

Part IV: Shakespeare

8. The Lark and the Jay

Appearance and Reality in Shakespeare's Comedy of Supposition

Almost everyone in *The Taming of the Shrew* is generally supposed by other characters to be someone quite different from the person that the play reveals them to be. Even the servants are engaged in pretending to themselves and to others. Shakespeare took his subplot from Robert Gascoigne's play *Supposes* (which was adapted from Ariosto's *I Suppositi*); and the concept of "supposition" is the unifying theme of his own play.¹

The sort of "supposition" that is important to a proper appreciation of the play is a matter of the social status-identity which may be either feigned, voluntary, or quite unconscious. Where it is unconscious, it can only be qualified as a "pretense" (or a "suppose") if the character consciously believes herself to be quite different from the person that (s)he really is, i.e. from the person that (s)he ought to be, and that (s)he needs to become, if (s)he is to be happy. The "supposes" of Gascoigne and Ariosto are all of them *deliberate* pretenses by one character or another to be what (s)he is not (and quite consciously knows that (s)he is not). It was by connecting this sort of supposition — which dominates the subplot of *The Shrew* — with the more complex form of assumption that any society makes about how its members ought to behave (according to their social status and the particular circumstances of their situation); and with the still more complex suppositions that we all make about ourselves (which are, of course, greatly influenced by the social roles that we accept, and by all the normal suppositions that these involve) — it was by bringing together and interweaving these different kinds of supposition that Shakespeare created a single unified dramatic work of art out of the three separate sources, the three different comedies, that are integrated in his *Taming of the Shrew*.

First there is the folk-tale of the beggar taken up in a drunken stupor, and induced to suppose himself to be a prince. Secondly, there is the Gascoigne-Ariosto story of the master who becomes a supposed servant in the house of his lady-love, leaving his servant to bear his person as one of her suitors. These are “supposition” stories in the obvious sense. But the third story, another folk-tale, and the one to which Shakespeare gives pride of place, is ordinarily regarded as a reform or conversion of nature. The shrewish wife is to be “tamed”; her own God-given, or genetically determined, nature is to be replaced by the one that a good wife is *supposed* to have, according to the ordinance of holy matrimony. Viewed in this light, even the traditional treatment of the “taming” story is “suppositional.” But Shakespeare actually treats it very differently. The world supposes Katherine to be a shrew; and she has accepted that status, because there is no other thought category available to her, within which she can interpret her situation, and her own response to it. Petruchio looks at her in quite a different way. He is very largely at odds with the whole system of social “supposition”; and in particular, he objects to the two-faced character of most social roles. It is generally expected that one will maintain one set of values in speech, while guiding one’s actions (as far as possible) by a different set. We shall see that Petruchio has a system of “natural” suppositions of his own. For instance, he appears to take the conception of marriage expounded in the order for the solemnization of matrimony (see the Prayerbook of Edward VI, and the Elizabethan Homily “On the State of Matrimony”) very seriously. But what position he is finally committed to, remains ambiguous. If we take him to be committed to the ideals that he recommends to Kate, and which Kate formally avows in her last long speech, we shall see that, in the light of the story of Christopher Sly, Kate’s speech needs to be read with care and caution. What is *clear* is that Petruchio’s every act is directed against a social system in which one says one thing in public but does another, or claims to be committed to certain goals and values, while actually pursuing other goals and following quite a different life-policy.

What Petruchio believes about Kate is that she is not really the kind of person that she is socially perceived to be at all. Like himself, she is a rebel against the false, unnatural, two-faced values of her society. But unlike him, she does not clearly recognize what she is rebelling against; and in a very important sense, she is herself a prisoner of false values. His success in “taming” her

has to be seen essentially as the revelation to Kate herself of what her character and situation really is, and as a liberation from the falsified values that she has herself accepted from her environment.

Let us see, now, how the interpretation of the play as an organic whole, will establish this view. We must begin with Katerina, because (as the title tells us) she is the heart and center of the play as a work of art.

The elder of the two daughters of Baptista Minola has the reputation of a “shrew.” She is generally supposed to be someone whom no sensible man would marry, because of her highly irritable temper, and her railing tongue. Gremio, who is nothing but a mouthpiece of social convention, because he is too old to have a “nature” at all (he is biologically *irrelevant*) expresses the conventional view of Kate in such an exaggerated way that we ought to see that her “nature” is being completely misread in this conventional view of her.

But it is undeniable that Kate is a *cat*. Petruchio brings this out when he promises to make her “conformable as other household kates” (2.1.265-7). At present, she is a wild cat, and she cannot fit into a peaceful household at all. She must become a useful member of the household, a cat that kills the rats and mice, and is otherwise a general pet of the family. Petruchio is the *agent*, the middle term of the action, who is going to produce this transformation.

But Petruchio fills the “middle,” not just between the beginning and the end of the action, but between Kate at the center and Christopher Sly at the circumference. What happens to Christopher Sly is not a transformation of nature, but an involuntary sojourn in the realm of illusion. For him, the action of the play constituted by Petruchio’s “taming” of Katerina, is not just an entertaining interlude as it is for us; it is the main component in a rather heartless joke perpetrated by a nobleman for his own amusement. Christopher Sly goes, from being a beggar at the beginning, to being a beggar again at the end; and when we look at the agent of this non-transformation, our attention is directed to the fact that someone who is able to set himself above society (as this nobleman does) is a more dangerous animal than a household cat which has been allowed to run wild. Petruchio, set in

the middle between the noble joker and Kate who is so earnest in her rebellion, is a joker who has a serious purpose; and sure enough, his name confirms that he too is a wild creature. If we spell it as Ariosto would have done, he is “Petruccio” — which means “outrageous (or *wild*) Peter.” This is the name that he lives up to (just as Katerina lives up to “Kate”). Clearly, therefore, the transformation of Kate at the hands of Petruchio is not all that matters; a transformation of Petruchio into the saved shape of “Peter” is necessary also. The play will become a unity when we can see what the implied salvation of Petruchio amounts to. The household in which Kate is to become “conformable” must not have a “wild” master, like the noble household in which this play is staged.

Let us begin at the beginning, therefore, and ask first : “Why is Katerina a Shrew? What does her ‘shrewishness’ consist in?” Three instances of shrewish *action* are generally alleged:

1. She attacks her sister (2.1.13-23, P.63).
2. She assaults her supposed music teacher (2.1.138-155, P.68-69).
3. She strikes her suitor (2.1.213, P.71).

And we may add 4: that she assaults Grumio (4.3.31-32, P.106).

But no one takes this last incident as shrewishness, because Grumio, who is only a servant, is openly making game of her. In fact this last scene just shows that Kate is a girl of spirit; and that is what ought to be said about the third episode also. The assault on “Litio” is a rather different matter. It is surely “shrewish” to break the lute on your new teacher’s head?ⁱⁱ No analysis of this incident can be conclusively validated. But remember that “Litio” is really “Hortensio.” The garlic from the garden, is something that is easily recognized by its smell; and Hortensio is well known to Kate as one of *Bianca’s* suitors. Surely the truth here is that Katerina sees through Litio-Hortensio in a moment. She is furious about being used in a plot to gain her *sister’s* hand. There is nothing “shrewish” in that. Petruchio very sensibly says that he loves her for her spirited reaction.

Finally, the attack on her sister is motivated by jealousy. Kate’s rage at all the men who flock after Bianca seems to be the root of her *shrewishness*. She cannot believe that her sister has no real preference among her followers. And why is that? It is because Kate cares desperately about

not having any followers of her own. It is because she is humiliated (and has been for a long time) that she rails at people. She is afraid that she will be an old maid — being probably now past her twentieth birthday! And her own father is afraid that her behavior will bring about that result. Also Kate knows that her sister is more beautiful than she is; and she wants to be courted for something other than her money.

But after all *shrewishness* is properly a matter of words not deeds. So let us now examine the catty talk of our Kate. First of all, how much does she rail, and at whom?

Most of what is regarded as a shrewish tongue in Kate is sarcastic *wit*, rather than real shrewishness. Bianca is witty in the same way; but Bianca guards her tongue, and does not “talk back” to everyone equally: “so well I know my duty to my elders,” she says to Kate herself (2.1.7) — being perhaps three years younger! This is a pure pretense on Bianca’s part, and it clearly irritates Kate; but as a consistent policy it makes Bianca’s pertness acceptable, while Kate’s is not.

The demonstrated truth is that Kate is a natural wit — the best in the whole circle — even Petruchio cannot get the better of her in their verbal exchanges; and if we do not want to look deeper we can say that Kate’s *sarcasm* (arising from rage and humiliation) was originally set off because her wit scared away potential suitors, and made them prefer her sister, who gives way so prettily, and does not puncture the vanity of anyone she likes by being *too* clever for him. Kate *is* far too clever; and she is not clever enough to pretend otherwise. She *disdains* to do that, but it is a fact that she could hardly do it if she wanted to. In a world in which everyone is pretending most of the time, she does not know how to begin. So they claim that she is a shrew; and she is well on the way to becoming one willy nilly.

We can recognize this in one passage of *pure* shrewishness that we hear from Kate; and this genuine instance suggests a deeper reason for her trouble. She is *truly* shrewish to her father. He says that she must be married *first*; so she rounds on him, and says that he cares only for Bianca, and he wants to get Bianca safely married (2.1.32-36: “*She is your treasure, she must have a husband/ I*

must dance barefoot on *her* wedding day,/ and, for your love to *her*, lead apes in hell./ Talk not to me: [as if he had a chance] I will go sit and weep/ Till I can find occasion of revenge.”) The root of Kate’s humiliation goes back to the time before the young men came wooing at all. It grows out of her feeling that Baptista loves Bianca best; and his curious ultimatum supports her view. For Baptista’s guilt about Kate collaborates with a secret wish surely, when he decrees that Kate must be married before he will let Bianca go.ⁱⁱⁱ And then he gives 20,000 crowns for Kate’s second dowry at the end! This argues a fearful turmoil of emotions in a man who measures *everything* in crowns.^{iv}

But in this passage about “leading apes in hell,” and in the scene of which it is the culmination, we catch sight of Kate’s dream of heaven too. She dreams of being what she feels her sister is. It ought to be Katerina Minola, the eldest, who is her father’s *treasure*. She ought to be courted by rich young men, and have a grand wedding in the finest clothes (*not* dance barefoot at Bianca’s nuptials). Katerina loves finery, and she dreams of St. George’s, Hanover Square. Bianca offers to give up her “gawds” and “all my raiment to my petticoat”; while on Kate’s side (even after she is “tamed” into saying “thank you” for her food) she insists furiously that she *will* have the cap the Haberdasher has produced, and that the dress the tailor offers is a good one (4.3.84-85, 100-101, P.108, Y.84). This is one time when she is *shrewish* with Petruchio: “Your betters have endured me say my mind/ And if you cannot, best you stop your ears/ My tongue will tell the anger of my heart/ Or else my heart, concealing it, will break,/ And rather than it shall, I will be free/ Even to the uttermost, as I please, in words . . . Love me, or love me not, I like the cap” (4.3.75-80). As I said, Kate *disdains* pretense; but that is because it would “break her heart” to pretend. She needs to realize that pretending is not what is at issue. The clothes (and St. George’s, Hanover Square) simply don’t matter very much. (Even Bianca, offering to give up her “gawds,” is — all unwitting — teaching Kate that lesson.)

So much for Katerina, who supposes herself to be a person of consequence, deserving ceremonious treatment and the best of everything, and is supposed by everyone else to be a *shrew*. What she naturally *needs* is her father’s love; but she thinks that ceremonial can take its place.

“Plain Kate” is the same person stripped of all pretenses, and false suppositions. She is the young woman who tramples on her non-functional cap, and lectures us about the natural values of life, to show us she has rid herself of all her false values. Contrast “Love me, or love me not, I like the cap/ And it I *will* have or I will have none” with this last scene. Do we see Plain Kate anywhere before her final speech? Yes, we see her from the start; she is caught in a web of pretense, and she does not know what it is to be free of it, but she hates pretense. Bianca “knows her duty,” Kate “says her mind . . . and will be free/ Even to the uttermost, as I please, in words.”

But this freedom of speech has a kind heart. Kate hates injustice and cruelty; and she rebels against a social order that sanctions it. This shows plainly in the tale that Grumio “refuses” to tell Curtis (4.1.53ff): “how her horse fell and she under her horse . . . how he left her with the horse upon her; how he beat *me* because *her* horse stumbled; how she waded through the dirt to pluck him off me; how he swore; how she prayed that never pray’d before.” Again after they get home, Kate twice tries to persuade Petruchio not to take out his spleen on the *servants*. Would this girl have attacked a *real* music teacher, and smashed the instrument upon which his living depended? Certainly *not*. She rails at her equals, not at those whom their social superiors presume to call “whoreson, beetle headed flap eared knaves” (Petruchio, 4.1.128), or to regard with contempt, as the Lord does Sly — “O monstrous beast/ how like a swine he lies!/ Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!/ Sirs, I will practice on this drunken man” (Induction, 1.30-32). Kate feels that she has been unfairly treated by the world; and she sympathizes with all whom she *sees* to be unfairly treated in it.

Let us go on now to Petruchio, and ask in the second place “Why does Petruchio want to marry Katerina?” He *says* plainly enough that it is for the sake of her fortune; and many have taken him to be the plain man who simply goes in for outrageous pretense in order to expose pretenses. Grumio, who has the servant’s eye view, and appears to speak the plain truth as he sees it, says of Petruchio “Why *nothing* comes amiss so *money* comes withal” (1.2.77-78). But Grumio understands his master well. He enjoys playing up to him, and sometimes — as for instance when we first meet them — he plays him up independently on his own account. That “nothing comes amiss, so money comes withal” is the simple unvarnished truth of the world of the pretenders. Petruchio’s truth of

nature is a bit more complicated. He has come to Verona to find a wife, and he wants a rich wife. But he is playing a part, and pretending to be what he is not, just as much as everyone else except Kate. Petruchio's pretense (that he is *simply* a fortune hunter) is the reality that all the other young folk hide away behind their romantic pretenses;^v and what everyone else takes to be mere pretense and mockery is Petruchio's *reality*.

Petruchio is *not* an "honest cynic," a blunt straightforward person who knows what he wants, and puts on a special mask to get it. What everyone takes for the mask is the man himself. He is a mocker. Kate sees this immediately. On her wedding day she is in tears, because she thinks his wooing was all a mockery, that he means to inflict the ultimate humiliation, to show her up for what she secretly fears she is (because everyone says so), the girl whom no one will ever marry.^{vi}

Everyone *assumes* (including Kate) that anyone who wants to marry Katerina Minola (or Bianca Minola for that matter) is interested in her money, whatever *else* he may talk about. It is positively wicked in this commercial world to be willing to marry out of the class that has money. Hortensio (Litio) pretends to be utterly appalled that Bianca should be in love with her tutor — who is a supposed scholar, a man of *education* but no *property*. We shall see, in due course, that he is only pretending. He almost certainly knows that "Cambio" is another rich young man. If he has not found it out already for himself by this time (4.2.1-31) then Tranio tells him (matching confession with confession, though we do not hear him do it, as we do hear Hortensio confess — 4.2.16-21). For Hortensio certainly knows all about "Cambio" subsequently. It must be from him that Petruchio has learned about Lucentio's plan to elope with Bianca (4.5.62-63). On the stage Tranio supports Hortensio's pretense, and encourages him to go first to Petruchio's "taming school," and then to marry the *rich* widow who is in love with him.

What Grumio says about money is close to the simple truth for Hortensio.^{vii} Speaking of Petruchio, Grumio talks as if the urging of nature does not matter, but he knows better really. He expresses his master's mockery of the commercial world and he, Grumio, knows that he is not speaking the truth. What *is* true for the younger generation is that "nothing comes *aright* so money

comes *not* withal.” Money is a prerequisite for the legitimation of their natural impulses. It is not a *sufficient*, but still a *necessary*, condition of moral and social acceptability.

That is what Petruchio knows; and Petruchio is a *real* peripatetic, a genuine student of virtue and “that part of philosophy . . . that treats of happiness by virtue specially to be achieved” (I . . . ; compare Aristotle, *Ethics*, I . . .). He is not a pretender like Lucentio — who sends Tranio to lectures that are themselves only a pretense of real philosophy, and himself uses a pretended study of Latin to cover his wooing of Bianca. But, since Petruchio is really a mocker who knows what everyone else will assume, it is the most natural form of mockery for him to pretend to have arrived (like his friend Hortensio)^{viii} at the position of Gremio and Baptista, while he is still of an age with Lucentio and Hortensio. If he *really* cared about money, would he come to church as he does, or act as he does when he gets there? It is not Katerina the Shrew he means to mock, but the reverence for social position, and the finery that money feels it *must* buy and *wear* upon the appropriate social occasions.

But is Petruchio *really* a philosopher, and not simply a jester? Does he not set out to woo Kate in a spirit of *bravado* (as Northrop Frye among others says)? Kate thinks so herself: what else can she think when he is late for the wedding? She does not know what Petruchio has said about being in search of a wife because he has a home and property to look after, now that his father is dead. Since I want to claim that the bravado is a pose, I must confess honestly that there is no good textual reason to suspect mockery in any of this. He is talking to an old friend, new met after a longish interval; and nothing has yet been said to rouse his imp of mischief. Nor does Kate know that Petruchio has said he will marry someone “as curst and shrewd as Socrates’ Zantippe” (. . .) if only she be rich enough. If she did know this she would suspect mockery instantly, and one does not need to be as quick-witted as she is, to agree with her. But Petruchio’s wooing quickly ceases to be a joke when he actually comes to woo her, even if it did begin in that spirit.

The most plausible reading of what Petruchio says is this. He is looking for a wife in his own class as a settled matter of policy. He hears of one who will very probably suit him; and he

insists on going straight to meet her. She is rich, yet she is supposedly ill-tempered and shrewish. Will he not reason that she must be unhappy, and ask himself why? When he is told that “She is young and beautiful, brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman” (), the most likely causes of any unhappiness that would be hard to cure, are removed. It becomes probable that her unhappiness arises from a sense of injustice, and from rebellion against her family situation. What else could make a rich and beautiful girl shrewish? If she were ugly, or inept at the things that girls of her station are supposed to be able to do, then she might well be bitter about that; and in that case she might be quite irredeemable from the false values of her world. But the chances are that she can be saved; and if not, Petruchio will be able to withdraw quite easily.

Since Petruchio is well known to Hortensio as a joker, it would not surprise his friend if he were to change his mind when he met the reputed “shrew.” But as soon as he is told who her father is, Petruchio wants to meet Kate right away. He knows Baptista, and Baptista was a close friend of his father. He knows more about him, surely, than just that he is rich? Finally he is told about the situation between Kate and her sister. Being wild and impulsive himself, he feels sure, that Kate is the girl for him before he ever sees her. He does not know, until he meets her, what a remarkable mind it is that makes her tongue so rich; but he can already guess that she is really a “lark” (the bird that looks so ordinary but sings so marvelously at sunrise) and that the screams of the jay come from a creature whose “tongue will tell the anger of her heart or else her heart will break” — one who must be “free even to the uttermost in words.”

Petruchio wants to marry Kate (when he does meet her) because he recognizes someone who cannot be caged, someone who will never know “her duty to her elders” (in the formal pretending way in which Bianca knows it). Kate is someone who must always answer back, and will never be put down in a verbal exchange. They are both of them wild creatures but Petruchio is free, whereas Kate is forcibly confined. Petruchio is a man, and his father’s death has made him his own master; Kate is a woman imprisoned by the conventions of her status, and humiliated precisely by her father’s decree that she must be married before Bianca. Grumio forecasts just how Petruchio will deal with Kate’s sarcastic tongue. But it is Petruchio’s own reference to “Florentius’ love” that tells

us what he is hoping for. He will not actually marry someone “as old as Sibyl.” That is just a joke — a rhetorical flourish — because he certainly wants children; and he will not marry “Socrates’ Zantippe” unless he can see that her harsh tongue conceals a beautiful mind. That was the actual case with Florentius. In order to save his own life, he had to discover “What all women most desire?” A “foul old hag” told him the answer — “to be sovereign of man’s love” — upon the condition that he must marry her. On the wedding night she was transformed into a beautiful young woman, and revealed to be an enchanted princess.^{ix} That is what Petruchio takes to be Kate’s situation; and only when the spell is broken are they properly wedded.

What is it then, that really happens in Petruchio’s “taming” of Katerina? Perhaps larks *can* be “tamed,” but it is certainly part of the proverbial wisdom upon which poets rely, that they cannot (or at least should not) be kept in cages. Petruchio tells Kate he is the man who is born to tame her, and bring her from a wild Kat to a Kat conformable as other household Kats. We need not take this pun on her name too seriously, because it is only the conventional world that sees her first as a wild *cat* and then later as a tame cat. What she really is, eludes the conventional view altogether.

However, Petruchio also tells *us* (not Kate) that he is going to tame her as men tame hawks; and this is not a pun but an analogy that he follows very exactly before our eyes. Hawks are not tamed as cats are (let alone dogs). They never become domesticated, and their spirits cannot be broken — a hawk may be tortured to death, but it cannot be brought to *obey authority* (as a dog does) or even to cower from a threat (as a cat will). The Elizabethans knew only one way to tame hawks. One had to suffer with them — and one had to do it in one’s own person, because a hawk is “tame” only for its known trainer. The hawk had to be starved and “watched” (i.e. kept awake) until it would take food from the falconer, and rest peacefully on his wrist. The falconer need not starve, but he too must stay awake and *patiently* put the bird back into its place every time it “bates.” Petruchio does starve and stay awake with Kate, and he is always patient but firm, from the moment when she slaps his face (her first “bate”).^x

As an analogy this “hawk-taming” is only another of Petruchio’s practical jokes; and it is part of the essence of it, that Kate must understand exactly what he is doing.^{xi} On her wedding-day she thought that he was simply trying to humiliate her. But she has in all probability “watched” her own hawk. (This is more likely for Kate than for Bianca anyway, and we all know that she has been brought up as befits a gentlewoman.) She knows what sort of person Petruchio is, and she herself comments on the “perfect love” with which he torments her (4.3.12).^{xii} Just in case she fails to realize that Petruchio is making fun of her, in comes Grumio, to tease her by offering her all sorts of food, and end by promising her “the mustard without the beef” (). Then Petruchio concludes his “falconer” joke by bringing in food that he has cooked himself; and since all he wants from her is the simplest politeness (which he has always given her, whereas the servant whom she defended from his master’s unjust wrath, treated her badly when she was actually *begging* from him) she grudgingly gives way and plays out her part in the game.

A game is all that this scene is. With the haberdasher and the tailor comes the real test. For Kate loves finery, and her Petruchio is a fanatic, a genuine wild man, on the subject of clothes. Fine clothes are the fine feathers of the jay — whose tongue is so shrewish. Petruchio can be married in any clothes because “to me she’s married not unto my clothes” (); and the virtue of a piece of clothing (e.g. of a hat) is not that it looks pretty, but that it shields one from the cold (or one’s head from the sun’s heat). We may take it that Petruchio acts so wildly in the matter of dress, precisely because he sees at the first glance that Kate is a clothes horse. (Her sister’s offer to give up her “gawds” and even her dress — 2.1.3-5 — confirms this; and a wise director must see that his Kate is costumed accordingly. Kate is not ugly, probably not even “plain”; but it is Bianca who is the “beauty” of the family, and Kate certainly feels decidedly inferior in this respect.) Freedom from vanity about her clothes becomes the symbol, therefore, of her escape from the bondage of conventional values. Probably it was an important symbol for Petruchio himself, not just one that he saw to be crucial for Kate. For when he appears at his wedding, Tranio (Lucentio) tells us “‘Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion/ Yet oftentimes he goes but mean-apparell’ d” (3.2.63-64).^{xiii}

Petruchio comes late to the wedding that he was in such haste for. That is to upset Kate; but his comically mean apparel is meant to upset everyone, and not just Kate. When he arrives, he is in a hurry to “kiss the bride”; and the *real* kiss will be the *magic* moment of the play as it was in the story of Florentius. Petruchio behaves scandalously during the marriage service; and Gremio says that Kate was quite frightened. But Gremio does not realize (as Kate surely does) that Petruchio is far wilder than she is.

The fact that her husband’s will must prevail over hers, is made plain by Petruchio’s determination that they shall go straight home. In her father’s house, Kate has been accustomed to have her own way. So she assumes that she can send Petruchio home by himself, if he is in such a hurry. But he pretends the company is “coveting” her. She is *his* “goods and chattels,” and he is her protector. He and Grumio march or carry her out, because — being his wife — she *naturally* wants to stay with him. Baptista’s feast becomes a rehearsal for *Bianca*’s wedding day.

On the journey home, the frosty weather helps in the “taming.” Grumio speaks as if Petruchio and Kate were riding the same horse. But the ambiguity in his speech here, is only a folk-tale echo. Kate was actually riding ahead, when her horse stumbled and fell. Petruchio blames Grumio for this, and beats him for it. Kate has to pull him off Grumio — and “she prayed that never prayed before.” Curtis comments that Petruchio “is more shrew than she” (); and so he is, but all of his shrewishness is directed at the servants. The food is sent away the first time, because it is not fit for *him* to eat. Kate will “fast for company” with him (as his wife). The servant Peter remarks that “He kills her in her own humour” (4.1.151). Petruchio is simply *showing* her what shrewishness is like, for those who must endure it. (This first phase began with his lateness, his clothes, and his behavior at the wedding.)

In the bedchamber, Kate herself gets a shrewish lecture on the duties of a wife. It is a sermon that she remembers, for she gives us some of it in her last speech. But the fact that Curtis calls it a “sermon of continency” (4.1.154) clearly indicates that the marriage is not consummated. Petruchio himself comes out to us after the lecture, and explains that Kate is to be “watched” and famished like

a hawk. Kate herself is not to be “killed in her own humour”; she is to be “killed with kindness” (4.1.179). She will not be shouted at any more, but treated with the utmost courtesy; and when *she* is courteous, she will get what she wants. Until then she will get nothing. (“Killing with kindness” is the second phase of the “taming.”)

The “oaths and brawling” continue (4.3.10). But they are all directed at the servants, at the food, and at the bed. By the time Petruchio comes in with the food he has prepared himself, Kate has been driven to attack Grumio. But like a chastened child, she learns to say “thank you” for her food at least. She is not his goods and chattels except in their relation to the outside society. But he does control all of their joint property.

The little scene with the haberdasher is crucial for the understanding of Kate’s behavior in the final episode. She says that “gentlewomen wear such caps as these” and Petruchio responds “When you are gentle you shall have one too/ And not till then” (4.3.70-72). He pretends that she is agreeing with him; and when she says “it I will have, or I will have none” (4.3.85) *none* is just what she gets (by her own decision). She hardly gets a word in about the new gown,^{xiv} which is actually bought and paid for secretly.^{xv} The end result is that they must go to Bianca’s wedding in their old clothes.

When Petruchio tells Kate in the last scene, to throw her hat down and walk on it, he knows very well that she wants the new one; and she knows that now she is properly “gentle” she will get it. (Probably, like the new gown, the cap has already been bought and paid for.) We should take particular note that when Petruchio teaches Kate his philosophical doctrine that “’tis the mind that makes the body rich,” and asks her “is the jay more precious than the lark/ Because his feathers are more beautiful?” (4.3.166, 169-170) he does not expect her to go all the way in agreement with him. He tells her explicitly that in conversation with the other wives, she should blame him: “If thou account’st it shame, lay it on me,/ And therefore frolic” (4.3.175-176). He knows very well that he ought not to dictate his wife’s dress, and that it is not a mere appearance, but the social reality of her

own dignity that is involved here. (But Kate's treading on her hat will be a secret "frolic" for them both, because by then she has come to agree with him fully.)

"Frolic" is the keynote of the last stage in the "taming" exercise. Kate has said that her heart would break if she did not exercise absolute freedom of speech. Petruchio now shows her that it is eminently sensible, and quite easy, to give up that freedom for the sake of freedom in the real world. She said just what she thought about the hat and the dress, but she did not get them. She must learn to be unfailingly *obedient* to her husband in the sphere of language (and in the sphere of all social conventions that are mere "appearance"). Then Petruchio will be able to show her what "freedom to the uttermost in words" can really be for someone who is as gifted rhetorically as she is. They are now about to return to Padua for her sister's wedding. They must both go in their old clothes, because what she does without, he must do without likewise.^{xvi} The game of "linguistic obedience" now begins. Petruchio says it is seven o'clock, and Kate at once tells him it is two. That is folly on her part, because she knows that he is not really delirious. The scene ends here, but we can assume that Kate has given in to Petruchio, and that it is still the same afternoon, when we next meet them on the road. When she refuses to call the sun, the moon, Hortensio begs her to play along, and she does so. But her forced agreement is that of one humoring a fractious child. She thinks the game Petruchio is playing is a very stupid one.

Then, quite suddenly, her attitude changes. She begins to play the game with enthusiasm. Her second speech of agreement is not "forced" at all. She has suddenly realized that the "lunatic"^{xvii} she married is lovable, and that she loves him. The contrast between the two speeches that are virtually identical in content is meant to show this (4.5.12-15 and 18-22). Kate is now as eloquent as she was in the wooing scene; and Petruchio becomes the "straight" man, who feeds her the necessary "leads." Vincentio (who takes their joke in good part) has the star performer rightly identified: "Fair sir, and you, my merry mistress" (4.5.53). When they reach Padua, and Vincentio becomes the butt of Tranio and Biondello, he will not be nearly so good-tempered. It is no joke for him, of course, to be threatened with jail by someone who is impersonating him. But even when he knows that it was really a joke, he forgives Lucentio much more readily than he forgives the servants Tranio and Biondello. They can plead that they were only obeying Lucentio's orders. But, like

Petruchio himself (who has learned of the elopement-plot from Hortensio), they are also aware, by this time, that the “supposes” have become superfluous. So there is some justice in Vincentio’s continued resentment against Tranio (5.1.105).

It is only a joke when Petruchio threatens to go home again, unless Kate will kiss him in the street; for he understands what has happened just as well as she does. But in her surrender at this point she offers us a contrast that is crucial for the play as a whole. When she wanted Petruchio to stay for the feast on their wedding day she challenged him: “Now, if you love me, stay” (3.2.194). At that point (if my argument is accepted) Petruchio *does* love her. But his response is “Grumio, my horse!” Here, he says, “Come, sirrah, let’s away”; so Kate kisses him, and responds, “Now pray thee love, stay” (5.1.121-123). She does not ask him if he loves her, but tells him, for the first time, that she loves him. This transforms the whole relation between them. He will always do what she asks him after this (if he can); and he will not “command” her to do what he knows she does not want to do (unless she herself can see why she must do it).^{xviii}

In the final testing-scene Bianca does not quite have a fair chance. She sends a polite message; and we cannot say, at that point, that she does not “know her duty.” But when she discovers what has happened and responds “The more fool you for laying on my duty” (5.2.129) we ought to realize that in her mind, the marriage to someone of her own age was an escape from the pretense of “duty to her elders,” which she observed so scrupulously in her father’s house.^{xix} Kate would never play that game, because she did not feel properly grateful, and Baptista never subjected either of them to discipline. The two girls — who must have lost their mother early — were both *spoiled* by a father who was almost as stupid about them as King Lear. (The play illustrates, among other things, just how and why a father *can* become as foolish as Lear.)

The widow holds Bianca’s view of marriage (with all the wisdom of experience). Like all the critics (both feminist and traditionally conventional) the widow is simply *fooled* about Kate’s sacrifice of her own bourgeois dignity. The episode of the cap is only the game of obedience continuing. Petruchio surely gives Kate a straight-faced wink when he tells her to throw down her

cap; and she gives him a mischievous grin when she puts her foot on it. They both know what cap it is that she wants and will have.

Kate's final sermon on the duties of a wife is *not* a joke. She gives us now, in all gentleness, the "sermon of continency" that Petruchio gave to her on their wedding night, with all that railing, swearing and rating that she had never experienced before. Petruchio is older than she is (she called him "withered" at their first meeting [2.1.229] — which is Tranio's *accurate* adjective for Gremio [2.1.393]), and he subjects her to the discipline that she ought to have received from her father. He is still like a father to her — for they have not consummated the marriage yet. But he behaves like a *husband* in the "taming," because they go through the discipline *together*, sharing it equally. Kate learns that for a wayward *child*, there must be discipline; and now she tells us that in the family, there must be authority; and that it belongs to the husband (as it should have belonged, and will once more belong in their future, to the father). But for Kate the family-authority will never again be *disciplinary*; and because the loving relation now holds between them as equals, it will not often even be authoritative. Kate can expect to get her own way, wherever her way is reasonable. It is the *father* who has the final authority; but "I pray thee love, stay" will always move the *husband's* will.

As they go to bed to consummate their marriage finally, on Kate's younger sister's wedding night, Petruchio says "We three are married, but you two are sped [i.e., done for]." The last lines show, however, that Hortensio is more truly "sped" than Lucentio. Hortensio has seen what happened at "the taming school" (4.2.54-58). But his conclusion about what he has seen is worthy of Gremio: "thou hast tamed a curst shrew." Lucentio, on the other hand, whose relation to Tranio has thus far resembled the dependence of Bertie Wooster on Jeeves, suddenly reveals an intelligence that he did not know he had. He didn't see how the trick was done; but he strongly suspects that something other than "taming" was involved: "Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tamed so" (5.2.188-189), he says. And with that hint Shakespeare leaves us. (Perhaps Lucentio and his blonde Bianca will "hit the white" together after all.)^{xx}

That last line is not the proper end of the play. It is clear from the adapted version offered in *A Shrew*, that the original play of about 1590 ended, as it begins, with Christopher Sly outside the Tavern. The three scenes with Sly that are not in our genuine text should be restored; it was only some necessary economy of the actors on stage (surely?) that forced their deletion from our text.^{xxi} In the first one, Sly wants to prevent Vincentio's being taken to jail. (In our play, he could easily be dragging the false Vincentio away from the upstairs window.) His intervention underlines his agreement with Kate that unjust punishment is no joking matter. Both of them know, by instinct and experience alike, that we must be kind to our fellows. Kate normally treats the servants courteously, even when she is shockingly rude to her social equals; while Sly here insists that he is "Don Christo Vary," and assumes that the players are his servants. They must therefore play properly.^{xxii}

Sly now goes to sleep. At the end of the scene, the nameless Lord supervises his removal from the stage. Sly does not see Petruchio win the wager. But after the final scene, we observe his sleeping return to his place outside the Tavern. When he wakes up, he thinks that it has all been a dream.^{xxiii}

Sly also thinks that he now knows how to "tame" his wife — who is shrewish. But, of course, he is quite mistaken about that; and the Tapster (who reveals that Sly's wife is a shrew) probably holds this view when he agrees to go home with the beggar. The shrewishness of Sly's wife will be rooted in their poverty (and in Sly's habit of drinking up whatever financial resources they have).

Sly cannot use Petruchio's method of taming, for he would need to tame himself first; and he is far too kind-hearted to use "Morel's skin."^{xxiv} If the Tapster goes home with him, they may all three have a good laugh about his "dream" when he tells it. But he must rub along as well as he can with the shrewish wife who still loves him, unless he is willing to change his own ways.

Sly's sympathy with others who suffer unjustly, and his insistence that a good joke must have its limits, brings us back to what Kate, as a loving wife, can do for Petruchio. He is "wild

Peter,” and there is reason to fear that he may not always know where to stop.^{xxv} If Sly ever meets the nameless Lord again, they will laugh together, Sly will get drink-money out of it, and they will part friends. When Petruchio beats Grumio he probably hurts him less than Kate does in her rage. All of his servants seem to be on good terms with Petruchio. But he falls in love with Kate at first sight,^{xxvi} *precisely because he recognizes his salvation in her.*

We can see this in Petruchio’s initial speech to Kate. He begins with factual observation: “plain Kate/ and bony Kate, and *sometimes* Kate the curst [not *all* the time, because of himself and of what is coming]”; he proceeds to *his* truth which looks like calculated flattery: “the prettiest Kate in Christendom/ Kate of Kate-Hall, my super-dainty Kate [I could eat you!]”; and he comes at last to his own wild hope: “Kate of my consolation.” “Kate the curst” is really Saint Catherine of Siena. This is not effective flattery, and Petruchio cannot *know* that it is true. But he knows what he *needs*; and like everyone in love he wants to believe that he has found it.^{xxvii}

It is only the husband’s “*honest* will” that Kate defends (5.2.158). But as the “loyal subject” she can be counted on to have a better sense than her madcap husband, of the proper bounds of “honesty.” One who behaves as Petruchio did in Church cannot be implicitly trusted, any more than one who speaks as the Lord does of Sly when Sly is asleep: “O monstrous beast, how like a swine he lies!” (Induction, 1.30). Kate’s attitude to beggars is quite different.

In our world, we are no longer threatened by any Lord of that sort. But we have come to regard family-authority as something to be shared as equally as possible by both parents. For us, to think of the husband as the true focus of family authority, is reactionary. Unlike the authority of the Lord, however, patriarchal authority is a social ideal that is still alive; and its *reality* is threatening to all who regard it as superannuated. Hence many of us feel about the patriarchy, exactly what Sly feels about people being sent to jail. It is no laughing matter, and it ought not to be presented as such on the stage.

Luckily, because the play is a comedy about appearance and reality, the remedy is simple. Kate's last speech just has to be treated as a continuation of the joke about the hat. There, Petruchio winked and Kate grinned. Here Kate winks when she offers to put her hand beneath her husband's foot; and Petruchio's part is already letter-perfect, for he surely laughs uproariously as he *takes* her hand and says, "Why there's a wench! Come on and kiss me, Kate" (5.2.180). We can simply forget about the "sermon of continency." That, too, was all a joke, after all. Petruchio, the philosophical reader of Aristotle, of Vives, and perhaps of Erasmus, still knows the difference between the *social* reality of money, of property rights, and of law, and the *natural* reality of human desires and needs, the ideal reality of human love. The social realities can to some extent be manipulated; the natural ones must be reverently respected. Petruchio will smile with us, to see his philosophical lesson made part of the joke; and Kate, of course, will cheer her militant sisters on, in their campaign to transform the social realities. but Kate finally enjoys the certainty that, even if she dies in childbirth, none of *her* daughters will need the educational lessons of "the taming school." (Both Kate and Petruchio would laugh their heads off at the contention that Kate is the "natural superior," who finally knows "what every woman knows" — that she can be the lord, if she pretends her husband is. *That* is just what *Bianca* "knows.")^{xxviii}

All of the elements that went into the play were essentially farcical. But what Shakespeare made of them when he wove them together, was a very *realistic* comedy, as serious as it is light-hearted. The farcical elements still present in it — the "supposes" of Lucentio, Hortensio and Tranio, together with the figures of Gremio and the "supposed" Vincentio — are justified and excused by the dramatic structure of "a play within the play." To mount the whole thing as a farce is a bad mistake.^{xxix} When that is done, we are bound to miss just what we are meant to hear: the song of the lark at the dawn, and of the nightingale in the gloaming.

Notes

Key to References

For scene and line references to the play I have used the *New Cambridge* edition edited by Ann Thompson. Line references in many scenes will vary a great deal between different editions because of the presence of a large amount of prose.

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- i. This thesis was first advanced (probably) by D.A. Stauffer (1949, 46); and it was developed in some detail by C.C. Seronsy (1963). But they both took the play to be a study of how "thinking makes it so" (cf. also M. Mack, 1963, 279-280; excerpted in R.B. Heilman, ed., 1966, 213-215). That view is far too simple; indeed, it is part of Shakespeare's intention to show that "thinking does *not* make it so." (Seronsy pushes the importance of *The Supposes* too far; but he makes some good points that fall outside of my own concern.)
 - ii. R. Berry points out that music is an important "symbolic center" in the play (1972, 62). At the beginning, Bianca is a focus of harmony, and Kate of discord; at the end their positions are reversed.
 - iii. The psychology of Kate's shrewishness is brilliantly analyzed by Ruth Nevo (1980, 29-41): "No one can penetrate her defenses, so great her need for assurance." Consequently, she desperately *wants* to believe that Petruchio is in earnest.

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- iv. Perhaps Kate is quite mistaken about Baptista's feelings. Certainly he is very concerned that she should be happy. He will make no "covenants" until "the special thing is well obtained,/ that is, her love, for that is all in all" (2.1.124-125); and he says that "The gain I seek is quiet in the match" (2.1.319). Petruchio tells us at the end that that is more important than money: "peace it bodes, and love, and quiet life" (5.2.108). Baptista makes no such condition in the auction for Bianca, because he thinks she is perfectly happy to be obedient. Her willing elopement at the first opportunity, shows how mistaken he is about that. But it is hardly his fault, if he cannot talk to Kate. He does not deserve Neville Coghill's contempt (1950 in R.B. Heilman, 1966, 167).
- v. The older generation, Baptista and Gremio, we should notice, do not pretend about this; they frankly confess that Mammon is their god. But Hortensio, in particular, is *really* pretending. He does not seriously care about Bianca.
- vi. To regard Kate's tears as part of a *game* (as R. Berry does — 1972, 66) is absurd. Kate made only a token protest against "one half-lunatic/ A mad-cap ruffian and a swearing Jack" (2.1.276-277). She let their hands be joined in betrothal, and she did not subsequently ask Baptista to break it off. When the bridegroom does not come, she is both publicly shamed, and privately very disappointed; and, of course, when he does come he lives up to her description of him exactly.
- vii. It is also the simple truth for the oldsters: thus Gremio can come to market to buy Bianca from Baptista. But for the young folk, biological attraction is also part of the equation.
- viii. The essentially mercenary character of Hortensio is shown by his readiness to turn to "the widow." He will not be able to benefit from the lessons of "the taming school" until he

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- achieves Petruchio's conception of marriage as mutual commitment. This difference is what obliges us to regard Petruchio's mercenary protestations as a pose. (See further note 27 below.)
- ix. The story is told in Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (with which Shakespeare was probably acquainted). But I have taken it from H.J. Oliver's note in the Oxford Shakespeare edition (1982) of *The Taming of the Shrew*.
- x. All that I know about the taming of hawks in Shakespeare's time and ours comes from T.R. Henn, *The Living Image*, 1972, chapter 2; and from T.H. White, *The Goshawk*. (Both can be heartily recommended.)
- xi. The most astounding statement I have found in the literature is the comment of B. Morris (1981, 124): "Throughout the play she [Kate] is presented as not particularly intelligent." She is *clearly* presented as a *very* intelligent girl. But her feelings have overwhelmed her good sense, because the heart that she says "would break" *is* very nearly broken with respect to her father.
- xii. Kate says "He does it *under name of* perfect love" (4.3.12). She can hardly believe that Petruchio is truly in love with her, though she half-believed that he might be until her wedding day. But Petruchio *does* love her (see 4.1.174-175); and Kate clearly recognizes that he is avoiding any "brutality" (compare A. Leggatt, 1974, 52). Quiller-Couch simply did not attend to the text carefully enough, when he called it "brutal stuff," and cited the proverb about whipping a spaniel, a wife, and a walnut tree (1928, xv-xvi). Shakespeare quite probably had the ballad of "Morel's skin" (see note 23 below) in mind; but if so, he intended to create the greatest possible contrast to it. (The analogy with "hawk-watching"

would lead Kate to believe that Petruchio's loving protestations are actually sincere — cf. T.M. Parrott, 1949, 151.)

- xiii. Hortensio would be able to tell us this from personal knowledge. But Tranio, who comes from far-away Pisa, cannot know it. We have to assume that he is simply trying to reassure Baptista with a plausible hypothesis. All of his seemingly anomalous behavior fits into this pattern. He is a servant pretending to be his master; so it is natural for him to support Baptista's desire to see the conventions properly observed. And he probably *enjoys* offering to lend Petruchio a suit of Lucentio's clothes. When he says to Baptista that "We will persuade him, *be it possible*/ To put on better ere he go to church" it is plain that he thinks the meaning of Petruchio's "mad attire" is an intention to make fun of all the "conspicuous consumption" that *Baptista* has paid for. His initial reaction "yet oftentimes he goes but mean-apparell'd" is an excuse offered to soothe Baptista's sense of outrage, without any knowledge of Petruchio's habits. But it is clear that the "supposes" have defeated the dramatist at this point. We cannot have Hortensio — who would know about Petruchio's habits — at the wedding, because Hortensio is only a music-teacher recommended by Petruchio himself. But Shakespeare wants us to accept Tranio's guess, as if it were the word of Hortensio himself. In the theater this happens easily enough; it is only for readers that it becomes a problem. Shakespeare wanted the line in; and Tranio (like Petruchio and Kate) is quick-witted; so a thoughtful reader can understand how and why he produces what is only a guess on his part so promptly. (A similar view was first proposed to Brian Morris by Jean Robertson. See the Arden edition, 1981, 22. I wrote this note before I knew that.)
- xiv. To make the same sort of joke with the Tailor would be wearisome. So now it is Grumio who takes the "middle" part; and he is quite cheeky to Petruchio. But line 4.3.151 ("Go, take it up unto thy master's use.") must belong to the Tailor, not to Petruchio. Grumio would never call his own master "Villain" at *this* juncture (line 152).

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- xv. Hortensio performs this office (having come to the “taming school” before he goes off to wed his widow). It is clear that he has abandoned his pursuit of Bianca, because he knows that Lucentio has won her love. He knows about the planned elopement (which explains how Petruchio learns about it). In the auction for Bianca, Baptista is not concerned about Hortensio’s absence, because he is well aware that Gremio can outbid him. Hortensio is not in any way “outwitted” (B. Morris, 1981, 38); and he is cynically mercenary himself. But he knows Bianca, better than Baptista does; and he understands Baptista. Bianca will not accept betrothal to the highest bidder unless she wants to; and Baptista will not make her do so. (Not everything is presented on stage; but for thoughtful readers the problems have easy answers.)
- xvi. It is unjust both to Petruchio and to Kate, to say that “Kate has yielded to a will stronger than her own” (R. Nevo, 1980, 49). We have seen why Kate *cannot* win in any marital conflict of *wills*; and upon Petruchio’s view of marriage, *no one* can. What Kate is intelligent enough to grasp is that a conflict of *wills* between them is quite unnecessary (and hence stupid). (This is the only assertion in Ruth Nevo’s chapter with which I find myself in disagreement. It was William Hazlitt who first spoke of a battle of wills.)
- xvii. Petruchio’s identification of the sun as the moon (4.5.2-5) is deliberately symbolic. It echoes upon 2.1.276-278.
- xviii. This brief scene goes neatly from the “honoring” of the Marriage Service (“What, art thou ashamed of me?/ No sir, God forbid”) to “obeying and loving.”
- xix. Lucentio certainly ought to have known her better (see 3.1.18-20). Germaine Greer’s

appreciation of Kate's final speech is generously intelligent; but her comment on Bianca is shockingly unjust: "The submission of a woman like Kate is genuine and exciting because she has something to lay down, her virgin pride and individuality: Bianca is the soul of duplicity" (*The Female Eunuch*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1971, 220). For a sounder evaluation of Bianca see G.R. Hibbard (1968, 34-35). Bianca is another wild falcon that needs gentling (4.2.39). If we compare Greer's reaction with that of G.B. Shaw (who said that the whole play was "altogether disgusting to the modern sensibility") we can judge just how far the battle for women's rights has progressed (E. Wilson, ed., *Shaw on Shakespeare*, 1961, Penguin, 1969, 198).

- xx. The "white" was the center of the archery target; and "Bianca" means "the white girl."

- xxi. The textual arguments that tend to show that our Folio text was cut for some external practical reason are well summarized by B. Morris (1981, 42-45).

- xxii. The scene can be inserted at 5.1.82. It will then fit the action of our play. But Sly is *not* confusing the play with the real world (as the Lord and his servants think). Once he is sure that nobody (even playfully) will be sent to prison, Sly says cheerfully "let them play again." Because he is on the stage, we naturally take him for a *farcical* figure. But actually he is a moral censor of the drama (comic certainly, but not farcical).

- xxiii. I do not believe he was really *deceived* when he was awake. It is better to assume that he is consciously "playing along." In my opinion "Don Christo Vary" still knows quite well that he is "Christopher Sly" — who has been in the playhouse more than once, and probably knows Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (compare Induction 1.4 and notes). (When Sly asks what a "comonty" is, he is playing up to his part, just as Kate does.)

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- xxiv. The ballad called *A Merry Jest of a Shrewde and Curste Wife, Lapped in Morrelle's Skin for Her Good Behavyyour* is not very merry for the wife. The husband tears off her clothes, “beats her with birch rods till the blood runs on the floor and she faints, and then wraps her in the [well-salted] skin of an old lame plough-horse, Morel, killed and flayed specially for the occasion” (Richard Hosley, cited by H.J. Oliver, Oxford edition, 1982, 49). She amazes the company by her good behavior at her father's house after this. We can fairly assume that this wife hates her husband as much as she fears him. Shakespeare's play is about family love — of father and daughters, and of husband and wife.
- xxv. Petruchio forecasts that his wooing will be “rough” (2.1.133). A. Leggatt is right to emphasize that his method is “harsh,” and that Kate really suffers (1974, 54-55). He ought not to use Quiller-Couch's word “brutal” (1974, 55, 57); but he is right again, in arguing that the continual use of sporting metaphors underlines the *cruelty* of treating human “subjects” as if they were one's hawks or dogs. And Petruchio has lived an adventurous life as a soldier and big-game hunter (1.2.194-200).
- xxvi. “No doubt whatever is left that he admires Katerina for herself on sight” (N. Coghill, 1950 in 1966, 168). Considering that Petruchio has just told us exactly how he will woo Kate, this is a bit extreme. But I hope my argument will overcome the legitimate doubt.
- xxvii. He is lucky, because Kate does have a touch of the saint in her. When she is pleading with Grumio she does not say “Look what I did for you!” But she does say how “Beggars that come unto my father's door” are often (but not always) treated. Whose response to them is she talking about? (4.3.2-6). (It is not true that Kate “*learns sympathy*” — A. Leggatt, 1974, 53 — her rescue of Grumio was completely spontaneous.)

It is worth noticing, however, that the philosophy of authority that Petruchio has taught Kate is entirely secular-political. She makes no reference to God's creation of Eve, or to St. Paul's doctrine that "the head of the woman is the man" (as Vives' translator puts it — see R. Hosely, 1963/4 in R.B. Heilman, ed., 1966, 200). Kate conceives the family as a constitutional monarchy (compare further J. Dusinger, 1975, 78-79).

- xxviii. This misunderstanding began with N. Coghill (1950, reprinted in R.B. Heilman, ed., 1968, 169), and was carried further by H.C. Goddard (1951, excerpted in R.B. Heilman, ed., 1968, 209). Goddard's own comments on Kate and Bianca, and on the "farical" reading (*ibid.*, 210-212) are much sounder. But on Kate and Petruchio, R.B. Heilman himself (1966, cited in H.J. Oliver, 1982, 56) has the appropriate last word.
- xxix. This approach was proposed by M.R. Ridley (1937, 59). The critical reaction of R. Berry (1972, 54-55) is very sound, and is now almost the general consensus — but see H.J. Oliver (1982, 50-57). Juliet Dusinger (1975, 105-110) emphasizes the make-believe character of the play. But she also says that "Kate's submission gives her power over Petruchio"; and that "Petruchio could only play the part of lord if Kate agreed to the game."