

Piotr Szymor

THE PASTORAL AND ITS USE
IN "THE WINTER'S TALE" BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Before passing to an analysis of the role of the pastoral in "The Winter's Tale" it will be worth while dwelling briefly on the meaning of the pastoral as a literary form. Critical literature on the subject makes us aware that plays such as "The Winter's Tale" belong to the main line of development of a form modelled on classical examples and revived mainly, as David Young claims, in some narrative romances by Renaissance writers¹.

As for the classical models, it was above all Virgil who contributed to the consolidation of the pastoral although the earlier "Idylls" of Theocritus were germinal to its development². Peter Marinelli stresses the fact that Theocritus introduced the fundamental idea of the art of pastoral, namely the concept of a backward glance, in his case from the complexity of the civilized world represented by a specific location (Alexandria) and by a specific period of individual human existence (adulthood) to the visions of childhood and simplicity of the rural life (Sicilia)³. Thus he created a distance from reality by a removal in time and space; yet he still evoked a realistic

¹ D. Y o u n g, *The Heart's Forest. A Study of Shakespeare's Pastoral Plays*, Yale University Press, New Haven, London 1972, p. 13.

² See, for instance, W. W. G r e g, *Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama*, London 1906, p. 13-16; P. V. M a r i n e l l i, *Pastoral*, Methuen, London 1971, p. 9.

³ M a r i n e l l i, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

image of rural life. However, it is, admittedly, only when poetry ceases to imitate ordinary rustic existence that it becomes distinctly pastoral⁴. Virgil departed from direct imitation in the "Eclogues" and created an imaginary world by moving away from the immediate range of Roman culture. He invented a pastoral setting which he named after a part of Greece, Arcadia, and which represented an ideal reality which was to become in turn a universal concept.

The abstract quality of the Arcadia of the "Eclogues" allows the introduction of both mythical and real figures. They belong to Arcadia either by their remoteness from reality as gods and shepherds or because, as poets, they retire to this world from the corrupt environment which is implied in the poems/e.g. Eclogue I/. The appearance of poets who create poetry within the framework of the poetic vision, Marinelli continues, makes poetry itself the most important of the constant elements of Arcadia, beside the subjects of love and death⁵. There is here a new view of poetry as a self-conscious art and an awareness of its being a process rather than a product. Hence, the dynamism of the poetic form will be fully appreciated by Renaissance writers.

It should be emphasized, therefore, that drawing an ideal image of Arcadia is not an end in itself. The regression from reality into the world of poetic fancy is not infinite. If this were the case, pastoral literature would have to be classified as escapist. The turn which Virgil's art takes, however, already points to a different direction of its evolution. It places the contemplation connected with Arcadian poetry as a preliminary stage before the engagement with the world of reality. Virgil then, as Marinelli concludes, establishes Arcadia and also suggests the role it should play as a device used by a poet⁶. The value of living in the pastoral world of Arcadia

⁴ Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. Alex Preminger, Macmillan, London 1975, p. 603. See also Greg, op. cit., p. 1-5.

⁵ Marinelli, op. cit., p. 41-45.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 46.

consists in an opportunity for self-discovery and likewise for the exploration of the relative merits of the active and contemplative lives. In the light of the above-mentioned poetic practice, the pastoral is more than a specific kind of poem. It offers rather "a view of life, an ethos or informing principle", and as such it may interpenetrate and modify other forms as a creative element⁷.

Renaissance writers took full advantage of the possibilities which the classical pastoral offered. However, there is no classical dramatic model, except for the example offered by Marvin Herrick of a rather problematic satyr play associated with tragi-comedy and a pastoral setting⁸. Thus the Renaissance pastoral was developing mainly within the narrative romance in prose and verse (from Sanazzaro's "Arcadia", to Montemayor's "Diana" and Sidney's "Arcadia") or within the narrative poem (Tasso's "Gerusalemme Liberata" and Spenser's "The Faerie Queene"). The pastoral characteristics of these works, seen by Young as the most significant achievements of the Renaissance pastoral, may have influenced Shakespeare's pastoral plays to a greater extent than the Italian drama of Tasso and Guarini, or for that matter, much more than the pastoral shows which appeared as court entertainment in England in the second half of the sixteenth century⁹. Although the pastoral drama is latent in the idylls and eclogues inasmuch as they contain brief dialogues which can be easily expanded, yet they become artificial and static when transferred directly to the stage. The Italian pastoral drama is characterised precisely by a lack of dramatic movement which is the effect of its being constructed around set pieces, lyrics and choruses. Similarly static, and therefore artificial, was court entertainment in which rustic and pastoral motifs were quite common and were represented mainly in the form of the pastoral masque or a

⁷ Ibidem, p. 9.

⁸ M. I. H e r r i c k, *Tragicomedy. Its Origin and Development in Italy, France and England*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana 1962, p. 10-14.

⁹ Y o u n g, op. cit., p. 13-14.

play¹⁰. Generally speaking, there was no genuine interest in the dramatic factor in these pageant-like shows since their chief purpose was the glorification of the royal patron.

However, two conspicuous examples of plays written for the entertainment of the court deserve to be mentioned, namely: "The Arraignement of Paris" by George Peele (ca. 1581) and "Gallathea" by John Lyly (ca. 1585). Peele's play is important chiefly on account of its theme which concerns the myth of the judgement of Paris, the most famous of all classical shepherds from whose wrong choice of the life of pleasure sprang the whole epic narrative of Homer. Paris remained the archetype of the shepherd for the Elizabethans and the popularity of the motif is asserted, according to Hallett Smith, by this major Elizabethan treatment of it¹¹.

Accordingly, Paris story points to certain tendencies in the pastoral. In the first place, the pastoral figure is of royal birth, not a true shepherd; secondly, pastoral leisure does not always have to bring beneficial results and in this respect the question of individual choice becomes foregrounded.

On the other hand, Lyly's "Gallathea", according to Young, is a step forward, although partial, in creating a dramatic structure around pastoral motifs¹². In the play there are traces of the pattern of extrusion from society resulting in the use of disguise by the characters and in the choice of rural existence until justice is restored, which was to become the basis of English pastoral drama. The work is also characterised by a freedom in handling pastoral motifs, which may be explained, as Herrick finds, by the fact that native English drama always was "a drame libre"¹³.

¹⁰ The comments on the qualities of the Italian pastoral drama and of the court entertainment come from Young, op. cit., p. 12, 14.

¹¹ H. Smith, Elizabethan Poetry. A Study in Conventions, Meaning and Expression, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1970, p. 3-8. Smith exemplifies the vitality of the myth as a motif and a point of reference in Renaissance literature.

¹² Young, op. cit., p. 15-16.

¹³ Herrick, op. cit., p. 215.

Nevertheless, following the convincing argumentation of Young, we maintain that it is only the tradition of the narrative romance, its plot structures, characters and situations which provide precedents for shaping the pastoral drama of Shakespeare¹⁴. The development of that form in the sixteenth century led to the creation of Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia" which was enormously popular and had a considerable literary influence. Describing the achievement of Sidney, the critic says:

Perhaps the most important single innovation exemplified by the "Arcadia" was the concept of the sojourn, the experience of the pastoral world as a part of a larger set of circumstances, both spatial and temporal, often a segment of a journey. Two radical changes in the character of the pastoral were thereby accomplished: the characters dealt with could be visitors to Arcadia as well as inhabitants, pseudo-shepherds as well as shepherds, and the pastoral experience became sequential, giving rise to more opportunities for plot¹⁵.

Sidney enables then a shift from the implication of a different reality outside the pastoral to its representation in the pastoral environment. In this way a static picture of an ideal union of man with nature is replaced by action - an enactment of the process of achieving the harmonious union through the sojourn. Moreover, the sojourn has to provide both an explanation of the motives which precipitated the arrival in Arcadia and a subsequent chance of return. The concept of the pastoral as sojourn, which simultaneously points to the importance of a broader context within which the pastoral place is set, will be essential in my analysis of "The Winter's Tale".

The scope of the possible antecedents of the Shakespearean pastoral drama may be enriched by mentioning examples of dramatizations of pastoral romances, which answered a public demand created probably by the popularity of the pastoral as court entertainment. Such popular Elizabethan hack-work, mentioned by Young, as "The Maid's Metamorphosis", "The Thracian Wonder" and "Mucedorus" are anonymous and of uncertain date but they

¹⁴ Young, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 18-19.

are definitely symptomatic of the common practice in the theatres at the end of the sixteenth century which cannot be without influence on the subsequent development of the pastoral drama in England¹⁶.

The foregoing brief survey of statements by critics, which place Shakespeare's pastoral drama in the historical perspective of the development of the form, is to serve as an introduction to the subsequent analysis of the pastoral in the play.

Important as it is in the structural design of "The Winter's Tale", the pastoral exists within a non-pastoral universe so that the conflicts and complexities do not arise only from tensions in the pastoral setting. Thus pastoral values acquire significance from reference to an unpastoral context by being set within and distinguished from it. The first three acts in which proper social relations among the royal family and the whole courtly society of Sicilia are violently destroyed by Leontes provide a dramatic situation to be juxtaposed with the natural order of life. The latter is expressed in the relationship of Florizel and Perdita, based on faith and devotion:

Flo. [...] since my desires
Run not before mine honour, nor my lusts
Burn hotter than my faith.

(IV,iv,33-5)

For I cannot be
Mine own, nor anything to any, if
I be not thine.

(IV,iv,43-5)¹⁷

The relationship of Florizel and Perdita thus becomes ideal and suggests regeneration of the just order of society to contrast strikingly with Leontes' suspicion and jealousy. In this sense the pastoral inset constitutes a counterforce to the hi-

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 22, 24.

¹⁷ W. S h a k e s p e a r e, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. J. H. P. Pafford, Arden 1963; rpt. Methuen, London 1966. All references in the text will be to this edition.

thereto main movement of the play, challenging it and in the case of "The Winter's Tale" effecting a desired change.

If we take into account Andrew Ettin's critical distinctions, then such an inset is explicit, that is it "clearly sets apart the two spheres of pastoral and non-pastoral"¹⁸, rather than implicit, that is one which only "suggests knowledge of another way of life" contrasted with the pastoral¹⁹. While the reader or audience is brought into the pastoral environment the former events fall into perspective with what is happening when the movement of the pastoral scene promises a fresh start. The non-pastoral and the pastoral, however, are not neatly separated from each other to provide a recognition of what the pastoral has already excelled in or gained victory over. Instead, the dramatist concentrates on the question of how such a victory is being achieved by placing figures connected with the outside world in the pastoral context.

The audience may watch the actual clash of outlooks on life since a recollection of the world seemingly excluded by the pastoral is forcefully realized at the sheep-shearing feast through the presence and behaviour of King Polixenes, which parallels that of Leontes in Acts I and II. Polixenes represents the court with its idiosyncrasies so, accordingly, he overshadows and at last destroys the mood of pastoral happiness; yet unlike Leontes he is unable to destroy the bond of love, which further stresses its ideal quality, asserted by Florizel towards the end of the scene:

Not for Bohemia, nor the pomp that may
Be thereat glean'd: for all the sun sees, or
The close earth wombs, or the profound seas hides
In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath
To this my fair below'd.

(IV, iv, 489-93)

The attitude of Polixenes proves yet another point, namely

¹⁸ A. V. E t t i n, *Literature and the Pastoral*, Yale University Press, New Haven, London 1984, p. 80.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 81. The concept of the implicit inset proves to be useful in relation to pastoral lyrics. However, what is implicit in eclogues usually becomes explicit in a narrative or a dramatic form.

that the physical presence of characters in the pastoral environment does not necessarily entail beneficial results. A necessary condition for the adoption of pastoral values by members of the non-pastoral world will be a spiritual evolution since the countryside is not for outsiders in spirit. The evolution occurs in the case of Leontes who recognizes his error and then for sixteen years repents of what he has done.

Cleomenes says of Leontes' repentance:

Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd
A saint-like sorrow: no fault could you make,
Which you have not redeem'd; indeed, paid down
More penitence than done trespass.

(V,i,1-4)

Only in this state of mind is Leontes prepared to appreciate fully what his destructive action had caused to disappear, namely the virtues expressed in the pastoral. They are similar to those which supported social relations in Sicilia before Leontes had destroyed them. Therefore, it is important that in the play he values the pastoral qualities standing for the lost qualities of the court. Thus it is only an immanent paradox of the pastoral²⁰, that Leontes, who is not himself of the pastoral world, can best express appreciation of its merit. Accordingly, Florizel and Perdita, symbolic of the pastoral ideal, are warmly welcomed by him: "Welcome hither,/ As is spring to th' earth". (V,i,150-1). Their union brings hope for a new beginning. It stands for what is lacking after Hermione's death, and so Leontes decides to act on their behalf, thus confirming his spiritual maturity. He declares:

I will to your father:
Your honour not o'erthrown by your desires,
I am friend to them and you: upon which errand
I now go toward him;

(V,i,228-31)

It is then readily noticeable that the closing act of the play is important for the validity of the pastoral scene as well

²⁰ "[...] one of the central paradoxes of the pastoral is that those best able to appreciate it and those best able to express their appreciation are not themselves of the pastoral world". (E t t i n, op. cit., p. 82).

as the preceding three acts. What has been exemplified above allows the observation that the dramatic pastoral requires some degree of bordering on an unpastoral context because the ideal is partly defined there by contrast.

The natural law by which the union of Florizel and Perdita is sanctioned subsumes a whole complex of pastoral qualities which to a large degree stem from the pastoral environment - the natural place of love and renewal. Its force lies precisely in its capability of exemplifying pastoral virtues, for place in the pastoral never functions as a collection of particular details, the landscape being a total physical surrounding which does not call attention to itself²¹. Although the "countryside of Bohemia" partakes of actual country festivals which may be noticed in the use of customary dances and songs together with other ceremonies of rural feasts, yet in the play it is mainly a symbol of a simpler form of society than that of the court presented in the first three acts. Bohemia, as a locale, is deprived of any realistic geographical implications. It is dislocated, provided with a seacoast and a desert to acquire physical neutrality, even mysteriousness. The main purpose of such a depiction of the setting is to make it a psychological symbol which belongs to a tradition going back to the ancient origins of the pastoral, to, as Rosalie L. Colie observes, Virgil's Arcadia rather than Theocritus' Sicily, because Bohemia, as a natural spot, is "a concept, an image in itself"²².

The same juxtaposition of pastoral versus non-pastoral as in the case of the motif of love, will play its role in the perception of the pastoral place because the reader or audience is to feel relief from the pressures of tragedy at court in the change of atmosphere introduced by the pastoral. Together with the characters of the pastoral, the onlookers will enjoy the liberty and freedom of the rural environment while the shortcomings of the court (cold in opposition to the subsequent warmth; cruel, since stiff formality results in deaths at odds with liberated simplicity and rebirth) make it a hostile place

²¹ Ibidem, p. 127 ff.

²² R. L. Colie, *Shakespeare's Living Art*, Princeton 1974, p. 249. See also Marinelli on the classical origins of "Arcadia", (op. cit., p. 9-11, 39-45).

contrasted with the emotional quality of the pastoral site. Thus the dominant impression of the pastoral may be expressed as feeling at home²³.

However, interpretations of place vary according to the characters' provenance, or emotions, making it, typically for the pastoral, a field of reference. Antigonus and the Mariner see it as a desert, the skies over which are grim, the land itself being a place famous for beasts of prey (III,iii,2-13). Nature seems hostile to them, the weather and general atmosphere serving as a reaction to their status as outsiders in spirit because they are to do something unnatural, which culminates in the objectively horrifying death of Antigonus. This event draws a borderline between the impure world and the purified pastoral enclave. Similarly, in Polixenes' words there is an implicit evaluation of the place as that of base rusticity - ignoble (IV,iv,159). On the contrary, the Shepherd and the Clown feel safe even in the presence of death because, on the one hand, their home is really not far away in physical terms; besides, they do not intervene in something that seems to them to be beyond human reach. Thus the enactment of the whole event at the sea-shore becomes only an occasion for typical witty repartees on the part of simple-minded countrymen:

Clo. Now, now: I have not winked since I saw these sights: the men are not yet cold under water, nor the bear half dined on the gentleman: he's at it now.

Shep. Would I had been by, to have helped the old man!

Clo. I would you had been by the ship side, to have helped her: there your charity would have lacked footing.

Shep. Heavy matters! heavy matters!

A relative lack of interest in the death of Antigonus is explained by their belief in the laws of nature. When people follow these, they are rewarded, otherwise they are punished - such is the simple credo of the shepherds. Accordingly, gold wrapped in the "bearing-cloth" which the Shepherd finds is per-

²³ E t t i n, op. cit., p. 135,

ceived as a sign of nature's bounty, which confirms the rightness of his obedience to the rules set by local deities: "it was told me I should be rich by the fairies" (III,iii,116): "We are lucky, boy; and to be so still requires no- / thing but secrecy". (III,iii,123-4). Undoubtedly, observing the traditions and beliefs, as expressed by the Shepherd and the Clown, adds to the sense of feeling at home in the natural world. In spite of such unusual incidents as finding gold, however, nature daily yields means of sustenance, so to cultivate tradition means also to mark important moments of the year with celebrations of the natural order such as the sheep-shearing feast.

Not all the characters present in the pastoral environment are members of one actual family living in the same home. Only the Clown is the son of the Shepherd and Perdita his alleged daughter. Thus the notions of family and home become broader in scope to mean the human family and the pastoral world. Furthermore, not all the characters who want to live in ideal communion with natural surroundings are shepherds since in Renaissance pastoral literature most of them are courtiers and they are really the focus of attention, as Florizel is. They come for instruction - to be naturalized, as it were - and they obtain it if they are emotionally mature, that is ready to accept high pastoral values²⁴. In this way courtiers may share the shepherds' enjoyment of their world, and, what is especially important, they transfer a whole complex of principles ruling the pastoral world to a place outside the rural environment, that is the court as in the case of Florizel and Perdita arriving in Sicilia in Act V.

Beside the setting, time is another element of the pastoral which plays an important role in the construction of the pastoral ideal and related meanings. The choice of a particular time of year for the pastoral is a matter of associations within a given culture, as Ettin observes²⁵. Most pastoral scenes, including that of "The Winter's Tale", take place during summ-

²⁴ Coli e, op. cit., p. 249.

²⁵ Ettin, op. cit., p. 137.

er since that is the time of nature's fruition when the shepherd's real work has been done and holiday merry-making and leisure are possible. Moreover, since the pastoral should be timeless, a permanent summer, the passage of time has to be arrested. In the context of the whole play, however, time stops only for a moment in the pastoral scene, "one self-born hour" in the words of Time, the Chorus (IV,i,8). Yet to provide an illusion of unending duration the presence of all seasons is evoked. For one, Perdita in her flower speech during the feast implies that the time of the sheep-shearing is really late summer, almost autumn (IV,iv,79-81), then the beginning of the year is recalled by images of spring flowers (IV,iv,118-27) as spring is undoubtedly most important to the meaning of the pastoral ideal. It emphasizes rebirth, the awakening of new things leading to fruition; hence Autolycus' song also evokes the atmosphere of spring (IV,iii,1-12). The significance of this season is further strengthened by the contrast with the implications of winter.

The seasons of the year are also made to reflect different seasons of life in the above-mentioned flower speech of Perdita who distributes flowers of particular seasons among members of various age groups. As an expression of the desire for perpetuation of the vernal climate of the pastoral, however, she presents men, whom she thinks to be old, with rosemary and rue - herbs that stay green and fragrant, a token of spring in winter (IV,iv,74-5).

Admittedly, such a green, fertile and warm timelessness recalls the image of the mythical Golden Age, modified by the Christian point of view. According to this tradition, Eden had been destroyed for ever by the Fall, which objectively happened in world history, hence the ideal in that form cannot return. Similarly, when the time of individual human life is interpreted in such terms, childhood is a past age, and the subsequent falls of adolescence and middle age enlarge the distance from that unconscious unity with nature. In "The Winter's Tale", Leontes' history seems to recreate that very view of world history inscribed in the time of human life: images of childhood and innocence (I,i,22-5; I,ii,67-70), then crisis

and personal losses (accusation and seeming death of Hermione; the death of Mamillius).

In agreement with the same view, however, Shakespeare implies in the play that a happiness recalling that of the Golden Age may be regained in the life of an individual by the perfection of his own self. The result of the process is perceived as a state of spiritual maturity and emotional integrity attained by Leontes after a period of sixteen years, as the earlier-mentioned opening scene of Act V suggests. The pastoral scene plays a significant role in the perception by the reader or audience of the direction of Leontes' moral development as it propounds the ideal which Leontes wants to reach. Reaching the ideal involves, as the reader or audience is led to infer from the play, approaching the state in which Perdita finds herself in the pastoral scene, that is of a fully balanced self in harmony with nature. She embodies what Leontes lacked; Leontes' jealousy is described by Camillo in Act I as being the result of moral chaos, a state of rebellion against his true, sane self (I, ii, 355)²⁶.

At the same time, as it seems, through the role of Perdita as a symbol of renewal - "Flora/ Perring in April's front" (IV, iv, 2-3) - the pastoral promises that it will be possible to avoid errors of the past in the next generation, which will thus maintain order and stability, since Perdita's upbringing and her union with Florizel possess values of the natural world which are perceived as a guarantee of perfection.

Thus we notice that the larger temporal plan of the pastoral, that is the cycle of seasons linked with the cycle of generations, provides a degree of detachment from everyday reality, that is the reality of the court in the play. Accordingly, it provides space for a clarification of Leontes' motives, yet in a broader sense it elevates the value of the pastoral capable of the creative realization of the ideal when it recalls the mythical Golden Age.

The guarantee of perfection, which the union of Florizel

²⁶ P a f f o r d, op. cit., f.n. to ll. 355-356, p. 24.

and Perdita becomes, is so strongly pronounced throughout Act IV, scene iv that an apparent ambiguity contained in the notion of world history as a cycle of generations remains unnoticed in this pastoral by Shakespeare. To say that after winter come spring and summer implies that there is another winter in the future as well. The problem was given poetic shape almost from the beginning of pastoral literature, namely in Virgil's Fourth Eclogue in which an idyllic vision is broken by a passage slightly overshadowing its splendour: "Yet a/ few traces of ancient delusions will remain, moving people to test the seas/ with ships, encircle towns with walls, cut furrows into the earth"²⁷.

The fragment draws attention to an aspect of history which seems to be consciously evaded in "The Winter's Tale". Shakespeare deals mainly with the promise of beneficial results which are going to be brought about by shaping reality according to the principles of the natural world.

On the other hand, however, the hypothetical quality of the pastoral image of alternative existence, that is one modelled on the ideal, is suggested throughout the play by references to the theatricality or the unbelievable nature of the events:

Per. Methinks I play as I have seen them do
In Whitsun pastorals

(IV, iv, 133-4)

I see the play so lies
That I must bear a part.

(IV, iv, 655-6)

Sec. Gent.

[...] This news
which is called true, is so like an old tale that the
verity of it is in strong suspicion.

(V, ii, 27-9)

This insistence on fiction may serve to point out what Virgil expressed in the above-mentioned fragment of the Fourth

²⁷ Virgil, Eclogues, IV.31-33, after Ettin's translation (op. cit., p. 47). The author provides a discussion of the whole Fourth Eclogue, p. 45-50.

Eclogue, namely that man may only be offered a chance for virtuous life but human beings possess a freedom of choice and some of them choose just the opposite of virtue. Thus the possibility of perpetuating high pastoral values is not really undetermined; it is rather the limited effectiveness of the pastoral pattern depending on free choice that is pointed out. The question of free choice and the pastoral appears in "The Tempest" where it obtains a fuller expression.

Having examined the presence and structural uses of the elements forming the pastoral ideal of nature, it will be appropriate to turn to the meaning of the pastoral rendered by Shakespeare in "The Winter's Tale". As has already been noted, a set of values introduced by the pastoral and perceived as attributes of nature effects a transformation within the spiritual state of the hero, which because of his status (a king - a ruler) influences the whole social order. The movement of the individual towards perfection corresponds to that of society, as stated in one of the most influential Renaissance books, Baldesar Castiglione's "The Book of the Courtier". There, we read that if the "prince is good [...] his people are good, because the life of the prince is a norm and guide for the citizens and all behaviour must needs depend on his"²⁸. The norm in question is never set by shepherds as such, since although they partake of it in their natural environment, the real value is embodied in the "royal shepherd". The latter is to appear natural in a pastoral masquerade. Castiglione stresses that, in the pastoral context, the "royal shepherd's" excellence "is all the more convincing for being so obvious when everyone supposes him to be an ordinary shepherd"²⁹. In relation to this, it should be emphasized that the social transformation in pastoral literature never affects hierarchy, despite single pronouncements of egalitarianism like that of Perdita: "The selfsame sun that shines upon his court/ Hides not his visage from our cott-

²⁸ Quoted in H. E. Toliver, *Pastoral Forms and Attitudes*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1971, f.n. 5, p. 26.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

age, but/ looks on alike". (IV,iv,445-7), which spoken by her, a disguised princess, inevitably points to her own superiority as well as to a lack of any further consequences of the idea in the context of the whole play.

Still, as Harold Toliver observes, Shakespeare in such plays as "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "As You Like It", "The Winter's Tale" and "The Tempest" unites idyllic wish with realizable social change, where as Sidney and Spenser, for instance, in their romances, similar in tripartite structure and the exposure of heroes to the green world, stress rather the difficulty of any permanent social transformation³⁰. Unlike Shakespeare, who at least believes in the poet's power to work upon the mind, thus influencing minds by the magic of nature, Sidney approaches the attitude of a realist in social matters. Accordingly, despite the tendency of the pastoral to remove barriers between classes, in the "Arcadia", Sidney sharpens social distinctions³¹. Shakespeare does not so much sharpen the distinctions, yet he uses irony to show the limitations of mere rusticity: Mopsa is sure that the incredible stories must be true because in print (IV,iv,261-2) and Dorcas, genuinely moved by a story of a usurer's wife, exclaims, "Bless me from marrying a usurer!" (IV,iv,269); similarly, when in Act V the Shepherd and the Clown have put on rich apparel and speak of their newly acquired nobility, they are to point out the absurdity of such a proposition (V,i,127-175).

In this way the values of the court or of civilization, culture and art are not denounced as inferior but rather re-established after having become enriched by the resources of the pastoral. The opposition of nature and art is a basis for dialectical reasoning in pastoral works³², yet in agreement with the Neo-Platonic search for harmony nature ultimately merges with art instead of opposing it. Moreover, it seems that nature itself needs modification to be transformed beyond its mere

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 15-16.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 52-53.

³² See, for instance, Marinelli, op. cit., p. 15-

simplicity to be able to answer the demands of the dominant cultural order which the dramatist is conscious of. Furthermore, the nature of the countryside of Bohemia as the reality of the staged performance cannot exist without art, and so the seeming polarity of nature and art is to a large degree subsumed under the rules of the art of the dramatist. Still, an all-encompassing concept of "great creating nature" is introduced quite early in the pastoral scene, apparently to inform the reading of the play. Yet, simple human nature embodied by the Shepherd, the Clown, Mopsa and Dorcas, as we have seen, is powerless to a large extent, in the sense that it is not compatible with the ideal. It may be merely an occasion for laughter in this play. It is then the role of nature as the source of the power of art and not the power of nature itself, which the art-nature debate between Polixenes and Perdita especially stresses. Nature is united with art which serves as its corrective (art as nurture) and art in fact enables the representation, or creation of nature, in the language of the text and in stage-imagery. Perdita and Polixenes say,

Per. For I have heard it said
 There is an art which, in their priedness, shares
 With great creating nature.

Polix. Say there be;
 Yet nature is made better by no mean
 But nature makes that mean: so over that art,
 Which you say adds to nature, is an art
 That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
 A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind
 By bud of nobler race. This is an art
 Which does mend nature - change it rather - but
 The art itself is nature.

(IV, iv, 86-97)

As Terry Eagleton rightly suggests, the dialogue leads to viewing culture as natural just as to perceiving nature as cultural because from the perspective of the debate: "Nature itself produces the means of its own transformation, contains that

which goes beyond it"³³. Grafting, which Perdita opposes (IV, iv, 99-103), is actually a symbol of her own and Florizel's significance in the play since as they are "royal shepherds", their royalty merges with pastoral life and they are made into products of nature; even though they belong primarily to the order of art, culture and civilization. As such, they serve as the means which helps to bring human nature to perfection. In this way, the pastoral eventually reinforces the existing social order, dominated by the court, in providing an ideology whereby that order is "naturalized"³⁴.

Institute of English Studies
University of Łódź

Piotr Szymor

SIELANKA I JEJ ZASTOSOWANIE W "OPOWIEŚCI ZIMOWEJ" WILLIAMA SZEKSPIRA

Zastosowanie sielanki w "Opowieści zimowej" wskazuje na przynależność utworu do głównego nurtu rozwoju konwencji literackiej wzorowanej na modelach klasycznych. Wśród gatunków renesansowych rozwijających koncepcje sielankowe, które mogły mieć wpływ na sposób ich użycia przez Szekspira wyróżniają się romans prozą i wierszem. Choć szesnastowieczny dramat włoski oferuje formę tragikomedii pastoralnej, to jednak fakt, że brakuje mu dramatyczności decyduje o wyborze struktury akcji, postaci oraz scen występujących w romansie jako elementów kształtujących sztuki pastoralne Szekspira. Szczególnie istotny wydaje się wzór struktury utworu pastoralnego jaki prezentuje "Arkadia" Sidneya, którego podstawą jest okres pobytu w rzeczywistości sielankowej będący odtworzeniem procesu osiągnięcia harmonii z otaczającym światem.

Struktura "Opowieści zimowej" opiera się właśnie na koncepcji pobytu w rzeczywistości sielankowej, a wartości przypisywane sielance są postrzegane w rezultacie kontrastu między idealnymi cechami egzystencji sielankowej a ich odpowiednikami w rzeczywistości dworu. Konstrukcja ideału obejmuje przede wszy-

³³ J. E. G. L. e. t. o. n., William Shakespeare, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1986, p. 91.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 92-93.

stkim samo miejsce oparte na koncepcji naturalnej rodziny i poczucia bezpieczeństwa wynikającego z poddania się jego mieszkańców prawom natury. Innym elementem ideału jest specyficzne dla sielanki ujęcie czasu jako cyklu oraz zawieszenie czasu w stanie permanentnego lata w obrębie samej sceny pastoralnej. Tak skonstruowany ideał sielankowy jest jednak konsekwentnie relatywizowany przez odniesienia do teatralności całego założenia.

Zespół wartości sielankowego ideału pojmowanych jako "naturalne" powoduje transformację wewnętrzną bohatera, która ze względu na jego status władcy obejmuje całe społeczeństwo. Jednak w literaturze sielankowej transformacja nie dotyczy nigdy społecznej hierarchii mimo wypowiedzi propagujących egalitaryzm społeczności sielankowej. Wręcz przeciwnie, zwykle mamy do czynienia z podkreśleniem różnicy między "szlachetnie urodzonymi pasterzami" a wieśniakami. W związku z tym wartości przypisywane cywilizacji dworskiej nie ulegają degradacji w zestawieniu z naturalnymi. Są one raczej o nie wzbogacone. Natura jest wobec tego źródłem cywilizacji, a dopiero sztuka do niej przynależąca, faktycznie umożliwia kształtowanie natury w tekście i w obrazie dramatycznym. Sielanka ostatecznie wzmacnia obowiązujący porządek kulturowy, gdy dramaturg świadomy tego dominującego porządku kształtuje obraz, który ten porządek czyni naturalnym.