Early English Drama:
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Contents

Residual Allegory in Elizabethan Drama:
The One–Scene Psychomachia and Arresting the Vice

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> [I]t is never safe to conclude…that allegory had died
> and no one knew where it was buried.
> —Rosemond Tuve[1]

The role of allegory in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries has not been a hot (or even welcome) topic, particularly in an age when psychological realism remains the default position for readers, teachers, and theatrical professionals. However, two recent essays have challenged widely held views about the role of onstage allegory in sixteenth-century England, so that the topic has been given fresh life.

First, Vladimir Brljak argues that the firm belief that the Middle Ages was *the* Age of Allegory—that this alternative to Realism did not persist into the Renaissance—was a myth, "long overdue to join the Flat Earth, the Chastity Belt, the Angels Dancing on the Head of a Pin," and other exploded beliefs about that period. He demonstrates in detail how this "quarantine" of allegory emerged from the influential work of Jacob Burckhardt and later writers, especially John Addington Symonds. Burckhardt's distaste for allegory was so strong that his ultimate solution was "to approach an allegorical Renaissance painting as the work of two rather than a single author": first "the painter, who produces the material object of aesthetic appreciation which is the sole concern of the modern viewer," to be separated from "the patron peering over his shoulder," who commissioned the painting, "including its invisible, hence irrelevant, allegorical meaning." For Burckhardt, "any presence of allegory in the Renaissance" in the visual arts or literature was "to be explained as a residuum of the Middle Ages rather than a genuine aspect of the period." Symonds pointed to Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister* as the moment when English playwrights "emerge from medieval grotesquery and allegory into the clear light of actual life, into

an agreeable atmosphere of urbanity and natural delineation." Brljak calls attention to "increasingly elaborate versions of the same story of how the drama liberated itself from allegorical personifications,"[2] a narrative that Willard Thorp sums up as "The Triumph of Realism."[3]

Second, Catherine Belsey in her essay on "transition" observes: "Part of the reason for the relative neglect of the moral plays…must be that they do not gratify our continued preference for realism. Allegory remains alien" whereas "mimetic assumptions go deep and can catch us unawares." She argues "that a recovered awareness of dramatic continuity can help to dispel such assumptions" and "can sharpen our sense of what is distinctive in Jonson, Shakespeare, and their contemporaries." These playwrights "altered the possibilities for English—and then world—drama, but they did so in the light of what had gone before, as well as in defiance of it. The early modern theater, in other words, both maintains and modifies the conventions of the past." As she notes, many new elements in the late sixteenth century broadened the range of drama (Seneca, Roman comedy, narrative romance, iambic pentameter), but "the process was cumulative, rather than evolutionary." If new developments altered the drama, "old habits could be incorporated or updated," so that they were not lost to sight. Linking old and new examples (e.g., *Horestes* and *Hamlet*) she notes that "Allegory was evidently not perceived as a constraint"; rather, "it allowed the presentation with a certain clarity of the issues that would confront later revengers."

As she sums up the situation: "In some respects, the new kinds self-evidently left the moral plays behind—but they were not forgotten." The changes may be decisive, but "at the same time, both generic and formal continuities are there to be traced." In her formulation: "The London theater neither emerged out of nowhere nor entirely repudiated its own past: instead, the professional dramatists whose works are still in our modern repertoire expanded and transformed a tradition that, since the mid-sixteenth century, had found successive ways to exceed the limits of homiletic drama, by incorporating new genres and modes of address."[4]

Like Belsey, I believe in continuity between allegory in the moral interludes and what follows in the 1580s and early 1590s. As a theatre historian my interest has been in the various means available to later playwrights—what I term the original *theatrical vocabulary*[5]—in this instance, ways of presenting ideas, abstractions, and key choices onstage. I do *not* have in mind soliloquies or other set speeches that clearly enunciate a Big Idea, devices that are readily recognizable to today's reader. Rather, my focus has been on other less visible techniques that can enhance the presentation of significant motifs or images. Outside of a few notable exceptions (the two angels in *Doctor Faustus*, Revenge in *The Spanish Tragedy*, Rumor in *2 Henry IV*, Time in *The Winter's Tale*) identifiable allegorical personae do not survive as part of the mainstream

of Elizabethan professional drama. Moreover, as noted by Brljak and Belsey, a major component of today's prevailing logic of interpretation is a distaste for allegorical and didactic effects in drama, especially in Shakespeare's plays, for the triumph of realism narrative and its various successors—psychological and otherwise—have won the battle for the hearts and minds of Shakespeareans. Nonetheless, my thesis is that in the 1590s and thereafter a post-allegorical mode of presentation—what may be termed "residual" allegory (to borrow a distinction from Raymond Williams)[6]—*does* persist, albeit in adapted form. And thereby hangs my tale.

The Onstage One Scene Psychomachia

In what follows I will not invoke the allegorical personae scattered throughout lesser known plays. Rather, I will concentrate on two devices prevalent in the 1560s and 1570s that could be incorporated into the plays that follow. To start with a familiar moment, for his first appearance in *The Merchant of Venice* Launcelot Gobbo is given a comic turn of roughly thirty lines in which he debates whether or not to run away from his master, Shylock. The clown presents the arguments of two opposing forces, Conscience and the Devil, giving each side its own voice (and perhaps gestures) and likely placing himself in the middle as the chooser. Much of the fun arises from Launcelot's varying postures and inflections as he voices the strictures of Conscience and the insinuations of the Devil, perhaps only turning his head in turn for each speaker or, at the other extreme, leaping back and forth when he reaches "Bouge" versus "Bouge not." At the climax the clown sums up the two positions:

> "Conscience," say I, "you counsel well." "Fiend," say I, "you counsel well." To be rul'd by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who (God bless the mark) is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew, I should be rul'd by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnation, and in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandement, I will run. (2.2.21–32)[7]

Here Launcelot's debate between the two voices or to-be-imagined entities is cast in a form still familiar to playgoers in the mid-1590s, a form associated with the moral drama and still visible occasionally at the end of the sixteenth century, most notably in the Good and Evil Angels that flank Doctor Faustus.

To characterize this technique, scholars who have dealt with the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English moral plays have used the term *psychomachia*

(war for the soul), derived from the title and focus of Prudentius's allegorical Latin poem, and have called attention to one of its major assets in drama or other narratives—the ability to break down X into component parts. One of the earliest scholars to write at length about the moral drama notes that in the early fifteenth-century *The Castle of Perseverance* "the subjective forces that in reality belong to man himself in the most personal sense were transformed by the poet into visible, external forces" so that, in effect, "the motives and impulses of man's own heart were taken from him, and, clothed in flesh and blood, given him again for companions."[8]

Unlike the soliloquy or aside, this approach to the onstage display of the workings of the mind is not compatible with the expectations of today's readers and playgoers.[9] A strong defense is provided by Wilbur Sanders in his discussion of the Good and Evil Angels in *Doctor Faustus* where he argues that such a technique is not "clumsily primitive" but rather "an immensely dramatic procedure." As he describes a representative scene: "The first effect of the interruption is to arrest all action on the stage, and to focus attention on the protagonist, suspended in the act of choice. Not until he speaks do we know to which voice he has been attending. It is the act of choice in slow motion, a dramatisation of his strained attention to the faint voices of unconscious judgment."[10] To readers today this effect may seem a blemish, but in the theatre such a slowing down of the process of choice can serve as a meaningful equivalent to a soliloquy or to a novelist's presentation of interior states of consciousness, especially for an audience attuned to such a technique.

In the earlier and more familiar moral dramas, this breaking down of the entity Humanum Genus, Everyman, or Mankind served as a strategy to organize an entire play. When the later moral dramatists turned to other strategies or paradigms, they still found use for such a device to break down X (an individual, a key choice, a kingdom) into its component parts that in turn could be represented onstage, often in a single scene. A revealing example is found in R. B.'s *Apius and Virginia* (1564)[11] where, after Apius agrees to the Vice's plan that will wrest Virginia from her family, the stage direction reads: "*Here let him make as though he went out and let Conscience and Justice come out of him, and let Conscience hold in his hand a lamp burning and let Justice have a sword and hold it before Apius' breast*" (500). Although Conscience and Justice have no lines while Apius is onstage, the judge himself supplies their half of the argument:

> But out I am wounded, how am I divided?
> Two states of my life, from me are now glided,
> For Conscience he pricketh me contemned,
> And Justice saith, judgment would have me condemned:
> Conscience saith cruelty sure will detest me:

And Justice saith, death in the end will molest me,
And both in one sudden me thinks they do cry,
That fire eternal, my soul shall destroy. (501–8)

Haphazard the Vice, however, mocks Conscience and Justice ("these are but thoughts" 510) and argues instead: "Then care not for Conscience the worth of a fable, / Justice is no man, nor nought to do able" (521–22). After Apius agrees to forgo his scruples ("let Conscience grope, and judgment crave"), Conscience and Justice are left alone onstage to lament his decision in psychological terms, as when Conscience complains: "I spotted am by willful will, / By lawless love and lust / By dreadful danger of the life. / By faith that is unjust" (538–41).

To act out the central decision in his play, R. B. has not resorted to a soliloquy or even to straightforward temptation by the Vice but has chosen to break down Apius's choice into its component parts. Somehow, at the moment when the judge is leaving the stage under the influence of the Vice and his own lust, Conscience and Justice are to "come out of" Apius (or "glide" from him, according to the dialogue), whether from behind his cloak or through some stage device. The theatrically emphatic presence of these two figures (with their striking entrance, their emblems, and their gestures) is then linked verbally to Apius's own conscience and sense of justice. Apius's subsequent exit with the Vice acts out his choice and spells out how he has abandoned his conscience and sense of justice in favor of his lust. Both the stage direction that indicates that Conscience and Justice are to "come out of" Apius and the Vice's insistence that "these are but thoughts" underscore how the inner workings of the protagonist's mind have been made external in a fashion particularly suited to onstage presentation.

The late moral dramatists regularly used such onstage psychomachias to display at length pivotal decisions, whether the choice of Knowledge of Sin over Infidelity (Lewis Wager, *The Life and Repentance of Mary Magdalene*, 1558), the choice of Covetous over Enough (William Wager, *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, 1560), or the choice of Faith over Despair (George Wapull, *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, 1576). The technique survives in the 1590s, as witnessed by the Good and Evil Angels of *Doctor Faustus*, one or more angels who flank a despairing figure in Lodge and Greene's *A Looking Glass for London and England* (1590), and Launcelot's debate between Conscience and the Devil. In *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599), a pivotal event, the seduction of Mistress Sanders, is presented not through dialogue among the characters but by means of a dumb show that pits Lust versus Chastity. Like R. B., Wapull, and both Lewis and William Wager (or Marlowe with his two angels), this dramatist felt that such a visible orchestration of component parts was a workable method of putting the mind of a chooser on theatrical display at an important moment.

I invoke such choices to suggest some of the expertise in the late moral drama that regularly goes unrecognized and to call attention to comparable signifiers in the theatrical vocabulary in the 1580s and thereafter. My purpose is not to mount an assault upon all modern interpretation of Shakespeare's characters but rather to expand the options available to the reader or theatrical professional. When reading Shakespeare's plays we give privileged status to those features that do make sense in our terms, even when they are obvious non- or pre-realistic conventions like the soliloquy, but inevitably we play down or screen out other devices that do not conform to our horizon of expectations. Admittedly, Shakespeare and his contemporary playwrights seldom incorporate into their plays anything as obvious as Conscience and Justice who come out of Apius or Chastity and Lust who flank Mistress Sanders. Still, the principle of breaking down an entity or a decision into component parts for fuller display in the theatre was certainly not unknown to Shakespeare, as witnessed by Launcelot Gobbo's comic debate.

A Psychomachia Interlude

Relevant here is a workshop staging of a series of scenes at the University of Toronto in 2010 that involved a director (Peter Cockett), eleven actors, a costumer, and a dramaturge. Given the limited time and resources available, the director and I chose to focus on psychomachia tug-of-war scenes, both allegorical and post-allegorical, so that, after an initial segment from the Digby *Mary Magdalene*, an audience saw scenes from two late moral plays (the Despair sequence from Wapull's *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* and the appearance of Conscience and Justice in *Apius and Virginia*) followed by related tug-of-war scenes from Heywood's *1 The Iron Age*, the A-text *Doctor Faustus*, *Arden of Faversham*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Dekker's *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, and *Cymbeline*. Between presentations the director provided a narrative bridge that offered plot summary and context, and, after the initial Digby scene, he offered a demonstration of the techniques that had been adopted.

At the outset Cockett noted "that we know virtually nothing about how early modern actors performed on stage." Rather, he declared the goal of this workshop was "to develop a visual rhetoric that can communicate moral arguments to an audience in a lively manner whether in a scene of overt moral allegory or a scene of apparent secular realism." Among the elements in this vocabulary were several rhetorical gestures: heaven "is upward, forward and to the performer's right"; hell is "downward, behind and to the performer's left." Other signifying actions included the right hand representing good, the left evil, and a left hand behind the body represented deceit. Virtues tend to be balanced and upright, whereas vice twists the body and puts it off-balance, so that

in a configuration that the director termed "the penitent sinner" (e.g., Faustus with the Old Man) the actor played an in-between, indecisive state by reaching up to Heaven with his right hand while at the same time twisting down to the left. The goal was to suggest an alternative way to understand the character's struggles, an alternative that invites a different approach to performance than the modern method—"an allegorical style" that is recognizably not Realism. As the director summed up the situation: "Ultimately, all we can really say about our allegorical style is that it was developed with reference to period sources available to us and that it is recognizably not twenty-first-century realism."

Figure 1. Banishing Despair from Wapull's *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* (Toronto 2010).

What did this test reveal? No one involved in this project claimed that what emerged was a faithful reconstruction of the original staging. Nonetheless, the results of this workshop approach were enlightening. Most rewarding for me as an observer were the segments from the two moral plays, for here the staging revealed the assets of such visual rhetoric for making interior moral-psychological forces visible. The segment from *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* started with Faithful Few, a nun in white carrying a Bible, who forcefully delivered a speech on the power of Greed and Usury and the absence of Love that was followed by the appearance of Wastefulness "*poorly*" to lament "how wastefully have I, with Wantonness my wife, / Consumed our goods, substance and treasure" (1660, 1665–66). This despairing figure decides to "seek some place where I may, / Finish my life with Cord, or with knife" and is directed to "*feign a going out*" but is prevented by Faithful Few who "*plucketh him again*" (1691–93). This Virtue figure (the play's primary moral spokesman) called attention to God's mercy and got the despairing figure to kneel in prayer.

What pushed the scene to another level was the visible and audible presence of Despair. With Faithful Few looking on from stage right, Wastefulness (anticipating Marlowe's Faustus) asks "which way shall I run?" adding:

> I know it is folly unto God to call:
> For God I know my petition will shun,
> And into perdition I am now like to fall.
> Despair, despair. (1677–81)

At this point the stage direction reads: "*Despair enter in some ugly shape, and stand behind him*" to deliver a six-line speech (1684–89) that argues "to end thy life it is best" and "calling for mercy, is all but in vain." Despair was portrayed as a shabby black-hooded figure with ropes coiled around his neck and a pained (despairing) visage who hovered behind his victim. When Faithful Few started the counter argument, Despair initially knelt stage left of the two figures, then, with some tortured moans, gradually moved upstage, so that at the final word of the prayer ("banish hence / That wicked Monster of *Despair*") "*Despair flieth, and they arise*" (1709). This well acted moral exemplum of a preacher saving a wayward sinner would have made verisimilar sense without the presence of an allegorical entity, but this approach, given the actor's chilling depiction of Despair, took the effect to another level so as to demonstrate the potential assets of such a technique—a fine example of inner forces made visible in the allegorical mode. Such an onstage tug-of-war spells out the coordinates involved in a pivotal choice and makes external the moral geography of Despair and Faith in the chooser's mind.[12]

The same was true for the scene from *Apius and Virginia* where, as noted earlier, after Apius agreed to the Vice Haphazard's plan that will wrest Virginia from her family, the stage direction reads: "*Here let him make as though he went out and let Conscience and Justice come out of him.*" This surprising emergence was handled effectively by having the exiting Apius move upstage to the central curtained opening from which point the two figures emerged through the slits in his long black cloak. Meanwhile, Haphazard, who to this point had circled and dominated his victim, retreated downstage stage left to mock Conscience and Justice ("why these are but thoughts man") so that at Apius's exit all they could do was back off slightly and lower their heads as if in sadness.

Clearly, to act out the central decision in his play the playwright has chosen to break down Apius's choice into its component parts. The staging of the scene, however, reinforced this effect in ways I had not anticipated. In particular, the Vice's speeches as befits his name are full of references to "hap" and "hazard," and the actor supplied hand gestures to reinforce these usages. As this figure wove his spell over his victim, moreover, Apius too could be seen using the same gestures. His exit speech, with Conscience and Justice silently standing by, is peppered with *hap* and *haphazard*:

> And sayest thou so my sured friend, then *hap* as *hap* shall hit,
> Let Conscience grope, and judgment crave, I will not shrink one whit.
> I will persever in my thought, I will deflower her youth,
> I will not sure reverted be, my heart shall have no ruth,
> Come on proceed and wait on me, I will *hap* woe or wealth,
> *Hap* blunt, *hap* sharp, *hap* life, *hap* death, though *Haphazard* be of health
> (525–29, emphasis mine)

The last line, along with accompanying gestures, drove home a sense of the infection or pollution of this judge by the Vice and what he/it represents, so that, when combined with the two figures who "*come out of*" Apius and the Vice's insistence "why these are but thoughts," the inner workings of the protagonist's mind have been made external in a fashion particularly suited to onstage presentation.

Of the subsequent segments the most telling for me was Shakespeare's pre-Actium scene where for most of the time Antony was positioned stage left close to Cleopatra with Enobarbus, Canidius, and the soldier stage right. Clearly, the arguments from the three Romans to fight on land and to ignore Octavius's dare were outweighed not by Cleopatra's few lines on the subject ("By sea, what else?"; "I have sixty sails, Caesar none better" 3.7.28, 49) but by her very presence, as spelled out by Enobarbus before Antony's entrance: "Your presence needs must puzzle Antony, / Take from his heart, take from his brain, from's time / What should not then be spar'd" (10–12). I had suggested

this scene because the tug-of-war had been obvious to me as a reader, but what emerged only in the staging was the impact of Antony's exit. His first offer to go ("Away, my Thetis!" 60) is interrupted by the entrance of the soldier with his six lines that start: "O noble Emperor, do not fight by sea, / Trust not to rotten planks" (61–62). Antony's subsequent exit line is then "Well, well, away" (67).[13] Given the focus on the tug-of-war, what seems to a casual reader a throw-away phrase of little importance became an opportunity for the actor to look at the three Romans stage right at the first "well," then back at Cleopatra on the second, then depart. What turns out to be a disastrous choice could not have been clearer. Generations of readers may have noted the Rome versus Egypt dichotomy in Antony's choices and the play as a whole, but staging the scene in a post-allegorical mode sharpened the focus and gave added weight to the dynamics of this choice.

Arresting the Vice

A second legacy of the late moral drama is linked to ways of structuring the elements and action of a play. Most scholarly formulations draw upon early moral plays such as *The Castle of Perseverance*, *Mankind*, and *Everyman* and focus on the Humanum Genus protagonist and the *psychomachia* tug-of-war for his soul, but to dwell primarily upon this line of descent is to oversimplify the evidence and to ignore the Vice, the predominant figure in English drama in the generation before Marlowe and Kyd. The emergence of the Vice as the central figure in the interludes of the 1560s and 1570s represents a practical theatrical answer to the problem of how to present onstage a critique of what is wrong in society. Playgoers were regularly confronted with a lively, often very funny figure that sets up a special bond with his audience and then acts out with wit, energy, and comic violence the power of some corrupting force (Courage, Covetousness, Haphazardness, Inclination, Ill Report, Infidelity, Iniquity, Newfangledness, Revenge) only to be defeated or transcended in the play's final movement. At some point almost every Vice wields his dagger with comic bravado against foes or allies, but ultimately he is thwarted, in some cases by an opposing figure wielding a sword of Justice. Quite a few plays, then, exhibit a consistent pattern: a jesting Vice, who embodies a force that threatens society as a whole, brandishes his dagger of lath and has his moments of fun and dominance (while one or more victims are led into sin), only to be arrested or eclipsed in a second climactic movement that brings him, his weapon, and what he has come to represent under control. For playwrights like Marlowe and Shakespeare this way of structuring a play narrative would have been as familiar as the Humanum Genus-centered approach or, for today's reader, the pattern of action taken for granted in a cinematic western, a situation comedy, or a detective story.

Of particular interest for later drama is the mechanism by which the Vice is contained or defeated in a play's final movement. Later allusions indicate that the best-known disposition of the Vice was to have him carried off to Hell on the Devil's back, but that choice is found in only one extant moral play, Ulpian Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (1568): "*He rideth away on the Devil's back*" (1301).[14] In John Pickering's *Horestes* (1567) after a string of successes the last appearance of the Vice Revenge is as a beggar "*with a staff and a bottle or dish and wallet,*" a "sudden mutation" that he attributes to the arrival of Amity who "is unto me Revenge most contrary. / And we twain together, could not abide" (1233, 1254, 1258–59). The figure that had dominated the action is transformed into a beggar, denied his original power, and replaced by allegorical opposites (Truth and Duty) who provide the remedy to his threat. Elsewhere, two Vices are countered by means of fire. At the climax of *King Darius* (1565) with Iniquity outnumbered by the virtues, the stage direction reads: "*Here somebody must cast fire to Iniquity,*" and his exit line is: "Nay, I go to the devil, I fear" (pp. 78–79). In *The Cobbler's Prophecy* (1590) Contempt, albeit not specified as a Vice, clearly embodies "envy and dissension among the several estates and for the resultant turmoil and injustice in the realm."[15] Although this allegorical prime mover is never punished, the curing of the kingdom is effected when the Duke, his daughter, the Priest, and the Scholar repent, pledge reformation (humility for pride, obedience for presumption, love for contempt, and chastity for lust) and then burn the cabin of Contempt: they "*compass the stage, from one part let a smoke arise: at which place they all stay*"; "*They all kneel down*"; "*They all rise and cast incense into the fire,*" at which point they get news of peace and victory (1565–66, 1571, 1589).

In the majority of extant plays, however, the Vice is *arrested* in both senses of the term: "The act of stopping anything in its course; a stop put to anything, stoppage, stay, check" and "The apprehending or restraining of one's person, in order to be forthcoming to answer an alleged or suspected crime" (OED II.5, 8). In *Nice Wanton* (1550), Iniquity (not specifically designated as the Vice) tempts and corrupts two figures, Dalilah and Ismael. In the climactic trial scene, when Iniquity is implicated as Ismael's accomplice, the allegorical figure threatens: "He that layeth hand on me in this place: / Shall have my brawling iron laid on his face" and the stage direction reads: "*They take him in a halter and he fighteth*" (B4r). The same figure that had dominated the two protagonists in the first phase of the action is now literally and figuratively arrested, so that his threats no longer carry any force. Similarly, Inclination in *The Trial of Treasure* (1567) can be bridled early in the play by Just and Sapience, but, confident that his victim, Lust, will release him, the Vice assures us: "though that I be bridled a while, / The colt will at length the courser beguile." At the climax of the play, however, Just leads in a struggling Inclination "*in his bridle shackled*" and even

tightens the reins. Although the Vice promises to "rebel, yea, and rebel again," he is led off to prison under control, an exit juxtaposed with the display of the fates of Lust and Treasure (turned to dust and rust) and the awarding of the crown of Felicity to Just (pp. 280, 297, 299). The continuing threat posed by man's "beastly inclination" is both placed in a larger salvific framework and linked to a recurring bridle-snaffle-shackle image that provides a theatrically visible answer to the Vice's energy and threat.

In *Horestes* and also in the better-known *Cambyses* the Vice can be incorporated into a well-known story. In Thomas Garter's *Virtuous and Godly Susanna* (1569) the Vice Ill Report is instrumental in getting the two judges to condemn the heroine; later, after Daniel appears as judge, the Vice helps to lead the two false judges to execution while continuing to serve as chief comedian. But with the appearance of his opposite, True Report, the Vice's wit and comic energy lose their punch. Rather, the formerly successful comic violence and disruption now are brought under control: "*Here they struggle together, the Gaoler casts the Rope about Ill Report's neck*" (1367–68). Instead of going directly to Hell, the Vice is taken off to be hanged, and the Devil enters to forecast Ill Report's fate in Hell. Again, the same figure that had controlled the action (and entertained the playgoers) throughout much of the play is judged, arrested, and taken off for hanging in a final phase characterized by an ideal judge, Daniel, and the Vice's symbolic opposite, True Report.

Similarly, the Vice Haphazard in *Apius and Virginia* (1564) epitomizes not only a weakness to which Apius is susceptible but also an amoral attitude (roughly defined as "take a chance—perhaps you may get what you want") that pervades the world of the play. But after Apius has been condemned by Justice and Reward, the Vice spells out his distinctive rationale one last time in a long speech (1081–1115) in which he decides to ask for his reward, reasoning: "the worst that can hap is but a no" (1106). But the same "haphazard" approach that earlier had seduced Apius now yields the "reward" of a rope, so that although the Vice tries "*to go forth*," he is forced to "stay a while" (1142–43) and eventually is led off by Virginius to be hanged. The final speeches of Fame, Memory, Justice, and Reward then stress how Virginia's death "shall ever reign / Within the mouth and mind of man, from age to age again" (1194–95) as opposed to the short-term power of Haphazard that has been transcended in this final movement of the play.

The presence of both the Vice and various allegorical alternatives in a world also populated by figures like Susanna, Horestes, and Apius may jar the sensibilities of readers today who view such a combination as evidence of the primitive nature of English drama before the triumph of realism. Yet despite their limitations, these renditions of famous stories show how early Elizabethan dramatists were able to use the Vice both as an entertainer *and* as an allegorical

index to the central issues of the play. Equally revealing, the final phase of each rendition is clearly linked to the fate of the Vice, so that the diminution or arrest of this formerly dominant figure is brought about by allegorical opposites (True Report in *Susanna*; Amity, Truth, and Duty in *Horestes*; Reward and Justice in *Apius*) who epitomize the new situation at the end in a manner analogous to the climaxes of plays such as *Wealth and Health*, *King Darius*, and *The Trial of Treasure*. The Vice and this two-phased movement were available as a formula that could be adapted to various ends, including the presentation of well-known stories not closely associated with the moral play.

The most revealing example of this formula is to be found in George Wapull's *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, where Courage the Vice controls the action throughout the first two-thirds of this play in contrast to the plight of "deformed" Christianity. In the final scene, however, the Vice is arrested by Correction in the presence of Authority, a figure who bears "this sword of God's power" (1837). In typical fashion, Courage resists, but here the same dagger that earlier had dominated the action fails to protect its wielder when juxtaposed with the sword of God's authority and the correction that accompanies it. Then, once the Vice has been taken off under arrest, Faithful Few can restore Christianity's sword of Truth and shield of Faith to their pristine state, the culminating action of the play. The formula implicit in other moral plays is here spelled out and fully realized in terms of two sets of weapons, two contrasting powers, and two phases of the action that, taken together, present one moral thesis.[16]

The significance of the Vice's arrest is enhanced by an earlier scene. According to the information presented on the title page, in the middle of this play the actor playing the Vice must exit to reappear moments later as the poor but honest Debtor who refuses to bribe the Sergeant and therefore is led off to prison while wealthy figures like Greediness and No Good Neighborhood bend the law. Despite its obvious point about the corrupt world, this brief scene may seem gratuitous to a modern reader—at least until that reader links it to the final movement when Courage tries to flee from Faithful Few and Authority (who carries a sword and is addressed in judicial terms) only to be grasped by Correction who is told: "thine office do, / Take here this caitiff unto the jail" (1813–14). Clearly, in function (if not in costume as well), Correction is a positive or heavenly version of that corrupt sergeant who led off the impoverished debtor (with the latter role performed by the same actor now portraying the Vice—his only such double in the play). As with the deformed versus restored Christianity, the spectator is offered two stages in a process that structures the entire play—the movement from the domination of the Vice and his worldly interpretation of the proverbial title (*carpe diem*) to the emergence of Faithful Few and Christianity with their heavenly version of the same proverb (see lines 43–49). The importance of the role played here by Authority and Correction, moreover, is reinforced by the account

of a lost play, *The Cradle of Security*, which also climaxed with the appearance of two old men, "the one in blue with a Sergeant at Arms, his mace on his shoulder, the other in red with a drawn sword in his hand"—figures identified as "the end of the world, and the last judgment."[17]

Arresting Doll Tearsheet

To turn to the drama of the 1590s and thereafter is to find plentiful examples of arrests and incarcerations without overt allegory, examples not limited to the final sequence of a given play. Such actions can be a source of comedy, as in *The Comedy of Errors* where ten of the fifteen dialogue uses of *arrest* and its variants occur in 4.1 and 4.2. Sometimes a positive, as opposed to a Vice-like, figure is arrested (as with the hapless Debtor in *The Tide Tarrieth*): Duke Humphrey in *2 Henry VI*, 3.1; Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*, 3.3; Antonio in *Twelfth Night*, 3.4; Posthumus in *Cymbeline*; Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*. Such situations can be complex, as with the arrest of Carlisle in *Richard II* ("of capital treason we arrest you here" 4.1.151) after his prediction of the horrors to come as a result of the deposition (a vision that can be arrested but not forestalled) or with the taking into custody of Celia and Bonario in *Volpone*, an action that epitomizes the vulnerability of Justice in Venice owing to the machinations of Mosca and Volpone. Less common is a figure successfully resisting arrest, as in *2 Henry VI*, where the "good" Duke Humphrey is arrested, then murdered in Act 3, but the plotting duke, Richard of York, refuses to comply with his arrest in Act 5 ("he is arrested, but will not obey" 5.1.136), thereby setting up the first battle of the Wars of the Roses.[18]

Of particular interest are situations in which a figure that epitomizes what is wrong in the world of the play is arrested (again, in both senses of the term) in the final movement: Borachio, Conrade, and Don John; Falstaff and his companions; Angelo and Lucio; Iago and Othello; and Edmund. The adaptation of the moral drama arrest for structural purposes is best seen in *2 Henry IV*. Of the four examples of "arrest" in the dialogue, three are linked to Fang and Snare's failed attempt to arrest Falstaff on behalf of Mistress Quickly (2.1.8, 45, 70–71). The fourth is found after the rebels, believing Prince John's "princely word," have dismissed their soldiers at Gaultree Forest, at which point Westmoreland announces to Hastings: "I do arrest thee, traitor, of high treason" (4.2.66, 107). In the first instance neither the Lord Chief Justice (in both 1.2 and 2.1) nor the would-be arresters can bring Falstaff under control; in the latter instance the rebel leaders *are* arrested but the problems facing the sick king and the sick kingdom are not resolved by this arrest. In contrast, in Act 5, under a new king and a newly empowered Chief Justice, Falstaff and his companions (including perhaps Justice Shallow) *are* arrested and contained (to the

displeasure of generations of readers and playgoers). In Part 2 more than in Part 1 Falstaff has been associated with the diseases of the kingdom, so that his arrest, epitomized in the famous (or infamous) rejection speech is linked to the "new" society under Henry V.

The arrest of Falstaff in Part 2 does bear a general debt to the fate of the moral play Vice, but, in terms of Shakespeare's adaptation of the techniques of the previous generation, a more telling example is found in the previous and often neglected scene, the arrest of Doll Tearsheet and Mistress Quickly. To see the connection, an overview of some key motifs is necessary.

Throughout his history plays Shakespeare has often concentrated our attention upon children, heirs, and descent, with Prince Hal and his brothers being but one of many such sets reaching back to the sons of Edward III. Part 2 starts with the reported death of a son, Hotspur, that elicits a reaction from his father that has ominous implications for the future health of the kingdom, followed by the appearance of the son of Richard II's Mowbray, a son who through his presence and pointed comments (see especially 4.1.111–27) recalls the conflicts still simmering from Bolingbroke's past, and by the appearance of a crown prince who waits in the background and discusses his problematic status with Poins in 2.2. Related references recur in the dialogue, whether in the rebels' concern "that our hopes (yet likely of fair birth) / Should be still-born" (1.3.63–64), Mowbray's allusion to the lives that have "miscarried under Bullingbrook" (4.1.127), or the account of fearful omens that include "Unfather'd heirs and loathly births of nature" (4.4.122).

The most revealing passages are linked to the rhetoric of rebellion, especially when the insurgents describe the vulnerability of Henry IV. In one of his major speeches the Archbishop analyzes the awkward dilemma of the king who "hath found to end one doubt by death / Revives two greater in the heirs of life" (4.1.197–98). In this view, each corrective action by Henry IV or his agents instead of providing a solution only adds to the problem (as epitomized by the onstage presence of a second Mowbray). Linking correction, marriage, and children to the more familiar garden imagery, the Archbishop then sums up the dilemma of a king who knows full well he cannot "precisely weed this land." Rather:

> His foes are so enrooted with his friends
> That, plucking to unfix an enemy,
> He doth unfasten so and shake a friend,
> So that this land, like an offensive wife
> That hath enrag'd him on to offer strokes,
> As he is striking, holds his infant up
> And hangs resolv'd correction in the arm
> That was uprear'd to execution. (205–12)

Similarly, just before the rebels accept Prince John's offer, Hastings predicts that if this rebellion fails, others will "second our attempt," and, "if they miscarry, theirs shall second them," so that, in his terms, "success of mischief shall be born / And heir from heir shall hold his quarrel up / Whiles England shall have generation" (4.2.44–49). Although John rejects Hastings's vision of the future ("you are too shallow, Hastings, much too shallow, / To sound the bottom of the after-times" 50–51), the king too is conscious of the problem posed by both current rebels and their heirs in "the after-times." In his final speech to his son he admits that the "soil" attached to his achieving the crown has "daily" led "to quarrel and to bloodshed / Wounding supposed peace," for despite all his efforts to answer the many challenges, he recognizes that "all my reign hath been but as a scene / Acting that argument." But the shrewd Henry IV also recognizes that, since his own death now "Changes the mood," the answer lies in his son: "what in me was purchas'd / Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort; / So thou the garland wear'st successively" (4.5.189–201). The dying king knows that in his own person he can never resolve the continuing problem enunciated by Hastings and the Archbishop. Only a new untainted king, a son who has gained the crown or garland "successively" (rather than "as an honor snatch'd with boist'rous hand" 191), can weed England's garden.

In Act 5 and thereafter Henry V must come to terms with this problem. To show this process in action Shakespeare provides a series of linked moments climaxing in the famous rejection scene. One of these moments, however, has received little or no attention, in these or any other terms. In the brief 5.4, one or more beadles drag onstage Doll Tearsheet and Mistress Quickly, with the accusation against Doll that "There hath been a man or two kill'd about her" and "the man is dead that you and Pistol beat amongst you" (6, 16–17). Meanwhile, the Hostess provides her characteristic comments, including what could be a topic sentence for this final sequence: "O God, that right should thus overcome might!" (24–25). Though Doll rages and the Hostess invokes the name and supposed influence of Falstaff (11), these two figures are arrested, as we are reminded in the next scene just before the rejection when Pistol reveals Doll's fate to Falstaff who promises: "I will deliver her" (5.5.39).

What is particularly striking for the playgoer, moreover, is the stage picture of an apparently pregnant Doll who claims "and the child I now go with do miscarry, thou wert better thou hadst strook thy mother, thou paper-fac'd villain!" (8–10). Given the various rebel allusions to heirs and unborn children, including the Archbishop's image of a wife who holds her infant up to avoid correction, Doll's claim is certainly consistent in metaphoric terms. But in response to this threat of impending miscarriage, the beadle answers: "If it do, you shall have a dozen of cushions again; you have but eleven now" (14–15). The "child," it appears, is only a cushion, another Falstaff-like trick (as with those

used against the Lord Chief Justice, Prince Hal, Justice Shallow, or Mistress Quickly) to sidestep authority and the implications of one's actions.

Significantly, in this equivalent to phase two of a moral play the stratagem does not work. In the context established by the rebels' speeches and imagery, not only are Doll and her accomplices arrested in the legal sense (as the rebels were arrested or attached by Westmoreland), but, in addition, their way of life and, even more important, their seeds for the future are also being brought under control. Just as many a Vice or other fallen figure had been arrested by a figure of Correction or Authority (as in *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* and *The Cradle of Security*), so this epitome of the diseases and subterfuges of the world under Henry IV is here being exposed, arrested, and metaphorically denied any progeny. In imagistic terms, an answer under Henry V for the diseases linked to the kingdom under Henry IV (as set forth in Hastings's prophecy that "heir from heir shall hold his quarrel up / Whiles England shall have generation") is being acted out, for, in the Archbishop's terms, "resolved correction" has transcended the threat of the infant hostage or the continuing problem posed by "the heirs of life." Granted, the arrest of the two women is comic, even anarchic, in its language and action, but, especially with the paradigm of the two-phased moral play in mind, there is a logic to both the arrest and the exposure of the false pregnancy that (along with the arrests in the final scene) defines the "new" world under Henry V.

To link a Shakespeare play to a plot or staging convention found in the 1560s and 1570s may not be a startling breakthrough—and I am not advancing the earlier material as a source for the latter. Rather, my goal is to call attention to the common ground beneath the mode of presentation or theatrical vocabulary, a continuity as opposed to a sharp break.[19]

In conclusion, I return to the workshop with psychomachia scenes described earlier and the rationale provided by dramaturge Noam Lior. "These plays, like tracks of music, are composed of multiple layers which present themselves to an audience as a simultaneous experience. Moral allegory, historical reference, psychological realism, and other elements all blend together, in the way that vocals, bass, rhythm, and melody are layered to produce a symphonic experience." The goal of the workshop, he argues, was "not so much try to reconstruct that original melody as to turn up the gain on a single layer—Moral Allegory—to allow it to be heard over and above all the others." In keeping with the arguments and context provided by Brljak and Belsey, my goal has been to tease out more of that residual layer that may have been part of the original playgoing experience. The fundamental question remains: to what extent is a carry-over from the moral-allegorical theatre to the drama of Kyd, Marlowe, and Shakespeare (and thereafter) the norm rather than the exception? Can Every Scholar find Truth in the Kingdom of Theatre History?

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Notes

1. Tuve, *Allegorical Imagery*, 218.
2. Brljak, "The Age of Allegory," 698, 708, 717, 714.
3. According to Thorp, "Before plays could be written which would show men as they are, writers had to believe that this was a better thing to do than to show them as the church or any other regent of morals thought they should be" so that his goal was to show "the decline of didacticism in theme and plot and the consequent triumph of realism" (vii–ix).
4. Belsey, "Continuity and Change on the English Popular Stage," 146–47, 150, 160.
5. For a full exploration of this term see my *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary*.
6. In his *Marxism and Literature* Williams distinguishes among dominant, emergent, and residual elements in a given culture. "The residual," he argues, "has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present. Thus certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue—cultural as well as social—of some previous social and cultural institution or formation," 122.
7. Citations are from the 1997 revised edition of *The Riverside Shakespeare*.
8. E. N. S. Thompson, "The English Moral Plays," 315.
9. A notable exception is *Herman's Head*, a sit-com that ran for three seasons (1991–94) on the Fox Network. The protagonist, Herman Brooks, is a fact-checker at a magazine who faces a wide range of romantic and professional problems. What makes the show distinctive is the visible presence of four figures who in their interactions represent four phases of his personality: Angel (Sensitivity, the Female), Animal (Lust, Hunger), Wimp (Anxiety), and Genius (Intellect). For this item I am indebted to Professor Jody Enders.
10. *The Dramatist and the Received Idea*, 217.
11. Dates attached to plays are for the convenience of the reader and are taken from *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700*. With several of the moral plays I have modernized the old spelling.
12. See the attached photo of "Banishing Despair" with Faithful Few (Laine Zisman Newman), Wastefulness (Paul Babiak), and Despair (Adam Lazarus).
13. The exclamation point after *away* provided by the Riverside editor (not in the Folio) obscures an important option for the actor and has been ignored here.
14. For allusions to this stage business see Dessen, *Shakespeare and the Late Moral Plays*, 20–21.
15. Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, 210.
16. For a fuller account of such two-phased moral plays see chapter 2 of Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*.
17. For the full passage see *REED: Cumberland, Westmoreland, Gloucestershire*, 362–64.
18. Other senses of arrest cited in the OED are also found in Shakespeare's plays: "To seize (property) by legal warrant" (III.12) is used in *Merry Wives*, 5.5.115 ("his horses are arrested for it"); and "To take as security" (III.13) is used in *Measure for Measure*, 2.4.133–34 ("let me be bold. / I do arrest your words") and *Love's Labors Lost*, 2.1.159. The arresting of speech is also found in Collatine's lament over the body of Lucrece: "The deep vexation of his inward soul / Hath serv'd a dumb arrest upon his tongue" (*Rape of Lucrece*, 1779–80). The best known metaphoric-allegorical usage occurs in *Hamlet*, 5.2.336-37 ("this fell sergeant, Death, / Is strict in his arrest"), and the same conceit is found in Sonnet 74 which begins: "But be contented when that fell arrest / Without all bail shall carry me away."
19. In terms of continuity, *A Warning for Fair Women* with its pivotal allegorical dumb shows was part of the repertory of Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, in the late 1590s.