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Boethian Influences in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*

A thesis submitted to
The Department of English
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in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in English

by Andrea N. Collins
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Dedication

For Don Jantunen who, when thrust into the faithful-servant role of Flavius or the consolatory role of Philosophy while forced to play to my Timon/Boethius, good-naturedly endured my absurdity – I am lucky. This thesis would not have been possible without him. And, for Melissa Jantunen who knew when to smile and nod but still isn't quite sure what this thesis is about.

This thesis is also dedicated to three ***incredible women*** whose wisdom, perception, understanding, encouragement, and friendship led in some way to the development of my life and/or this thesis: Lisa Richardson and in memory of Jeannie Mutkala, and Elizabeth Charles. Thank you.

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Abstract

While John L. Tison Jr. recognizes Shakespeare as writing in the consolatory fashion, he highlights *Henry VI*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Coriolanus*, and *Romeo and Juliet* as examples while failing to include *Timon of Athens*. The evidence presented in my thesis indicates that Timon should be added to Tison's lists. Boethius changed the genre of *consolatio* in antiquity; likewise, Shakespeare adapts consolatory literature to the Renaissance stage. This thesis undertakes an examination of Philosophy's discourse in conjunction with the characters in *Timon of Athens*, thereby revealing that Shakespeare's *Timon* is informed by Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy*. I show the characters of Timon and Alcibiades to be the embodiment of Philosophy's – and therefore Boethius' – imparted wisdom in the areas of the right cure for the right ailment, Fortune, sin, good and evil, the bestial man and the virtuous man. Furthermore, this analysis serves to clarify the purpose of the contentious fifth scene in the third act.

I begin by discussing the extent of Boethian influence in the Medieval and Renaissance periods. I show existing critical and scholarly connections between Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and the work of such Medieval and Renaissance writers as Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Wyatt, and William Shakespeare. I examine the sources of Shakespeare's *Timon* to facilitate a complete understanding of how Alcibiades' scene with the Senate shows a direct Boethian influence which is not found in other sources. Then, I move toward drawing parallels between Philosophy's discussion with the persona Boethius to the discussions and actions in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. Most specifically, I tackle the unique discussion found only in Boethius' consolation of applying the right cure to the ailment, and show how it is relevant to *Timon*, as well as revealing the true Boethian purpose behind the Alcibiades and Senate scene. I examine the overwhelming similarities between Philosophy's imparted wisdom about Fortune, revealing how this wisdom is echoed in *Timon*. I show how Boethius further informs Shakespeare in the areas of sin, the virtuous and bestial man, and the hazards of attaching oneself to the wrong 'good'. This thesis concludes by summarizing and structuring the evidence to enable the reader to understand the extent to which Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* informs Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens*.

Acknowledgements

Dr. Mike Richardson's contribution to this endeavour went beyond the past academic year. He provided the knowledge – in my undergraduate and graduate work – from which to launch this thesis. Furthermore, he inspired and encouraged the ingenuity that resulted in this thesis. I am indebted to Dr. Richardson for his constant encouragement, his creative and constructive criticism, his persistent dedication to this task, his willingness to listen to yet another idea and his unflinching support.

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish her election,
Sh' hath seal'd thee for herself, for thou hast been
As one in suff'ring all that suffers nothing,
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-meddled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.

Hamlet III.ii.63-74

Like the rest of his works, Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens* receives consistent critical attention. Critics, however, rarely agree about the design, genre, or inspiration of this 'tragic' play. Is it, in fact, a tragedy? Do we classify *Timon* as a tragedy simply because of its placement within the tragedy section in the First Folio (1623)? If so, then we must consider the claim by such scholars as Richard Dutton who believes *Timon of Athens* was "probably a last-minute substitution for *Troilus and Cressida*" (145). The word "tragedy" does not appear in the title *The Life of Timon of Athens*. Does this show that it may not have been intended as a tragedy? Is it a morality play? G.B. Harrison, for example, feels that *Timon* is "more of a morality than a drama" (258). Northrop Frye believes that this play has "many features making for an *idiotes* comedy rather than a tragedy" (98). As Lesley Brill notes, other critics, such as M.C. Bradbrook, Peter Ure, and Judah Stampfer, have hailed *Timon* as a "pageant," a "problem play," and a "closet drama" (20). These scholars and critics supply a microcosmic example of a macrocosmic problem. What is *Timon of Athens* and why does it fall under whichever genre we have chosen? I believe the reasons we are finding it difficult to classify Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens* are that it is cruder and less polished than the plays which surround it in the first folio, and the fifth scene of Act III –

Alcibiades and the Senate – appears to be a confusing inclusion which does not tie in well with the remainder of the play. I believe that it is necessary for us to expand the discourse concerning the sources of *Timon of Athens* to provide further clarification over some of these outstanding issues.

John M. Wallace claims that

> [m]ore than any other play of Shakespeare's, *Timon* is indebted for its ideas to a book, which in my opinion Shakespeare clearly had in mind when planning and writing the play, and which contributes more to the action than North's translation of Plutarch's *Life of Antony* or Lucian's dialogue *Timon the Misanthrope*, which editors cannot decide whether Shakespeare had read or not. The book is Seneca's *De beneficiis*, much neglected by recent scholarship but exerting an influence over sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English thought which has yet to be fully explored. (349-50)

I agree with Wallace's claim that a much neglected and overlooked book is primarily responsible for the ideas contained in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*; the book, however, that contributes most significantly to the action in Shakespeare's *Timon* is Boethius' *de Consolatione Philosophiae* (*The Consolation of Philosophy*). Moreover, I will demonstrate in this thesis that Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* illustrates the consolatory advice given by Philosophy to the Boethian character in Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy* and can be read as an exploration of Exile or Consolatory Literature. John L. Tison, Jr. discusses Shakespeare's freedom "to choose the form, ideas, and techniques, which best served the individual situation of action and character" when "using the

consolatio," since "the drama which preceded [him] passed on few examples and no formulas" (142). Tison also recalls that the "name of Boethius has come to represent almost the whole tradition of consolation" (144). While Tison recognizes Shakespeare as writing in the consolatory fashion, he highlights *Henry VI*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Coriolanus*, and *Romeo and Juliet* as examples while failing to include *Timon of Athens*. This thesis will undertake an examination of Philosophy's discourse in conjunction with the characters in *Timon of Athens*, thereby revealing that Shakespeare's *Timon* is informed by Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy*. I will show the characters of Timon and Alcibiades to be the embodiment of Philosophy's – and therefore Boethius' – imparted wisdom in the areas of the right cure for the right ailment, Fortune, sin, good and evil, the bestial man and the virtuous man. Furthermore, this analysis will serve to clarify the purpose of the contentious fifth scene in the third act.

To facilitate this examination, I will begin by discussing the extent of Boethian influence in the Medieval and Renaissance periods. I will show existing critical and scholarly connections between Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and the work of such Medieval and Renaissance writers as Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Wyatt, and William Shakespeare. From there, I will examine the sources of Shakespeares' *Timon* to facilitate a complete understanding of how Alcibiades' scene with the Senate shows a direct Boethian influence which is not found in other sources. Then, I will move toward drawing parallels between Philosophy's discussion with the persona Boethius to the discussions and actions in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. Most specifically, I will tackle the unique discussion found only in Boethius' consolation of applying the right cure to the ailment, and show how it is relevant to *Timon*, as well as revealing the true

Boethian purpose behind the Alcibiades and Senate scene. I will then show the overwhelming similarities between Philosophy's imparted wisdom about Fortune, revealing how this wisdom is echoed in *Timon*. I will also show how Boethius further informs Shakespeare in the areas of sin, the virtuous and bestial man, and the hazards of attaching oneself to the wrong 'good'. This thesis will conclude by summarizing and structuring the evidence to enable the reader to understand the extent to which Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* informs Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens*.

Fortune knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.
Antony and Cleopatra III.xi.73-74

Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was a fifth-sixth century philosopher, who reached the exalted position of "Master of the Offices" before being accused of treason and sentenced to death in approximately 525 CE (Matthews 30). At the same time that Boethius held this position his "sons were appointed consuls together [...] an extraordinary distinction" (Matthews 29). Unfortunately, Boethius' good fortune would come to an end. He was in a precarious position in that he was loyal to both Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, who had killed Odoacer in 493 CE and assumed the title of Emperor of Italy, and also to the Senate which was showing signs of corruption. A 35-year schism between Rome and Constantinople had been resolved in 519, and Theodoric was fearful of the Eastern emperor. It was during this time that senator Albinus was accused of having written a letter to Emperor Justin. When Albinus was charged by the Senate, Boethius openly and naively came to his defense stating, "If Albinus has done this, then so have I and the entire senate, of one accord; the charge is false, *my lord king*" (Matthews 30). This declaration, as well as documents forged by corrupt members of the Senate, would be enough to have Boethius charged with treason (Matthews 37). Victor Watts notes that "Boethius' allegiance to the Roman Imperial idea may have been consistent to him with his service of the Gothic king; but seen through barbarian eyes it could understandably be viewed as treason" (xxi). Regardless of Boethius' motives, he was exiled to Pavia and his execution is believed to have taken place some time in 524 or 525 CE. The execution was an extremely painful and horrific event which entailed a heavy cord being wrapped around the upper portion of Boethius' head and tightened until

his eyes were bulging out, then Boethius was bludgeoned to death with clubs. Matthews explains that a Roman senator could "anticipate a less brutal method of execution [...] nice distinctions were at any time liable to be ignored when a really serious crime like that of treason was involved" (15).

During his stay in the Pavia prison, Boethius wrote his most lauded and memorable work, the *Consolation of Philosophy*. This is not to say that many other works of Boethian origin did not hold similar favour amongst scholars for an enduring length of time. Two such examples of other popular Boethian works are *De Arithmetica* and *De Musica*. Alison White points out that *De Musica* influenced discourse, as indicated in a "manuscript now at Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole 1524," as well as the fact that "Boethius was prescribed reading for the Arts course at Oxford, and as late as the seventeenth century it was noted in a manuscript of the *De Musica*" (184-85). Furthermore both "*De Arithmetica* and *De Musica* were printed in Venice in 1492 [and] Ercole Bottrigari [...] made an Italian version of the *De Musica* in 1597" (187-88). It is evident that Boethian works remained relevant to both the Medieval and Renaissance periods; however, a closer examination of Boethius' *Consolation* and its influence and authority during these periods is necessary to gain a better understanding of how the *Consolation* informs Shakespeare's *Timon*.

In Book I of the *Consolation*, Boethius sits in a Pavian prison lamenting his fate. Dame Philosophy comes to his cell to philosophically sooth her ailing patient's mind. Her initial action is to drive away the poetic muses who sit in attendance on Boethius, denouncing them as Sirens. As Stephen Varvis notes,

> She sets about treating the illness of her patient. He has forgotten who he is, the nature and origin of the order of the universe, and his mind is so clouded by his grief that he cannot understand reasonable arguments immediately, but must be coaxed along with simple questions and discussions until he is well enough for mature reasoning. (2-3)

To begin her treatment, Philosophy asks Boethius about the nature of his illness. He informs Philosophy of the events leading to his imprisonment. Boethius displays anger toward a corrupt Senate, explaining how he had always championed those requiring assistance; whether citizens or Senate members he represented them all fairly. Yet, when he found himself in trouble, no one assisted him and he was exiled. He also informs Philosophy that his circumstances are unfair and unexpected for someone in his exalted position. In short, he feels Fortune has deserted him.

Book II deals entirely with Fortune. The crux of the argument lies in the realization that if Fortune can give you something she can also take it away. Any reliance on Fortune is a reliance on her turning wheel. Philosophy tells Boethius there are many items belonging to Fortune and not to man; among these items are wealth, fame, honour, and power:

> From the discussion Boethius learns the lesson of fortune: that fame is slight and fleeting, that temporary goods are fragile, and that when fame and fortune desert so also go with them the dishonest and disloyal. (Varvis 3)

Learning about Fortune is only part of the illness that Philosophy diagnoses in Boethius and she continues her dialogue on a new subject in Book III.

While Book II deals primarily with Fortune, Book III moves on to a discussion of "the Good, virtue and [...] true happiness" (Varvis 3). Philosophy directs the dialogue to illustrate how God is the convergence of true happiness, virtue and the Good. Strengthening the cogency of her argument, she includes subject matter from Book II. The explanation of virtue includes a discussion of what is not virtuous; wealth, fame, honour, and power are not virtuous in themselves; indeed, man is capable of being virtuous without them. Philosophy explains that man strives to attain happiness, virtue and good in earthly things which prove by virtue of their inadequacy that there is only one Good.

Having discussed the Good, Philosophy moves onto the subject of providence in Book IV. Through this discussion, she explains how evil men can exist, their bestial natures and the roles of fate and providence. The prominent point in this Book is that "God secures the final justice of all temporal things" (Varvis 3). God secures this justice through the ability to stand outside of man's perceived notion of time. Furthermore, evil men attach themselves to the wrong things thereby separating themselves from what is true and good.

In Book V Boethius broaches the all-important question about God's providence. He asks if it is possible to exert free will under God's providence. God is represented by Philosophy as a being who can "simultaneously apprehend all knowledge of temporal things in his complete presence" (Varvis 4). Therefore man is able to exercise free will while still remaining under God's providence. In the end, Boethius is consoled and left seeking virtue and Heavenly goodness.

Boethius' *Consolation* is a discourse between Dame Philosophy and the persona of Boethius about aspects of fortune, sin, good and evil, the virtuous man versus the bestial man, and providence versus fate. How much influence did this discourse have on the Medieval and Early Modern periods? More importantly, are there any connections between this Boethian work and Shakespeare's works?

Boethius' *Consolation* was a very popular work during the Medieval period and this is reflected in three prominent translations occurring in three consecutive centuries. As Alastair Minnis explains, "reference is made to three vernacular translations of Boethius' work, namely those undertaken by Jean De Meun (*ante* 1250-1305), Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400), and John Walton (*fl.* early fifteenth century)" (312-13). Also, these three "translations have a special relationship. Chaucer drew on Jean de Meun's French translation [...] in his turn Walton used Chaucer's when composing the metrical English version of Boethius which he completed in 1410" (Minnis 313). Furthermore, both Jean de Meun and Chaucer employed Boethian ideas within their own works. "Jean had included an account of Nero's misdeeds in his *Roman de la Rose*, an account which [...] was indebted to book II m. vi of *De Consolatione Philosophiae*" (Minnis 320). Minnis cites many examples showing the influence of Boethius' *Consolatio* on *Roman de la Rose*; he also provides an example encompassing both Jean de Meun and Chaucer:

> In fact, for Jean de Meun (as for Chaucer after him) 'fine manners' were but one aspect of the complex concept of gentility. Gentillece' is the word which Jean used to translate Boethius' term 'nobilitas' in III pr. Vi 19-27. Here Boethius had argued that a reputation for nobility is an empty and vain thing. If it is related to nobility of lineage, then it belongs properly to

> those men who lived before us; this nobility is a kind of praise deriving from the desserts of one's parents. The fame of others, if you have none of your own, does not make you renowned [...] [Minnis] suggest[s] that this type of exposition lies behind the discussion of 'gentillece' found in the *Roman*. (333)

The discussion of 'gentillece' also permeates much of Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale* and is also reflected in the Knight's portrait contained in the *General Prologue*: "[h]e was a verray, parfit gentil knyght" (I 72). Chaucer the pilgrim is describing the Knight as "a truly perfect noble knight" (Benson 1302/1276/1252). 'Gentillesse' is also a topic of conversation in Chaucer's *The Wife of Bath's Tale* between the Knight and his newly acquired wife, the hag:

> But, for ye speken of swich gentillesse
> As is descended out of old richesse,
> That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,
> Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen.
> [...]
> Thy gentillesse cometh fro God allone.
> Thanne comth oure verray gentillesse of grace;
> It was no thyng biquethe us with our place. (III 1109-1112, 1162-1164)

The Knight is indebted to a hag and must marry her although he neither loves her, nor respects her because he believes that she is socially beneath him. She explains to him that true nobility or 'gentillesse' is not something inherited or acquired through social standing, or wealth, but is achieved through virtuous living. Not only did Boethius' *The*

Consolation of Philosophy influence Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale* and *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, but there is evidence of Boethian influence in *Troilus and Criseyde*. Minnis recognizes Boethian influence in *Troilus and Criseyde* but attributes much of the influence to an intermediary, Nicholas Trevet and his 1307 commentary and gloss on Boethius' *Consolation*. Minnis admits that up to 1981 there had been "no systematic study [...] of the extent to which [Nicholas] Trevet's Boethius-commentary [1307] influenced these great poems [*Knight's Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde*] in scope, execution and detail" (341-42), but he feels it is strong enough to warrant research. Furthermore, we cannot overlook the fact that Chaucer translated Boethius in *Boece*. Minnis believes that "[i]f, as seems highly likely, Chaucer's working manuscript of *De Consolatione Philosophiae* was equipped with Trevet's commentary, when Chaucer read Boethius he was reading Trevet also (342). However, even if Chaucer "often followed Trevet's method of dividing and subdividing Boethius' text in order to understand [*The Consolation*] (the procedure termed the 'diuisio textus' in medieval exegesis)" (342), he was clearly influenced most by the philosophical thoughts of Boethius.

The version of Boethius' *Consolation* written by John Walton was popular as is evidenced "by the twenty manuscripts in which it survives" (Minnis 343). Thomas Richard "produced the first printed edition of Walton's Boethius [in 1525]" (Minnis 345). Richard's production of Walton's Boethius included

> glosses which were derived largely from Trevet's commentary. [...] in [Richard's] humble way [he was] following a great tradition of writers which includes Jean de Meun and Chaucer. The *Consolatio Philosophiae*,

> with its medieval apparatus of glosses, provided a major reference-book for translators and mythographers. (345-47)

It is evident that Boethius' influence during the Medieval period was extensive, but the extent of his influence over the Renaissance period needs to be considered.

While Anthony Grafton feels that "early humanists were not quite sure what to make of Boethius" (410), he does note that Petrarch "frequently quoted [the *Consolation*]" (410). Furthermore, Grafton explains,

> In the second half of the fifteenth century [...] the character of Italian humanism changed. Men like Angelo Poliziano, Ermolao Barbaro, and Filippo Beroaldo [...] all approved heartily of formal philosophy of the sort the scholastics had practised. Their interests ran to formal dialectic, music, natural philosophy, and mathematics – all fields in which Boethius had much to offer. (411)

These Italian humanists appreciated different aspects of Boethian expertise. "Barbaro saw Boethius as an authority on philosophy [...] Poliziano saw him as an authority on a whole range of subjects [...] Poliziano's pupil Pietro Crinito saw him as a brilliant inventor" (411-12). Clearly, the Italian humanists are embracing Boethius, but what about the English humanists during the Renaissance?

Josephine Evetts Secker believes that "[s]ince the translation by King Alfred of the *Consolation* [...], England has seemed Boethius' natural domicile" (122). Helen M. Barrett seems to concur with Secker and discusses the influence Boethius had over the English during the Renaissance period:

> Sir Thomas More, though by his day Plato and Aristotle were themselves available as they were not for earlier lovers of the book, valued the *Consolation of Philosophy*, commended it to his children's study and evidently had it in mind when he named the book he wrote during his own imprisonment, *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*; Queen Elizabeth felt the book's spell and made her own translation of it; and a writer so rarely carried away by enthusiasm as Edward Gibbon has called the work 'a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully'. [...] From the sixth century right down to the eighteenth Boethius was universally regarded as an eminent son and supporter of the Church. (2-3)

It is important to note that Queen Elizabeth's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* was "undertaken late in her life [...] at the height of her power, Elizabeth was attracted by Boethius' Stoic rejection of worldly ambition" (Damrosch, et al 1082). Also during this period, H.F. Stewart and E.K. Rand revised, and subsequently published, a 1609 English translation of Boethius' *Consolation* by someone known only as "I.T." (xiv).

Martin Buzacott notes that "Sir Thomas Wyatt's poem 'If thou wilt mighty be, flee from the rage' is an adaptation of Book 3, Metres 5, 6 and 3 of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*" (163). A "correspondence between the first two stanzas of Wyatt's earlier (1536) poem CXXIII 'Who list his wealth and ease retain' and Book 2, Metre 4 of *De Consolatione*" is also noted by Buzacott (163). Furthermore, he reinforces the connection of Wyatt to Boethius when he explains that "the poem was written while Wyatt was imprisoned [...] [and] (ll 18-20 at least are [...] inspired by his witnessing the

execution of Anne Boleyn through his cell window)" (164). If this poem was written during Wyatt's imprisonment and subsequent witnessing of Anne Boleyn's execution then "echoes of Boethius are understandable" (164). John L. Tison, Jr. also notes Boethian influence during the Renaissance period:.

> The number of comfort books published in Tudor England was large enough to make it one of the popular forms of literature of the day [...] The authors and translators of comfort books include such prominent persons as Wyatt, Coverdale, More, Erasmus, Bradford, De Mornay, Luther, Lipsius, and Cardan. The art of consolation they most admired was that of Plutarch, Cicero, Seneca, and Boethius. More's *Dialogue of Comforte* (1534), for example, follows the dialogue form of Boethius and consoles with both Christian and philosophic ideas. (144-145)

We can now see that many scholars, poets, and politicians during the Renaissance were interested in, and gave credence to Boethius and his works. Wyatt, More, and Queen Elizabeth were all admirers of Boethius' *Consolation*, and all had access to copies of this work. Rather than just making the assumption that Shakespeare had access as well, we need to find traces of Boethian influence within Shakespeare's work to be certain that Shakespeare had his own awareness of Boethius' *Consolation*. To achieve this goal we must consider both direct and indirect sources.

The most obvious indirect influence of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* found in Shakespeare's work is the connection between Chaucer and Shakespeare. Shakespeare would not require a direct awareness of Boethius' *Consolation* to understand its underpinnings in Chaucer's *Troilus and Crisyede* as well as *The Knight's Tale*. While

he may not have drawn from Boethius as a source for his *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *The History of Troilus and Cressida*, he is influenced by Chaucer. This influence is most evident in Shakespeare's *The Two Noble Kinsmen* where the Prologue gives credit to Chaucer's influence:

> New plays and maidenheads are near akin –
> Much follow'd both, for both much money gi'n,
> If they stand sound and well; and a good play
> (Whose modest scenes blush on his marriage-day,
> And shake to lose his honor) is like her
> That after holy tie and first night's stir,
> Yet still is modesty, and still retains
> More of the maid to sight than husband's pains.
> We pray our play may be so; for I am sure
> It has a noble breeder and a pure,
> A learned, and a poet never went
> More famous yet 'twixt Po and silver Trent.
> Chaucer (of all admir'd) the story gives;
> There constant to eternity it lives. (P 1-14)

Not only does Shakespeare acknowledge Chaucer as the source for this play, but he also acknowledges that Chaucer's rendition of *The Knight's Tale* is one sure to win eternal appreciation.

Some critics also claim that Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is influenced by Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale*. I believe this argument, since the motif of a

marriage at the beginning and end of *The Knight's Tale* is reflected in the enveloping story of the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Paul A. Olson is one scholar who makes the connection between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Knight's Tale*. He feels that there is a strong connection through the speeches of the character Theseus in both works. As Olson explains:

> The first movement [in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*], the movement toward an orderly subordination of the female and her passions to the more reasonable male, is epitomized at the beginning of the first scene with the announcement of the prospective marriage of Theseus and Hippolita. Long before Shakespeare wrote, Theseus had come to embody the reasonable man and the ideal ruler of both his lower nature and his subjects. Chaucer's Theseus, to whom the ruler of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is indebted, had conquered 'all the regne of Femenye' (*KT* 865-66) with his wisdom. (101)

Olson points out that Chaucer's characterization of Theseus became the template for other authors and their works. He also draws attention to a broader influence from Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale* in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*. He feels that the "view of wedlock outlined [by Luciana in Comedy of Errors II, I, 15-25] was expressed in Chaucer by the Knight and the Parson (*KT*, 2986-3108; *PT*, 260-270, 321-348, and 836-957)" (100). These passages have the similar theme of man's superiority – as granted by God – over the land, sky, and seas as well as being in charge of the domestic sphere where he is to be considered the 'master' to the female.

Through this examination, it is clear that some of Shakespeare's works were

informed by Chaucer. It is still necessary, however, to make the connection showing how Boethius' *Consolation* also played a role in informing the works of Shakespeare. Robert Metcalf Smith found a connection between Boethius' *Consolation* and Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet.* Smith highlights the Boethian influence in the areas of Fortune and Providence in *Romeo and Juliet* (76). Boethius not only informs *Romeo and Juliet*, but Ann Thompson believes that there is also a strong connection from Boethius through Chaucer to Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida.* She tells us that

> Boethius speaks twice about the idea that 'contrarious Fortune profiteth more to men than Fortune debonaire' (Chaucer's translation, Book ii, Prose viii and Book iv, Prose vii), and follows it the second time with Agamemnon and Ulysses as examples of men who have suffered ill fortune and turned it to good (Metre vii of Book iv). This is very suggestive of the opening of Shakespeare's I.iii [in *Troilus and Cressida*]. (158)

The scene to which Thompson is referring in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* opens with Agammemnon's speech:

> [...] Why then, you princes,
> Do you with cheeks abash'd behold our works,
> And call them shames which are indeed nought else
> But the protractive trials of great Jove
> To find persistive constancy in men?
> The fineness of which metal is not found
> In fortune's love; for then the bold and coward,

> The wise and fool, the artist and unread,
> The hard and soft, seem all affin'd and kin;
> But in the wind and tempest of her frown,
> Distinction, with a broad and powerful fan,
> Puffing at all, winnows the light away,
> And what hath mass or matter, by itself
> Lies rich in virtue and unmingled. (17-30)

The soldiers are disheartened because they have been trying to defeat Troy for over seven years, and yet the walls remain standing. Agammemnon is telling them that their trials are making them virtuously rich. He believes that everyone will willingly flock around good fortune; however, such people have gained nothing through the experience of easy acquisition. He and his men, on the other hand, have learned valuable lessons and, while any man can look virtuous in the face of fortune, it takes a truly virtuous man to persevere in the face of misfortune. Thompson also notes that although Shakespeare chose to exclude the Boethian treatment of mutability in the writing of his plays, she thinks "the medieval-Renaissance tradition of Boethius was as important as strictly classical influences in forming his [Shakespeare's] attitudes [concerning fortune and virtue]" (158). Thomspon also notes that when Shakespeare and Fletcher were collaborating on *The Two Noble Kinsmen* she believes that "[t]he Boethian theme that 'We witen nat what thing we preyen here' (1260) is one developed by Shakespeare in his parts of the play.

The idea of Boethian influence is echoed by John Tison who informs us that

> Shakespeare employed banishment 'by decree' in 'almost one-third' of his plays. The tradition stems from Seneca, Plutarch, and Cicero, modified by such Christian philosophers as Boethius; consolation books were immensely popular in the sixteenth century. (142-157)

Tison traces the stoic philosophy into many of Shakespeare's plays including *Coriolanus*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Titus Andronicus*. Two other scholars who have shown an interest in Boethian influence on Shakespeare have noted a connection to *King Lear*. In his article "Boethius, *King Lear*, and 'Maystresse Philosophie" Robert K. Presson explains that "[a]lthough King Lear's life is of course utterly different from the historical Boethius', there are analogies in their reactions to the situations adversity creates" (408). Throughout his article, Presson makes note of the similarities in the action of *King Lear* to the adversity faced by Boethius. One similarity Presson discusses lies in the storm imagery utilized by both the persona 'Boethius' and Lear.

> Boethius speaks of his own 'Fortune cloudy' (I.M I, 26-27)[1]. The pattern of life which emerges in *The Consolation* is that of mutations, of rises and falls emotionally colored by the storm analogy since the tempest concept well conveys pain and suffering. [...] To intensify the pain and suffering man experiences in adversity, Shakespeare, like Boethius, chooses the storm image. Life's fierceness and afflictions are symbolized by the tumult on the heath. This storm Lear himself recalls at a later date: 'When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the

> thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out" (IV.vi.100-103). (408-409)

Another area in which Presson feels Boethius informs *King Lear* is in the matter of good and evil. Like Presson, Paul N. Siegel also believes that *King Lear* is informed by Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. He states,

> Boethius in the concluding part of his book sought to reconcile the misfortunes brought by chance with the concept of divine providence, finding that, uncertain as life in this world is, it is under the control of the divine power which had created the order by which it operates and of which seeming chance is a part. This reconciliation retained its validity for Shakespeare's age and is the basis for Shakespearean tragedy. (325)

Throughout his article, "Adversity and the Miracle of Love in *King Lear*," Siegel provides evidence of the Boethian concept of good fortune leading to corruption and ill fortune leading to enlightenment. In *Lear*, Siegel tells us, "[a]dversity brings for the good the miracle love, a heightening of their humanity, the humanity whose lack is so unnatural in the wicked" (325). All of the scholars mentioned thus far have found a connection between Boethius and Shakespeare but none of them have seen the connection between *The Consolation of Philosophy* and *The Life of Timon of Athens*. There are two scholars, however, who recognize Boethian influence in *Timon of Athens*.

The first of the two scholars, Raymond Chapman, briefly mentions *Timon* in an indirect relation to Boethius. This indirect attention is because Chapman's article focuses more on the Elizabethan idea of Fortune and applies this to *King Lear* and "Sonnet 18," while making only a brief mention of Boethius. Chapman credits Boethius with being

"the first to link the idea ['the state of continual mutability'] with the activities of Fortune. He attributed the mutability of the world to the Will of God with Fortune as agent" (376). Chapman then mentions near the closing of his article that "[t]he conventional conflict of Fortune and Nature, a commonplace of the drama, is thus given a new significance" (380). His footnote to this statement provides examples among which are included *Timon* (IV.iii.3), *King John* (III.i.51), and *As You Like It* (I.ii.30ff.). Paul Reyher, on the other hand, in his (1947) book *Essai sur les idées dans l'ouevre de Shakespeare* (*Essay on the Ideas in the Works of Shakespeare*), stresses the ways in which the stories of Alcibiades and Timon are linked by the theme of ingratitude. Unfortunately, his book does not discuss all the ways in which Boethius' *Consolation* informs Shakespeare's *Timon* and he fails to reconcile the confusing scene featuring Alcibiades and the Senate with the rest of the play. In this thesis I will expand on previous research and show the many ways in which Boethius' *Consolation* informs Shakespeare's *Timon.* I will also reveal the significance of the Alcibiades scene emphasizing its Boethian affiliation. At the end of this thesis, a cogent argument will emerge stressing the importance of Boethius' participation as a source to Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. To achieve this argument, a clear picture of how *Timon* evolved and which works are possible sources is necessary to the understanding of character development and plot structure within the play.

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[1] Throughout his article Presson uses the Chaucer translation of *De Consolatione Philosophiae* in *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F.N. Robinson (Cambridge, Mass., 1957)

Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
King Lear IV.i.1-4

Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens* is a product of myriad sources. This chapter will explore those sources supplying brief summaries of each. I will not be making comparisons between the sources, but rather, using the information contained in the summaries to highlight the ways in which Boethius' *Consolation* informs Shakespeare's *Timon*. E.A.J. Honigmann, in his article "*Timon of Athens*", lists the sources for *Timon* as Plutarch's *Lives* and narratives derived therefrom, and Lucian's *The Dialogue of Timon* or *the Misanthrope*, and its derivatives[1] (4). It is necessary to have a basic understanding of Plutarch, Lucian, and their derivatives to understand that Boethius influences Shakespeare in ways and areas where Lucian and Plutarch leave off. To assist in the examination of these sources, since all are relevant to Shakespeare's *Timon* and this thesis, I will utilize Volume VI of the *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, edited by Geoffrey Bullough[2]. The first source to consider, as set down by Honigmann, is Plutarch's *Lives*. Plutarch "introduced Timon into his *Life of Antony* [...] What he wrote there of Timon was brief [...] But the analogy with Antony shows that Plutarch regarded Timon as one who had been abandoned by his friends" (227). Bullough indicates that Plutarch did not create the character, Timon, but followed a tradition of characterization based on an actual individual (226). The real Timon was born sometime in the fifth century BCE and Aristophanes refers to him repeatedly. In fact, in *The Birds* "Prometheus, accused of being the enemy of the gods, agrees: 'Yes, yes, like Timon. I'm a perfect Timon; just such another'" (Bullough 226). Timon was

also the subject of "two (lost) comedies" from the 4th and 5th centuries" (226). The short excerpt regarding Timon within the *The Life of Marcus Antonius* introduces us to Timon after he has lost his wealth. The description begins by telling us that Timon, a citizen of Athens, was ridiculed by Plato and Aristophanes in their works. The account claims that Plato's and Aristophanes' descriptions of Timon make him out to be a man-hater, who shunned the company of all men except for Alcibiades, whom he appeared to love. When Apemantus asked Timon why he hated everyone except Alcibiades, Timon claimed that he gave attention to Alcibiades because he was sure Alcibiades would be trouble for the citizens of Athens. Timon spoke with Apemantus because they were similar in nature. Once, while Apemantus and Timon were feasting together, Apemantus brought Timon's attention to the fact that it was an enjoyable occasion. Timon responded by implying the feast would be better without Apemantus' presence. Timon was also known for having gone to the market where the Athenians were assembled. He approached the pulpit, thereby signifying his intent to speak. When the crowd hushed to receive his oration, he told them that he had a fig tree in his yard on which some citizens had already hanged themselves. He wanted to inform them that he would soon be cutting down the tree and they should hurry if they also wanted to hang themselves. He died he in the city of Hales and was buried near the water, which surrounded his burial site at high tide so none could approach. He had two epitaphs. It is said that Timon wrote the first epitaph and Callimachus wrote the second.

(1) Heere lyes a wretched corse, of wretched soule bereft,
Seeke not my name: a plague consume you wicked wretches left.

(2) Heere lye I Timon who alive all living men did hate,

> Passe by, and curse thy fill: but passe, and stay not here thy gate.
>
> (Bullough 251)

At the end Plutarch claims there is more to tell about Timon but he fails to write further on the subject (251-52). Shakespeare chose to follow the Plutarchan example and employ the double epitaph in his version of *Timon.*

Not only was Shakespeare influenced by Plutarch's *The Life of Marcus Antonius*, but he also drew on Plutarch's *Life of Alcibiades* to write *The Life of Timon of Athens.* It is interesting to note that the title Shakespeare chose for his play is similar to those contained in Plutarch's *Lives.* Rather than recalling the entire translation by Sir Thomas North, I will recall only the aspects of the story of Alcibiades which are pertinent to this thesis. The story extoles the virtues of Alcibiades while also pointing out his faults. At one point the story summarizes a description of Alcibiades and the Athenians' reception of him:

> For to saye truly: his curtesies, his liberallities, and noble expences to shewe the people so great pleasure and pastime as nothing could be more: [...] the grace of his eloquence, the beawtie of his persone, the strength and valliantnes of his bodie, joyned together with his wisedome and experience in marshall affayers: were the very causes that made them to beare with him in all things, and that the Athenians dyd paciently endure all his light parties, and dyd cover his faultes, with the best wordes and termes they could, calling him youthfull, and gentlemens sportes. (255)

This section nicely sums up Alcibiades' strengths as well as his weaknesses, and will be something I will refer to further in this chapter as well as in the next chapter. The next

section describes the moment when Alcibiades encounters Timon, and is another important factor in this discourse.

> And on a daye as he came from the counsaill and assembly of the cittie, where he had made an excellent oration, to the great good liking and acceptation of all the hearers, and by meanes thereof had obteined the thing he desired, and was accompanied with a great traine that followed him to his honour: Timon, surnamed Misanthropus [...] meeting Alcibiades thus accompanied, dyd not passe by him, nor gave him waye (as he was wont to doe to all other men) but went straight to him, and tooke him by the hande, and sayed: O, thou dost well my sonne, I can thee thancke, that thou goest on, and climest up still: for if ever thou be in authoritie, woe be unto those that followe thee, for they are utterly undone. (255-56)

The last section that is pertinent to this discussion details Alcibiades' exile from Athens as well as his eventual return. While away at war, Alcibiades is accused of sacrilege. Warned of the impending charge, he eventually fled to Thuries where he hid so well no one could find him. Someone who knew him well, however, found him and asked him why he did not have enough trust in the justice system to return to Athens. To this Alcibiades answered,

> Yes very well (quoth he) and it were in another matter: but my life standing upon it, I would not trust mine own mother, fearing least negligently she should put in the blacke beane, where she should cast in

> the white. For by the first, condemnation of death was signified: and by the other, pardone of life. But, afterwards, hearing that the Athenians for malice had condemned him to death: Well, quoth he, they shall knowe I am yet alive. (256)

Alcibiades was charged and went into hiding for the alleged crime of having shown contempt for the holy mysteries of the goddesses Ceres and Proserpina through mockery, thereby committing an act of sacrilege. He was not condemned to death until he showed contempt for the law of his country and refused to face the charges. For this second offense, he also lost all of his possessions in Athens. Alcibiades chose to fight against the country that had abandoned him and took up arms with the Lacedæmonians to help them in their fight against Athens. When Athens faced its greatest threat, Alcibiades offered his assistance and was turned away. As he was being rejected, however, "an oligarchy of four hundred seized power in Athens" (258). While the Senate may not have desired Alcibiades' assistance, the common people did. They called for Alcibiades and made him their Captain. This was the beginning of Alcibiades' return from exile and his eventual reinstatement as General of Athens. Eventually, however, Alcibiades, again, lost favour with the people of Athens.

> Accused of self-conceited neglect of his duties, Alcibiades was superseded. As a result, the Spartan Lysander captured Athens. Alcibiades took refuge with the Persian Pharnabazus, but Lysander asked the latter to get rid of the Athenian hero. (262)

Alcibiades was killed while sleeping with his concubine Timandra. The culprits set fire to the outside of the dwelling and when Alcibiades ran out with his sword, they killed him with arrows and darts. By doing so, they kept a distance between themselves and the threat of Alcibiades' sword. Timandra, alone, buries Alcibiades' body (252-63).

As Honigmann notes, there were a few derivatives of Plutarch's work and the one that is relevant to this discussion is William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* (1566). At the beginning of his account, Painter credits Plutarch's *Life of Marcus Antonius* as his source. Painter also notes that both Plato and Aristophanes comment on Timon and in doing so imply that he held the form of a man, but that is where his similarity to mankind ends. In this version, Timon lives by himself in a small cabin outside Athens where he sees no one and interacts with no one. In fact, Painter claims, Timon "never wente to the citie, or to any other habitable place, except he were constrayned: he could not abide any mans company and conversation" (293). Apemantus, residing in Athens, was one person who shared many of Timon's attitudes toward men. Painter claims Apemantus was also abnormal in his aversion to mankind and preferred to sleep in fields. However, even though these two like-minded characters share a hatred of men, it becomes apparent that Timon's hatred is deeper than Apemantus' when,

> On a day they two being alone together at dinner, Apemantus said unto him: 'O Timon what a pleasant feast is this, and what a merie companie are wee, being no more but thou and I.' 'Naie (quoth Timon) it would be a merie banquet in deede, if there were none here but my selfe.' (294)

It would appear, through Painter's version (an echo of Plutarch), that Apemantus is not as wholly committed to hating man as is Timon. Even Timon, however, has one to whom he willing speaks:

> Apemantus demaunded of him, why he spake to no man, but to Alcibiades. 'I speake to him sometimes, said Timon, because I know that by his occasion, the Atheniens shall receive great hurt and trouble.' Which wordes many times he told to Alcibiades himselfe. (294)

The remainder of Painter's version closely resembles that of Plutarch except for the fact that at the end there is only one epitaph and it reads differently (293-295).

> My wretched catife dayes,
> Expired now and past:
> My carren corps interred here,
> Is faste in grounde:
> In waltring waves of swel-
> ling sea, by surges cast,
> My name if thou desire,
> The gods thee doe confounde. (295)

It appears that Painter expands on the epitaph written by Timon from the Plutarch version. Painter also incorporates into his epitaph the information Plutarch supplies about the sea encompassing the grave into his epitaph.

This examination would not be complete without referring to Lucian's contribution and subsequent analogues. Lucian's *The Dialogue of Timon* begins with

Timon cursing while he digs fruitlessly in the ground for food. Timon feels that his friends have treated him deplorably and is in the process of cursing Jove for not punishing them. As Bullough points out, "[h]e goes on at some length, accusing Jove of idleness" (264). Timon moves his discussion away from Jove and his inadequacy and refocuses on the crux of his plight. He uses his own example to enlighten Jove on how corrupt and cruel mankind has become. He explains to Jove that it was Timon's assistance that raised many Athenians "from poverty to wealth" (264). Now that he is without financial means, everyone who had formerly fawned over him, treats him as a stranger. Timon's rant continues for so long that Jove finally asks Mercury the identity of the disgruntled Athenian. Mercury informs his father that the person below is none other than Timon. Jove asks how someone so rich in wealth and friends ended up in such a poor state. Mercury tells Jove:

> He was brought to this by his bounty, humanity and compassion towards all in want; or rather, to speak more correctly, by his ignorance, foolish habits, and small judgement of men, not realizing that he was giving his property to ravens and wolves. Even while the poor wretch was having his liver eaten by so many vultures, he thought they were his friends and well-wishers, who took pleasure in consuming it because of the love they bore him. When they had finally eaten him down to the bone, and sucked the marrow, they left him dry and stripped from top to toe, and now they no longer know him or condescend to look at him, or give him any help. That's why you see him in skins, with a hoe, having abandoned the city out of shame, tilling the soil in order to live, and afflicting himself when

> he thinks that those who have become rich through his kindness now despise him and do not even care to know if he is called Timon. (265)

Jove is upset by what Mercury has told him and believes they would be no better than those Timon despises if they did not attempt to assist Timon in some way. Jove admits to Mercury that he has been too busy to attend to Timon's issues to date, but feels they must do something. He orders Mercury to take Riches down to stay with Timon. He also wants Treasure to accompany Riches. Mercury does Jove's bidding and approaches Riches to explain the situation. Once Riches realizes what is being proposed she becomes adamant that she will not return to Timon's side. Jove asks Riches why she is declining and in her answer she explains that she feels she has been mistreated by Timon. Riches feels that Timon went out of his way to throw her away with reckless abandon. In fact Riches believes that Timon's treatment of her is similar to the treatment a person would give something too hot to hold onto. She asks Jove to "let those simpletons stay with Poverty who prefer her to me. Let the poor, who receive from her some skins and a pick, be contented when they earn fourpence and thoughtlessly throw away the gift of ten talents" (266). Jove assures Riches that she will not be treated negligently again by Timon, because Jove believes Timon has learned a valuable lesson. Jove also reminds Riches that she is contradicting herself because she also complains when someone hangs on to her too tightly she is secreted away and not allowed to see daylight. At least, Jove explains, Timon allowed you to circulate. Riches informs Jove that she has the right to be equally vexed by both situations and would prefer to be with someone who is temperate in their spending habits. Jove instructs Riches to go with Mercury and to remain at Timon's side. However, Riches continues her discussion about men and their

reaction to wealth with Mercury. She tells Mercury that "[w]hen a man opens his door to me just once, and receives me into his house, then secretly go in with me Pride, Ignorance, Arrogrance, Sloth, Violence, Fraud, and a thousand other similar evils" (268). Riches continues to explain that once man has been treated to her company, "he could bear almost any thing else save let me go from him" (268). Just before Mercury and Riches depart, Mercury recalls that they have forgotten Treasure. Riches informs him that she had left him on earth, locked up until he hears her voice. When they go down to earth Timon is in the company of "Poverty, Toil, Endurance, Wisdom, Strength, and many others serving under Hunger" (269). Mercury believes these are much better companions to have than Riches' "henchmen" (269). Riches, seeing that Timon has adequate company, requests that she may depart. Mercury reminds her that this was Jove's request. Poverty asks Mercury what he is doing there with Riches. Poverty is upset that she is being asked to step down from her guardianship since it was Riches' act of abandonment that left Timon in his situation. When Mercury explains that it is "Jove's will" (269) she gathers up her followers and exits. Mercury and Riches approach a very distrustful Timon who threatens to throw stones at them. Mercury asks Timon not to throw the stones and tells him that they are gods that Jove has sent down to endow him with wealth. Timon curses them and tells them he hates the gods as much as he despises men. Riches, after being threatened by Timon, pleads with Mercury to leave since "this fellow is melancholy-mad" (270). Mercury asks Timon to reconsider his actions and to take what is being offered. Timon continues to refuse Riches. When Mercury asks why he will not accept Riches, Timon explains:

> [S]he caused me many troubles, putting me in the hands of flatterers and traitors, rousing other men's hatred and envy against me, destroying me with pleasures and delights, and finally she abandoned me all of a sudden, perfidiously and treacherously. (270)

Riches requests that she be allowed to express her side of the situation and Timon relents and allows her to talk.

> I was the cause of so many good things, honour, preferment, garlands and other delights, and you were admired and praised, esteemed by men, all because of me; and if you suffered wrongs through flatterers, I am not to blame. Rather in this respect I was harmed by you, since you drove me out so shamefully, and put me into the hands of scoundrels who, with toadying and feigned praise did you wrong. Finally you have said that I have betrayed and deceived you; but I could well accuse *you* of this, since I have been chased away by you in all sorts of ways, and tossed head first out of your windows. (271)

After Riches' oration, Mercury speaks to both and asks Timon to soften his temperament towards Riches; as well he asks Riches to notice the change in Timon's demeanor. In acquiescence, Timon agrees to obey the gods and Riches agrees to remain with Timon. Mercury leaves and Riches sends for Treasure while Timon's attitude begins to change as he digs up gold. He praises Jove, and wonders if he is dreaming because he is receiving gold with every attempt to dig. He decides that with the money, he will buy the land on which he has been digging and then he will "build a tower above the treasure, big enough

for [Timon] alone, and [Timon] intend[s] that, after [his] death, th[e] tower shall also be [his] tomb" (272). Having decided that, Timon goes on to promise himself that he will not bother himself with people and will continue to despise men. He continues with his diatribe:

> Alone let him sacrifice to the gods, alone may he feast, and have no other neighbour than himself; and if it come to him to die, alone let him stretch forth his right hand, and set the garland on his head. The name most acceptable to him, let it be 'Misanthrope', which signifies 'hater of men'. May the qualities of his behaviour be these: harshness, asperity, hostility, wrath, inhumanity. (272)

Timon continues his rant even further, claiming to give no assistance, and, in fact, to further hinder anyone requiring aid. He then places himself in the position of being a country of his own and the head of his Senate. No sooner has Timon decreed himself separate from society than Gnathonides approaches. Timon recalls that when he had asked Gnathonides for assistance Gnathonides had offered him a rope to hang himself (273). Now that Timon has money Gnathonides cheerfully approaches Timon recalling to him the fact that he knew Timon would not be without the gods' favour for long. Timon replies caustically and Gnathonides, thinking Timon is simply joking with him, asks him about the location of the feast he assumes Timon will be hosting. He also tells Timon that he has brought a new song from one of the latest plays. Timon has had enough and begins to beat Gnathonides with his mattock. Gnathonides asks Timon why he is attacking him and threatens to charge him with assault. To this Timon replies "If you wait a while, perhaps I'll be charged with murdering you" (273). Gnathonides does

not understand the depths of Timon's anger and asks him to heal the cut he has inflicted upon him by placing some of the gold on it, as Gnathonides claims it has medicinal properties. Rebuked again, Gnathonides departs, but his departure is quickly followed by the approach of another flatterer, Philiades. As Timon watches his approach, he recalls that Philiades "had from me a whole farm and two talents for his daughter as a reward for his praises [...] A short time afterwards, when I was sick, I went to ask him for a little help, and the noble soul threatened to thrash me" (274). As Philiades approaches Timon, he begins a discourse on how unfaithful other people, like Gnathonides, are and he warns Timon not to trust those "rascally toadies" (274). He then tells Timon that he was coming to give him a talent but learned of his new fortune and now desires to give him counsel. Timon gives Philiades the same response he gave Gnathonides and hits him in the head with his mattock. As Philiades is mourning the wound inflicted upon his person, Timon notices Demea approaching. Timon recalls that he "paid the treasury sixteen talents for this man because he had just been condemned and sent to gaol for not paying his fine" (274). Yet later, when Timon approaches him, he turns him away and fails to recognize him as a citizen of Athens. When Demea reaches Timon he announces that he has written a decree on Timon's behalf. Demea begins to read the decree which reads

> Since Timon son of Echecratides of Collytos, a man both good and wise, whose like is not to be found in Greece, has been at all times the benefactor of this city, and has been victor at the Olympic games in boxing and wrestling and in the foot-race, all in one day, also with a single and the four-horse chariot and only recently he bore himself bravely for the defence of his country against the Acharnians, and cut to pieces two

> companies of Spartans. Moreover by making laws, giving counsel in the Senate, and being an army-leader, he has done valuable service to the republic. (274)

Timon interjects twice to remind Demea that he had never, in fact, been involved in any Olympic games, and he had never been in the army nor did he own any weapons. Demea is unperturbed and continues reading his decree which continues with a call on the Senate to erect a statue in Timon's honour. Furthermore, Demea announces himself to be a relative, and disciple of Timon's and then tells Timon that he is going to name his firstborn son after Timon. Timon is surprised because he had yet to meet Demea's wife and he had not exiled himself for that long. Demea explains that he does not have a wife but, "shall take one now, if it please God, and beget children, and the first-born, which [he is] sure will be a boy, [he will] call Timon" (275). In understandable frustration, Timon assaults him like those who came before him. Demea argues with Timon further, and Timon inflicts "another blow" (275). As Demea is wailing and Timon is threatening to hit him again, another man approaches. The new man approaching is Thrasicles the philosopher and Timon recalls that Thrasicles was a man who admonished other men for having "followed their own lusts" and was the same man who "praised abstinence" (276). Yet, after announcing this, he attended a banquet thrown by Timon, drank very strong wine and ate ravenously. Thrasicles was

> snatching at the food with his hands like a voracious bird, shoving the other guests with his elbow, and always getting his beard full of gravy, he bends over his body like a dog, looking down with his head bent over into his bowl as if he expected to find virtue inside it, working away in the

> dishes with his finger, so as not to leave anything to wash up. And always he grumbles, even if he has a whole pig all to himself. [...] When he is sober he will yield to no man in lying or impudence, insolence or avarice, and he is the prince of flatterers, ever the readiest to swear what is untrue. Fraud goes before him and impudence follows him. (276)

Once Thrasicles arrives, he tells Timon that he has not come in pursuit of Timon's riches or feasts. Thrasicles tells Timon that he does not need money or food and that his worn clothes are enough to keep his body covered and all he really needs to eat is a "dry biscuit" (276). He also contends that all he needs to drink is water. He offers advice to Timon and his advice is a call for Timon, in Thrasicles' presence, to wade out into the sea with his fortune and throw it into the rough water. He tells Timon not to keep any of the money for himself, but to distribute it to the needy. Thrasicles, again, tells Timon he does not want any money for himself, but requests that Timon fill the bag he has brought with him so he can distribute it among his fellow philosophers. Timon responds to Thrasicles in the same manner as he did the previous visitors, and begins beating him. While Timon is beating Thrasicles, he notices more people advancing upon him. He leaves his mattock, gathers stones, and climbs to a position of advantage. Once Blepsias, Laches, Gniso and "a whole host of people" (277) are close enough, Timon pelts them with stones and, when they beg him to stop and promise to leave, he continues throwing stones, informing them that they will not be leaving without wounds.

Lucian's version of Timon does not discuss the death of or epitaph for Timon, nor does it mention Alcibiades; hence, subsequent or analogous versions that include these details, as well as references to Alcibiades mingle both Lucian's and Plutarch's stories.

One such analogue is that of M.M. Boiardo who wrote *Timone* in 1487. The major difference between Boiardo's version and Lucian's is Boiardo's fifth act which, Bullough explains, is "original" (229). While Honigmann believes it to be a derivative of Lucian, I feel that Boiardo's inclusion of Alcibiades, which is not contained in Lucian, causes it to be analogous to Plutarch in addition to Lucian.

Another derivative of Lucian, and possible source to Shakespeare's *Timon*, considered is the 1601 academic play "(the'MS. *Timon*', Dyce MS. 52)" (297). This play is the one that most closely resembles Shakespeare's *Timon* in that it gives the reader a glimpse of Timon's life before he became the man-hater, and includes two female characters. Bullough's summary describes the play as being

> a long clumsy pedantic piece in which a broadly comic sub-plot parallels the action and ideas of the main-plot. In the main-plot Timon, at the peak of his wealth and popularity, is warned by his servant Laches against prodigality, but glories in his generosity (I.1). When his friend Eutrapelus (I.2) is threatened by his usurer Abyssus, Timon gives him five talents. He feasts his parasites, and when Laches again warns him he turns the faithful man out-of-doors (I.5). Laches however returns disguised as a soldier (II.2) and takes service anew with his master (II.3). When Demeas the orator is arrested, Timon frees him with sixteen talents (II.4). Made 'lord' of a wedding-feast (II.5), he orders great conviviality and falls in love with the bride, who refuses the groom chosen by her father and gladly turns to Timon, not for love but for his wealth, saying, 'Who doth possesse most golde shall mee possesse' (III.2). They are about to be married when a

ship-wrecked sailor announces that all Timon's ships have been sunk, and he is ruined (III.5). At once his bride and all his friends forsake him, and Timon is distraught. In IV.1 Timon, now homeless, asks Demeas and Eutrapelus for 'houseroom'. They pretend not to know him, whereupon he utters a Senecan diatribe and falls to the ground. Lying there, he is mocked and wishes he could be some animal hostile to men (IV.2). When he begs shelter of Hermogenes, the fiddler he has befriended, Hermogenes bids him go hang himself, and when two philosophers try to calm him with stoic commonplaces, he beats them and Hermogenes. He resolves to invite his false friends to a last banquet (IV.3).

At the feast the viands are all stones painted to resemble rich dishes. Timon drives out his betrayers. Only Laches is left (IV.5). In V.2 Timon tries to shake off his servant, and even when Laches reveals his identity to prove his fidelity, bids him keep his distance. They vie with each other in railing against human nature. When Timon finds gold (V.3) he wishes to throw it into the sea, but Laches prevails on him to use it to avenge himself. He decides to dwell alone, and 'Lett that day be unfortunate wherein I see a man', but he is soon besieged by many clients (V.4). In V.5 his mistress wants him back and the others cringe before him. Demeas brings the decree he has prepared for the Areopagus. Helped by Laches Timon drives them all away. Left alone on the stage he speaks the Epilogue in which he promises to change his nature if the audience will applaud. (232-33)

The necessity for this abbreviated examination of the sources will become evident in the next chapter where I will begin to examine the precise ways in which Boethius' *Consolation* informs Shakespeare's *Timon*.

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[1]Honigmann, E.A.J. *Timon of Athens*. (1) Plutarch's *Lives* gave a short account of Timon's misanthropy and the Athenian background (in the 'Marcus Antonius' and the 'Alcibiades'). From Plutarch sprang derivatives, Pedro Mexía's *La Silva de varia lección* (1540), William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566), and others.
(2) Lucian's dialogue, *Timon or the Misanthrope*, sketched in Timon's prodigality [...] Lucianic derivatives include Boiardo's play, *Timone* (late 15th century), and an English academic MS. Play of no certain date (the 'MS. *Timon*', Dyce MS. 52). (4)

[2] Unless otherwise specified in the citation – Bullough's Volume 6 *Narrative and Dramatic Sources* of Shakespeare is used as primary source for the remainder of this chapter.

I am resolv'd another shape shall make me,
Or end my fortunes.
The Two Noble Kinsmen II.iii.21-22

As mentioned in chapter one, many critics including Rolf Soellner, Robert Metcalf Smith, Ann Thompson, John Tison, Raymond Chapman, and Paul Reyher suggest Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* as a possible source for such Shakespearean works as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *Coriolanus*, *Richard II*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Titus Andronicus*. Chapman and Reyher both discuss Boethian' philosophy and distinctions in *The Life of Timon of Athens*; I, however, feel more evidence can be brought forward before the extent of this argument can be considered adequately exhausted. In this, and the subsequent chapters, I will highlight portions of Shakespeare's *Timon* as well as Boethius' *Consolation* to show how the latter informs the former. In this chapter, I will discuss inter-textual items explaining Alcibiades' inclusion in *Timon*, drawing parallels between the reaction to misfortune by Boethius and Timon, and revealing the theme of illness and disease shared by Boethius' *Consolation* and Shakespeare's *Timon*.

To facilitate the first portion of my examination, it is necessary to recall the previous chapter's discussion of Plutarchan and Lucianic sources, as well as their derivatives, for Shakespeare's *Timon*. Most specifically, I wish to draw attention to the sources that discuss Alcibiades. In Plutarch's *The Life of Marcus Antonius*, Timon is referred to in an aside which recalls his going out of his way to speak to Alcibiades because he believes Alcibiades will be the cause of 'mischiefe' for the Athenian people. That is the only connection between Timon and Alcibiades in this piece. In Plutarch's *Life of Alcibiades* we are given a deeper insight into the character of Alcibiades. He is

represented as a beautiful man, a great soldier, an eloquent orator, but someone who is neither trusted nor liked by many people. It appears as though Alcibiades is revered by those who wish him to lead their army to success, but, in every case, they become disenchanted with his abilities and he is spurned by the same people who request his assistance. In this respect, he is somewhat like Timon, so comparing their responses to rejection is logical. Alcibiades is a manipulator, as is reflected in how he manipulates countries and armies after his exile and death sentence in Athens. He switches allegiances quite easily to serve his own purposes, moving from Athens (when exiled), to Sparta where he soon loses the confidence of the Spartans and flees to Tissathernes. Alcibiades continues to manipulate events and people until he regains his place in Athens. Those in power, as well as the Athenian citizens, never truly trust Alcibiades again, nor do they have absolute confidence in his abilities and, shortly before his death, he flees Athens again. In Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure*, a passing reference to Alcibiades echoes the words of Plutarch. In Lucian's *The Dialogue of Timon* there is no mention of Alcibiades; I believe it is interesting, however, to note that Demea (The Orator) attributes many of Alcibiades' skills (participant in the Olympic games and successful soldier) to Timon in his decree. The decree of Demea is echoed in *Timone* by Boiardo, but again there is no mention of Alcibiades. The Anonymous 1601 Academic version of *Timon*, like the Lucian version, fails to mention Alcibiades. This omission of Alcibiades by Lucian and Boiardo has led scholars such as Geoffrey Bullough to wonder why Shakespeare chose to incorporate the character of Alcibiades into his version of *Timon*, especially "the appearance (III.5) of Alcibiades before the Senate [which] comes as a great surprise, and we never learn who the rash friend was who committed the

violence" (Bullough 244). Furthermore, Bullough feels that Shakespeare failed to "develop his plot fully" and argues that had he, "he would certainly have prepared for Alcibiades' appeal in some way. As it is, we have had no previous indication of his past relations with the Senate, nor indeed of his past life" (245). Frank Kermode expresses a similar concern in the introduction to the play in *The Riverside Shakespeare* when he points out "[i]t may be that the Alcibiades of the play (or indeed the Alcibiades of history) is not a very serviceable emblem of the mean between the extremes exampled by Timon; if so, that is a flaw in the play as it stands" (1492). I believe that Shakespeare's contemporaries would have been aware of the connection between Alcibiades and Timon, as well as both their histories; as I will explain shortly, Shakespeare manipulates Alcibiades' history to make him a more palatable foil for Timon. First, I will address Bullough's concern that there is no preparation for Act III, Scene v. I believe Shakespeare supplies two small references anticipating Alcibiades' meeting with the Senate in Acts II and III. In Act II Scene ii, the Page approaches Apemantus and requests that he read "the superscription of these letters" (II.ii.78-79). Apemantus reads them and tells the Page, "[t]his is to Lord Timon, this to Alcibiades" (II.ii.83-84). Although the identity of the Page's Master remains unclear, what does become evident is that Timon and Alcibiades are receiving some news or information from someone. Not only is the audience unable to discern with certainty the identity of the Page's Master, but the Page is never seen again, and the audience never witnesses Timon or Alcibiades receiving their messages. While it can be assumed that Timon's message probably contains a complaint and demand from yet another creditor, there is no reason for including the information that Alcibiades is receiving a message as well. I believe that Shakespeare inserts this

information purposely to foreshadow Alcibiades' defense of his friend to the Senate. He could be receiving news about his friend's crime. The second indication of the upcoming scene with Alcibiades and the Senate comes in Act III, Scene i when Timon and Flavius are discussing those approached by the servants for money thus far. Flavius is recalling the reaction of the Senators and tells Timon

> They answer, in a joint and corporate voice,
> That now they are at fall, want treasure, cannot
> Do what they would, are sorry; you are honorable,
> But yet they could have wish'd – they know not –
> Something hath been amiss – a noble nature
> May catch a wrench – would all were well – 'tis pity –
> And so, intending other serious matters,
> After certain half-caps and cold-moving nods,
> They froze me into silence. (III.i.204-213)

This passage indicates that the senators had something important and troubling on their minds when approached by Flavius. The fact that the Senate was caught up by this other matter, and the fact that the other matter deals with someone of a 'noble nature' who obviously suffered a momentary lapse in that nature – 'catch a wrench' – foreshadows the eventual meeting of Alcibiades with the Senate. The person with the 'noble nature' is the same person Alcibiades had received the notice about and will eventually defend to the Senate. Although very subtle, these are forewarnings of the meeting between Alcibiades and the Senate. Therefore, Scene v of Act III, is not as surprising as previously thought. Moreover, Bullough's concern over the identity of the person Alcibiades defends is a detail that is not germane to Shakespeare's plot; the defense and subsequent exile are,

however, and this is what Shakespeare is highlighting in this scene. Kermode raised another concern with the scene between Alcibiades and the Senate. He feels that the historical Alcibiades, as depicted by such writers as Plutarch, and as understood by Shakespeare's audience is an ineffective foil for Timon. Shakespeare's audience would also have been aware of the history of Boethius and Shakespeare uses this knowledge to elevate Alcibiades to a Boethian status in Act III, Scene v.

The Alcibiades and Senate scene in Act III strongly echoes the historical Boethius' own situation. Shakespeare rewrites history and creates a scene that ends with the Senate exiling Alcibiades because he defends a fellow soldier and loses his temper. Reviewing the recollections of Alcibiades set out earlier in Chapter Two, we know that Alcibiades was exiled three times, but he was never exiled while defending a fellow soldier to the Senate. Shakespeare was obviously motivated to change the history as set down by his predecessors, and the answer is contained in Boethius' *Consolation* and the life history he imparts to Philosophy. I bring your attention back to Chapter One, and the recollection that the tribulations leading to Boethius' eventual exile and death began with his innocent defense of a fellow Senator. Boethius naively speaks freely in support of Albinus, and this combined with other events leads to his exile and execution. Similarly, Alcibiades suffers exile after defending a fellow soldier to the Senate. The parallel of the situations is further advanced by the implication of corruption within the Senates faced by both Boethius and Alcibiades. Boethius informs Philosophy of the corruption within the Senate he faced when he mentions Basilius, Opilio, and Gaudentius. Basilius "impeached" Boethius because of "his debts," while the other two suffered "banishment because of their countless frauds" (11). Opilio and Gaudentius, however, on the same

day they were to leave Athens, "laid information against [Boethius] and the denunciation was accepted" (11). The corruption may be attributable to the fact that the Senate was becoming split, with some allying themselves to their Roman heritage, and others remaining loyal to the Ostrogoth ruler, Theodoric (Varvis 6). Like Boethius, Alcibiades also faces a corrupt Senate. At the end of the play, the corruption Alcibiades faces in the Senate is explained by another Senator: "Nor are they living / Who were the motives that you first went out; / Shame, that they wanted cunning in excess, / Hath broke their hearts (V.iv.26-29). The Senators who had sentenced Alcibiades' friend to death and him to banishment had extended their deviousness to a point where their faults were becoming blatant to others and they could no longer hide their acts of cunning.

Shakespeare echoes Boethius through the situation of Alcibiades. The historical Alcibiades would not provide an adequate foil for Timon's character flaws in dealing with misfortune, but he was already connected to Timon historically. By giving Alcibiades similar character traits to those of Boethius (especially his readiness to aid a fellow citizen), as well as having them both deal with a corrupt Senate, Shakespeare is elevating the character of Alcibiades to a Boethian level. This elevation brings more credibility to the reading of Alcibiades and Timon as foils, as well as Alcibiades' eventual diplomatic reunion with Athens at the end of the play. Boethius' anger during his exile is resolved and his death becomes his successful reunion with God. Alcibiades eventually reunites with the people of Athens after moving past his anger; Timon never gets beyond his anger, and chooses to hold onto his rage until he dies. Shakespeare included Alcibiades and the Senate scene to create a foil to Timon and show another way, a Boethian way, to react to the same condition.

Not only does Shakespeare include a reconceived Alcibiades in his version of *Timon* to create a foil for Timon's character, but Shakespeare also includes similarities between Timon and Boethius or between Philosophy's wisdom and the characters in *Timon*, reinforcing the connection between his work and *The Consolation*. In Book I of Boethius' *Consolation* Dame Philosophy has listened to Boethius explain what has brought him to the present situation and she tells him,

> However, it is not simply a case of your having been banished far from your home; you have wandered away yourself, or if you prefer to be thought of as having been banished, it is you yourself that have been the instrument of it. (16-17)

Philosophy tells Boethius that, although he feels everyone has forsaken him and he has been banished by his countrymen, he has banished himself in that he has lost his virtuous self. Apemantus imparts a similar diagnosis of Timon during their final scene together in Act IV when he claims, "Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself" (IV.iii.220). Like Philosophy, Apemantus is trying to tell Timon that he has lost his true self because he is unwittingly holding onto hate and anger. Shakespeare leaves Timon's true nature an ambiguity. However, as Lesley Brill explains, the critics' disagreement and subsequent discourse over the nature of Timon's character holds more complexities than are contained within Timon himself:

> Among Timon's advocates the most influential is G. Wilson Knight, who has defended [Timon] for more than thirty years. Knight's Timon is a figure of gigantic goodness and love; he stands as 'a symbol of mankind's

> aspiration,' a 'spirit of infinite and rich love and bounty.' R.P. Draper sees Timon as practicing 'idealistic communism,' and William Empson declares that 'Timon keeps a certain grandeur and generosity which works for good however much he wants to do harm.' But Timon has more detractors than defenders. The complaint most commonly made against him is one which Apemantus voices in the play: 'The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the extremity of both ends' (IV.iii.301-302). He acts with a 'strange irresponsibility towards reality.[Anne Lancashire]' At best, 'Timon clearly means well: but that is not enough. His well-meaning favours knaves, smothers real friendship, and ruins his own estate. [E.A.J. Honigmann]' Worse, 'Timon's liberality has been something that involves subservience. [David Cook]" [...] [Timon is regarded by one critic as] 'Ideal Bounty and Friendship' [while another sees Timon's behaviour as] 'simply Reckless Prodigality' [at the same time he is seen as being having a] 'bond with mankind [that] is purely societal' [and as someone who] 'seems strangely isolated amidst the crowds'. (18)

Brill reveals that the discovery of Timon's true nature is a puzzle that has left everyone baffled and in disagreement. I believe Shakespeare left Timon's character intentionally ambiguous and the reason will become apparent at the end of this chapter. It is enough at this point to understand that the true nature of Timon's character is unclear, but what is clear is that Timon falls into a state of grief, despair, and anger over his loss of Fortune and friendship.

Not only do Boethius and Timon become disconnected from their true selves through anger, but their reactions to misfortune are similar. Boethius, in expounding his unfortunate circumstances to Philosophy, accompanies his story with a "long and noisy display of grief" (16). She explains to him, "In your present state of mind, [...] great tumult of emotion has fallen upon you and you are torn this way and that by alternating fits of grief, wrath and anguish" (18). Moreover, Philosophy notes that Boethius' "mind has been infiltrated by the fever of emotional distractions" (19) and asks Boethius what "has thrown [him] down into the slough of grief and despondency" (23). In addition, Boethius claims that "the mind is weighed down again by its deep seated melancholy" (27). Like Boethius, Timon is noted to fluctuate between grief and anger, and this vacillating is most evident when Apemantus attempts to show Timon he is reacting out of a great sense of loss and he needs to find himself. "This is in thee a nature but infected, / A poor unmanly melancholy sprung / From change of future" (IV.iii.202-04). However, no sooner does Apemantus notice Timon's state of grief than Timon's angry retorts cause Apemantus to reflect on this aspect of Timon as well: "If thou didst put this sour cold habit on / To castigate thy pride, 'twere well; but thou / Dost it enforcedly" (IV.iii.239-241). Apemantus has noticed that Timon wears his anger, much like his state of self-exile, as a symbol of his dissatisfaction, and misery over his current state. While Boethius' anger is contained within his cell in Pavia, Timon displays his anger by hosting a final feast for his would-be friends where he, according to the stage direction, "[t]hrow[s] the water in their faces," and "[t]hrows the dishes at them, and drives them out" (III.vi.). The discourse that follows amongst the guests implies that Timon also threw stones at them, particularly that of Lord 4 who claims, "[o]ne day he gives us

diamonds, the next day stones" (III.vi.120). Whereas Boethius demonstrates bouts of anger within his grief, Timon has moments of grief within his anger. I suggest that this is where Alcibiades fits in as a foil. While Timon will become representative of someone who totally succumbs to fortune's wheel, Alcibiades, like Boethius, gains strength and insight from his experience as I will demonstrate more fully in Chapter 5. Including Alcibiades in the plot as a Boethian foil to Timon, creating a discussion between Apemantus and Timon that echoes the dialogue between Philosophy and Boethius on the subject of losing the self, and Timon's similar decline into a state of 'melancholy' like that of Boethius provide strong evidence that Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* informed Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens*. There are, however, further parallels between the two texts; the first I will examine focuses on Boethius' and Shakespeare's discussion of disease and medical treatment.

In Book I of the *Consolation*, Philosophy tells Boethius that "it is a time for healing" because "he is suffering the common disease of deluded minds" (6). Shortly after, Boethius recognizes Philosophy as his "nurse" (7). To persuade Boethius to discuss the events that led to his present state she tells him, "[I]f you want the doctor's help, you must reveal the wound" (9). Jo-Marie Claassen notes that Boethius' "despair is equated with sickness, which Philosophy proceeds to heal" (99). The imagery of illness and disease requiring nursing and medication continues throughout the discourse between Philosophy and Boethius. In Book I Philosophy tells Boethius that "it is not yet time for stronger medicine" (20), but, in Book III, Boethius asks for more of Philosophy's "cures" (47), implying that he has been strengthened by the medicines offered thus far. The concepts of ailment-cure and the doctor-patient dialogue were added by Boethius to exile

literature. While many critics recognize Boethius' *Consolation* as exile literature following the tradition of writers like Seneca, Jo-Marie Claassen and T.F. Curley indicate that Boethius "transcends the limits of the genre" (100) and regards the notion of "the remedy being chosen as appropriate to the condition of the patient as the only motif clearly taken from the consolatory genre" (100/352). Unlike Seneca, Boethius adds the element of a physician-patient dialogue in which the physician facilitates the recovery of the patient through discussion. Other writers of exilic literature like Dio Cassius and Plutarch employ the similar use of "medical imagery" and describe their "protagonist's suffering in each" as someone having a "curable disease" (Claassen 87) but they include an inadequate cure. Dio, for example, shows Cicero as having decided to "partake of the medicine of philosophy" but he tries to gain his cure through a discourse with Philiscus and "Cicero does not accept everything his friend offers him" (Claassen 87). Furthermore the physician-patient relationship is not present, nor is the continual focus and refocus on the issue of disease, illness and the necessity for cure. Like Boethius, Shakespeare understood the necessity of applying the proper remedy to the patient's ailment, and this is evidenced in his continual referral to states of disease, illness and sickness, but he did not feel obligated to apply the remedy or to portray his patient as a willing receptor to the balm.

While Shakespeare incorporates the Boethian concepts of disease, sickness, and healing in *Timon*, he chooses to focus more heavily on disease than healing. When Apemantus announces that "Those healths will make thee and thy / state look ill, Timon" he alludes to Timon's forthcoming misfortune (I.ii.56-57). Apemantus recognizes the potential for spiritual illness in the extravagance of Timon's giving. Later, one of

Timon's servants begins to discuss Timon's eventual illness and its cause when he tells Lucullus,

> Thou disease of a friend, and not himself!
> Has friendship such a faint and milky heart,
> It turns in less than two nights? O you gods!
> I feel my master's passion. This slave
> Unto his honor has my lord's meat in him;
> Why should it thrive and turn to nutriment
> When he is turn'd to poison?
> O, may diseases only work upon't!
> And when he's sick to death, let not that part of nature
> Which my lord paid for, be of any power
> To expel sickness, but prolong his hour! (III.i.53-63)

In his frustration, Flaminus vents his anger to Lucullus as he considers him to be one of the primary reasons for Timon's downfall. He recognizes Lucullus as a sickness that has infected his master's life and his fit of anger foreshadows the potential strength of Timon's wrath when it eventually erupts.

Once Timon loses his fortune and his friends, disease, sickness, and decay imagery begin in earnest. Right after the mock-feast in Act III, Timon begins cursing humanity:

> Plagues incident to men,
> Your potent and infectious fevers heap
> On Athens, ripe for stroke! Thou cold sciatica,

> Cripple our senators, that their limbs may halt
> As lamely as their manners! [...]
> Itches, blains,
> Sow all th' Athenian bosoms, and their crop
> Be general leprosy! Breath, infect breath,
> That their society (as their friendship) may
> Be merely poison! (III.vi.21-25, 28-32)

Throughout Timon's rant, and before he takes himself away from Athens, he wishes upon those whom he believes have betrayed him physical diseases which are an external evidence of his internal (emotional or mental) disease. Recognizing such predicaments as double-edged, Philosophy understands men like Timon when she tells Boethius,

> Remember, too, that all the most happy men are over-sensitive. They have never experienced adversity and so unless everything obeys their slightest whim they are prostrated by every minor upset, so trifling are the things that can detract from the complete happiness of a man at the summit of fortune. (31)

Although many would not consider Timon's complete loss of fortune to be a minor incident, it does become minor in light of Timon's recovering his wealth when he digs up the gold. However, Timon goes to an immediate extreme owing to his unfamiliarity with misfortune and this, in effect, causes him to become as 'bad' or 'evil' and, therefore as 'infected' and 'poisoned,' as those he is cursing. Philosophy discusses this aspect of the 'diseased' or 'wicked' man with Boethius:

> For just as weakness is a disease of the body, so wickedness is a disease of the mind. And if this is so, since we think of people who are sick in body as deserving sympathy rather than hatred, much more so do they deserve pity rather than blame who suffer an evil more severe than any physical illness. (101)

Timon is a weak man who succumbs quickly to anger and grief in his state of misfortune. Once he has fallen into this state, and because he refuses to accept counsel or forgive those who have sinned against him, Timon becomes the 'wicked' man he is cursing.

While not recognizing the evil within himself, Timon recognizes the evil in those around him, but he does not feel any sympathy for them, and, instead, curses them and wishes illness and disease upon them. Timon continues his invective when visited by Alcibiades shortly after Timon has found gold. Timon offers Alcibiades gold and asks him to "[b]e as a planetary plague when Jove / Will o'er some high-vic'd city hang his poison / In the sick air" (IV.iii.109-111). Venting his desire to have humanity destroyed through illness, Timon asks Timandra to "[g]ive them diseases, [...] bring down rose-cheek'd youth / To the (tub-) fast and the diet" (IV.iii.85, 87-88). At first Timandra is insulted and angry, but then Timon throws gold at Phrynia and Timandra, and they both agree to comply when he demands they

> Consumptions sow
>
> In hollow bones of man, strike their sharp shins,
>
> And mar men's spurring. Crack the lawyer's voice,
>
> That he may never more false title plead.

Nor sound his quillets shrilly; hoar the flamen,

That (scolds) against the quality of flesh

And not believes himself. Down with the nose,

Down with it flat, take the bridge quite away

Of him that, his particular to foresee,

Smells from the general weal. Make curl'd pate

ruffians bald,

And let the unscarr'd braggarts of the war

Derive some pain from you. Plague all,

That your activity may defeat and quell

The source of all erection. (IV.iii.151-164)

His focus centres on his desire to infect the male population through venereal disease, a task he believes Alcibiades' two mistresses can accomplish. Timon is attacking that which is most clearly their manliness; he, in effect, wants to de-male them. With such vehemence does he express the desire to have this venereal infection spread that he seems to relish relaying the details of gruesome symptoms that accompany the contraction of such an illness. To add to the grotesque nature of his diatribe, he desires that any men who can potentially 'smell' and announce the spreading of the disease lose the use of their nose, or have their noses fall off altogether. It is not a coincidence that Shakespeare makes Timon desire the infection of other men with venereal disease; Timon's mind has been infected by his misfortune. The best way to ensure that those Timon believes

responsible for his condition suffer a similar fate – having their minds infected thereby falling prey to misfortune – is to infect them with a venereal disease that will eventually destroy their minds. The anger that Boethius displays toward the Senate is one that he allows to diminish with Philosophy's ministry; he is desirous of the cure. Timon is long past desiring his cure and rejects his chance for economic and social resurgence. He becomes so mentally diseased and steeped in anger that he wishes his fate on everyone. However, he is not wishing they lose their economic fortunes, but is now focussing on ensuring they become mentally or physically diseased, clearly revealing how far his own mental disease of 'wickedness' has spread.

Although Philosophy would understand the cause of Timon's wrath and his mental illness, she would not condone his actions, or his words. Philosophy tells Boethius "it is clear that when someone is done an injury, the misery belongs not to the victim but to the perpetrator" (100). She also believes that perpetrators "ought to be brought to justice not by a prosecution counsel with an air of outrage, but by a prosecution kind and sympathetic, like sick men being brought to the doctor, so that their guilt could be cut back by punishment like a malignant growth" (100). Timon becomes a paradoxical representation of both the injured and the perpetrator. Once Timon suffers the injury of finding out that his friends were not actually friends but people using him to access his wealth, he becomes the perpetrator of a colossal hate campaign. It is not good enough for Timon to suffer the corrosive mental infection brought on by his melancholy through loss of fortune and subsequent anger, but he then becomes an agent (perpetrator) of injury to and infection of others. He becomes the agent and perpetrator when he gives Alcibiades and his mistresses the money, hoping Alcibiades will bring war upon Athens

and his mistresses will infect those who remain alive after the war. Timon does not receive the sage counsel that Boethius receives when Philsophy tells him "if I have fully diagnosed the cause and nature of your condition, you are wasting away in pining and longing for your former good fortune. It is the loss of this which, as your imagination works upon you, has so corrupted your mind" (22). Timon's mind is so corrupted that he cannot move past his hatred and he cannot think of anything other than revenge. To further poison his own mind, Timon abuses imagination when he contemplates the images of diseased and maimed enemies.

Apemantus is a poor substitute for Philosophy; however, he is a philosopher, and he does try to apply a balm to Timon's illness through his purposeful discourse in Act IV. As mentioned previously, Apemantus recognizes Timon's illness when he recognizes in Timon "a nature but infected, / A poor unmanly melancholy sprung / From change of future" (IV.iii.202-204). Unfortunately Apemantus is a flawed man, like Philiscus in his discourse with Cicero, without the absolute wisdom of Philosophy, and instead of guiding Timon away from his anger and melancholy Apemantus directs him toward revenge. Apemantus instructs Timon: "Be thou a flatterer now, and seek to thrive / By that which has undone thee [...] '[t]is most just / That thou turn rascal; hadst thou wealth again, / Rascals should have't" (IV.iii.216-218). Apemantus believes that Timon should become a flatterer to those who served him like treatment, and, through his flattery, he can become wealthy off his industrious efforts of misappropriating the funds from those who misappropriated his. Although Apemantus is misguided in his attempts to medicate Timon's ailment, he continues an accurate diagnosis of the condition:

> If thou didst put this sour cold habit on

To castigate thy pride, 'twere well; but thou

Dost enforcedly. Thou'dst courtier be again,

Wert thou not a beggar. Willing misery

Outlives incertain pomp, is crown'd before:

The one is filling still, never complete;

The other, at high wish. Best state, contentless,

Hath a distracted and most wretched being,

Worse than the worst, content. (IV.iii.239-247)

Apemantus recognizes Timon's need to wear his misfortune like a shield; however, Timon is not wearing it for protection, but much like he wore his wealth, as a badge or label drawing attention to himself. Eventually Timon responds to Apemantus with an honest admission of his own illness: "I am sick of this false world, and will love nought / But even the mere necessities upon't" (IV.iii.375-376). Now that Timon has nothing, he has nothing to lose and admits that his sickness is a result of the actions of his fallacious friends. Believing he can rail at mankind without fear of further loss, Timon chooses to take only what he needs to survive from the world so he will be indebted to no one and nothing.

When he is talking to the three bandits, Timon makes his aversion to any form of cure clear: "Trust not the physician, / His antidotes are poison, and he slays / Moe than you rob" (IV.iii.431-433). Timon recognizes that there is a cure to his illness, as well as that of the bandits who are 'wicked' men; however, he is telling them to reject the cure and the physician and discredits the cure calling it poisonous. For Timon to accept a cure

at this point would be to accept that there is a possibility he is wrong. If Timon were not willing to take ownership of his mistake of overspending, it is understandable that he would be unwilling to take ownership for his current behaviour. His refusal to admit to culpability for his present state becomes even clearer when his faithful servant, Flavius, comes to see him. Although Timon recognizes Flavius as an honest man, he sees him as the only honest man then proceeds to ask that honest man to partake in the destruction of other men:

> Look thee, 'tis so. Thou singly honest man,
>
> Here, take; the gods out of my misery
>
> Has sent thee treasure. Go, live rich and happy,
>
> But thus condition'd: thou shalt build from men;
>
> Hate all, curse all, show charity to none,
>
> But let the famish'd flesh slide from the bone
>
> Ere thou relieve the beggar. Give to dog
>
> What thou deniest to men. Let prisons swallow 'em.
>
> Debts wither 'em to nothing; be men like blasted woods,
>
> And may diseases lick up their false bloods!
>
> And so farewell and thrive. (IV.iii.523-533)

Timon gives his gold to Flavius, but the gold comes with conditions. Flavius must use the money to set himself up in a reclusive position away from mankind, and he must give nothing, share nothing, and offer nothing to any other human being. Another condition

that Timon places on the gold is that Flavius leave and not come near Timon again, which is something Flavius chooses to ignore, because he remains close by and warns the Senators who have come to visit Timon that it is best to leave Timon alone. At this point the audience realizes that Timon is not only not looking for a cure, but is, rather, looking for someone to continue infecting the citizens of Athens when he is gone. Timon tells the senators "[m]y long sickness / Of health and living now begins to mend, / And nothing brings me all things. Go, live still; / Be Alcibiades your plague, you his, / And last so long enough" (V.i.186-190). Timon, knowing he is close to death, curses Athens, hoping that they will be destroyed by Alcibiades and, in turn, will be the ruin of Alcibiades. Before Timon has completed his conversation with the senators, he curses them one more time with the desire that they be infected: "What is amiss, plague and infection mend! Graves only be men's works, and death their gain! Sun, hide thy beams, Timon hath done his reign" (V.i.221-223). Timon's desire to see others in his predicament shows that he is unwilling to accept a balm to his ailment, and he carries the disease with him to his grave.

Shakespeare not only includes the theme of ailment and cure in and around Timon, but also makes it relevant to Alcibiades. When Alcibiades pleads to the Senate for leniency in the matter of his friend's crime, he becomes outraged by the Senate's inability to agree with his cause. Once his anger has reached what the Senate considers an unacceptable level, they banish him from Athens. Alcibiades responds angrily:

> I myself
> Rich only in large hurts. All those, for this?
> Is this the balsom that the usuring Senate

Pours into captains' wounds? Banishment!

Alcibiades feels that the treatment he is receiving is deplorable. Instead of recognizing his contributions to Athens and pouring balm into the wounds, inflicted upon him in his role as a soldier, by showing leniency to his fellow soldier, they banish him. Alcibiades feels the same rage, and suffers the same form of illness as Timon when he is banished from Athens. Alcibiades, however, acquires his own cure, using reason, which is first evident in his conversation with Timon after Timon has found the gold:

> *Tim.* Put up thy gold. Go on – here's gold – go on;
> Be as a planetary plague when Jove
> Will o'er some high-vic'd city hang his poison
> In the sick air. Let not thy sword skip one.
> Pity not honor'd age for his white beard,
> He is an usurer. Strike me the counterfeit matron,
> It is her habit only that is honest,
> Herself's a bawd. Let not the virgin's cheek
> Make soft thy trenchant; for those milk paps,
> That through the window (-bars) bore at men's eyes,
> Are not within the leaf of pity writ,
> But set them down horrible traitors. Spare not the babe,
> Whose dimpled smiles from fools exhaust their
> Mercy;
> Think it a bastard, whom the oracle
> Hath doubtfully pronouc'd the throat shall cut,
> And mince it sans remorse. Swear against objects,

> Whose proof nor yells of mothers, maids, nor babes,
> Shall pierce a jot. There's gold to pay thy soldiers,
> Make large confusion; and thy fury spent,
> Confounded be thyself! Speak not, be gone.
> *Alcib.* Hast thou gold yet? I'll take the gold thou
> Givest me,
> Not all thy counsel. (IV.iii.108-131)

Timon asks Alcibiades to take the gold and destroy Athens – all the residents, men, women, and children – to achieve the revenge Timon vehemently desires. In telling Alcibiades this, Timon is also indicating his desire that Alcibiades fall prey to his own self-destruction. Throughout the discussion between these two characters, Alcibiades begins to sound like a man of sound mind, who is performing a necessary, but undesirable task. The more Timon rants, the more rational Alcibiades appears. Alcibiades agrees to take the gold, but he refuses Timon's advice, thereby showing that Alcibiades is not fighting simply because he is angry, but because he feels his fight is just. As Timon informed his audience in Act I, "[t]hey say my lords, '*Ira furor brevis est*" (I.ii.28). Timon's anger extends beyond a brief madness into a state of permanency, while Alcibiades has moved beyond anger and he takes action against a Senate he considers to be corrupt. Where both men suffer the ailment of anger, only one chooses his form of balm to move past the anger.

In the last scene, Alcibiades comes before Athens, and members of the Senate appear to talk with him. The first Senator to speak immediately recognizes that Alcibiades has been wounded by them: "We sent to thee to give they rages balm, / To wipe out our ingratitude with loves / Above their quantity" (V.iv.16-18). Not only do

they tell Alcibiades that they went after him to apologize and make good the injustice served on him by the other senators, but they wanted to apologize in such a manner as to overshadow the strength of his anger. Fortunately Alcibiades had already begun his own healing process, and their final capitulation was enough to allow him to enter Athens carrying "the olive with [his] sword" (V.iv.82). As Philosophy notes to Boethius "[n]o wise man prefers being in exile, being poor and disgraced to being rich, respected, and powerful, and to remaining at home and flourishing in his own city" (102). Alcibiades is the wise man who chose the balm that saw his return to home, while Timon's true character is revealed. Timon is not a wise man as is reflected in his dogmatic persistence in rejecting any opportunity for curing his ailment and preferring a state of exile. Both Alcibiades and Timon, through their discourses and actions, illustrate aspects of Philosophy's discourse with Boethius concerning the soothing of an ailment with the appropriate medication. An illustration of Boethius' discourse with Philosophy concerning Fortune is also evident in the characters Timon and Alcibiades, which is discussed in the following chapter.

> *So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,*
> *That I would set my life on any chance,*
> *To mend it, or be rid on't.*
> *Macbeth* III.i.111-113

Before I examine Fortune's thematic permeation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, I will provide a brief history of Fortune and her iconography. The primary reason for this examination lies in the words of Shakespeare's Poet in *Timon* who claims: "Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill / Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd. The base of the mount / Is rank'd with all deserts, all kind of natures, / That labor on the bosom of this sphere / To propagate their states" (I.i.63-67). Shakespeare, unlike Boethius, places Fortune on a hill. I believe that Shakespeare, while influenced by Boethius' discourse with Philosophy concerning Fortune, chose to add a Renaissance touch to Fortune's iconography. This brief examination of Fortune's history will reveal her iconographic evolution, beginning in the Roman classical period and ending with Shakespeare's hill.

Sarah Pomeroy explains in detail the varying cults attached to Fortune in Rome from approximately 491 B.C. up to 194 B.C. Pomeroy describes the majority of these cults as belonging to women.

> Fortuna Virginalis, or Virgo (Virgin), was the patroness of young girls as they came of age. Adolescent girls dedicated to this goddess the little togas they had worn in girlhood. [...] Upon her marriage a bride passed to the protection of Fortuna Primigenia (firstborn, primordial, or first-to-sire) of Praeneste, who was a patroness of mothers and childbirth and an oracular deity as well. The cult of Fortuna of Praeneste, however, was not

> confined to women, for men were interested in her promise of virility, material success, and economic prosperity. [...] The glorious deeds of the mother and wife of the infamous Coriolanus occasioned the founding of a cult of Womanly Fortune (Fortuna Muliebris). [...] Virile Fortune (Fortuna Virilis) was a cult concerned with the sexual fortune of women. (207-208)

At this time, depictions of Fortune include her with a "rudder, globe, and cornucopia" (Pomeroy 206). The rudder was part of Fortune's attributes because with it she steered or commanded men's fortunes. Fortune's cornucopia represented her "promise of abundance" (Flanagan 131). Fortune is depicted either standing – on the ground, water or on a ball or globe – or seated – on a ball/sphere or on a throne. This globe served to represent the "ever-rolling ball of chance" (Wittkower 104). Fortune's iconography becomes more diverse as F. Guirand and A.V. Pierre explain: "The countless representations of Fortuna show her chief attributes to be the wheel, the sphere, a ship's rudder and prow, and a cornucopia" (225). Fortune becomes associated with the wheel, which may occur in conjunction with the sphere, ball, or globe or by itself in a number of different positions, but usually above Fortune's head.

While Guirand and A.V. Pierre recognize the wheel as part of Fortune's properties, it is important to understand that "[t]he ubiquitous and ominous wheel of Fortune was a legacy to the Middle Ages from the second book of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*" (Strayer 145). At times, Fortune is depicted wearing a blindfold because she was believed to be blind to both the fortunes and misfortunes of those under her rule. Moreover, some depictions of Fortune include her holding a sail, which relates directly

back to the analogy of her controlling the ship of man's financial destiny. Fortune is also occasionally shown holding a bridle, again, referring to her ability to steer the fortune of man. It is the wheel, however, and the changing representation of Fortune and her wheel which most concerns this discussion; therefore, I will turn my attention in that direction. Thomas Flanagan describes the transition that takes place:

> It is instructive to observe how the image of Fortuna changed as she was adopted by a civilization with a different spirit. In Rome she had been a beguiling figure whose cornucopia was a promise of abundance. *Bona Dea* she was called – the 'good goddess.' But after Boethius she is a much more sombre figure; almost all of her colourful imagery has been lost. Only the wheel remains, which Fortuna grimly turns. [...] In this fashion, as a symbol of the transitoriness of earthly glory, Fortuna and the wheel appear throughout Europe during the Middle Ages. [...] What began to change in the Renaissance was the spirit in which Fortuna was regarded. [...] [S]he gradually evolved from the grim woman turning her relentless wheel into a much friendlier power who could be a distinct help in human affairs. It is fascinating to see how the symbolism of the wheel was increasingly supplemented by the revived symbols of antiquity, particularly the sailing ship. (132)

It is unfortunate that Boethius appears to be regarded as a literary point at which Fortune becomes associated solely with the wheel, when he clearly includes other attributes in his dialogue with Philosophy.

In Book II of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, during Philosophy's explanation of Fortune to Boethius, she says, "Commit your boat to the winds and you must sail whichever way they blow, not just where you want" (23). This reference alludes to sailing explaining that if you choose to ride Fortune's winds you must go wherever she steers. Philosophy continues the sailing imagery when she tells Boethius to "dry your tears. Fortune has not yet turned her hatred against all your blessings. The storm has not yet broken upon you with too much violence. Your anchors are holding firm" (30). At this point Philosophy is no longer referring to Boethius' circumstances being steered by Fortune, but his ability to take some control of his own ship rather than allowing Fortune to continue directing his life. Not only does Philosophy refer to Fortune's sailing but she also refers to other attributes belonging to Fortune. The last poem of Book II refers to Fortune's cornucopia: "Plenty from her well-stocked horn" (26). Fortune's cornucopia was linked to Plenty, since she was very generous to those whom she favoured. This is echoed in *Timon* and will be mentioned later. Further along in the poem Philosophy refers to Fortune's bridle: "No reins will serve to hold in check / The headlong course of appetite" (26). The reins, like the bridle, Philsophy explains are a necessary element – like the rudder – that Fortune uses to control man's position. Man, Philosophy is telling Boethius, must take control of his own reins or rudder and not allow Fortune complete control. It is unfair, therefore, to claim that Boethius is responsible for the depiction of a sour Fortune who grimly turns her wheel. The wheel and Philosophy's depiction of the Goddess who turns the wheel with a "domineering hand" and "steely hearted laugh" (24) would unfortunately be the dominant features of Fortune that would carry through to the medieval period.

It is obvious that Shakespeare was also aware of Fortune's iconography. The Poet in his depiction of Fortune alludes to her being "thron'd" (I.i.64). As mentioned earlier, Fortune was depicted as standing or seated and, at times, throned. Soellner notes that during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance "Fortuna seated on a throne does occur in literature, but rarely, it appears, in art" (145). Shakespeare also highlights Fortune's blindfold in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* when Arcite is bemoaning his imprisonment with Palamon: "The fair-ey'd maids shall weep our banishments, / And in their songs curse ever-blinded Fortune" (II.i.38-39). Not only are Fortune's throne and blindfold mentioned by Shakespeare, but Soellner points out that "Timon scatters gifts and favors from what he assumes to be an inexhaustible treasure, a cornucopia of the kind from which *Fortuna Bona* distributes her riches in the emblems" (146). The concept of the cornucopia is most exemplified when Cupid enters and begins the feast's entertainment:

> Hail to thee, worthy Timon, and to all
> That of his bounties taste! The five best senses
> Acknowledge thee their patron, and come freely
> To gratulate thy plenteous bosom. (I.ii.122-125)

Timon's bounty is recognized as equal to that of Fortune's cornucopia. The idea of Timon's bounteous cornucopia is carried throughout the Act with such acknowledgements as "we'll share a bounteous time," "I am so far already in your gifts," and "O, he's the very soul of bounty" (I.i.254, I.ii.172, 209). The last quotation would lead critics like Soellner to interject that Shakespeare is allowing Timon to envision himself as being his own god of Fortune. In fact, Soellner feels that

> [w]e must not balk at the identification of Timon with Fortuna because of his sex. The mythographers noted that the ancients represented fortune sometimes as a young man, presumably because of the association with *Chairos*, the Greek god of opportunity, and they recollected from Pliny that the Romans erected a statue of a male Fortuna. (146)

Timon's representation as Fortune is further enhanced by his claims that he "could deal kingdoms to [his] friends" (I.ii.220). The image of Fortune's rudder is echoed in Timon's words: "O, what a precious comfort 'tis to have so many like brothers commanding one another's fortunes" (I.ii.103-105). It is evident that Shakespeare, like Boethius, was aware of Fortune's many representations. Shakespeare adds a contemporary, Renaissance attribute to Fortune's description when he places her on the hill.

Not only does the image of Fortune bearing a wheel while on a hill occur in Shakespeare's *Timon*, there are also occurrences in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. During the rehearsal of the play in *Hamlet*, one of the players calls for the gods to "take away [fortune's] power! / Break all the spokes and (fellies) from her wheel, / And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven / As low as to the fiends" (II.ii.494-496). Like the player in *Hamlet*, the fool in *King Lear* also recognizes Fortune as residing on a hill with her wheel when he tells Kent "[l]et go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw after thee" (II.iii.71-74). Scholars like Rolf Soellner and John F. Danby have equally viable explanations for Shakespeare's placement of Fortune on a hill. Soellner explains one possible reason for Shakespeare's inclusion of the hill image with Fortune:

> Shakespeare's Londoners, however, had seen a symbolic hill of Fortune of sorts a few years before *Timon* was presumably written and performed. It crowned one of the triumphal arches through which King James passed during his coronation procession in 1604 [...]. The fifth 'pegme,' or structure, entitled *Hortus Euphoriae* (Garden of Plenty), showed Fortune standing on top of a little temple or palace, which in turn was on top of a high, a 'high and pleasant hill' like that of the Fortune favorable to Timon. (145)

Soellner provides an interesting context for Shakespeare's use of the hill as one of Fortune's attributes. I believe, however, that King James' coronation arch was only one of the 'hills' that Shakespeare would become acquainted with prior to his writing of *Timon.* Danby understands the political climate and the "importance of patronage in the Elizabethan-Jacobean environment" (15), and feels that it is no coincidence that Shakespeare places the Poet in the outer room with the Painter awaiting his opportunity to impress his potential benefactor. The Poet, as Danby point out, is "only one in a throng. Around him are merchants, senators, soldiers, gentlemen, 'a Painter, and a Jeweller'" (15). The Poet's attempt to gain patronage echoes Shakespeare's own requirement for patronage to maintain his existence. Furthermore, Danby believes

> The Poet did not exhaust the implications of his image. We can legitimately, I think, moralize the Hill in ways he failed to do. [...] If one were not oneself either rich or eminent it was imperative to have a backer. This guaranteed one's bread-and-butter, one's status, and one's possible advancement. The patronage might come from a single great Lord, or

> from one of the Great Houses that sheltered the *élite*, the Elizabethan 'consumers' of culture. [...] The picture of the Hill of Fortune, and of literature bound to the patronage of either Great House or Public Theatre, already makes the Elizabethan-Jacobean scene less monolithic than it is sometimes imagined. Taking the image further, increasing complications become evident. The Hill has different levels and different sides. [...] Different views are expected from different positions on the Hill. Elizabethan society is as highly differentiated as any other. Literature is what happens 'in' a man, certainly. What can happen 'in' him, however, will be partly conditioned by what has happened 'to' him in virtue of his place and behaviour on the Hill. Finally, literature is addressed by a man from his place to those of his contemporaries (on the same Hill) who are in a position to listen to him. Such moralizings are as jejune as those of Timon's Poet. But the commonplaces are important. Literature has a three-dimensional setting. Very often it is reducted in the study to something as two-dimensional as the paper it is written on. (15-17)

Shakespeare was very much a member of this Hill as described by Danby and like the Poet "saw all men's careers as upward and arduous climbs. He knew there was a 'grade' to be 'made'" (Danby 15). As pointed out by Danby and Soellner, Shakespeare had two reasons to place Fortune on a Hill; but a third explanation also emerges for Shakespeare's use of the hill in conjunction with Fortune. Shakespeare would have been aware of the work of Cebes, "a disciple of Philolaus the pythagorean and of Socrates, and a speaker in the *Phaedo*" (Heninger 180). S.K. Heninger Jr. explains

> Cebes was a favourite author of the renaissance. His *Tabula* was first printed in a Latin translation by Ludovicus Odaxius at Bologna in 1497, and went through innumerable editions after that, often as complement to Epictetus' moral manual, the *Enchiridion*. It was translated into most vernaculars – into English by 1528 and into French as early as 1529 – and echoes of it can be heard in nearly every allegorical narrative of the renaissance. [...] Visual renditions of the *Tabula* to accompany the text abound in the renaissance – the earliest being a woodcut title page of 1507. (180)

The story contained in the *Tabula* is that of a pilgrim who visits a "temple of Saturn" (Heninger 180) and in the temple there is a picture which shows the various stations in life. The depictions usually place these stations at various points on a hill. One of the residents present at one of the stations on this hill is Fortune. In such a depiction of the *Tabula*, Fortune is on the hill, standing on a sphere, holding a bag in one hand and letting coins fall from the other hand. Although Shakespeare could not have been aware of this 1670 depiction, he would have been aware of Cebes' *Tabula* and the concept of working through virtues and vices to arrive at "Felicity at the summit of the ascent" (Heninger 182). Shakespeare's awareness of Cebes' *Tabula*, combined with his knowledge of King James' coronation arch, and his own participation in the patronage hill of English society during the Elizabethan-Jacobean period contribute to his incorporating the image of the hill within Fortune's iconography. While the Poet refers to the hill, it must be remembered that he also refers to the "bosom of this sphere" (I.i.66) which shows that the Poet and Shakespeare are still recognizing Fortune's wheel. Although it is important to

understand the reasons for Shakespeare's inclusion of the hill, the hill is not the only image Shakespeare associates with Fortune, but the 'new' image that bears explanation. I will now move on to examine how Boethius' and Shakespeare's characters react to Fortune and her alleged desertion.

In *The Consolation of Philosophy,* during his lament, Boethius tells Philosophy

> Surely the severity of Fortune's attack on me needs no further mention; it is self-evident. Look at the mere appearance of this place [...] Are my clothes the same and my face the same as when I used to probe the secrets of nature with you [...]? (9)

Boethius believes that he has been forsaken by Fortune because he is in a cell waiting to be executed, is wearing dreary clothes, and has been deplorably transformed in appearance. Actually, Boethius portrays himself in a manner which resembles Timon's fallen state when he has exiled himself to the cave and is visited by Apemantus who points out his "slave-like habit" (IV.iii.205). Flavius also comments on Timon's appearance which echoes that of Boethius when he asks "[i]s yond despis'd and ruinous man my lord? / Full of decay and failing" (IV.iii.459-460)? Philosophy, throughout Book II of the *Consolation*, explains to Boethius that "because [he] has forgotten the means by which the world is governed [he] believes these ups and downs of fortune happen haphazardly. These are grave causes and they lead not only to illness but even death" (20). Boethius is eventually executed; however, he does regain himself and dies spiritually healthy. He has learned that the world is not governed by Fate and Fortune, but by Providence, and that anything that can be taken away is never truly yours and,

therefore, not to be mourned if lost. Timon, on the other hand, becomes an illustration of Philosophy's discussion of the man suffering illness and death through his misunderstanding the governing of the world. His unwillingness to listen to any discourse that may guide him to spiritual recovery sees Timon dying the wretched death described by Philosophy. Unlike Boethius, in a sense, Timon has contributed to his own death.

In the first prose section of Book II, Philosophy explains to Boethius that one cannot stop Fortune's wheel. "If you are trying to stop her wheel from turning, you are of all men the most obtuse. For if it once begins to stop, it will no longer be the wheel of chance" (24). Shakespeare gives us a vision of the obtuse man in Timon who at times seems to believe himself to exist outside of the wheel. David Cook believes that "Timon allows riches to isolate him in a privileged position, so he remains ignorant of the truth about himself" (86). For Cook, and many other scholars and I include myself among them, the truth about Timon is that he is a man who "pays lip-service to community" (Cook 86). Therefore, we feel very little sympathy for a man who deludes himself both before and after his misfortune. I would also add that the possibility exists that Timon never knew himself; therefore, unlike Boethius, Timon has no 'true self' to return to and that is what keeps him rooted in anger. Either Timon believes himself to be economically invincible or as Willard Farnham believes Timon "is so completely lacking in wisdom that one wonders how he could ever have been useful to Athens in a responsible position" (126-27). Timon demonstrates this lack of wisdom most specifically in the area of Fortune's wheel and his role or position on that wheel. In fact he believes, as previously mentioned, that he could "deal kingdoms to [his] friends" (I.ii.220). Philosophy would

also recognize Timon's lack of wisdom when she tells Boethius that "[n]o wise man prefers being in exile" (102), but Timon does prefer his exile and chooses not to use his second gift from Fortune – the gold – to change his state. Timon's actions show he is, in fact, obtuse thereby verifying Cook's and Farnham's assessment that Timon is not a wise man.

Shakespeare, however, was not obtuse as is evidenced within the text of *Timon of Athens*. To make sure his audience is aware of the recurring theme of Fortune, Shakespeare infused *Timon* with words consistently drawing attention to the theme of fortune. The word 'fortune', or some variation thereof, is used twenty-nine times (not including 'misfortune'). The word 'bounty', or a variation of 'bounty', occurs eighteen times. Other words reflecting fortune, such as 'rich', 'gift', 'wealth', 'treasure', and 'prosperity' occur forty-seven times. The word 'gold' (to highlight one example of a treasure, bounty, etc.) is mentioned in *Timon* thirty-six times. This repeated use of words depicting fortune and its familiar cognates is an echo of Book II, in the Victor Watts translation, of Boethius' *Consolation* in that Book II – the Book containing the discussion of Fortune – uses the words: 'wealth', 'riches', 'gold', and 'bounty' thirty times. I have not included the word 'fortune' since that is the primary subject in the chapter. When comparing Shakespeare's *Timon* to the recognized main sources, such as Plutarch, Lucian and the derivatives, it is evident that Fortune is a theme Shakespeare has chosen to highlight while Plutarch makes no mention and Lucian and Boiardo mention fortune minimally or not at all. What is fascinating is that the Anonymous 1601 version of *Timon* also has a high count of 'gold' – thirty. However, there is a combined total of only twenty references to the words: 'wealth' (5), 'fortune' (5), 'riches' (4), 'bountiful' (1),

'gift' (2), and 'treasure' (3). One other thing worth mentioning about the Anonymous version is that it actually personifies Fortune twice in the play. In IV.iii, Stilpo, a philosopher, asks "Hath fortune left thee naked and forlorne?" The second direct mention of Fortune takes place in Act IV, Scene v when Timon claims "[a]nd griefe doth vexe mee? Fortune left mee poore?" Other than the Poet's and Painter's dialogue about Fortune, Shakespeare does not overtly represent Fortune; instead, he strategically places all the words ('wealth', 'fortune', 'riches', 'bountiful', 'treasure', 'gift', etc.) to create the illusion of the personification of Fortune. Fortune is such a prevalent issue in *Timon* it is necessary to examine the issue from Boethius', Shakespeare's, and the critics' perspectives.

As Rolf Soellner notes, "[r]eligious or spiritual feelings of any kind are inconceivable in Athens. The pursuit of Fortune is the only worship there; the loss of Fortune, the only hell" (146). An in-depth discussion concerning the pursuit and loss of fortune occurs in Boethius' *Consolation*, although Philosophy does not believe that Fortune controls man's destiny as Boethius and Timon do. In fact, when Timon's fortune becomes his misfortune, he has a definite view of Fortune's control over man. Timon expresses this understanding of Fortune's control when he tells Apemantus "[t]hou art a slave, whom Fortune's tender arm / With favor never clasp'd, but bred a dog" (IV.iii.250-251). Timon admits he was under Fortune's control. While once she had taken his arm as a favored one, she now rejects him, but he is still under her control because he refuses to shake the melancholy and anger that has infected his spirit. In Book II of the *Consolation*, Philosophy defines Fortune, explains the finicky ways of Fortune, and tells Boethius why it would be best to avoid Fortune's lure.

Philosophy supplies Fortune's own argument to make it clear to Boethius what he has and has not lost.

> What possession of yours have I stolen? Choose any judge you like and sue me for possession of wealth and rank, and if you can show that any part of these belongs by right to any mortal man, I will willingly concede that what you are seeking to regain really did belong to you...Wealth, honours and the like are all under my jurisdiction. They are my servants and know their mistress. When I come, they come with me, and when I go, they leave as well. I can say with confidence that if the things whose loss you are bemoaning were really yours, you could never have lost them [...] Shall man's insatiable greed bind me to a constancy which is alien to my ways? Inconstancy is my very essence; it is the game I never cease to play as I turn my wheel in its ever changing circle, filled with joy as I bring the top to the bottom, and the bottom to the top. Yes, rise up on my wheel if you like, but don't count it an injury when by the same token you begin to fall, as the rules of the game require [...] Indeed my very mutability gives you just cause to hope for better things. So you should not wear yourself out by setting your heart on living according to a law of your own in a world that is shared by everyone. (25-26)

By supplying Fortune's argument to Boethius, Philosophy is showing him there is nothing he can possess externally that Fortune cannot claim. She continues the discussion with him by providing examples of external Fortune. One example Philosophy provides is that of money/riches. She asks, "[w]hat makes riches precious,

the fact that they belong to you or some quality of their own?" (33) This question is answered with her later argument in Book III:

> [W]ealth cannot make a man free of want and self-sufficient, though this is the very promise we saw it offering. And this, too, I think, is a point of great importance, namely the fact that money has no inherent property such as to stop it being taken away from those who possess it, against their will [...] So the situation has been reversed. Wealth which was thought to make a man self-sufficient in fact makes him dependent on outside help [...] There is no need for me to mention that nature is satisfied with little, whereas nothing satisfies greed. So that, if so far from being able to remove want, riches create a want of their own, there is no reason for you to believe that they confer self-sufficiency. (52-53)

Philosophy is simply stating the premise that a man without money may be worthy alone, but the same does not hold true for money. Money cannot make a man worthy, nor is money worthy in its own right. Timon begins to grasp the understanding that money, or in his case gold, can 'create a want of their own' but are not 'worthy' on their own when he is digging for roots and finds gold.

> What is here?
>
> Gold? Yellow, glittering, precious gold?
>
> No, gods, I am no idle votarist;
>
> Roots, you clear heavens! Thus much of this will make
>
> Black white, foul fair, wrong right,

> Base noble, old young, coward valiant. [...]
>
> This yellow slave
>
> Will knit and break religions, bless th' accurs'd,
>
> Make the hoar leprosy ador'd, place thieves,
>
> And give them title, knee, and approbation
>
> With senators on the bench. (IV.iii.25-30, 34-38)

Timon's words echo Philosophy's understanding that 'nothing satisfies greed' and he realizes that having riches will not make someone self-sufficient because most people will do anything to obtain riches, and the desire for riches, gold, etc., perverts all other values.

Philosophy extends this argument to honour and explains to Boethius that since other people bestow honour on an individual then the honour can just as easily be stripped away. Honour is also an external value controlled by Fortune. Both of these examples hold true for Timon as well. As Soellner explains, "Timon feels on top of the wheel or hill in the beginning of the play, and the flatteries of his friends seem to put him there" (32). Timon values the adoration of his followers as much as they value his money. This is evident during the feast, when Timon tells his audience "[w]e are born / to do benefits; and what better or properer can we call / our own than the riches of our friends?" (I.ii.101-103) Timon and his followers are attaching value to external objects and thinking, like Boethius had, that they own these things. Two of the lords attending Timon's initial feast, discuss Timon's riches and his generosity:

> *1. Lord.* shall we in

> And taste lord Timon's bounty? He outgoes
> The very heart of kindness.
> *2. Lord* He pours it out: Plutus, the god of gold,
> Is but his steward. No meed but he repays
> Sevenfold above itself; no gift to him
> But breeds the giver a return exceeding
> All use of quittance. (I.i.273-279)

Knowing it is profitable to be near Timon, the Lords emphasize how any gift given to him, even one of little value, will yield "sevenfold" its value in return. Timon's suitors are vying for his attention to gain wealth, and Timon is plying his wealth to gain attention, a form of honour which is, of course, dependent and what Philosophy denigrates.

Honour and wealth are items under Fortune's control and located on her wheel. Fortune's wheel has been mentioned, thus far, by both Philosophy in Boethius' *Consolation* and critic, Rolf Soellner, in *Timon of Athens: Shakespeare's Pessimistic Tragedy*. Soellner also provides a further explanation of Fortune's wheel:

> [T]raditionally Fortune's clients were depicted as being at one time on one of four positions of her wheel: they were either rising, or presiding, or falling, or they were thrown to the ground or sometimes into a grave. This is symbolized by a figure in four different positions: climbing at the left, standing or enthroned on top, falling to the right, and prostrate underneath. (31)

Philosophy gives a similar explanation to Boethius, but she includes the emotional aspects attached to the participation in Fortune's game:

> With domineering hand she moves the turning wheel,
> Like currents in a treacherous bay swept to and fro:
> Her ruthless will has just deposed once fearful kings
> While trustless still, from low she lifts a conquered head;
> No cries of misery she hears, no tears she heeds,
> But steely hearted laughs at groans her deeds have wrung.
> Such is the game she plays, and so she tests her strength;
> Of mighty power she makes parade when one short hour
> Sees happiness from utter desolation grow. (24)

Even the characters in Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens* recognize Fortune's power and her game. In Act I the Poet and Painter discuss Timon in relation to Fortune. The Poet acknowledges Timon's "large Fortune" (I.i.55) and he continues his discussion with the Painter by saying

> Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill
> Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd. The base o' th' mount
> Is rank'd with all deserts, all kind of natures,
> That labor on the bosom of this sphere
> To propagate their states. Amongst them all,
> Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd,

> One do I personate of Lord Timon's frame,
> Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her,
> Whose present grace to present slaves and servants
> Translates his rivals. (I.i.63-72)

The Poet recognizes that Timon has been summoned to the top of Fortune's hill, or Wheel as depicted by Philosophy in Boethius' *Consolation*. Yet, while the Poet recognizes Timon's current position at the top of Fortune's hill/wheel, he foreshadows Timon's eventual decline on that same wheel:

> All those which were his fellows but of late —
> Some better than his value — on the moment
> Follow his strides, his lobbies fill with tendance,
> Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,
> Make sacred even his stirrup, and through him
> Drink the free air. [...]
> When Fortune in her shift and change of mood
> Spurns down her late beloved, all his dependants
> Which labor'd after him to the mountain's top
> Even on their knees and [hands], let him [slip] down,
> Not one accompanying his declining foot. (I.i.77-82, 83-88)

When Timon loses his wealth, and subsequently his friends, he falls from the top position to the declining position on the right. Yet, by clinging to his grief and anger, he quickly falls to the prostrate position. Like Timon, Boethius began at the top of Fortune's wheel, but quickly fell past the position on the right and went immediately to the 'prostrate'

position under the wheel. Philosophy's balm helps Boethius to remove himself from Fortune's game altogether. Alcibiades is also a participant in this game, and Soellner explains how Timon and Alcibiades, together, complete one full turn of Fortune's wheel.

> The structure of *Timon* is more complex than the rotation of a wheel, but it could be said that roughly the main plot together with the Alcibiades subplot make a full circle. Timon is at the top when the play opens; he falls during its course, and Alcibiades now moves upward.[...] In the first act, Timon behaves as if he ruled from a throne; his "I could deal kingdoms to my friends" (1.2.219) is a *regno* [I reign] proclamation. He stays in this position throughout the first two acts; at the end of the second, although already beset with creditors, he still proclaims "Ne'er speak or think / That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink" (2.2.234-35). His precipitate decline takes place in the third act, where the servant's simile of the sun-like decline of a prodigal's course (3.4.12-14) predicts the end of the downward motion. Simultaneous with Timon's fall, Alcibiades comes into prominence; his defiant declaration "Soldiers should brook as little wrong as gods" (3.5.118) is a *regnabo* [I shall reign] announcement. Timon's *regnavi* (I have reigned) stage is over when he declares, in his last words, "Timon hath done his reign" (5.1.222). His ultimate *sum sine regno* [I am without reign] stage is reached with his death and "low grave" in the fifth act. Finally, Alcibiades' entry into the city puts him in a *regno* position where, king-like, he will use the olive with the sword. (31)

The Boethian concept of Fortune and Fortune's wheel is a prominent theme in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* as Soellner points out. As part of this discussion, it is important to examine how the three characters handle their fortunes and misfortunes.

The cause of Boethius' grief has more to do with his misconception about Fortune than his exile and impending execution. At the beginning, Boethius is contemptuous of the members of the Senate. He is also angry that people have lied to put him in his predicament. In short, Boethius is looking to blame everyone else for his situation. When Philosophy begins her dialogue she recognizes all of his ailments and the remainder of her discussion is designed to sooth Boethius and cure his ills. S. Lerer argues that in the *Consolation* "the silences are as important as the words, particularly the increasing silence of the protagonist who is shown as tacitly and gradually absorbing the tenets of philosophy until he can again show evidence of its mastery" (153). By the end of the *Consolation* Boethius has regained his former self if not his former status.

In *Timon*, Flavius recognizes the Boethian ailment in Timon when he says "thy great Fortunes / Are made thy chief afflictions" (IV.ii.43-44). Flavius' sentiments echo those of Philosophy in her discussion about wealth mentioned earlier. While Philosophy recognizes that wealth does not make one self-sufficient, Flavius understand that Timon's wealth has made him dependent on his flatterers, and when Timon's misfortunes begin his friends leave him stranded creating his 'affliction'. Timon, however, would not suffer any 'affliction' by the withdrawal of his friends had he not 'expectations' from those with whom he had shared his fortune. Timon's situation seems worse and even more self-deluded than Boethius' at the outset of the *Consolation* because Timon makes an assumption of unlimited power as well as wealth and honour. Timon "behaves as if he

ruled from a throne" (Soellner 31), and declares "I could deal kingdoms to my friends" (I.ii.219). Because Timon acts like a king and elevates himself to that position, he does not understand that he has in effect placed himself in such a manner that he does not appear to be "an intimate, time-tempered friend to anyone" (Morsberger 64). Robert E. Morsberger claims this is because Timon "is bound to no one by close ties; he simply loves to gather crowds and bestow largesse upon them" (65). It appears as if Timon is placing the same value on friends as he does on his wealth, but without actually realizing it, and this causes his bitterness when he loses the friends. A.A. Ansari recalls that "Timon's attitude to the dispensing of his wealth is that of uncritical spendthrift; he squanders it right and left indiscriminately" (Ansari 143). Having bought his friends, he is confused and disillusioned when he loses them at the same time as he loses his money.

When Timon falls from the presiding position on Fortune's wheel to the descending or prostrate position, he immediately falls into the state of melancholy Apemantus and the Bandit bring to our attention. According to A.M. Eastman and G.B. Harrison, "in Timon we see one way in which a man may make his response to the injuries in life; he may turn upon the world with a fruitless and suicidal rage" (315). Timon refuses to listen to anyone – unlike Boethius with Philosophy – and believes that exiling himself and fueling his unadulterated hatred for mankind is the solution to his ailment: "Timon will to the woods, where he shall find / Th' unkindest beast more kinder than mankind" (IV.i.35-36). When Timon moves to a cave near the sea it is significant, for as Soellner points out

> Like the wood, the cave was Shakespeare's addition to the Timon legend, and he chose it surely for its association with Fortune and despair. In

> Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1.9.44), the Cave of Despair serves as a refuge from the world in which 'fickle Fortune rageth strife." (152)

Timon exiles himself to a cave with living conditions similar to those of Boethius' exile, except that Timon has the freedom of movement that Boethius lacks, and I believe Boethius has the freedom of thought that Timon lacks. While living in self-exile, Timon receives the opportunity to reseat himself at the top of Fortune's wheel when he finds the gold while digging, but he spurns the offering. I believe he does this not to remove himself from Fortune's wheel, the truly Boethian path, but to follow his melancholic choice allowing him to illustrate the role of the individual who uses free will to choose vice. on Fortune's wheel. Apemantus points out "[t]he middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the extremity of both ends" (IV.iii.300-301). Timon, Apemantus notices, has chosen to be as perfect in his blind hatred of men, as he was in the over-zealous and blind generosity leading to his misfortune. Timon not only forgets; it is quite possible Timon never thinks about his self-indulgent desire for attention and adulation that was the cause of his downfall. With the arrival of the gold comes the reinvested interest of his old suitors. Robert C. Elliott comments on the arrival of the Poet and Painter:

> In Act I, Scene I, the Poet and the Painter whose words had opened the play reappear, magnetically drawn to Timon's cave by the rumor that he is again 'full of gold.' They have a brief colloquy (overheard by Timon) in which they make totally explicit the shameless hypocrisy of their natures.

When Timon's disgust with humanity is reinforced, he is pushed further away from self-discovery. Timon does not realize, or does not care, that the real cure to his problem lies

in the ability to forgive and remain within the community that he believes has forsaken him. Philosophy discusses forgiveness when she mentions wretched men who when brought before the court should be treated not like criminals but like "sick men being brought to the doctor, so that their guilt could be cut back by punishment like a malignant growth" (100). Philosophy understands that you cannot condemn the patient for relaying a symptom, and Shakespeare illustrates this in the portrayal of Timon. Shakespeare allows the audience to, while not condoning Timon's actions, understand them and, in some way, relate to them. Without necessary critical thinking skills, Timon naively goes from believing everyone is trustworthy, to venomously feeling that all men are evil and untrustworthy. Timon's self-exile leads him to further descent on Fortune's wheel, made more dramatic knowing his descent was accelerated by his denial of the offered opportunity for ascent – the gold. Timon's refusal to use the gold to reinstate himself in a position of comfort and wealth, not being based on a Boethian withdrawal from the enslavement to fortune, shows how far into the state of melancholy he has fallen. But, if Timon was to take the gold and regain his social position, he would still remain in the game run by Fortune again, missing the Boethian lesson. On the other hand, exile offers Alcibiades an opportunity for ascent that he astutely acknowledges and accepts.

One of the recipients of Timon's newfound wealth is Alcibiades, who is 'wronged by the Athenian Senate as fully as Timon is wronged by false friends" (Ribner 141). While Alcibiades has invested his time in Athens as a warrior, Timon has invested his money in his friends. Each experiences a rejection of his investment. As Irving Ribner points out, the reasons for Alcibiades' banishment from Athens are "left unclear, although we know that it has resulted from his defense of a friend, and by this emphasis

upon friendship his fate is linked to that of Timon" (141-42). Unlike Timon whose "love is so soon converted into hate bespeak[ing] the empty and pretentious nature of his generosity" (Cook 90), Alcibiades "comes to term with life [...] he accepts man and his limitations; and in the light of this acceptance can exercise mercy" (Cook 93). Fortune has dealt Boethius, Alcibiades, and Timon similar blows: they have all suffered a loss and banishment. Boethius believes he has lost his honour by being unjustly convicted and sentenced by a corrupt Senate for supporting a friend. Alcibiades is wronged by the Senate in a manner similar to Boethius and also suffers banishment. His questioning of, and outrage toward, the Senate cause him to lose his honoured status as hero, and this leads him to lose his right to bear arms for his country (through his banishment). Timon loses his money, as well as false friends and inflicts banishment upon himself. Each individual's sense of loss and banishment resonates thematically within the stories of the others. As Philosophy tells Boethius, "the desire for true good is planted by nature in the minds of men, only error leads them astray towards false good" (48). In the next chapter, I will examine how Boethius in the *Consolation of Philosophy*, and Timon and Alcibiades in Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens* were led astray and toward the false good, a situation that raises the question of each member's contribution toward his own destruction. This examination will include insight into Shakespeare's understanding of the Boethian concept concerning the individual's need to attach himself to earthly values. Moreover, the next chapter will reveal how this attachment leads to the creation of the bestial man and how Boethius, Timon and Alcibiades reflect different aspects of Philosophy's instruction on these subjects.

My rage is gone,
And I am struck with sorrow.
Coriolanus (V.vi.147-148)

The previous chapter served to highlight the importance that the characters, Boethius, Timon, and Alcibiades attached to Fortune and her wheel in *The Consolation of Philosophy* and *Timon of Athens*. In this chapter I will examine the ramifications of clinging to Fortune's wheel, and the ways in which the actions of Timon and Alcibiades illustrate Philosophy's instruction to Boethius on the matters of the virtuous as opposed to the beastly man, and on good and evil.

In Book IV of *The Consolation of Philosophy*, Philosophy explains to Boethius that there are two types of men: the virtuous man, and the man who resides in "wickedness" and is "utterly bad" (113). In her description of the virtuous man, Philosophy recognizes three levels of virtue: "Well, the result of all that we have agreed is that whatever the fortune of those who are in possession of virtue (whether that possession is perfect, still growing or only incipient), it is good" (113). Boethius has lost sight of his good fortune, a situation which leads to the conclusion that his virtue is still growing and by the end of *The Consolation of Philosophy* his virtue has neared perfection. Alcibiades, given a Boethian status through the Senate scene, has not reached perfect virtue but his virtue shows definite signs of growth. When Alcibiades faces the Senate, he loses his temper and is subsequently banished. By the time he meets Timon in Act IV, Alcibiades' anger has abated but his purpose has not. When Timon asks Alcibiades if he plans to wage war against Athens, he replies, "Ay, Timon and have cause" (IV.iii.103). By the end of the play, Alcibiades has regained complete control of his wrath and agrees not to wage war:

Then there's my glove;

[Descend,] and open your uncharged ports.

Those enemies of Timon's and mine own

Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof

Fall, and no more; [...]

Bring me into your city,

And I will use the olive with my sword:

Make war breed peace, make peace stint war, make each

Prescribe to other as each other's leech.

Let our drums strike. (V.iv.54-58, 81-85)

Alcibiades agrees to punish only those considered wicked by him and the Senate, while everyone else will go unharmed. Philosophy notes this type of virtuous behaviour to Boethius when she examines how a virtuous man should react to misfortune:

> So a wise man ought no more to take it ill when he clashes with fortune than a brave man ought to be upset by the sound of battle. For both of them their very distress is an opportunity, for the one to gain glory and the other to strengthen his wisdom. This is why virtue gets its name, because it is firm in strength and unconquered by adversity. (113)

Alcibiades is a man who has faced ill fortune and battle and has learned how to face them with grace. We do not witness many of the events leading to Alcibiades' final decision to acquiesce, but we have enough information to recognize his regrouping from his initial rage to handle the situation like a virtuous man and wise soldier. Alcibiades, therefore, has proven himself a virtuous man whose virtue is still growing.

It is questionable whether Timon's virtue is growing, incipient, or has been completely corrupted by vice. What is clear is that Timon's virtue has not reached a state of perfection. I believe Timon never exhibits the traits of a virtuous man. He appears to be virtuous at the beginning of the play but many critics question that virtue. Michael Chorost examines Timon's economy of gift-giving and believes that Timon believes "his courtiers are in debt to *him*. And indeed, in terms of a *potlatch* gift economy, they are" (351). Timon's recognition of obligatory debt is evident in his "so many like brothers commanding one another's fortunes" (I.ii.105). Timon, however, believes he is in command of this gift economy and I would suggest this need for command displays Timon's lack of virtue from the outset. How a man reacts to misfortune, Philosophy suggests, shows his true virtuous nature, and Timon reveals himself as an unwise man with no virtue. Virtue and wisdom are connected to sin, because it is understanding and rising above sin that enables our virtuous growth. A better way to understand our sin is to understand the good. Siobhan Nash-Marshall explains the Boethian "good" in that it

> has three main parts. In the first and second books he claims that it lies in man's self-sufficiency, which is man's possessing his intellect, the noblest part of his soul, and in his mastering his need for extrinsic goods. In the third book, after having analyzed why those things which man commonly believes to be his 'good' – or, to be precise, which he believes to be the means with which to attain his self-sufficiency that is, wealth, power, honor, fame, and pleasure – are insufficient, since self-sufficiency can by definition lack nothing, and none of those things man believes to be his 'good' lacks nothing, he claims that there is only one true Good, i.e., God

> [...] Finally, in the fourth book, he claims that man's 'good' is his reward for his good activities. For man's virtuous behaviour is both his possession of himself, and his becoming a god, where one supposes such a claim to mean man's participating in God. The main point of the *Consolatio* must as such be to delineate the intrinsic and extrinsic causes of man's perfection. (192-193)

In the *Consolation*, Boethius receives instruction from Philosophy concerning the nature of his sin and what he has mistakenly identified as his good:

> [H]owever protracted the life of your fame, when compared with unending eternity it is shown to be not just little, but nothing at all.
>
> You, however, don't know how to act uprightly except with an eye to popular favour and empty reputation. You ignore those excellent qualities, a good conscience and virtue, and pursue your reward in the common gossip of people. (42)

Boethius is guilty of the sin of pride. He has attached too much importance to his fame and honour, believing them to be responsible for his good, his self-sufficiency. He takes pride in the reputation he has gained in society. He has forgotten that his reputation cannot exist without its being 'given' to him by others, thereby placing his reputation, and by association himself, under the control of Fortune and the whims of other people.

Boethius, not fully comprehending Philosophy's wisdom, expounds on his righteous endeavours:

> And I have countless times opposed the attacks of the Cunigast on the fortunes of some defenceless person, or stopped Trigulla, the Prefect of

> the Palace, from some injustice he had begun or already carried through. And I have countless times interposed my authority to protect wretched men from danger when they were hounded by the endless false accusations of the barbarians in their continuous and unpunished lust for wealth. [...] Again, in their hope and ambition the palace jackals had already swallowed up the wealth of an ex-consul called Paulinus, when I snatched him from their very jaws. Another ex-consul, Albinus, had been presumed guilty and I had to set myself against the hatred of the Public [Accuser], Cyprian, to save him from punishment. You must surely agree that the opposition I provoked against me was considerable. (10-11)

Throughout Boethius' exaltation of his own virtuous (if not superhuman) abilities to protect the weak, Boethius clearly revels in his accomplishments. Boethius fails to include that in some cases, like that of Albinus, his attempt to intercede was fruitless and Albinus was found guilty. Perhaps a wiser man, or one less convinced of his own self-worth and public importance would have known when he was truly able to defend someone or whether he was trying to trade off of his own status.

Philosophy continues with her discussion to impress her message on Boethius:

> Listen while I tell you how cleverly someone once ridiculed the shallowness of this kind of conceit. A certain man once made a virulent attack on another man for falsely assuming the title of philosopher more in order to satisfy his overwhelming pride than to practise virtue, and added that he would accept that the title was justified if the man could suffer attacks upon him with patience and composure. For a time he did assume

> patience and after accepting the insults asked with a sneer whether the other now agreed that he was a philosopher. 'I would,' came the replay, 'if you had not spoken.' (42-43)

Through her example, Philosophy is trying to show Boethius that his need to claim self-righteousness rings hollow and is conceit rather than virtue. Boethius, the author, is drawing from another source for this lesson. "According to Plutarch, Euripides said that the wise man's answer was silence" (Watts 43n). That Boethius, the character, finds it necessary to voice his virtue shows that it is not, in fact, a true virtue, but a vice. Others have given his reputation to him. Boethius, the character, is a reflection of what others have told him he is and he does not understand that true virtue is never something discussed, but something carried with quiet dignity.

Timon is also guilty of the sin of pride, and his desire to maintain his reputation by highlighting his generosity parallels Boethius' need to call attention to his righteousness by accentuating his defence of others. Timon's pride is worse in the specific sense he seeks and indeed needs public approbation for his behaviour, while Boethius seeks endorsement as a private matter. Timon's sin remains constant before and after his punishment and is much more complex than that of Boethius. Timon clings to a refusal to be quietly and privately virtuous. His guilt begins with his prideful generosity.

True generosity is in the giving, not the receiving, and generosity is not something that should be highlighted post-distribution. Timon cannot give without receiving: "I gave it freely ever, and there's none / Can truly say he gives if he receives" (I.i.10-11), claims Timon, and in return Ventidius, one of the recipients of his beneficence repays him with a compliment: "A noble spirit" (I.i.13). Timon makes a show of his

beneficence by highlighting it himself. In the case of Ventidius, Timon deludes himself into believing that his beneficence is emancipating. As Ken Jackson explains:

> Timon offers to pay the debt of Ventidius [...] Timon sees his own gesture as liberating: 'I'll pay the debt and free him' (I.i.109). The messenger, however, in a striking and quick contrast, reveals the nature of this gift. Not only is it (the offer to pay, the gift) not liberating, but, at least from the messenger's point of view, it is an exchange. 'Your lordship,' he replies, 'ever binds him' (I.i.110). As the messenger sees it, Timon pays the debt in exchange for some kind of everlasting obligation. (49)

He is buying his own reputation as a great benefactor. Brill recognizes this all-consuming need to reign through beneficence in Timon's character when she writes

> Timon's liberality is something that involves subservience. He commits the sin of pride, and he is in danger of complacently accepting superhuman honours. He has a disproportionate notion of gold, which in the last analysis is not [his] but Fortune's to command. (18)

Had he taken the money offered by Ventidius, in return for the funds he had given him in his time of need, then the exchange of generous acts would have been complete. Chorost explains that "[w]hen Timon is given a gift, he must always outdo it. Although he talks a circular gift economy, he creates a *linear* gift economy in which the *net* flow of gifts goes in one direction, from himself to his courtiers" (351). Furthermore, Chorost notes that Timon "contrives to give far more than he gets [...] he wants only the theoretical possibility of reciprocation, since the real thing would diminish the accumulated sense of

obligation built up in his courtiers" (350). He does not need their friendship; he needs to ensure they remain obligated to him so their flattery and subservience will continue. This need is evident in Act I when he claims, "where there is true friendship, there needs none [goodness]. / Pray sit, more welcome are ye to my fortunes/ Than my fortunes to me" (I.ii.18-20). While Boethius has attached too much importance to his honour and fame, Timon believes his wealth is responsible for his self-sufficiency, his good. Timon is convinced that he values friendship over wealth, but when tested by Fortune he is not as virtuous as he believes and he reveals himself as an anti-Boethian character in his reaction to adversity.

Once Timon is in financial ruin and all of his 'toadies' have deserted him, he maintains his sin of pride. He blames the world – all of humanity – for the injustice perpetrated upon him. Timon remains as prideful in his hate as he did in his benevolence, and he refuses to forgive those he feels have wronged him, without looking at what he has done to wrong himself. Furthermore, to compound his sin, Timon purposely strives to assist in the downfall of those he believes have deserted him. Ribner believes that "[t]he society which turns upon Timon is the ordinary society which will turn upon any man of similar folly; he experiences the ordinary evil of the world" (139). Therefore, Timon's rage and absolute hatred of all mankind is ridiculous in its lack of proportion. Perhaps Timon is choosing to focus his anger outwardly, because it saves him from having to look at his own 'folly.' Richard Fly recognizes the flaw in Timon's rage: "Timon's intransigent separation of himself from society, then, suggests, when seen in the wider symbolic context of the play, the essential and timeless imperfection of man – the eternal gap between his ideals and his actual nature" (248). Timon idealistically

believed that he could endlessly dole out his fortune to his friends and receive their idolization for an eternity, and, while doing so, would be the very essence of beneficence. What he believes he is, however, and what he turns out to be when faced by harsh reality are two entirely different people. Cook suggests

> That Timon's 'love' is so soon converted into hate bespeaks the empty and pretentious nature of his 'generosity'. A truly benevolent man could never be brought deliberately to cry down such vengeance upon his race; anyone might come to say such things in a state of hysteria, but Timon maintains them steadily from now till his death [...] Whatever Timon's state, he has certainly no more grounds for such indiscriminate denunciation than he had for his equally indiscriminate generosity. (90)

Because Timon is unable to let go of his pride, unlike Boethius, he is incapable of learning and of taking authorship for any part of his downfall. Instead he clings as tightly to his rage as he did to his generosity.

Alcibiades, like Timon and Boethius, comes to the defense of someone he believes requires his assistance. Alcibiades, as Jeremy Tambling explains, "has had to plead with the Senate on behalf of a friend who in 'hot blood' has killed a man" (147). The entirety of Act III, Scene v is dedicated to Alcibiades' defence of his friend. Alcibiades begins his suit to the senate with a tone of diplomacy. "I am an humble suitor to your virtues; / For pity is the virtue of the law, / And none but tyrants use it cruelly" (7-9). Acibiades fails to recognize that he is, in fact, no 'humble suitor,' but someone who attaches an importance to his perceived power, recognizing it as his good, the source of his self-sufficiency. He is then surprised when the Senate is uninfluenced by his

argument. Indeed, Alcibiades is so confounded by his inability to secure the man's pardon that he is roused to anger. "By the end of the scene not only has Alcibiades failed to have the sentence of death commuted but has lost his own temper and been banished" (Tambling 147). Since his pride had led him to believe he is the voice for virtue and truth, like Boethius, Alcibiades falls prey to his own sin and to his attachment to the power allotted him by others. Philosophy explains power to Boethius:

> But riches are unable to quench insatiable greed; power does not make a man master of himself if he is imprisoned by the indissoluble chains of wicked lusts; and when high office is bestowed on unworthy men, so far from making them worthy, it only betrays them and reveals their unworthiness. (39)

Alcibiades is corrupted by the same power that he feels has corrupted the Senate. Although Shakespeare never allows us to participate in his revelations, Alcibiades does come to understand his fallibility. Irving Ribner explains that

> Alcibiades [...] has been the man of action, unlike Timon the man of feeling, and his perversion of values appears in a lust for revenge. He learns at the end what Timon never learns, that good may exist in spite of evil, and he is redeemed from the fury which has possessed him. (Ribner 141)

While Alcibiades provides a foil for Timon, he also stands in the stead of Boethius himself. Alcibiades is a figure who fathoms the depths of mankind's irrationality, understands that he is not exempt from the same irrationality – unlike Timon who never figures this out – and "is, thus, a figure we meet often at the close of Shakespeare's plays:

he is an order-figure [...] who with widely varying degrees of emotional effect and thematic validation, brings a fractured society back to its natural rhythms" (Fly 252). I find it ironic that Timon, in a moment of witty repartee with the Lords concerning Apemantus, would quote the Latin phrase "*Ira furor brevis est* (Anger is a brief madnèss)" (I.ii.28). Perhaps he did not understand what he had said because he refuses to let go of his anger and it drives him to try to destroy humanity, while the warrior Alcibiades relinquishes his anger in an attempt to restore humanity. Timon has been so destroyed by his anger he has lost his identity as a human and falls into the piteous state of a beast.

During the renaissance, not only was there a natural connection between man's committing of sin and his falling into a beastly state owing to his sin, but also there was a connection between his being virtuous and rising to his highest state. Boethius and Shakespeare understood such spiritual associations. This correlation between man, his sin, and a beastly state is recognized as part of an "ordered world" (Heninger 159). S.K. Heninger Jr. discusses how this ordered world carried through into the renaissance:

> Whatever faults appeared were temporary disruptions due to capricious fortune or to the wickedness of men, not to any deficiency in the design. When fifteenth-century cosmographers looked into their books, they found this view supported by Boethius, Isidore, Bede, Bartholomaeus Anglicus, even Sacrobosco. (159)

It is not surprising then, that both Boethius and Shakespeare would fashion their works with the understanding that anything going amiss must be caused by either Fortune or Sin. Another cosmographic understanding that carried into the renaissance was that of

the universal chain or great chain of being. Man's existence on the chain does not remain static; in fact, man can move up through virtuous acts or down through sin. For instance, in 1510 Charles de Bouelles designed his own steps or levels of being which incorporates the possibility of man's movement up or down the steps. Heninger explains that the steps "leading to virtue, like the steps in Lull's *scala* are the same as the lower links in the conventional chain of being" (162). These steps have four levels going up and back down from left to right. The steps begin at the bottom left with the "minerale" step represented by a rock and captioned *est* – is. The next step up and to the right is the "vegetable" step represented by a tree and captioned *est vivit* – is and lives. One step up and to the right is "sensible," represented by a horse, captioned *est vivit sentit* – is, lives, and can sense. The next step up and right is "rationale," represented by a man and captioned *est vivit sentit inteligit* – is, lives, can sense, and can reason. The step to the right remains at the same level as the previous step and is "virtus." While still represented by a man, a scholar sits at a desk and carries the same traits as the man before but he "understands." The succeeding step descends. This step is "luxury" and is depicted as a "sensual" man with a mirror. Heninger notes that this man "exhibits the vice of prodigal dissipation" (163). On this step sits the man who falls prey to "luxuria" and has lost his ability to reason. He "is, lives and feels". The next step down, parallel with the vegetable state, is the gluttonous man who, by virtue of his gluttony, has become no better than a plant living only to eat. This level is represented with a man sitting at a table gorging himself, he "is and lives". The final step down and to the right represents the indolent man whose inactivity has caused him to be equated with a rock. His dormancy qualifies him as existing but not living, sensing, or thinking (Heninger 162-

163). I will refer back to these steps of being throughout the examination of Boethius, Timon, Alcibiades and others to gauge which step each man should be placed on, according to his actions and sins. First, however, I will examine the beastly man according to Boethius and Shakespeare.

In Book IV of *The Consolation of Philosophy*, Philosophy discusses the concept of man's beastly nature through sin. She tells Boethius that man loses his human state when he falls into wickedness, and that, since only performing good deeds can raise a man's level, it stands to reason that when a man performs an evil deed he is "thrust down to a level below mankind" (94). Furthermore, she imparts

> The result is that you cannot think of anyone as human whom you see transformed by wickedness. You could say that someone who robs with violence and burns with greed is like a wolf. A wild and restless man who is for ever exercising his tongue in lawsuits could be compared to a dog yapping. A man whose habit is to lie hidden in ambush and steal by trapping people would be likened to a fox. A man of quick temper has only to roar to gain the reputation of a lion heart. The timid coward who is terrified when there is nothing to fear is thought to be like the hind. The man who is lazy, dull and stupid, lives an ass's life. A man of whimsy and fickleness who is for ever changing his interests is just like a bird. And a man wallowing in foul and impure lusts is occupied by the filthy pleasures of a sow. (94)

Unlike Bouelles' placing of sinful men in the state of beast, vegetation, and mineral, Philosophy maintains the sinning man at the level of beast and simply equates the sin to

the actions of a similar beast. It is possible that through these descriptions Philosophy is trying to show Boethius the animal with which he can be equated. Since Boethius himself admits to forever defending others to the Senate, he is comparable to the "yapping dog." This yapping dog description is especially fitting, considering that on occasion Boethius would wag his tongue to no avail and those he defended, like Albinus, were still found guilty. Alcibiades is equatable to the "lion" in that he displays a "quick temper" when facing the Senate. Timon is harder to classify than Boethius and Alcibiades. He fits best with the description of an "ass" in that in his laziness he let his steward handle his financial difficulties; he was stupid for letting his money dwindle and for expecting reciprocity for his good deeds.

On Bouelle's steps of being, Boethius', Timon's and Alcibiades' sins place them in the "sensible state," which is described as the man admiring himself in the glass, although Timon's state degrades. As discussed earlier, Philosophy explained how Boethius fell into the "sensible state" when she informed him "[y]ou ignore those excellent qualities, a good conscience and virtue, and pursue your reward in the common gossip of people" (42). Philosophy recognizes that Boethius once stood on the step inhabited by the virtuous scholar but his sin made him stumble down a step. Boethius is guilty of looking in a mirror to see his reflection in the faces of those who admire him. He is less concerned with his actions than with the reciprocity of popularity amongst his public. He is forgetting that this state is depicted by the man with the mirror because the person who is looking at his flatterers is seeing a reflection only of what he wants to see not of what he truly is. This flatterer-flattered relationship becomes more clear when we look at Timon.

In Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon*, the Poet, during his discussion with the Painter, highlights the flatterer-flattered relationship of Timon and his followers:

> His large fortune,
> Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,
> Subdues and properties to his love and tendance
> All sorts of hearts; yea, from the glass-fac'd flatterer
> To Apemantus, that few things loves better
> Than to abhor himself; even he drops down
> The knee before him, and returns in peace
> Most rich in Timon's nod. (I.i.55-62)

The description of Timon's attendees aptly fits the description of the man in the 'sensible state' according to Bouelles. Clifford Davidson explains,

> The description of the flatterer as 'glass-fac'd' is iconocraphically important, for the mirror appears widely as a standard emblem of pride and surely is intended to point toward weakness in Timon, who obviously very much liked to receive back the desired image of his beneficence. The smiling face of the flatterer is thus the mirror into which he looks. (187)

In the face of his flatterers, Timon receives the reflection of his beneficence. The Poet is the one who notices this, and in doing so seems to place himself outside the circle of 'glass-fac'd flatterer[s]' yet his first words to Timon, "[v]ouchsafe my labor, and long live your lordship!" (I.i.152), ring as hollow as the rest. While the Poet mocks the 'others' for their flattery, he performs in exactly the same way when in the presence of

Timon. Asking Timon to condescend to buying his work serves the double purpose of raising Timon's status while lowering the Poet's.

Like Timon and Boethius, Alcibiades is also guilty of pride, and is in a "sensible state." His sin is most evident when he addresses the senate, expecting his reputation and power to gain the freedom of his fellow soldier. His "sensible state" is most evident when he asks the Senate to "Call [him] to [their] remembrances" (III.v.91). Alcibiades' being the worshipped war hero has lasted for so long that he believes the reputation placed upon him by others. He is convinced that recalling his reputation to the Senate will be the strongest argument for freeing a man charged with murder. While Shakespeare incorporates the image of the man with the mirror he also gives credence to Philosophy's discussion of the beastly man.

The animal references in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* begin in Act I, Scene I and continue throughout the play. "It is of some significance," Farnham affirms "that in no other of Shakespeare's plays does the word "beast" occur so often as in *Timon*" (129). Not only does the term beast occur frequently in *Timon*, but a recurrent theme in this play parallels man with animals. With this parallelism comes an extensive number of references to different types of animals or animalistic states. Brill comments that in *Timon* "[t]he vision of human depravity finds further expression in pervasive imagery of bestiality and disease" (33). I will briefly highlight the animals referenced in *Timon*, then show how many are applicable to the state of the sinful man.

In *Timon* Shakespeare refers to beasts and creatures (20 and 4), as well as to monsters (5). Moreover he discusses the dog (20) specifically the breeds greyhound, and beagle , the baboon and monkey, the ass (6), birds (3) as well as specifying eagle (2),

feather (2), wing, gull, phoenix, chickens, swallow. The play also contains reference to flies, the lion (4), wolf/wolves (5), parasites, toad (2), adder, gilded newt, venom'd worm, tigers, dragons, the lamb, the fox (3), the horse (9), leopard (2), the boar, fish, and the unicorn. While many of the references to animals are innocuous I will examine pertinent areas concerning the animal imagery as it relates to the sins of Timon, Alcibiades, and those who fawn over Timon, with a view to revealing how they are all effectively reduced to animalistic states.

When Timon discovers his financial state, he decides to throw a mock banquet and invites the flatterers who refused to help him. At the feast Timon commands them to "[u]ncover, dogs, and lap" (III.vi.85). Davidson indicates that

> The most important emblem of the deceptive language of flattery is the dog, a creature to which Timon's friends are constantly being compared. Appropriately, a dog is an equivocal symbol in Renaissance iconography, for this creature can appear in reference to loyal friendship as well as to flattery, or even ingratitude. The latter is more common. [...] Shakespeare generally linked dogs to ideas of fawning, licking sweets, flattering. (189)

Therefore, it is no coincidence that Timon calls his former flatterers "dogs." Although Timon does not recognize them as beasts (dogs) until after his betrayal, Apemantus observes those around Timon as beastly much earlier. In Act I Lord 2 calls Apemantus an "unpeaceable dog" (I.i.271) echoing Philosophy's "yapping dog". In retaliation Apemantus admits his association to the dog but calls the lord an "ass" (I.i.272). We know very little about the Lords except that they seem to frequent Timon's estate and partake of his largesse. Therefore, the description of the Lord as an ass resonates with

Philosophy's description of someone who "is lazy, dull and stupid." The Lord does not effectively respond to Apemantus' insult; in fact, he does not respond at all, confirming the fact that he is dull and incapable of a quick response. The scene at the mock banquet reads more like a farce because the Lords sit in stupid anticipation expecting further rewards from a man they shunned. Their departure from the mock feast is equally farcical, with the rush of scampering bodies, the grabbing of attire and the short, (and I imagine) quickly delivered lines. Like Timon, the Lords do not recognize their own sins. They live simply to attend the next feast, banquet, or social event that sees them fed and entertained, and they are willing to fawn over the person providing those services like a dog licking the hand of his master.

Not only can the Lords be equated with asses; they can also be related to birds as Philosophy explains: "a man of whimsy and fickleness who is for ever changing his interests is just like a bird" (94). Shakespeare echoes this understanding and provides subtle foreshadowing with this information. In the first act, Timon describes himself as "not one of that feather to shake off / My friend when he must need me" (I.i.100-101). While Timon recognizes there are those people who are fickle and desert needy friends, he does not count himself among those men, and does not have the insight to detect this fickleness amongst his friends – the Lords. During the mock feast, Timon and the Lords provide further evidence of the Lords' sharing the same fickleness as birds:

> 2. [*Lord*]. The swallow follows not summer more willing than we your lordship.
>
> *Tim.* [*Aside.*] Not more willingly leaves winter, such summer birds are men. (III.vi.29-32)

Although Timon is angry, his anger is understandable. The Lords have flocked back to Timon believing him to have regained his fortunes. Timon understands that he was merely a stand-in for summer, but now that he is winter (barren and cold) they will leave him to fly somewhere warmer (food and gold). The Lord acknowledges, albeit unknowingly, their fickleness by comparing them to swallows. Through this depiction, Shakespeare is sharing his knowledge of Boethian wisdom and using it to provide further insight into the motivations of the characters.

Shakespeare not only tackles the Boethian issues of sin, and virtuous and beastly man; he includes the discussion concerning what makes man corrupt – wealth, fame, power, honour – and distributes those attributes between Timon and Alcibiades. By the end of *Timon* it becomes apparent that Shakespeare has woven the wisdom contained in Philosophy's words through the action, language, and imagery of his play.

As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes.
King Lear (V.iii.29-30)

Before this thesis concludes, it is necessary to collate the information and readings contained in the preceding chapters in order to reach one conclusive argument. Therefore, I supply a short summary of Chapters One through Five to remind the reader of the salient points.

I undertook an accounting of Boethius' history, especially concerning his political career and eventual exile and execution. Having also looked at the reception of his work, such as *De Musica*, and *De Arithmetica*, to show their influence in the Medieval and Renaissance periods, I then extended that examination to Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. The results of that research are contained in Chapter One and show a Boethian influence on many Medieval and Renaissance writers. Alastair Minnis discusses three prominent Medieval writers who translated Boethius' *Consolation* (Jean De Meun (*ante* 1250-1305), Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400), and John Walton (*fl.* early fifteenth century), attesting to its popularity at the time. Jean De Meun's *Roman de la Rose* was informed by Beothius' *Consolation*, as was Chaucer's Knight's Tale. After establishing firm connections between Boethius' work and the Medieval period, I expanded the search to see how well received, accepted, and utilized Boethius' work appeared to be during the Renaissance period. As witnessed in the first chapter, Boethian influences, although not as prevalent as during the Medieval period, is still a viable concern in the Renaissance and most certainly in Shakespeare's work. In fact many scholars find Boethian influence in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, *Coriolanus*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Richard II*, *As*

You Like It, *King Lear*, *King John*, and *Timon*. Many of the connections, however, are slight, with Boethius mentioned in passing, or included with Seneca and Cicero as influences. This referential brevity holds true when *Timon* is discussed in relation to Boethius' *Consolation*.

In Chapter Two, I undertook an examination of those sources considered relevant to Shakespeare's *Timon* in order to highlight their influence as well to accentuate their silence in regards to the Alcibiades-Senate scene in Act III. This was a purposeful examination which led into Chapter Three's examination of how Boethian influence provides the purpose for the contentious Alcibiades scene with the Senate. Shakespeare required a foil for Timon and the historical Alcibiades was inadequate. It was necessary to create a more Boethian Alcibiades who appeared the virtuous man and, like Boethius, becomes enraged, but calms himself and considers the greater good. Furthermore, I illuminated how the right-cure-for-the-right-ailment discussion, which was peculiar solely to Boethius' *Consolation,* informs Shakespeare's *Timon*.

Chapter Four was devoted strictly to the issue of Fortune. I imparted Philosophy's wisdom on the subject, discussed Fortune's wheel and showed how both related to Shakespeare's characters Timon and Alcibiades. While this is an area where most scholars tend to focus their discussion, I went beyond that, and, in Chapter Five, I revealed further, intricate arguments, related to Fortune. These arguments included examining the Boethian virtuous and bestial man, and consequences of attaching yourself to something other than the "good," while relating them to the characters in Shakespeare's *Timon*.

As noted earlier, John L. Tison, Jr. examines consolatory literature in regards to Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Coriolanus*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. The evidence presented in my thesis indicates that Timon should be added to Tison's lists. Boethius changed the genre of *consolatio* in antiquity; likewise, Shakespeare adapts consolatory literature to the Renaissance stage.

At the outset, my contention was that Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* informed Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens*. While many sources influenced and informed Shakespeare, there are strong arguments that Boethius is amongst those sources. The scope of this thesis did not allow for an examination of still further ways in which Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* informs Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. One such area that remains to be examined is the reflection, in Timon, of Philosophy's discussion of providence, fate, and man's free will. Acknowledging Boethius as a prominent source is pivotal to a further understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare's works. I also believe that this examination may help resolve the arguments concerning whether *Timon* is a single-authored and complete play. There is most probably only one author of *Timon*, as is witnessed in the continuity of the underlying Boethian influence throughout the play, allowing the work's plot structure to flow in a finished, if unpolished, fashion. Furthermore, the recognition of Boethian influence necessitates a reexamination of *Timon* as consolatory literature. Not only should Shakespeare's work be reassessed with a view to highlighting further Boethian influence, but it is also necessary to recognize that Boethius is now firmly linked to two of the cornerstones of English literature: Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare. Therefore, it is important

to reconsider the issue and reexamine the extent of Boethian influence in literature after Chaucer and Shakespeare.

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