Shakespeare’s Patterns of Self-Knowledge
TO

THOMAS WHITFIELD BALDWIN

who to me as to many Shakespeareans

is the master of those who know
# CONTENTS

Preface \( \text{ix} \)
Introduction \( \text{xi} \)

## 1 HUMANISM AND ANTIHUMANISM

1 *Nosce Teipsum*: Learning the Method \( 3 \)
2 *Nosce Teipsum*: Charting New Courses \( 26 \)

## 2 THEORY AND ADAPTATION

3 Microcosm and Macrocsm: Framing the Picture of Man \( 43 \)
4 *The Comedy of Errors*: Losing and Finding Oneself \( 62 \)
5 *Love's Labor's Lost*: Seeking Oneself \( 78 \)
6 *Richard II*: Looking into the Mirror of Grief \( 97 \)
7 *Henry V*: Patterning after Perfection \( 113 \)

## 3 PROBLEMS AND AMBIGUITIES

8 The Real versus the Ideal: Taking a Skeptic View \( 131 \)
9 *Julius Caesar*: Taking an Uncertain Road \( 150 \)
10 *Hamlet*: Probing a Restless Self \( 172 \)
11 *Troilus and Cressida*: Fragmenting a Divided Self \( 195 \)
12 *Measure for Measure*: Looking into Oneself \( 215 \)

## 4 ACHIEVEMENT AND SYNTHESIS

13 Will and Passion: Heightening the Self \( 239 \)
14 *Othello*: Subjecting the Self \( 259 \)
15 *King Lear*: Valuing the Self \( 281 \)
16 *King Lear*: Stripping the Self \( 305 \)
17 Macbeth: Losing the Self 327
18 The Tempest: The Mastered Self 356

APPENDIXES

A Hamlet: “What is a man?” 387
B Lucrece: “Why should the worm intrude the maiden bud?” 390
C Hamlet: “What a piece of work is a man!” 399
  Notes 405
  Index 437
Preface

I have sought in the following study to quote primary rather than secondary sources wherever feasible. I have modernized the spellings in the titles and in the quotations taken from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books and also modified the punctuation so as to make it better conform to modern usage. In a study of ideas like mine, the old spellings would have hindered more than helped. We do, of course, generally quote Shakespeare from modernized texts; not to grant the same advantage to his contemporaries means to provide them with an even greater handicap than they already have by intrinsic merit. In quoting from the Bible, I have used the versions of Shakespeare's time, that is, the Bishops' Bible, the Genevan, and its variant, the Genevan-Tomson; but in most cases I have had the Genevan closer at hand, and it is the version referred to unless specified differently. It also offers ample, even if at times rather doctrinal, notes. The Shakespeare edition used is that of *The Complete Works*, edited by Peter Alexander (American edition: New York, 1952). In a few instances, indicated in my notes, I have preferred readings different from Alexander when they are supported by the Folio or an authoritative quarto; and in Appendix C I have retained the spelling and punctuation of the sources because they are substantive to my argument. The abbreviations of the titles of periodicals in the notes conform to *PMLA* practice.

Whatever I can say in expressing my gratitude for what I owe to others in conceiving and writing this book is, to speak with Shakespeare's Kate, "too little payment for so great a debt." In many cases I shall not be able to acknowledge particular debts since it is impossible for a Shakespeare scholar to remain aware of the myriad influences his predecessors have exerted on him. But I am gratefully conscious of the abiding effect that two masters of Shakespeare
scholarship have had on me: Levin L. Schücking, my mentor during my German student days, and T. W. Baldwin, my adviser during my graduate studies at the University of Illinois. To the latter, this book is affectionately dedicated. I began my exploration of Renaissance moral philosophy while I held a Guggenheim fellowship, and I am most appreciative of the personal encouragement I received from the president of the foundation, Gordon N. Ray. Professor Paul Jorgensen, who in his study of *Lear* was the first to bring Renaissance *nosce teipsum* concepts to bear on the interpretation of a Shakespeare play, was most generous in giving up his plans of extending this approach and in leaving the field to me when he heard that I had a similar intention. A travel grant by my former institution, Kansas State University, aided my work; but I would not have been able to complete it if it had not been for the kindness and help I received from my colleagues in the English Department of the Ohio State University, then under the leadership of Albert J. Kuhn, who guided my weary steps and revived my hope. For reading and criticizing parts of my manuscript at various stages, I am indebted to Ruth Hughey, Joan Webber, Jewell Vroonland, John Gabel, Julian Markels, and Charles Wheeler; to Edwin Robbins I am grateful for reading the whole and for making some excellent suggestions. Samuel Schoenbaum of Northwestern University scrupulously read the penultimate version; I have benefited immensely from his great learning, critical discernment, and editorial know-how. Where I stubbornly stuck to arguments he criticized, I have at least tried to strengthen them.

My research was done at the British Museum in London, the Henry Clay Folger Library in Washington, D.C., and the Henry E. Huntington Library in San Marino, California; the latter library awarded me a grant-in-aid, and the personnel of all three were most understanding and helpful. Mrs. June Johnson painstakingly typed the manuscript; and my student Mr. Dan Atwood acted as both proofreader and stylistic critic. Finally, I am grateful to Mr. Weldon A. Kefauver, director of the Ohio State University Press, for his interest and encouragement, and to Mr. Robert S. Demorest, the editor, for his care in guiding the manuscript through its final stages. Whatever in this book (to speak with Kate again, in her triumph of self-knowledge) is still "muddy, ill-seeming, thick, and bereft of beauty," I must acknowledge as undeniably my own.