

The Structure of Meaning in Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo*

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The Structure of Meaning in Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo*

IT IS A well-known fact that, while the Italian public received the publication of Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's posthumous novel *Il Gattopardo* (*The Leopard*) with immediate and clamorous enthusiasm, the book fell short of universal acclaim by the critics and literati and was openly indicted on a variety of counts. Criticism ranged from subjective and vitriolic remarks by Vittorini that Lampedusa's novel failed to flow in the mainstream of Italian letters and was, in any case, the work of an author too old to have an effect on contemporary literature to more debatable assertions that the novel suffered from both ideological deficiency and structural weaknesses. While the historical backdrop of the Risorgimento transported the general public in the year of its hundredth anniversary, the critics complained that it did not fulfill the requirements of a historical novel and that they could not tell whether they were dealing with a reactionary or a revolutionary text. Recent criticism has corrected the myopia that resulted from an intense search for political meaning in the work, but it has proved more difficult to dispel the notion that *Il Gattopardo* lacks structural coherence and was assembled in either a hasty or an ill-conceived manner. Remarks by Eugenio Montale that the narrative was not always "armonioso e proporzionato," that it had its "squilibri" and could do without several superfluous scenes, including the entire fifth chapter, which he considered digressive and insignificant, were echoed by Luigi Blasucci.¹ Blasucci found fault with the "narrazione a sbalzi" and also singled out Chapter v as so peripheral to the novel's main action that it exposed Lampedusa to the charge of having violated Aristotle's principle of unity of action. That Aristotle should be invoked in this day and age itself invites a countercharge, but we can accept these early remarks (coming within a year of the

book's publication) as evidence of dissatisfaction with the novel's composition.

Criticism of a more recent vintage and a less journalistic imprint has met the earlier objections convincingly.² Yet Lampedusa's concern with the structural architecture of *Il Gattopardo* has not, I think, been fully explored. Lampedusa was conscious of narrative design in constructing the sequence of events in his novel, and, in particular, was fond of creating complex patterns of narrative symmetry to underscore the significance of what was narrated. In the following pages I examine two examples of such patterns and show how they are vehicles for the expression of ideas central to the meaning of the novel. If my argument is convincing, we will have the sense that Lampedusa is one of a number of modern writers to arrange episodes in a formal pattern for illustrative purposes. And we will have good reason to conclude that the author of *Il Gattopardo*, like his "portavoce" and alter ego Fabrizio, was something of an esthete, more interested in formal beauty than in the strict logic of an Aristotelian unity.

I

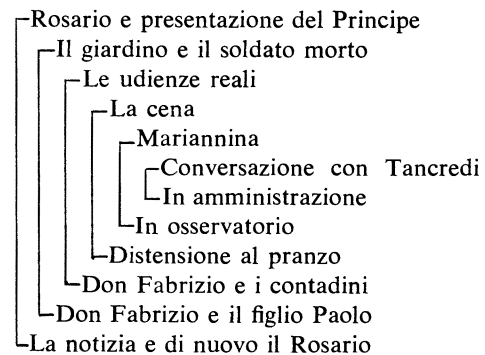
The most complex and elegant arrangement of episodic material appears in the design of the novel's first chapter, the introduction. As an introduction, it presents a picture of Prince Fabrizio and the family he governs, conveys the atmosphere of Sicilian aristocratic life, and situates the reader within the historical context of imminent Italian liberation from the grips of the moribund Bourbon monarchy. But the individual vignettes that compose the chapter are skillfully arranged to create a structural design that in itself identifies the coordinates along which the meaning of the author's vision is aligned. This design, known as "ring structure" or "con-

centric symmetry," describes the deployment of related incidents in a concentric or chiasmic order.³ Chiasmus is a rhetorical term generally used to identify a particular kind of word order in a sentence or a line of poetry, one that exhibits a reverse parallelism of its related parts. The term serves well, however, to express the interrelationship of a series of discrete narrative events in which the first corresponds in some way to the last, the second to the penultimate, and so on, working inward, until the center is reached. In symbolic language, the linear arrangement of events appears as ABCBA if the central element stands alone, or ABCCBA if the center consists of the final chiasmic pairing. The greater the number of parts (ABCDEDCBA, for example), the greater the complexity of the pattern, and, we might add, the greater the chance that we have identified a valid and consciously constructed pattern. The validity of a pattern depends in large part on the reader's ability to perceive narrative portions as separate and related entities possessing a distinctive characteristic. Although conspicuous formal divisions (for example, in the novel, chapters, subchapters, sections, and other untitled narrative breaks) may not be necessary as lines of demarcation, their presence invariably assures readers that they are not themselves imposing an arbitrary order on the text from without. For readers to be persuaded that a design is the product of the author's imagination and not the critic's fancy, some formal clue to its presence should be manifest.

In *Il Gattopardo* the clue to a pattern of scenes revealing concentric symmetry is immediately evident: the rosary informs both the opening and closing lines of the first chapter. The book begins ironically with the announcement of an end. With the words "Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen" Fabrizio concludes the rosary on 13 May 1860, and on the following day opens the same service with "Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae." The liturgical formulas neatly circumscribe the passage of twenty-four hours in the Salina household, call attention to the ritual of their quotidian life, and confer on the chapter a formal coherence. More important, they touch on the main theme of the novel, the idea of death and the notion that all must eventually turn to dust. The event, the

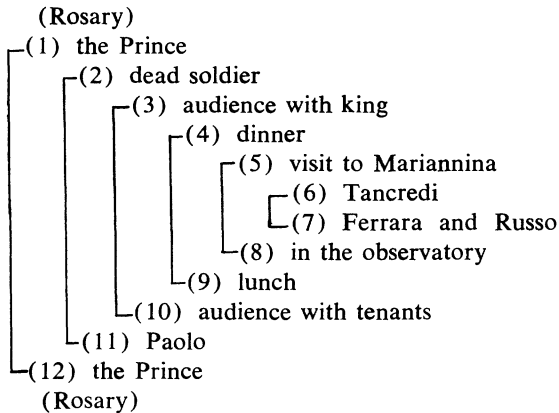
rosary, is not itself described. But in the form of a Latin inscription at the head and foot of the chapter, the formulas signal within the chapter the presence of an elaborate arrangement of scenes in chiasmic order.

The chapter is divided into twelve sections, each of which is a single narrative event complete in itself. While Lampedusa does not number the sections, he makes clear that he is thinking of each section as a self-sustaining narrative unit by indicating breaks between sections. In his "Indice" he provides brief subtitles for these sections, a format that is employed in each of the eight chapters. These twelve sections, of varying length, are arranged thematically in chiasmic order. To visualize the design we might make use of the following diagram, borrowing the subtitles of Lampedusa's "Indice" (in some instances abbreviated).⁴



The subtitles attached to the sections do not reveal the thematic and conceptual connections that link section to section in chiasmic order. The only correspondences that readily manifest themselves are those of the two rosaries and the two repasts. But a close analysis of the content of each section discloses that it is Lampedusa's intention to encourage the reader to view one event in terms of its binary counterpart. If we characterize the narrative content of each section according to its thematic material and plot, the correspondences begin to emerge more clearly (see diagram on facing page).

I will argue that the correlation between a section and its countersection illustrates the direction that events in the novel will take in succeeding chapters, and that the chiasmic design is a heuristic literary device for calling attention to analogical connections between seemingly different things and for revealing the process of



change taking place between two moments. Lampedusa, as we shall see, purposely focuses exclusively on the Prince at the beginning and end of the chapter; the scenes of the dead soldier and Paolo are paired for good reason; the Prince's two audiences with the king and with his land tenants echo each other, as the lunch scene does the dinner. And we are meant to view through the same glass the episodes of Fabrizio with his mistress Mariannina and the Prince's leisure hours in the astronomical observatory and, likewise, to connect Tancredi with Ferrara and Russo while noticing the central position of their appearance in the chapter. The pattern is meant to guide us in our understanding of the novel and to help us assess the relative significance of particular themes and relationships, something that is important in a novel that de-emphasizes the dynamic aspect of events and insists on remaining static, meditative, cerebral. Finally, not the least reason for the presence of the pattern is its inherent esthetic elegance. Beauty, after all, was a topic on which Fabrizio, and most likely his creator, did much reflecting.

II

We would best begin an analysis of the chiasmic pattern by examining the center, for the fundamental dynamic (what little there is) in this chapter consists of a tension between the figures in the center and those in the two outer panels (Secs. 6 and 7, 1 and 12). Fabrizio Corbera, Prince of Salina and member of the Sicilian nobility, presides over an illustrious family, which derives its privilege from a dying monarchy whose demise is hastened by the rev-

olutionary acts of Tancredi and the silent support of men of the servant class, such as Ferrara and Russo. The power of the Regno delle Due Sicilie is on the wane, and the authority of the feudal nobility is about to be usurped by a new class of upstarts. Tancredi's initial appearance at precisely the center of the chapter aptly symbolizes the forces that will result in both the dismantling of a class system that confers privilege according to blood relation and the forming of a "classless" society in which wealth determines status. The ascent of men like Tancredi, Ferrara, and Russo within the new society whose historical cornerstone is Garibaldi's military invasion of Sicily ("lo Sbarco") is prefigured by their introduction at the center of the chapter. The centers of literary works, it is worth recalling, often point to what is "central" to the meaning of the whole. Such is the case here, for Fabrizio is about to be displaced by Tancredi, the monarchy replaced by democracy, and the aristocracy eclipsed by a rising bourgeoisie.

"Eclipse" is the best word to characterize the changes taking place. We learn at the beginning of the novel that Fabrizio is symbolically surrounded by a phalanx of pagan protectors. The *affreschi* on the ceiling of the rosary room transform Palermo into a Mount Olympus where the gods and goddesses of antiquity flock together to bear up the blazon of the Salina family. The image may contain a fiction, but it expresses aptly the notion of aristocratic superiority perceived by the nobility as divinely inherited. The Greek gods not only offer to support the Salina family but also extend the promise of human immortality through preservation of family lineage. The *bertucchie* 'monkeys' and *cacatoés* 'cockatoos' carry on their indecorous and impertinent sneering in the company of the divinities, but, as representatives of a lower class of being, they are relegated to the walls beneath the ceiling. In Section 12, however, as Fabrizio finishes reading the newspaper notice of the landing of the Thousand at Marsala and prepares for the daily rosary, those pagan divinities have been eclipsed in his imagination by a new figure: "notò come il Vulcano del Soffitto rassomigliasse un po' alle litografie di Garibaldi che aveva visto a Torino" 'He noticed that the Vulcan on the ceiling bore a certain resemblance to the

lithographs of Garibaldi, which he had seen in Turin' (p. 63; all translations are mine). Garibaldi supersedes Vulcan, a mortal replaces an immortal, and the perpetuity of aristocratic privilege is revealed as an illusion, which historical events will no longer permit Fabrizio to entertain. The *bertucchie*, not so distant cousins of the *sciacalletti* 'little jackals' and *iene* 'hyenas,' having become "maligne" now shine forth through the dust of a feudal society in collapse and are assured of a higher position on the wall.

These two outer sections, 1 and 12, clearly present in the same images the nature of the historical and social changes at the heart of the novel. To call these sections mirror images of each other would be to adopt a defective metaphor; nevertheless, a calculated correspondence between the two is evident in their structure as well as in their imagery. On both occasions we view Fabrizio in the solitude of private reflection; he is without company, and there is no dialogue.

If in the changing of the divine guard Garibaldi replaces Vulcan, it is Tancredi (to return to the center panels) who will replace Fabrizio in the new society. His entrance is contrived to produce a cinematic effect laden with symbolic overtones. Absorbed in the daily ritual of shaving, Fabrizio spies Tancredi's reflected image in the mirror: "Mentre si radeva la guancia destra, vide nello specchio, dietro la sua, la faccia di un giovanotto, un volto magro, distinto, con un'espressione di timorosa beffa" 'While he was shaving his right cheek, he saw in the mirror, behind his own, the face of a young man, a lean, refined visage, with an expression of faint mockery' (p. 41). Tancredi's face may still occupy the background, "dietro la sua," but it is a face destined to eclipse his own. As he departs from home to fight with the rebels, Tancredi advises his uncle that "Se vogliamo che tutto rimanga come è, bisogna che tutto cambi" 'If we want everything to remain as it is, everything must change.' It is an analysis of events in which Fabrizio begins to perceive some truth and that will shortly become the motto of his own passive rebellion against the feudal system. The system cannot survive, and the best defense of his aristocratic world will be silently to join the enemy rather than to oppose it.

We might have expected Tancredi to occupy

the center alone, but he does not. The following and parallel section (Sec. 7, "In amministrazione") introduces two other figures who in one way are similar to Fabrizio's nephew. Ciccio Ferrara, the accountant, speaks like Tancredi of "nuovi tempi gloriosi . . . per la nostra Sicilia" and patiently awaits the shift in political power that will benefit him not a little. As Ciccio leaves, Pietro Russo, the superintendent and one of the more notable of Fabrizio's dependents, enters. The Prince discerns in each character the markings of the nascent bourgeois class. Ferrara is a dreamer ("anima illusa e rapace di un liberale" 'deluded and rapacious mind of a liberal'), a member of "la classe che sarebbe divenuta dirigente" 'the class that would become the ruling power' (p. 47). Russo, who like Ferrara supplements his income through petty speculation, presents "la perfetta espressione di un cetto in ascesa" 'the perfect image of a class on its way up' (p. 48). It is an expression that almost provokes the Prince to translate Russo's claim that "tutti staremo meglio: i preti soli ci perderanno" 'we will all be better off: only the priests will lose out' into its truer, hidden, meaning: "volete soltanto prendere il nostro posto" 'you just want to take our place' (p. 50).

Fabrizio's interviews with Tancredi, Ferrara, and Russo reflect the Prince's growing consciousness that his aristocratic world is not for long to remain the same. Lampedusa's placement of these interviews at the center of the chapter underscores the centrality of the theme of class shifting in the novel. But it is important to notice that Lampedusa presents us with a diptych: Tancredi is squared off against Ferrara and Russo even as they together represent the imminent inheritors of the new society. In contrast to a heroic Tancredi, shortly to become "il glorioso ferito dei combattimenti di Palermo" 'the wounded hero of the battles of Palermo' (p. 78), the parasites Russo and Ferrara quietly reap the benefits of a revolution in which they will shed no blood. The Prince admires his nephew intensely while reviling his two dependents, whose cowardice and greed reflect the central impulses of the bourgeois spirit.⁵ Tancredi will be the best of the new class, they the worst.

As we move out from the center, we see how Lampedusa relates subordinate motifs in parallel

sections without abandoning the political theme. Surrounding the central diptych are Sections 5 and 8, each of which delineates one of Fabrizio's two principal pleasures: sensual delight (Mariannina) and intellectual detachment (astronomy). We learn at the beginning of the novel that the Prince derives his bent for the abstract from the German side of his family, through his mother, and his sensuality from the Sicilian side, through his father. While these impulses seem to lead in opposite directions, the one toward the earthly and physical, the other toward the stellar and transcendent, they are merely different manifestations of the same temperament. In both impulses a superficial difference hides a fundamental similarity, the desire to escape the tedium of daily life. The sensual (Sec. 5) and the spiritual (Sec. 8) are ultimately two forms of the same morphine. The amorous blandishments of Mariannina, her reassuring cries of "Principone!", offer temporary truancy from the marital chamber of a wife who dedicates her love cry "Gesummaria!" to another prince. Astronomy, a pastime that receives its first elaboration in Section 8, provides momentary detachment from the humdrum of life's monotony, especially because interstellar space conjures up the illusion of immutability and absolute precision, characteristics that Fabrizio finds lamentably absent from the terrestrial domain. The stars keep to their paths, the comets make their prescribed rendezvous with the telescope, and, for a time, Fabrizio is at one with the universe, suffused with a "tranquilla armonia." The cosmic order presents an image of perpetual stability and unchanging permanence, one that the Prince would like to delude himself (but cannot) into believing characterizes the aristocracy.⁶ As he sits in the Observatory, reflecting on political realities, he is able to achieve a retreat from thoughts of human mortality, of the mutability of all things (particularly class privilege and aristocratic elegance), and even (how appropriate at this point) of his carnal caprice with Mariannina the evening before. Lampedusa rarely describes the two impulses separately: he intends us to perceive in the duality of sensuality-spirituality a fundamental equivalence, the propensity, inherited from both sides of the family, for escape from life's tedium and imperfection.⁷

The two sections 5 and 8 introduce comple-

mentary themes and define two complementary aspects of the Prince's temperament. It is no wonder, then, that on his deathbed, at the moment of death, he should apprehend the appearance of that woman so long desired and so far beyond the grasp of human reach, a woman now ready to fulfill his dreams of complete possession.

Era lei, la creatura bramata da sempre che veniva a prenderlo: strano che così giovane com'era si fosse arresa a lui; l'orario della partenza del treno doveva esser vicino. Giunta faccia a faccia con lui sollevò il velo e così, pudica, ma pronta ad esser posseduta, gli apparve più bella di come mai l'avesse intravista negli spazi stellari.

It was she, the forever yearned-for creature coming to take him away: strange that, being so young, she should yield to him; the hour of the train's departure had to be near. Face to face with him, she raised her veil, and then, chaste, but ready to be possessed, she seemed to him more beautiful than ever before when glimpsed in the stellar spaces. (p. 297)

She is not named here, but we know her identity. Returning from the Ponteleone ball almost twelve years before, after having danced with the divine Angelica ("le sue lenzuola debbono avere l'odore del paradiso" 'her sheets must smell like paradise'), he had turned his eyes to the stars and glimpsed Venus on the eastern horizon and wondered when she would grant him "un appuntamento meno effimero, lontano dai torsoli e dal sangue, nella propria regione di perenne certezza" 'an appointment less ephemeral, far from trivial remains and blood, in her own region of perennial certitude' (p. 279). Now, at death, it is Venus as celestial body and as woman who comes to accompany him into the world beyond, into a realm that transcends the flux of human fortune and the corruptibility of earthly matter. It is Venus, but also in a sense Angelica, that being so passionately desired and never quite possessed in life. The image of woman and the trail of the stars have provided escape from a prison of monotony, but they remain, until the moment of death, the objects of an "inseguimento dell'irraggiungibile" 'pursuit of the unattainable' (p. 295). The sensual and the intellectual, the two principal strains of Fabrizio's

character, converge here into a single image at the hour of death.

My critical procedure in emphasizing the sensual and the intellectual may seem to constitute a good deal of selection and reduction, since both Sections 5 and 8 address another matter as well, the political situation. But politics pervades the entire chapter and is discussed or meditated upon in each of the sections in one way or another. It is not important to decide which theme, Fabrizio's temperament or politics, is more central to a section or best characterizes its content. In any case, Lampedusa also links the two sections with respect to the political theme. As he approaches Palermo and an assignation with Mariannina, Fabrizio spies along the mountain-side "i falò che le squadre ribelli accendevano ogni notte, silenziosa minaccia alla città regia e conventuale" 'the bonfires that the rebel forces lit every night, silent threats against the city's palaces and convents' (p. 34) and begins to worry about Tancredi's involvement with them. The thought of a possible revolution, with Tancredi's participation no less, weighs heavily upon him: "brutti tempi." But in the corresponding section, 8, those worries have been dissolved by Tancredi's subsequent discussion of the realities: "se vogliamo che tutto rimanga come è, bisogna che tutto cambi."⁸ The same images come back, but they have been transformed by the Prince's new consciousness: "le montagne che la notte erano apparse temibilmente piene di agguati, sembravano ammassi di vapori sul punto di dissolversi" 'the mountains that had appeared dangerously full of ambushes at night now looked like clouds of vapor about to fade away' (p. 53).

No such change of vision is, of course, available to Padre Pirrone, who on both occasions, significantly, in terms of the sections' parallelism, accompanies Fabrizio and constitutes a sounding board for his thoughts on the Church's predicament. Fabrizio knows that those bonfires, lit against the convents as well as against the monarchy, represent forces that one day will deprive the Church of its property. Pirrone is left to worry about the fate of his institution, while Fabrizio, liberated, turns his thoughts to the stars and reflects that "la loro apparizione prevista era . . . il trionfo della ragione umana che si proiettava e prendeva parte alla sublime

normalità dei cieli" 'their predicted appearance was . . . the triumph of human reason, which asserted itself and participated in the sublime regularity of the heavens' (p. 56). He delights no doubt in the triumph of his reason in perceiving the coming shift of power and in adapting himself to it as the best means of survival. The two sections hence project the political theme against the background motif of sensual and intellectual escapism, the salient features of Fabrizio's mentality.

As we recede further from the center we are able to confirm that a pronounced change in Fabrizio's spirit has taken place and that Lampedusa relies on the design of concentric symmetry to structure contrasting images that point up that change in spirit. When the Prince sits down to dinner, in Section 4, we are struck by his sternness, his severity, his lack of humor. He takes pride in his role as paterfamilias, for he surrounds himself with the insignia of his power and privilege. The glassware is inscribed with the initials *F.D.* (*Ferdinandus dedit*), which, while they remind Fabrizio of the king's generosity, remind us to whom he owes his obeisance and from whom he derives his economic and social well-being. The dinner plates that the Prince reserves for his personal use are not only the largest but also the ones whose borders are lined with little golden anchors ("ancorette dorate"), small but reassuring reminders of his role as anchorman in the family and of the stability of his family within the feudal system protected by the king of the Two Sicilies. The image of the dancing leopard itself appears on the top of the soup tureen. But on this day his authority is threatened, for one of his sons, Francesco Paolo, is not in his place at the table. The boy's late arrival casts a pall over the meal. Fabrizio, angered and intransigent, is reminded of the defection of another son, Giovanni, who whisked himself off to London and a clerk's job rather than bask idly in the Sicilian sun. The familial order, like the political order, shows signs of stress.

Lunch the following day, however, shows signs of another kind. In Section 9, parallel to Section 4 in the design of concentric symmetry, events threaten to repeat the previous day's plunge into chaos. Another of Fabrizio's children, this time Carolina, drops a ringlet on her

plate, and Francesco Paolo retrieves and appends it to his neck like a scapular. The incident clearly parallels the boy's fiasco at dinner the evening before, and Lampedusa explicitly calls the parallel to our attention: "L'incidente che, un altro giorno, avrebbe potuto essere increscioso, questa volta aumentò soltanto l'allegria" 'The incident, which on another day could have proved most regrettable, this time only increased the festivity' (p. 57). The Fabrizio who at dinner had clung to tradition and been unwilling to compromise his authority now not only permits infractions in the code of etiquette but, as a result of his talk with Tancredi, assists in the symbolic destruction of his own estate. The consequences of the Prince's decision to support Tancredi and embrace the notion that the best way to beat the opposition is to join it are effectively symbolized by the manner in which the rum jelly pudding, shaped like a fortress, is eaten at dessert. By the time the dish reaches Francesco Paolo, it is entirely demolished. Little, we can easily imagine, will be left of the family estate when the boy is old enough to inherit. And the last touch: a toast to Tancredi, and with it, the efficacious disappearance of the initials F. D. inscribed on the Prince's glass: "Le cifre F. D. che prima si erano distaccate ben nette sul colore dorato del bicchiere pieno non si videro più" 'The initials F. D., which earlier had stood out quite clearly on the golden color of the full glass, were no longer visible' (p. 59).

Lampedusa has carefully and skillfully structured his symbolic images to convey an idea of change, and it is not coincidental that they occur in precisely the two sections that are related symmetrically to the center sections. I do not mean to suggest that readers would have any difficulty in perceiving a connection between, say, the two references to the initials "F. D." if they were not aware of the chiasmic design of the chapter's sections. In fact, the opposite would more likely be the case: the relationship between the images is fairly obvious, but the chiasmic design less immediately evident. The parallel images are made prominent, I think, to encourage the reader to consider parallels of a larger order, involving greater blocks of narrative material. If we are able to perceive a homologous relationship between these two sections, whose subtitles "La cena" and "Distensione al pranzo"

invite immediate comparison, we are more likely to look for thematic connections between other sections and, in the end, to discover the design of the chapter. We will then have a fuller understanding of the novel's themes and the direction of its events.

Sections 3 and 10, "Le udienze reali" and "Don Fabrizio e i contadini," present mirror images of two different levels of the social hierarchy in the Bourbon kingdom. In each a figure of inferior standing visits and pays homage to his immediate superior. Fabrizio's visit to the king is an act of acknowledged submission to the monarchy, just as the tenants' visit to Fabrizio constitutes a formal acknowledgment of social and economic dependence. The parallel is so strong that even the Prince himself is aware of it: "si era accorto che il colloquio era stato una ripetizione delle udienze di Re Ferdinando" 'he realized that the conversation was a repetition of his audiences with King Ferdinand' (p. 59). It is superfluous that Fabrizio's visit to the king is presented as a recollection and not as an event. Both visits reveal an atmosphere of similar administrative ceremony, courtesy, and formality. The king mechanically inquires into the well-being of the Prince's family, and the Prince likewise goes through a similar introductory ritual with his tenants Pastorello and Lo Nigro.⁹ There is something of a parallel too between Fabrizio's signing the visitor's ledger upon departing from his audience with the king and the tenants' securing receipts for their rent, which consists of slaughtered animals ("i carnaggi"). The signature and the receipts are official, written records of the feudal relationship and are signs confirming one's status within the social hierarchy.

In this context of parallels it is not unlikely that Lampedusa intends us to see a link between the carnage of the butchered animals, which revolts the Prince, and the "mobilio stomachevole" 'revolting decor' of the king's palace, and, by implication, the moribund state of the monarchy. A more direct parallel obtains between the "carnaggi" and the image of the decomposed government soldier that Fabrizio discovers in his garden (in Sec. 2), but the king is linked to that same image of decomposition. Ferdinand's trousers ("cateratta violacea dei pantaloni cascanti" 'purple cataract of his falling trousers,' p. 26)

and the soldier's protruding intestines ("gl'intestini violacei avevano formato *pozzanghera*" 'the purple intestines had formed a puddle,' p. 23 [italics mine]) share the same color for good reason; and both images contain a common hidden metaphor, "cataract" and "puddle" both being based on water. If the soldier has already been disembodied, the king shows symbolic signs of an imminent and similar fate. And Fabrizio, in receiving the tenants' rent, is reminded of that image of disembowelment.

The point that Lampedusa wants to emphasize in linking these two sections is that every level of the political system is characterized by the same principles, values, and habits. The microcosm of the aristocratic house ("la casata") is mirrored in the macrocosm of the monarchy. The estate reflects the state, the private sector the public sector, the smaller the larger: both derive their authority from hereditary privilege. Something of the same technique of mirror imaging is employed in Sections 2 and 11. They do not at first appear to correspond to each other in any obvious way. The first presents two major images, the garden of flowers exuding exotic and erotic fragrances bordering on the fetid ("lievemente putridi") and the memory of the dead, half-decomposed soldier that those fragrances call to Fabrizio's mind. The second gives us a glimpse of the Prince's eldest son, Paolo, in the only scene in the novel in which he speaks. A boy of no character, whose only passion is horses, he promises to amount to very little in life and, consequently, finds himself standing in the shadow of Tancredi, a rebel who, in Paolo's words, "è andato a unirsi a quei farabutti che tengono la Sicilia in subbuglio" 'has gone and joined those scoundrels who are throwing Sicily into turmoil' (p. 61). But there is an implied correspondence between the dead soldier and Paolo on a thematic level. Both the soldier, who died defending his king, and Paolo, who complains to his father that Tancredi's actions cannot be tolerated, represent defenders of the status quo, unthinking supporters of the existing political structure. The suggestion is that Paolo, as a representative of the aristocracy, is destined for the same fate as the soldier—disembodiment. There can be no question why Paolo rather than any other member of the Salina family is chosen to fit the parallel with the dead

soldier. He is Fabrizio's *primogenito*. He is the natural heir to the Salina stronghold, destined by birth to become the next *gattopardo* in a long line of *gattopardi*. His preoccupation with horses, his simpleminded dedication to self-indulgent leisure, tell us that he is not cut out to play the leopard. Fabrizio thinks more of his nephew than of his son, and he will shortly reject Paolo and prepare the more worthy Tancredi to succeed him. As primogenitor, Paolo is metaphorically as eviscerated as the soldier on the field. Again the micro- and macrocosms, the family and government, reflect each other, for the monarchy and the aristocracy are hereditary institutions on their last legs.

We can now see why the introduction of Tancredi occurs at the center of the first chapter, for it is he who is fighting against the king's soldiers and he who eclipses Paolo in the family structure. As Tancredi departs to join the rebels, Fabrizio reflects that he, not Paolo, is his true son: "E quel suo Paolo che in quel momento stava certo a sorvegliare la digestione di Guiscardo! Questo [Tancredi] era il figlio suo vero" 'And that Paolo of his who at that very moment was most likely supervising the digestion of his horse Guiscardo! No, this [Tancredi] was his true son' (p. 42). When Fabrizio dismisses Paolo abruptly from his study in Section 11, the stage is set for the ascendancy of Tancredi and the new bourgeois class.

The physical degeneration of the soldier, I think, is a vivid analogue for the moral and spiritual degeneration of the aristocracy represented by Paolo. If this association of figures seems in any way tenuous, we have only to notice that Lampedusa reiterates that association later in the novel, again in the context of death. As Fabrizio lies on his deathbed and reflects that one never dies with one's own face, that death distorts the facial features and robs one of one's identity, he recalls, in strict sequence, the images of the dead soldier and of Paolo's death.

Si muore con una maschera sul volto; anche i giovani; anche quel soldato col viso imbrattato; anche Paolo, quando lo avevano rialzato dal marciapiede con la faccia contratta e spiegazzata mentre la gente rincorreva nella polvere il cavallo che lo aveva sbattuto giù.

We die with a mask on our faces; even the young; even that soldier with his blood-stained visage;

even Paolo, when they had picked him up from the pavement with his features contracted and crumpled, while everyone chased in the dust after the horse that had thrown him. (p. 209)

It is not, I believe, coincidental that Lampedusa has Fabrizio link the two figures in his mind. The parallel sections in Chapter i were a prophecy, and here that prophecy is fulfilled. Paolo's death is physical, certainly, but the symbolic overtones and the associative aspects have a greater impact than the event itself.¹⁰ We see that technique of association employed in other instances: the linking of the "pacifiche serate in osservatorio" 'peaceful evenings in the observatory' with the "occasionali visite a Mariannina" 'occasional visits to Mariannina' (p. 71) was one. We see it again in a passage just following the description of Paolo's and the soldier's deaths, where Fabrizio associates Garibaldi, for a second time, with Vulcan: "Quel Garibaldi, quel barbuto Vulcano aveva dopo tutto vinto" 'That Garibaldi, that bearded Vulcan had won after all' (p. 292).¹¹ These iterations reinforce the thematic equivalences first elucidated in the chiasitic structural design of the Introduction.

III

With the last reference, to Garibaldi superseding Vulcan, we come back to the first and last sections of the chapter and to the framing event of the rosary. There can be little doubt that Lampedusa conceived the ring structure as a guide to an understanding of the principal themes of the novel. It emphasizes the abstractions that underlie the real events taking place and compels us to consider them on a symbolic level. The novel, as has been noted, is static; nothing seems to take place. What historical events are referred to are relegated to the background and receive no description whatever (for example, the "Sbarco"). The substance of the book consists more of interviews, conversations, meditations, and descriptions of physical reality than of events. There is little movement; almost nothing is described in the process of happening. Each chapter is a discrete entity, and it is not always clear how we move from chapter to chapter. The novel lacks the consistency of integrated linear movement, of events flowing together smoothly and sequentially according to

the laws of cause and effect to form a developed whole. The breaks in the time sequence, the abrupt jumps from 1860 to 1862 to 1883, contribute to this effect. We are therefore forced to seek the unity of the novel elsewhere, in the web of thematic correspondences and symbolic imagery. In Chapter i Lampedusa calls attention to important thematic correspondences by arranging them in a symmetrical narrative order. One of the purposes of this order is to illustrate Fabrizio's growing perception that the aristocracy, his family line, and his very being will undergo great change as a result of a shifting political reality. Sections 1 and 12 define the inevitability of Garibaldi's eclipse of Vulcan. The descriptions of lunch and dinner, delineating the Prince's relaxation of a rigid observation of the ritual of table etiquette, symbolize the decline of the Bourbon monarchy and the fading of the Prince's resistance to political and social revolution. The symmetrical arrangement of sections also has the purpose of revealing equivalence within apparent difference and of identifying differences where similarities seem to prevail. We must judge Paolo in the light of the fate of the dead soldier, consider Fabrizio's audiences with his tenants in the context of those with the king, and notice that Fabrizio's sensual and intellectual pastimes have points of close correspondence. Tancredi may share with Russo and Ferrara the wealth of the future bourgeois world, but essential differences, elegance and wit, separate them.

IV

One would naturally be curious at this point to know whether the entire novel is constructed according to the principle of chiasitic order. This does not, however, seem to be the case; a highly organized pattern of correspondences between the eight chapters does not obtain. Very likely such an elaborate design would have been nearly impossible, given the genesis of the novel. We know from Gioacchino Lanza Tomasi, the author's adopted son, that Lampedusa had originally conceived a novel of three chapters (corresponding, as noted earlier, to the symmetrically arranged dates of 1860, 1885, and 1910), but expanded it on successive occasions to four, six, and finally eight chapters. It is questionable

whether Lampedusa would have attempted to impose a formal design on the chapters once it had grown beyond the original tripartite stage, and it is even more unlikely that a formal design was the guiding principle of composition from the start. Yet less intricate vestiges of symmetry are visible in the novel's overall structure, for just as the rosary opens and closes the first chapter, so the significant dates of the first and last chapters, 12–13 May 1860 and 13–14 May 1910, defining an arc of precisely fifty years, circumscribe the events of the entire novel.¹² If the comprehensive structure of *Il Gattopardo* reveals no elaborate design, neither do the sections of the other individual chapters repeat the design of the first chapter. But Lampedusa does on at least one other occasion make use of concentric symmetry for structural purposes. Chapters iv and v, the book's central chapters, form a diptych that discloses a pattern of chiasmatically related parts as salient as, if less complex than, the one in Chapter i. Let me conclude by examining briefly that pattern.

The shift of focus in Chapter v from Fabrizio to the minor figure of Padre Pirrone, and from the aristocracy to the *umili*, was, as we noted at the outset, a source of irritation for many critics. In their opinion the plot took a wrong turn, introduced new and apparently unrelated narrative threads that simply failed to tie neatly or expectedly into the general fabric of the novel. The problem with this kind of criticism is that it insists on a narrative unity based on plot and character while ignoring the possibility of one based on theme and formal structure (i.e., the positioning of the episodes).¹³ Viewed from the latter perspective, the subplot of Chapter v can be seen to fit securely into the framework of the novel.

Each chapter consists of two distinct narrative sections devoted to the themes of love and politics. Chapter iv divides into a description of Angelica and Tancredi's flights into the world of sensual bliss and Fabrizio's dialogue on the political future of Sicily with the Piedmontese representative of the Turin government, Cavaliere Aimone Chevalley of Monterzuolo. Chapter v focuses on the activities of Padre Pirrone, who first delivers a long monologue on the virtues of the Sicilian aristocracy and the inevitable vices that the rapacious new regime will in time

evidence and then takes charge of a family dispute (over the seduction of his niece Angelina) that threatens to find its resolution in the traditional Sicilian style of vendetta.

Superficial parallels are immediately apparent. Although their relationship is born more out of revenge than natural affection, Angelina and Santino, her seducer, are a parody of the couple Angelica and Tancredi. The point is half suggested by the girls' shared name, and by the fact that each couple's tryst takes place during Indian summer ("l'estate di San Martino").¹⁴ The purpose of such associations is to lead us deeper into an analysis of the two episodes in search of more conceptual correspondences. And they are present, for as Olga Ragusa has noted, Father Pirrone's "arrangement of a marriage for his niece parallels the prince's 'swallowing of a toad' in the latter's negotiations for the marriage of Tancredi" (p. 211). But the two episodes reveal an even closer correspondence: to enable the marriages to take place, both Fabrizio and Pirrone must make personal sacrifices. To compensate for his sister Sarina's eventual loss of "metà del Chibbaro," half of the almond grove, as Angelina's dowry in marriage to Santino, Pirrone renounces his father's inheritance and bequeaths it to her.¹⁵ Fabrizio, in turn, cannot join Tancredi to Angelica in marriage without sacrificing the purity of his bloodline, which is, in a sense, a part of himself. Each character occupies a similar position of control, exercises the same kind of diplomacy and selflessness, and adapts himself, in the light of a changing world, to a new and difficult situation.¹⁶ Furthermore, both episodes pivot on the theme of hereditary sacrifice. Neither Fabrizio nor Pirrone can make an appropriate accommodation without contravening, in a symbolic sense, the old world laws of natural heredity and inheritance. Fabrizio's family tree now depends for growth on the grafting of foreign shoots, and Pirrone can placate opposing parties only by abandoning his share of the family property. The traditional Sicilian solution for a disgrace such as the one Turi has brought upon Vincenzino and his family, revengeful bloodletting, is averted. The old feudal code has been replaced by something more modern, and Lampedusa wants us to view both Pirrone and the Prince through the same prism, to perceive in each a

man who knows how to compromise, to preserve social order through self-sacrifice, and to assist in the dismantling of antiquated values (family heritage for Fabrizio and the ethic of vendetta for Pirrone).

Love intrigue composes only half of each chapter. The other half of each chapter deals with political questions; and again, the similarities between the form and content of these halves suggest that Lampedusa consciously constructed them as mirror images. Fabrizio's discourse to Chevalley on sleepy Sicily and the impossibility of social progress is balanced by Pirrone's defense of the aristocracy to a literally sleeping audience in the person of don Pietrino the herbalist.¹⁷ Each delivers a sermon from the pulpit of enlightenment to one who lacks true knowledge, and each is met with vague protests by a half-comprehending listener. Chevalley thinks Fabrizio is crazy, and the herbalist awakes with the words "Scusami, Padre, ma dicevi cose tanto strane e imbrogliate" 'Excuse me, Father, but you were saying such strange, confusing things' (p. 235). The message, as well as the format, is the same. Chevalley hopes for change, but Fabrizio sees only the substitution of one class for another: "Noi fummo i Gattopardi, i Leoni: chi ci sostituirà saranno gli sciacalletti, le iene; e tutti quanti, gattopardi, sciacalli e pecore, continueremo a crederci il sale della terra" 'We were the Leopards, the Lions; those who will replace us will be little jackals, hyenas; and all of us, leopards, jackals, and sheep, will go on thinking ourselves the salt of the earth' (p. 219). Pirrone's discourse comes to a close on the same topos of *plus ça change plus c'est la même chose*: "se . . . questa classe dovesse scomparire, se ne costituirebbe subito un'altra equivalente, con gli stessi pregi e gli stessi difetti; non sarebbe più basata sul sangue forse, ma che so io . . . sull'anzianità di presenza in un luogo o su pretesa miglior conoscenza di qualche testo presunto sacro" 'if . . . this class had to disappear, an equivalent one would form itself right away, with the same merits and the same defects; it would not be based on blood perhaps, but, who knows, . . . on the length of time in a place or on alleged better knowledge of some text presumed sacred' (p. 235).¹⁸

Both Fabrizio's and Pirrone's statements on the impossibility of true change in society may at

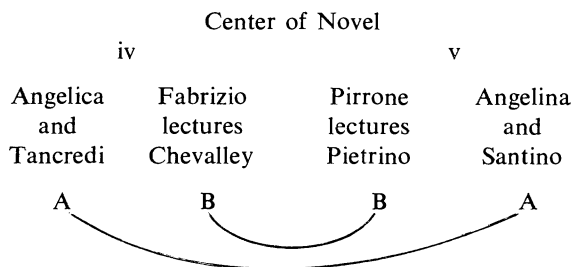
first seem inconsistent with their acts of self-sacrifice to the new generation and of compromise with the old. But Fabrizio's character, especially, is a blend of contradictions: he is a man who knows how to make political compromises but who at the same time can neither abandon his intellectual and emotional attachment to the idea of a feudal aristocracy nor welcome the new order without believing that it represents a degeneration. The Prince is fully aware of his ambivalence (and this makes him a complex and fascinating character) and expresses it best in his own words, when, speaking to Chevalley, he declines an invitation to become a senator in the new government:

Sono un rappresentante della vecchia classe, inevitabilmente compromesso col regime borbonico, ed a questo legato dai vincoli della decenza in mancanza di quelli dell'affetto. Appartengo ad una generazione disgraziata, a cavallo fra i vecchi tempi ed i nuovi, e che si trova a disagio in tutti e due.

I am a representative of the old class, inevitably compromised with the Bourbon regime, and linked to it by bonds of decency in the absence of those of affection. I belong to an unfortunate generation, astride the old times and the new, and I find myself ill at ease in both. (p. 213)

Even if he cannot believe in the future, at least, in advancing Tancredi, he does not stand in its way.

To return to my main point about narrative structure, the echoes and parallels between the two chapters are fairly strong, and Lampedusa reinforces them by intertwining the episodes of love and politics in chiasmic order:



Lampedusa was here as before most likely struck by the formal elegance that such a design possessed, but perceived in it as well the possibility of structuring the meaning of his novel.¹⁹ Dependence on the chiasmic pattern at

this point has the twofold effect of rendering prominent the novel's central themes at its center as well as ensuring that Chapter v, so oft maligned by the critics, is effectively integrated into the narrative framework. It seems fair to conclude that Lampedusa was not only a conscious architect of the constituent parts of his novel but also a skillful one.

Lampedusa's choice of concentric symmetry to create a formal narrative design might seem at first to set him apart from the contemporary practice that is generally thought to eschew such signposts of order and harmony. However, as R. G. Peterson has observed, patterns of concentric symmetry have been found in works of all ages, including the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in such diverse authors as Homer, Shakespeare, Pope, Fielding, and Joyce, to name only a few.²⁰ In this perspective Lampedusa fits into a long-established tradition that cuts across the boundaries of time, genre, and language. It would prove not only vain but unnecessary to search for a specific source of authorial influence to account for the chiasmically ordered episodes, but his sophisticated handling of concentric symmetry suggests indebtedness to this tradition.

He uses the device on two occasions to point up thematic motifs of primary order and to compensate for the effects of the intentionally static quality of a novel that consists more of a sequence of moods and meditations than of any plot. At the same time, the elegance of relating narrative episodes by concentric symmetry seems a natural expression of Lampedusa's habit of mind. He possessed an esthetic sensibility of classical imprint, reflected in his creation of the Prince. Fabrizio is often lost in the contemplation of Greco-Roman beauty etched in the statuesque pagan goddesses of the Amphitrite fountain or contained in the image, depicted on the floor tiles of the rosary room, of Perseus rushing to embrace a receptive Andromeda. The ataraxy that he is forever seeking bears a classical imprint, as do the stoical and epicurean aspects of his character. It is likely that the use of concentric symmetry in *Il Gattopardo* is one more manifestation of Lampedusa's love for classical harmony, one more visible sign of his appreciation of artistic beauty.

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Notes

¹ Montale's article, which appeared originally in *Corriere della sera*, 12 Dec. 1958, is reprinted in Giuseppe Samonà, *Il Gattopardo, i Racconti, Lampedusa* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1974), pp. 364-68; Blausucci's essay "Il Gattopardo," *Belfagor*, 14 (1959), 117-21, is summarized and in part quoted in Samonà (pp. 370-72). In spite of these demurrers on specific issues, most critics recognized that Lampedusa was a mature writer and his novel of high literary quality.

² Simonetta Salvestroni, "Analisi del *Gattopardo*" and "La struttura e lo stile del *Gattopardo*," *Filologia e letteratura*, 17 (1971), 101-28 and 209-37, now in her book *Tomasi di Lampedusa* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1973), is the first to have rebutted the notion of structural deficiency by referring to specific patterns in the text. The most conspicuous feature of the novel's construction, she contends, is the dialectic alternation of passages expressing contrasting moods of bitterness and serenity, of displeasure and pleasure recovered. Hence the first chapter divides into two balanced halves, with Tancredi's departure animating a change in the general atmosphere and in the Prince's disposition from anxiety to tranquillity. She finds the same pattern of thesis-antithesis in other chapters and argues that Lampedusa employs this narrative procedure to

emphasize the dialectic of pain-pleasure and the contradictory nature of life. But concerning the contrasting moods of Ch. i, it does not seem helpful to conclude that the author wanted to show how things might change within so short a period as twenty-four hours. More perceptive is her observation that the novel's "static" narrative results in a "svolgimento tutt'altro che lineare" (p. 212). Salvestroni defends the inclusion of Ch. v, but Olga Ragusa makes a better case for its thematic relevance to the preceding chapter. Her essay, "Stendhal, Lampedusa and the Novel," *Comparative Literature Studies*, 10 (1973), 195-228, is a gold mine of fine insights into a variety of topics concerning the novel and its history and contains a useful commentary on the critical bibliography. Criticism of the inclusion of Ch. v (and of Ch. viii) has not, however, entirely abated. See Giancarlo Buzzi's provocative if polemical study *Invito alla lettura di Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa* (Milan: Mursia, 1972), pp. 125-34.

³ On the topic of "ring structure" or "concentric symmetry" (also known as "recessed symmetry") in literature, terms used by Cedric H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (1958; rpt. New York: Norton, 1965), to describe elaborate structural patterns

in the *Iliad*, see the recent and informative discussion by R. G. Peterson, "Critical Calculations: Measure and Symmetry in Literature," *PMLA*, 91 (1976), 367-75, and Alastair Fowler, *Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 91-92.

⁴ It will be noted that the "Indice" to the original edition of *Il Gattopardo* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1958), edited by Giorgio Bassani, on which all of my citations are based, contains in fact fourteen subtitles for the twelve actual narrative sections. The discrepancy derives from the fact that the three summaries "In vettura per Palermo," "Andando da Mariannina," and "Il ritorno a S. Lorenzo" all refer to a single section (pp. 33-40), to different moments in a single narrative episode. A different editorial practice has been used for the edition based on the 1957 holograph manuscript, *Il Gattopardo (completo): Edizione conforme al manoscritto del 1957* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1969), for the text of Ch. i has been divided into fourteen sections to correspond to the fourteen subtitle summaries, and page references have been inserted after each summary. I believe Bassani's edition is preferable in this as in a number of other instances, for it recognizes the narrative coherence of the episode in which Fabrizio journeys to his lover, visits her, and returns home. It is conceived as a self-contained unit, one that discreetly skips over any direct description of the Prince in Mariannina's boudoir, focusing rather on his thoughts about her and, in that context, about previous lovers. In other instances, the 1969 edition based on the 1957 holograph resolves similar textual problems by conflating two subtitles to refer to a single narrative section (e.g., in Ch. ii, "Viaggio per Donnafugata—La tappa, 34" and in Ch. v, "Arrivo di Padre Pirrone a S. Cono. Conversazione con gli amici e l'erbuario," where the period after "Cono" has replaced the dash of the Bassani 1958 edition). Even Lampedusa's final longhand version does not seem to have been in perfect order. I would argue that a strict correlation between the subtitles and narrative breaks is not required as indispensable evidence that the chiasmic arrangement of scenes in Ch. i indeed does obtain.

⁵ It is interesting to note that *Il Gattopardo*, as Lampedusa first conceived it, was to have only three chapters (the first chapter and the last two chapters as we have them now), each bearing an inscription date (1860, 1885, 1910) indicating the passage of twenty-five years (see Gioacchino Lanza Tomasi's introduction to *Il Gattopardo (completo)*, p. x). One can see then how the character of Calogero Sedara is developed from the prototype Russo and how the relationship of Tancredi and Angelica has its conception in the passing observation "E tua figlia [Russo's daughter], già prima, avrà sposato uno di noi, magari anche questo stesso Tancredi" 'And your daughter [Russo's], even before, will have married one of us, perhaps even Tancredi himself' (p. 50). The original tripartite division of the novel, incidentally, reflects Lampedusa's continual concern with symmetry.

⁶ In spite of the promise held out by the Olympian

divinities in the *affreschi*, the aristocracy in its present form, he perceives, will pass away with time: "Viviamo in una realtà mobile. . . . Alla Santa Chiesa è stata esplicitamente promessa l'immortalità; a noi, in quanto classe sociale, no" 'We live in a changing reality. . . . Immortality has been explicitly promised to Holy Church; to us, as a social class, it has not' (p. 55).

⁷ At Donnafugata (Ch. ii), Fabrizio is said not to feel "alcun rimpianto per le pacifiche serate in osservatorio, per le occasionali visite a Mariannina" 'any regret for the peaceful evenings in the observatory, for the occasional visits to Mariannina' (p. 71).

⁸ "Tale era la quiete che le scoperte politiche della mattinata avevano instaurato nell'anima del Principe, che egli non fece altro che sorridere di ciò che in altro momento gli sarebbe apparsa insolenza" 'Such was the peace that the morning's political discoveries had instilled in the Prince's mind that he could only smile at what would on another occasion have seemed to him impudence' (p. 53).

⁹ See pp. 27 and 59.

¹⁰ It is more than merely ironic that Paolo dies by falling from his horse, his only interest in the world. In the context of the novel's thematics, his death constitutes a kind of *contrapasso* to the folly of his mindless aristocratic leisure.

¹¹ Earlier I argued that the Piedmontese general eclipses and replaces the classical deity in the scheme of symbolic correspondences, but here the Prince appears, in his inner monologue, to think in terms of equivalence rather than supersession. I believe, however, that Lampedusa's point is grounded both in difference and in similarity. Garibaldi's displacement of Vulcan symbolizes, to be sure, the ushering in of the bourgeoisie and the end of the aristocracy, and this is the essential idea behind the association. Vulcan is a divinity, an immortal, and represents the order of privilege; Garibaldi belongs to a lower level of being and can lay no claim to immortality. But Garibaldi shares with Vulcan a number of attributes, which make his eclipse of this (and not another) pagan god so appropriate. Besides the stated physiognomic similarity (each wears a beard), both are linked to war, Vulcan as God of Fire and maker of weapons and Garibaldi as soldier general. Mars, the God of War, might at first seem a better choice, but the myth of Vulcan links him in a special way to Sicily, for his favorite abodes on earth were volcanic islands. And finally, Lampedusa's choice may well have been motivated by the fact that both Garibaldi and Vulcan were lame, Garibaldi having been wounded in the foot at the battle of Aspromonte, and, as Colonel Pallavicino reports to Fabrizio at the ball, "reso zoppo per tutta la vita" 'rendered lame for the rest of his life' (p. 276). The import of these associations is to establish sufficient grounds of similarity so that the essential differences will stand out forcefully. Superficially Garibaldi resembles Vulcan, but the point of the analogy here is to emphasize the political changes that have taken place.

¹² There are, moreover, thematic and imagistic correspondences between the opening and closing scenes of

the novel. See John Gilbert, "The Metamorphosis of the Gods in *Il Gattopardo*," *Modern Language Notes*, 81 (1966), p. 24; and Jeffrey Meyers, "Symbol and Structure in *The Leopard*," *Italian Quarterly*, 9 (1965), p. 67. For Gioacchino Lanza Tomasi's reminiscences, see reference in n. 5 above.

¹³ Olga Ragusa has perceptively pointed this out (p. 213). Both she (pp. 210–13) and Samonà (pp. 129–48) have argued the chapter's relevance and unity with the rest of the novel, without, however, drawing attention to the structural pattern it forms with Ch. iv.

¹⁴ Just as Lampedusa unobtrusively slips into the first and last chapters references to the dates on which events take place, so too the mention of Indian summer—which, as "la vera stagione di voluttà in Sicilia" 'the real season of sensuality in Sicily,' is an appropriate setting for Angelica and Tancredi's erotic interlude in the labyrinthine recesses of the Donnafugata palace and for Santino's seduction of Angelina—is introduced obliquely (see pp. 182 and 246).

¹⁵ "Si capisce, Vincenzino," disse, 'che anch'io voglio contribuire al riassetto di tutto. Quella carta privata che mi assicura la proprietà di quanto mi spetta nell'eredità della Buon'Anima, te la rimanderò da Palermo, stracciata'" "You understand, Vincenzino," he said, "that I too want to contribute to the resettlement of everything. That private agreement that guarantees me possession of my share of my father's inheritance, I'll send it back to you from Palermo, torn up" (p. 245). It is typical of Lampedusa's sense of irony that Pirrone's sacrifice should take place shortly after he has celebrated the office of "il Divino Sacrificio."

¹⁶ There is a parallel, too, between those who gain. Turi, Santino's father, will acquire the almond grove, just as Tancredi will marry into Sedara's wealth.

¹⁷ Fabrizio's peroration to Chevalley, beginning with "Il sonno, caro Chevalley, il sonno è ciò che i Siciliani vogliono" 'Sleep, my dear Chevalley, sleep, that's what the Sicilians want' (p. 210), is considered by most critics to be the quintessence of Lampedusa's pessimistic vision of Sicily and to have the function of "message." The scene of don Pietrino dozing during Pirrone's discourse rather serves to validate what the Prince has been saying.

¹⁸ The lines contain an allusion to the "aristocracies" of the United States ("anzianità di presenza di un luogo") and the Soviet Union ("pretesa miglior conoscenza di qualche testo presunto sacro"), as Leonardo Sciascia was the first to observe (quoted in Samonà, p. 411). The point is that in Lampedusa's vision an aristocracy (i.e., a ruling class) is an inevitable institution of every society; only the basis for election changes.

¹⁹ It will be noticed that the criterion for division into sections is based strictly on content (episodic material) and not on formal demarcations as in Ch. i. The lack of such formal clues in this instance does not, however, weaken, much less invalidate, my claim that the scenes are chiasmically ordered. Critics are in agreement that each chapter is composed of two parts (see, e.g., Salvestroni, "La struttura e lo stile del *Gattopardo*," p. 216) and such a division should be obvious to any reader.

²⁰ See Peterson's article, cited in n. 3 above, pp. 373–74.