King Lear notes Nov. 25th to Dec. 26th 1991

The 121 Rhythm in King Lear (ed.)   Monday 25th November 1991.

Regan's words in Act II, *"To bring but fiue and twentie, to no more"*, fall at Act-line 605, which is 5 x 121, or 5 x 11². We discover this in tracing the 121 rhythm throughout Act II and III together. The hint of such a rhythm arises directly from the numbers of these two Acts. Thus:

ACT II   = 671   lines   =   61 x 11

ACT III   = 539   lines   =   49 x 11

          1210   lines   =   10 x 121   lines

                               =   10 x 11²

An 11 rhythm is completed within each act and an 11² rhythm is completed within the two Acts taken together. The twinning of Acts II and III is also made clear when we finally solve the geometrical problem that arises because each act has an odd number of lines, implying that each circle is entered on a half-line. In fact geometrically Act II 'gives' one line to Act III, so that each becomes even.

                    wing – act-circle – wing (ed)

671 - 1   =   135 - 400 - 135

539 + 1   =   70 - 400 - 70

Line 605 or 5 x 11² in Act II is the exact mid-point of the two Acts taken together. That this position is marked by a <u>number</u> in the text is striking. How, we ask, does it relate to the numbers of the play? What quantity, in fact, does a knight represent?

We have arrived at five times the square of 11. Is there somewhere twenty-five times the square of 11? Can we add 20 x 11² to or 5 x 11²?

25 x 11² = **3025**

Line 3025 brings us to Edmunds words whose geometrical significance has already been explored. *"The Wheele is come full circle, I am heere."* (Act V, Act-line 272) (272/432). Just after G. R. of Act, = 0.6296.

It seems that 11² is a 'knight'. But what is the role of this knight in the whole play?

3185 – 3025 = 160 = 10 x 4². 11 does not divide into the whole play and 11² could go in 26 times with 39 left over.

81 x 11 = 891

Act I has 899 lines.

899 – 891 = 8.

∴ 11 divided 8 : 3 between Acts I and II. *(obscure ed.)*

Suppose rhythm in II & III continues backwards and forwards? Then:

8 + 81 (9²) x 11 + 110 x 11 + 95 x 11 + **31**
    891   **1210**   **1045**

    Act I   Acts II & III   Act IV & V

8 + 891 + 1210 + 1045 + 31 = 3185 *(play-total ed.)*

Lines 32 back from end of play:

33   *What comfort to this great decay may come,*

32   *Shall be appli'd. For vs we will resigne,*

31   *During the life of this old Maiesty*

30   *To him our absolute power,*

    Certainly a break.

___

Mon 25th November 1991

At play-line 121 Lear rejects Cordelia.

121 + 25 x 121 = 26 x 121 = 3146

    (Kent)

3144   *Your eldest Daughters haue fore-done themselues,*

3145   *And desperately are dead*

3146   Lear. I so I thinke.

The 25 knights that Regan would allot her father might well run from the moment he rejects Cordelia to the moment when he learns of Regan (and Goneril's) deaths.

After

3167 – Lear's own death.

3167 – 25 x 11² = 3167 – 3025 = 142

(Lear)

140   …, Execution of the rest,

141   Beloued Sonnes be yours,_which to confirme,

142   This Coronet part betweene you.

*143   Kent. Royall Lear,*

His decision confirmed.

‾‾‾

26th December 1991

Play-line 142

This is the moment when Lear's rejection of Cordelia, his grand error, is confirmed. The absurdity of the deed is emphasized because one cannot cut a coronet in half without destroying it. (Was the ownership meant to alternate, like a football cup, like Lear's own?).

In a geometrical context the coronet is of course the Figure. Line 142 (end) falls at 99° of circle A in Act I. If we join this point to the Great Circle and produce it both ways we have a line bisecting the vesica between Acts III & IV, forming a diagonal diameter to the whole Figure.
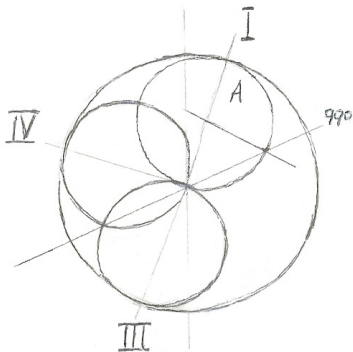
Below this line, esp. in Acts II & III, we encounter Cornwall. At the end of Act III he is wounded and must die early in Act IV.

In Act IV, first above this line we encounter Albany. Thus the coronet is parted between Lear's two sons-in-law.

The line dividing Acts III & IV is the line dividing the action of evil from the re-action of good.

The 5 & 20 Knights. Could these be nights? 25 nights (and days) allotted to Lear between his mad decision and his death? But in Act III, the storm, it is bitterly cold. By Act IV (the mad Lear near Dover) it appears to be Summer (or Spring) from the garlands the king gathers.