
Riddled Romance: Kingship and Kinship in *Pericles*

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A plethora of romance conventions form the basic structure of *Pericles*, among them a wandering hero, a virtuous heroine, shipwrecks, storms, pirates, and persons of royal blood who will be reunited with families and reinstated within their royal class. There is no doubt that the play constructs a fantasy world of romance in which the good triumph and regeneration is realized. And yet, as satisfying as the ending of *Pericles* can be in performance, the events that have transpired between the time of Pericles' strange encounter in Antioch at the play's beginning and the happy reunions of the ending do not work on all levels toward a tidy romance closure; the emotion of father, daughter, and mother reunited—a strategy to effect that closure—does not eradicate the contradictions within the text which seem to resist romance.

The issue of whether *Pericles* ought to be classified as a romance at all has occupied many critics, who rightfully find the generic label confining and prefer the term “late play.”¹ However, approaching *Pericles* with a full awareness of its romance conventions paradoxically reveals the play as much more than a romance: a play that uses generic conventions to challenge the basic assumptions—generic, political, and social assumptions—of romance. Shakespeare employs the dynamics and paradigms of romance to present a critique of naturalized representations of power and patriarchy and to place them under interrogation. He addresses familiar discourses and reverses their dynamics to emphasize that they are not as natural as we assume them to be—inside the romance world and perhaps outside it as well.

My point of entry into romance convention is the polarization of good and evil—clear-cut in many romances, but interestingly muddled by ambiguity in *Pericles*—ambiguity that ultimately challenges romance assumptions about royalty and family relationships. For example, in the Epilogue to *Pericles*, Gower re-

calls the beginning scene of the play as he compares Antiochus and his daughter to Pericles, Thaisa, and Marina:

In Antiochus and his daughter you have heard
Of monstrous lust the due and just reward.
In Pericles, his queen and daughter, seen,
Although assail'd with fortune fierce and keen,
Virtue preserv'd from fell destruction's blast,
Led on by heaven and crowned by joy at last. (Epil.1-2)²

The moralizing Gower,³ placing vice and virtue as binary opposites, assures the audience that good has been rewarded and evil punished; all is well as this romance closes. Speaking of Pericles in the same vein as Gower, Geoffrey Bullough voices a view not yet entirely superseded in *Pericles* criticism: "Nothing mars the simple antinomies of the play, where all is black or white, the bad very bad, the good very good" (372). But Gower's is an older voice, speaking from a distant age; the absolutes of his medieval narrative are complicated by a new re-enactment on the early modern stage. The position of characters as polarized does not withstand a close analysis in *Pericles*: the notion of good and evil as binary oppositions deconstructs at the same time the romance conventions are un-written.⁴ The world of *Pericles* is not a world of black and white; it is, for Pericles and for the audience, a world of confusion, of running, of searching and never finding—of exploring, but never clearly defining, goodness. While the play may clearly state what is wrong or evil, the alternative remains undetermined. It is in this way that the incest scene at Antioch connects to the rest of the play—not because it stands in contrast morally, but because, through the riddle it presents, it underlies all that follows.

When Pericles has deciphered the riddle given him by Antiochus, he realizes his dilemma: if he pretends not to know the answer, he will die; if he reveals his understanding that Antiochus and his daughter are incestuous, he surmises correctly that he will be killed anyway. Caught in a nightmare world where wrong is wrong and right is not right—and also dangerous—Pericles can do nothing but flee. The wandering hero of the romance becomes a running man who escapes danger, but he cannot escape other worlds in which wrong is apparent and right is undefined. The last lines of the riddle challenge Pericles to make sense of the inverted relationships:

He's father, son, and husband mild;
I mother, wife, and yet his child:
How they may be, and yet in two,
As you will live, resolve it you. (I.i.71-72)

He easily discovers the incest implied, but in the personal relationships of his textual life he will need to learn to resolve his own underlying Oedipal urges in an appropriate way. Psychoanalytic critics offer strong arguments for the far-reaching effects of Pericles' confrontation with the incestuous pair. Coppélia Kahn is among those who insist that the incest that infects Antioch leaves neither Pericles nor the play untainted:

[T]he father-daughter incest of the riddle is a projection of the son's desire to possess the mother and is associated with Pericles as a son.... Pericles' episodic voyages from place to place, and his successive experiences of loss, are symbolic confrontations with oedipal desire and oedipal fear. The recurrent father figures he encounters represent his continuing difficulty in resolving his image of the father and his position in relation to him. (230-31)

Maria Prendergast actually sees it as a "deformation of the Freudian scene": rather than a "classic Oedipal moment [that] develops out of the father's competition with his son, *Pericles* is, instead, a father/son conflict over possession of the daughter" (55). And Marc Shell, in his study of incest in *Measure for Measure*, sees an undercurrent of incestuous desire throughout *Pericles*: "During the course of *Pericles* the hero discovers within himself the desire for father-daughter incest that he abhorred in Antiochus" (66).

Pericles must not only resolve the riddle but also resolve his own internal conflict, and on this metaphorical, psychological level, the riddle remains unsolved; he knows the wrong answer but never discovers the right one. The ambiguity initially interjected by the riddle also permeates the text through the moral and political values encountered by Pericles on his travels. In the world of *Pericles* evil is clearly discernible—for example, through a father like Antiochus, who commits incest, or through a surrogate mother like Dionyza, who arranges to have her ward murdered. Good, however, is not clearly defined but remains clouded by ambiguity. The paradigm constructed by the search for the answer to the riddle, where the wrong answer is clear but the right answer is elusive, is apparent throughout the rest of the play in the clarity of evil and the ambiguous nature of good.

In worlds where evil is discernible but good is never sufficiently defined—Antioch, Tyre, Tharsus, Pentapolis, and Mytilene—and in the sets of family relationships (Antiochus and his daughter, Simonides/Thaisa/Pericles, and finally Pericles/Thaisa/Marina)—a variety of settings and situations present themselves as opportunities for exploring two closely connected issues: rulership and family bonds. The reunification of the family as an aspect of romance endings encodes and idealizes familial bonds; family losses are restored, often supernaturally, and the emphasis on restoration reinforces the idea that the nuclear family unit is the

natural state of things. Outside the romance world cultural practices are also made to seem natural; as Jonathan Dollimore puts it, “Through legitimation the existing social order—that is, existing social relations—are ‘naturalized,’ thus appearing to have the unalterable character of natural law” (7). The continuation of the status quo depends on sustaining a reverence for family bonds; and romances in general assume that ties of blood are spiritual, mystical, and indissoluble. The audience responds approvingly as a lost daughter or wife is restored to her father or husband; the touching reunion scene in *Pericles* can move the audience in just this way. But other episodes in this play open a space for questioning those assumptions and leave room for an alternative view: that family bonds and relationships are not natural but are social constructs necessary for procreation. Intertwined with the concerns of kinship is a running comment on kingship; in a play about royalty, family relationships are inherently political; as Leonard Tennenhouse remarks, “If they are about nothing else, romances deliberate the relationship between family and government” (171).⁵ Thus, an exploration of family directly parallels an examination of rulership. Neither line of inquiry leads to a definition of an ideal: examples of evil abound, but if we seek the model for goodness that we might expect in a romance, to which king, court, or family do we look? The answer to that riddle remains elusive in this play.

Early in the play, as he recounts the unfortunate episode at Antioch, Pericles identifies the practical purpose of his quest:

I went to Antioch,
Whereas thou know'st, against the face of death
I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty,
From whence an issue I might propagate,
Are arms to princes and bring joys to subjects. (I.ii.70-74)

“Propagation” motivates Pericles, and the re-birth he will later experience through his reunion with Marina will be the kind of “eternal” life one hopes to find through the birth of children and the continuation of self through the family line.

Like most romances, *Pericles* centers on a royal family in which the desire for children becomes an imperative dynastic need. Pericles’ need for “royal issue” is not mentioned in the sources for *Pericles*, but in Shakespeare’s play the political implications are emphasized; his ultimate union with Thaisa will make him “heir apparent” in Pentapolis, where he will rule at the end of the play (Bergeron 136). So, for a combination of political and personal reasons, Pericles desires a wife who will bring him children, but his quest is marked by a series of losses until at last he is re-united with both wife and daughter. Of the two reunions, the more memorable in production and more significant to the resolution of the play is that of

Pericles and Marina, for it is she who brings the redemption and victory of life over death—an element of the expected romance ending. However, she accomplishes the re-birth through the promise of his posterity: there is no talk of after-life, but a daughter and a marriage will mean the fulfillment of the quest he begins at Antioch. Pericles' initial repulsion at the revelation of incest in the first scene matches Gower's, since both condemn it on moral grounds. Violating the strongest of social taboos, the incest in *Pericles* shocks on more than one level: it shatters bonds which society sees as inviolable; it disturbs Pericles in a way that will render him ineffective in his roles as husband, father, and king; and it impacts the whole of the political kingdom in which it takes place. The physical violation of a daughter is patriarchal power in a most abusive form, but the abuse is the very act which destroys the patriarchy; as Tennenhouse puts it, "One would be hard put to find a clearer violation of the patriarchal principle even though only a patriarch can commit such a violation" (176). When Antiochus keeps his daughter to himself, killing all her suitors, he eliminates the possibility of his own legitimate posterity. As Pericles observes, kings are beyond censure—they are "earth's Gods"—but the act that the king can carry out because he is king is the same that will negate legitimate succession.⁶

The fact that incest can occur at all argues against the concept that the father-daughter bond is "natural" and inviolable in a way that other male-female relations are not. Here the play demonstrates that what we consider a natural bond is actually a social construct: as Freud tells us, "Respect for this barrier is essentially a cultural demand made by society" (*Transformations* 225). Antiochus' act, despicable as it is, is not so because it is unnatural or because it transgresses natural bonds, but because through a violation of a social contract, a member of the social order is left unprotected and abused.

After Pericles leaves the kingdom of Antioch, which has been affected by the personal relationship of its ruler, he enters a kingdom in which the condition of the state is seen to affect personal relationships. Dionyza and Cleon, rulers of famine-ridden Tharsus, stand helplessly by as their subjects starve to death. Earlier, in Antioch, a child is depicted as eating mother's flesh; here, in a reverse image Cleon speaks of the lengths to which hunger may drive a human being:

Those mothers who, to nuzzle up their babes
Thought nought too curious, are ready now
To eat those little darlings whom they lov'd.
So sharp are hunger's teeth, that man and wife
Draw lots who first shall die to lengthen life. (I.iv.42-46)

The image of baby-eating mothers suggests the unnerving possibility that devastating economic conditions could violate bonds of kinship which we like to think of as indissoluble.

As a head of state, Pericles' finest moment occurs at Tharsus; Cleon and Dionyza expect to be conquered in their vulnerability, but instead they are saved by Pericles' generous gift of grain.⁷ The incident shows Pericles' potential for leadership, but as Stuart M. Kurland points out, Pericles "never acts with similar resolution to his own people" (234). The action of the play seems to suggest that as Pericles moves on from place to place, he carries the emotional burden that he has acquired at Antioch. The upsetting confrontation with the incestuous Antiochus and his daughter has turned a quest into a flight; he continues throughout the play to escape—first from Antiochus, and, later, unconsciously, from the responsibilities of kingship and parenthood. For Pericles, the tempest which tosses him about at sea externalizes a troubled, internal state.

An uneasy Pericles, then, washes up on the shores of Pentapolis; he keeps his identity hidden and holds back, assessing Simonides and Thaisa carefully, long past the time such caution seems necessary. What Pericles apparently sees, but which many critics have not seen, is the similarity between this father and daughter and the first incestuous pair. Underlying their relationship is an Oedipal attraction which is, unlike that of Antiochus and his daughter, satisfactorily resolved. The dissembling that Simonides enjoys, the pretended anger he directs toward Pericles, his assumed opposition to the match: all are part of an appropriate expression of his sublimated feelings. Mark Taylor's statement that "desire [that is] both impermissible and inadmissible, expresses itself in very strange behavior" (Taylor x) best explains the psychological necessity of Simonides' subterfuge. Many have seen Simonides as the ideal father and the ideal king; his relationship with his daughter does seem to come closest to a healthy resolution of Oedipal conflicts and allows an appropriate affection between the two, but the picture of the ideal king is undercut by the fishermen in the preceding scene, whose observations comment negatively upon the state of affairs in the country ruled by good King Simonides.⁸ In Pentapolis, beggars are whipped—a fact that seems to surprise Pericles, and incidentally, a condition that existed in England at the time. Here the world is like the sea; fishes live as men do: "the great ones eat up the little ones" (II.i.28-29). A fish that is caught "hangs in the net, like a poor man's right in the law" (II.i.115-16), and since "from the finny subject of the sea / These fishers tell the infirmities of men" (II.i.48-49), it becomes obvious that the realm of Pentapolis is not without its social and economic problems.

This social comment problematizes the picture of Simonides as the kind of ideal figure expected in romance; but if Simonides has not stilled the rumblings of discontent in his realm, he has at least resolved the Oedipal rumblings which seem to incapacitate Pericles. In this sense, he could benefit from Simonides as a role model; but even though Pericles sees his own father in Simonides, he does not emulate him. In Pericles' family relationships and in his kingship, this romance hero leaves something to be desired.

Even when Pericles is finally married to Thaisa, he remains in some respects distanced, as can be evidenced at the moment of her death. Although we see him pray to the gods and express concern for her while she is below deck, giving birth to their child, his grief at her death is abbreviated compared to that expressed in the sources of the play.⁹ In Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, the Pericles figure swoons and weeps through many lines of poetry (Bullough 399). In Twine's *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures* the Pericles figure vehemently opposes the sailor who wants to throw the body of his dead queen overboard: "What saiest thou varlet? Wouldest thou have me cast this bodie into the sea, which received me into house and favour, when I was in miserie and drenched in the water, wherein I lost ship, goods & all?" (Bullough 446). In contrast Pericles and the sailor in Shakespeare's play have this brief exchange:

I. Sail. Sir, your queen must overboard; the sea works high, the wind is loud, and will not lie till the ship be clear'd of the dead.

Per. That's your superstition.

I. Sail. Pardon us sir; with us at sea it hath been still observ'd; and we are strong in custom. Therefore briefly yield 'er, for she must overboard straight.

Per. As you think meet. Most wretched queen! (III.i.47-54)

When Pericles' grief and his reluctance to have his wife thrown overboard are noticeably minimized in this way, the audience is denied the picture of a close marital bond. Thaisa, upon her recovery in Ephesus, inexplicably assumes that she cannot find Pericles, so she decides to become a nun in Diana's temple:

But since King Pericles,
My wedded lord, I ne'er shall see again,
A vestal livery will I take me to,
And never more have joy. (III.iv.7-10)

Neither does she choose to return to her father's house. Her separation from Pericles is source-derived and may be a necessary plot device as Hallett Smith suggests, but her immediate reconciliation to her circumstances, in which her ties with male family members are severed, does nothing to reinforce the concept of a "natural" need for familial bonds.¹⁰

While the lack of sustained affection between husband and wife is part of the questioning of family relationships in this play, Pericles' relationship with his daughter makes an even stronger comment, diminishing both the notion of natural family ties and the image of Pericles as romance hero. Pericles abandons Marina in Tharsus, an action for which there is no justification: "Why Pericles should leave Marina in Tharsus for fourteen years is surely a more difficult question than what prompts him to leave her there at all. Why should Tharsus be better able than Tyre 'to give her Princely training?'" (Taylor 56).¹¹ Moreover, Pericles' neglect nearly causes her death.

Although some see in Pericles a patience that qualifies him for sainthood or view him as a "kingly Everyman—a Job who must be tried by loss and adversity" (Gesner 88-89), I concur with those who judge Pericles to be irresponsibly passive.¹² Even though he endures suffering, the suffering itself does not ennoble him. Gower praises Pericles as an illustration of "Virtue preserv'd from fell destruction's blast" (V.iii.Epil. 89), but as John Dean points out, Gower says "preserved . . . and not developed" (304). Pericles himself personifies passivity, not patience, in his own description of a man at the mercy of the sea and of fate:

A man whom both the waters and the wind,
In that vast tennis-court, hath made the ball
For them to play upon, entreats you pity him.... (II.i.59-61)¹³

Pericles' inactivity leads not to martyrdom, but to abdication of his roles as father and king. Pericles abandons his kingdom as well as his daughter; he avoids rulership, both as he flees from Antiochus and, later, as he retreats to his ship, deep in guilt-induced depression over the loss of Marina. His unkempt hair and beard "an equivalent of sackcloth and ashes" (Taylor 55), Pericles sinks in retreat, and by the time Marina finds him, he is completely non-functional, a helpless victim of fate—or of his own inaction.

Marina, in her activity, provides a contrast to the passive Pericles. She has patience but also the capacity to act when necessary. Because she is active, in fact "militant" in the defense of her virtue, she does not allow the evil around her to affect her as Pericles has done (White 128-29). Marina's goodness is never in question; in fact, she is too good to be true. Her protestations to her would-be murderer, Leonine, often elicit laughter in performance; she says: "I never kill'd a mouse, nor hurt a fly; / I trod upon a worm against my will, / But I wept for't" (IV.i.77-79). A self-consciousness of romance convention is evidenced here; as the play parodies itself, the convention is challenged rather than reinforced.

Like her father, Marina has been compared to a saint; her trials in the brothel relate her specifically to stories of saints' lives,¹⁴ but unlike St. Agnes and others

who were protected by divine intervention, Marina saves herself. Marina not only lacks a father's protection, but under the "care" of a triumvirate, Bawd, Boulton, and Pandar, who support one of the oldest patriarchal institutions, prostitution, she remains chaste. The background of the brothel is often viewed as a foil for Marina's virtue, but the social structure of the brothel can also be seen as a replication of the family unit. The bawd and Pandar are here depicted as man and wife, trying to sell their "daughter" Marina to the highest bidder. Pericles has earlier set out to "purchase" a bride, who, as a commodity has been spoiled for the marriage market by having been "played on before her time." Marina's virginity is the commodity that brings a high price on either market, prostitution or marriage.

Albeit the brothel in *Pericles* is set in a comic scene and has little to do with the reality of brothels, life there, as dramatized in this play, affords Marina more freedom than a traditional family structure. In the brothel, Marina's education and intelligence, as much as her virtue, preserve her chastity. Her eloquence even redeems others.¹⁵ Her education enables her to save herself, and later support herself by teaching children of noble families. Although some of her pursuits are of a traditionally "feminine" category—sewing, dancing, playing the lute—she also appears to have an education in classical rhetoric; she is the educated aristocratic lady of Renaissance humanism. She is also the only young, unmarried, Shakespearean female character to assume a functioning, self-supporting social role outside a protected family environment, without the aid of a disguise. The confines of a traditional family setting would never have afforded her such latitude, but her association with the marginal characters of the brothel allows her to play an alternative role. This is quite unbelievable; as Gower tells of her escape from the brothel and her independent success, he insists, "The story says" (V.Pro.2). The fantasy of romance works here to provide an opening for Marina in the otherwise closed systems of both the brothel and the social world she would ordinarily inhabit.

Marina's experience as a free agent ends with her reunion with Pericles, for almost as soon as they are reunited, Pericles promises her in marriage to Lysimachus. Lorraine Helms remarks that the Marina who has talked her way out of the brothel has no words to speak about this event in her life (331). Like the silence of Isabel in *Measure for Measure*, Paulina in *A Winter's Tale*, and Sylvia in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Marina's lack of response does not necessarily bespeak consent. The arrangement satisfies the romance convention of marriage and the promise of rebirth through future children, but the doubt engendered by silence opposes the closure such a union might otherwise bring. A marriage is disappointing since it denies the possibility of a long overdue relationship between Pericles and his

daughter. Marina will never know him, since they will rule in different lands. Many see the reunion scene as restorative for Pericles since they believe it sets to rest his unresolved Oedipal desires. Pericles' description of his re-birth does recall the role inversions in Antiochus' riddle in the earlier scene: Pericles says to Marina, "O, come hither, / Thou that begets't him that did thee beget..." (Vi.196). But the immediate marriage Pericles arranges between Lysimachus and Marina can be seen as another of Pericles' escapes; the absence of his daughter will allow him to avoid ever confronting the Oedipal problem.

The marriage of Marina and Lysimachus is especially displeasing because the character of the bridegroom is suspect. It is difficult to accept the critical stance that regards the brothel-frequenting Lysimachus as suitable after having been redeemed by Marina.¹⁶ Even though he recognizes in her qualities he would desire in a wife, he considers Marina unworthy of him until he knows she is a princess: "She's such a one that, were I well assur'd / Came of gentle kind and noble stock, / I'd wish no better choice, and think me rarely wed" (Vi.67-69). When compared to other romance royalty like Florizel, Ferdinand, or Imogen, who will marry without regard for noble blood, Lysimachus seems shallow, if not opportunistic.

Pericles, without really knowing Lysimachus, remarks that he "seems noble." Pericles' hasty gift of a newly found daughter assures his posterity, but adds to his own list of questionable acts as a father. The marriage also indicts the family system in this play; while in the brothel, as unlikely as it may seem, Marina can avoid Lysimachus and others like him; once again under the "care" of a father, she cannot, but must submit to a choice made for her by her father.

Despite his failings as a father and a ruler, Pericles remains a victim of misfortune, and the audience retains sympathy for him. The reunion scene can be a moving moment in the play as Pericles is restored by Marina. She is an agent of redemption, bringing to Pericles the promise of posterity and effecting an almost magical transformation. When a vision of Diana leads Pericles to his lost wife, Thaisa, the family is restored to wholeness, and so is Pericles; at the same time, the political world will at last be ordered as two kingdoms are united: Pericles and Thaisa will rule in one and Marina and Lysimachus in the other.

Although this "beatific love vision realized on earth" (Felperin 373) works toward an experience of closure,¹⁷ both the ending and certain assumptions of romance are left unraveled. Pericles' dynasty remains intact and his kingdom is even enlarged, but the picture of the monarchy, often supported by the romance genre,¹⁸ has been largely negative in the case of each king, from Antiochus to Pericles himself. After Pericles has recovered, the audience may assume that he will now become an effective ruler, but the picture of wasted time—a wasted life—is not

erased, and there is no real evidence that he has undergone a learning process. Family bonds, an important element of the romance, have been exposed as cultural mechanisms even as they have been recuperated as “beatific.” The re-instatement of patriarchal order as the play closes has been momentarily challenged by the image of Marina, functioning outside the social convention of the protective nuclear family. Unlike her mother who retreats from life (or from a male-dominated world?), Marina is forced into action and she shines for a moment as she suggests the potential for women.

Generic conditions of the romance have been fulfilled in this play, but not without an interrogation of the genre. Although the ending of the play suppresses subversive elements, they have stimulated a reassessment of generic assumptions and a recognition that they are not necessarily “natural.” While *Pericles* cannot be read as a plea for reform, a look both beyond and within the romance genre and its surface text reveals the play’s significance in its process of social reevaluation. ✱

Notes

¹ Critics from G. Wilson Knight to Stephen Orgel have objected to the twentieth-century use of the term “romance” to describe *Pericles*, *A Winter’s Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest*. As early as 1952, Knight remarked, “It is a pleasure to observe that the term ‘Final plays’ is beginning to replace its misleading predecessor, ‘the Romances’” (vii). In his 1987 introduction to the Oxford edition of *The Tempest*, Orgel, who regards the generic classification as confining, protests its perpetuation:

We have, thereby, unquestionably, shed light on the relations between *The Tempest* and three other late plays, but we have also thereby obscured *The Tempest’s* relation to the rest of Shakespearian comedy. And in our imposition of exclusiveness on Renaissance concepts of genre, we have obscured the plays’ relation to Shakespearian tragedy as well. (5)

Many critics continue, however, to employ the label, finding it useful in connecting the plays to each other and in acknowledging their similarities to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century narrative prose romances.

² All quotations have been taken from F.D. Hoeniger’s Arden edition of *Pericles*.

³ As a literary figure from an earlier era, Gower is an unusual choice for the narrator of the play. However, a precedent had been set in 1598-1600, when the Admiral’s Men used John Skelton as a choric character to provide exposition in *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington* by Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday (John Dean 178).

⁴ In a perceptively nuanced discussion of the romance genre Simon Palfrey puts it this way: “[W]hile there are ‘Cartesian’ speculations galore in Shakespeare, still his work

remains in important senses free from the dichotomizing epistemologies which, from Descartes' 'cogito' on, have characterized the modern metaphysical tradition" (13).

⁵ Charles Frey makes a similar connection between "familial and sociopolitical destinies" (87). Also, in another discussion connecting the personal and the political, Constance Relihan finds each world in *Pericles* lacking in some way, and argues that the liminality of each foreign setting creates a distance for members of the English audience that allows them to see and accept the critique of government.

⁶ See Constance Jordan's "Eating the Mother" for a political reading of the incest in *Pericles*.

⁷ While Leonard Tennenhouse views this as a generous act (178), Stephen Dickey considers an ulterior motive: a trade of badly needed food for shelter and safety (556).

⁸ Kurland makes a similar point about the way that the views of the fishermen reflect negatively on the kingship of Simonides. Relihan agrees, but goes a step further: she also believes that the ambiguity created around Simonides by the fishermen's social commentary connects him with the incestuous Antiochus.

⁹ The play was indirectly derived from *Apollonius of Tyre*, a third-century Greek romance by an unknown author; the story of Apollonius, which still survives in the form of a folk tale in modern Greece, was retold and rewritten many times throughout the Middle Ages (Smith 1). One of these medieval versions, a main source for Shakespeare, was Book VIII of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (Bullough 120), which had been derived from Godfrey of Viterbo's twelfth-century *Pantheon*. Shakespeare's second major source was Laurence Twine's *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures of Apollonius of Tyre* (1594), which had been taken from the story of *Apollonius* in the *Gesta Romanorum* of the thirteenth century (Gesner 88). Shakespeare adheres to earlier versions of his story much more closely than he typically follows his sources; although of the two he draws more heavily from Gower, he seems, as Bullough remarks, to have had both "at his elbow" (120).

¹⁰ Relihan notes that Thaisa's reaction, based on an unsubstantiated belief that Pericles is dead, deprives her own country, Pentapolis, of its natural succession of leadership (290).

¹¹ Relihan posits a connection between Pericles' abandonment of Marina and James I's "frequent separations from his own children—and especially from Prince Henry and Princess Sophia on their deathbeds" (288-289).

¹² The editors of *The New Cambridge Shakespeare* present Pericles as a typically "good" romance figure because of his forbearance: "Like the 'pattern of all patience' that Lear hopes but fails to be, Pericles succeeds, by being more like Job, sacred because he is both cursed and blessed" (Delvecchio and Hammond 56). In contrast to the view shared by Gesner, Hoeniger, and others of Pericles as suffering saint, virtuous because he is patient, many see him as simply passive, such as G. Wilson Knight (73), Maurice

Hunt (5), Stephen Dickey (560), and Richard Hillman (431). Hillman comments that in *Pericles*, “man’s fortune varies with his attitude toward life and that in one way or another he gets what he deserves” (431). For an opposite view, see Douglas Peterson, who points out instances in which *Pericles* is active (105).

¹³ See William Elton’s *King Lear and the Gods* (165-167) for a collection of images in which humans are batted about as tennis balls.

¹⁴ Saints Theodora, Serapia, and Denise underwent similar tests of chastity, but Marina’s experience in the brothel most closely resembles that of St. Agnes. St. Ambrose tells Agnes’s story: in 304 AD, at age thirteen, she faced the same problems that later plagued Marina; whereas Marina preserves her chastity by persuading and even redeeming her prospective clients, Agnes maintains her virtue in the brothel through divine aid, and the men who would defile her miraculously fall back from her (Bullough 352). Paul Dean convincingly points out similarities between Marina and St. Margaret, sometimes called St. Marina, a virgin martyr in Antioch who also resists temptation (135). Marina’s trials are also associated with a broader discourse of endangered virtue. Carol Gesner notes that many medieval women had to undergo chastity tests, the origin of which was Levitical law (Numbers 5:11-13) and the myth of the Stygian fountain. She also points out that such tests were imposed in the Greek romances: Chariclea had to endure a trial by fire, and Achilles Tatius’ Leucippe underwent a trial by water (15). Bullough suggests that another source for the brothel scene might be a Senecan story of a nun in a brothel (371). See Lorraine Helms’ “The Saint in the Brothel” for a comprehensive look at Marina within a long tradition of female chastity endangered. It is not irrelevant that, although not directly related to the brothel scene, a link exists between *Pericles* and a medieval saint’s play. F.D. Hoeniger mentions the relationship (lxxxviii-xci), and Peter Womack thoroughly explores the intertextuality between *Pericles* and the late fifteenth-century Digby *Play of Mary Magdalene*.

¹⁵ For a complete discussion of Marina’s rhetoric see Stephen Dickey’s “Language and Role in *Pericles*.”

¹⁶ See Douglas Peterson (94), R.S. White (129), and Kay Stockholder (27).

¹⁷ For a discussion of closure, see Joseph Lenz’s extensive work, *The Promised End*.

¹⁸ Leonard Tennenhouse sees *Pericles* reinforcing the monarchy in this way (182). Constance Jordan believes the play charts a redemptive course for *Pericles* as a ruler, but Stuart M. Kurland relates *Pericles*’ flight from responsibility to the neglect demonstrated by the frequent travels of King James I. Cf. Bergeron’s discussion of political connections between James I and *Pericles*.

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