his weariness with war and his desire to establish a permanent peace between Greeks and Trojans (Achille, 84-96), and he refers repeatedly to this pious intention as the play progresses. He tells Déiphobe and, shortly afterwards, Polixène herself that he wishes by this marriage to unite the two peoples (Achille, 907-14; 955-60). In his dying words to Ajax he reiterates that
at least part of his purpose in marrying Polixène was to bring about peace:

Je venais sous l'espoir du lit de sa germaine,  
Désireux de tarir une guerre inhumaine.  
\textit{(Achille, 1409-10)}

Ajax, in his funeral oration, insists upon this aspect of Achille's character, that his sense of public duty, was greater than his concern for personal "gloire" \textit{(Achille, 1683-86)}. Achille's passion, as well as his essential nobility, deceive him into believing, against his better judgement and the warnings of his friends, that the Trojans are not likely to practise some perfidy. His passion leads him to believe romantically that what he wants to happen will happen, instead of accepting realistically what is likely to befall. He is ashamed of his passion, he recognises it as being contrary to his own best interests and those of the Greeks, and yet he cannot resist it. So he comes alone to the temple, where he is treacherously murdered.

Consideration should be given here to three of the heroines whose names provide titles for Hardy's tragedies. The character of each of them shows this same quality of flawed nobility that we have seen in Achille.

The catastrophe in \textit{Mariamne} is brought about at least partially by a clash of personality. Were Hérode not tyrannical, unstable in his emotions and cruel, were Salome not jealous of Mariamne's authority and bent on using calumny to bring about
her downfall, then Mariamne would not be executed. But in addition, Mariamne refuses to ask forgiveness of a man she regards as a monster. In the opening lines of her first monologue she expresses her wish to die, to be released from a marriage which is abhorrent to her: her husband is a tyrant who has murdered her father and her brother in order to usurp the throne, and he has ordered that, in the event of his death, the queen also should be put to death (Mariamne, 309-34). These are the crimes of which she reminds Hérode as she scornfully rejects his offer of leniency. The desire for death is the most consistent feature of her utterances, and though this device was very commonly used in plays of this period, for Mariamne, it expresses essentially a release from genuine moral anguish. The Eunuque and Soème emphasise her virtue and chastity, and even Hérode recognises her courage; these qualities, together with dignity and magnanimity, are evident in her comportment in the accusation and trial scenes: she makes it clear, in stichomythic dialogue with Hérode, that her desperate wish for death stems from her horror at this situation:

Les meurtres perpétrés m'apportent plus de deuil. ... Mon père et mon germain remémorés je pleure. ... La fin de mes douleurs en doit être l'issue.

(Mariamne, 1366-71)

Her scorn for Hérode's lowly birth, her revulsion at his baseness of soul, and her anguish at being married to a murderer, lead her to feel she has sullied her "gloire". This remorse produces in her the desire for death as the only solution to her dilemma.
Didon's motivation for seeking death is rather more complicated than that of Mariamne. We have seen above that, for love of Aenée, she has abandoned the path of honour in being unfaithful to the memory of Sicheé. This gives her the greatest reason for remorse, and this is her expressed reason for committing suicide. But Didon is not simply a woman in love: she is a queen and head of state in her own right. She has not merely tarnished her personal reputation, she has also abrogated her duty to her people. Because she has succumbed to passion, "rien plus ne reste à [sa] grandeur royale" (Didon, 668). Having placed herself in the power of a foreigner, she has brought upon herself not only the enmity of neighbouring kings, but also that of her subjects:

Vois, vois qu'à ton sujet un monde m'est contraire,
Les peuples lybiens ne s'en peuvent plus taire,
Les rois de Numidie ont juré mon trépas,
Voire, hélas! et pour toi les miens ne m'aiment pas.

(Didon, 675-78)

These considerations help to explain the undeveloped sub-plot concerning Iarbe, who only appears in one very short scene (II,1), and also the speech by the anonymous messenger (Thérodomante?) which closes the play. The messenger points out that a legal marriage to Iarbe would have united their two kingdoms to the benefit of both:

Union suffisante à rendre l'univers
Sous un joug tributaire en ses peuples divers.

(Didon, 2017-18)

Considerations which are held to be of greater importance than those of honour add, then, to Didon's culpability. A
similar conflict produces the remorse which leads to Panthée's suicide, though in this case the considerations are simply those of piety and "gloire": the 'baser' passions which also destroyed Didon's virtue are not involved in Panthée's case. In her very first speech, Panthée states that she does not wish to survive the sack of her country, "l'honneur détruit du sceptre assyrien" (Panthée, 117-20). It soon becomes apparent, however, that her primary concern is less for the honour of her country than for her own. After Cirus places her under Araspe's protection with strict orders that her virtue is not to be insulted in any way, Panthée gives thanks that her greatest fear has been allayed:

O dieux, qui fléchissez les mortelles pensées,  
Mes prières encore vous avez exaucées,  
Soulagé ma tristesse, un monarque inspirant  
De sauver mon honneur du naufrage apparent. 
(Panthée, 173-76)

This initial softening of her attitude towards Cirus is followed by complete acceptance of his regime. "Cette âme chaste et noble croit devoir témoigner sa reconnaissance à Cyrus; elle ne le peut qu'en abandonnant son pays, et peu à peu le patriotisme est vaincu en elle, jusqu'à ce qu'il se réveille pour lui suggérer le remords du dénouement"4. By the end of the scene in which Cirus gives Panthée her liberty (III,1), she is prepared to promise to sway the intransigent Abradate and to persuade him to accept Cirus' kingship.

This in fact she accomplishes, overcoming all Abradate's arguments for continued resistance to the usurper, including

4 Rigal, Hardy, p. 293.
his final objections on the grounds of self-esteem. Abradate claims that he would rather serve any master than the ravisher of his country's liberty (Panthée, 689-94): he would regard such a betrayal of principle as sacrilegious ("J'appréhende des dieux la colère future", Panthée, 711). But his wife manages to turn aside even this objection:

Pourvu que tu me sois exorable en ce point,
Sans crainte dessur moi je chargerai leur haine.
(Panthée, 714-15)

Thus, when the catastrophe of Abradate's death occurs, Panthée feels not only grief but responsibility for his death, since she has persuaded him to betray his natural piety:

Ains, mon trépas j'estime une amende petite,
Comparant le forfait qu'horrible j'ai commis,
Moi, moi, qui te rendis les destins ennemis,
Moi, qui te fis parjure envers notre patrie,
Qui troublai ton bonheur, infinale furie,
Corrompis de ta foi la pure chasteté,
Qui te portai coupable à cette impiété.
(Panthée, 988-94)

Although Panthée remains faithful to her own strict code of virtue, she can still feel -- and be -- guilty of infringing yet higher obligations. She is, in fact, guilty of corrupting Abradate, and of persuading him to be unfaithful to himself. She is lacking in "générosité", the ability to recognise the primacy of "gloire" in others, even in enemies, a quality not lacking in Coriolan, for example, or in Daire, who acknowledges Alexandre's moral superiority even in the moment of defeat.

With the character of Panthée, we move from the descending
line of Hardy's heroes, those in whom yielding to the passions leads to degradation, to the ascending line that leads to glorification. At this point one may also enter a further argument on Hardy's behalf as a creator of character. If it is not unusual for the tragic dramatist of Hardy's period to present a pessimistic view of human nature, to show man as prey to his passions, it is less common for him to show man, as will Corneille a decade or so later, as overcoming his baser emotions and attaining an ideal. Hardy does this, and the consistency of his thought is again remarkable in a series of plays written over a period of several years. Furthermore, the character of what we shall call the admirable hero is not an abstract concept, but is presented dynamically and with human dimensions.

In a sense the admirable hero can be too passionately attached to the idea of personal honour: we have seen that this is the case with Coriolan, and I shall shortly examine Alexandre's character in this light. In both instances the exclusive concern with "gloire" can lead to the accusation, perhaps justified, of overweening pride and ambition. The truly admirable hero, while perfectly aware of his own merit, is modest in that he recognises the merit of others and respects their liberty of conscience. The desire to earn the esteem of others is not the same as recklessness: in this respect only does Abradate fall short of the ideal. Cirus, receiving the news of his death, regrets that his general had not balanced his valour with prudence:
There are risks which are not warranted even in the pursuit of "gloire"; in other words, its acquisition must be based on a reasonable balance between respecting the right of others, serving one's own ideals and prudence. In *Panthée*, Abradate is contrasted with Araspe; if the latter succumbs to the physical passion of love for Panthée, Abradate is guilty of falling victim to the spiritual or moral passion of love of reputation.

On the other hand, the hero remains constantly mindful of his self-esteem and cannot survive its loss. "Qui survit à sa gloire est indigne de vie", claims Toxée (*Méléagre*, 729), and this aphorism is true for all Hardy's admirable heroes, both men and women. Atalante, for example, the prize having been snatched from her grasp, resolves not to survive this affront (*Méléagre*, 925-26). Since the hero is jealous of his personal "gloire", it cannot be disposed of by others. This is Plexipe's defence of his conduct: the king can share his crown, but he cannot give away the honour of his uncles:

> La cause nous absout, qui parle d'elle-même,
> En ce que tu l'as donné ton diadème,
> Non pas le bien d'autrui, non pas l'honneur de ceux
> Que ton service n'a pas reconnu paresseux.
> 
> (*Méléagre*, 977-80)

The hero is "généreux"; he is not envious of the "gloire" of others, though it may exceed his own. The hero will, indeed, defend the reputation of others; Atalante, in denouncing the
ignoble actions of Flexipe and Toxée, emphasises that their violence towards her is an insult to Méléagre's honour rather than to hers, since it was the king's decision to award her the prize (Méléagre, 863-66).

Finally, the admirable hero shows consideration and compassion for those weaker or less fortunate than himself. For this reason Euripile is sure that the Père of Admete will gladly die in place of the king, thus exchanging his old age for a glorious and magnanimous death:

Vois ton vieux géniteur, qui de garant s'apprête, 
Qui voue à ton salut et au nôtre sa tête; 
Vois son front rayonner de magnanime ardeur, 
La mort si généreuse estimant un grand heur. 
(Alceste, 373-76)

This concept of magnanimity takes us beyond the ideal of the hero as hero and his concern for self-esteem, to a yet higher ideal held by the hero as king, a devotion to the service of others.

Rigal refers to Timoclée, la Mort de Daire and la Mort d'Alexandre as "la trilogie sur Alexandre"\(^5\). The tragedies do indeed constitute a trilogy, though Rigal does not treat them as such, since they serve to illustrate different stages in the development of the character of Alexandre as an admirable hero. The first scene of Timoclée is crucial for the understanding of the whole trilogy. Alexandre, discussing with his generals the problem of coping with the Greeks' unruliness and intransigence, is unable to distinguish between his role as king and his role

\(^5\) Rigal, Hardy, p. 358; also p. 384, n. 4.
as hero. While accepting in principle Antipatre's arguments in favour of indulgence and clemency, he gives evidence of his continuing rancour over the calumny directed against him by the popular demagogues. "Il sait, dit-il, à quoi a servi la clémence de son père, et que de tels feux doivent s'éteindre dans les larmes et le sang; on lui a refusé le titre de capitaine des Grecs, dont il voulait bien se contenter; on l'a même traité d'enfant: une telle offense ne peut sortir de son esprit, et un attentat sur sa vie lui serait plus facile à pardonner".

L'attentat sur ma vie est un crime léger
Au prix de me vouloir en l'honneur outrager;
Nulle injure envers moi ne reste irrémissible,
Hormis celle qui touche à ce point si sensible.

(Timoclée, 147-50)

Antipatre replies that Alexandre should be impervious to the envious insults of a populace that can harm neither him nor his reputation; rather should he feel compassion for them. After continued discussion, in which Alexandre claims that by temporising he is giving the appearance of being afraid of the Greeks (Timoclée, 229-32), he nevertheless consents finally to do nothing precipitately; as a magnanimous hero he is willing to allow the insurgents time to repent (Timoclée, 265-66). However, when the Athenian ambassadors prove still to be intractable in their demands, Alexandre cries out in anger that their concept of liberty

\[\text{Consiste à vomir libre un fiel de médisance,}\]

\[\text{6 Ibid., p. 387.}\]
Où sa rage ne peut faire plus de nuisance.

*(Timoclée, 297-98)*

Thus Alexandre allows his concern for personal honour to blind his judgement. He will destroy Thebes in a fit of anger. He does not have the Stoic consciousness of his own virtue and disdain for the opinion of others that the truly admirable hero should possess. The assault upon Thebes is delayed by further discussions and exchanges of ambassadors, but finally Alexandre determines to destroy the city, despite Perdice's warning that the king's passion may lead him to repent his actions *(Timoclée, 1481-86)*. When, in the final scene, Timoclée is brought before him, accused of murdering her ravisher, Alexandre can forgive her the more readily because, feeling remorse for a deed which has been less than worthy of his own ideals, he recognises Timoclée's sense of self-esteem as being of the same order as his own. He therefore tries to make recompense for his own deficiency by a magnanimous action *(Timoclée, 2324-29)*.

In *Timoclée* the character of Alexandre grows in stature in spite of (or perhaps because of) his error of judgement in sacking Thebes. He is more king-like, more in control of himself and less reliant on the opinions of his advisers at the end of the play. He reaches the apogee of his career as admirable hero in *la Mort de Daire*, a play in which the two opposing kings vie with one another in nobility of character and magnanimity of conduct. Daire, already defeated at the beginning of the play, recognises Alexandre's compassion in his treatment of the Persian king's wife and daughter *(Daire, 71-72)*.
Daire's concern for his daughter's virtue is allayed by Bubace; Alexandre may have defeated the Persian army, but his military prowess is as nothing compared to his chastity and sense of honour (Daire, 93-100). Later in the play, Nabarzane opposes Besse's suggestion that they deliver Daire into Alexandre's hands on the grounds that, being magnanimous himself, he would consider such a treacherous deed as criminal. Alexandre, as an admirable hero, could not condone an immoral act even when he benefits from it (Daire, 629-30). Alexandre rejects Parménion's advocacy of a surprise night attack on Daire's army because he regards such a plan as being by its nature contrary to his concept of self-esteem ("acte d'un lâche cœur"). He cannot conceive of not displaying his "vertu" to the light of day, and claims that gaining victory by subterfuge would be injurious to his honour (Daire, 239-52).

As a statement of the admirable hero's qualities of virtue, honour, courage tempered with prudence, compassion and magnanimity, la Mort de Daire may be considered in terms of the panegyric. But this is not Hardy's final treatment of the developing character of Alexandre. In la Mort de Daire the conqueror, while remaining mainly concerned with his personal "gloire", is presented as a leader of men and as having, therefore, certain political obligations. He remains, however, rather a static character; the play is mainly concerned with the development of particular themes. It is in la Mort d'Alexandre that the hero is presented in the process of becoming king. In the first
scene of the play the ghost of Parménion reproaches Alexandre for his overweening personal ambition, and goes on to list examples of Alexandre's ingratitude to and barbaric treatment of his oldest and most loyal advisers and friends, who had been disturbed by the king's falling from virtue and had spoken out too bluntly against it. This is a sure way, Alexandre is told, for the king to surround himself with flatterers. In the following scene (1,2), Perdice plays this very role of the flatterer, so that Alexandre's ambition becomes enflamed by the thought that he has paused in his victorious progress at the defeat of Pore (Porus) instead of continuing with the conquest of the whole world (Alexandre, 81-104). The Mage, the second harbinger of destiny to appear in the play, is not prepared to flatter Alexandre's self-esteem, but warns him that death awaits him in Babylon. Alexandre replies that fear is unworthy of him, to which the Mage answers that taking a risk when it can be avoided is not courageous but foolhardy (Alexandre, 191-94). He echoes the sentiments expressed by Cirus about Abradate's lack of prudence, and for the same reason: Alexandre has also fallen victim to the passionate desire for personal "gloire". His recollection of the sack of Thebes and his remorse over this hasty action (Alexandre, 117-22) are significant. While he does not commit a similarly violent act in la Mort d'Alexandre, the destruction of the city is symptomatic of this same passionate concern with reputation seen in the latter play. Moreover, Alexandre does infringe upon the liberty of others. Cassandre
explains that, having refused to prostrate himself before Alexandre as before a god (as was the Persian custom), he had been severely beaten by the king, "cruauté qui me peint la honte sur la face" (Alexandre, 302).

In the final act, Alexandre still shows himself to be conscious of his honour. Reconciled to death, he knows that his memory will survive him:

Mes jours s'en vont finis, non pas ma renommée
Parmi les nations de la terre semée;
Sans regret d'expirer pendant l'âge plus beau,
Car ma meilleure part survivra le tombeau,
Et mon âge, qui fut de petite durée,
Je repute assez long, sa gloire mesurée.

(Alexandre, 1107-12)

Alexandre's character develops in the play. He becomes, particularly in the final two acts when he knows he is going to die, increasingly conscious of his duty as king. He excuses his apparently impious claim to divine descent as a political instrument to bring peace and unity to the kingdom. His main concern in the final scenes of the play is to establish the succession, to legitimise his reign by giving his subjects a natural prince. In this light, some of his earlier actions may be re-interpreted. The violence of his accusations against Apollodore and the violence of his treatment of the Mage (II,2) should be compared with his expressed concern to establish the security of his kingdom at the end of the same scene (Alexandre, 529-38). His anger at the beginning of the scene was directed at those he felt were conspiring to undermine the stability of

7 Théâtre, IV, 76. The lines are misnumbered 1007-12.
his reign. Alexandre's cruelty towards Denis may also be explained by his fear that the latter's act of lèse-majesté might undermine the king's precarious authority.

It is in this same scene that Alexandre's dual role as hero and king is most clearly set forth. Aristandre tells Alexandre that he should be able to await death resolutely and calmly, in no fear that presages or ill-omens can deprive the hero of his reputation (Alexandre, 655-64). But Aristandre also reminds the king of his role as "bon roi" who, "plein d'honneurs, adoré du reste de la terre" (Alexandre, 657), is assured of immortality. Plistarque having reported yet another presage, Alexandre fears that he will suffer

par quelque lâche main
Jalous de ma gloire, un trépas inhumain,
Et qu'après ma mort (malheur qui serait pire)
Un successeur indigne usurpe cet empire.
(Alexandre, 695-98)

"Certes, la Parque ne l'épouvante pas, mais un bon prince ne doit-il pas s'inquiéter des désordres qui suivront sa mort? Ne doit-il pas désirer assez vivre pour les prévenir?"8 Roxane, in pleading with Alexandre to take heed of the repeated presages, reminds him that, though as hero he may regard it as prejudicial to his honour to flee an imminent death, as king he should be prudent and mindful of the destiny of his subjects (Alexandre, 757-64). Her advice is similar to that offered by Alceste to Admète, but, unlike Admète, Alexandre does not accept his wife's counsel. Pride in his personal reputation remains in conflict

8 Rigal, Hardy, p. 377.
with his duty as king, and the tragedy turns about the fact that not until it is too late does the dying Alexandre devote all his attention to his role as king.

In this hierarchy of heroes whose characters we have been studying, Alexandre represents the summit. "Évidemment, l'histoire ou, pour mieux dire, la légende d'Alexandre avait séduit notre dramaturge: il y trouvait de quoi satisfaire ce goût de grandeur que nous avons remarqué en lui; il y trouvait encore ce dont il avait le plus besoin, des sujets tout indiqués et comme des esquisses de tragédies". In Alexandre's character as developed in the trilogy may be found every aspect of the heroic ideal of "gloire" which is presented piecemeal or less completely in all the other heroes, except one, that have been studied. The exception to the developing line of Hardy's heroes is, of course, Hérode. It will be remembered that among Mariamne's reasons for hating him was not merely baseness of soul, but lowliness of birth. Hérode alone of Hardy's principal characters is not of aristocratic or royal descent. All the others are conscious of their patriotic or public duty, and are thus potentially capable of attaining this ideal.

The principle of the schematic presentation of Hardy's characters in a descending line and an ascending line should then be reaffirmed. All Hardy's characters are concerned with honour. Those on the descending line fall short of the personal

9 Ibid., p. 358.
ideal; those on the ascending line achieve it, but become conscious of a yet higher principle of action. Alexandre's contradictory actions in the final play of the trilogy stem from the conflict between his wish to remain faithful to his personal ideal while trying to fulfil the higher function of public duty. The former principle we may call the aristocratic ideal, the latter the monarchic ideal, and it is to the examples of dépassement de soi, those heroes who attain the monarchic ideal of piety, that we now turn.

This ideal, once achieved, is not retained without a struggle. Hardy's characters remain dynamic; both Aenée and Cirrus have conflicts to resolve which are of the same order as those of the characters already examined. But by their clearer appreciation of the pious ideal and their strength of will the conflicts are resolved by the transcendence of personal interests.

I have chosen to denote this ideal by the term piety because it is traditionally associated with Aenée, the first of Hardy's heroes to embody this attitude. Indeed, Aenée's opening monologue establishes his piety: vacillating between the memory of past misfortunes and uncertainties about the future, and his present happiness, he turns to the gods for advice (Didon, 1-63). The stage is set for a psychological conflict between Aenée's sense of pious duty to establish a kingdom in Italy, and his personal inclination to stay with Didon in Carthage where he is happy. Nor is this the only reason for hesitation on Aenée's part. He knows that he has an obligation of honour towards
Didon, and that to show ingratitude to the queen would be damaging to his "gloire":

La gloire au plus haut prix j'ai toujours acheté,
Ennemi du repos, ennemi des délices;
Mais quand nous nous sentons de cruautés complices,
Quand il est question de rompre une amitié
Envers nos bienfaiteurs plus dignes de pitié,
Ha! cieux, ha! justes cieux, alors la conscience
Jette un trouble dans l'âme affreux d'impatience,
Nous portons contre nous de terribles témoins,
Et les plus généreux alors le sont le moins.

(Didon, 120-28)

How can these conflicts be resolved? Aenee's personal inclination to find happiness in Carthage and his desire to act magnanimously towards Didon can be resolved by his staying in Carthage; his public duty can be performed only by his leaving. In other words, Aenee is torn between being a hero and a king. In Didon also, there is a conflict between love, reputation and duty to her people, but whereas Didon succumbs to passion and is destroyed, Aenee follows the path to greater glory. He is clearly seen as the "man of destiny", and it is this aspect of his role that neither Didon nor her sister Anne can comprehend. In the final interview, Aenee tells the latter:

J'ai, ferme sous l'espoir de nos dieux domestiques,
Préservé jusqu'ici les troyennes reliques,
D'être plus du salut d'un enfant curieux,
Qu'accomplir menacé le mandement des cieux,
Jamais; la piété leur appartient première,
Comme ils veulent de nous une assurance entière
Que l'on croie du tout leurs oracles reçus,
Par qui les vertueux onc ne furent déçus.

(Didon, 1235-42)

We have seen a number of examples of characters who, while

10 Didon is pregnant.
conscious of their pious duty, while expressing the ideals of patriotism and service to others, are in fact more concerned with striving after self-fulfilment. Panthée and Abradate may be cited; both find that the concept of personal "gloire" is hollow once consciousness of the higher ideal is present. Paradoxically, it is in self-abnegation, in the performance of his pious duty, that the hero achieves ultimate self-fulfilment. Panthée also provides us with an example of the supreme hero; Cirus reaches the only form of apotheosis that can be attained by a mortal in Hardy's theatre. Once more, the presentation of Cirus' character is not static; like Aenée, he has personal considerations to overcome. If I have placed him higher than Aenée in this hierarchy of heroes, it is because he succeeds not only in recognising his duty to all of his subjects, but also in being just and magnanimous towards each one. Like Aenée, Cirus regards himself as a man of destiny, embodying a divine purpose to bring peace to all on earth (Panthée, 1-14). This is not ambition, a desire for personal aggrandisement such as Alexandre was accused of; indeed, Cirus claims that it is this passion which he is most concerned to combat. It is a pious duty: "Cirus doit régir l'univers, /Monarque nécessaire à ses peuples divers" (Panthée, 8-9). The ideal of the admirable hero is not incompatible with that of good kingship; indeed, the admirable hero alone is equipped to become the leader of men:

L'humeur du prince sert aux sujets de modèle,
Il faut, bon gré, mal gré, qu'ils se forment en elle:
Couard, ils le suivront en sa timidité,
Vaillant, chacun s'efforce à sa gloire incité.

(Panthée, 77-80)

Cirus realises that personal interests have to be subordinated to those of the state, and that good kingship is the ultimate expression of "gloire". But to express a general precept and to act in accordance with it are two different matters. Cirus is put to the test in the case of Araspe. The king has given his word of honour that Panthée's chastity will be respected; for this reason he rebukes Araspe, whose conduct towards Panthée has been detrimental to the king's reputation ("au dépens de l'honneur de moi, ton souverain", Panthée, 477). Cirus would find an offence committed against himself easy to forgive, but if he fails to punish Araspe in this particular case, his action would seem unjust and his authority would be undermined:

Une faute commise en mon particulier,
Rémisible aisément je voudrais oublier,
Mais où vole en public l'éclat d'une injustice,
Où mon autorité sert de voile à son vice,
Où ma gloire pâtit pour ses cupidités,
Je doute quels tourments il n'a point mérités.

(Panthée, 441-46)

Here Cirus' honour is identified with his authority, which in turn is equated with the good of the state. But political considerations supersede personal ones. By a double act of clemency, Cirus retains for his regime the services of an able lieutenant as well as earning the gratitude and loyalty of Panthée, and into the bargain Abradate, his most adamant enemy and the clearest threat to his reign, is won over to his cause.
Cirus is the most complete example of Hardy's concept of the admirable hero, the man who combines by an act of will the apparently contradictory attributes of personal "gloire" and pious duty.

At the top of the hierarchy stands Hercule, the main character of Alceste. Although Hardy claims that his "riche sujet" is "[en] partie imité d'Euripide"\textsuperscript{11}, his conception of the demi-god's character bears little resemblance to the roistering drunkard of the Greek drama. Rather is Hardy's presentation derived from a tradition, to which Seneca's Hercules Oetaeus gives expression, which saw in Hercules a somewhat messianic figure who, in slaying monsters, was symbolically overcoming evil and whose self-immolation represented the final triumph over passion. "Une des principales originalités de Sénèque est qu'il joint parfois à la pitié un sentiment nouveau, l'admiration. ... On peut dire qu'Hercule sur l'Oeta est par excellence la tragédie de l'admiration"\textsuperscript{12}. Hardy expresses the same idea in Didon se sacrifiant:

\begin{quote}
Perfection digne des dieux,  
Que premier n'obtint à la terre,  
Celui qui fit victorieux  
Aux monstres une juste guerre,  
Premier que d'avoir dépouillé  
Son mortel dans la flamme éprise,  
Et çà-bas l'écorce remise  
Des voluptés qui l'ont souillé.  
\end{quote}

(Didon, 1555-62)

\textsuperscript{11} Théâtre, I, 204, Argument, l. 28.

In *Alceste*, Hercule is presented as the epitome of the admirable hero, courageous but modest, magnanimous, and above all conscious of his personal "gloire". Admête utters a long panegyric on the demi-god (*Alceste*, 1185-1208), mentioning first Hercule's merits as a hero, but linking them with those qualities he has in common with the good king, "appui de l'innocence, au vice redoutable" (*Alceste*, 1190). Sacrifices will be offered in Hercule's honour, and Admête's people, following their king's example, will adore "celui qui le rendra de tout désastre franc" (*Alceste*, 1208). Hercule, modestly declining for the present this honour, awaits confidently his acceptance into "la céleste bande", when, he says, "je recevrai ma part /Des suprêmes honneurs que l'homme lui départ" (*Alceste*, 1211-12).

Though an ideal hero whose life ends in a kind of apotheosis, Hercule is not subject to doubts or psychological conflict. He perceives an ideal and achieves it effortlessly. Junon's hostility cannot make him angry, nor can Eurysthée's blandishments disturb his modest self confidence. Not in a state of becoming, but of being, Hercule must be distinguished from Hardy's other heroes, just as Alcméon in his vicious self-indulgence must be set apart at the other end of the scale. Both Hercule and Alcméon are non-heroes. In all the other characters created by Hardy the impression of their dynamism, of their moving from one state to another is strongly evident. The range extends, as can be seen, from the outstanding example of tyranny, Hérode, to the supreme embodiment of good kingship,
Cirus. Between these extremes Hardy presents a wide variety of characters who, idealists all, are motivated in their actions by their individual conception of "gloire".
CONCLUSION

The tragic action, especially as it involves the tragic emotions and the methods of arousing them, is a complex and controversial matter which has not ceased to preoccupy the best critics and philosophers since Aristotle wrote his treatise on the subject. In particular, the phrase most frequently examined is that in which he defines tragedy as the imitation of an action "with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions". What is meant by pity and fear? Pity and fear for whom? Should we perhaps understand it as fear of someone? What is meant by catharsis? What other emotions did Aristotle have in mind as being susceptible of catharsis and thus suitable for tragedy? It seems a mistake to approach the tragedies of any particular dramatist, except perhaps those of the Greek triad, with fixed and immutable notions of what these terms mean. Rather should one study the plays produced by a dramatist and try to determine on that basis what he understood by tragedy.

For example, distinguished critics have done much to rehabilitate Corneille as a tragic dramatist by explaining that implicit in his plays there is a system of moral values which may seem foreign to us, but which, as we study the problems which confront the Cornélian hero and the means he uses to resolve them, have, in reality, relevance to modern man. The

1 *Art of Poetry*, p. 35.
moral values underlying Corneille's tragedies are basically aristocratic and heroic, the hero being forced to use his own initiative to solve his problems, and it seems unjust to judge his plays by criteria other than those implied in them.

Similarly, it is a mistake to judge the tragicality of Hardy's plays by reference to the moral values implicit in the tragedies of Racine, for example, or in those of the Greeks. Even comparing them with the tragedies of the sixteenth century, we are mainly struck by the differences between the two conceptions. We should do Hardy the honour of assuming, until it is proved otherwise, that the term "tragédie" had some distinctive meaning for him, and that his conception of the genre was sufficiently coherent to be made comprehensible by a study of his plays.

This is not to say that the views of commentators and theorists of Hardy's day are of no value in reading his plays. Let us return to the phrase from Aristotle quoted above. What did Hardy understand by catharsis? We have no direct evidence. He did not himself use the term, or one of its current equivalents, or imply that he knew it; but his system of moral values would

3 This is the approach of F. K. Dawson, "Alexandre Hardy and seventeenth-century French tragedy." For example: "Centuries of Christianity had taught that [the] power behind the scheme of things entire is, above all else, moral, a characteristic which seems to be superfluous in the Greek view of life which tragedy at this time ostensibly adopted. ... With the Greeks, the responsibility of the tragic hero for the eventual outcome of the action could be extremely small. ... For Hardy, however, since moral purpose has been substituted, since Fate has clothed herself in the shining garment of justice, and granted that tragedy is a record of man's suffering, then it follows that if the suffering is great (as indeed it is in tragedy) the cause of that suffering must be equally great." (pp. 87, 89)
be much the same as that of his contemporaries, and what they have to say about catharsis would presumably not be irrelevant to a study of Hardy's plays.

As Hatzfeld points out, the moral ideas expressed in literature at this period constitute a link between the Baroque and the Counter-Reformation. "The great reform in manners and customs and the care for souls, and the development of the systematic examination of conscience, are reflected in a greater stress on the purgative character of epic and drama. A case in point is the baroque explanation of Aristotle's catharsis. To antiquity it had been a liberation from pity and fear, forces equally negative as hindering the mesotes in a carefree life. To the Baroque it is a liberation from the passions and a stimulus to virtue, a killing of the bad and an awakening of the good intentions". Edith Kern, in discussing Heinsius' translation of and commentary on Aristotelian catharsis, notes that "he had translated: expiatio. However, he is aware of the fact that the term may also be rendered as purgatio; and after having told us this, enters into an elaborate discussion of the concept. ... Heinsius chose this parallel in order to show the correspondence between catharmos and catharsis, thus indicating that Aristotle used the term in an ethical sense; for catharmos was used by Pythagoreans and Neo-Platonists to describe

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a complete cleansing from passion. As Heinsius tells us, they
desired a kind of life dedicated to contemplation and completely
governed by the mind. In that manner they would approach God
more closely⁵. Except that his heroes are more active than
contemplative, the spirit of catharmos seems to suffuse the
tragedies of Hardy, for we have seen the consistency with which
he castigates the passions as impediments to self-fulfilment,
and how he exalts the heroes who free themselves from passion.

For tragedy such a view of man's condition entails two
consequences. Firstly, the happiness or misery of the hero
will be exactly commensurate with his ability to dominate his
own passions; and secondly, the possibility of perfection must
be held open to him. Both these factors lead to the conclusion
that the hero's fate is in his own hands, that he is not dominated
or oppressed by a destiny external to himself, that tragedy is,
in a word secularised. Furthermore, if the hero is capable of
perfection, then the possibility of a happy ending is open to
tragedy. If we may feel pity and fear for the hero with incom­
plete mastery over himself, we may also feel admiration for the
exalted hero. The tragic conflict is no longer between man's
desires and the arbitrary and incomprehensible forces of the

⁵ Edith G. Kern, The Influence of Heinsius and Vossius upon
French dramatic theory. (Baltimore, 1949), pp. 58-59. We
might note that, in the second Discours, Corneille uses the
verb "déraciner" to describe the action of catharsis on the
emotions (Writings on the Theatre, ed. R. T. Barnwell,
universe as expressed through the will of the gods, but between man's will to perfection and the forces of his own nature which threaten his attainment of this ideal. Jacques Maurens has called it "cette lutte intime entre l'être naturel et l'être idéal qui impose au spectateur l'évidence d'un héroïsme non plus donné mais conquis".

The same critic goes on to say: "Cette démonstration de la grandeur de l'homme ne pouvait être complète sans une réforme de la structure de la tragédie. Elle correspondait à une vision du monde où prédominait la crainte, le tabou, la soumission alogique à l'ironie divine. Ce pessimisme hérité continuait à commander le choix de sujets en désaccord avec la confiance nouvelle en Dieu et dans la raison. Les humanistes avaient développé la contradiction; la tragédie renaissante du XVIIe siècle en était partie. Il revenait à Chapelain, le génie d'Aristote, de la fonder en droit par la théorie de la purification des passions et par la définition, universellement admise, d'un hérotragique parfait de nature mais fautif par improvisation".

In studying Hardy's tragedies I have attempted to show the importance he places on the hero's obligation to purge himself of passion and to remain true to his ideals -- all the more important since the heroes are usually kings whose actions have

7 Ibid., loc. cit.
far-reaching consequences. But this will to perfection is only the first stage in a process leading to the king's annihilation of self in the interests of the state. His attempt to attain personal fulfilment determines not only his own fate, but the destiny of nations, and is presented dramatically in an action which revolves about a moment of decision for the hero, a decision which can result in calamity or triumph. If we have difficulty in relating to these heroes, it is not, I suggest, because we cannot accept the importance of decision in guiding conduct, but because we feel that human intellect and human will are not so strong that they can make one single choice, however momentous, that will determine for ever life's progress. Hardy's heroes seem, in their nobility and idealism, too far removed from what we understand to be common humanity, and the extremes of degradation or exaltation which are their fate are consequently less capable of moving us. Their heroism and the moral values on which it is founded seem alien to us, but we should not condemn, or even make value judgements about Hardy's tragedies from this point of view alone. The only valid criterion of judgement is whether, within this moral framework, Hardy has presented a coherent treatment, in dramatic form, of the dilemma facing his chosen heroes.

When Lancaster claims that Hardy "does not sufficiently bring out the tragic element in his plays, even in such essentially tragic themes as those of Coriolanus and Alexander"\(^8\), one

\(^8\) Lancaster, *History*, I, 1, p. 49.
might agree that there are weaknesses in his plays, but question this criterion of judgement as well. Are some themes more essentially tragic than others? H. T. Barnwell has given a categorical answer to this question. "No subject is of itself tragic: it becomes so only when it is presented within a coherent tragic framework and is made to serve a tragic purpose. The order of tragedy differs radically from the confusion of ordinary existence, and it is this which accounts in part for true tragedy being lifted out of the sphere of that existence by the noble stature of its characters — their social nobility is symbolic of their moral nobility (which has nothing to do with goodness or badness in the usual sense)". The tragic framework for Hardy is expressed in the moral choice with which he confronts his hero, and the tragic purpose is the arousing of emotion in the spectator, sometimes pity and fear, but quite often admiration for these exemplars of human conduct. The validity of this framework is never seriously questioned by Hardy's tragic heroes. They accept that honour and justice are eternal and worthwhile principles, and that they are acting in accordance with natural law in observing them. Such confidence in reason and order is outside the experience of modern man, which is why the heroes of these seventeenth-century tragedies no longer arouse in us the appropriate emotions. Jacques Morel has stated the case succinctly: "La perfection de la tragédie exige la possession de certains principes, la certitude de

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9 H. T. Barnwell, *The Tragic in French tragedy*, pp. 22-23.
l'existence d'un monde de valeurs, la connaissance au moins des termes du dilemme qui écartèle le héros. ... Les hommes du XVIIe siècle assimilaient la liberté à l'accomplissement de l'individu dans une action qui en même temps s'efforçait d'accomplir la loi. Les hommes de notre temps ne croient plus en la préexistence de l'individu, non plus qu'en celle de la loi. Le tragique tel qu'ils l'entendent n'est douloureux que parce qu'ils ont conscience d'enfanter, à eux seuls, un monde nouveau et ambigu"10.

Having tried to define the correct moral perspective in which to view Hardy's theatre, I shall now endeavour to summarise the main findings set forth in the preceding chapters. In the construction of the plots of his tragedies and in the themes he treats Hardy offers an interesting amalgam of the dramatic practices of the Renaissance theatre and those of the developing seventeenth-century drama. He uses the devices, both dramatic and linguistic, developed by the Renaissance dramatists to impose an atmosphere of gloom and despair on their tragedies, and which one may describe as rhetorical. This is particularly true of the appearance of protatic figures in Hardy's plays, and of their pronouncements which do nothing to carry forward the action. The same criticism is by and large justified when applied to his use of dreams, portents, omens and the like, particularly as Hardy's tragedies are usually devoid of a sense

10 La Tragédie, p. 76.
of the supernatural or merveilleux. Such devices represent, in fact, the personal intervention of the author in an attempt to establish an emotional or moralising tone and may be justly deplored in drama, especially when, as in this case, the imposed emotional tone is often out of keeping with the actions shown and the sentiments expressed in the play. On the other hand, Hardy managed to disencumber his tragedies of the device of the chorus, regularly used in sixteenth-century tragedy to present the voice of the author commenting on the action. He uses the messenger's report sometimes as a rhetorical device, but also more dramatically to produce an emotional reaction in the personages on stage. Although he employs the soliloquy too often as a device to provoke in the audience a moral judgement on the speaker's character, yet sometimes it marks for the hero a moment of resolution, a prise de position or a conflict of emotions. Coriolan's speech in which he surveys the situation which has led to his banishment from Rome and resolves to ally himself with the Volscians (II,1), or the soliloquy in which Hérode expresses his hesitations before the trial of his wife, but resolves to be resolute and, if possible, magnanimous (Mariamne, IV,2), are dramatically as important as the stances of Rodrigue in le Cid. Hallucinations and similar scenes of delirium were quite commonly employed to create an atmosphere of horror in Renaissance tragedy, and Altée's invocation of the Furies (Méléagre, V,1) is a comparable use of this device. But Hérode's hallucination in the final scene of Mariamne may
be compared with that of Oreste in *Andromaque* as the dramatic presentation of the state of mind of a man assailed by guilt and remorse.

Hardy's use of conventional dramatic devices tends to obscure the outlines of the action in his tragedies, but he was aware of the need to subordinate these devices to an over-all plan, even if he did not always succeed in achieving this aim. He presents as much as possible of the physical action on stage, but usually avoids scenes, however picturesque, which would detract from the unity of the action. The proportion of dialogue in his plays is greater than in those of his sixteenth-century predecessors, because he realised that this is the best way to represent a conflict of will between two characters. The central scene of his tragedies is usually one of confrontation, and all the episodes prepare for, or result from, this central point in the drama. This is for Hardy the peripety, or turning-point of the action. The protagonist is presented with a choice of courses to follow, and is forced to make a decision. He may make either the right or the wrong decision, so that the outcome may be either fortunate or unfortunate. The probability which produces the peripety lies in the character of the protagonist: he is aware of certain tendencies in his own personality, and must reconcile them with certain principles by an effort of will so that he may act correctly in the crisis which faces him. The conflict between the principles which should guide conduct and the desire to act against them is sometimes worked out in
the mind of the protagonist; but sometimes the conflict is externalised, and the hero is confronted by other characters who offer him advice on alternative courses of action. In either case the hero must make a choice and act on it.

The action of a tragedy by Hardy may be represented schematically as a rising and falling movement around this central scene of decision. If the protagonist makes the wrong choice, he poses a threat to the existence of a moral order governing the conduct of men. But there is nothing immoral about Hardy's tragedies; in these circumstances it is the hero who is destroyed, either by murder (Méléagre, Achille), or by suicide (Didon, Panthée), or, perhaps most dramatically, by a complete disintegration of personality and authority (Hérode). If he makes the correct choice, he reinforces the moral order and attains a higher level of consciousness and exaltation; the examples of this type of hero are Aenée, Cirus, Alexandre, at least potentially, and above all Hercule. The hero sometimes has the opportunity to reverse the falling movement started by a hasty decision, and to restore the moral order he had threatened to destroy (Coriolan, Alexandre in Timoclée), while in some of his tragedies Hardy presents a reciprocal movement of the action involving a second protagonist, in which the fortunes of the one fall as those of the other rise. Examples of this may be seen in the fate of the Persian king in la Mort de Daire and, more strikingly, in Mariamne, where the death of the heroine is an affirmation of her faith in the moral order.
The protagonists of Hardy's tragedies are usually kings, or at least heroes who are in a position to affect the destiny of nations. It is not surprising, therefore, that the main theme of his tragedies should be political: the problem of the principles which should guide the king in affairs of state. The theme was a traditional one, and Hérode is the descendant of a long line of sixteenth-century stage tyrants. Nor was this type to fall quickly out of favour in later seventeenth-century drama. Hardy also presents good kings whose reign is based not on a craving for power, but on a sense of duty to their subjects, who rule by justice and mercy, not by cruelty and oppression, and whose subjects are obedient from loyalty and affection, not from fear. This conception of kingship is, again, far from new; but it is interesting to note that Hardy presents more kings who attempt to rule justly than he does tyrants. Moreover, his good kings are shown as often succeeding in their endeavours; if they fail it is because of some defect in their own character. Hardy does not show us the pitiful spectacle of the oppression of an essentially good king who has fallen into the power of a tyrant, such as Sédécie in Garnier's les Juifves or Cléomène in Montchrestien's les Lacènes. He does indeed present two contrasted kings in some of his plays, and the double outcome ensures good fortune for the good king, misfortune for the tyrant, as in Alceste. But usually, if the king fails to achieve the ideal of good rule, it is not because he is ignorant of the principles on which it must be founded or
chooses to ignore them, but because the contrary impulses of his own nature impede his progress to perfection.

In those plays in which a warrior rather than a king is the main protagonist, he is shown as holding a similar position of responsibility, and as having problems similar to those of a king. He is aware of the need for truth and justice, of good faith and trust in dealings between nations as between men, and anxious for the establishment of peace. In plays such as Alceste and la Mort d'Achille, the episodes concerning the kings are subordinated to the major action involving a hero who is even more conscious of his duty to mankind than are the kings. Unlike the tragedies of the later seventeenth century, in which responsibility for evil actions is shifted from the king to a minister (for example, Photin in Corneille's Pompée, Narcisse in Racine's Britannicus), the tragedies of Hardy show the king as fully responsible for his actions and for their outcome, good or bad. He may solicit advice from his counsellors, but the decision to act on it rests with the king, and will depend on the principles he follows.

The king is an absolute monarch, and the monarchy as a system of government is consistently presented in a favourable light compared with other forms, such as republicanism or democracy. Even in a play such as Mariamne, the evils of Hérode's reign are contrasted with the benign rule of the king who was deposed, not with a different form of government. The monarch is at one and the same time the first servant and the
embodiment of the state: provided he is acting in its best interests, in accordance with the correct principles of kingship, he is deserving of the loyalty of his subjects. If he is a tyrant, it is not illegal for his subjects to depose him. He may also be deposed by an external force, by a conqueror, provided the latter proves himself the better king. If the contrast between the good king and the tyrant is a traditional theme of Renaissance tragedy, that between the conqueror-usurper and the legitimate ruler is less common, and is a distinctive feature of Hardy's tragedies. The problem for the conqueror who is a benevolent monarch is somewhat different from that of the legitimate king. No matter how just his reign, his authority is likely to remain precarious, for it will be illegal, and therefore in danger of being overthrown by rebellious subjects, until he can legitimise his conquest by providing the empire with an heir who will be accepted as a natural prince. The role of the conqueror is of romanesque origin, and in this respect Hardy's tragedies demonstrate the tendency of early seventeenth-century dramatists to choose romanesque subjects. Alexandre and Cirus prefigure Scudéry's Cirus and Racine's Alexandre, with this important exception, that Hardy's conquering heroes are not inspired by love, but, first, by a desire for honour, and, by extension, by the wish to bring peace and good rule to the whole world. It is significant that these conquerors embody in the highest degree the ideals of kingship that form the central theme of Hardy's tragedies.
The desire for "gloire" is the unifying feature of Hardy's treatment of character. As a formulation of man's aspirations, it is not entirely new. Montchretien, for example, gives a striking portrait of a character animated by his concern with reputation in his tragedy *Hector*, and the need to temper immoderate courage by prudence was the subject of sentences in many sixteenth-century tragedies. All Hardy's protagonists, even Hérode, have a conception of honour and try to attain it; they are all idealists in their own way. As in Renaissance tragedy, Hardy presents the traditional view of man as prey to his passions, to which he opposes his strength of will. "Gloire" can only result from the clear-sighted assessment of the motives for and the consequences of an action. The passions of love, hate or anger can only be harmful to the full deployment of courage, generosity, magnanimity and chastity, which seem to be the main ingredients of this concept of self-esteem. The remorse felt by some of the protagonists is produced by a realisation that they have not achieved their full potential, that they have made the wrong choice in following a course of action which is ultimately destructive of reputation. But it should be noted that there is nothing ineluctable about these passions. Hardy's heroes are dynamic, not static; they are in a state of becoming, not being. They create their own destiny by their own decisions and actions. They may have to struggle against contrary tendencies in their own natures, but it is this internal conflict which makes them interesting characters and worthy of this type of drama.
Several critics have remarked upon the importance of this aspect of Hardy's drama for the development of the tragedy. As Lanson notes, Hardy "s'aperçoit que l'émotion s'accroît et que l'action s'anime quand les victimes luttent, et quand les sentiments sont combattus par d'autres sentiments. Le ressort de la tragédie classique est trouvé"\(^{11}\). Forsyth is equally emphatic: "il paraît certain que Tristan l'Hermite et Corneille ont tiré la notion fondamentale de dilemme tragique d'une source commune, à savoir le théâtre d'Alexandre Hardy"\(^{12}\). In an important essay, Octave Nadal sees the idea of a dilemme tragique replacing an externally imposed fatality. The sense of a supernatural force bearing down on man is removed; instead:

\begin{quote}
l'acte dramatique est saisi au coeur même de l'homme. Certes il n'y a pas dévalorisation du mystère; mais celui-ci est autrement situé. Retiré aux forces surnaturelles, dieux ou Dieu, destin ou grâce, il fait retour à la nature humaine. Le ciel oublié, la scène s'allège de ses bontés ou de ses menaces. Dans la sécurité, les personnages ne parlent plus qu'à leur propre coeur; dans le péril, ils n'en appellent qu'à eux-mêmes. On voit alors succéder au lyrisme de l'immobile déploration, aux infortunes illustres broyées dans le poing de l'Inexorable, les modèles d'un tragique ou d'un comique, fondés sur une dynamique et une politique purement humaines. Napoléon a signalé ce tragique des temps modernes. ... Ces temps modernes de l'homme expliquent aussi la naissance d'une esthétique, qui ne tire plus son efficacité du sentiment de l'horreur ou de la pitié, mais de l'admiration; et il va de soi qu'il commande les figurations nouvelles, les sujets, les trouvailles et les avatars de la dramaturgie. Alexandre Hardy joint les deux versants scéniques: l'un voit s'achever la tradition humaniste, où ce mystère encore senti comme extérieur à l'homme constitue le personnage et le dernier mot du drame, l'autre reconnaît
\end{quote}

\(^{11}\) *Esquisse*, p. 46.

\(^{12}\) *Tragédie française*, p. 400.
le tragique comme intérieur; il ne le projettera plus hors de l'homme pour l'élever à l'état de mystère".

It is in the dramatisation of internal conflict, in the presentation of protagonists who struggle against the fatal effects of passion, that Hardy's achievement is most important for the development of tragedy in the seventeenth century. This is not to claim, as does Rigal, that seventeenth-century tragedy could not have developed as it did without Hardy as intermediary, nor that the notion of a tragic dilemma may not be found in the plays of his contemporaries and immediate successors. We have seen that Tristan l'Hermite may well have arrived at this conception of the tragic action by direct imitation of Hardy; but Forsyth notes that, among Hardy's contemporaries, Chrétien des Croix also exploits this source of tragic action and emotion. Jacques Maurens sees in Mairet's Sophonisbe an example of a play in which the human will creates its own destiny. Jacqueline Van Baelen has recently written, with reference to the heroes of Rotrou's tragedies, that "l'homme ne se justifie et ne s'explique que par lui-même, et non en fonction d'une religion, en fonction de valeurs extérieures; c'est lui seul qui invente sa vie et sa morale, c'est lui qui assume la responsabilité de cette vie, en n'acceptant d'autre juge ou

14 Tragédie française, p. 387.
15 La Tragédie sans tragique, pp. 214-15.
maître que lui-même". If Hardy made a notable contribution to this line of development in the seventeenth-century tragedy it would be no small achievement. But he would seem to have done more than this. Forsyth notes the definitive emergence in the fourth decade of the century of the two main currents into which French tragedy was to flow. "L'apparition en 1636-37 de ces deux types de tragédie — la tragédie réaliste et psychologique, représentée par la Mariane [de Tristan], et la tragédie idéaliste et 'héroïque', représentée par le Cid — marque à la fois la fin d'une longue période de tâtonnements et la bifurcation de la tradition dramatique. L'époque de la tragédie élégiaque, didactique et macabre est enfin terminée, et c'est dans l'une ou l'autre des voies ouvertes par ces deux pièces que s'engagera le plus souvent la tragédie de l'âge classique". Forsyth considers Hardy's tragedies to be, in the main, representative of the macabre tendencies which died out around 1620, and he is not alone in holding this opinion. But can we not see, in those plays of Hardy we have studied, at least some "tâtonnements" towards a conception of the heroic and idealistic tragedy?

If the heroic struggle is at the centre of Hardy's tragedy, the successful resolution of conflict in a hero would naturally lead to a kind of apotheosis. Alexandre is presented as the

17 Tragédie française, p. 401.
epitome of a type of hero, particularly in *La Mort de Daire*, where his chevaleresque qualities of courage, generosity, magnanimity and chastity are unalloyed by any harmful passions. Coriolan, after falling into sin, rises once more to the heroic heights at the end of the play. But in some cases the hero is seen to pass beyond a personal ideal as he becomes conscious of a yet greater achievement that awaits him. The concept of magnanimity, the sense of consideration and compassion and duty which regulates the admirable hero's dealings with those weaker and less fortunate than himself, leads him beyond the ideal of personal "gloire" to that which is inherent in the concept of good kingship, a devotion to the service of others. The self-confidence which results from the inner serenity and energy he has acquired by his conquest of self, assures the hero that the perfectibility of the individual can be extended to human society. "La volonté de puissance et de liberté, le désir de choisir son propre destin, et l'efficacité, qui lui permettait de recréer un monde neuf, entraînait le moi puissant et glorieux dans un don généreux et lucide qui enveloppait le monde réel et l'améliorait"18. In this desire to serve mankind, to raise it to the heights of perfection, one can see the supreme expression of dépassement de soi, and in the will which imposes its own vision on the world the final fulfilment of self and the ultimate expression of a heroic ideal. Such an attitude seems

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paradoxical, but it expresses the desire of the hero to establish norms of conduct which are not subject to change and decay, and at the same time to assert his confidence in his own powers of decision and action. After some internal conflict, Aeneé and Cirus attain this position and join Hercule in a semi-divine world beyond doubt and conflict which is as close as one may come to apotheosis in a secular drama.

This is idealism in the highest degree, which sees the establishment of a newer, more perfect moral order based on positive values of chivalry and heroism. One may ask once again to what extent this vision of the world is tragic. Jean Rousset would deny that the plays of Corneille, of which the earlier ones at least express a very similar view of the human condition, are tragic. "Tragédie? Il faudrait plutôt dire, comme Corneille le fait quelquefois, tragi-comédie ou comédie-héroïque; ni les héros ni les climats de ses pièces ne sont vraiment tragiques; le tragique impose à l'homme une limite et le broie sous une force inéluctable; le héros cornélien ne connaît aucune limite, il peut tout, non seulement sur lui-même et sur les autres, mais sur l'événement, sur le destin; la mort elle-même est au pouvoir du héros, comme un instrument de sa liberté"\(^{19}\). I would suggest that there are not a few points of similarity between Hardy's conception of tragedy and that of Corneille as outlined by Rousset. Furthermore, I would maintain that, if one aim of

\(^{19}\) *La Littérature de l'âge baroque*, p. 213.
tragedy is to express a view of the moral universe as seen by a
generation of men, then Hardy, Corneille and their contemporaries
were not mistaken in calling their plays tragedies. For their
generation, it seemed that the ideal of a society based on
reason and immutable principles of honour, justice and mercy
was realisable (not without struggle and disappointment, it is
ture) by men of good faith and good will. The tragedy of
psychological conflict represents the struggle; the tragedy of
idealism and heroism marks the triumph.
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APPENDIX

Plot summaries of Hardy's tragedies

As far as technical matters of plot are concerned, Rigal's study remains basic and essential for the understanding of Hardy's tragedies, and I rely heavily on his analysis of the plays in what follows. He devotes several pages to a synopsis of the plot of each of Hardy's plays\(^1\), but combines plot analysis with character studies, with his own commentaries on the plays and with comparisons of Hardy's plays and treatments of the same subject by other dramatists. Some episodes he analyses in detail, others he scarcely mentions. The general outline of the intrigue of the tragedies which follows will, I hope, show more clearly the way the material is organised and the plays constructed. The summaries are arranged in alphabetical order.

Alceste

In soliloquy, Junon expresses her continued enmity for Hercule. She enumerates the prodigious feats he has accomplished and says that a grateful humanity worships him as a god. As a final and most difficult task, she intends to send him to the underworld. She commands Euristée to send Hercule to fetch Cerbère and, as the hero approaches, Junon vanishes (I,1). Euristée relays this order to Hercule, while assuring him that this is his own scheme. If Hercule accomplishes it, he will be released from his obligation to Euristée. Hercule is not deceived and asks what Junon will set as his next labour -- to

\(^1\) Rigal, *Hardy*, pp. 263-394; 404-407.
attack the gods themselves? Nevertheless, he agrees to carry out the command (I,2). The scene changes to Pherae, where Admète awaits with his mother, father and wife, Alceste, the return of Euripile from consulting the oracle at Delphi. Admète is fated to die very shortly, and his regrets are for his subjects, whom he will leave kingless, for his parents and for his wife, rather than for himself. The Mère and Père vie with one another in swearing their willingness to take their son's place, but Alceste is so overcome with grief that she can only promise to follow her husband in death. Euripile enters to announce that Apollo will allow Admète to live if a close relative will consent to die in his place. The Mère and the Père now rival one another in finding excuses not to offer themselves, but Alceste willingly volunteers to make the sacrifice. Admète protests that he cannot accept this offer, but yields to his wife's argument that he must continue to live for the good of his subjects. She urges him not to sully her glorious death by an excess of lamentation (II,1). Hercule thanks Admète for his hospitality and asks if there is any service he can perform for him. Admète replies that, if it were not sacrilegious to kill one's host, he would ask Hercule to kill him, and, at Hercule's prompting, reveals the circumstances of Alceste's death. Hercule says that, since he has to descend to the underworld, he will bring Alceste back with him as he returns. He leaves, and Admète utters a panegyric on the hero (III,1). The next scene takes place in the court of Pluton, who gloats vindictively over the death of Pirithoüs
and the capture of Thésée. Pluton and Rhadamante are discussing how to punish their prisoner when Atrope rushes in to report that Cerbère has been seized, Thésée liberated, and Pluton's defending forces routed. From Atrope's description, Pluton recognises Hercule, the scourge of tyrants, and despairs of defeating such an opponent. Charon enters with a message from Hercule: the hero explains that he is accomplishing one of his labours and apologises to Pluton. He must take Cerbère, but he also wishes to free Thésée from prison and Alceste from death. If Pluton does not accede to these requests, Hercule will devastate his kingdom. After some discussion with his advisers, Pluton regretfully yields to these demands, and sends Charon back to Hercule, adding only that his ambassador should bargain for Cerbère's return by giving up the shade of Alceste (IV,1). Hercule and Thésée are discussing further assaults on Pluton's realm, when Charon approaches leading the Ombre d'Alceste. He tries to bargain as his king ordered, but Hercule forces the ferryman to transport himself, Alceste, Thésée and Cerbère back across the river (IV,2). In Pherae, Admète continues to lament the death of Alceste and feels sure that Hercule has failed in his mission. At this moment, the hero enters, accompanied by Thésée and Alceste and leading Cerbère. Alceste and Admète praise Hercule's goodness, Thésée tells briefly how he was rescued, and Hercule modestly replies that many years of friendship bind him to Thésée, while he had a debt of gratitude for hospitality to repay Admète. Refusing Admète's offer to stay
and celebrate, he leaves with Thésée to take Cerbère to Euristée (V,1).

**Coriolan**

In soliloquy, Coriolan explains how he, the saviour of the Roman people in the war with the Corioli, is now having to defend his actions against the calumny of these same people. Volomnie enters and urges her son to adopt a submissive attitude until the wrath of the people has passed, thus performing a patriotic duty by preventing a rift between the plebs and the patrician class. Coriolan promises to do anything, provided his honour is not impugned. An Edile enters to conduct Coriolan to the Forum (I,1). Before the assembled Roman people, Licinie accuses Coriolan of various crimes against the state, principally of wishing to establish a dictatorship. Coriolan vehemently denies these charges and accuses the Roman people in turn of ingratitude and calumny. Licinie announces that Coriolan is condemned to perpetual exile from Rome and the hero leaves, pursued by the insults of the people, while the Sénat regrets that it has not helped Coriolan to defend himself (I,2). In a long soliloquy, Coriolan considers the implications of his banishment. He determines to avenge himself on the Romans and decides to join the Volsques in their struggle against Rome (II,1). Amfidie despairs of ever defeating the Romans, who are destined to rule the world. A page announces that a stranger wishes to see him (II,2). Coriolan enters in disguise, explains
the circumstances of his exile and offers his services to the Volsques. Amfidie eagerly accepts his offer and swears to keep good faith with Coriolan (II,3). In the Forum, the Sénat and the Choeur des Romains hurl recriminations at each other. They regret their short-sightedness in exiling Coriolan, who is now implacably determined to destroy Rome. The ambassadors enter to announce the humiliating peace terms set out by Coriolan. The Sénat asks the ambassadors to return and plead once more with the exiled commander (III,1). Coriolan muses on the course of his vengeance. He has twice rejected offers of reconciliation and will be content with nothing less than the reduction of Rome to the rank of a minor power (III,2). The Roman ambassadors enter with their final offer, complete pardon and recall from exile, and ask for a private audience to discuss terms. But Coriolan sends for the Volscian council and threatens to denounce the ambassadors as spies if they persist in trying to confer with him in private on a public matter. Before the council, he repeats his demand that the Romans return everything they have conquered as a prerequisite for peace and, when the ambassadors protest that these terms are inequitable, Coriolan publically renounces all ties of duty and affection for Rome. The Conseil des Volsques expresses its gratitude for Coriolan's help (III,3). In Rome, Valérie decides to ask Volomnie to intercede with her son on behalf of his native city (IV,1). Amfidie regrets that he has invited Coriolan to lead the Volscian army, for he is
now envious of the affection his compatriots feel for the exiled Roman. He resolves to find a way to destroy Coriolan (IV,2). Volomnie agrees to Valérie's proposal that she plead with her son, because it is her patriotic duty to do so (IV,3). Coriolan urges the Volsques to continue their siege of Rome and starve the citizens into submission, rather than to try a direct assault on the city. His mother, his wife, his son and a Troupe de Dames approach, and Volomnie pleads with Coriolan to end his enmity for the Romans, accept their offer of recall from exile and establish peace. She also appeals to his sense of filial duty and embraces his knees, urging his wife and son to do the same. Coriolan hesitates, and the Conseil des Volsques expresses its suspicion that Coriolan's determination is weakening and that he will want to abandon the siege of Rome (IV,4). Coriolan has been disturbed by evil presages and portents and he fears the jealousy of Amfidie. A page summons him to appear before the council (V,1). Awaiting Coriolan's arrival, Amfidie explains to the Conseil des Volsques that his sense of patriotic duty and injured honour have led him to arraign Coriolan. The Roman general had deceived him and the Volsques into believing he was supporting their cause, when he was merely seeking personal revenge on Rome while waiting to be recalled from exile. Coriolan has now betrayed them by lifting the siege. He should really be summarily condemned rather than given the benefit of a trial. Coriolan enters, and Amfidie demands to know his reasons for
raising the siege, finally accusing him of treachery. Coriolanus defends himself ably, but in the end has to admit the strength of his mother's appeal to his piety. Amfidie triumphantly concludes that Coriolanus stands condemned out of his own mouth, and the Choeur des Volsques demands his death. Indeed, the people are so enraged that they rise up and kill Coriolanus on the spot. Amfidie asks the council to excuse them for carrying out what would in any case have been the decision of the court, and they decide to return the body to Rome (V,2). Volomnie awaits the foreboding news of Coriolanus. A messenger enters to give details of her son's death, and Volomnie laments that patriotism should have been its cause. She asks to weep over the corpse and to give it fitting burial, and swears to follow her son to the grave (V,3).

Didon se sacrifiant

In dramatising the Dido and Aeneas story, Hardy begins his tragedy at the moment when the lovers are at the height of their happiness, but when Aeneas becomes once again conscious of his obligation to leave Carthage. He turns to Achate and Palinure for advice, and they urge him to leave without delay (I,1). Didon speaks of the warning that has come to her in a dream of Aeneas's impending departure and refuses to be consoled by Anne's arguments that he will return once Jule (Ascanius) is old enough to assume the kingship (I,2). Then follows an interlude in which the rejected suitor Iarbe fulminates against
Didon and expresses his desire for revenge (II,1). Aenée tells Achate how strongly he is aware of his own culpability towards Didon and how much he dreads the coming interview with the queen. Achate urges Aenée to flee Carthage without telling Didon, but Aenée replies that the success of his enterprise depends on the good-will of the gods, who would be offended by such a cowardly and ungrateful action (II,2). A short scene closes the act, in which Jule breathes fire and brimstone in his eagerness to be away and establish his heritage, while Achate and Palinure argue for a little moderation (II,3). The interview between Didon and Aenée occupies most of the third act. The queen reminds Aenée of their past love and warns him that his departure will kill her. She fears for his safety on the sea, and says that it would be more prudent for him to stay in Carthage. As for herself, she has abandoned the path of virtue and honour for his sake. Aenée replies that he will always be grateful to her for her kindness, but reminds her that he had never promised marriage and that he had never forgotten the purpose of his voyage, to establish his empire in Italy. Didon asks sarcastically if he had seduced her merely for political ends, to persuade her to give refuge to the Trojans. He has caused her to love him, his departure will kill her and he must accept the responsibility for her death. Overwhelmed by her love, she pleads with him to stay. Aenée replies that the divine command takes precedence in time and importance over his love for Didon. Abandoning her queenly dignity, Didon throws herself at Aenée's
feet and begs him to stay, to have pity on her, not to cause her death. Aenee repeats his arguments: if the gods had not commanded him to resume his voyage, he would have chosen to stay in Carthage. Didon bursts into furious imprecations, and faints. Aenee takes the opportunity to slip away, vowing to return when he has established his kingdom (III,1). Didon, recovered from her swoon, sends Anne to make one final plea to Aenee to stay, at least until she has accustomed herself to the idea of his departure (III,2). Mercure appears to Aenee in a dream to remind him of his mission and to warn him that Didon is preparing to expiate her honour in Trojan blood. Aenee orders the Trojans to make ready for immediate departure (IV,1). Anne enters to beg Aenee to stay, or at least to take Didon with him. Aenee repeats his arguments for leaving, which, as he had foreseen, Anne is incapable of understanding, and his promise to return (IV,2). Didon watches Aenee's ships depart: the fatal omens have been confirmed. Determined on death, she calls down curses upon the Trojans and their descendants. To her sister she dis-simulates her resolve to die in asking for her help in preparing a magic ritual to cure her of love; but in a long soliloquy she repeats that only in death can she regain her lost virtue (IV,3). Her feelings of guilt and remorse are the burden of Didon's soliloquy which opens the last act. Preparations for the sacrifice follow, and the queen kills herself. Anne utters a lament over the corpse and would kill herself too, but the Choeur urges her to take over the reins of government from her sister (V,1).
The ghost of Aristobule appears to Hérode in a dream. He recounts the king's tyranny, how he has perjured the trust placed in him and usurped the throne, predicts that he will cause Mariamne's death, and promises the punishment of the gods so that Hérode may serve as an example to other kings who might abuse their divine trust (I,1). Hérode awakens, startled by his dream. In soliloquy, he recounts the acts of cruelty and repression by which he has risen to and maintains the throne. He explains to Phérore that, while he apparently has all the wealth and power anyone could desire, in reality he has nothing because he lacks the love of his wife. Salome claims that Mariamne intends to destroy Hérode and his empire, and be the ruin of them all. Hérode accuses his brother and sister of envy and rancour towards Mariamne, and while Phérore protests that he has no intention of calumniating the queen, Salome declares that she is sure that Mariamne has plotted against the life of the king. But Hérode cannot fear for his life at her hands and, with imprecations against Phérore and Salome, leaves to see his wife. Salome, left alone, swears to bring about Mariamne's death (I,2). Mariamne utters a long monologue in which she describes her deplorable situation. Married to an inhuman tyrant, the murderer of her father and brother, she wishes only for death and to bring about Hérode's death. The nourrice tries to dissuade Mariamne from her purpose, and a lengthy discussion ensues, terminated by the arrival of a page to call
the queen to the king's private apartment (II,1). Salome tries to persuade the Echanson to convince Hérode that Mariamne has tried several times to suborn him into poisoning the king. Hérode must be protected against himself, blinded as he is by his infatuation with a woman who seeks his death. The Echanson demurs, fearful of the king's wrath if he accuses the queen. Salome promises to support him, and appeals to his loyalty to the king. The Echanson reluctantly agrees to bear false witness since the king's safety is at stake and since he trusts Salome to be working in the king's best interests (II,2). Hérode leaves his apartment in a fury. Mariamne has again refused her conjugal duty and he came close to killing her there and then. Salome warns him that Mariamne's scorn may become active plotting against his life, and Hérode replies that he can never trust her again. Phérore enters and utters a diatribe against women, and Hérode agrees that his love for Mariamne has made him forget his heroic ambitions. The Echanson asks to speak privately with the king, and as they withdraw, Salome tells Phérore that she suspects Mariamne of plotting to poison Hérode. Phérore comments that the Echanson has chosen an appropriate time to report the matter, since the king is angry with Mariamne. Hérode re-enters, even more furious, and Phérore suggests that Mariamne be brought to face her accuser. Salome, anxious for the success of her plan, says that the Echanson, intimidated by the queen's presence, might retract his accusation; but Hérode replies that he must preserve at least the form of justice. Mariamne is
brought in and accused by Hérode of having plotted to murder him. Who are her accomplices and what are her motives? Mariamne, for the moment dumb-founded, says that she will confess to anything, since she only wishes to die anyway. She has known for some time that Hérode would order her death one day, and this act removes the uncertainty. When Hérode demands to know the meaning of her remarks, Mariamne replies that she had been told that, if Hérode died while absent from his capital, the queen was to be put to death as well. Hérode realises that Soème has revealed to Mariamne his secret orders, and commands that Soème and his confidant, the Eunuque, be brought before him. The king suspects that Mariamne has learnt his secret by becoming Soème's mistress, but the queen ridicules Hérode's suspicions: her honour would not allow her to commit adultery. They hurl insults and recriminations at one another, and Hérode seems about to forgive Mariamne when the Eunuque is brought in. Under threat of torture, the Eunuque admits that Soème told the queen of Hérode's order, but resolutely denies that his master and Mariamne were lovers; the queen is too virtuous for such a thing to be possible. Hérode sends the Eunuque to be tortured until he confesses. Mariamne pities his fate and continues to deny that she has been unfaithful. Soème is brought before Hérode and says that, having heard a rumour that the king was dead, he had sought to secure his position and the queen's favour by revealing the king's secret. He begs Hérode's forgiveness, but the latter says that repentance has
come too late and demands that Soème confess to having been Mariamne's lover. When Soème swears to the virtue and chastity of the queen, Hérode orders that he also be tortured and that Mariamne be imprisoned to await further questioning (III,1). In prison, Mariamne repeats her hatred for Hérode and her wish to die. The Prévôt enters to take her before Hérode, where she will be confronted with her accuser, the Echanson (IV,1). Awaiting Mariamne's arrival, Hérode speaks at length of the indecision he feels, torn between love and anger. If his wife would show less hostility towards him, if she would confess her guilt, he would gladly forgive her. As Mariamne is brought in he is seized by compassion, but hardens his heart. Addressing the assembled court, he swears to be impartial in this affair and orders the Echanson to present his accusation. The Echanson asks to be excused, since he has already given his evidence in private to Hérode, but the king insists that he repeat his accusation before the accused. The Echanson then affirms that Mariamne had tried to persuade him to poison the king, but asks Hérode to pardon her. Mariamne denounces the Echanson's perfidy, but forgives him, as she wants to die anyway. At Hérode's insistence that she answer the accusation, Mariamne replies that it is a matter of indifference to her whether she plead guilty or not guilty. She will confess to any crime, provided she be put to death and released from his hands. She questions the competence of a judge who is also the injured party, and Hérode, claiming that a counter-accusation is a sign of guilt,
demands her confession. He dismisses the court so that he can question the queen in private, and Phérole and Salome fear that Hérode may be swayed by his love for Mariamne. Hérode tells Mariamne that he still loves her, that he wishes to save her in spite of herself, and that if she will only confess he will forgive her. Mariamne replies that she cannot confess to a crime, the very suspicion of which outrages her innocence and her honour. At the end of a scene in which Mariamne becomes increasingly scornful and reproachful and Hérode increasingly angry, Mariamne assures Hérode that, if she had had the strength and the opportunity, she would indeed have murdered him and calls upon him to kill her: it seems that he dare not. Hérode recalls the court and orders that Mariamne be executed the following day (IV,2). The messenger enters to Hérode and reports at length Mariamne's execution. Hérode laments her death and then gradually goes out of his mind. He cries out to his subjects to rise up and kill him. He cannot believe Mariamne is dead, then imagines he sees her vengeful ghost approaching to carry him off to Hell. Phérole and Salome enter and try to calm and reassure the king, but Hérode is first of all too absorbed in the horror of the infernal vision to heed them, and then drives them from him with curses for having taken Mariamne from him. The king is left alone to regret the death of Mariamne, and he declares he will erect an altar to her where he will not cease to pray for her forgiveness (V,1).
Méléeagre

The play opens with a prayer by the hero to Diana to remove the scourge which is ravaging his kingdom and destroying the glory of his reign. The Choeur de peuple, followed shortly by a Troupe de paysans, complain of their deprivations and remind the king of his duty to protect his people. Méléeagre promises to rid them of the boar and, receiving news of the beast from his huntsmen, sends a messenger to assemble the Argonauts (I,1). Atalante is seen preparing to join the hunt, and she speaks of her delight in the chase. The Choeur de filles, fearful, advises prudence (II,1). The hunters assemble and talk of their valour and the glory of the hunt. Atalante joins them and is subjected to the gallantry of Méléeagre and the teasing of Thésée. A huntsman reports on the whereabouts of the boar (II,2). The Choeur de peuple awaits news of the expedition, and expresses its fears, hopes and prayers in a choral ode. The messenger arrives to give a short and graphic report of the hunt. He stresses major part played by Méléeagre in killing the beast (III,1). Méléeagre and the Argonauts have returned joyfully from the chase. Thésée, asked by the king to nominate the hunter who has shown the most valour and to whom the prize of the boar's head is to be awarded, names, first, Méléeagre, and in second place Atalante. Méléeagre declines the primacy in favour of Atalante, and in the general discussion which follows Pirithoûs asserts that the king is denigrating the glory of his own achievement, while Lincée suggests that love
rather than justice has influenced Méléagre's decision. Mutterings of discontent are heard from Plexipe and Toxée (III,2).

In the next scene the king's uncles become more vehement in their protests against this affront to their honour and they resolve to take the prize by force from Atalante (IV,1). The heroine and her attendants are quietly celebrating the victory over the boar when Plexipe and Toxée burst in, insult Atalante and seize the boar's head. Atalante is left to complain of the indignity and to stress that their action is an affront to the king's honour and authority (IV,2). Méléagre is soliloquizing about his love for Atalante when she enters to complain of her dishonour at the hands of his uncles. Méléagre denounces this insult to his authority and, despite Atalante's pleas that he be not precipitate in his rage, he vows to punish the criminals. Plexipe and Toxée are brought before him and, when they refuse to return the trophy and apologise to Atalante, Méléagre kills them, claiming that the justice of this punishment restores his authority as king (IV,3). Altée swears to avenge her brothers' murder, for Méléagre is guilty of a sacrilegious act, that of parricide. She overcomes the objections of the nourrice that it will be not only parricide but also regicide if she kills her son and, alone, prepares with incantations Méléagre's death (V,1). Méléagre and Atalante discuss a dream the heroine has had, foretelling the king's death. Suddenly Méléagre is struck by a strange but agonising pain, and is borne off-stage to die (V,2).

The messenger arrives to report her son's death to Altée, and
she is left to point exultantly the moral of the king's abuse of power and the justice of her revenge (V,3).

La Mort d'Achille

The ghost of Patrocle appears to Achille as he sleeps, warning his friend that he is fated to die at the hands of the most cowardly of men. Achille wakes, speaks of his overwhelming love for Polixène, but doubts if the Trojan princess can ever look kindly on him. Nestor enters as the emissary of the Greek leaders to discover the truth of the rumours of Achille's love. The truth soon becomes apparent, and when Nestor reminds Achille of the dangers of love in general and love for a Trojan in particular, Achille accuses the Greeks of showing their usual ingratitude towards him. He leaves to think about the problem (I,1). In the council of the Greek leaders, Agamemnon argues that they should break off the present truce which is allowing the Trojans to regain strength, particularly as he suspects that the love-sick Achille will afford them no help. Ménélas and Ajax doubt the truth of the rumour. Nestor enters to confirm that Achille is in love, but argues that sympathetic treatment and his own natural virtue will soon enable him to reassert his good judgement. Ménélas and Ajax accept Nestor's reasoning, and Agamemnon, despite his misgivings, agrees to abide by the majority decision and asks Nestor to bring Achille before the council the following day (I,2). In Troy, another discussion about Achille's love for Polixène is taking place between Priam,
Paris and Déiphobe. The king is inclined to grant Achille's suit to marry Polixène, which will be a means of ending the war, but his sons see in the Greek's infatuation with their sister a means rather of treacherously murdering him. They manage to overcome Priam's objections, and the king summons the Greek ambassador, Nïrée, to tell him that they agree to Achille's suit and that the marriage should take place while the truce is still in effect (II,1). In his tent, Achille soliloqizes on the anguish of love. Nïrée enters to tell him of the success of his mission, and Achille sends the ambassador back to Troy with instructions that Polixène and the Trojan representatives meet him (Achille) at the Temple of Apollo. Nestor arrives to conduct the hero before the Greek council (II,2). In council, Agamemnon complains of the difficulty of dealing with the hypersensitive Achille. The hero enters and, under questioning by Agamemnon and encouragement by the other Greek leaders, reluctantly confesses to his love for Polixène. Asked his opinion about whether to break the truce, Achille feels that his sincerity and good faith are under attack and hastily leaves the meeting. The Greek leaders can only regret his all too obvious change in attitude to the war (II,3). In Troy, Pâris and Déiphobe discuss with Polixène the forthcoming interview with Achille, and the brothers tell Polixène that she must aid them in their plan to murder Achille by allaying any doubts he might have about her true feelings (III,1). As they set off for the meeting, Achille questions his messenger as to which
Trojans to expect to meet. When they reach the temple, he dismisses his followers and advances alone to join the Trojans. He is greeted cordially by Pâris and Déiphobe, who then discretely retire to leave the lovers en tête-à-tête. In the long interview which follows, Achille speaks ardently and sincerely of his love, while Polixène pretends to be demure and then to return his passion. When Pâris and Déiphobe return, arrangements are made for the marriage to take place at the Temple of Apollo the following day (III,2). In Troy, Priam fails in his last minute attempt to dissuade Pâris and Déiphobe from carrying out their treacherous plot. When the king leaves, his sons arrange the details of the plan and set off for the rendez-vous (IV,1).

On his way to the temple, Achille prays to the gods to forgive him his crimes against the Trojans and to bless his marriage, but he feels presentiments of evil. At the temple he meets Déiphobe and they discuss the forthcoming marriage. Suddenly Pâris leaps out and stabs Achille while Déiphobe pinions his arms. Achille falls mortally wounded, and the Trojans retire to the city to summon help. A Greek soldier, having heard a noise, approaches and finds the dying hero. He calls for help and Ajax runs up. To him Achille explains the circumstances of his murder and dies. Ajax is lamenting the death of the hero when a messenger announces that a Trojan force is headed in their direction to seize Achille's body. Ajax guards the corpse while the messenger summons the Greeks (IV,2). The fight over the corpse of Achille. Pâris harangues the Trojan troops;
Ajax harangues the Greeks. Skirmish; the Trojans flee back into the city (V,1). All the Greek leaders enter to utter the lament and panegyric on the hero. As a final act, Ulysse is sent to fetch Pyrrhus to take his father's place, so that the Trojan war may continue (V,2).

La Mort d'Alexandre

The ghost of Parménion appears in a dream to Alexandre, recounts instances of his tyranny and prophesies his death (I,1). Alexandre awakens, troubled at first by this vision, but deciding to think no more about it, he discusses with Perdice and Antigone the return to Babylon. He regrets the sack of Thebes and swears that he has tried to atone for this ill-considered action by bringing peace to the whole world. A Mage enters to warn Alexandre that death awaits him in Babylon, but the king declares he does not fear to die provided he can leave his empire secure (I,2). The conspirators, Antipatre and his sons Cassandre and Iolas, discuss their grievances against Alexandre and plot his murder. During the banquet that Médie is to give the king, Iolas will mix poison with his wine. Antipatre assures his sons that there is no danger of detection if they continue to dissimulate loyalty to Alexandre (II,1). Alexandre rails against the perfidy of Apollodore, his viceroy in Babylon, who has consulted an oracle to learn the king's destiny. Alexandre sees in this action a plot to stir up revolt against his authority. A Mage reveals details of the votary sacrifice and
divination. Alexandre is disturbed by the gloomy omen, but once again is less worried about death than the security of his kingdom (II,2). In the royal palace in Babylon, a page stands before the throne-room, terrified by the apparition he has seen seated on the throne. Alexandre approaches, and the page warns him not to go into the room. The king sends for Aristandre, the high-priest, and together they enter the room, where Aristandre questions the figure. The man is a prisoner who, under instructions from a god, has dressed in the king's robe and crown and sat on the throne. Aristandre advises Alexandre to sacrifice the prisoner to propitiate the gods, and the man is dragged out, cursing Alexandre and prophesying his imminent death. The king and the high-priest are discussing ways to prevent these recurring evil omens, when Plistarque reports yet another presage. In the royal park a goat has challenged and killed a lion. Alexandre sees in these presages a prediction that he will die at the hands of a coward and that his throne will be usurped by an unworthy successor. Aristandre says that he should take advantage of these warnings to forestall disaster, but Alexandre replies that he is surrounded by traitors and regrets that his attempts to reign justly have been constantly thwarted by treachery. Roxane enters, and Alexandre asks to be left alone with his queen (III,1). Roxane begs Alexandre to take heed of the constant presages: if he cares nothing for his own life, he should be mindful of the well-being of the kingdom and of his heir with whom she is pregnant. Alexandre
assures her that he will leave Babylon at the earliest opportunity as Médie arrives to escort him to the banquet (III,2). Alone outside the banqueting hall, Cassandre rejoices that the king will soon be dead. Alexandre has drunk from the poisoned cup, and Cassandre had to leave the hall lest his joy be seen. He stops a page who is on his way to fetch doctors and learns that Alexandre is being brought hither. Cassandre exults that the tyrant will soon be brought low and leaves as Alexandre is carried in (IV,1). Alexandre cries out against the invisible enemy which is attacking him and that he cannot combat. He is concerned that, ruler of half the world, he will not live to bring peace to the other half. Perdice and Antigone offer platitudinous consolations, but Alexandre regrets only that he has no heir and that his benevolent reign has brought nothing but conspiracy and revolt against him, leading to his murder by traitors. The doctor enters to examine Alexandre, and advises him to take to his bed. Alexandre is protesting that an emperor should die on his feet, when an access of pain causes him to faint, and the doctor orders that he be put to bed (IV,2). The Choeur d'Argyraspide laments Alexandre's impending death, and resolves to bid him farewell before he dies. In the king's chamber, Alexandre, reconciled to his fate, speaks of the disruption that may follow his death, and of the provisions he must make for the future. He is interrupted by the entrance of the Choeur d'Argyraspides. Alexandre, bidding his most loyal soldiers farewell, urges them to remain united and to pursue his
ideals. The Choeur expresses its loyalty and asks for the name of the assassin so that his murder may be avenged. But Alexandre has fallen into another faint, and the soldiers quietly leave. Alexandre awakes with a start, cries out in pain, and feels shame that a hero such as he should be reduced to dying in bed like an ordinary man. When the queen enters, Alexandre asks to be left alone with her (V,1). Roxane expresses her determination to follow her husband in death, but Alexandre tells her she must live for the sake of their unborn son, in whom the loyalty of the Macedonians will be placed. He leaves her in the protection of Perdice, whom he makes his regent. He asks his friends to maintain peace among themselves, and dies. Perdice and Antigone utter the formal lament over the body, and Perdice closes the play by calling a council meeting to fulfill Alexandre's dying wish that they remain united (V,2).

**La Mort de Daire**

Daire prays to Apollo to save the Persian empire and, in dialogue with Artabase and Bubace, reveals the situation in which he finds himself. His army defeated, his wife dead and his mother and daughter captives of Alexandre, he can see no hope for the future. He is urged to continue the struggle and, assured by Bubace of Alexandre's nobility of character, he prays either that he may regain for Persia its lost glory, or that the throne may pass to his adversary, this paragon of virtue (I,1). Alexandre asks the advice of his captains on the
conduct of his campaign. Some are in favour of swift pursuit and complete destruction of the Persian army, others of more cautious measures; some advise a direct frontal assault, others a surprise night attack. Alexandre opts for the swift, direct attack as being the more glorious course of action. Ménide enters to announce that the Persian army seems to be preparing for combat, and Alexandre gives orders that everything be made ready for battle the following day (I,2). Daire addresses his soldiers. Previously they had fought for glory, now they must fight for freedom. He reviews the previous battles of the campaign, but is certain that the Macedonian army is now disorganised. Masée assures Daire of the loyalty of his army, and the king offers a final prayer for victory (II,1). In the Greek camp, Parménion comes to Alexandre's tent and reproaches the king for sleeping when his army is ranged ready for battle. Alexandre replies that he has slept soundly because his main concern was that Daire might escape; now he can be sure of defeating him. He retires to his tent to arm himself. The Choeur d'Argyraspides expresses its eagerness for the battle and praises Alexandre's leadership (II,2). Alexandre reappears to give his orders to his generals and to draw up the battle lines. As Parménion is conducting him to review his troops, a Greek deserter from Daire's army runs up to warn Alexandre of a trap that has been laid by the Persians. Alexandre harangues his troops, telling them that this is the last despairing effort of the Persian army and explaining his tactics. The high priest
announces that the sacrifices have been propitious (II,3). The Persians have been defeated and are in flight. Besse and Nabarzane discuss the situation: they must think of some way of gaining Alexandre's favour. Nabarzane suggests going over to Alexandre's side with their troops, but Besse says that the delivery of Daire into the Macedonian's hands would make him even more indebted. Nabarzane cannot agree to such treachery, but they finally come to a compromise whereby Nabarzane would suggest to Daire that he abdicate in favour of Besse. Daire and his council enter (III,1). Daire is inclined to risk one more battle with Alexandre, and Artabase seconds this courageous gamble for victory. Nabarzane then speaks up: why try another encounter which will only cost more lives? Daire should relinquish his authority for a period, handing over the leadership to someone else until peace is re-established, when he can resume his reign. Daire, furious, threatens Nabarzane with death for such a sacrilegious attack on his legitimate kingship. Besse hastily intervenes: Nabarzane has been indiscrete but well-intentioned, and he leads his fellow conspirator away. Daire deplored his lot to be surrounded by traitors, but Artabase advises the king to overlook the offence, since in their present position they need the support of such a powerful man. Daire agrees to follow, for the moment, this counsel (III,2). Alexandre explains to his captains the necessity for capturing Daire as the final measure in securing control of Persia (III,3).
Patron, a Greek loyal to Daire, soliloquizes on the king's plight, threatened as he is by traitors. When Daire enters, Patron warns him of the plot of Besse and Nabarzane to deliver the king, alive or dead, into Alexandre's hands and offers him sanctuary among the Greek mercenaries. But Daire cannot accept this offer, because all his followers, including the innocent, would regard themselves as equally under suspicion. He would rather be constantly deceived than condemn too hastily and prefers death to the hatred of his subjects. Left alone, Patron remarks that the king is going voluntarily and consciously to his death, but decides to prevent it if possible. Besse suspects that Patron has informed Daire of the plan and resolves to deceive the king by admitting all and feigning repentance. In soliloquy, Artabase expresses his wish to save a monarch who seems to have lost all will to save himself. Hard-pressed by Alexandre, Daire has yet more to fear from his disloyal subjects, and Artabase determines to try to reconcile Besse, Nabarzane and the king. The conspirators enter, expressing their penitence and their desire to seek Daire's forgiveness. Daire enters, and Besse pleads with him on Nabarzane's behalf. Daire pardons him, and the two traitors effusively swear their loyalty. As proof of their sincerity, Besse proposes to put a guard of his own men around Daire's tent, and he and Nabarzane leave (IV,1). Daire has not been deceived and condemns the treacherous dissimulation of Besse and Nabarzane. He cannot decide what to do in this situation. He can neither accept Patron's offer, nor
commit suicide, for this would be to desert those subjects still loyal to him. As he retires into his tent, Artabase regrets that Daire had not sought refuge with Patron (IV,2). As Alexandre consults with his captains on the continuing pursuit of the Persians, a deserter from the Persian camp is brought in to report the virtual imprisonment of Daire by Besse and Nabarzane. Alexandre realises that he must pursue the foe still more closely if he is to capture Daire alive (IV,3). In the Persian camp, Daire laments the desperate and lonely position he is in. Besse, Nabarzane and their soldiers enter and bind the king; he is to be used as a hostage in their bargaining with Alexandre (IV,4). A further battle has taken place and Polistrate, a Macedonian soldier, expresses wonder at the ease with which the Persians were routed. As he is scooping water with his helmet from a stream to slake his thirst, he hears groans from behind a hillock, and discovers Daire, bound and riddled with arrows, who has been thrown from his chariot by the stampeding horses. He explains that Besse and Nabarzane, ever more hard-pressed by Alexandre and needing Daire's prestige and active support, had offered to release him and to share authority with him. Daire had rejected this proposition, and promised, once released, to put the usurpers to death. They had then wounded him and driven his chariot off into the desert. He asks Polistratet to make Alexandre swear to punish the traitors on his behalf, drinks from the soldier's helmet and dies. Polistrate leaves to tell Alexandre the news (V,1).
Alexandre is explaining why the capture of Daire is so important to the establishment of his legitimate rule over Persia, when Polistrate enters to announce Daire's death. He gives an account of the circumstances and of the Persian king's dying words as they approach the spot where the corpse is lying. Alexandre decries the indignity of Daire's death and vows to avenge it. He arranges for the body to be carried to Daire's mother for final funerary honours (V,2). In the last scene of the play, Sisigambe reviews Daire's virtues, laments over the corpse and calls upon death to allow her soon to follow her son (V,3).

**Panthée**

The *entrée en matière* is swift. Cirus, in giving thanks to the gods for his victory over the Lydians, feels that he has been favoured as a strong and good king opposed to a self-indulgent tyrant. He must secure his conquest by gaining the loyalty of the conquered people, and means to set an example by showing mercy to his noble captive, Panthée. His prisoner's hostility and fears are rapidly overcome as Cirus places her under the protection of his lieutenant Araspe, and Panthée closes the act by singing the praises of the king and his justice (I,1). In a long soliloquy, Araspe expresses his passion for his captive. He decides to declare his love, although he is aware that he will incur Cirus' wrath. Panthée enters, and Araspe speaks at first guardedly, and then more openly, of his
love for her. When Panthée indignantly rejects his pleas, he warns her that Cirrus will regard with disfavour this refusal of his closest adviser, but Panthée braves his threat (II,1). The nourrice urges her to complain to Cirrus, but Panthée feels that the king is too busy to attend to petitions from individuals, and that an accusation levelled against his favourite would fall on deaf ears. However, she agrees to let the nourrice plead with the king on her behalf (II,2). Cirrus enters with the nourrice, who has just told him of Araspe's conduct. At first Cirrus is determined to punish Araspe severely so that his exemplary treatment will serve as a warning to other malefactors; but when Araspe is brought before him, the king contents himself with a sharp reprimand and, to prove to Panthée that this is not merely cynicism and to assure her of his good faith, he sets her free without ransom and reunites her with her husband. Panthée, overcome with gratitude, promises to persuade Abradate to join Cirrus' cause (III,1). The scene changes to Abradate's camp, where Abradate fears that his wife has been unfaithful to him. Panthée enters to reassure him, to sing Cirrus' praises and to urge her husband to enter the king's service. In spite of Abradate's objections, she finally succeeds in her purpose (III,2). Back in Cirrus' camp, Panthée describes the portents and presages she has had of Abradate's death, while the nourrice offers consolation and counter-arguments (IV,1). The messenger enters to report to Cirrus the death of Abradate, and the king utters a short lament and panegyric on the warrior
(IV,2). Panthée soliloquizes on Abradate's death and resolves not long to survive him. The nourrice suggests that she stay away from the funeral, since it will cause her too much grief, but Panthée replies that such behaviour would be a betrayal of Abradate's honour. The funeral cortège enters (V,1). Cirus expresses the general regret and his personal grief at Abradate's death, and assures Panthée of his continued protection. Panthée utters the lament over the corpse and kills herself. Cirus closes the play with the final panegyric on Panthée's chastity, love and constancy (V,2).

Timoclée

Alexandre discusses the revolt of Thebes and Athens with his advisers. He wishes to promote the greatness of Greece by destroying the Persian empire, but this enterprise is delayed by the unrest in Greece. His captains are divided in their opinions, some advising swift repression of the revolt, others a more moderate approach to gain the loyalty of the Greeks and their acceptance of Alexandre's leadership. The arguments are debated at some length, and Alexandre finally decides to do nothing precipitately; but when the Athenian ambassadors arrogantly refuse his terms, he angrily threatens to destroy Athens as well as Thebes (I,1). In Athens, Démosthène and Phocion debate the situation. Démosthène argues in favour of war with Alexandre in support of their ally Thebes, Phocion for the more flexible policy of waiting until Alexandre's power is weakened and their revolt can be more effective. This lengthy but indecisive
argument is interrupted by the return of the ambassadors who announce Alexandre's peace conditions. The Choeur d'Athéniens turns to Phocion for advice, and he decides that Athens should remain neutral; it is better for Greece if only one city is destroyed rather than two (II,1). In Thebes, the ghost of Théagène appears to Timoclée as she sleeps, prophesying the sack of Thebes, Timoclée's rape and the murder of her assailant. Timoclée awakes to lament the death of her brother Théagène and to engage in a discussion with the nourrice on the efficacy of dreams and the threat to the city (III,1). Phoenix and Prothyre whip up the enthusiasm of the Choeur de Thébains to resist Alexandre (III,2). When the herald enters to present Alexandre's peace terms and to declare that the king is bent on moderation, the Choeur de Thébains dismisses him with insolent counter-demands. They disperse to make preparations for Alexandre's assault (III,3). Alexandre decides that he can be moderate no longer. As the Thebans will not see reason, the city must be destroyed. This time he has the unanimous support of his captains, and they make preparations for the final assault. Nevertheless, as Alexandre leaves to address his troops, he still expresses slight hesitation; repentance by the Thebans could still save them (IV,1). In another part of the camp, the Choeur de Soldats macédoniens rejoices that at last the day has dawned that will see the destruction of Thebes. Alexandre enters to harangue his troops; he tells them that no mercy is to be shown the citizens and dismisses them to take up their positions.
Phoenix harangues the defenders, reminding them that they are fighting not only for Thebes but for the whole of Greece (IV,3). In the Cadmée the Capitaine urges his soldiers to sally out, and the Macedonians, urged on by the prospect of booty, drive the Thebans before them (IV,4). The Thebans fall back in disorder, calling on Dionysus to defend them. In vain; the Macedonians are setting fire to the city, and Antipatre exults over their victory and exhorts his troops to plunder the city and slaughter the citizens (IV,5). Timoclée is dragged on stage by Hypparque. She begs him to take her life rather than stain her honour, pleads the nobility of her family and offers him all her wealth. It is to no avail, and Hypparque takes Timoclée out to rape her off-stage (IV,6). The Choeur d'Athénienes laments the fall of Thebes and prays that this not be a prelude to the destruction of Athens (IV,7). Timoclée and her nourrice enter. The heroine cannot be consoled for the loss of her virginity and claims that the only reason for her continuing to live is to have her revenge. The nourrice tries in vain to dissuade her mistress from this dangerous course of action; Timoclée dismisses her, revealing cryptically that Hypparque will find a "watery grave" (V,1). When Hypparque enters, he is gratified to find that Timoclée's reception is less hostile than he had expected. She explains that she has become reconciled to her fate and that, provided he legitimise their relationship, she will give him the treasure she has hidden in a well. As they leave, the nourrice says in soliloquy
that she cannot believe that Timoclée's attitude has changed; she must be preparing Hypparque's death. (V,2). Hypparque has descended into the well and cries out for help as Timoclée throws stones down on him. As he dies, Timoclée exults. The nourrice urges her mistress to flee, but Timoclée thinks only of death now that she has had her revenge (V,3). Alexandre feels remorse for the destruction of Thebes and begs Dionysus to pardon him. His advisers assure him he had no alternative but to raze the city and urge him to continue with the destruction of Athens, but Alexandre declines, saying he does not wish to be further distracted from his major project, the conquest of Asia. At this moment, Timoclée is brought before him, accused by the Troupe de Soldats of the murder of Hypparque. Timoclée reveals the circumstances of her violent action and the nobility of her family. Alexandre pardons her, praises her magnanimous deed and orders that her plundered wealth be restored. He asks Timoclée to bear witness to his merciful treatment, which is a direct result of the remorse he feels for the sack of Thebes. The play ends as Alexandre calls his captains into council to discuss preparations for the invasion of Asia (V,4).