The following segmented essays were presented at the Word and Disclosure: Philosophy and Literature conference in Florence, February 2009 under the following titles:

> *Michael Pringle, "The 'equivocation of the fiend': Manly Virtue vs. Moral Vice in Macbeth"; and Erik Schmidt, "A Fruitless Crown: Tyranny, nihilism, and moral order in Shakespeare's Macbeth and Plato's Gorgias."*

Despite the separate titles, the two presenters intertwined the essays (as reprinted here) into four parts to further reinforce the themes of interconnectivity and integration between literature and philosophy.

Part 1: Core Consistency

Michael Pringle

When the Jesuits began teaching classes at the newly built Gonzaga College in 1887 they had nearly 300 years of teaching experience from which to draw. The first Gonzaga catalog employs titles—such as "Prefect of Studies" and "Prefect of Discipline"—pulled directly from the Ratio Studiorum(1). The early college was quite different from today's University: for one instance, the Jesuits taught grade school, high school, and college courses all in the same building until 1922, and the high school remained on campus until 1954. Another example of a strong difference between the young Gonzaga and today's school shows in the structure of the curriculum—the courses were formed on European Jesuit models and the faculty was all Jesuit all the time. As Wilfred Schoenberg puts it in his 1963 history of Gonzaga, "Gonzaga was a Jesuit family business" (380)(2). A cursory look through the first 20 years of school catalogs reveals a bewildering and shifting organizational structure—particularly to those of us used to our current departmentalized University. The rigid division of disciplines that we take for granted today simply didn't apply then, and the faculty were expected to teach in a range of areas. For example, an incoming freshman in 1887 would have taken Rev. Robert Smith, S.J. for English and Grammar, as a sophomore might see him again teaching Algebra, and could have sat in a Smith class on poetry in his third year. By the 1893-94 school year Rev. Smith was listed as "Chaplain, Prefect of Studies, Professor of Philosophy, and Director of the Debating Society."

Such interdisciplinary mobility seems extreme by today's standards, but was completely in keeping

with the Jesuit Ratio, which calls for the deliberate integration of humanities, natural philosophy, religion, and professional skills. Claudio Aquaviva completed the Ratio Studiorum in 1599—the same year that Shakespeare's repertory company opened their new theater, "The Globe," with the premier of Julius Caesar. The Ratio codifies the broader humanistic aspirations of the Renaissance, meshing them into a program of study that widely expands the narrower, medieval scholastic agenda. For time's sake I have largely passed over and compressed the historical complexities of the Jesuit plan of education (assuming that most of you have the broad sense of it), but it is this legacy that continues to inform our current core offerings. As William Sullivan and Matthew Rosin claim in A New Agenda for Higher Education, "Higher education contributes most to society and is most faithful to its own deepest purposes when it seeks to use its considerable intellectual and cultural resources to prepare students for lives of significance and responsibility" (xv)(3). The question which I wish to pose today is whether the broad, humanistic, interdisciplinary model of the school's early years remains compatible with the specialization, secularization, and departmentalization of the University since World War II.

The birth of specialized departments at GU occurred in incremental stages, but has its strongest origins in Leo Robinson's tenure as president, from 1935-1942. Robinson not only argued for creating more specialized departments, but also for filling them with the best candidates that could be hired—whether lay or Jesuit. The proposed change met with some strong resistance by some within the Jesuit community who feared that it would change the very nature of the University. They were right—this era marks a sea change at Gonzaga, and started a trend where lay professors would soon outnumber Jesuits, and where discipline-specific departments would soon determine much of the curriculum. The benefits of this shift are undeniable: greater professionalism, stronger job applicants from an international pool, better currency and depth of knowledge in specific fields—the list could go on at some length. Most believe that this was the right—perhaps inevitable—choice for Robinson to make, and that his battle to change the structure of things helped make Gonzaga a viable, strong university in the second half of the 20th century. While I agree with this assessment, I would also suggest that there were some losses associated with the change. The early structure of a small group of coordinated, interdisciplinary generalists modeled for students the kind of breadth and interchange of knowledge that our current core still espouses. However, as departments have become increasingly specialized and isolated from one another, gaps are developing between disciplines that are getting harder to bridge.

One explicit goal of the core curriculum is that a wide base of liberal arts classes will develop and discipline students' "imagination, intelligence, and moral judgment." To further cite the Mission

Statement: “We hope that the integration of liberal humanistic learning and skills with specialized competence will enable our graduates to enter creatively, intelligently, and with deep moral conviction into a variety of endeavors, and provide leadership in the arts, the professions, business, and public service.” Implicit in this hope is the expectation that students will be able to draw parallels between differing disciplines, and to make meaningful connections from their core classes to the more specialized knowledge of their majors. The area at Gonzaga where we consciously model this kind of connection is in the thought and expression block. There are a number of linked courses in this group— but not consistently, most are not linked—and this block is an early point in the curriculum built on the concept of interdisciplinary exchange. Maybe this initial model of interdisciplinary interplay is sufficient to help students draw together the disparate elements of their later classes—we are, after all, a pattern-making, synthesizing species. But I have my doubts—the historical trend from a small faculty of integrated generalists to a large and sometimes fractured faculty of increasingly specialized niches has created new challenges to a cohesive core that require action.

The challenges are not only internal. Anti-intellectualism may have hit an all-time high during the Bush administration, and the attacks against traditional liberal arts programs—the humanities in particular—are growing stronger even as we in academia seem to be equivocating, and doubting our own reasons for existence. The Trade-school model is in ascendance, and justification for academics falls more and more on economic viability. Online universities now air television ads attacking what they term the “elitism,” failure, and inaccessibility of traditional colleges. Frank Donoghue’s book, The Last Professors: The Corporate University and the Fate of the Humanities, announces the death of the traditional humanities core in America, except in a few private universities that he claims will merely act as living museums dedicated to outmoded and irrelevant ideals(4). Those who believe in the traditional humanities are under attack, and combined with the current economic crisis, any university founded on that tradition may be in trouble. We need to confidently and clearly explain why our core is constructed as it is, and how it remains important and relevant to students in the new millennium. In essence, we need once again revise the Ratio Studiorum.

To be clear, I am not endorsing an effort to return to a faculty composed of extreme generalists—the benefits of departmental specialization for individual majors, and to the college as a whole, are (for the most part) desirable and healthy. The concept of the “renaissance man” is as extinct as the passenger pigeon—our contemporary reality seems to require increasingly narrowed focus, and departments (some more so than others) have had to respond to the trend. If we wish to continue the

traditional Jesuit model of education where we claim to "educate the whole person" we must react to the widening gaps between disciplines. When I ask professors (both at GU and other universities) how they would like their specialties to mesh with the other classes students are required to take, they often have no ready answer—they simply haven't thought about it in those terms. As profs begin to think about the question, several different versions of the core curriculum emerge. One concept of the core parallels the "box of chocolates" metaphor, where the various classes that compose the core are (figuratively) a sort of sampler-pack of disciplines that allow students to discover where their talents and preferences lie—the more flavors we offer, the better in this model. Even ignoring the Forest Gump overtones here, this model does not seem sophisticated and ambitious enough to live up to the core promises espoused in our mission statement. It may, however, be the reality in many respects. I believe that greater and greater specialization has increased the voids between differing disciplines and have made it more difficult to integrate "humanistic learning and skills with a specialized competence." For this reason, the classic metaphor of the humanities core as a broad foundation on which you can build a higher, more stable specialized structure seems to have a few cracks in it.

Perhaps more palatable than the "box of chocolates" trope is the "tool box" metaphor. In this figure, the core classes represent individual skills that students can employ in different situations, and that while they remain distinctly separate, they will all ultimately be useful at some point. This view rather nicely adopts and accepts the wide divisions between disciplines, and imagines a life well-lived as a kind of "bricolage," a constant shifting of frames of reference and approaches. One imagines an alumni facing some dilemma later in life: "hmmm, religion won't help here and history is right out—where's my Keats?" Even as I make fun of this approach, I have to acknowledge that all argument by analogy ultimately fails at some point, and that my personal preference is just as fragile. My favorite figure for the individual disciplines that make up the core is that of different lenses by which we can view the world—although a pile of different lenses really doesn't get us much further than a box of tools. Yet, if you will allow me to extend the trope, my argument for core formation and integration is analogous to the arrangement of different lenses in a microscope or telescope—that each differently shaped and sized lens can be made to work in conjunction with others to create a much more powerful apparatus. The proper relationship between the component parts should lead to a synergy that I would like to see in our core, to a clear cohesion that will allow us to boldly claim that this is what a university education should be. In the second portion of my presentation I will move to a specific example of how core classes might achieve this kind of integration.

Part 2: Logos in Mythos

Erik Schmidt

There are at least two reasons why the works of Shakespeare provide an unparalleled opportunity to explore the connection between philosophy and literature. First, his plays are historically situated in a significant period of philosophical upheaval. Epistemic questions about the limits of human understanding, metaphysical questions about the intelligibility of causal relations, and ethical questions about the existence of an underlying moral order dominate the Early Modern philosophical landscape and shape many of Shakespeare's plays. Second, Shakespeare's works possess an unprecedented capacity to heighten our insights into the human dimensions of those issues. The intersection of these two features raises the following question: how should we approach the epistemology of literary experience? To put this in classical terms: what is the logos in mythos?(5)
I will begin by setting aside the most common approaches to the philosophical significance of literature. Most of these efforts to explore the connection between philosophy and Shakespeare take one of two strategies(6). They either use the events and characters within the play to illustrate various philosophical issues or they attempt to find within the plays an argument or defense for substantive philosophical positions. An example of the first strategy would be Moulton's claim that Shakespeare's plays offer us a laboratory in which we work out the implications of various ethical theories within our imagination. An example of the second claim would be McGuinn's argument that Shakespeare's plays offer a defense of scientific naturalism.

The alternative approach I will defend today commits itself to the goal that the integration of philosophy and literature work in both directions. On the one hand it should help us do philosophy and not simply refer or allude to philosophical themes, arguments, texts. What can literary experience contribute to the pursuit of novel answers to the basic questions of philosophy? On the other, it should deepen our experience and aesthetic appreciation of literature.

In this presentation I will move toward that goal of mutual benefit by offering a rough account of the epistemology of literary experience and by illustrating that account through a philosophical reading of Macbeth that both enhances our understanding of the challenge of nihilism and deepens our experience of the tragic dimensions of Macbeth. By the end, I hope to have offered a basic philosophical justification for integrating Shakespeare and philosophy in research and the classroom.

I want to begin with Aristotle's observation in the Rhetoric that in some domains we accept the application of a principle that was successfully applied in other domains as a credible source of knowledge. While such inferences do not qualify as instances of valid inductive inference, they do count as a kind of induction(7). (Rhetoric, I.ii.13).

We might think that applying this inductive form of reasoning to literature simply turns literature into reasoning by example. But what we gain is the ability to clarify both the argumentative forms that lie behind certain literary experiences and the species of conclusion with which they can be associated. As Aristotle argues, the need for rhetoric occurs when defending contingent propositions or beliefs that could be other than they are but are, generally, true. It arises when we commit ourselves to a contingent truth through a process that obeys the forms of rhetorical reasonableness rather than the strict analytic forms of deductive or inductive argument. It arises in those domains of human experience that can be discussed and understood to count as reasonable, even if our reasoning does not take a deductive or inductive form.

The connection to literature, I want to suggest, is this. The forms of reasoning that shape literary experiences are parallel to but not reducible to the standard logical forms of deductive and inductive inference. So exploring the forms of reasoning behind literary experience is important to philosophy because similar forms of reasoning shape our experience and our commitments to various first principles(8). In the second part of my paper I will illustrate this claim by arguing that one lesson of the Gorgias is that only rhetorical forms of reasoning can be used to reject the first principles of nihilism and that our experience of Macbeth is shaped by patterns of reasoning which show why that rejection is reasonable.

In order to briefly characterize the forms of reasoning that arise within literary experience I will begin with its success conditions, which are closer to questions of fit or insight than truth. Once again, I want to draw on Aristotle and his observation that plot represents action through the unity of probability and necessity.

The pleasures of dramatic poetry, according to Aristotle, parallel the pleasures of animal dissection (1448b17). The plot orders and arranges the parts of a narrative by probability and necessity and so the pleasure of hearing a story is similar to the pleasure of making sense of the organs of an animal or events in a human life by revealing their internal logic or how they fit together(9). Plot, rather than

character, is the soul of tragedy and the unity of plot consist in the finding that the connections among the parts of a drama are connected either by necessity or probability. Even Hamartia, a term eventually used for 'sin' in the New Testament, is, for Aristotle, a mistake or error in judgment, a foolish action following self-deception, rather than a vice or character flaw, like ambition or pride(10). So the patterns of reasoning follow fit or insight with respect to the ordering of parts rather than strict correspondence or truth. That is why Aristotle claims that dramatic poetry is more scientific than history. It aims at understanding rather than a statement of fact.

Determinations of fit, however, rely on experience as well as deliberation. A plot can be described but not reduced to that description and this irreducible experience plays a role in the conclusions we draw. This is clear in the case of Shakespeare, where we engage in a similar form of reasoning about fit between a performance and the text. The unity found within a play can be expressed in multiple plausible ways, which opens the possibility for a failed performance. A performance can posit a mistaken unity through a performance (an error of commission) or it can fail to manifest a unity present within the text (an error of omission). This is not to suggest that the unity of a literary work is fixed or inflexible. The unity found in some works may well be more plastic that those found in other works, in the sense of having a wider range of equally successful embodiments of the unity found in the play. I am, however, committing myself to a form of realism about the limits of successful performance.

I would like to conclude part one by suggesting that identifying the forms of literary reasoning is important for both philosophical inquiry and for education.

For philosophical inquiry, the investigation of the role experience plays in our commitments to contingent truths or first principles rehabilitates various forms of belief formation that are non-analytic and therefore too often thought to be non-cognitive. I have in mind here recent work that has rehabilitated the importance of emotion and imagination. I want to suggest that an exploration of literary experience and the role it can play in our commitment to contingent beliefs and first principles should be considered a counterpart or possibly a correction to recent efforts to naturalize ethics.

In the classroom, such rehabilitation is largely unnecessary, since students rarely carry a philosopher's prejudice against non-analytic argument forms. What a philosophical exploration of

literature does in the classroom is cultivate a habit of evaluation, assessment and insight rooted in the process that culminates in our commitment to various contingent truths and first principles. It serves that goal well since the experience of a literary work is well contained, intentionally constructed, and sufficiently rich in detail to lead to the formation of belief.

In short, the approach I am proposing integrates philosophy and literature in a way that avoids didacticism, since its value is not reduced to the lesson or description, avoids instrumentalism since the literary experience of the text remains an irreducible source of value, and avoids the concerns of various theorists since it leaves open the tools brought to the text.

Part 3: Connecting Literature and Philosophy Via Macbeth

Michael Pringle

Before moving to the specific example of our linked course, I will briefly list what I believe to be the general benefits of better connectivity. Too many students view core classes as isolated hurdles that simply need to be cleared to reach an artificial finish line. First, framing core classes as integrated parts of a clearly articulated whole outlines an overarching educational plan that rejects the notions of core classes as barriers to what is "really important" in an education. Second, interdepartmental sharing reinforces respect for other disciplines, encourages interdisciplinary thinking, and invigorates our approach to long taught classes. Third, modeling interdisciplinary methods will help students bridge the gaps between core classes and unify their educational experience (professors sometimes have trouble doing this, so we cannot assume it is automatic for students). Finally, finding and working out connections with other disciplines will help professors better understand and assess their own relationship with, and contribution to, the core.

As for our specific goals in linking the Shakespeare and Ethics courses, we hope not only to explicitly model the integration of differing disciplinary approaches, but to achieve pedagogical advantages by so doing. For example, I generally begin the 200 level Shakespeare course with the pairing of Macbeth and A Midsummer Night's Dream. Erik begins his Ethics course with the differing ethical models of Plato and Aristotle. I spend much of the early part of the 15 week semester familiarizing students with early modern English and Shakespeare's figurative language, often wishing I had more time to spend on the larger ethical issues within the plays. While I could assign additional readings,

purely “philosophic” renderings of drama tend to strip its emotional, dramatic, and figurative power (for example, McGinn’s work), and students are already working through 8 plays and attendant criticism(11). Teaching close, careful attention to the formal aspects of drama does not leave much time to explore all its ethical complexities; however, linking students’ knowledge of ethical systems gained in Phil. 301 with the close reading skills gained in Engl. 205 should help render a more complex model for understanding Shakespeare’s comedies and tragedies. It is important to stress that neither Erik nor I intend to fundamentally change what we teach in our courses due to this link; rather we plan to change how we approach it, and hope to extend what we can accomplish during the semester by asking students to draw on skills gained in the other course. To better illustrate this course objective, I will now outline my rationale for the specific pairing of Macbeth and the Nicomachean Ethics(12).

By bringing a common background understanding of Aristotle’s account of virtue in the Nicomachean Ethics, students are in a better position to discuss the important relationships among judgment, emotion and character within Shakespeare’s plays. Macbeth is a good case in point. The witches begin the play muddying the moral waters by attempting to confuse good and evil: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair.”(13) Rather than a simple choice between right and wrong, the witches, and then Lady Macbeth, present Macbeth with a version of masculine virtues that compete with his moral certainty that killing Duncan is evil. These “virtues” consist of an excessive, “bloody, bold, and resolute” model of hyper-masculinity that resonates throughout the play, beginning with Duncan’s early praise of Macbeth for having “unseam’d [MacDonwald] from the nave to th’ chops,” and concluding with Malcolm’s praise of Macduff for tossing Macbeth’s bloody head at his feet. Literary gender studies of the last decade mesh well here with the added dimensions of differing ethical systems. In strong contrast to Aristotle’s “golden mean” Macbeth is a play that charts extremes, where vices, clothed as masculine virtues, triumph. Fame, valor, reputation, ambition, honor, and advancement are all linked to a cruel and martial model of masculine prowess prized in Scotland, yet in Aristotle’s view, each of these “spheres of action” can be taken to excess and do not lead to virtue in and of themselves. It is not then, the simple choice between right and wrong that engages our attention; rather, the equivocal lures that draw Macbeth to do what he knows in his heart to be foul are of most interest.

In scene 7 of Act I Macbeth speaks a visually vivid and imaginative soliloquy where he firmly decides there are no logical, emotional, or moral reasons for killing the king. Yet directly after, Lady Macbeth is able to turn him back to the murderous course by urging him to be a man. The figurative language with which she bludgeons her husband is some of the most disturbing and powerful in all of

literature—so powerful, in fact, that the most common thesis I get in student papers about the play is that it's all Lady M's fault. The gendering of two differing moral systems seems to throw students. Her insistence on a bold and bloody version of masculinity is implicit in her plea to be "unsexed" by "murthering ministers"; moreover, she fears the softer, "feminine" aspects in herself and her husband—the "milk of human kindness," must be purged before they can ascend to the throne. She implicitly feminizes compassion, conscience, moral deliberation, and religion, and the play subtly reinforces the distinction to show there is something rotten in Scotland. As one ethical model is feminized and devalued by the Macbeths, they tragically turn to the masculine model. Just as Lady Macbeth purges herself of femininity, so too is the play entirely and violently purged of its women. If Scotland is restored to order in Act V, it is at a terrible price: all the women are dead, and yet another king places an absolute trust in a bloody, bold, and resolute defender. The virtuous Macduff looks disturbingly like the virtuous Macbeth of Act I.

Unlike Aristotle's famous "tragic fall" Macbeth's plunge is more like a springboard dive into evil. It is an ongoing project in Engl. 205 to compare Aristotle's concept of "hamartia" with the falls and flaws of Shakespeare's tragic figures, but in the particular case of Macbeth, I believe it is clearly personal frailties—that non-Aristotelian concept some call the "tragic flaw"—that trump fate or cosmic mis-steps. The witches and Lady Macbeth offer an apparent, equivocal "good" in lieu of what Macbeth knows to be right, and yet he allows himself to be easily misled. As Frank Kermode argues, it is Macbeth's all-too-human weakness that makes him a cautionary figure: "Macbeth is an Everyman; and for him as for all habitual sinners the guilt that is at first a matter of choice becomes, as his will atrophies, a matter of fate" (1357)(14). The guilt is there from the beginning, because for all the apparent confusion and equivocation Macbeth never really doubts that he is making the wrong choice—this perverse willingness to be tempted, to be drawn to evil illustrates the most vulnerable and human aspects of the man in Act I, yet also explains what makes him such a brutal, hardened tyrant by play's end. By tapping into Aristotle's ethical distinctions and doctrine of the mean we can better tease out some of the major excesses in Macbeth, and better understand Shakespeare's dramatization of moral dissolution.

The Nicomachean Ethics should help to clarify some of the moral fog in Macbeth, and it is not hard to imagine how its privileging of the contemplative life might work into a discussion of Hamlet. Plato's distrust of poetry and second hand experience should mesh nicely with A Midsummer Night's Dream and Duke Theseus' dismissive claim that "The lunatic, the lover, and the poet/Are of imagination all compact." While I've just touched on 2 weeks of the semester, linking these two courses should

provide a mutually beneficial interplay of ideas throughout the semester. Philosophy and literature pair nicely, but we cannot assume that students can automatically apply the skills of one to the other, however "natural" the combination may seem.

Part 4: Nomos and Physis

Erik Schmidt

In this section of the paper I would like to illustrate the account I sketched in part one by looking at Macbeth in light of Plato's Gorgias. The central theme of the Gorgias is the antithesis betweem Nomos and Physis as it relates to the practice of philosophy and education. One side we find Nomos, a conception of value on which the good is legal, customary, or stipulated and ultimately instrumental. On the other, we have Physis, or a conception of value on which the good is based on a natural order that establishes limits and inherent value.

The Gorgias explores the nature of argument and education as practiced and understood as a techne – a practice organized by physis – or a knack – a practice rooted in nomos. The plot of the dialogue follows the way in which a discussion about the nature of reasoned argument between interlocutors informed by these two accounts of value ultimately dissolves. It is, I would argue, a philosophical tragedy ending in the death of reason.

To develop this contrast let's take a central look at the problem facing Socrates. How can you reason with someone who recognizes only nomos? What would the argument look like? The problem facing Socrates is that you can't ultimately use reason to convince someone to recognize physis. You can't use reason since any reasons you offer will be instrumentalized. The nomic approach to argument endorsed by Gorgias and Callicles does not recognize the internal or natural good of truth that orders it and so Socrates is reduced to the use of concrete examples, stories, myths, and metaphors.

It's instructive, for example, that Callicles views philosophy as purely instrumental, a pursuit suitable for children in school, because it teaches effective expression and persuasion. Philosophy from an instrumental perspective appears abstract, impractical, naïve or even silly. It may be important for the acquisition of skill but it cannot be seen as a general discipline capable of pursuing first principles or identifying the good for humanity. Without a commitment to physis, reasoned argument and

education becomes a knack rather than an art and one skill or competency leads to the next with no inherent order and all one can hope for is to hit an arbitrary outcome set for the practice.

The folly of a purely instrumental approach cannot be established by progressive argument, for such a progression presupposes the very order-conferring value one is hoping establish as a reasonable commitment. The only alternative is appeal to experience and so Socrates turns to the metaphor of the leaky jar. The view that all values are nomos reduces human flourishing to a matter of maximizing the prospects of preference satisfaction, which implies the happiest person is one who cultivates the strongest appetites and is capable of satisfying them(15). Such a person, Socrates claims, would be a leaky jar, with just as much flowing out and lost as being poured in through pleasure. He would experience the hollow pleasure of someone who never stops itching but can scratch to their hearts content. The instrumentalization of value creates a world of empty accomplishment because each goal, once achieved, is transformed into an instrumental step to the next goal. The problem of a world filled with nomic or instrumental value is horror of nihilism, or as I will argue now, turning now to Macbeth, the nihilism of a futureless tomorrow.

To make that argument I want to focus on how Macbeth chooses to kill Duncan, how that choice can be understood as rejection of physis for nomos, and how that reading illuminates the tragic dimension of the events that follow. I will conclude that our experience of the horrors of nomic nihilism or absolute instrumentalism clarify why it is reasonable to reject nihilism and commit ourselves to natural goods despite the absence of an explicit argument.

Macbeth’s first soliloquy, contemplating Duncan’s murder, shows tremendous awareness of three arguments, all rooted in Physis. The first is that the murder cannot accomplish his goal because “evenhanded justice” will lead others to avenge Duncan’s death and that there is a basic difference in kind between that just violence and the unjust violence he is contemplating.

Second is the obligation to protect a kinsmen, sovereigns and guests. Duncan is all three. The argument presumes a moral order, and to violate it is in some sense to violate oneself, which is why it’s important to see that Macbeth’s eventual punishment consist in his consciousness of separation from those who have been dear to him, and whose welfare has been intertwined with his own.

Third is an imagined drama. Duncan has been a good king, “So clear in his great office, that his

virtues will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued against the deep damnation of his taking-off." His virtues take the form of physic values. They are rooted in the world and what is real and carry the power to revenge Duncan's death.

Macbeth concludes that he has no reason (physis) to kill Duncan, only" vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself…." which in this case involves the move to Nomos, instrumentalized value and Callicles.

So how does Lady Macbeth undo this reasoning? She begins by not addressing Macbeth's desire to celebrate his recent heroic victory. On a purely instrumental value system, what has been achieved becomes the instrument to the next outcome. There is no reason to wait. She then raises the idea that Macbeth has already pledged himself to murder. The move here, interestingly, is the Hobbesean move to take a nomic value (strategic coordination through a pledge) and treat it as if it were a physic value (an oath or promise).

But what is this pledge? Macbeth has not explicitly promised to kill Duncan although he shares her commitment to the goal of becoming king. Lady Macbeth says that Macbeth is not without ambition, but lacks the "illness should attend it." That ambition "should" be attended by release from moral restraint is a central claim made by Callicles and Gorgias in the Gorgias, where Socrates maintains that the worst fate to befall a human being is not to become the victim of a tyrant—terrible as that may be—but to become a tyrant. The soul of the tyrant makes one the enemy of everyone and forces you to perform acts that are not your own. The life of the tyrant is barren of every good thing that might have tempted Macbeth to become a tyrant, but the actions that made him tyrant make it impossible for him safely to relinquish or abandon his tyranny.

Looking more carefully, Lady Macbeth says that what Macbeth "wouldst highly" he wouldst also "holily," implying that he renounces the tyrannical role praised by Callicles. She says that he would not play false, and yet would wrongly win. What does this mean? If someone will not play false, how can he wrongly win? The contradiction, as she sees it, is that he does not abandon the end, even as he recoils from the means. Her task, therefore, is to fire his passion for the end so as to overcome his repugnance for the means. She says that he fears to do what must be done, even though he would not wish it undone, if it were done. She will "chastise" with the "valor" of her tongue this weakness, this essential reluctance to accept the instrumentalism required for his pursuit, which impedes him

from “the golden round.” The idea of chastisement implies punishment for wrongdoing, and her “valor” a power for good. The moral order appears, in this speech, as an obstruction to Calliclean virtue. Physis becomes an obstacle to what they both want.

People often see Macbeth in terms of a fatal flaw: ambition. I am arguing here for the more Aristotelian notion of hamartia or tragic flaw which is not a character trait or vice but a poor decision that leads to a fitting end that illuminates character. So the mistake Macbeth makes is that he drops the commitment to physis because it presents an obstacle to his connection to Lady Macbeth and the crown, which both appear to be on the Nomos side of that ancient divide. But his choice to join that side of the ancient antithesis is tragically self-defeating, for it undoes the natural good of the connection that motivates the choice.

From this point onward the world of physis recedes into the futureless tomorrow for Macbeth. From here on his, “desire is got without content” And notice the dual meaning of that term, without contentedness as well as without substance. He quickly becomes Socrates’ leaky jar where everything is experienced merely as a means and never an end – once the goal is achieved it transforms into simply another means with no sense of connection to the natural goodness of one’s accomplishment. From this point on there is no rest for Macbeth, who endlessly relegates the value of what he accomplishes to the future or puts his accomplishments into a context that is broader than the one capable of conferring meaning or value upon it.

This is why Macbeth is haunted by Banquo’s corpse when Lady Macbeth mistakenly thinks he is suffering from guilt. Corpses haunt him because a corpse can’t be refashioned into a further means. The body shows not simply that killing is wrong, but that murder cannot be viewed merely as a means. The question Macbeth raises at the banquet is whether he is brave enough to face the finality of his action. (III.iv.57-9) Blood is where Macbeth meets reality – in a world in which victory is empty, the blood of the act remains and all that can be gained must lie in the future, with one’s children.

All of this brings us to a final set of parallel scenes. In the first, Macduff hears of his family’s death. This is the longest scene in the play because Shakespeare must create a space within the vacuum of Macbeth’s future-tense nihilism for genuine human connection. Macduff doesn’t postpone or avoid the tragic news. He speaks in clear present tense even when Ross avoids speaking directly by referring to what he has already said. He avoids future oriented emotions like anger or revenge and concentrates

on the loss and his attachment. Malcolm, who has no children, can't understand and pushes him to revenge the deaths, to which Macduff replies, "I shall do so, but I must also feel it like a man/I cannot but remember such things were/that were most precious to me; did Heaven look on, and Would not take their part?" (IV.iii.215-24) His feeling or emotions upset his categories (Feel it like a man… I could play the woman with mine eyes.) He is impacted through his connection with the event – the opposite of the violence against the unresisting bodies of M's murders.

The contrast to Macduff is Macbeth's famous tomorrow soliloquy. Even mourning Lady Macbeth's death must be pushed into the future, since he is preparing for battle. He begins by complaining that she died at a time of war when he can't mourn her properly. The petty pace isn't day in and out drudgery but tomorrow, and tomorrow and tomorrow. It signifies nothing because it points to non-existence or a non real future. This is the hollow end in which the two emotions he was capable of experiencing evaporate: his love for LM and fear(16).

The end of the play is equally fitting. Having selected the futureless nihilism of nomos, Macbeth is undone not by the natural order of physis but by the unnatural: killed by Macduff, of artificial birth, and an artificial Birnam wood marching toward him.

My argument here is that our experience of Macbeth does real philosophical work by clarifying the connection between a purely instrumental account of value and nihilism. It provides a literary experience that gives rhetorical force to Socrates' leaky jar argument by enabling us to see the nature of the experiences that lead us to commit to physic value and the importance of avoiding the purely nomic forms of reasoning associated with Callicles and Gorgias. By reading Macbeth in light of the Gorgias we see how, ironically, an instrumental approach which promises greater power and control can make one vulnerable to manipulation, precisely because one is prepared to do whatever someone can persuade you or deceive you into thinking is necessary to achieve one's end.

My goal today has been to illustrate one model for integrating literature and philosophy, one that emerges from an attempt to outline an epistemology of literary experience by identifying the forms of reasoning that shape a literary experience. The account I am proposing asks both what literary experience can contribute to the pursuit of novel answers to the basic questions of philosophy and what philosophy can contribute to our experience of literature. I believe such an account provides one model for integrating literature both in and out of the classroom.

NOTES

1.Aquaviva, Claudio. Ratio Studiorum. 1599. Trans. Claude Parvur, S. J. Saint Lois: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2005. Print.

2.Schoenberg, Wilfred. Gonzaga. Spokane: Lawton Printing, 1963. Print.

3.Sullivan, William & Matthew Rosin. A New Agenda for Higher Education: Shaping a Life of the Mind for Practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008. Print.

4.Donoghue, Frank. The Last Professors: The Corporate University and the Fate of the Humanities. Fordham UP, 2008. Print.

5.Since the Greeks identified Mythos with narrative in general, without distinguishing between fictional and nonfictional narratives, my argument here may have broader implications for narrative forms of reasoning in general. I do not pursue those implications here since I am limiting myself to literature in general and drama in particular. I will also not address the question of whether a distinction should be drawn between the forms of narrative reasoning that characterize our experience of drama from our experience of literature.

6.Most notably, C. McGinn, Shakespeare's Philosophy: Discovering the Meaning behind the Plays (New York: Harper Collins, 2006), S. Cavell, Disowning Knowledge in Six Plays of Shakespeare (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), T. Zamir, Double Vision: Moral Philosophy and Shakespearean Drama (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), A.D. Nuttall, Shakespeare the Thinker (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007), R. G. Moulton, The Moral System of Shakespeare: A popular Illustration of Fiction as the Experimental Side of Philosophy, E. Dadlez, What's Hecuba to Him? (University Park PA, Penn State UP, 1997), F. Palmer, Literature and Moral Understanding (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), A. Harbage, As They Like It: An essay on Shakespeare and Morality (New York: Macmillian, 1947), and D. Novitz, Learning from Fiction (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1987).

7.Rhetoric, I.ii.14

8.I would also suggest, along the lines proposed by Martha Nussbaum and Stuart Hampshire, these forms of rhetorical reasoning play a prominent role in the forms of ethical deliberation that Aristotle associates with Phronesis in the Nicomachean Ethics. If that is true, then the forms of reasoning that partly constitute our engagement with literary works would be even closer to moral deliberation. Literary engagement would then come to count as a form of moral reasoning. I will not pursue this much stronger suggestion here.

9."Relate not things that have happened, but things that may happen, i.e., that are possible in

accordance with probability or necessity." (Poetics 51b1) Aristotle begins with the proviso that tragedy be the mimesis of action (Poetics 1449b25,36; 1450a15)

10."Nor undergoes a change to misfortune because of vice or wickedness, but because of some error (hamartia) and who is one of those people with a great reputation and good fortune." 53a10-11

11.McGinn, Collin. Shakespeare's Philosophy: Discovering the Meaning Behind the Plays New York: Harper Collins, 2006. Print.

12.Aristotle. The Nicomachean Ethics. Trans. David Ross. New York: Oxford Univerity Press, 1980. Print.

13.All quotes are from The Riverside Shakespeare. New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1997. Print.

14. Kermode, Frank. "Introduction to Macbeth." The Riverside Shakespeare. New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1997. Print.

15.This is the point at which the ancient discussion over nomos and physis overlaps with more recent discussions of the conceptual adequacy of [economic conceptions] of value that rest on comparison, where the basic evaluative relations must be better than, worse than, or equal.

16.(V.v.18-19) "I have almost forgot the taste of fears."

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