THE AVENGING HERO: REVENGE TRAGEDY AND THE RELATION OF DRAMATIST TO GENRE, 1587-1611

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY

The first section of the dissertation examines the literary background of justified revenge. This is a necessary prelude to Part II, which is taken up with an inquiry into the relations of individual authors to the genre they work in and modify.

Chapter I is involved with the justified revenger in Elizabethan narrative literature; the narratives offer a more fruitful avenue for inquiry into the probable response of Elizabethan audiences to stage revengers like Kyd's than contemporary essays and sermons, which tend to reflect the orthodox attitudes of church and state on the subject of private revenge. Chapter II examines the most important pre-Kydian revenge play, Horestes, and its author's unorthodox handling of his subject matter. The morality of revenge in The Spanish Tragedy, the first and most influential revenge tragedy, is next inquired into and found to be equally unorthodox. Kyd, in fact, encourages his audience to see his protagonist as justified throughout the play. The fourth chapter closes Part I

with an attempt to isolate some important anticipations of the changes wrought in the Kydian form after 1600.

Part II is given over to the central inquiry: to what extent and in what ways did dramatists working in the form of Kydian revenge tragedy from 1600 to 1611 show their concern for the kind of play they were developing, and how conscious were the changes they effected in the concept of the hero? Marston's Antonio's Revenge provides the best example of a conscious reaction against the dramatic representation of justified revenge, a reaction against the kind of revenger figured in Hieronimo (and probably Hamlet). Marston's play is in a sense a parody of the tragedy of blood, but it is a serious parody. Marston inverts commonly accepted moral standards and shows up the morality of a revenger like Hieronimo for what it is. The hero is presented as noble and justified to the end, but the response sought from the audience is in fact the opposite of that apparently encouraged on the surface of the play. Lust's Dominion is important in that it offers an extended examination of the causal relationship between vindictiveness and villainy, although here there is much less evidence of a conscious relationship between dramatist and generic tradition. Hoffman exhibits Chettle's concern for the genre

in several ways; significantly, the hero is allowed to retain his noble stance in his own eyes while being reduced in the eyes of the audience. The reduction of the hero is also a central element in The Revenger's Tragedy, where again there is evidence that the analysis of the morality of revenge is being undertaken in reaction to the concept of the revenger as justified and noble.

Chapman's The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois and Tourneur's The Atheist's Tragedy embody a new kind of hero, the "honest revenger" who is content to wait until he can achieve a morally acceptable revenge or until divine retribution relieves him of responsibility. In this sense, these two plays are the culmination of a transitional period in the history of revenge tragedy. Along with the others, they provide an area for research into the intellectual bases, the conscious nature, of generic change.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and (to the best of my knowledge and belief) no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text or notes.

The thesis does, however, contain original material which has been published or accepted for publication by scholarly journals. The section in Chapter VIII on parallel action and reductive technique in The Revenger's Tragedy appeared in similar form in English Language Notes, VIII (1970), 103-107; the Appendix virtually unchanged in Notes & Queries, N.S. XVII (1970), 212-213; the Marston chapter will appear in modified form in Studies in English Literature 1500-1900; and the first chapter in modified form in Studies in Philology.

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from primary sources are taken from first editions, whose place of publication is London. Contractions are expanded.

The date that follows the first mention of any play refers to composition. I have relied on the dates given in Samuel Schoenbaum's revised edition of Alfred Harbage's Annals of English Drama, 975-1700 (London, 1964), but I have preferred to simplify the procedure followed there. Thus, whereas Schoenbaum enters The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois under 1610 and gives its limits as c. 1601-1612, I write "c. 1610." The only exception to this rule is the date I give to The Atheist's Tragedy: Irving Ribner's argument for 1611 (Introduction to his Revels edition [London, 1964], pp. xxiii-xxv) is too persuasive to be ignored, and as the date is important in its being terminal for this study, I have followed Ribner.

Abbreviations of the titles of well-known journals follow the form used in the annual MLA Bibliography.

INTRODUCTION

The primary aim behind this dissertation is to subject the earlier revenge tragedies to a close critical examination in an attempt to show the extent to which playwrights working in the genre from 1600 to 1611 were conscious of the ways they were changing the form as begun and defined by Kyd. Apart from The Spanish Tragedy (c. 1587), the plays I shall be most concerned with in this regard are Marston's Antonio's Revenge (c. 1600), Lust's Dominion (1600?), probably by Dekker in collaboration with Day and Haughton, Chettle's Hoffman (1602), The Revenger's Tragedy (c. 1606), traditionally ascribed to Tourneur, Chapman's The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (c. 1610), and Tourneur's The Atheist's Tragedy (c. 1611). The thesis will concentrate on the most striking change in revenge tragedy over the period, the dramatists' increasingly orthodox treatment of the avenging hero.

Fredson Bowers treated these plays (among others) as a group in his Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, still the most

authoritative general study of the tragedy of revenge.[1] He demonstrated, by way of fairly brief analysis of the plays under Kyd's immediate influence, that there was a noticeable change in the way the revenger was presented over the period. With the exception of Chapman's Clermont and Tourneur's Charlemont, both of whom reveal their authors' more orthodox treatment of revenge not through their villainy but through their refusal to take revenge, protagonists become increasingly vicious and more openly villainous, until the kind of revenging hero Kyd presented is practically unrecognizable in the villains who dominate tragedy after the first decade of the new century. The plays dealt with most closely in this thesis are those which appear to modify the morality of the original Kydian revenger in significant ways and which afford, to varying degrees, opportunities to examine the relation of writer to tradition through the decade. The study represents more, however, than an elaboration on Bowers' treatment of these plays.

Since the first publication of his book in 1940, several of Bowers' critical assumptions have been seriously questioned. One of the most significant shifts in critical

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[1] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, 1587-1642 (Princeton, 1940), Chapter IV and esp. pp. 118ff.

opinion involves the morality of Kyd's hero and the most likely forms a contemporary audience's response to that hero would have taken. Hieronimo is now generally seen to have been presented as a much more noble, virtuous protagonist than would have been allowed by Bowers (who saw him as a fairly sympathetically drawn character), deserving of his audience's sympathy and even, perhaps, of its condonation to the very end of the play. Bowers' view of Hieronimo as a character an audience could sympathize with only until he turns to private revenge for his wrongs and "according to English standards . . . inevitably becomes a villain"[2] was determined by certain assumptions about how Elizabethans would have responded to the idea of personal vengeance. These assumptions were based on diligent research into what prominent Elizabethan preachers, magistrates, and moralist writers thought on the subject of private revenge.[3] It is fair to say that over the last twenty years a decreasing amount of emphasis has been placed on such sources. The research itself has been questioned as perhaps misguided and there is considerable scepticism about how representative the writings

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[2] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 77.

[3] See particularly Lily B. Campbell, "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England," MP, XXVIII (1931), 281-296; and Bowers' introductory chapter, "The Background of Revenge," in Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 3-40.

on revenge of moralists and statesmen really were of the sentiments of the average Elizabethan--particularly of the average Elizabethan's reaction to the dramatic representation of revenge.[4] The time is ripe for research into the background of justified revenge that will examine what literary precedents there may have been for, let us say, a hypothetical dramatic representation of justified revenge written around 1587. If there were important literary precedents it will be possible to arrive at a more balanced and objective view of Kyd's play, since the analysis of the morality of revenge in The Spanish Tragedy will not need to be particularly influenced by what scholars have supposed to have been the general Elizabethan abhorrence of private revenge.

The opening chapters of this thesis will establish that there were literary precedents--dramatic as well as non-dramatic--for Kyd's portrayal of justified revenge, should that turn out to be what Hieronimo's actions at the end of the play represent. The thesis will proceed to an inquiry into the morality of revenge in The Spanish Tragedy that will take account of the results of recent criticism of that play, an inquiry that will not be restricted by what we know to

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[4] For a concise statement of the sceptical position see Helen Gardner, The Business of Criticism (Oxford, 1959), pp. 35-37.

have been the orthodox attitude to revenge or by previous theories about the possible range--or lack of range--of reaction to the dramatic portrayal of revenge open to Kyd's audience. The chapters in the second section will examine the important Kydian revenge tragedies written from 1600 to 1611 against the immediate background of The Spanish Tragedy and, beyond that, the background of non-orthodox approaches to revenge in Horestes (1567), a few other early plays, and some of the narrative literature.

Part I, then, forms a necessary background to the central inquiry: the relation of Marston, Dekker, Chettle, Tourneur, and Chapman to the Kydian form each at some stage worked in, and particularly the extent of their awareness of the moral issues involved in the changes they effected in the form.[5]

An inquiry of this nature can claim to have a

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[5]Shakespeare's Hamlet (c. 1601) is not treated in depth. Like Bowers, I have been content to make reference to it where necessary but to avoid an analysis that would probably add very little to our understanding of the play. The morality of revenge in Hamlet is certainly no more orthodox than it is in The Spanish Tragedy, and the changing concept of the hero in Marston, Dekker, Chettle, Tourneur, and Chapman amounts to a movement away from the figure of Hamlet as much as from that of Hieronimo. Hamlet is clearly indebted to

significance that extends beyond a limited range of revenge tragedies to the Elizabethan drama in general. The idea for the dissertation came initially from a paper, "The Dramatists' Independence," delivered by Clifford Leech at the 1966 Modern Language Association Conference on Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama. He centred his address on the proposition that Elizabethan dramatists "were perhaps as much concerned with the idea of a particular kind of play as with providing suitable fare for the Globe or the Red Bull, suitable parts for this or that player."[6] In support of this thesis he proceeded to argue that Shakespeare's Henry VI (c. 1591-1592) "is a direct consequence of the writing of Tamburlaine [c. 1587-1588]," that it is obviously a new leap in the development of the history play "as remarkable as Marlowe's in Tamburlaine but nonetheless derivative from that."[7]

Kyd, but the problem of influence is complicated by the mystery of the Ur-Hamlet (c. 1589), the lost original about which little is known but which may tentatively be ascribed to Kyd. The important point is that the writers dealt with in Part II of this thesis, in changing the morality of the revenger, are moving away from a popular but non-orthodox tradition of literature embodying noble and sympathetically presented revengers, literature of which The Spanish Tragedy is the most influential and for our purposes the most important extant dramatic representative. A critical discussion of Hamlet would be irrelevant in the second section and superfluous in the first.

[6]Clifford Leech, "The Dramatists' Independence," Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama, X (1967), 17.

[7]"The Dramatists' Independence," p. 19.

Subsequently Shakespeare's Henry VI leads Marlowe to Edward II (c. 1592), in the composition of which Marlowe is conscious both of what Shakespeare has done in Henry VI and of how he, Marlowe, is developing learnt lessons in his own way.[8]

Leech finds what is probably a clearer example of the relationship he is concerned with in the composition of the plays Westward Ho (1604), by Dekker and Webster, Eastward Ho (1605), by Chapman, Jonson, and Marston, and Northward Ho (1605), again by Dekker and Webster. Westward Ho represents a new development in English comedy, with a minor journey as the basis of action. Chapman, Jonson, and Marston are inspired by the originality of the play and write their own journey play, which is at once a refinement and a development of Westward Ho. Both plays having proved popular, Dekker and Webster write another, closer in design to their first effort than to Eastward Ho. "What emerges," Leech claims, "is that here we have not a mere imitation by one children's company of the work of another. Rather, we have dramatists excited at the thought of a new sub-genre, the journey-comedy where the journey is minimal and abortive, and, in the case of Eastward Ho, is presented with a subtle irony."[9] "What I

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[8]"The Dramatists' Independence," p. 20.

[9]"The Dramatists' Independence," p. 21.

have been putting forward," Leech concludes, "is the notion that the nature of major dramatic writing in our period is often largely determined by the effect of dramatist on dramatist and by the effect of a man's own sense of his growth. The writers I have spoken of were not play-makers simply at the call of a fashion set by actors or playing-places. Of course, they responded to changing acting-conditions, changing theatrical devices. Primarily, however, they belonged to one another and to themselves."[10]

Leech's hypothesis seems so plainly right in its basic assumption that it may not get the attention that is due to it. It is a fact, however, that the sort of research it is intended to prompt has never been conducted in any systematic way. Any number of books and articles have been written that assume a consciously felt relationship between the writer and the generic tradition of which his work is a part and which he is modifying as soon as he puts pen to paper, a consciously felt relationship between himself and his fellow contemporary dramatists. But research that establishes whether the relationships existed on a conscious level fairly generally throughout the great period of English drama, and research that probes the nature of such relation-

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[10]"The Dramatists' Independence," p. 22.

ships by following through changes in a reasonably tight and productive genre, has yet to be carried out. What is really needed is an extensive study of the question that will examine the whole field of English Renaissance drama and cover a number of genres (or, more accurately, sub-genres) in detail. Although there is not room in a thesis for a study of this scope, this dissertation might be expected to provide something in the nature of a test of the possibilities of the larger study. Before embarking on it, however, it will be as well to offer a brief survey of what the field of Elizabethan drama to 1642 affords in the way of support for Leech's hypothesis and in the way of encouragement for an inquiry such as the present.

There is, as it happens, a good deal of evidence, some of it non-conclusive, much of it as conclusive as one could want, that Leech's hypothesis is valid. He could have cited many more plays than he does, although the short-lived vogue that Westward Ho, Eastward Ho, and Northward Ho amount to seems an adequate demonstration of his point. Concern about what one's fellow writers are doing in the same kind of drama one is working in can take various forms. Often

it expresses itself in the form of parody, which may or may not arise out of a serious care for the possibilities of the genre to which the parodied (and, in a real sense, the parodying) work belongs. Concern can also be completely serious without involving any element of either parody or satire. And of course concern about the possibilities of a new kind of play can degenerate into faddism. Eastward Ho and Northward Ho represent a mid-way point between the second and third kinds of concern.

Criticism of the kind involved in a study of this nature is least secure when it is dealing with parody. It is only too easy to excuse a really bad play by calling it a parody when it is in all probability simply an imitation, a failed attempt to capitalize on the success of another play that, like Tamburlaine, amounts to something really new in drama. Examples of the sort of play I have in mind are Alphonsus, King of Aragon (c. 1587) and Selimus (c. 1592), the first by Greene, the second anonymous but possibly also by Greene. Each is, on the face of it, a bad play. Each is, apparently, an imitation of the Tamburlaine model. It is probable that Alphonsus and Selimus were failures on the stage; both promise second parts that never materialized. It is difficult to date Greene's plays with anything approaching

certainty but it is likely that Alphonsus was his first attempt in drama. The most reasonable explanation for the badness of Alphonsus, then, is lack of experience on Greene's part, even though, as Kenneth Muir has pointed out,[11] it contains lines that are so bad as to appear to burlesque their own pretension. Attempting to emulate (and capitalize on the popularity of) Marlowe's two-part play, Greene fails badly enough to abandon the project after it is only half completed. Yet precisely because its lines often strike the reader as so absurd in their attempt to rival Marlowe's, they can be read--if one ignores all circumstantial evidence to the contrary--as burlesque. This is the line that Grosart, in defending the author he used fifteen volumes to edit, felt inclined to take, but it is hardly a responsible one.[12] The other play, Selimus, is only doubtfully attributable to Greene. Again with this play, the temptation to excuse bad drama by calling it satire or parody ought to be resisted. Perhaps the most profitable approach to these two plays is Irving Ribner's (although he too easily accepts Selimus as

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[11]"Robert Greene as Dramatist," in Richard Hosley, ed., Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig (Columbia, Mo., 1962), pp. 46-47.

[12]Alexander B. Grosart, Introduction to The Life and Complete Works . . . of Robert Greene (London, 1881-1886), I, xxvii-xxviii.

Greene's). As he sees it, "Alphonsus and Selimus are not only imitations of Tamburlaine; in terms of doctrine, they are also answers to Tamburlaine. That they are both bad plays, full of ridiculous bombast, has tended to obscure the fact that both contain some serious ideas."[13] Each play is "a deliberate answer to Marlowe's humanistic philosophy of history" in its affirmation of "the will of the gods as the ruling force in human affairs."[14] That is, these plays represent a serious concern for the original qualities of Tamburlaine in that they emulate it; while at the same time they show a serious concern on the part of their author (or authors) to offer a view of the individual's role in historical change totally opposed to the unorthodox one of Marlowe.[15]

A play like The Knight of the Burning Pestle (c. 1607)

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[13]"Greene's Attack on Marlowe: Some Light on Alphonsus and Selimus," SP, LII (1955), 165.

[14]"Greene's Attack on Marlowe," p. 166.

[15]In the case of Orlando Furioso (c. 1591), on the other hand, it would appear much more likely that Greene is burlesquing not only Marlovian rhetoric but bombastic tragedies of blood generally. See Charles M. Gayley, "Robert Greene: His Life and the Order of his Plays," in Gayley, gen. ed., Representative English Comedies (New York, 1903), I, 410; Thomas H. Dickinson, Introduction to the Mermaid edn. of Robert Greene (London, n. d.), p. xxxvi; Alan Brissenden, "The Originality of Robert Greene," unpublished University of Sydney dissertation (1953), pp. 105-107.

demonstrates its author's anxiety about the state of recent and contemporary theatre more clearly than do Greene's plays. But Beaumont is not working, as Greene is if one accepts Ribner's argument, within a tradition he is attempting to change in some vital way. Beaumont's play is not in itself a burlesque, although a large amount of its action consists of burlesque. He is concerned with a kind of theatre of which his play is not itself a part. Plays like this, while seeming at first sight to offer much, in fact afford little that is relevant to, or would even support one's embarking on, the kind of inquiry into revenge tragedy that this thesis represents. The literature of the War of the Theatres, too, seems at first sight more promising than in fact it is. Were the satire of its main protagonists, Jonson, Marston, and Dekker, to prove to be as involved with artistic questions as it is with personalities and, one suspects, with its own success, a study of the plays could not greatly encourage this sort of inquiry. Though he is, more than any of his contemporaries, concerned about the role dramatic art ought to play in society, even Jonson is never really central to a discussion of genres in change.

Somewhat analogous, for present purposes, to Alphonsus and Selimus is Chapman's Blind Beggar of Alexandria

(1596). This is, superficially at least, unlike Chapman and seems considerably influenced by Marlowe. Some recent criticism has tended to see it as a burlesque, and justifiably. One might quarrel with Ennis Rees's attempt to fit the play into what he sees as Chapman's consistent Christian outlook and at the same time accept his view of it as primarily a burlesque, a parody rather than an imitation of Marlowe.[16] Rees has received qualified support from Samuel Schoenbaum, who claims (though he does not demonstrate) that "Chapman's parody of Marlowe in the play is more extensive and complex than Rees indicates."[17] If one accepts that the play is what Rees and Schoenbaum claim it is, it can be placed alongside the other two and the plays cited by Leech as additional evidence in support of the claim that Renaissance dramatists "were perhaps as much concerned with the idea of a particular kind of play" as with the demands of their theatres and their actors.

Concern of the wholly serious kind expresses itself in a rather uninteresting way in Sir John Oldcastle (1599). The play was obviously written purely in response to

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[16]Ennis Rees, "Chapman's Blind Beggar and the Marlovian Hero," JEGP, LVII (1958), 60-63.

[17]"The Widow's Tears and the Other Chapman," HLQ, XXIII (1960), 322.

Shakespeare's presentation of Falstaff in I and II Henry IV (c. 1597) and amounts to a counterview, a "true and honorable historie," of Oldcastle:

> It is no pamperd glutton we present,
> Nor aged Councellor to youthfull sinne,
> But one, whose vertue shone aboue the rest,
> A valiant Martyr, and a vertuous peere,
> In whose true faith and loyaltie exprest
> Vnto his soueraigne, and his countries weale:
> We striue to pay that tribute of our Loue,
> Your fauours merite, let faire Truth be grac'te,
> Since forg'de inuention former time defac'te.[18]

It is an uninteresting example of the sort of dramaturgy we are involved with because although it is a history play that would almost certainly not have been written but for Shakespeare's Falstaff, although it is clearly the product of the influence of one dramatist upon others, it leaves its conscious concern for Shakespeare behind in the Prologue.

Much more interesting, although further away from the period this thesis will be concerned with, is the work of Brome. It is in the studied continuation and adaptation of the Jonsonian tradition and ideal which Brome's work represents that we find one of the clearest examples of the influence one writer can have upon another. The best account of the relationship of Brome to Jonson is contained in

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[18] The First Part of . . . Sir John Old-castle (1600), sig. A2^{r}.

R. J. Kaufmann's recent study.[19] As he points out, the nature of Brome's indebtedness to his master had to be affected by the poor reception given to Jonson's last plays. The reasons for Jonson's failure are not to be sought where Dryden sought them, in the poet's "dotage." Incipient feebleness of mind has nothing to do with the question, for the plays reveal an intellect whose vigour has diminished little over the years. The reason why The Staple of News (1626), The New Inn (1629), and The Magnetic Lady (1632) were failures on the stage lies in the changed nature of the audience. The validity of Kaufmann's assertion that "serious satire can be successful only when the satirist shares certain moral assumptions with an influential percentage of his audience"[20] should be self-evident. Not realizing or unwilling to admit to himself that the old moral standards he was upholding were no longer credible to an increasingly large section of his audience, Jonson inevitably came to be seen not so much as a conservative as a reactionary. In the circumstances he made what Kaufmann calls "the rational idealist's mistake." Finding that his audience was failing to appreciate his humour, he felt

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[19] Richard Brome, Caroline Playwright (New York, 1961).

[20] Richard Brome, p. 44.

forced, Kaufmann argues, to "make his point more and more obvious and explicit, on the assumption that he was not being understood on a literal level."[21] Brome's admiration for Jonson ought to have been tempered with criticism, and that it was is demonstrated in his plays. Where Jonson lectures the theatre-goers, Brome takes them unawares. Kaufmann makes the point succinctly enough to warrant quoting him at some length: "By making his primary object the creation of laughter, Brome could then bargain for a certain amount of attention to more serious matters. He adopted numerous versions of the oblique (as opposed to the directly didactic) technique. This was a shrewd choice, for if Jonson, with his immense intellectual powers and his accumulated prestige, could not successfully adapt direct persuasive rhetoric to the theatrical medium, what chance did Brome have? Brome had to rely on cunning, good nature, and surprise."[22]

The most familiar example of Brome's technique is The Antipodes (1638). Its therapeutic effect on its audience is inseparable from Hughball's cure for Peregrine. Like Brome's, Hughball's is a

medicine of the minde, which he infuses

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[21] Richard Brome, p. 45.

[22] Richard Brome, p. 46.

> So skilfully, yet by familiar wayes,
> That it begets both wonder and delight
> In his observers, while the stupid patient
> Finds health at unawares.[23]

Thus it is not only Peregrine's foolish indulgence in his fantasies but the attitudes and minor madnesses of the audiences--Brome's as well as the one on stage--that are defeated through the experience of the play-within-the-play. Brome's values are very close to Jonson's, but the techniques he uses to influence his audience are vastly more subtle than those Jonson used in his last plays. Less obviously insistent on the values his drama supports, his didacticism can be effective with a Caroline audience intent above all on entertaining diversion where Jonson's falls on deaf ears. Brome is always aware of the need to effect a reconciliation between the expectations his audience brings to the theatre and the cathartic effect he wants his play to have. The reconciliation is always established, regardless of the target of his satire, which ranges from Puritanism and extremism generally through usurers and promoters to other (more recent) symptoms of a changing society, the Cavalier values and the affectation and fads that often accompanied them.[24] Taking over fairly intact the Jonsonian ideals and

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[23] The Antipodes (1640), sig. B1^{v}.

[24] Although (oddly enough) he contributed to a short-lived fad himself--Place-Realism, discussed briefly below.

the Jonsonian conception of what good theatre should endeavour to be, Brome adapts his material to a rapidly changing society and extends one of the oldest, most serious and worthwhile kinds of comedy almost to the end of the age, when he writes A Jovial Crew (1641) and decides for disengagement (spiritual if not physical) from a community intent on going its own way to disintegration and catastrophe.

The wholly serious concern for the possibilities of a certain kind of play that Brome's work demonstrates so well can degenerate into faddism, something much less important but nevertheless interesting and relevant to any extended examination of the relationship of individual authors to a new sub-genre they work in and modify. Faddism, of course, involves a concern for the possibilities of a new kind of play, but it tends to be primarily a concern to cash in on, rather than to explore the artistic values and potential of, a fresh idea. It must certainly have been partially responsible for Eastward Ho and Northward Ho, although there--and particularly in Eastward Ho--a more serious commitment is involved as well. Again it is the Caroline period which furnishes one of the best examples of this sort of dramatic writing. This is Place-Realism, a vogue which

began with Marmion's Holland's Leaguer in 1631 and extended through Shirley's Hyde Park (1632), Brome's The Covent Garden Weeded (1632), Nabbes's Covent Garden (1633) and Tottenham Court (c. 1634), and Brome's The Sparagus Garden (1635). Theodore Miles, who was the first to take any notice of these plays as constituting a group, describes their distinctiveness as consisting in "the insertion of a photographic realism which seems to have been introduced for its intrinsic appeal, rather than for its effectiveness as setting."[25] Importantly, the place-realism tends to be confined to no more than two areas in the play and is not essential to--in fact it often interrupts--the development of the plot. Apart from Miles's essay, little has been written on this group of plays and one might expect it to provide a fruitful area for research into the developmental processes of sub-genres.

These are some of the more promising areas for a full-scale inquiry into the question. My purpose in discussing them briefly here, however, has not been to offer alternative fields of study to the one I have chosen so much

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[25]"Place-Realism in a Group of Caroline Plays," RES, XVIII (1942), 430-431.

as to demonstrate that the general hypothesis upon which this thesis will rest seems a valid one, that the sort of questions it prompts with regard to Kydian revenge tragedy are likely to find rewarding answers. What follows after the necessary background of Part I is the result of the application of Leech's hypothesis--a general hypothesis--to half a dozen revenge tragedies. In addition to furnishing an intensive test for the hypothesis, the thesis can hopefully go some way towards providing an answer to the vexed question of the spectrum of response open to an Elizabethan audience watching a dramatic representation of revenge. In that it subjects a number of plays to close analysis within a generic frame of reference, it can hope to offer new critical insights into those plays and into the tradition of which each forms a part. Lust's Dominion and Hoffman have received comparatively little attention from critics although they are important in relation to the development of revenge tragedy through the first decade of the seventeenth century. This thesis offers the first extended and analytical examination of each. In its moral tone Antonio's Revenge has presented critics with apparently insoluble problems that, as I shall try to show, can only be overcome when the relation of Marston to the Kydian morality of revenge is understood. The Revenger's Tragedy, The

Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois, and The Atheist's Tragedy, each of which has received a good deal of critical attention, should yield fresh opportunities for their understanding when examined not simply as individual works but as developments of possibilities latent in the genre, both bound by and breaking away from the plays they look back to for their inspiration.

PART I

JUSTIFIED REVENGE AND NOBLE REVENGERS

CHAPTER I

ELIZABETHAN ATTITUDES AND ELIZABETHAN NARRATIVES

Forty years ago an article appeared that was to prove seminal in the study of revenge tragedy. "Drama," Lily B. Campbell claimed,

> can never be explained solely by its relation to its dramatic forbears, for the fostering environment of local and contemporary ideas has always to be reckoned as a determining influence also. Yet modern critics have tended to explain the revenge play of the English Renaissance almost exclusively in terms of its relation to Senecan tragedy. The vital interest which the thinkers of the period took in the subject of revenge has been left unconsidered for the most part, and the general philosophy of revenge has been unexplored.[1]

As Campbell pointed out, J. Q. Adams had felt perfectly secure in stating that "to the audience of the Elizabethan age, Hamlet was called upon to perform a 'dread' (=sacred) duty."[2] Campbell examined, at length for the first time, the official attitudes to revenge as they were expressed by church and state, as well as their reflections in popular literature,

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[1]"Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England," MP, XXVIII (1931), 281.

[2]Adams, ed., Hamlet (New York, 1929), p. 211, quoted by Campbell, p. 281.

and provided a new perspective on the plays. She found a unanimous condemnation of extra-legal retributive justice and argued that if we are to respond to the plays as a contemporary audience would have responded then this condemnation ought to be kept in mind.

Following Campbell's lead, Fredson Bowers extensively researched Elizabethan feeling on the subject and arrived at a conclusion substantially similar to hers.[3] He discovered, however, a popular tradition that seemed to support or at least sympathize with private retribution in certain circumstances, its spokesmen including, at various removes from orthodoxy, Sir William Segar, Vincentio Saviolo, John Norden, William Cornwallis the Younger, William Perkins, and Count Annibale Romei. Although Eleanor Prosser has implied misreading of some of these on Bowers' part,[4] it will be seen that several are at the least equivocal on the subject of revenge and lend considerable support to Bowers when he concludes that "there was a very real tradition existing in favor of revenge under certain circumstances" and that "Many thoughtful men refused

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[3]See his Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 3-40.

[4]With the possible exception of Cornwallis and Segar, Prosser finds a unanimous condemnation of private revenge in contemporary writings on the subject. See her Hamlet and Revenge (Stanford, 1967), pp. 3-35.

to condemn revenge entered upon in cases where recourse to the law was impossible."[5]

Helen Gardner adopts a similar point of view and in effect proceeds to deny the value of Campbell's essay. She dismisses "the question which some writers seem to feel bound to raise before they approach a play built on the theme of revenge. What did the Elizabethans think of the ethics of private revenge?" For her, "Questions which lead us to platitudes and foregone conclusions are not worth asking."[6] The statement is perhaps rash considering the more balanced conclusion Bowers reached as a result of posing essentially the same questions as Campbell. It is nevertheless a point worth making. Cleaver, Hall, Thomas Beard, James I, preachers, moralists, and magistrates generally, can be expected to condemn revenge. It would be strange if they did not. Gardner's reference to the vindictive "temper of mind which lay behind the Bond of Association of 1584"[7] is important: the rational approach to the question of revenge, which usually means the official approach, is what appears in print, rarely the confused emotional attitudes. Cornwallis, whose essay on

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[5] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 40.

[6] The Business of Criticism (Oxford, 1959), p. 36.

[7] Ibid. The Bond was formed by prominent individuals who bound themselves to hunt down and execute any pretended successor in the event of Elizabeth's being murdered.

revenge illustrates the conflict between his vindictive instincts and reason, is a notable exception.[8] Emotional attitudes, though, are as important as the rational when research into what Elizabethans thought of revenge is directed towards discovering how they responded to revenge tragedies. Even Eleanor Prosser, who places considerable store in what the moralists were saying, accepts this. She draws a distinction, though, between moral approval and sympathy: an audience could sympathize with a revenger like Hieronimo, but it could never approve of his actions.[9] The object of this chapter is to show that it could.

That the official attitude is one of total opposition to revenge is granted. Whether any of those other writers Bowers cites go so far as to condone fully private retribution for base injury is a matter for argument. Bowers recognizes this himself. Furthest to the left is Sir William Segar. In the printer's Epistle Dedicatory to The Booke of Honor and Armes (1590) is found the claim that the virtuous will "foresee that no violence be offered, but onlie by him that with iniurie is thereunto prouoked: and that things common should bee commonlie vsed, and priuate things priuatlie enioyed. By which

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[8] William Cornwallis, Essayes (1632; first publ. 1600-1601), sigs. C2^{v}-C3^{v}.

[9] Hamlet and Revenge, pp. 33-34.

rule appeareth, that vertue alloweth iust reuenge, and admitteth the defence of propertie and right" (sig. A1^{v}). Segar is not as confused as Prosser suggests he is.[10] She rightly claims that he admits the Christian injunction against revenge in the same breath as he dismisses it, but in Segar's odd logic this is no self-contradiction. In his preface "To the Reader" he argues that

> True it is, that the Christian lawe willeth men to be of so perfect patience, as not onlie to indure iniurious words, but also quietlie to suffer euerie force and violence. Not withstanding, forsomuch as none (or verie fewe men) haue attained such perfection, the lawes of all Nations, for auoyding further inconueniences, and the manifestation of truth, haue (among many other trials) permitted, that such questions as could not bee ciuilie prooued by confession, witnesse, or other circumstances, should receiue iudgement by fight and Combat, supposing that GOD (who onelie knoweth the secret thoughts of all men) would giue victorie to him that iustlie aduentured his life, for truth, Honor, and Iustice. (sigs. A2^{r}-A2^{v})

He escapes contradicting himself by heretically implying that "the Christian lawe" may be set aside as simply an ideal "forsomuch as none (or verie fewe men) haue attained such perfection." For him "the Christian lawe" is not an absolute law, and by putting it aside occasionally one does not necessarily forfeit the title of Christian. This allows him to claim, however unreasonably, that his book "sheweth the order of reuenge and repulse, according vnto Christian knowledge [not law] and due respect of Honor" (sig. A3^{r}).

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[10] Hamlet and Revenge, p. 15.

Segar is of the belief that for "cowardlie and beastiall offences, it is allowable to vse any aduantage or subtiltie, according to the Italian prouerbe . . . which is, that one aduantage requireth another, and one treason may be with another acquited" (sig. D2^{v}). Significant in regard to Hieronimo and Hamlet is Segar's account of the nature of advantageous injury:

> Either the Iniurie with aduantage is offered in presence of other men that can beare witnesse thereof, or els it is offered out of presence of others.
>
> In the first case, the testimonie of witnesses will make the fact punishable by lawe and ciuill triall, which is the true reuenge, for (as hath been oft said) the triall of Armes is not allowed, but in such cases as the ciuill prooues cannot appeare.
>
> If the Iniurie bee offered where no man can witnesse the manner thereof, then resteth it in the choyce of the Iniured, either to bee reuenged by challenge, which is the more honorable, or with the like aduantage.
>
> (sigs. F3^{v}-F4^{r})

Saviolo, the resident Italian fencing master whose London school was held in high regard by those interested in the art, is slightly more orthodox. In his Vincentio Sauiolo his Practise (1595) he argues that "if the iniurie be such, that either murder be committed by trecherie, or rape, or such like villanies, then is it necessarye to proceede in reuenging it, as in due place I will more largely declare" (sig. P1^{v}). Later, though, it becomes clear that Saviolo has nothing like Tourneur's Vindice in mind. In a just revenge

vindictiveness has no place--a paradox, but probably Saviolo is taking care to remain morally acceptable: "the partie that will combate, knowing how greatly his diuine maiestie is offended with this sinne, ought not to vndertake the combate, because he would kill him, but because hee might be as it were, the minister to execute Gods deuine pleasure, and most holy commaundement" (sig. $Z1^{v}$).

The statement is interesting in the light of the occasional Elizabethan distinction between a "minister" and a "scourge." Both are agents of God's retribution, but the scourge acts wantonly without any desire to be, and usually without any realization that he is, an agent. The minister, unlike the scourge, is not morally tainted by executing God's vengeance.[11] As will be shown later, the biblical phrase "Vindicta mihi!" presents no real obstacle to Hieronimo because he feels he has been chosen as God's minister of retribution. Such revengers as the hero of Pickering's Horestes (1567), Shakespeare's Hamlet (c. 1601), and Altophil

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[11]For the first considered account of the distinction, and a discussion of how it affects Hamlet, see Fredson Bowers, "Hamlet as Minister and Scourge," PMLA, LXX (1955), 740-749. The concluding lines of Beaumont and Fletcher's The Maides Tragedy--citing the 1619 first edn.--imply that the "instrument" of God is necessarily "curst" (sig. $L4^{r}$), at least where regicide is concerned. They ought to serve as a reminder that not all Elizabethans drew the distinction. Note too that some of the sanctioned revengers referred to later in this chapter are presented as divine agents and private revengers at the same time, a circumstance the possibility of which Bowers does not entertain.

in Davenant's The Unfortunate Lovers (1638)--characters who remain heroic to the end--see themselves at some stage as ministers of divine justice, as both private and public revengers.[12] Charalois in Field and Massinger's The Fatal Dowry (c. 1619) feels guilty at the point of death because he did not have heaven's warrant for taking his own revenge.[13] Chettle's Hoffman (1602) assumes he has it throughout, an irony essential to the play's purpose. Of course the distinction between the two sorts of divine agent could never have a legal basis, but in the theatre it sometimes proved useful in preserving the revenger's heroic image.

John Norden, in The Mirror of Honor (1597), claims that it is more noble to forgive than to revenge injuries (sig. E2^{r}). Honourable revenge, however, is noble compared with envious attack, for "Reuenge . . . is a desire to requite an euill receiued, by returning an euill againe, which hath some colour to worke iniurie, for iniurie," whereas envy

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[12]See John Pickering, A Newe Enterlude of Vice Conteyninge, the Historye of Horestes (1567), sig. E1^{r}; Hamlet, ll. 3500-3574, and esp. ll. 3509-3510, 3551, 3571-3574, in the Norton facsimile of The First Folio of Shakespeare, ed. Charlton Hinman (New York, 1968); William Davenant, The Vnfortunate Louers (1643), sigs. F4^{v}-G1^{r}.

[13]Nathaniel Field and Philip Massinger, The Fatall Dowry (1632), sig. L4^{v}.

"seeketh to iniure such as iniure not" (sig. E1v). Norden's "reuenge, as it is truly reuenge" is at least a lex talionis, and as such he does not go so far as to condemn it.

Prosser justifiably points out that John Keper's translation of Count Annibale Romei, The Courtiers Academie ([1598]), is quoted out of context by Bowers, and that Romei's spokesman Gualinguo condones only instant retaliation for injury.[14] It is also true that Bowers is misleading on William Perkins' The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience (1635; first published 1606). Perkins states that a man may forcibly defend himself "when violence is offered, and the Magistrate absent," but retaliation must be immediate, "For if there be a delay, and it come afterward, it loseth the name of a just defence, and becomes a revenge, arising of prepensed malice, as the Lawyers use to speake" (sig. T3r).

Prosser, though, does not mention Norden's Mirror of Honor, and evades the implications of Segar's book by referring to him as a propagandist "endeavoring to change opinion."[15] And although she admits there is a probable

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[14] Hamlet and Revenge, p. 19. Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 38, cites sig. O4r, which ought to be read in conjunction with both sig. T4v and sig. V1v.

[15] Hamlet and Revenge, p. 14.

justification of private revenge for murder in Cornwallis, she can hardly call it "unique" when she has already quoted Segar.

William Cornwallis the Younger's essay "Of Patience" in the Essayes (1632; first published 1600-1601) shows him struggling within himself over the respective demands of honour and virtue. Honour demands retaliation against injury, virtue requires forbearance. His natural inclination is to revenge injuries. Common opinion supports him and makes a coward of patience. Yet "in the behalfe of Truth, & mercy, I will combat against a receiued tradition. I thinke nothing but murther should be punished . . . for any thing lesse offensiue, a coole reproofe, no chollericke reuenge" (sig. C3^{v}). Neither Bowers nor Prosser comments on the significant "receiued tradition" that Cornwallis is so aware of and that Bacon suggested he understood when he implied that "Mans Nature runs to" revenge.[16]

Apart from those cited above, Elizabethan authors who discuss revenge generally reiterate the position of church and state on the matter.[17] But, as Helen Gardner implies, this is

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[16]"Of Reuenge," Essayes (1625), sig. D2^{r}.

[17]Some who might be expected to consider it are silent on the moral question, e.g. Matthew Sutcliffe, The Practice, Proceedings and Lawes of Armes (1593); George Silver, Paradoxes of Defence (1599); John Selden, The Duello or Single Combat (1610).

only to be expected. It does not indicate that the average Elizabethan could never approve of private revenge for murder, let alone suggest that approval was impossible in the world of the theatre.

It is only logical to search for other material that might better indicate whether audiences could (within the confines of the dramatic experience) approve of private revenge as a justifiable response to grave injury. Since the point at issue is their reaction to dramatic literature treating revenge (and by implication whether a dramatist could in the first place write a play that portrayed a justified revenger), it would seem quite reasonable to examine the narrative literature in order to discover whether Elizabethans were reading tales of justified revenge and of noble, "good" revengers. If it can be established that they were, then it can be deduced that they were psychologically prepared to accept and condone such a revenger in the medium of drama.[18] Research of this kind into narrative literature is at least as relevant to the question of the audience's response to a Hieronimo as inquiries into the publicly stated positions of Elizabethans on revenge, yet it has been unaccountably

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[18]Drama and prose fiction are obviously linked by their story content. Narrative poetry, which saturates a good deal of the prose fiction, is of course equally relevant.

neglected.[19]

Of the tales dealt with in the following pages, some are translations and some are original, and many are based on European history. It is therefore important to recognize at the outset that private revenge was officially condemned in Italy, France, and Germany as it was in England, although revenges were probably more common in Italy where a blind eye was apparently turned to revenge for adultery and for other serious offences.[20] It might be objected that the reading public would look upon the revengers it was reading of in translation as Continental villains irrespective of whether or not they escaped punishment. Ignoring the probability

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[19]Bowers devotes several pages to prose fiction in order to show that the material for revenge tragedy was at hand and that Elizabethans were reading tales of villainous revengers. He does not consider whether any of the prose fiction dealt with justified private revenge. See Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 57-61. Ernst B. De Chickera--"Palaces of Pleasure: The Theme of Revenge in Elizabethan Translations of the Novelle," RES, N.S. XI (1960), 1-7--draws general conclusions from a detailed examination of one author, Painter. He finds a discrimination between corrective punishment and disproportionate revenge, the first sometimes justified but never the second.

[20]This is difficult to verify in any absolute sense. See Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 50-51, where the claim is fairly convincingly supported.

that these stories were read simply as tales with little regard to their being translated or original, this view is open to serious doubt. Both English and Continental authors usually make clear or suggest their own view of the actions they relate. They tend to direct their readers, overtly or indirectly, towards their own moral position.

It must be admitted that most of the revengers in the narrative literature are villains. The revengers in John Reynolds' The Triumphes of Gods Reuenge, against the Crying and Execrable Sinne of Murther (1629; first published 1621-1624), for example, are exclusively villainous. An author, however, may well have a moral axe to grind, and Reynolds, frequently cited as a source used by dramatists, is a case in point. He is an avowed opponent of private revenge and he bases his arguments (Preface, sigs. $A4^{r}$-$C1^{v}$) on the Bible. Ironically, he would certainly not have approved of any of his stories being adapted for the stage, since he stands Puritanically against a world that assails men with, among other evils, "Dancing, Maskes and Stage-playes" (sig. $A4^{r}$). His purpose in writing the book is to show God's punishment on, inter alia, revengers, for despite the fact that the Bible does this, men need "new examples" (sig. $B3^{v}$). Thomas Beard's The Theatre of Gods Iudgements (1597) is

similarly motivated. My concern here is to show that there is a large number of revengers in Elizabethan narrative literature who are clearly not meant to be seen as villains, and that many are presented as heroic and praiseworthy.

As in the drama, a large percentage of the revenges are for murder. Three versions of the familiar story of Camma's revenge on Sinoris illustrate the author's freedom to impose his own view of the particular revenge he is writing about. In Thomas North's translation of Antonio de Guevara, The Diall of Princes (1557), the poisoner-revenger is presented as a heroine, "this faire and vertuous Camma" (sig. S2^{r}). Yet in A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure (c. 1578; first published 1576) George Pettie leaves it to the reader to decide whether Camma or Sinoris deserves the greater blame: on the one hand "He had the law of loue on his side, she had the law of men and of mariage on her part"; on the other, "she with reason might haue preuented great mischiefe, his winges were to muche limed with lust, to flee forth of his folly" (sig. D2^{r}). Both are thus partially exonerated. Humphrey Gifford--A Posie of Gilloflowers (1580)--does not commit himself to a position, but Camma is allowed to refer to her action as a "iust reuenge" (sig. Q2^{r}). The reader's reaction to the revenge is in each case influenced by what the

author does or does not say.

Perhaps the best example of the way an author can ensure that his readers will take the side he intends them to take is the third history in Henry Wotton's A Courtlie Controuersie of Cupids Cautels (1578). Prince Adilon, jealous for the love of Clarinda, poisons an apple and gives it to his friend and unsuspecting rival Alegre. Unexpectedly, however, Alegre passes it on to Clarinda. As soon as he realizes Adilon's treachery he kills him, thrusting

> the poynt of his sworde so farre vnder his lefte shoulder, that the heart, (I say, the heart whiche was so wicked and dissembling) beeing pearced through, yeelded the Carkase vnto death. Then all furious and madde, our Frencheman bestirred his blade here and there, sleaing and wounding the nearest vnto him, in parting the prease where it was moste thickest. Which was the cause that these miserable soules seing their maister deade, beganne to runne away without any resistaunce, so as this fencer remayned alone, who taking breath, receyued also some of his good senses, seeing himselfe halfe satisfyed of the wretche that had purchased him so great domage. Wherevpon crossing his weery armes, turning his face towards the dead body, he began to say: Oh carkasse wherein lodged a soule so vnfaithfull and deceyuable, as I hate the ayre which thou now receyuest, beeing deliuered and freed from the trauels of this life, sithence I am tormented with a thousande deathes by thy occasion, and for that euen after thy death thou makest me languishe, but I will deliuer immediately a wished ende therevnto. (sig. P1r)

Alegre dies heartbroken beside Clarinda. There is no question of his vengeance being anything but justified.

One might expect Sidney and Spenser to reflect the

official position of church and state on revenge for murder, if only because of their pre-eminence. Yet even they occasionally seem to condone it. In Book III, Chapter xxii of The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia (1590) Pyrocles, in the guise of Zelmane, vows revenge for the death of his lover Philoclea. It turns out later that Philoclea is still alive, but the reader cannot help seconding Pyrocles' vindictive determination in its context (sigs. $Vv7^{v}$-$Vv8^{v}$). The fifth book of The Faerie Queene (1596)--concerned, through the legend of Artegall, with justice--contains a canto, the second, that is given over in its first half to the action Artegall takes against a Saracen and his daughter who hold a bridge used by travellers. They practise extortion and murder on those wishing to cross, and when Artegall slays the infidel, Spenser refers to the killing as "vengeance" (sig. $N5^{r}$). The daughter is killed by Artegall's assistant, aptly named Talus, despite some feeling of pity the hero feels for her:

> Yet for no pitty would he change the course
> Of Iustice, which in Talus hand did lye;
> Who rudely hayld her forth without remorse,
> Still holding vp her suppliant hands on hye,
> And kneeling at his feete submissiuely.
> But he her suppliant hands, those hands of gold,
> And eke her feete, those feete of siluer trye,
> Which sought vnrighteousnesse, and iustice sold,
> Chopt off, and nayld on high, that all might them behold.
> (sig. $N6^{r}$)

Talus then throws her in the river where she drowns. Artegall's

justice here is talionic, in line with the Mosaic Law. He is hardly a vindictive character, of course, but neither is his "moral virtue" particularly Christian.

It would be absurd to suggest that these authors always support the individual's right as an interested party to avenge murder. In both Sidney and Spenser, for example, a vindictive person is usually villainous. Occasionally, too, one cannot be certain of the author's own attitude, despite what he says. Thus Thomas Nashe--The Vnfortunate Traueller (1594)--is probably being cynical when, after describing the brutal execution of the Jew Zadoch, organized by a vindictive Juliana, he bursts out with "Triumph women, this was the end of the whipping Iew, contriued by a woman, in reuenge of two women, her selfe and her maid" (sig. N3^{r}). In any case, Juliana is no more heroic than Cutwolfe, whose idea of vengeance is discredited by its very expression (sig. O3^{v}).

A number of tales treat revenge upon a sovereign sympathetically and have incidental relevance to plays like Horestes, Locrine (c. 1591), Titus Andronicus (1594), and Hamlet. Probably the most noteworthy are the second and eighth histories in George Turbervile's Tragicall Tales (1587). The second concerns the revenge taken upon the tyrant and bloodthirsty slayer of innocents, Nicocrates, by his wife

Aretafila. Her first husband has been murdered by Nicocrates and, conscious of the despair the tyrant has brought the country to, she resolves to "venge her louing husbands death" and set the nation free (sig. E6^{r}). Oddly enough, emotions one supposes most Elizabethans would have frowned upon are excused in her. Her first attempt foiled, she keeps

> within her wrathfull minde,
> Remembrance of reuenge, till she
> fit time and place might finde. (sig. F1^{r})

She finally arranges the death of the king, but her agent Leander, the new ruler and the dead king's brother, proves equally tyrannous. Accordingly Aretafila decides that he too must be destroyed. With the help of a foreign army he becomes her victim. He is drowned as a

> beast
> that wel deserude to die (sig. F7^{r})

while the mother of the first tyrant is burned to death. Aretafila might seem nothing more than a scourge visited by God upon the wicked, but this is not how Turbervile chooses to present her. Thanked by the people and offered the crown, she refuses it and enters a nunnery:

> And as shee liude in vertue earst,
> so dide shee very well. (sig. F8^{r})

As with Antonio, Pandulpho, and Maria at the end of Marston's Antonio's Revenge--and unlike the Queen Mother in the final scene of Lust's Dominion--her entering a religious order does

not signify a penitent revenger. At the end of each tale Turbervile adds what he calls "The Lenvoy," which has the function of summarizing and moralizing at once. The moral at the end of this tale is quite simple:

> A lawlesse peere by law deserues to die,
> True iustice payes the blooddie home their hyre,
> And blood mispilt for vengeance aye doth crie,
> Lex talionis doth the lyke requyre:
> As in this tale that here my Muse hath told,
> Of brothers two, each man may well behold. (sig. F8v)

Turbervile's eighth history has an important bearing upon The Spanish Tragedy and Hamlet. Most critics have assumed that the Biblical phrase "Vindicta mihi, ego retribuam" (Romans, 12.19), which Hieronimo apparently refers to, amounted for the Elizabethans to a final condemnation of the private revenger. As has been remarked above, Elizabethans occasionally distinguished between the minister of God and the scourge. Turbervile's story illustrates the distinction at the same time as it weakens Prosser's argument that "So long as Hamlet loathes Claudius, so long as he desires to kill, so long as he consciously intends still further 'knavery,' it is doubtful that Shakespeare's audience could consider him the minister of divine justice."[21]

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[21] Hamlet and Revenge, pp. 200-201. Prosser is attempting to counter the argument behind Bowers' "Hamlet as Minister and Scourge."

The tale concerns the classical history of Aristotimus the tyrant, who rewarded evil men

> Till Gods at last detesting murthers done
> Incenst the hearts of sundrie noble wights,
> For due reuenge. (sig. N6r)

(The "Gods" are pagan so it would be wrong to infer anything from this.) Ellanicus, an old nobleman whose sons the king has murdered, plans to

> take reuenge of blood, by blood,
> Of death, by murther done. (sig. O6r)

He delays, however, until he is visited in his sleep by a vision of his elder son, who reminds him of his duty:

> Why sleepe, & slugge you (father deare)
> Why doe you linger so?
> That you to morowe shall subdue
> Doe you as yet not know?
> And reaue this citie from the king
> Who now enioyes the same?
> Departe your pillow (father mine)
> And balke your bed for shame. (sig. P3r)

Aided by his friends, Ellanicus is successful. The queen takes her own life and the two princesses are allowed to do the same, having been saved from the hands of the mob. The story of Aristotimus was well known. Turbervile's tale is important because of "The Lenvoy," which has an unmistakably Christian frame of reference:

> For he that guydes the golden globe aloft,
> Bekoldes* from hie, and markes the deedes of man
> And hath reuenge for euery wicked thought,
> Though he forbeare through mercy now and than:

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*Sic.

> He suffereth long, but sharpely payes at last,
> If we correct not our misdoings past. (sig. Q1^{r})

Like almost everything in the tale that precedes them, these lines imply that the revenger has God's blessing, that Ellanicus' revenge is, in fact, God's revenge.

Others occasionally illustrate the possibility of a heroic revenge upon a king. In Book II, Chapter ix of The Arcadia Sidney describes the execution of the king of Pontus by Pyrocles and Musidorus in revenge for his beheading two of their friends. Pyrocles and Musidorus, it will be recalled, are Sidney's chief protagonists and never commit a criminal act. Robert Greene tells of a revenge that resembles Camma's, through Cosimo's tale in Greenes Farewell to Folly (1591). Semyramis' revenge on her husband, Ninus, is only technically judicial, since she has earlier persuaded him to make her sovereign for three days for no other purpose than to have him executed. This is of no concern to Greene, though, who not only presents her revenge as praiseworthy but as the first beneficial act in her nine years of good "politike gouernment" (sig. K1^{r}). Thomas Lodge is equally sympathetic to the successful revenge of Julian on his king for the rape of Julian's daughter, a story included in The Life and Death of William Long Beard . . . with many other most pleasant

and prettie histories (1593), sigs. H2v-H3r.

The Hystorie of Hamblet (1608), anonymously translated from Belleforest, deserves some notice.[22] After describing Hamlet's firing of the palace with its many "drunken bodies," and his cutting off of Fengon's head, Belleforest comments:

> This was a man, to say the truth, hardy, courageous, and worthy of eternal commendation, who arming himself with a crafty, dissembling and strange show of being distract out of his wits, under that pretence deceived the wise, politic, and crafty: thereby not only preserving his life from the treasons and wicked practices of the tyrant, but, which is more, by a new and unexpected kind of punishment revenged his father's death many years after the act committed. He directed his courses with such patience, and effected his purposes with so great boldness and constancy, that he left a judgment to be decided among men of wisdom which was more commendable in him, his constancy, or magnanimity, or his wisdom in ordering his affairs, according to the premeditable determination he had conceived. (p. 266)

The narrator goes on to say that "if vengeance ever seem to have any show of justice, it is then, when piety and affection constrain us to remember our fathers unjustly murdered, as the things whereby we are dispensed withal, and which seek the means not to leave treason and murder unpunished" (pp. 266-267). Indeed, "where the Prince or country is interested, the desire of revenge cannot by any means (how small soever)

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[22]The edition cited in the quotations is that of W. J. Thoms in his Early English Prose Romances (London, 1907).

bear the title of condemnation, but is rather commendable and worthy of praise" (p. 267). It should be remembered that Hamlet takes revenge on a usurping king.[23]

Regicide, or tyrannicide, was commonly seen as being in accord with the will of God. What Turbervile, Sidney, Greene, Lodge, and Belleforest serve to remind us of is that the human agent was not always considered damned, as he is at the end of Beaumont and Fletcher's The Maid's Tragedy.

Sometimes the source of a story can seriously limit an author's treatment of it. Pettie's handling of Procne and Philomela's revenge on Tereus for the atrocity he committed on the latter, for example, is restricted by the fact that in Ovid's Metamorphoses all three are turned into birds, signifying their shared moral guilt. Naturally, in the Petite Pallace all three are condemned. Personal revenge for atrocity, however, is an understandable human response. Sidney, for example, presents Argalus' revenge on Demagoras for his disfiguring Parthenia's face (Arcadia, sigs. $D7^{r}$-$D7^{v}$) as nobly heroic.

Adultery might seem a less compelling argument for

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[23] A weight of orthodox opinion viewed the overthrow of a usurper as binding on the subject. See John Silby, "The Duty of Revenge in Tudor and Stuart Drama," REL, VIII, No. 3 (1967), 46-54.

revenge, yet a considerable number of characters in the narrative literature turn revengers the moment they become cuckolds, several somehow remaining heroic through the process. Naturally, honour is frequently of prime concern. In Tome I, Novel xliii of William Painter's The Palace of Pleasure (Tome I, 1566; Tome II, 1567), which made the Continental novelle generally accessible for the first time, is related the revenge of a lord upon his wife and her lover. Apart from a reference to the revenge as an "immoderate cruell punishemente" (sig. Mm4^{v}), the moral issue is scarcely touched on. The story is supposed to provide an object lesson for wives, as well as for their husbands who, reading it, "shalbe lesse deceiued" where their wives are concerned (sig. Nn4^{r}). In Novel lvi the tone of the story more clearly supports the revenger. The husband slays his wife's lover and forces her to share a room with the corpse as well as to drink from its skull. Because she is truly penitent, after a long time he takes her again as his wife and they are blessed with many children (sig. Llll2^{r}). Novel lvii presents the revenger as genius, though Painter refrains from praising him. Concerned that no one should know him to be a cuckold--the motive behind Bellamente's refusal to take revenge upon his wife and her lover in Shirley's Love's Cruelty (1631), which makes some use of this story--a president of Grenoble allows his

wife's lover to dance with her publicly, then sends him away with the order that he never return. The description follows of how he "went to gather a sallade in his garden, of such herbes, that so sone as she had eaten of them, she liued not past xxiiii houres after, whereof he counterfayted such sorrow, as no man could suspect the occasion of her deathe. And by that meanes he was reuenged of his enemy, and saued the honor of his house" (sig. Llll4^{r}).

The fourth history in Turbervile's Tragicall Tales relates Rossilyon's revenge on his friend Guardastano, who has fallen in love with the former's wife. After ambushing Guardastano he cuts out his heart, gives it to his cook to prepare, and presents it to his wife. When she learns of the Thyestean meal she has enjoyed, she takes her own life. In "The Lenvoy" Guardastano and Rossilyon's wife receive harsh treatment. Turbervile says nothing about Rossilyon, but the moral implies that he had divine support:

> Great are the plagues to such disorders due,
> From skyes reuenge and fearefull scourge doth fall:
> The dome diuine although it suffer long.
> Yet strikes at last, and surely wreakes the wrong.
> (sig. I7^{r})

There is nothing to suggest that "scourge" carries an implication.

Also apparently supported are the revenges in the

section "Adulteries punnished" in Edward Grimeston's translation of Simon Goulart, Admirable and Memorable Histories (1607). Nothing is said against the revenge a nobleman takes by forcing his wife to kill her lover and share the same room with the body (sigs. C3^{v}-C4^{v}). Neither is judgment passed on a Milanese revenger who stabs his adulterous wife to death, leaving her "in that estate as hee should no more neede to feare any such lewde dealing" (sig. C6^{v}). He escapes unpunished. That both revengers are justified the author apparently assumes to be obvious. In only one instance is the revenger clearly saddened after his action, and even here it is not clear whether the revenge or the adultery causes him to spend "the rest of his dayes like a man confined" (sig. C6^{v}). The description of the extremely brutal revenge of an attorney on his wife and her lover (sig. C8^{v}) suggests that the author is prepared to support any sort of revenge on an adultress.

Even attempted adultery is sufficient grounds for vengeance in Goulart-Grimeston. One story details the reaction of a gentleman of Milan and his wife to their French guest's attempted seduction of her: "She prepares him a banket, seeming to yeeld to his intreties: insteed of dainty wine, she giues him a drinke, which casts him presently into a deadly sleepe; and the Milanois comes and cuts the throat of

this vngratefull guest" (sig. C8^{r}). The tone here makes it clear which side the author is on and which side the reader ought to be on. This kind of revenge--for family honour--is common enough. The tenth novel in the anonymously translated Queene of Nauarres Tales (1597), probably one of the sources for The Revenger's Tragedy, tells of a gentleman's revenge on his friend the duke for the latter's attempt to use him as a bawd to his own sister (sigs. F4^{v}-G2^{r}). He escapes to Turkey, more secure than ever in her affections.

Finally, two examples of justified revenge in the most tenuous causes should be mentioned. In Book III, Chapter xxviii of The Arcadia Pyrocles kills Lycurgus when he has him down in combat. At first he is inclined towards mercy, but noticing his enemy is wearing a jewel Pyrocles gave to Philoclea, and recalling how Lycurgus forcefully stole it from her, he takes it for "a Cyphar, signifying all the iniuries which Philoclea had of him suffred, & that remembrance feeding vpon wrath, trod down al conceits of mercy. And therfore saying no more, but, No villaine, dye: It is Philoclea that sends thee this token for thy loue. With that [he] made [his] sword drink the blood of his hart" (sig. Zz6^{r}). Even more precarious is the cause behind "A wonderous reuenge executed by Megallo Lercato of Genoua vpon the mightie Emperour

of Trabisonda" in Lodge's Life and Death of William Long Beard. Not able to obtain redress from the emperor for an insult, Megallo leaves for Genoa, acquires two galleys, and in revenge ravages the emperor's coast, attacks his ships, and kills his sailors. He finally strikes a bargain with the emperor, the gist of which is "that in memorie of those his actions, a pallace shuld be reared in Trabisond for the commodity of the Genowaies." In it Megallo's actions are represented and "eternized." He returns to Genoa where he is "receiued and gratified with great honors by the Cittizens" (sig. G1^{v}). After this heroic revenge anything seems possible.

The claim has been made, on the basis of examples in Painter subjected to scrutiny, that the message of revenge stories in the prose fiction may be summed up in two sentences: "So long as equity in revenge is observed, all is well. But that revenge which is out of all proportion to the offence, which disturbs the equity of punishment, must be shunned."[24] Lodge's Megallo, like several other revengers discussed above, clearly exacts a punishment "out of all proportion to the offence" and yet is upheld as the hero of the piece. The implication for generalized conclusions based on one (supposedly representative) author hardly needs to be stressed. The stories

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[24]De Chickera, "Palaces of Pleasure," p. 7.

referred to here are of central importance in relation to the question of whether an Elizabethan dramatist might portray justified private revenge on the stage. Equally important, they show that Elizabethans were reading of revengers whose actions were condoned by the authors and of whom the reader was often encouraged to approve. It seems fair to conclude that approval of, not only sympathy for, the actions of Hieronimo or Hamlet, at least within the confines of the theatre, was not impossible for an Elizabethan audience.

CHAPTER II

A PRECEDENT FOR KYD

In the pre-Kydian native drama the only play that treats the moral problem of revenge at any length is John Pickering's Horestes (1567).[1] Pickering went to Caxton's Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye (translated from the French of Raoul Le Fèvre) for the story of Orestes' revenge on Clytemnestra, his mother, for her murder of Orestes' father Agamemnon but, as critics have pointed out, he supplemented it in two important ways.[2] First, he devoted a considerable amount of space to arguments for and against deposing a murderous sovereign. Second, he introduced the familiar

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[1]The title page gives the author as "Iohn Pikeryng" and the title as A Newe Enterlude of Vice Conteyninge, the Historye of Horestes with the cruell reuengment of his Fathers death, vpon his one naturtll Mother. No one has convincingly identified the author. The most recent argument favours the anti-Marian John Puckering, Speaker of the House of Commons in 1584 and 1586, Lord Keeper in the Privy Council from 1592 to his death in 1596. See James E. Phillips, "A Revaluation of Horestes (1567)," HLQ, XVIII (1955), 227-244 and esp. 239ff.

[2]The many changes which Pickering introduced are mentioned but not explained by F. Brie, "Horestes von John Pikeryng," Englische Studien, XLVI (1912), 66-72.

figure of the Vice, who encourages Horestes to slay his mother under the pretence that the gods have so willed it. As in Caxton, matricide is excused and the action ends with Horestes' coronation and his marriage to Menelaus' daughter Hermione.

That this play should have appeared in 1567 is significant. In May of that year Mary Queen of Scots married the Earl of Bothwell, believed by many to have organized the murder of her second husband, Lord Darnley, a little over three months earlier. In June the Scottish Protestant lords, their cause appreciably strengthened by the obvious conclusion to be drawn from this, overthrew Mary and Bothwell and imprisoned the queen in Lochleven Castle. Mary's one-year-old son became James VI, the Earl of Murray acting as regent. Elizabeth was naturally concerned at this violation of royal authority even though politically it was in her interests. Pickering's lengthy treatment of the moral question of Horestes' overthrowing and executing his mother has led James E. Phillips to see the play as a political "mirror," an extended argument in favour of the Scottish lords. Pickering "deliberately reshaped and developed his materials to elucidate this central problem and to bring to bear upon it a political philosophy acceptable to a Tudor queen."[3]

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[3]"A Revaluation of Horestes (1567)," p. 230.

The argument, persuasive as it is, avoids one crucial problem, Pickering's Vice. That the Vice does present difficulties is quite obvious. Seeking guidance from the gods, uncertain in his own mind of the moral rightness of killing his own mother, Horestes meets the Vice who informs him that his name is "Courrage" (sig. B1^{r})[4] and that he has been present at a council of the gods where it was agreed that Horestes should revenge Agamemnon's death. Horestes welcomes him, receives the blessing of King Idumeus and his Counsel, and is promised a thousand men to assist him in his war against Clytemnestra. He defends matricide against the entreaties of Nature, attacks his enemies, and captures his mother. Her pleas for mercy weaken Horestes' resolve, but the Vice threatens to leave him and he takes this as a sign of divine displeasure. Egistus, Clytemnestra's new husband, has already been hanged, and Horestes now allows the Vice (whose alternative name, Revenge, suggests the two-sided nature of his character) to lead the queen to her execution. Menelaus, at first enraged at his sister's death, determines to take revenge on his nephew Horestes. Nestor and Idumeus convince him that Horestes should not be condemned for his actions and the two are reconciled. Menelaus is persuaded to give his

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[4]All references are to the 1567 quarto.

daughter Hermione as a bride to Horestes, and the play ends with Truth and Duty crowning the revenger and condemning Clytemnestra and Egistus.

The problem of reconciling the play's ending with the role of the Vice has absorbed several scholars. C. F. Tucker Brooke's comment on the "dramatic unity and tragic purpose" of the play seems hard to support.[5] For Eleanor Prosser, "the play splits in two," its first half suggesting the evil of revenge, the second half apparently endorsing Horestes' actions.[6] Willard Farnham sees the introduction of the Vice as "a first step toward reviving for the Orestes saga some of those ethical implications which had once converted it into great tragedy," but the "promising possibilities" revealed at the opening are not realized.[7] It has been suggested that Pickering's real concern is not with revenge but with social order,[8] but the problem of the revenge is unaffected by the distinction. The riddle need not have a solution, of course. Ambiguity of this kind may well be "little more than a morally evasive stage-device for precipitating the action" and

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[5] The Tudor Drama (London, 1912), p. 139.

[6] Hamlet and Revenge (Stanford, 1967), p. 42.

[7] The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy (Oxford, 1956), pp. 260, 261.

[8] See Bernard Spivack, Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil (New York, 1958), pp. 279-283.

allowing Pickering to present Horestes as a hero "without committing the play to sharing his belief in divine sanction."[9]

Disinclination to accept that the author was sloppy in his treatment of Horestes' revenge--lazy in forgetting about the amorality of revenge that the Vice's introduction suggests--has led others to interesting if sometimes dubious conclusions. It has been argued that King Idumeus' approval of the hero's plan of vengeance, and the support of Counsel, make the killing of Clytemnestra a public rather than a private revenge--that "the King's approval implies divine sanction, and the moral rightness of Horestes' revenge is never in doubt throughout the play."[10] If this is so one wonders why the Vice bothers to stay with a public revenger whose "moral rightness" is no longer in doubt. More sound is David Bevington's thesis that Pickering transfers all the really "bloody impulses to the Vice, whose urgings of 'cruell revengment' must be offset by the counsel of Nature. Any true prince must strike a balance between justice and mercy."[11] As he points out, Caxton's hero is more bloodthirsty: not only

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[9]D. J. Palmer, "Elizabethan Tragic Heroes," Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, IX (1966), 17.

[10]Ernst B. De Chickera, "Horestes' Revenge: Another Interpretation," N&Q, CCIV (1959), 190.

[11]Tudor Drama and Politics (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), p. 151.

does he kill his mother, he cuts her breasts off as well. Although Bevington is misleading in his reference to the phrase "cruell reuengment," which comes not from the Vice but from the play's title (where it stands as a description of the hero's vengeance), it will be seen that Horestes is concerned with the justice his revenge will mete out rather than with satisfying his own blood-lust. He pursues a mean between the Vice's urgings of wholesale slaughter and Nature's pleas for mercy.

Horestes' first speech reflects his dilemma: "dame nature" requires that he forgive and pity his mother, yet if he allows Clytemnestra to live not only will he be negligent of what he sees as his duty to avenge his father's murder, but the "adulltres dame" will continue to "wallow in her sin" (sig. $A4^{v}$). He has a choice between action and inaction and is inclined to accept revenge as the lesser evil. He asks the gods for direction and is immediately confronted with the Vice, who calls himself Courage, a messenger from heaven. The Vice assures him that his "lamentation sone shall fade, if thou imbrasydest me" (sig. $B1^{r}$). Horestes welcomes him and momentarily forgets the idea of the justness of the revenge he proposes, absorbed in a reverie of vindictive emotions:

> My thinkes I fele all feare to fley, all sorrow griefe & payne,

> My thinkes I fele corrage prouokes, my wil for ward
> againe
> For to reuenge my fathers death, and infamey so
> great,
> Oh how my hart doth boyle in dede, with firey perch-
> ing heate. (sig. B1^{r})

The emotional, not the rational, response is the one the Vice desires Horestes to adopt. When Idumeus replies to Horestes' unspecified "sute" in the unemotional tones of

> What thing is that if we suppose, it laufull for to be,
> On prynces faith without delaye, it shall be giuen the
> (sig. B1^{v})

the Vice at once senses a threat to his influence. Idumeus has already bewailed Agamemnon's death, but without any signs of vindictive feelings. He sees Agamemnon's fate in conventional terms of turning fortune:

> What euer he be that sceptar beares or rules in
> state full hie
> Is sonest down through fortunes eyar, & brought
> to myserey. (sig. B1^{r})

In Idumeus the rational is in complete control: "through fortunes blind attempt, he lo in earth doth lie" (sig. B1^{v}), he says of Agamemnon. So when he proceeds to deliberate over whether Horestes' suit is "laufull" the Vice realizes the danger of Horestes' revenge becoming a legalistic rather than a selfish procedure of retribution:

> Tout let him alone now, . . .
> . . . . . .
> In reuenging the wronge, his mynd he hath set.
> It is not Idumeus that hath poure to let.

> Horestes fro sekinge his mother to kyll,
> Tout let hym alone, hele haue his owne wyll. (sig. B1^{v})

Disregarding the Vice, Horestes asks Idumeus' permission to act, first, for revenge of his father's murder; second, to realize his heritage; third, to maintain his honour. He does not mention his belief in divine sanction. Idumeus refers the responsibility for a decision to Counsel, who presents a perfectly reasonable line of argument supporting Horestes:

> As I do thinke my soferayne lord, it should be
> nothing ill,
> A Prynce for to reuenged be, on those which so dyd
> kyll.
> His fathers: grace but rather shall, it be a
> feare to those,
> That to the lyke at anye time, their cruell mindes
> dispose:
> And also as I thinke it shall, an honer be to ye,
> To adiuuate and helpe him with, some men reuenged
> to be. (sig. B2^{r})

In other words Horestes' revenge is a political necessity--and, despite his being distraught, this is how Horestes himself has conceived of it, the only time excepted being when he first embraces the Vice and blood-lust momentarily overcomes him. Idumeus accepts the verdict of Counsel and seconds Horestes' plan. There is nothing to indicate that Counsel "concludes that Horestes may proceed not in a vindictive spirit but as an officer making wholesome corrective example,"[12]

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[12]David Bevington, Tudor Drama and Politics, p. 151.

yet the whole tone of the passages spoken by Counsel and Idumeus very strongly suggests that both assume Horestes has the proper motives--that his vindictiveness is not selfish but directed toward the execution of justice and the welfare of the state.[13] It is quite clear that the Vice realizes this and that he is determined to influence Horestes to forget issues and simply satiate himself in the blood of his enemies:

> Com on Horestes sith thou hast, obtayned thy desier.
> Tout tout man, seke to dystroye, as doth the flaming fier.
> Whose properte thou knoest doth gro, as long as any thing
> Is left wher by the same may seme, som suckcor for to bring. (sig. B2^{r})

Such urgings have no apparent effect on the hero. This is clear from his debate with Nature in the scene in which he next appears. Vindictiveness is very low-keyed, the justice of killing Clytemnestra stressed in Horestes' replies:

> Pythagoras doth thincke it lo, no tyraney to be,
> When that iustyse is mynestryd, as lawe and godes decree.
> If that the law doth her condemne, as worthy death to haue,
> Oh nature woulst thou wil that I, her life should seme to saue.
> To saue her lyfe whom law doth slay, is not iustise to do,

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[13]This is the motive proper to Vincentio Saviolo's ideal revenger, who acts, it will be recalled from the previous chapter, not because he longs to kill his enemy "but because hee might be as it were, the minister to execute Gods deuine pleasure, and most holy commaundement." See Vincentio Sauiolo his Practise (1595), sig. Z1^{v}.

> Therefore I saye I wyll not yeld, they hestes
> to com vnto. (sig. B4^{v})

Horestes' arguments are persuasive--though as one would expect they do not convince Nature. Clytemnestra has already been condemned by the "law" in the person of Idumeus, and Horestes' revenge is now in support of that law. This is spelled out once more when Horestes takes leave of Idumeus a second time and opens war. The king assures him that if he "be bold, & feare no fate" the gods will fight beside him (sig. C1^{r}). His "case" is "right" as far as Idumeus is concerned. Counsel justifies the revenge in advance and cites Plato in support (sig. C2^{r}).

Confronted with his mother, Horestes at first weakens in his resolve and orders her to be kept in prison. The Vice is upset:

> Ounds of me what meane you man, begyn you now
> to faynt
> Iesu god how styll he syttes, I thinke he be
> a saynt.
> O oo oo, you care not for me, nay sone I haue
> don I warrant ye. (sig. D1^{v})

Horestes immediately hardens, taking the Vice's lament as a sign of divine disapproval of leniency, but he remains dispassionate in the reasons he gives for executing Egistus and Clytemnestra (sig. D2^{r}). He accuses Egistus of treason: the murderer deserves "dew punnishment" as "the chefe" agent

in Agamemnon's death. Horestes' mother is condemned as an accessory. She begs mercy, asking her son to remember the reputations of Oedipus and Nero, but he remains unmoved. Egistus is hanged, Clytemnestra taken offstage to her execution.

At the council of kings formed at Athens to pass judgment on him, Horestes defends his actions as the execution of divine commands (nobly refraining from any mention of Idumeus' support):

> I neuer went, reuengment for to do,
> On fathers fose tyll by the godes, I was comaund there to.
> Whose heastes no man dare once refuse, but wyllingly obaye
> That I haue slayne her wylfully, vntruely you do saye.
> I dyd but that I could not chuse, ites hard for me to kycke,
> Syth gods commaund. (sig. E1^{r})

Accused of wanton destruction in his war against Egistus and Clytemnestra, he points out that only those who resisted were killed (sig. E1^{r}). These arguments convince Nestor--Idumeus needs no convincing at this stage, of course--and even Menelaus, at first angered at his sister's death, is won over. Amity is sealed between him and his nephew when Menelaus consents to his daughter Hermione marrying Horestes. The nobles and commons express delight at the new situation and Horestes is crowned triumphantly by the personifications

of Truth and Duty. This harmony destroys the power of the Vice, who is reduced to beggary. He departs in hopes of more successfully influencing women--the vindictive sex.

There is ample evidence that Bevington is right when he suggests that the hero's actions represent a desirable mean between the urgings of Nature and the blood-lust the Vice tries to prompt. Once or twice the irrational temporarily takes control as Horestes excitedly anticipates the slaughter of his enemies (sig. B1^{r}) or threatens to kill men, women, and children indiscriminately (sig. D1^{r}). For the rest of the play he is completely rational, arguing out the issues in terms of justice or the welfare of the commonwealth. If this is borne in mind, the roles of the central characters can more readily be understood. The Vice represents selfishly motivated private revenge, Horestes represents private revenge in the public interest, while Nature, as her name implies, reflects the natural instinct of the son to pity his mother. It is just possible that Pickering meant Horestes to be seen as a public rather than a private revenger after Idumeus and his Counsel give him their blessing (as De Chickera has suggested), but in saying this one makes a problem of the Vice's continued presence on stage. This can only be explained by his desire to work up

purely selfish motives in Horestes, who remains a private revenger in a public cause. If Horestes is the public avenger--the magistrate, in effect--the Vice would be wasting his time.

The kind of interpretation argued for above has the virtue of reconciling the Vice's role with Horestes' heroic stature. It does not resolve all the problems--in fact it evades some. Why, for instance, does the Vice express such satisfaction when Horestes has had Clytemnestra executed (sig. D3r)? Why is he called Revenge? If the Vice is Revenge one supposes revenge to be a vice. His name suggests a view of private vengeance which Pickering's play does not bear out, for Horestes is clearly exonerated from guilt at the end. One feels a more apt name could have been found, since the Vice really represents unthinking vengeance. Another difficulty it seems impossible to resolve lies in the following words of Fame who, if she does not exactly equate Horestes with Nero, does not present him in a very favourable light either:

> [Nero] first did cause his masters death, & eke
> wheras he laye
> In mothers wound to se in south, his mother dyd
> straight slay.
> With this Horestes eke takes place, whose father
> being slayn,
> throgh mothers gile from mothers blod, his hands
> could not refraine. (sig. D4r)

Pickering would seem to want to have it both ways: it is wrong for Horestes to kill his mother, yet it is necessary in everybody's interests for him to do so. Perhaps Horestes can be excused because he acted on what he took to be a divine command, yet there is little in the play to suggest that this is what excuses him. In the final scene, the execution of Clytemnestra and Egistus is seen as just and beneficial, so that the Vice might just as well have been a messenger from the gods. Such as Clytemnestra and her agent

> receaue dew punnishment, as god shall se,
> For the faute commytted, most conuenient to be.
> As this storye here hath, made open vnto ye,
> Which yf it haue byn marked, much prophet may aryse. (sig. E4r)

Again, the title refers to the revenge as "cruell," the comic scenes--miniature sub-plots--seem to illustrate the folly of revenge, yet in the final scene the author endorses Horestes' actions.[14]

It is impossible to justify Pickering's carelessness but it might be possible to explain some of the ambiguities.

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[14]Patricia Russell has pointed out that although the comic scenes often read like a parody of the main action and of Horestes' vindictive role especially, the playwright gives no indication that he is aware of their potential reductive value. See her article, "Romantic Narrative Plays: 1570-1590," Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, IX (1966), 122ff. Pickering, of course, may have intended his comic scenes to reduce the hero, or he may have simply wished to illustrate other aspects of his theme.

Clytemnestra and Egistus deserve their deaths and it is right for a son to avenge the murder of his father. Nevertheless, it is morally doubtful that the revenger should pursue his revenge against his own mother. This is in fact the position Menelaus initially takes:

> In dede I must confesse that I, reuengyd should haue be,
> If that my father had byn slayne, with such great cruelte.
> But yet I would for natures sake, haue spard my mothers lyfe
> O wretched man, o cruell beast, o mortall blade and knyfe. (sig. E1^{v})

Idumeus' reply, though it does not really take this response into account, convinces Menelaus that Horestes should be excused--not because he believed the gods commanded him, nor because Clytemnestra deserved her fate, as in fact she did, but because it is in the interests of all for Menelaus to "forget" that Horestes killed his mother, to reconcile himself to the present situation and befriend his nephew. Menelaus should remember that Horestes is only young after all. Idumeus does not justify matricide (though admittedly he seemed ready enough to do so when he gave Horestes a thousand troops to assist him in his revenge). Instead he excuses it, replying to Menelaus with a plea for reconciliation.

It seems clear that Pickering feels compelled to suggest his disapproval of matricide while at the same time

stressing the beneficial effects matricidal revenge has in the framework of the Orestes story. The result is a play that, in its support of the heroic revenger, is hedged about with a good deal of anti-revenge or at least anti-matricide bias (in the pronouncement of Fame, for example) and opposition to wanton vengeance. The latter is evident in the contrasting approaches of the Vice on the one hand and Horestes on the other to the basic situation. As theatre the work reflects and suffers from the divided nature of its author's approach to his subject matter. Historically it is of importance as the first play in which the morality of the revenger becomes a real concern for the dramatist and, although it does not appear to have influenced Kyd at all, as an anticipation of the much deeper consideration of the moral question found twenty years later in The Spanish Tragedy.

CHAPTER III

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY AND THE MORALITY OF HIERONIMO

The influence of The Spanish Tragedy (c. 1587) on Elizabethan drama is attested by the many tragedies of blood that variously relied on its example.[1] The protagonist's search for vengeance as the moving force behind the action is found in Pickering, but there the moral issues are blurred and the potential of the material is largely unexplored. While Horestes set a precedent, if Kyd needed one, for the heroic stage revenger, it lacked real tragic dimension. Extant revenge tragedy begins with The Spanish Tragedy, and what Fredson Bowers calls the "Kydian formula"--"blood revenge for murder as the central tragic fact"[2]--is

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[1] Fredson Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 65n, suggests that Shakespeare's Hamlet later "combined" with Kyd's play to influence authors of subsequent plays, but Hamlet itself is considerably indebted to Kyd, as Bowers recognizes, the problem of influence being complicated by the question of the Ur-Hamlet (c. 1589).

[2] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 62.

Kyd's most important single contribution to subsequent drama. In Marston's Antonio's Revenge, Chettle's Hoffman, and Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy--each in what can be called the Kydian sub-genre--the influence is most obvious. Shakespeare's Hamlet is a special case: it fits the "formula" but probably relies heavily on an earlier Hamlet play that may have been written by Kyd. Since The Spanish Tragedy is so obviously seminal, and since the main concern of this thesis is to clarify the way in which Kyd's concept of the revenger was consciously challenged from 1600 to 1611, to elucidate the psychology of a transition whereby the revenger becomes the villain of Jacobean tragedy, it is essential first to ascertain as far as possible how Kyd meant his audience to respond to his revenger.

This question is especially important because there is every reason to suppose that for the Elizabethans Hieronimo was the most familiar example of the stage revenger. Post-Kydian drama contains more references to him, mainly in the form of parody, than to any other character. The theatre-goer referred to in the Induction to Jonson's Cynthia's Revels (c. 1601) who would swear that "the old Hieronimo, (as it was first acted) was the onely best, and iudiciously pend

play of Europe"[3] must have had plenty of supporters. Henslowe records twenty-nine performances of "Jeronymo" and seven of a (presumably lost) first part to which he gives various titles, including "comodey of Jeronymo" and "spanes comodye."[4] Between the first mention of the comedy, on 23 February 1592, and 22 June 1592, when Henslowe's accounts break off for six months because of plague, there are twenty recorded performances of Kyd's play--thirteen of "Jeronymo" and seven of the forepiece. Hieronimo, in other words, appeared on the boards of Henslowe's theatre more than once a week, on the average, during the four-month period. In all, there are thirty-six recorded performances of "Jeronymo" or the "comodey." The first of them is not marked as "ne" (which is generally understood to mean "new") so there is every reason to suppose frequent staging before 19 February 1592, when such records first appear in the Diary. The only other play for which Henslowe records so many performances is The Jew of Malta,

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[3] Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and P. Simpson (Oxford, 1925-1946), IV, 42.

[4] Henslowe's Diary, ed. R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 17-19, 55-60. The first part is generally assumed to be lost and not identified with the extant First Part of Hieronimo, printed in 1605. Recently, however, Andrew S. Cairncross has argued persuasively that the identification should be made after all. See his Introduction to the Regents edn. of The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy (London, 1967), pp. xii-xix.

which was also staged at least thirty-six times.

The historical importance of the play is universally recognized, yet it has suffered from an unwillingness on the part of critics to regard it as a considerable work of dramatic literature in its own right. And while criticism since F. S. Boas' edition[5] has tended to be increasingly sympathetic to the dramatic and (to a lesser degree) the literary qualities of the play, old attitudes persist. The title of a recent paper, "Taking Kyd Seriously,"[6] illustrates the point by implication.

Probably the main reason why critics have undervalued the play lies in the difficulties and imperfections they find in it, and by and large the main feature of mid-twentieth-century criticism of The Spanish Tragedy has been a continuing attempt to resolve these difficulties. Boas' objection to "Kyd's failure in an adequate psychological analysis of the Marshal's motives for . . . delay" in his revenge is overcome by pointing out that Hieronimo's search

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[5]The Works of Thomas Kyd (Oxford, 1901).

[6]Read by Robert Hapgood at the 1964 meeting of the Modern Language Association of America and cited by Cairncross, p. xxvi.

is for a legal revenge through the proper channels of earthly justice, a frustrating search that ends in his recourse to private vengeance. Delay is not an issue at all.[7] The objection to the Portuguese sub-plot is that it seems irrelevant, but in fact it brings out a central theme of the play, the limitations of earthly justice, very well.[8] As will be seen, it also develops other dominant themes. The chief difficulty, however, lies in understanding how Hieronimo is to be taken. It has been questioned whether he is intended to remain heroic to the end of the play. In the final scene the Ghost of Andrea assigns him to the play's heaven, a section of the Virgilian underworld

> where Orpheus plays,
> Adding sweet pleasure to eternal days. (IV.v.23-24)[9]

Yet critics have found it hard to believe that Kyd could have sanctioned private revenge. The point is not just that

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[7]See Boas, p. xxxv, and cf. the interpretations of, inter alia, Philip Edwards, Introduction to the Revels edn. of The Spanish Tragedy (London, 1959), p. lvii; Ernst B. De Chickera, "Divine Justice and Private Revenge in The Spanish Tragedy," MLR, LVII (1962), 228-232; Arthur Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems (Oxford, 1967), p. 84.

[8]According to Philip Edwards, "The Portuguese court could have been introduced more economically and the relevance of theme is very slight" (Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. liii). But cf. Freeman, pp. 84-85, and Cairncross, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

[9]Unless otherwise indicated, all references to The Spanish Tragedy are to Edwards' edn.

near the end of the play "the wild justice of revenge turns to mere massacre"[10] but that when Hieronimo becomes a private revenger, "according to English standards he inevitably becomes a villain."[11]

Enough evidence has already been presented to raise serious doubts about the influence of the official injunctions against private revenge. There is certainly no reason to believe that these were always paramount in the mind of the average Elizabethan. Practically all the criticism of the last fifteen years has followed C. V. Boyer in seeing Hieronimo as justified in the context of the play.[12] As Edwards points out, to view him as a villain in the final scenes one must rely on the argument that "Hieronimo is

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[10]Boas, Introduction to The Works of Thomas Kyd, p. xxxix.

[11]Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 77. This is also the view of Eleanor Prosser (Hamlet and Revenge, p. 52), but she concedes that there are obstacles to the reading.

[12]Besides Boyer, The Villain as Hero in Elizabethan Tragedy (London, 1914), p. 100, see, e.g., John D. Ratliff, "Hieronimo Explains Himself," SP, LIV (1957), 112-118; Edwards, Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, pp. lix-lx; De Chickera, "Divine Justice and Private Revenge," pp. 228-232; Ejner J. Jensen, "Kyd's Spanish Tragedy: The Play Explains Itself," JEGP, LXIV (1965), 7-16; Barry B. Adams, "The Audiences of The Spanish Tragedy," JEGP, LXVIII (1969), 221-236. Alfred Harbage recognizes that Hieronimo is "supposed to retain our approval" but thinks this represents a failure in Kyd's dramatic instinct. See Harbage's essay, "Intrigue in Elizabethan Tragedy," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hosley, p. 43.

condemned because the Elizabethans condemned revenge, however strongly the play's gods support him." More reasonably, though, "what an Elizabethan might think of Hieronimo's actions in real life may be irrelevant to the meaning of The Spanish Tragedy. Hieronimo may still be a sympathetic hero in spite of Elizabethan indignation against private revenge."[13] As has been seen, there are many revengers in the non-dramatic literature who are presented as justified, while in the drama Horestes embodies an heroic revenger and so anticipates Kyd. The anonymous Clyomon and Clamydes (c. 1570) contains an interesting episode where Clyomon slays Thrasellus, the Norwegian king, to revenge the abduction of Clyomon's lover Neronis.[14] More or less contemporary with Kyd's play, Peele's The Battle of Alcazar (c. 1589) is structured around retribution: private revenge for the murder of Abdelmunen is the prime mover behind the action, although vengeance is executed by armies rather than by the revenger himself. In Locrine Guendoline's vindictiveness is justified in the context of the play and condoned by the ending. If Kyd's handling of Hieronimo is heretical, the heresy was one that an Elizabethan audience had been

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[13] Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. lix.

[14] The Historie of . . . Syr Clyomon . . . And Clamydes (1599), sig. F2r.

adequately conditioned to accept within the context of the imaginative literature that embodies it. Once the critic has put aside the assumption that what Bacon or anyone else said about revenge necessarily determined how Elizabethans responded to revengers in the drama, he can begin to understand the play and its hero as Kyd meant them to be understood. The dangers attendant upon readings that are unduly prejudiced by concerns beyond the artifact itself hardly need stating. The meaning of Kyd's play only begins to emerge when proper account is taken of the way in which several dominant themes and ideas co-operate to enforce, in advance, the final judgment of Andrea and justify the course of action Hieronimo ultimately takes. To establish what these are is to establish the moral atmosphere of the play, the informing environment against the background of which Hieronimo's actions must be interpreted. The interpretation this chapter offers, then, will necessarily be preceded by an inquiry into several important themes that bear directly upon it.

Justice is certainly of major concern in the play but it ought to be seen in relation to another, less obvious, theme, the impotence of authority. Hieronimo's quest for state justice that will bring punishment on the murderers of

his son is frustrated once and for all in III.xii by Lorenzo. In his capacity as magistrate Hieronimo is bound to recognize that revenge should be left to the state and, as will be seen later, he takes the responsibilities of his office seriously. He seeks public justice, however, in a world where its course is continually frustrated by evil but influential men and where it works, if it works at all, often by chance or because, as Isabella says, at least "The heavens are just" (II.v.57).[15] Near the beginning of the play the Spanish king acknowledges that his victory over Portugal is due to the unseen intervention of God,"From whose fair influence such justice flows" (I.ii.11). Unfortunately, divine justice is too easily perverted or blocked by the human environment around its all-too-human agent, the king or magistrate. This is brought out well in the Portuguese scenes. There is every reason to suppose the Viceroy of Portugal is as "just and wise" as Hieronimo recognizes the Spanish king to be (I.ii.166), but he is distraught over the loss of his son Balthazar and in his pessimism is only too willing to believe Villuppo's invention about Balthazar's death and Alexandro's treachery. As the latter is led off to await execution,

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[15]For Bazulto, of course, there is no justice--divine or human--to be had.

Villuppo boasts in an aside:

> Thus have I with an envious forged tale
> Deceiv'd the king. (I.iii.93-94)

It is a characteristic of both rulers that they are easily deceived. In Portugal justice is secured only at the last moment by the news the ambassador brings (III.i). In Spain the king is kept in the dark more effectively. His nephew Lorenzo has more power than Villuppo and more cunning. Not only can he deceive the king, he is able to use the king's power for his own purposes. At times he appears to be effectively a usurper, using and abusing sovereign authority without the sovereign being aware that state affairs are for all practical purposes out of his hands. To ensure the silence of his accomplices in crime, Lorenzo arranges for Pedringano to shoot Serberine; but "to confirm the complot" Pedringano must also be killed:

> I'll spread the watch,
> Upon precise commandment from the king,
> Strongly to guard the place where Pedringano
> This night shall murder hapless Serberine.
> Thus must we work that will avoid distrust,
> Thus must we practise to prevent mishap,
> And thus one ill another must expulse. (III.ii.101-107)

When the first member of the watch asks

> to what intent it is
> That we are thus expressly charg'd to watch

the second replies, "'Tis by commandment in the king's own

name" (III.iii.17-19). Ironically, when Pedringano is taken before Hieronimo, the king's agent of justice effectively becomes Lorenzo's. For most of the play the only way in which the king exercises his own power is in support of the proposed marriage of Bel-imperia to Balthazar, which is in Lorenzo's interests anyway.

Generally ignored, and equally important to an understanding of the world in which Hieronimo's actions have their validity, is the theme of discovery and concealment, of truth and untruth. It is signalled at the beginning of the play when the Ghost of Andrea and Revenge sit down "to see the mystery" (I.i.90). The play is full of situations where truth and falsehood are confused or where seeming truth is grasped at by those desperate for answers. One of the characteristics that distinguish Hieronimo from the others is his patience in search of truths in a world where answers come slowly if they ever come. Villuppo asks the viceroy to "hear that truth which these mine eyes have seen" (I.iii.59) and proceeds to tell a story that only Alexandro knows is a "wicked forgery" (I.iii.72). The viceroy is only too ready to believe: "Ay, ay, my nightly dreams have told me this" (I.iii.76). Alexandro's "Vouchsafe, dread sovereign, to hear me speak" (I.iii.88) is

a hopeless plea in the circumstances, as hopeless as the Spanish king's "Why speak'st thou not?" (IV.iv.179) in the penultimate scene, where the Portuguese situation is reversed and it is the king who meets with silence in Hieronimo's

> What lesser liberty can king's afford
> Than harmless silence? then afford it me:
> Sufficeth I may not, nor I will not tell thee.
> (IV.iv.180-182)

Lorenzo assures Balthazar that if Bel-imperia has another lover, the truth will soon be discovered:

> By force or fair means will I cast about
> To find the truth of all this question out.
> (II.i.39-40)

The obvious source of truth is Pedringano, Bel-imperia's servant, but in order for him to be honest with Lorenzo he must break trust with his mistress; thus his situation qualifies what he can disclose:

> My bounden duty bids me tell the truth,
> If case it lie in me to tell the truth. (II.i.57-58)

Lorenzo has to force it out with threats and promises:

> Yet speak the truth and I will guerdon thee,
> And shield thee from whatever can ensue,
> And will conceal whate'er proceeds from thee,
> But if thou dally once again, thou diest.
> (II.i.72-75)

What is disclosed has first to be urged ("Stand up I say, and fearless tell the truth" [II.i.83]), then tested ("Swear on this cross, that what thou say'st is true" [II.i.87]), and,

since truth can be bought and sold, rewarded ("In hope thine oath is true, here's thy reward" [II.i.90]). The opposites of revelation and concealment here go hand in hand. Lorenzo "will conceal whate'er proceeds from thee" (II.i.74), forces Pedringano to swear "that thou wilt conceal what thou hast told" (II.i.88), and is assured by him that

> What I have said is true, and shall for me
> Be still conceal'd from Bel-imperia. (II.i.94-95)

As Lorenzo puts it,

> Where words prevail not, violence prevails:
> But gold doth more than either of them both.
> (II.i.108-109)

Three scenes later Bel-imperia still considers Pedringano "as trusty as my second self" (II.iv.9), but he is already planning to

> deserve more gold
> By fetching Don Lorenzo to this match. (II.iv.12-13)

And with Horatio murdered there are new truths to be concealed:

> Bel. Murder! murder! Help, Hieronimo, help!
> Lor. Come stop her mouth, away with her.
> (II.iv.62-63)

"Who calls Hieronimo?" (II.v.4) meets only silence. The central quest for truth is just beginning.

Lorenzo realizes better than anyone else the danger of trusting secrets to others because he knows how easily trust is bought and sold. "I'll trust myself, myself shall

be my friend" (III.ii.118), he says as he plots the deaths of Serberine and Pedringano, and again,

> 'Tis hard to trust unto a multitude,
> Or anyone, in mine opinion,
> When men themselves their secrets will reveal.
> (III.iv.47-49)

The world is deceitful and treacherous, and the tragic lesson Hieronimo has to learn is that justice can only be gained--at least for Horatio--by his becoming as calculating and deceitful as his enemies. He ends concealing truths and counterfeiting friendship so successfully that even the Ghost of Andrea and Bel-imperia are fooled (III.xv.15-17; IV.i.1-29).

Kyd's vocabulary underlines the importance and pervasiveness of the dominant themes in much the same way as does Tourneur's in The Revenger's Tragedy.[16] The words "just" and "justice" occur twenty-nine times. There are frequent references to the themes of truth and discovery in such words as "true," "truly," "truth," "troth," "trust," "trusty" (twenty-seven occurrences in all), "find" (17), "reveal" (9), "show" (17), "cause" (18), "suspect"-"suspicion"-"suspicious" (14), "seek" (6), "confirm" (5), "know" (57), "vow" and "swear" (10); and to falsehood and the concealment of truth in "false"-"falsely" (9), "feigned" (5), "secret" (10),

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[16] See R. A. Foakes, Introduction to the Revels edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy (London, 1966), pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

"conceal"-"concealment" (10), and "hide" (4). Additionally, it should be noted that approximately 12 per cent of the total lines in the play are interrogative. The character most concerned to discover the truth is Hieronimo: seeking justice involves first of all seeking evidence, and initially he has none. Significantly, over 14 per cent of his lines take the form of questions, against 11 per cent for the rest. In certain key scenes the ratio is much higher: of the lines he speaks in II.v, 33 per cent are phrased as questions; in III.ii, 20 per cent; in III.vii, 30 per cent. His quest is for truth and justice in a world where truth is elusive, justice uncertain, and authority often powerless or worse. When everything is taken into account, Hieronimo's turning to private revenge in III.xiii is not only understandable, not only felt by the audience to be justified, but anticipated as inevitable before Hieronimo even considers it--naturally predetermined by the moral landscape against which his actions are worked out. The following pages will demonstrate this well enough.[17]

As most recent criticism of The Spanish Tragedy has

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[17]Hieronimo's vengeance may be supernaturally predetermined as well. According to G. K. Hunter--"Ironies of Justice in The Spanish Tragedy," RenD, VIII (1965), 89-104--

shown, the revenge Hieronimo seeks for the murder of his son is, until the end of III.xii, a legal revenge, the punishment of the murderers (once he has discovered who they are) by law.[18] Boas is misleading in his reference to "the Marshal's instant determination upon revenge."[19] What the Portuguese viceroy means by revenge--"They reck no laws that meditate revenge" (I.iii.48)--and what Hieronimo, until III.xiii, generally means by the word are two completely different things. A distinction must be made, not only between public and private revenge, but between different kinds of private revenge. Balthazar's only motive for private revenge upon Horatio is jealousy. Bel-imperia desires personal retribution

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free will is an illusion in the play, overridden by the inescapable workings of divine justice: "We watch Revenge and Andrea watching Lorenzo watching Horatio and Bel-imperia; we watch Revenge and Andrea watching Hieronimo watching Pedringano watching the boy with the box; and at each point in this chain what seems free will to the individual seems only a predetermined act to the onlookers" (p. 102).

[18]See Ratliff, "Hieronimo Explains Himself," p. 112; Edwards, Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, pp. lvii-lviii; De Chickera, "Divine Justice and Private Revenge," p. 230; David Laird, "Hieronimo's Dilemma," SP, LXII (1965), 139ff; D. J. Palmer, "Elizabethan Tragic Heroes," Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, IX (1966), 19-20; Cairncross, Introduction to The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy, p. xxvii; Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems, pp. 84-94. That Hieronimo does everything he can to obtain redress through legal channels, through an institutionalized revenge, has been pointed out so frequently over recent years that it ought really to be regarded here as finally beyond dispute.

[19]Introduction to The Works of Thomas Kyd, p. xxxv.

too, but in her case it is more justifiable: her lover has been slain by Balthazar, and Horatio has given her reason to suppose the fight was less than fair (I.iv.16-26). The word "revenge" is used frequently in the play--forty-four times in fact--but it means different things at different times. When Alexandro warns Villuppo that

> My guiltless death will be aveng'd on thee,
> On thee, Villuppo (III.i.51-52)

he has heavenly vengeance in mind. Lorenzo is thinking of legal punishment when he advises Balthazar to seek the death of Pedringano, the murderer of Serberine, and

> To exasperate and hasten his revenge
> With your complaints unto my lord the king.
> (III.iv.31-32)

Hieronimo regularly uses the word and it is easy to misunderstand what he means by it.

The scene in which he discovers his son's body, II.v, emphasizes Hieronimo's magisterial role as marshal, the king's chief agent of justice. He enters in his night-shirt, asking questions: "What outcries pluck me from my naked bed?"; "Who calls Hieronimo?"; "what murd'rous spectacle is this?" (the only question for which there is a ready answer); and then, "Who hath slain my son?" But silence has closed in, Belimperia has been secreted away, and there are no witnesses, only grief and frustration:

> To know the author were some ease of grief,
> For in revenge my heart would find relief. (II.v.40-41)

What Hieronimo means by revenge is not clear and remains unclear until he has gathered all the evidence. At this point, though, any reaction would be understandable:

> Seest thou this handkercher besmear'd with blood?
> It shall not from me till I take revenge:
> Seest thou those wounds that yet are bleeding fresh?
> I'll not entomb them till I have reveng'd. (II.v.51-54)

He is assured by Isabella that

> The heavens are just, murder cannot be hid,
> Time is the author both of truth and right,
> And time will bring this treachery to light.
> (II.v.57-59)

The audience knows this too--the Ghost of Andrea and Revenge are an ever-present reminder of the fact, suggestive, like Gorlois in Hughes's The Misfortunes of Arthur (1588), of Nemesis. Hieronimo, however, is concerned only with the identity of the murderers, and in his frustration is tempted to suicide for the first time (II.v.67-78). His rejection of the idea shows that he puts little store in direct heavenly intervention:

> At tamen absistam properato cedere letho,
> Ne mortem vindicta tuam tum nulla sequatur. (II.v.79-80)

His death would preclude just vengeance. In order that the heavens may be proved just, their earthly officers must continue to function.

Hieronimo next appears in III.ii, desperately seeking

divine assistance in his search for the murderers: if their deeds

> unreveal'd and unrevenged pass,
> How should we term your dealings to be just,
> If you unjustly deal with those that in your justice trust? (III.ii.9-11)

He is saved from despair by the arrival of Bel-imperia's letter. The strategic placing of the previous scene should be noticed: Alexandro is saved at the last moment by the arrival of the ambassador who brings the truth that leads to justice. Both scenes can be interpreted as showing the timely intervention of divine justice. In fact Hieronimo refers to the letter (which, according to the stage direction, "falleth") as an "unexpected miracle" (III.ii.32). In it Bel-imperia urges him to take revenge on the murderers of Horatio--Lorenzo and Balthazar. Hieronimo, though, demands proof of guilt. He is not delaying, simply exercising caution, as one would expect a magistrate to do:

> What cause had they Horatio to malign?
> Or what might move thee, Bel-imperia,
> To accuse thy brother, had he been the mean?
> Hieronimo beware. (III.ii.34-37)

He will "be not credulous" (III.ii.39) but

> by circumstances try
> What I can gather to confirm this writ. (III.ii.48-49)

In III.vi Pedringano is examined by Hieronimo and

then executed under his orders for the murder of Serberine. For Serberine revenge comes quickly. There is no problem about evidence, the officers of the watch are themselves witnesses, so the way to justice is easy--"On to Hieronimo's!" (III.iii.44). The trial scene is important because it gives a clue to the kind of revenge Hieronimo so desperately desires:

> Thus must we toil in other men's extremes,
> That know not how to remedy our own,
> And do them justice, when unjustly we,
> For all our wrongs, can compass no redress. (III.vi.1-4)

"Redress" seems a significant word, suggesting that Hieronimo looks to the state for justice. He refers to the "justice of the heavens" (III.vi.6) but lines 9-10 link this with state justice:

> I to all men just must be,
> And neither gods nor men be just to me.[20]

He hardly needs the deputy's reminder of his responsibility:

> your office asks
> A care to punish such as do transgress. (III.vi.11-12)

What is so crushing is that while he concientiously metes out talionic justice to others he is denied the same:

> blood with blood shall, while I sit as judge,
> Be satisfied, and the law discharg'd;
> And though myself cannot receive the like,
> Yet will I see that others have their right.
> (III.vi.35-38)

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[20] The italics are mine.

Again, the context implies legal redress as the end in mind. The irony of the scene is superbly brought out. And mocking Hieronimo's care in seeing that justice is done is another, more cruel, irony: Hieronimo, in his official capacity as agent of state justice, has been used as Lorenzo's tool.

In the following scene all the truths are revealed by Pedringano's letter. Hieronimo does not grasp the full significance of what has happened, of how justice has been so easily abused by Lorenzo. He is too excited in his discovery of the murderers' identities:

> O sacred heavens, may it come to pass
> That such a monstrous and detested deed,
> So closely smother'd, and so long conceal'd,
> Shall thus by this be venged or reveal'd?
> Now see I what I durst not then suspect,
> That Bel-imperia's letter was not feign'd.
> (III.vii.45-50)

Now that he has the evidence, he is able to effect the revenge he has been anticipating. First, however, he will ascertain whether the two letters correspond in all details,

> make compare, 'twixt hers and this,
> Of every accident. (III.vii.53-54)

Suddenly it becomes clear that he has had a public revenge in mind from the beginning. There is no hesitation, no doubt about his course of action now:

> But wherefore waste I mine unfruitful words,
> When naught but blood will satisfy my woes?
> I will go plain me to my lord the king,
> And cry aloud for justice through the court.
> (III.vii.67-70)

He will

> either purchase justice by entreats
> Or tire them all with my revenging threats.
> (III.vii.72-73)

Yet when he enters at the beginning of III.xii, the most crucial scene in many ways, he doubts the wisdom of such a move:

> Now sir, perhaps I come and see the king,
> The king sees me, and fain would hear my suit:
> Why, is not this a strange and seld-seen thing,
> That standers-by with toys should strike me mute?
> Go to, I see their shifts, and say no more.
> (III.xii.1-5)

He is surprisingly perceptive here, as this is precisely what does happen. His alternative to pleading for justice in the court, though, is not (at this time) private retribution, but suicide. In one hand he holds a poniard, in the other a rope--"the stock 'properties' of a would-be suicide," as Boas remarks in a gloss.[21] He will seek out a judge in the underworld. There are two paths, corresponding to the objects he holds:

> Turn down this path, thou shalt be with him straight,
> Or this, and then thou need'st not take thy breath:
> This way, or that way? Soft and fair, not so:
> For if I hang or kill myself, let's know
> Who will revenge Horatio's murder then? (III.xii.14-18)

He rejects suicide for the same reason he rejected it earlier,

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[21] The Works of Thomas Kyd, n. 1 to III.xii, p. 405.

in II.v. He will see the king after all.

Although he has conclusive proof that Lorenzo and Balthazar are guilty, the audience has no cause to feel confident about the outcome, for in the world of Kyd's play sovereign authority is easily undermined or misused and justice is by no means sure. There is reason, moreover, to suppose Lorenzo has a greater influence than Hieronimo upon the king who, as De Chickera has observed, has already proved himself partial over his nephew's claims to the spoils of Balthazar.[22] Hieronimo is prepared for some resistance and does not leave when his first cry--"Justice, O justice to Hieronimo!"--is met only by Lorenzo's "Back! seest thou not the king is busy?" (III.xii.27-28). The king's response is more disheartening, however: "Who is he that interrupts our business?" (III.xii.30). It is the wrong time to see the king, as he suddenly realizes: "Hieronimo, beware: go by, go by." His second cry receives at least some recognition in the king's "Who is that? Hieronimo?" (III.xii.64), but again Lorenzo interrupts: "Hieronimo, you are not well-advis'd" (III.xii.67). Hieronimo now becomes distraught and, as Edwards points out,[23] this makes Lorenzo's

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[22]"Divine Justice and Private Revenge," p. 230.

[23]Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. lviii.

task of preventing an interview easy.

His attempts to secure state justice thwarted, Hieronimo turns to private revenge. Before critics consider his formal justification of that course, however, they might do well to examine a crucial line in III.xii that has never been given adequate consideration, perhaps because it is spoken in what seems like a fit of madness. When Hieronimo says he will "here surrender up my marshalship" (III.xii.76) he is doing more than rejecting the king. He is rejecting what Howard Baker calls his "prerogatives as a public avenger." Baker's claim that Hieronimo "resorts to them only when his appeals for unquestionable justice have utterly failed"[24] is nonsensical. It is when his appeals fail that he rejects his prerogatives, and for very good reasons. Baker, though, is not the only critic to have apparently ignored the line. De Chickera echoes him when, in an attempt to justify Hieronimo's revenge, he argues that "It is perhaps not unreasonable to claim for Hieronimo the right to take upon himself the prerogative of public avenger, executing God's justice upon others."[25] The implication appears to be that he cannot otherwise be justified, or not justified as

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[24] Induction to Tragedy (Baton Rouge, 1939), p. 215.

[25] "Divine Justice and Private Revenge," p. 232.

thoroughly as he can be if he acts as the public avenger in the penultimate scene. S. F. Johnson attempts to minimize the importance of the line by claiming that Hieronimo's "melancholy induces a frenzy in which he offers to 'surrender up my marshalship' . . . . Lorenzo urges the King to accept Hieronimo's resignation . . . , a proposal which Kyd, of course, has the King reject."[26] But Hieronimo does not offer to surrender his marshalship, he does surrender it. What is more, the king does not reject the resignation; what he refuses to do is to follow up Lorenzo's suggestion and appoint someone else to a vacant position (III.xii.101).[27]

The real point about the resignation is that it reinforces the audience's sympathy for Hieronimo. At least two factors have to be taken into account. First, as the

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[26]"The Spanish Tragedy, or Babylon Revisited," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, p. 30.

[27]At this point the 1592 quarto reads

Tis best that we see further in it first:
Till when, our selfe will exempt the place.

The second line here is a syllable short. Edwards suggests emendation to "not exempt" so that the line is made to mean, in effect, "I will not debar him from the position" (note to III.xii.101 in Edwards' edn. of The Spanish Tragedy). In any case the reading is not radically affected. Hieronimo has withdrawn from the post and the king neither accepts nor outrightly rejects the resignation. As far as Hieronimo is concerned he is no longer knight marshal.

marshal Hieronimo must act as an important agent of the state. By the end of III.xii he has learned something about the state that the audience has been aware of for some time: one can no longer take comfort in the integrity and responsibility of those in charge. To Hieronimo they have shown themselves "devils" (III.xii.82), and one of the most influential of those at the centre of power, Lorenzo, Hieronimo now knows to be a murderer. At times it must appear to the audience that Lorenzo has more control over what happens in Spain than the king. Hieronimo's resignation should be understood as an act of integrity: his revenge will be aimed, directly or indirectly, at those in power, so he can no longer honestly represent them. Second, he takes his magisterial role very seriously indeed. The audience is continually reminded of it. In III.vi he shows genuine concern that justice be done for others as well as for himself. He values truth and maintains a healthy scepticism after he has read Bel-imperia's letter. In the words of a citizen,

> There's not any advocate in Spain
> That can prevail, or will take half the pain
> That he will, in pursuit of equity. (III.xiii.52-54)

(By this stage, of course, he is no longer a judge but is playing "as corregidor.") Finally, though, when he has all the evidence he needs, when he knows the truth that is so hard to come by, he is not listened to. One recalls the

king's words to him in the second scene of the play:

> Content thee Marshal, thou shalt have no wrong,
> And for thy sake thy son shall want no right.
> (I.ii.173-174)

When Hieronimo goes to the king for justice he cannot even get a hearing. So, feeling he has no option but to take revenge into his own hands, he resigns from the marshalship. His position as a judge precludes private revenge and he has the integrity to withdraw from a position he would otherwise have to abuse. If he continued to be a magistrate he would deserve the audience's condemnation, not its increased sympathy. Importantly, Kyd's audience has a better understanding than Hieronimo of Kyd's Spain and has been conditioned in advance to support his action here. It knows better than Hieronimo that state justice has ceased to be credible because authority is easily usurped or powerless, that truth cannot often get a hearing, that wrongs are hushed up in conspiracies of silence. Hieronimo is justified in seeking private revenge because he cannot obtain justice by working through the normal channels, but more importantly because of the nature of the world he lives in.[28]

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[28]It is difficult to see how he is in any way justified or excused by his "madness," as Thomas W. Ross appears to suggest when he claims that Hieronimo's "madness is not feigned" and that "His derangement renders plausible" the tongue-biting incident and the killing of Castile. See Ross's Introduction to the Fountainwell edn. of The Spanish Tragedy (Edinburgh, 1968), pp. 9-10. Lorenzo refers to Hieronimo as

Hieronimo's formal self-justification for taking revenge into his own hands is given in the soliloquy that opens III.xiii. The speech has caused a good deal of confusion, mainly because the words he quotes at the beginning--"Vindicta mihi!"--and the next four lines seem to be contradicted by the argument for private retribution that follows. Despite the apparent contradiction, some recent criticism has tended to see the speech as a sufficient justification for private revenge in the context of the play.[29] Probably, however, it is both clearer and simpler than has previously been assumed. The first suggestion I want to make here is that the phrase "Vindicta mihi!" as it is used in III.xiii need not connote (as it does in Romans, 12.19, which it echoes) the leaving of vengeance to God alone. It must be remembered that the heaven of this play is fairly consistently pagan. As Edwards has pointed out,

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"Distract, and in a manner lunatic" (III.xii.89), but it is in Lorenzo's interests for the king to believe this. In the Additions that were printed with the play in 1602 Hieronimo is seen to be mad, but in the original play there is little indication of insanity. His digging with the dagger in III.xii represents a fit of frustration rather than madness. His mistaking Bazulto for Horatio in III.xiii is perhaps evidence of approaching madness, but for the rest of the play he is completely in control of himself and the situation.

[29]See, e.g., Ratliff, "Hieronimo Explains Himself," pp. 112-118; and Laird, "Hieronimo's Dilemma," pp. 137-146.

it is odd that "Momentarily, and most awkwardly, Jehovah assumes a role in the play" at this point.[30] There would seem to be some justification for not interpreting the Biblical phrase too strictly in this context (let alone for expecting that Hieronimo might twist it to his own advantage).

When the phrase is allowed a less rigid interpretation the contradiction in the speech vanishes. For Hieronimo it is a promise that heaven will revenge all injuries, but as he sees it heaven requires an agent:

> Vindicta mihi!
> Ay, heaven will be reveng'd of every ill,
> Nor will they suffer murder unrepaid:
> Then stay, Hieronimo, attend their will,
> For mortal men may not appoint their time.
> (III.xiii.1-5)

Apparently he has been contemplating suicide once again. By "appoint their time" he is more likely to mean "appoint the time of their own death" than "become their own revengers." That he has suicide in mind here is suggested by ll. 10-11:

> For he that thinks with patience to contend
> To quiet life, his life shall easily end.

The description of the man who ends by taking his own life fits Hieronimo well enough--the Hieronimo who is tempted by grief and pessimism to suicide (II.v.67-78; III.xii.6-16).

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[30] Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. lviii.

The new reading has on its side at least the presence of the idea of suicide in the speech (III.xiii.10-11) as well as the probability, backed by two clear precedents, that he would consider suicide at this point. He now quotes the Seneca he is reading as an authority for repaying injuries. "Per scelus semper tutum est sceleribus iter" (III.xiii.6) has no reference to Hieronimo. As has been shown by Ratliff, the line refers to Lorenzo, whom the audience has already seen making crime safe through further crime, disposing of Serberine and Pedringano.[31] What the Senecan observation teaches Hieronimo is that he must strike at Lorenzo before Lorenzo strikes at him. The Seneca links with Romans: heaven will repay, and it will repay by way of Hieronimo.

David Laird, who feels the speech is a successful defence, overall, of private vengeance, makes the same assumptions about "Vindicta mihi!" as other critics, including Ratliff, have done, and he may be quoted as typical in this respect: "The order of the ideas in the opening lines of the soliloquy shows Hieronimo deliberating between opposing options each introduced by a Latin quotation of clear relevance and authority . . . . The rhetorical device breaks open an abrupt and dramatically effective contrast

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[31]"Hieronimo Explains Himself," pp. 116-117.

between the Christian ideal of patience and humility and the classical-pagan concept of honor."[32] Too much stress is placed on what are admittedly the traditional and usual implications of the Biblical phrase, and the fifth line ("For mortal men may not appoint their time") accordingly read as a reference to private revenge when it more probably refers to suicide. The fourth line, "Then stay, Hieronimo, attend their will," may be taken to mean "refrain from suicide, await heaven's call to vengeance." There is no difficulty here in squaring private with divine vengeance, since the two become complementary. Hieronimo will act, like a number of revengers in the narrative literature, as the agent of divine vengeance. The stories of Ellanicus and Rossilyon in Turbervile's Tragicall Tales (1587)--referred to earlier--come to mind. Vengeance is God's, although as far as the revenger is concerned it is his own as well.[33]

In III.xiii.7-19 Hieronimo argues the case for action

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[32]"Hieronimo's Dilemma," pp. 138-139.

[33]Although the Hunter thesis (in "Ironies of Justice") that Hieronimo's revenge is to be regarded as divinely predetermined is attractive, it is important to realize that as far as Hieronimo is concerned he is still a free (albeit a divinely-appointed) agent. His revenge satisfies his own desire for retribution. While he recognizes that it also satisfies the demands of a higher power, he never becomes a disinterested agent of vengeance.

and against passivity. If one acts out one's destiny instead of vainly seeking a quiet life (a search that, according to III.xiii.10-11, ends in frustration and self-destruction), comfort--even if it is only the comfort of death--will ultimately follow. Hieronimo has come to realize that suicide, to which he has been tempted twice before, is both forbidden and unworthy of him, and he decides in favour of action. The obvious conclusion comes at III.xiii.20: "And to conclude, I will revenge his death!" As an argument the speech exhibits logic, organization, and control, lines reinforce one another, and one need see no "opposing options" apart from suicide and action. Extra-legal revenge is given a philosophic justification which is incidentally supported by the whole ethos of the play. For the rest of the soliloquy the only questions remaining to be considered are the means of avoiding suspicion and the how, when, and where of vengeance.

Hieronimo's decision to adopt the role of private revenger in a cause he soon comes to see as both his own and heaven's is taken, then, in III.xii when he resigns from the marshalship. The resignation ensures that Kyd's audience will continue to acknowledge his hero's moral integrity, while the argument used in III.xiii to justify direct action

perhaps makes it easier for the audience to sympathize with and support a revenger whose cause is not exclusively his own. In any case, the presence on stage of Revenge and the Ghost of Andrea is a reminder that Hieronimo's belief in his divine agency is justified. For Hieronimo the proof comes in IV.i, when Bel-imperia chides him for his apparent inaction and vows to take revenge herself:

> But may it be that Bel-imperia
> Vows such revenge as she hath deign'd to say?
> Why then, I see that heaven applies our drift,
> And all the saints do sit soliciting
> For vengeance on those cursed murderers. (IV.i.30-34)

Her words act as a revelation to him, and belief gives way to knowledge.

Hieronimo immediately apologizes for not having acted at once when he received Bel-imperia's letter, referring to "My fear and care in not believing it" (IV.i.39). Now, however, he will act, but not openly. After concerning himself for so long with the revelation of truth, he now sees the need for concealment:

> And here I vow (so you but give consent,
> And will conceal my resolution)
> I will ere long determine of their deaths,
> That causeless thus have murdered my son.
> Bel. Hieronimo, I will consent, conceal,
> And aught that may effect for thine avail,
> Join with thee to revenge Horatio's death. (IV.i.42-48)

Hieronimo's adoption of the underhand and deceitful tactics

of his enemies has been prepared for, in III.xiv by his deceiving of Castile and Lorenzo, and by the moral atmosphere of the play, which predetermines the turning to private retribution and necessitates deceit and cunning on the part of the revenger. Until the playlet is over and Lorenzo and Balthazar lie dead, motives must be concealed and appearances taken for reality. Tragically, justice can be had in no other way.

There are two rather confusing actions in IV.iv, Hieronimo's biting out of his tongue and the murder of Castile. Both are difficult to account for. The tongue-biting incident follows the king's threats to force Hieronimo to reveal his accomplices in the revenge, and the only logical explanation seems to be S. F. Johnson's: Hieronimo feels honour-bound not to reveal the full part Bel-imperia played in the action.[34] Everything else has been revealed. It may also be noted that the sequence of events here constitutes one of the supreme ironies of the play: Hieronimo is now making others suffer for want of the "truth." In this sense the tongue-biting is a revenge in kind. Moreover, there is a further irony: when Hieronimo wanted to

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[34] "The Spanish Tragedy, or Babylon Revisited," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, pp. 33-34.

reveal all to the king he could not get an audience. Now that he has an audience that demands to know everything he will keep silent.

Various explanations have been offered for the killing of Castile. It would be convenient to accept the arguments of William Empson and H. R. Coursen, Jr., that Castile was confederate with his son Lorenzo in organizing the death of Andrea,[35] but there is little in the play to support the theory. At the same time, the judgment that Castile is essentially "the innocent man"[36] or that part of the tragedy lies in the revenge having "to involve the innocent with the guilty"[37] ignores the fact that Castile is the first to be assigned to eternal punishment by the Ghost of Andrea. Coursen points out that "Whether [Castile] orders the murders [of Andrea and Horatio] or not, his policy demands them." Neither Andrea nor Horatio were socially significant enough to have had any hope of marrying Castile's daughter, and had either lived he would have been dealt with in one way or

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[35]Empson, "The Spanish Tragedy," reprinted from Nimbus, III (1956), in Elizabethan Drama: Modern Essays in Criticism (New York, 1961), ed. R. J. Kaufmann, pp. 60-80; Coursen, "The Unity of The Spanish Tragedy," SP, LXV (1968), 768-782.

[36]Edwards, Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. lxi.

[37]Cairncross, Introduction to The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy, p. xxviii.

another. To say with Coursen that Castile "represents the ambitious and powerful families who make ghosts of the humbler men who threaten them"[38] seems perfectly fair. Possibly this is justification enough for the fate he suffers.

In any case Kyd must have presupposed that his audience would concur in the final judgments set out in IV.v, where Hieronimo is promised an eternity of bliss. Everything in the play supports Hieronimo as the noble revenger who is forced by circumstances beyond his control to take vengeance into his own hands. In the world of Kyd's play Christian injunctions against private revenge are largely irrelevant and, as the play ends, the king's early promise to the marshal and Horatio gets its ironic fulfilment: "Nor thou nor he shall die without reward" (I.ii.100).

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[38] "The Unity of The Spanish Tragedy," p. 779.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY AND ANTICIPATIONS OF CHANGE

The popularity of Kyd's play has already been remarked. Possibly it passed into joint ownership following the disintegration of Derby's (until 25 September 1593, Strange's) Men in 1594,[1] but in any case the Admiral's were staging it in 1597--presumably with revisions or additions, since in Henslowe's entry for 7 January, the first recorded performance since January 1593, the play is marked as "ne."[2] It was staged five times in January 1597 and less frequently through to 11 October. Henslowe next mentions the play in 1601, and again in 1602: payments to Jonson for additions are recorded, but not performances.[3] There is convincing evidence, however, that The Spanish Tragedy was produced by

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[1] See Arthur Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems, pp. 121-122.

[2] Henslowe's Diary, p. 55.

[3] Henslowe's Diary, pp. 182, 203.

at least four companies between 1592 and 1604, so there is no reason to suppose it was dormant when theatres were open and Strange's or the Admiral's Men were not presenting it.[4]

Numerous allusions to the play in subsequent Elizabethan drama, often by way of close imitation and parody of memorable phrases and speeches, constitute more evidence of its popularity but also, and more importantly, of a change of taste in the more critical sections of the audience. There is no need to give here a comprehensive list of plays which contain parodies of Kyd or simply echo him; this has been done adequately by both Boas and Freeman.[5] A few may be noted. Jonson refers to The Spanish Tragedy frequently and his references rely for their effectiveness on the audience's recognition that the old play still had its full share of admirers. That it did is clear from its printing history: extant editions are dated [1592], 1594, 1599, 1602, 1602 (colophon, 1603), 1610 (colophon, 1611), 1615, 1618, 1623, and 1633. The reference in Cynthia's Revels to the theatre-goer who thinks "the old Hieronimo" the best play ever written has already been quoted. A

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[4]See Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems, pp. 120-125.

[5]Boas, Introduction to The Works of Thomas Kyd, pp. lxxxix-xciv; Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems, pp. 131-135.

similar type of patron is praised in the Induction to Bartholomew Fair (1614) "as a man whose Iudgement shewes it is constant, and hath stood still, these fiue and twentie, or thirtie yeeres."[6] Every Man in His Humour (1598) is closer to the old play in time but satirizes Kyd as out of date--old wine in a new bottle. Bobadill asks Matthew, "What new booke ha' you there? What! Goe by, HIERONYMO!" and they assure each other that it is "well pend."[7] As the Elizabethan drama matured, many dramatists naturally came to look upon old plays like The Spanish Tragedy, Titus Andronicus, and the old Hamlet as "mustie fopperies of antiquitie," to borrow Marston's phrase.[8] The veteran play-goer mentioned in the Induction to Bartholomew Fair is partial not only to The Spanish Tragedy but to Titus Andronicus as well. Dekker is particularly scathing. In Westward Ho Kyd's play is compared to an old woman ("if stale, like old Ieronimo: goe by, go by"[9]) and people are recommended to "play mad Hamlet, and

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[6] Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and P. Simpson, VI, 16.

[7] Ben Jonson, III, 319.

[8] Iacke Drums Entertainment: or the Comedie of Pasquill and Katherine (1601), sig. H3^{v}. It is impossible to know to which plays Marston is referring. He perhaps has old comedies rather than tragedies in mind.

[9] West-ward Hoe (1607), sig. D1^{r}.

crie reuenge";[10] while in Satiromastix (1601) Ben Jonson is sneered at because he is supposed to have once played Kyd's leading role,[11] and there is a reference to "mad Tamberlaine."[12] Although Rafe in Beaumont's The Knight of the Burning Pestle is familiar with a certain kind of contemporary drama, one feels that he, like Bottom in A Midsummer-Night's Dream (c. 1595), would be at his best in a play like Clyomon and Clamydes. So when Rafe models a speech on Andrea's prologue, that prologue is understood to be not only a familiar speech from an old play, but a speech from a play that no mature and intelligent person could any longer take seriously.[13] Deprecatory attitudes to the play are long-established, so the disinclination to revalue Kyd is understandable.

The reaction of Jonson, Dekker, Beaumont, and others to the play was perhaps partly a result of its immense popularity, but of course its language, characterized by over-developed rhetoric and over-elaborated figures, was

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[10] West-ward Hoe, sig. H3^{r}.

[11] Satiro-mastix, or the Untrussing of the Humorous Poet (1602), sig. G3^{v}.

[12] Satiro-mastix, sig. I3^{r}.

[13] The Knight of the Burning Pestle (1613), sigs. K3^{r}-K3^{v}.

outmoded before the turn of the century and open to parody. It is tempting to suggest that self-consciously sophisticated private theatre audiences enjoyed a joke at the expense of the crowds that were regularly flocking to the public theatres to see old favourites like The Spanish Tragedy, that they would have encouraged parody, being only too ready to respond in the proper way to the appropriate sections of Cynthia's Revels or Westward Ho. What must not be overlooked are the many satirical references to the old tragedy in plays staged at public theatres; among those mentioned above, Every Man in His Humour was a Chamberlain's play and Dekker's Satiromastix was under the joint auspices of the Chamberlain's and Paul's. The simple and obvious conclusion is that The Spanish Tragedy, as far as many dramatists and theatre-goers were concerned, exhausted itself and became "stale" in the 1590's and, because it was archaic and so well known, invited satire. Unlike the old Hamlet it was not fortunate enough to have a Shakespeare to save it from the scorn of later generations. What it needed in 1602 was something more than the Additions Pavier printed into it. It needed to be rewritten.

There was another kind of reaction against The Spanish

Tragedy, more serious and far-reaching in its effects, and the subject of the chapters that follow. From the turn of the century the heroic and justified revenger of Kyd becomes a villainous revenger, and through the new decade dramatists working in the framework of Kydian revenge tragedy explore the effects of vindictiveness on the characters of their protagonists. They effect a change towards the more orthodox moral attitude: the character who takes retributive justice into his own hands deserves his fate and rightly loses the sympathy of the audience.

One can only surmise when trying to account for this reaction. Bowers, who sees the transition beginning with Chettle's Hoffman rather than with Marston's Antonio's Revenge, suggests "the need for variation" as contributory and argues that "The development of the tragedies of revenge before and after Hoffman indicates clearly that the Elizabethan audiences were growing increasingly chary of accepting the bloody heroes as good and admirable men."[14]

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[14] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 126, 127. For Bowers the phrase "tragedies of revenge" is distinguished from the phrase "revenge tragedies," the former covering plays that are outside the Kydian type (as defined earlier), plays in which revenge can be a very subsidiary motif. Bowers, it might be pointed out, seems to contradict himself somewhat, as he has earlier argued (p. 77) that Hieronimo "inevitably becomes a villain" when he turns to private revenge.

The intellectual reaction against The Spanish Tragedy might also be taken into account. There is no indication in Jonson's or anyone else's parody of sections of Kyd's play that they were critical of its morality, but (as Bowers recognizes) change was being anticipated through the late 1580's and early 1590's in several plays that, while they cannot be categorized as revenge tragedies in the Kydian sense, embody revengers as subsidiary characters or revenge as a subsidiary theme. It is not difficult to visualize a reaction in revenge tragedy against the heroic revenger on both intellectual and moral grounds and, as will be seen shortly, Marston's play suggests very strongly that the two were co-operative and mutually reinforcing.

Importantly, while there was ample precedent for Kyd's concept of the revenger as justified in his actions, more orthodox attitudes were never without dramatists to take them up. In Gorboduc (1562) the political theme is paramount, but revenge is of more than incidental interest. Ferrex refuses on moral grounds to revenge his father's giving away half the kingdom to the younger brother, realizing the political and social consequences revenge would entail. It is the vicious characters who are vindictive, and notably the queen, who murders her repentant son Porrex to revenge his

killing of Ferrex. Absolon in Peele's David and Bethsabe (c. 1587) dies a villain of sorts, and David makes it clear that he considers revenge the prerogative of God alone.[15] In Hughes's The Misfortunes of Arthur (1588) Arthur comes to repent that he did not practise what he earlier advised--to "leaue the Heauens reuengers of my wrong."[16] Although it can hardly be called a revenge tragedy, revenge motivates much of the action of Marlowe's The Jew of Malta (c. 1589). Any initial sympathy the audience might feel for Barabas is quickly destroyed and, as the farcical element T. S. Eliot first stressed comes increasingly to the fore,[17] Barabas becomes a caricature--among other things, perhaps, a caricature of the revenger. In the anonymous Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany (c. 1594) Alexander's vindictiveness is understandable but like Barabas he quickly forfeits the audience's sympathy and ends as a villain.

Apart from Locrine, the only play of the 1590's in which the revenger is arguably justified is Titus Andronicus. The play deserves some notice here because revenge, while it

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[15] The Loue of King Dauid and Fair Bethsabe (1599), sig. E2^{v}.

[16] The Misfortunes of Arthur (1587 [1588]), sig. C4^{r}.

[17] Elizabethan Dramatists (London, 1963), pp. 63-64. The essay on Marlowe was written in 1919.

is not the central unifying motif that it is in Kyd and in the plays most directly under his influence, is a strong element in the total design. When Titus turns to private vengeance in the last act as the only course remaining to him he is probably fairly secure in his audience's sympathy. One may reasonably doubt, though, whether he retains it through the business of cutting the throats of Tamora's children and making pasties of them. That he is meant to is just possibly suggested by Marcus' words to the Romans when the grisly scene is over:

> Now iudge what course had Titus to reuenge
> These wrongs, vnspeakeable past patience,
> Or more then any liuing man could beare.[18]

But these lines have a reference to the theatre audience too, constituting a reminder that any horror and revulsion it feels should be modified with pity and the recognition that the cause was sufficient to justify the deaths, if not their manner. In other words the audience is asked to understand rather than to condone. Bowers is surely correct in emphasizing "the number of faults in the revenger's character, which, though balanced by obvious virtues, make

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[18] Ll. 2629-2631 of The Tragedie of Titus Andronicus in the Norton facsimile of The First Folio of Shakespeare, ed. Charlton Hinman.

necessary a tragic ending for his bloodstained life."[19] The final two scenes must cause mixed reactions in an audience and quite possibly the dominant response would be to an extraordinary, rather than to a villainous or praiseworthy, hero.[20]

There is some evidence in the Additions to The Spanish Tragedy to suggest that those in charge of staging Kyd's play were themselves concerned about the propriety of a heroic, justified revenger, and that they did their best to make Hieronimo more acceptable to orthodox opinion. The Additions first printed by Pavier in 1602 are probably not those Henslowe commissioned Jonson to write,[21] and there is reason to suppose that some, though not all, may have been composed years before the dates of Henslowe's commissions (1601, 1602). Something was new about the play in 1597, when Henslowe marked it as "ne," and Marston's Antonio and Mellida (c. 1599, but not printed until 1602) contains a

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[19] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 116.

[20] See Eugene M. Waith's analysis, which examines the way Shakespeare takes over Ovidian forms and Ovidian conceptions of the protagonist, in "The Metamorphosis of Violence in Titus Andronicus," ShS, X (1957), 39-49.

[21] Jonson's claim to authorship is rejected on stylistic grounds by Herford and Simpson (Ben Jonson, II, 245). Other objections to Jonson are summarized by Freeman, Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems, pp. 125-130.

parody of A4 (the "Painter's part").[22] The question of authorship and provenance, however, need not concern us here. What is important is, first, that the Additions offer yet another indication of the popularity of the play, representing a "desire to keep it fresh by adding new scenes";[23] and, second, that they change the character of Hieronimo considerably.

This latter point is vital: quite simply, the Additions make Hieronimo mad. In the original play his self-control occasionally lapses and he suffers a delusion over the identity of Bazulto. Otherwise, he is perfectly sane. Although Lorenzo, for reasons of his own, would like the king to believe Hieronimo "lunatic," the word "mad" is used only once, when the Portuguese viceroy refers to Fortune as "wilful mad" (I.iii.25).[24] In the Additions it occurs

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[22]See Harry Levin, "An Echo from The Spanish Tragedy," MLN, LXIV (1949), 297-302. Hereward T. Price's "'Titus Andronicus' and the Additions to 'The Spanish Tragedy'," N&Q, N.S. IX (1962), 331, establishes the date of A4 beyond doubt as 1600-1602. If Antonio and Mellida was on the boards in 1599, as is generally assumed, then Marston must have added the parody later, between 1600 and 1602. The problems Price's note raises in relation to Marston's play have gone unnoticed. Price seems not to recognize them himself.

[23]Philip Edwards, Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. 1.

[24]Quotations from The Spanish Tragedy and the Additions are from Edwards' edn., where the Additions are printed together at the end of the original play, pp. 122-135.

no less than ten times. Hieronimo shows no signs of madness immediately before A1, where he is suddenly made to appear pitiable. Isabella addresses him as "sweet Hieronimo" twice (A1.8, A1.14) and again as "Dear Hieronimo" (A1.37). "Ay me, he raves!" she exclaims, as he orders somebody called Roderigo to search for Horatio "in his chamber" (A1.6-8). Although he is face to face with the body, he does not recognize it: "I wonder how this fellow got his clothes!" (A1.15). The passage ends with him returning to his senses: "How strangely had I lost my way to grief" (A1.54). This seems contrived but is clearly necessary, since otherwise the incongruity would be too obvious in the original lines that follow. In A2, the shortest of the Additions, Hieronimo carelessly gives Lorenzo grounds for suspicion and refers to his grief as "a toy" (A2.3). A3 is dramatically effective. Hieronimo considers the nature of a son and prophesies divine vengeance on the murderers. The audience gets a deeper insight into his grief through language that conveys genuine emotional distress. The wisdom the lines contain, though, is the wisdom of a doting old man, as Hieronimo, out of his wits with grief, admits:

> What is there yet in a son
> To make a father dote, rave or run mad? (A3.9-10)

The "Painter's part," A4, opens with Jaques asking Pedro why

Hieronimo should be acting so strangely of late. Pedro's reply anticipates the sort of character Hieronimo reveals when he appears:

> O Jaques, know thou that our master's mind
> Is much distraught since his Horatio died,
> And, now his aged years should sleep in rest,
> His heart in quiet, like a desperate man,
> Grows lunatic and childish for his son:
> Sometimes, as he doth at his table sit,
> He speaks as if Horatio stood by him,
> Then starting in a rage, falls on the earth,
> Cries out, 'Horatio! Where is my Horatio?'
> So that with extreme grief and cutting sorrow,
> There is not left in him one inch of man:
> See where he comes.
>
> Enter HIERONIMO.
>
> Hier. I pry through every crevice of each wall,
> Look on each tree, and search through every brake,
> Beat at the bushes, stamp our grandam earth,
> Dive in the water, and stare up to heaven,
> Yet cannot I behold my son Horatio.
> How now? Who's there? Sprites? sprites? (A4.5-22)

Throughout the passage he shows little sign of being anything other than the character Pedro has described. At one point he denies he is mad (A4.42-45), at another he admits it (A4.163-165). The last Addition, like the second, adds little to the play and it is difficult to justify its inclusion.

Although Boas felt that A1 was little more than "a sop to a debased theatrical taste,"[25] he recognized the high literary quality of A3 and, in particular, of A4. The

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[25] Introduction to The Works of Thomas Kyd, p. lxxxviii.

Additions have, in fact, often received higher praise than the original play. Coleridge suspected that they were written by Shakespeare,[26] and there has been recent support for the view.[27] Charles K. Cannon has attempted to show how the author of the Additions had "a close and sympathetic understanding of the possibilities as well as the limitations of The Spanish Tragedy in its original form."[28] The 1602 play is a new Spanish Tragedy, not simply a Spanish Tragedy with additions. It has never been satisfactorily shown, though, how different an audience's reaction to Hieronimo's revenge could be when the play is received in its 1602, as opposed to its 1592, form.[29] For it is no longer necessary to sympathize with his turning to private revenge, let alone his tongue-biting and his killing of Castile, since

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[26] Table Talk (London, 1884), p. 210.

[27] See Warren Stevenson, "Shakespeare's Hand in The Spanish Tragedy 1602," SEL, VIII (1968), 307-321.

[28] "The Relation of the Additions of The Spanish Tragedy to the Original Play," SEL, II (1962), 231.

[29] Cannon (pp. 238-239) sees the problem of revenge modified by the presence of the Additions, but not overcome: in the world of the enlarged play "private revenge cannot be sanctioned, but neither can legal punishment be assured" (p. 238). The Additions, however, are seen to be concerned not so much with the revenge motif as with "the underlying problem: that of a world dominated by evil in which exists only a tantalizing promise of good" (p. 232). In suggesting another raison d'être for the Additions I am not implying that Cannon's is invalid. The Additions are probably effective on several levels of meaning.

everything can be understood by reference to the state of his mind. "Dear," "sweet" Hieronimo is not really responsible for what he does, so his assignment to a heaven in the final scene presents no difficulty either. He has suffered beyond what he could be expected to endure, and it is his intellectual and spiritual breakdown that constitutes the tragedy of the play, rather than his failure in his capacity as magistrate to find human justice. Orthodoxy is satisfied yet Hieronimo still ultimately saved.

One would not wish to suggest this as the only purpose the Additions serve, but it is one explanation for their existence. There is, moreover, the positioning of A4 to be noticed. It is placed immediately before Hieronimo's "Vindicta mihi!" speech and its final lines cannot help but affect an audience's response to him there:

> Paint. And is this the end?
> Hier. O no, there is no end: the end is death and madness. As I am never better than when I am mad, then methinks I am a brave fellow, then I do wonders: but reason abuseth me, and there's the torment, there's the hell. At the last, sir, bring me to one of the murderers: were he as strong as Hector, thus would I tear and drag him up and down.
> He beats the Painter in, then comes out again with a book in his hand.

PART II

REVENGE TRAGEDY, 1600-1611

CHAPTER V

ANTONIO'S REVENGE

Antonio's Revenge (c. 1600) has generally been accepted as the rather unsuccessful product of Marston's attempt to write a serious Kydian revenge tragedy. The similarities between its plot and those of *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Hamlet* have been pointed to repeatedly[1] and, understandably, most scholars see Marston as "at first a little clumsy in handling the technique of tragedy."[2] The construction appears careless, the characterization inconsistent, and the language a poor imitation of the "ranting" styles found in earlier tragedies of blood. *Antonio's Revenge* fails as tragedy and it fails as melodrama--facts that even a brief outline of its plot would suffice to

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[1] See, e.g., A. H. Thorndike, "The Relations of *Hamlet* to Contemporary Revenge Plays," *PMLA*, XVII (1902), 155-166; Fredson Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, pp. 118-119; G. K. Hunter, Introduction to the Regents edn. of *Antonio's Revenge* (London, 1966), pp. xviii-xxi.

[2] Una Ellis-Fermor, *The Jacobean Drama* (London, 1965; first edn. 1936), p. 77.

illustrate.

Most critics agree that the play is in "the pure Kydian tradition."[3] Their confusion tends to centre on the nature of the play's hero. Because the ending apparently takes no account of the wanton brutality Antonio has effected, they sense a gross failure in the conception of the "poor orphan" revenger deserving of the audience's sympathy to the end. The final vow the revengers make to become "constant votaries" does not attest Marston's awareness of the tarnished nature of his heroes, for he makes it clear that their retreat does not involve penance. The morality of the revenge seemingly goes unquestioned, yet it is far more difficult to sanction Antonio than Hieronimo or Hamlet.[4]

It is little wonder that critics have singled out the disjunctions apparent in the presentation of the hero as

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[3]Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 118.

[4]It is an open question as to the degree of blame Shakespeare attaches to Hamlet. See, e.g., Bowers, "Hamlet as Minister and Scourge"; Eleanor Prosser, Hamlet and Revenge, pp. 199-201; Myron Taylor, "Tragic Justice and the House of Polonius," SEL, VIII (1968), 273-281. Bowers argues persuasively that Hamlet proceeds from being heaven's scourge (in his slaying of Polonius) to acting as its sanctioned minister at the end. Prosser opposes this view; nonetheless she maintains that "Hamlet's soul is ultimately saved, but in spite of, not because of, his revenge" (p. 237). Taylor sees Hamlet as minister even in the death of Polonius.

the clearest evidence of Marston's careless artistry. Antonio is shown at one moment as the voice of Complaint speaking against murderers and "mature vice," and as a vicious murderer himself at the next, an odd hero indeed whose self-righteousness is vitiated by his own hypocrisy, and whose inhumanity is so great that in the final scene Piero seems almost pitiable alongside him.[5] In his recent edition of the play G. K. Hunter claims that "It is one of the principal difficulties of Antonio's Revenge that the surface language of conventional moral concern is not merely detached from but largely contradictory of the underlying pattern of amoral ritual."[6] Elsewhere Hunter says of Marston that "As an author he is notoriously careless and probably contemptuous of his means of expression,"[7] echoing T. S. Eliot, who understood the dramatist to have been "so exasperated by having to write in a form which he despised that he deliberately wrote worse than he could have written, in order to relieve his feelings."[8] Others have been less

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[5]See John Peter's analysis in his Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature (Oxford, 1956), pp. 223-230.

[6]Introduction to Antonio's Revenge, p. xviii.

[7]"English Folly and Italian Vice: The Moral Landscape of John Marston," Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, I (1960), 91.

[8]Elizabethan Dramatists (London, 1963), p. 156. The Marston essay was written in 1934.

ready to blame the author for bad dramaturgy, preferring to see the play as a reflection (in its limitations) of its having been written for the private stage. The plot is understood to answer "the demands of an audience who want all the horrors of Revenge and none of its moral implications."[9] Robert Ornstein considered the possibility that the final scene might have been--quite consciously on the part of Marston--"a sardonic travesty of Christian sentiment," rejected it, and concluded that the play's ethical intention is "as peripheral as that of Titus Andronicus." The dramatist simply "perfumes the butchery with the odor of sanctity."[10] Apologists assume that the reasons lie in the nature of the private theatre audience.

Contemporary with much of this criticism has been an attempt to reinterpret Marston's early work--The Metamorphosis of Pygmalion's Image and Certain Satires and The Scourge of Villainy, both of which appeared in 1598, probably less than two years before Antonio's Revenge--in a manner much more flattering to the poet than earlier analyses had proved. For

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[9]T. B. Tomlinson, A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy (Melbourne, 1964), p. 220. See also Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions (New York, 1952), p. 168.

[10]The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy (Madison, Wis., 1960), pp. 155, 156.

"Pygmalion's Image" it begins by taking seriously the poet's own professed aim in writing the piece, expressed in the sixth satire of The Scourge as having been

> to note the odious spot
> And blemish that deformes the lineaments
> Of moderne Poesies habiliments.[11]

In other words it is now generally accepted as a parody of the sensuous neo-Ovidian poetry that flourished in the last decade of the sixteenth century.[12] At the same time there is an increasing tendency to stress the poet's role, in the verse satire and elsewhere, of moral teacher: in Gustav Cross's words, "the most important thing to remember about Marston is that he was first and foremost a moralist . . . . Despite its great unevenness, his work has the consistency of purpose one would expect of a writer who set out as a scourger of villainy and ended as a divine."[13]

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[11] The Scourge of Villanie (1598), sig. E6^{v}.

[12] See esp. Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis, 1932), p. 179; Gustav Cross, "Marston's 'Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image': A Mock Epyllion," Études Anglaises, XIII (1960), 331-336; Anthony Caputi, John Marston, Satirist (Ithaca, N.Y., 1961), pp. 14-22; R. A. Foakes, "John Marston's Fantastical Plays: Antonio and Mellida and Antonio's Revenge," PQ, XLI (1962), 236n. Bush suggests, Cross affirms for the first time, and Caputi and Foakes accept, the poem's parodic nature.

[13] "The Retrograde Genius of John Marston," REL, II, No. 4 (1961), 20.

It is in the context of a growing awareness that "Recognition of what [Marston] was trying to do is the first step towards a juster appreciation of what he actually did"[14] that R. A. Foakes's radical revaluation of Antonio and Mellida and Antonio's Revenge should be read.[15] Foakes claims that the latter play is not meant to be taken as a serious effort in the genre of revenge tragedy at all, but as a parody of that form and of the acting styles used by adult performers at the public theatres. The frequent absurdity of the play's rhetoric is there for deliberate effect, to be exploited by the child actors in their "infant weakness." An audience is expected to be amused by the imitation, the burlesque, of the old rhetoric, and critically aware that this style was still being cultivated by adult players. Marston's conclusion is explained as "deliberately outraging in its calculated enormity a conventional ending which would have punished Antonio."[16] Obviously, many of the difficulties in the way of appreciation vanish when the play is approached in this way. Foakes's argument, though, entails a tendency to neglect the serious element given

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[14]Cross, "The Retrograde Genius of John Marston," p. 27.

[15]"John Marston's Fantastical Plays," pp. 229-239.

[16]"John Marston's Fantastical Plays," p. 236.

development in the play, and it is this element that will be examined in some detail here.

It would be unwise to regard the material of the satirical pieces that had so recently occupied Marston's energies as a totally unacceptable representation of his moral perceptions when he came to write plays, in most of which the satiric impulse is strong. One ought at least to consider the possibility that he viewed with some uneasiness the assumptions that allowed an audience to respond to a revenger like Hieronimo in the manner that Kyd's play indicates they were expected to respond. It is certainly worthwhile examining Antonio's Revenge with a view to discovering whether there is anything in the play that might suggest a more than parodic approach to the Kydian form. Of course if Marston did write his play partly as a comment on the morality of revenge tragedies incorporating nobly heroic revengers like Hieronimo or Hamlet it would be Marston's hero, Antonio, whom one would expect to carry, in his actions and attitudes, the weight of the author's moral preoccupations.

The play opens with the bloodied murderer, Piero,

gloating in his butcheries and followed closely by an accomplice whose obvious business is strangling people, the horrifying nature of the scene enhanced by the presence of a flickering torch and a clock that strikes two in accompaniment with "howling dogs, nightcrows, and screeching owls" (I.i.7).[17] No other Elizabethan play begins with anything like the announcement of the savage nature of its world that Marston makes here. It engenders an immediate sympathy for Antonio when he appears, and an impatience for his discovery of the manner of his father's death--feelings that are fortified by Piero's second appearance "as at first" (I.ii.191.1). The stoic acceptance with which Pandulpho meets the evidence of his son's grisly death would probably be greeted with disbelief by most members of an audience, and his very eloquent refutation of the supposed valour of a violent reaction dismissed as academic in the circumstances. Marston is encouraging in his audience the notion of the justness of private vengeance for injuries as great as those which Antonio and Pandulpho suffer. Piero's prostitution of his daughter to the ends of "policy" makes the taking of revenge doubly imperative for Antonio, and when Piero openly admits that he seeks the

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[17]Quotations are from Hunter's edn. of the play.

boy's life the urgency for direct action must completely dispose of Pandulpho's philosophy as suicidal.

By the end of Act Two Marston has so conditioned his audience that it is ready to follow Antonio in anything he might conceivably do to avenge his father's murder. Although the author's parodic interests tend to obscure the serious issues, Antonio's determination to "with dissemblance fight" (II.ii.164) seems understandable, and Marston's audience is in a similar position to that of Kyd's, ready to see private revenge as a justifiable answer to the evil forces at large in the world of the play.

What Marston does in the remainder of his play is to undermine the sympathetic attitude he has encouraged by working out a number of situations that involve his audience in an understanding of the real nature of the revenger. The process reaches its climax in the final scene, where Marston ridicules the myth of the heroic revenger by emphasizing it and at the same time highlighting the paradoxes it involves--to such an extent that the survival of the heroes is received with the horror it deserves. In no other Elizabethan play does the consciously-felt relationship of a writer to the genre he is working within emerge more

clearly than it does in Antonio's Revenge.

The first thing to stress is the significance of III.i. Here, if anywhere in the play, will be seen the real Antonio, for this episode is at once the most intensely realized dramatically and the most serious--the scene in which parody is least evident. It presents the motivation for Antonio's murdering of the young Julio, and the execution of that act. Within its action it provides, as will be seen presently, the first clear indication of what the hero represents for the author, and what he must be for an audience that pays any attention to the subtle shifts of language that underline his essential significance.

Antonio is observing "due obsequies" to his father's grave in Saint Mark's churchyard, and vows to continue to do so with "religious tears" every night. He asks, however, that his father's spirit help him to destroy the possibility of his mother marrying Piero, to

> beat down this rising fog of shame
> That strives to blur thy blood and girt defame
> About my innocent and spotless brows. (III.i.28-30)

With regard to what ensues, Antonio's conception of himself as both "religious" and "innocent" should be noted. Responding

to his son's despairing "Non est mori miserum, sed misere mori" (III.i.31), the Ghost of Andrugio "Forsakes his coffin" with the cry, reminiscent of the early Hamlet, of "Antonio, revenge!" (III.i.34). This is his command to his "innocent" son, his response to the "religious tears." It comes, in different forms, three times in the first six lines he is given and is followed by other incitements that detail the kind of revenge the ghost requires. Typical of these is the instruction to

> Invent some stratagem of vengeance
> Which, but to think on, may like lightning glide
> With horror through thy breast (III.i.48-50)

and the next line's Senecan maxim that can be translated as "Crimes are not revenged unless they are exceeded." With this last piece of coaxing the Ghost of Andrugio quits the stage.

Presumably Antonio stands deep in thought as his mother (accompanied by Nutriche) enters, for he shows no sign of noticing her presence as he bursts into eight lines of Seneca that express (in Latin) his avowal of vengeance to the "harsh judge of the shades" (III.i.66-73). Maria's conclusion that her "son's distraught" (III.i.74) is understandable. She actually suggests the process his emotions are going through when she begs him to calm his

"mutining affections" (III.i.75), for that is precisely what they are. Antonio's darker personality is assuming command, pushing down the old "religious," "innocent" self and replacing it with the mentality of a revenger in the worst tradition. The only surprizing feature of all this is that Antonio does not see himself as having changed at all from the poor innocent orphan of the early scenes. He does not seek heaven's consent for the "dire vengeance" he vows again and again to effect. Like Hamlet in the closet scene he assumes it, and Marston is fully aware, as the audience ought to be, of the irony implicit in that assumption when it gets its expression in lines like

> May I be cursed by my father's ghost
> And blasted with incensed breath of heaven,
> If my heart beat on ought but vengeance! (III.i.85-87)

This might be put down to rhetorical extravagance if the chilling conjunction of heaven and private retribution were not insisted upon:

> I have a prayer or two to offer up
> For the good, good prince, my most dear, dear lord,
> The duke Piero, and your virtuous self;
> And then when those prayers have obtain'd success,
> In sooth I'll come--believe it now--and couch
> My head in downy mold; but first I'll see
> You safely laid. I'll bring ye all to bed--
> Piero, Maria, Strotzo, Julio,
> I'll see you all laid--I'll bring you all to bed,
> And then, i'faith, I'll come and couch my head
> And sleep in peace. (III.i.96-106)

Marston does more, however, than suggest the monstrous

nature of what the ghost has made of Antonio. He now allows him to tell the audience, precisely and finally, that he has become in every respect except in deed a murderer, and further--this follows in the nature of a logical argument--that in assuming his new role of revenger he has become "More than a devil." The soliloquy demands close attention as its implications have a crucial bearing upon everything that has previously proved confusing about Antonio. Maria has suggested that he follow her and the others who "go before" to take some rest. Left alone, he begins his tirade against miserable man with a cynical reply:

> Ay, so you must, before we touch the shore
> Of wish'd revenge. O, you departed souls
> That lodge in coffin'd trunks which my feet press:
> If Pythagorean axioms be true,
> Of spirits' transmigration, fleet no more
> To human bodies; rather live in swine,
> Inhabit wolves' flesh, scorpions, dogs, and toads
> Rather than man. The curse of heaven reigns
> In plagues unlimited through all his days;
> His mature age grows only mature vice,
> And ripens only to corrupt and rot
> The budding hopes of infant modesty;
> Still striving to be more than man, he proves
> More than a devil; devilish suspect,
> Devilish cruelty, all hell-strain'd juice
> Is poured to his veins, making him drunk
> With fuming surquedries, contempt of heaven,
> Untam'd arrogance, lust, state, pride, murder.
> Andrugio. Murder!)
> Feliche. Murder!) From above and beneath.
> Pandulpho. Murder!)
> Antonio. Ay, I will murder; graves and ghosts
> Fright me no more; I'll suck red vengeance
> Out of Piero's wounds, Piero's wounds. (III.i.107-130)

These lines are usually cited only when a critic is trying to

establish the kind of misanthropic element he senses in Marston. Nobody seems to have noticed that Antonio's "Ay, I will murder" is no mere affirmation of vengeance, that it links directly (if unconsciously for Antonio) to the word "murder" four lines earlier, to "arrogance, lust, state, pride" and the "Devilish cruelty" of "mature vice." The whole soliloquy should be understood as a logical process of definition. Marston has established the change in his hero in terms of moral degradation, and readers should be fully prepared for the episode which now follows instead of reacting with the shocked disbelief that characterizes the response of those who think they are still being asked to accept sympathetically an heroic murderer.

Julio has not been able to sleep. Possibly the "bugbears and spirits" that have haunted him (III.i.138) are premonitions, but he does not connect them with Antonio. An audience might well do so, however, as Antonio declines the opportunity to take revenge on Piero quickly and cleanly, anticipating sadistically the possibilities that are now opening. Julio is at hand to serve his purpose and significantly it is heaven that gets the thanks--"I do adore thy justice" (III.i.151)--in imagery thick with irony:

> Time, place, and blood,
> How fit you close together! Heaven's tones

> Strike not such music to immortal souls
> As your accordance sweets my breast withal.
> (III.i.157-160)

When the child begs mercy for Mellida's sake (Julio being Antonio's prospective brother-in-law) Antonio is moved almost to relent, but one word from the ghost is enough to prevent that. Oddly rationalizing murder, he swears that he loves the boy's soul while loathing the blood: "It is not thee I hate, not thee I kill" (III.i.178). His resolution is the more alarming as it is pursued in the face of an absolute trust, on Julio's part, which manifests itself in sentences that seem to defy Antonio's determination. Marston is deliberately destroying the "heroic" image developed earlier, and after the "sacrifice" he continues to work upon the audience's sense of the grotesque:

> Here stands Andrugio's son,
> Worthy his father. (III.i.196-197)

> Forget this was thy trunk. I live thy friend.
> (III.i.203)

Justifiably, G. K. Hunter sees the murder as a ritual; but it is difficult to see how the morality of Antonio's actions is, "in terms of the play's aesthetic, unimportant."[18] It is essential that religious imagery should attach itself to Antonio, for he represents Marston's

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[18] Introduction to Antonio's Revenge, p. xvi.

view of the stage revenger who could successfully seek the audience's sympathy while committing murder in the role of heaven's agent. But it is as something more than a parody of that hero that Antonio is to be understood. This is apparent as Marston twists the associations and involves the character in irony:

> Lo, thus I heave my blood-dyed hands to heaven;
> Even like insatiate hell, still crying: "More!
> My heart hath thirsting dropsies after gore."
> (III.i.211-213)

If the allusion to the supplicant's own earlier elaboration of "Devilish cruelty"

> drunk
> With fuming surquedries (III.i.122-123)

is missed, there is this (with which Antonio closes the scene):

> Sound peace and rest to church, night-ghosts
> and graves;
> Blood cries for blood; and murder murder craves.
> (III.i.214-215)

The new personality delineated in the churchyard scene is reinforced subtly in the next. The stage direction at III.ii.75.1-75.2,

> Enter Antonio, his arms bloody, [in one hand] a torch and [in the other] a poniard,

recalls (as Hunter's note points out) Piero at I.i.0.1-0.2,

> unbrac'd, his arms bare, smear'd in blood, a poniard in one hand, bloody, and a torch in the other.

Importantly, this is Antonio's first appearance since the murder of Julio. It is noticeable how regularly resemblances between the two characters are shown, and some sort of parallel is apparently implied. The similarities are too many to be accounted for as mere coincidences. Antonio's "triumphant chariot of revenge" (III.ii.81) echoes Piero's "triumphing vengeance" at I.i.11. The lines

> Look how I smoke in blood, reeking the steam
> Of foaming vengeance (III.ii.79-80)

closely resemble Piero's earlier

> I have been nurs'd in blood, and still have suck'd
> The steam of reeking gore. (II.i.19-20)

The ghost advises Antonio to be "peerless in revenge" (III.ii.91) while Piero sees himself as "Unequal'd in revenge" (I.i.18).[19] All this suggests that Marston is working up to some supreme equation of the two which in fact comes shortly afterwards, in IV.i. The cumulative evidence of Antonio's real nature reinforces the significance of his swearing

> by the genius of that Florentine,
> Deep, deep-observing, sound-brain'd Mach'avel,
> He is not wise that strives not to seem fool.
> (IV.i.23-25)

The lines are hardly inappropriate. Any member of an

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[19]Indeed the ghost urges Antonio to be as excessive as possible in revenge and "o'erflow the brim" (III.ii.89).

Elizabethan audience who remained confused up to this point about how he was supposed to receive Marston's revenger could have few doubts after this. The praise of "Mach'avel" has another purpose: it reduces Antonio to the moral level of Piero, who is mentioned in the very next line. Almost immediately, Antonio confirms the alignment:

> Most things that morally adhere to souls
> Wholly exist in drunk opinion,
> Whose reeling censure, if I value not,
> It values nought. (IV.i.31-34)

A similar outlook allows the Machiavellian Piero to ponder his chance to

> conquer Rome,
> Pop out the light of bright religion;
> And then, helter-skelter, all cocksure! (IV.i.266-268)

Antonio, of course, is never given the clear-cut characteristics of the old Vice that Piero displays and it is easy to dismiss the clues offered for a proper understanding of him--particularly as they are frequently presented in conjunction with his assumption of an almost religious self-righteousness and a tiresome self-pity:

> I am a poor, poor orphan; a weak, weak child,
> The wrack of splitted fortune, the very ooze,
> The quicksand that devours all misery.
> Behold the valiant'st creature that doth breathe!
> For all this, I dare live, and I will live,
> Only to numb some others' cursed blood
> With the dead palsy of like misery. (IV.ii.14-20)

Not only is he determined to be "peerless in revenge," but

at the same time "Most miserable, most unmatch'd in woe" (IV.ii.80). The villainy, however, is continually emphasized and the pathos undercut. Certainly it is a difficult undertaking to parody a type of play and at the same time comment seriously upon it. One tends to laugh at Antonio and remain deaf to the other stance he is given; or take him simply as a serious protagonist in a serious play and wonder at the weird morality that makes him a hero.

The difficulty of interpretation can be illustrated by examining a single line and the stage direction that follows, Antonio's

> Let's think a plot; then pell-mell vengeance!
> Exeunt, their arms wreathed.
> (IV.ii.118-118.1)

One reader might see nothing remarkable in this at all. Another could point to the stage direction as evidence that the line's apparent force is not to be taken seriously: child actors are being exploited and their exit, "arms wreathed," burlesques the "weighty passion" to be had at the public theatres. A third might go further and insist that the adverb "pell-mell" is no mere accident here, that it very adequately sums up the nature of the revenge Antonio proposes and the sum total of his concern for the morality of that vengeance. Like Piero's "helter-skelter" (IV.i.268),

it carries with it important implications about the speaker. The use of "pell-mell" here can be compared with Piero's at II.ii.221-223:

> Piero's thoughts are fixed on dire exploits;
> Pell mell! confusion and black murder guides
> The organs of my spirit.

The word is in fact used only in reference to the inconsiderate taking of blood, to indicate its users' lack of any directing moral consciousness. This is so for the two other occasions on which Marston employs it. Before he stabs Julio, Antonio expresses the wish that it might be possible to kill the father's part of the child, leaving the mother's unharmed:

> But since 'tis mix'd together,
> Have at adventure, pell-mell, no reverse!
> (III.i.167-168)

Later he stabs Piero:

> Now, pell-mell! Thus the hand of heaven chokes
> The throat of murder. This for my father's blood!
> (V.iii.108-109)

The third interpretation is the most illuminating and provides another clue to the nature of the play.

Marston's treatment of the ghost further illustrates the nature of his preoccupations. It is an error to see the ghost as another (more actively participating) Andrea. Andrugio's ghost has no direct connection with any higher

moral order beyond the world he haunts. His conception of justice is so obviously and completely anti-Christian that his references to heaven beg an ironical interpretation:

> Now looks down providence
> T'attend the last act of my son's revenge. (V.i.10-11)

More effectively than any reading of the play, a performance would bring out the reaction Marston demands:

> the veins panting bleed,
> Trickling fresh gore about my fist. . . .
> Ghost of Andrugio. Blest be thy hand. I taste the joys of heaven,
> Viewing my son triumph in his black blood.
> (V.iii.65-68)

The evidence suggests that Marston is deliberately seeking to shock in such instances, implying that both Antonio and the ghost assume a divine sanction to which they have no right. The inference can be drawn that through them Marston is making a serious comment on the sanctioning of earlier heroes like Hieronimo and Hamlet who retained an aura of virtue even in their necessary deaths.[20]

Some such interpretation of the ghost and Antonio is necessary if the final scene is to be understood at all. Antonio is a grotesque inflation of the heroic, "good"

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[20]Necessary because a willing suspension of everyday morality could only be taken so far. In a sense, Hieronimo's death is probably a sop to official attitudes that any audience would to some extent supported, even in Kyd's theatre.

revenger so familiar to Marston's contemporaries through what was probably the best-known example of the type, Hieronimo. Marston makes him grotesque quite consciously to emphasize what he sees as the amorality of the Kydian conception of the hero. The portrayal is consistent to the end, and for the very good reason that to have Antonio escape censure is to deliberately and tellingly avoid the question of the nature of the hero who is also a revenger, to force a shocked awareness of the amorality of the accepted conception of that hero. It is a much more effective "morality" play than it would have been had Marston finally revealed Antonio as a villain. There is evidence that he prepared his audience for such a revelation and withheld it, inverting values to communicate his message more forcefully. A brief examination of the last two scenes will bear this out adequately enough.

Further to enhance Antonio's essential villainy, Marston subtly diminishes the earlier image he has developed of Piero as the Machiavellian devil. It is as if he were not sure that Piero's villainy might not be so great that anything Antonio inflicted on him would be regarded as justified at this point. So there is a reference to his "grief" (V.ii.22), an emotion one would not perhaps expect

in a Vice figure. In the final scene his approach to the masked conspirators, when he has ordered the others from the room, is almost convivial:

> Only myself? O, why, with all my heart.
> I'll fill your consort; here Piero sits.
> Come on, unmask; let's fall to. (V.iii.60-62)

Marston goes a step further. After the tongue-plucking incident he has Piero weep--and Pandulpho aver that "I had no vengeance if I had no tears" (V.iii.76). As Antonio offers the limbs of Julio with cool sarcasm--"Here's flesh and blood which I am sure thou lov'st" (V.iii.80)--Piero, in accordance with the stage direction, "seems to condole his son." Piero's humanity and Antonio's lack of it are contrasted so decidedly that the point can hardly be missed:

> Now, therefore, pity, piety, remorse,
> Be aliens to our thoughts; grim fire-ey'd rage
> Possess us wholly.
> [Piero again seems to condole his son.]
> (V.iii.89-91.1)

Marston then takes away any dignity he has left his "heroes" (and, through Balurdo, reminds the audience of the parodic element ever-present):

> Antonio. Scum of the mud of hell!
> Alberto. Slime of all filth!
> Maria. Thou most detested toad!
> Balurdo. Thou most retort and obtuse rascal!
> (V.iii.96-99)

Antonio ludicrously advises Piero (one line later) to "Remember hell," and aptly Pandulpho urges them all on with

the yell, "Sa, sa," that Hunter glosses well enough as a "hunting call, to urge forward the hounds."[21]

After a sadistic "They offer to run all at Piero, and on a sudden stop" (V.iii.105.1) Antonio finally stabs his enemy "pell-mell," followed by the rest in turn. After Pandulpho's "Murder for murder, blood for blood doth yell" (V.iii.113), and with vengeance secured, the ghost presents the "moral":

> 'Tis done; and now my soul shall sleep in rest.
> Sons that revenge their father's blood are blest.
> (V.iii.114-115)

It should by now be unecessary to add that this is not Marston's moral.

For an instant the revenge stands out in its true colours as the courtiers rush in and a senator asks "Whose hand presents this gory spectacle?" (V.iii.116). That is as good a description as any, and as each individual revenger eagerly seeks to claim it as his own work the audience must expect the sort of conclusion Tourneur later incorporated in The Revenger's Tragedy. Marston, however, carries his original conception to its logical end. Possibly by so doing he could no longer claim to be parodying the form,

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[21] Note to V.iii.105.

since he is departing from a tradition which demanded that the hero, no matter how noble, had to die for the sake of ethical propriety (although there are exceptions to the rule, the most obvious one being Horestes). Here, however, the Kydian formula is taken to its logically possible conclusion, a conclusion for which the audience of Hamlet and the audience of The Spanish Tragedy must to some extent have wished, and shown up as morally repulsive.

A kind of revelation now emerges, forced upon the audience by its own inevitable reaction when praise like the Second Senator's

> Bless'd be you all; and may your honors live,
> Religiously held sacred, even for ever and ever
> (V.iii.127-128)

is given to the group. It comes with the "Alas, poor orphan!" that Marston sardonically gives the same speaker, and the religious atmosphere (enveloping the whole scene) that allows the revengers to talk of "holy bands" (V.iii.136, 149). At the same time there is preserved just enough illusion of the "rightness" of their actions to make the conclusion arguably credible--since it must be credible to some extent for it to remain parody and not become farce. This is, however, so low-keyed that it really defeats its purpose--as it is designed to do:

> Antonio, belief is fortified
> With most invincible approvements, of much wrong
> By this Piero to thee. (V.iii.131-133)

That the revenging "hero" is really a villain is quite clear, and for Antonio to be made to say "First let's cleanse our hands" (V.iii.154) seems redundant. The use of religious imagery has established well enough already what Marston appears to be hinting in that line.

In the last of the Certain Satires appended to "Pygmalion's Image," where Marston the moralist appears to be speaking in his own voice (without any of the several scourging-masks he uses in the others), the poet describes himself as being so confused by the multitude of values turned topsy-turvy that he begins to wonder whether he has not been long mistaken:

> Fie, fie, I am deceiued all thys while,
> A mist of errors doth my sence beguile;
> I haue beene long of all my wits bereauen;
> Heauen for hell taking, taking hell for heauen;
> Vertue for vice, and vice for vertue still,
> Sower for sweet, and good for passing ill.
> If not? would vice and odious villanie
> Be still rewarded with high dignity?
> Would damned Iouians, be of all men praised,
> And with high honors vnto heauen raised?[22]

If the morality of Antonio's Revenge is accepted on face value it would appear that the poet had convinced himself

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[22] The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image and Certaine Satyres (1598), sigs. $F4^{v}$-$F5^{r}$.

that the delusion he suspected was a delusion indeed. More reasonably, the play is designed to provoke the same sort of response the poetry quoted above gets, different only in that it is not so much a response directed at the play's surface logic as at the concept of the revenger as hero. There is no reason to assume that Marston put aside his accepted role of moral teacher for this play; and Jonson did imply that Marston's plays were commonly regarded as the kind a clergyman might have written.[23]

Antonio's Revenge should be seen as the first in a group of revenge tragedies that, largely on moral grounds, reject Kyd's concept of the revenger. With this play, the dubious morality that allowed an Horestes, a Hieronimo, or a Hamlet to remain a hero is fully discredited by its being allowed complete expression. It is worth noting that Marston discredits the Kydian concept of that hero in what is perhaps the only way possible for a dramatist concerned for his popularity and the tastes of his audience: the play is not only didactic but entertaining as parody at the same time, doubly appealing on an intellectual level to an audience that considered itself sophisticated. Through the suggestions it offers on the nature of revenge and revenger

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[23] Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and P. Simpson, I, 138.

it may have had considerable influence on the writers in this particular genre who followed. But whether they learned anything from Marston (which is likely in view of the high regard in which he was held by his contemporaries), or simply pursued their own intuitions in the matter, it is a fact, evidenced in the works to be discussed in the following pages, that they either defined a much more realistic psychology for their protagonists or provided them with a more orthodox moral framework in which to operate. Importantly, they show (like Marston) a conscious concern for the kind of drama they are working in, a concern to do more than entertain an audience or profit from their efforts.

CHAPTER VI

LUST'S DOMINION

In Lust's Dominion (1600?) the justified revenger has no role to play. Horestes, Hieronimo, Titus Andronicus, and Hamlet all pursue vindictive actions that, in view of the injustices that seem to demand them, can readily be acknowledged by an audience as understandable. The action of Lust's Dominion, on the other hand, is concerned almost exclusively with the revenges of a character whose preoccupation is a "justice" so wild that the authors,[1] even had they wanted to, would have found it practically impossible to present sympathetically. In this respect the play is important in the development of revenge tragedy.

It might appear on a first reading that the authors were influenced more by The Jew of Malta and Titus Andronicus than by Kydian revenge tragedy or any contemporary feeling against the dramatic justification of revenging

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[1]Dekker, Day, and Haughton--if one accepts, along with most scholars, the identification of this play with The Spanish Moor's Tragedy (paid for in 1600 by Henslowe).

heroes. As the ambitiously vindictive villain, Eleazer completely dominates the plot in much the same fashion as Barabas does in Marlowe's play. At the same time, there are important parallels with Shakespeare's tragedy: in both, a central place in the drama is given to a lustful Moor deeply involved in an illicit relationship with a queen; in both, the themes of lust, vengeance, and treachery are strongly amplified.

Upon closer examination, however, it becomes clear that Lust's Dominion is distinguished from these plays by differences that are as significant as any shared qualities. For a variety of reasons, among them that Barabas' revenge is motivated not by the death of a loved one but simply by the loss of money, Marlowe's play tends to be reduced (consciously, one feels) to the level of farce. Certainly it is not a revenge tragedy. Unlike Barabas, Eleazer has reasonably sufficient motivation for vengeance (though not for the scale of vengeance he would like to effect); and one does feel the play to be a serious tragedy. The revenge motif that underlies the whole action and gives it direction is more dominant than that in The Jew of Malta and Titus Andronicus.

In fact what differentiates Lust's Dominion from

these plays is precisely what makes it so important a landmark in the history of revenge tragedy. The authors, in all likelihood following the same moralistic line of thinking that Marston displayed when he revived the genre one year earlier with Antonio's Revenge and ridiculed the concept of the revenger as noble and justified, have placed the villain in the forefront of the drama and given him as an impulse for his actions a consuming desire to avenge deeply-felt wrongs (that include the death of his father)--and, in connection with this, an ambition that derives solely from that desire and operates exclusively to its successful fulfilment. What is new to revenge tragedy is the overt villainy of the protagonist.

While most critics of the play concur in relating Lust's Dominion to the Kydian genre, their analysis of Eleazer is such as to prevent any clarification of the sort of relationship he has to other revengers. Scholarship has, of necessity, contented itself for the most part with a concentration on the problems of date and authorship (which do have some bearing upon the present study and must be looked at[2]). Nevertheless, there has emerged from this a

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[2]The question of the play's date of composition, as well as the related problem of its revision, are dealt with in the Appendix.

small body of criticism more closely relevant to the present purpose--and enough to illustrate the difficulties that can be placed in the way of any consideration of the play's importance as a revenge tragedy.

In 1881 A. H. Bullen compared the play to Chettle's Hoffman,[3] and more recently critics have been quick to point out similarities in theme and details of plot. J. Le Gay Brereton senses that "both poets were working under the same influences,"[4] and Gustav Cross remarks the close kinship between the protagonists: among other characteristics they share, "Eleazer and Hoffman are the first of a long line of villain-revengers."[5] But while these critics relate Lust's Dominion to the revival of the genre, they say little about the nature of the relationship. Possibly their disinclination to elaborate springs from an uncertainty about whether Eleazer is really a revenger at all. Bowers sees the revenge motive as "subsidiary,"[6] and Cross agrees: "Eleazer

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[3] See his Introduction to The Works of John Day (1881 edn. reprinted with additions, London, 1963), p. 642.

[4] Introduction to his edn. of Lust's Dominion; or, The Lascivious Queen, in Materials for the Study of the Old English Drama, 2d Ser., V (Louvain, 1931), p. xv.

[5] "The Authorship of 'Lust's Dominion'," SP, LV (1958), 41.

[6] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 273.

the blood-revenger is a Machiavellian villain motivated ostensibly by his desire to avenge his father, 'who with his Empire, lost his life' . . . , but prompted in actual fact by his own limitless ambition."[7] Brereton is more perceptive. Sensing that "ambition" is too simple a word for the driving force behind the action, he points out that Eleazer

> grasps at power really because it gives him scope for the practice of his profession as a villain and satisfies his restless craving for subtle intellectual plotting and savage violence. His aim is to produce a grim effect. He desires a victory about whose temples stand "brainless heads and bleeding bodies, like a crown". He is a tiger whose appetite for blood grows with what it feeds on--a scoundrel who must achieve a climax of wickedness or fail to "draw".[8]

This insight involves a better understanding of the nature of the villain's ambition, but Brereton fails to perceive the extent to which the villainy is motivated by the desire for vengeance. Recently, Eldred Jones has linked the villainy to its origin in a powerful revenge motive; but he feels that "motives are mere embellishments, supplied by the author [sic] in a superficial attempt to produce a more 'rational' character than Aaron."[9] He then proceeds to consider "the element of ambition" apart from the questions

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[7]"The Authorship of 'Lust's Dominion'," p. 46.

[8]Introduction to Lust's Dominion, p. xxxii.

[9]Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama (London, 1965), p. 63.

of motivation and villainy. What should be stressed, if Eleazer is to be understood as in any sense a rational character (which he need not necessarily be, of course), is the crucial importance in this play of motive in relation to villainous ambition.

To suggest that the villain's desire for vengeance is in any way subsidiary to his ambition is to misread Eleazer and, consequently, to misunderstand the play. Rather is the reverse true. Eleazer's ambition is no more than a logical concomitant of his vindictiveness, and is so presented consistently throughout the play. When the completion of his revenge is in sight, Eleazer repeatedly makes it clear that the achievement of his ambition is in fact identical to the "righting" of his several wrongs. It is made quite plain that he seeks the Spanish throne not to rule the nation but to destroy it, an end that is consistent with the scope of his vengeance and the nature of his injuries as he understands them. What the play shows is the calamitous result that must follow the pursuit of vengeance for genuine grievances by someone possessing the power to gain exactly the result he wants. This is its "moral," which gets its emphasis from the magnification both of the causes and the effects of private retributive justice.

Yet while the effectiveness of the "moral" depends on the protagonist being seen as a villain, Eleazer is not quite the ambitious Vice he is often made out to be. As the action progresses it becomes evident that what is being censured is not some obscure and overpowering "ambition" but an ambitious revenge.

That Eleazer should be shown as a villain from the outset is perfectly right, of course, for from the beginning he sets about to devise a punishment that fits the crime in nobody's eyes but those of the spiritually deranged revenger himself. It necessarily implies, though, that the problems for the moral health of the revenger in this kind of situation are, for the most part, left unexamined. The "moral," in other words, instead of emerging out of the spiritual decay of the character, is shouted at us; for the disease--ambitious vindictiveness--is merely emphasized, not analysed. An audience is asked to accept that Eleazer's psychological problems are largely things of the past when the action of the play begins.

From his first appearance it is apparent that Eleazer is ill both spiritually and physically. Symptomatic is his inability to appreciate music, which results from a loathing of "all unity." "Chyme out your softest strains of

harmony" (I.i.10),[10] the queen pleads, obviously alarmed by an "asspect so grim and horrid" (I.i.8) in the way of her advances. When her paramour informs her of the cause--"I am now sick, heavie, and dull as lead" (I.i.20)--she can only respond with a pleasant obscenity: "I'le make thee lighter by taking something from thee" (I.i.21). This calls forth from Eleazer a somewhat fuller account of his indisposition:

> take from mee
> This Ague: and these fits that hanging on me
> Shake me in pieces, and set all my blood
> A boiling with the fire of rage: away, away;
> Thou believ'st I jeast:
> And laugh'st, to see my wrath wear antick shapes:
> Be gone, be gone. (I.i.22-28)

Evident here are the symptoms of a sick disposition, and its cause--the "wrath" that "wears" it. It is not until near the end of the scene, however, that he manifests the extent of his rage, and then it is by way of an aside that demands for its understanding an insight into something more precise than the formless anger Eleazer has thus far shown:

> dear love farewell,
> One day I hope to shutt you up in hell. (I.i.144-145)

What motivates this surprising avowal is vaguely

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[10] All references to Lust's Dominion are to the edn. in The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge, 1953-), IV, 115-230.

hinted at some sixty lines earlier, when he complains of "every hissing tongue" that speaks against him in Castile (I.i.83-92). He makes it quite clear that it is not only his relationship with the queen that is the cause of this humiliating situation, but a more general popular prejudice against him as a Moor, a "black Prince of Divels." A feeling of antagonism towards the Castilian crowd does not, of course, explain why he should look forward to killing the queen, but when that antagonism is seen in conjunction with Eleazer's remarks on others at the end of the scene, the course of action he subsequently pursues becomes understandable. In conversation with his father-in-law, Alvero, he details two further insults to his dignity. The first gains expression through an incredulous reply to Alvero's question, "Was not the Queen here with you?" (I.i.148). The reply is very enlightening since it confirms an intense hatred for the court that has so far only been suggested:

> The Queen with me, with me, a Moore, a Devill,
> A slave of Barbary, a dog; for so
> Your silken Courtiers christen me. (I.i.151-153)

The second insult is even more important for a proper understanding of what follows:

> Although my flesh be tawny, in my veines,
> Runs blood as red, and royal as the best
> And proud'st in Spain, there do'es old man:
> My father, who with his Empire, lost his life,
> And left me Captive to a Spanish Tyrant, Oh!

> Go tell him! Spanish Tyrant! tell him, do!
> He that can loose a kingdom and not rave,
> He's a tame jade, I am not. (I.i.154-161)

The jerky abruptness of the language here does two things. It crystallizes for the audience the genuine hurt that Eleazer feels; and it further points up the diseased state of the mind that has too long suffered. Together with the injuries it gives expression to, it goes far to establish at this early point in the play the credibility of the motives for a revenge that will encompass all Spain--including a queen whose lusts hold little attraction for him but may afford opportunities to further his vindictive ends. This fact ought to be taken account of, as should the emphasis upon the sickness of Eleazer, before too much weight is given to suggestions that the protagonist is reminiscent of the Vice figure[11] or that his revenges are inadequately motivated.

Eleazer's loathing for the court is later enforced by the well-founded attack he suffers from the young Prince Philip, and by Mendoza's subsequent action in depriving him "Of all those Royalties thou hold'st in Spain" (I.ii.150) and commanding that he "Come not within the Court" (I.ii.157). That the new king shortly revokes this order of

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[11] Bernard Spivack's analysis comes to mind. See pp. 357-360 of his Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil.

his temporary protector by way of nothing more than an attraction he feels towards Eleazer's wife, Maria, in no way lessens the effect of the cardinal's actions. These, while being warranted by the Moor's conduct with the queen, only serve to realize for Eleazer his humiliating position in relation to those he sees as his inferiors.

The re-establishment of his personal dignity is equated with the securing of vengeance, first by his wife (for whom the new king "shall reveng my Lord's indignity" [I.ii.193]) and then by Eleazer himself: Ferdinand's passion for Maria is an opportunity to "climb up by that love to dignitye" (I.ii.212). It is not a desire for power and majesty but a simple sense of pride and the need to take revenge upon those who have besmirched it that prompts Eleazer's "climb" and determines the nature of his "ambition."

Eleazer's willing assumption of the role of villain naturally gives some support to the standard image of him as conceived by Philip and Mendoza and highlighted again in II.i. Their "Divell" and "villain" (II.i.1, 6), however, is not the Eleazer an attentive audience sees, as they take no account of the relationship of his wrongs to his villainy. There is perhaps a danger that their view of Eleazer as motivated by nothing but an innate devilishness will become the audience's

view as well. Apparently sensing this, the dramatists have carefully exposed the fallacy in the simple and off-hand kind of analysis; its chief exponent, Mendoza, is shown up as self-centred and totally imperceptive alongside the more objective Alvero--the least partial of all the characters in the play:

> Roderigo. Shall wee bear his pride.
> Alvero. Why not, he underwent much injurie.
> Cardinal. What injury have we perform'd proud Lord?
> (II.i.11-13)

For the rest of Act II it is Eleazer's injuries as well as the villainy they have prompted that are stressed. Thus the inception of his revenge (with the formulation of a plot against Philip that will facilitate Eleazer's "climbing high" to dignity) is balanced, and given added motive, by Fernando's further preparations for the seduction of Maria, and by the plan the queen conceives for killing her. Self-conscious villainy is not inherent in the character at all. Instead, it develops out of his reaction to a hostile environment, and should be seen as a weapon rather than a trait.

It is, in fact, a "Roab" (I.i.173), and it is so enthusiastically put on, one feels, because it relieves its wearer of a conscience: a villain (particularly if he is black) is lucky in not having "wit to blush" (II.ii.70),

as Eleazer says. The private vendetta can proceed unrestricted by moral qualms when it is acted out under a deliberately assumed inhumanity in outlook and action that makes Eleazer's earlier rationalization, "To shed a harlots blood can be no sin" (I.i.198), look like a responsible attitude. That the Vice-like role he assumes is in part a mask behind which he may more effectively pursue his vengeance is suggested by a curious contradiction that can otherwise be explained only by carelessness on the part of the authors. By way of reply to the queen's request that he murder his wife, he remarks in an aside, "With this I'le guard her, whil'st it stabs at you" (II.ii.157); but in the next scene he shows an opposite attitude to Maria (again in an aside): "poison him [the king], he gon, thou'rt next" (II.iii.187). The only explanation (apart from inconsistency on the dramatists' part) is that normal human emotions are being deliberately subverted by an expedient and vicious persona.

Clear by the end of Act II are the process of and reasons for Eleazer's spiritual descent from the heroic figure (whose bravery and wisdom was earlier commended by the dying king) to the vengeful villain whose countenance alone is enough to cause the friars Cole and Crab to think of hell. Evident too is the fact that his drive for power

amounts to nothing more than an ambition for a complete "justice." Asides, confessional by convention, are naturally the best indicators:

> Spain I will drown thee with thine own proud blood,
> Then make an ark of carcasses: farewell;
> Revenge and I will sail in blood to hell.
> (II.iii.190-192)

A somewhat detailed examination of Acts I and II has been necessary to establish a view of Eleazer essentially at variance with that implied in the little that has been written on the play. The final scenes substantiate this view.

Having apparently secured the throne, Eleazer admits to the helpless Isabella the use he intends to make of it:

> Spain I'le new-mould thee, I will have a chair
> Made all of dead mens bones, and the ascents
> Shall be the heads of Spaniards set in ranks.
> (V.ii.116-118)

The consequences for Spain are to be tragic; and since

> A Tragedy
> Ought to be grave, graves this shall beautifie.
> (V.ii.123-124)

Importantly, this achievement will be the triumph not of ambition but of an ambitious revenge:

> Now Tragedy thou Minion of the night,
> Rhamnusias pew-fellow; to thee I'le sing
> Upon an harp made of dead Spanish bones,
> The proudest instrument the world affords;
> When thou in Crimson jollitie shalt Bath,

> Thy limbs as black as mine, in springs of blood;
> Still gushing from the Conduit-head of Spain:
> To thee that never blushest, thou thy cheeks
> Are full of blood. O! Saint revenge: to thee
> I consecrate my Murders, all my stabs,
> My bloody labours, tortures, stratagems:
> The volume of all wounds, that wound from me;
> Mine is the stage, thine is the Tragedy. (V.iii.48-60)

It is with such statements in mind that one ought to understand the overthrown villain when he says of his enemies that

> their subtil policie
> Hath blasted my ambitious thoughts. (V.iii.138-139)

Although the downfall and death of the protagonist tend to the level of farce, with Eleazer passing his last breath in a promise to continue his machinations in hell (V.iii.164-166), the overall image the audience gets of him is consistent. His ends are not state power and glory, but their destruction. Ambitious only in the scope of his proposed vengeance and in a desire to actually take charge (from the seat of power) of the final holocaust, he is willing, in the process, to destroy without feeling not only Ferdinand, Philip, and Mendoza, but Alvero, Hortenzo, Maria, the queen, and even Isabella if she persists in denying him. At the same time, the motivation for his villainy (as well as its characteristics) make it hard to see Eleazer as a Vice-figure. His reactions to injustice are, of course, extreme. And because the dramatists have freed themselves

of the need to show any real psychological insight into Eleazer's character (by removing the factor of conscience from consideration and allowing the self-consciously villainous revenger an odd, though partially explained, satisfaction in his most pernicious schemes), there emerges by way of the action and characterization no evidence that the authors were conscious (in the way Marston was conscious) of the moral implications in what they were doing with the avenging hero.

Nevertheless, as a result of the analysis offered here a more definitive placing of the play seems possible; one can do more than remark upon its significance as the first revenge tragedy in which the protagonist is overtly shown as a villain.

In the first place, Eleazer is a more realistic revenger than, for example, Hieronimo, in that his passion for vengeance has the effect one would expect it to have: it destroys his humanity, it breaks him both morally and physically. While the process of perversion is not seen, it is assumed to have taken place shortly before the commencement of the play. There are references to Eleazer's former virtues, while to Alvero the villainous character that vindictiveness has developed is clearly something new.

Vindictiveness, in other words, is not the excuse for villainy but its cause; and this is stressed repeatedly in Acts I and II. That the character is flat in comparison with Hieronimo, Antonio, Hoffman, or Vindice does not alter his importance in this respect.

Secondly, the dramatists have taken the radical step--perhaps made the moral choice--of considering the cause of revenge in relation to its effects. Eldred Jones feels that Eleazer's motives are insisted upon too much in his speeches, and makes a judgment upon "The psychology which gives Eleazer more motives for his crime [than Aaron], as though any motives could justify them."[12] Yet one cannot help feeling that the point of his motives being insisted upon so forcefully is just to illustrate the fact that no matter how right the cause, the effect of taking vindictive action is to destroy the character of the revenger and, inevitably, to cause innocents to suffer. The audience is invited to question whether any motives can justify Eleazer in the course he follows, and it is forced to give a negative answer.

Lust's Dominion (along with Antonio's Revenge and

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[12] Othello's Countrymen, p. 67.

the plays dealt with below) belongs within the second phase of Kydian revenge tragedy--a phase that is preoccupied with analyses, in varying degrees of depth, of the morality of revenge as a weapon of justice. The play offers a statement rather than a subtle analysis, perhaps; but the statement gains in importance when seen in relation to the suggestions in Marston's play, and Lust's Dominion in significance when seen as a development of those suggestions into an entertaining and original kind of revenge tragedy suited to performance on the public stage.

CHAPTER VII

HOFFMAN

Eleazer is a development of earlier villains like Lorenzo, Barabas, and Aaron. His self-conscious villainy places him in this tradition, but he transcends it in one notable respect: it is his vindictiveness that shapes his character (and, of course, his character that shapes the play). Because he is the first protagonist avenger in revenge tragedy to acknowledge his own villainy, Lust's Dominion is significant historically.

In contrast to Eleazer, the character of Hoffman is squarely in the tradition of the avenging hero and owes very little to the inspiration of Kydian, Marlovian, or Shakespearian villains.[1] Eleazer can confidently swear that "Revenge and I will sail in blood to hell" (II.iii.192), but

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[1]The play itself owes something to Marlowe, admittedly. It has been recognized, for example, that Hoffman's accomplice, Lorrique, is patterned on Ithamore, and that Lodowick and Mathias are involved in a situation like that by which Barabas disposes of their namesakes in The Jew of Malta.

Hoffman, more readily than Hieronimo, Titus, and Shakespeare's Hamlet, is convinced that his cause is pure--in fact never doubts his divine agency. Even at the end of the play he is able to feel secure that heaven will reward him as its minister of justice. Importantly, however, Chettle takes the Kydian avenger in all his righteousness and, like Tourneur in The Revenger's Tragedy, gradually exposes him as the unwitting villain he really is. The character of Hoffman is clearly the product of Chettle's conscious response to the Kydian concept of the noble revenger; and the nature of Chettle's exposure of his hero has important implications deriving from the fact that Hoffman's own view of his revenges remains unaffected. For these and other reasons that have to do with the philosophical basis of the play, Hoffman (1602) tends to anticipate The Revenger's Tragedy, and beyond that The Atheist's Tragedy and The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois. It is thus a considerably more important revenge tragedy than Lust's Dominion, as well as a more rewarding work in the context of this study.

The revenger's cause is morally compromised from the beginning. His father has been legally, although apparently unfairly, executed for piracy, so that Hoffman's position differs from that of Hieronimo, Hamlet, and Vindice, whose

loved ones were murdered. Harold Jenkins rightly concludes that Hoffman's "longing for vengeance therefore has less of honour and duty in it," but is wrong when he says that it lacks "righteous dignity."[2] For Hoffman is fully convinced that his father's death was unjust and the executioners unfit to hold office.

His interpretation of the circumstances leading to his father's execution is offered as explanation to his first victim, Otho:

> Still you suspect my harmelesse inocence
> What though your father with the powerfull state
> And your iust vncle duke of Prusia
> After my father had in thirty fights
> Fill'd all their treasures with fomens spoyles,
> And payd poore souldiors from his treasury
> What though for this his merrits he was nam'd
> A prescript out law for a little debt,
> Compeld to flie into the Belgique sound
> And liue a pirate? (sig. B3^{r})[3]

It seems likely that an audience would feel some sympathy here, particularly as it is given no reason to doubt Hoffman's account of his father's history. It is equally likely that its sympathy would diminish when Hoffman proceeds to take revenge not only upon "the murtherer" but

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[2] The Life and Work of Henry Chettle (London, 1934), p. 76.

[3] All references are to the first edn., the quarto of 1631.

anie man that is affied
Has but one ounce of blood, of which hees part.
(sig. B2^{r})

From this point there develops a theatrical situation which (with the probable exception of that in Antonio's Revenge) must have been unique for those who formed part of the original audience; for while Hoffman continues sincerely to believe that his cause is virtuous, he is inevitably condemned in the eyes of his audience. His reasons for killing Otho, who was in no sense responsible for old Hoffman's death, may be understandable, but they are not tolerable:

Then hee was wrong'd you graunt but not by you,
You vertuous gentleman
Sate like a iust Iudge of the vnder-shades. (sig. B3^{v})

Otho Thy father dyed for piracy.
Ho. Oh peace, had he bin iudge himselfe, he would haue shew'd
He had bin clearer then the Christall morne!
But wretches sentenc'd neuer finde defence,
How euer guiltlesse bee their innocence,
No more did hee, no more shalt thou, no ruth
Pittied his winter age, none helps thy youth.
(sig. B4^{r})

In an odd twist of the Biblical warning, the sins of the dukes are to be visited upon their families.

Any analysis of Chettle's preoccupations in this play must take account of Hoffman's obvious sincerity. It would be easy to explain as inordinate blood-thirstiness his

intention of revenging himself upon all the blood-relations of the responsible party that caused his situation, and indeed that is a factor motivating his actions. He does, however, see himself in the role of Nemesis consistently throughout the play, so that the early

> Prussia, I come as comets against change:
> As apparitions before mortall ends (sig. C3^{r})

is more than bravado. There is considerable evidence to suggest that he sees himself as a divinely appointed agent:

> Rhamnusia helpe thy priest,
> My wrong thou know'st, my willingnesse thou seest.
> (sig. C3^{r})

> Now scarlet Mistris from thicke sable clouds
> Thrust forth thy blood-staind hands, applaud my plot,
> That giddy wonderers may amazed stand
> While death smytes downe suspectles Ferdinand.
> (sig. F4^{v})

When he hears that his most hated enemy, the Duke of Luningberg, has died a natural death, he might be expected to reflect that God's vengeance takes its own course. His words, however, imply that he still believes he is heaven's agent:

> Had I Briareus hands, i'de striue with heauen
> For executing wrath before the houre,
> But wishes are in vaine, hee's gone. (sig. H1^{r})

Hoffman's sincerity is the most disturbing thing about him. It prevents the audience's reacting to him as it must to Eleazer, for it provokes a degree of sympathy (that

has nothing to do with condonation). The central question, as much directed at the audience as at Lorrique, is difficult to answer since it seeks an emotional rather than a rational response:

> Wouldst thou hauing lost a father as I haue,
> Whose very name dissolues my eyes to teares
> Could duty and thy loue so different proue,
> Not to auenge his death whose better part
> Was thine, thou his, when he fell part of thee
> Fell with him each drop, being part thine owne
> And wouldst not be reveng'd? (sig. B2^{r})

An audience might respond as Lorrique does--"Yes on the murtherer"--and then condemn Hoffman's extension of revenge to those with "one ounce of blood, of which hees part." Outright condemnation would seem to be impossible. Yet that is certainly the response sought by Chettle in this play, and every critic agrees that it is ultimately the response he gets. To discover how he achieves it is to better understand the play and, in the light of it, the playwright.

Hoffman is perhaps the most self-righteous revenger in Elizabethan tragedy; and he is also more adequately sanctioned (in his own eyes) than earlier representatives of the type. He is sanctioned first of all by his blood-relationship with the remains of his father,

> whose nerues and arteris
> In dead resoundings summon vp reuenge, (sig. B1^{r})

and who can be "appeas'd" only through revenge. Unlike a ghost, the skeleton is not able to issue a direct appeal to action, but in Hoffman's mind the call is real, and right:

> I'le execute iustly in such a cause.
> Where truth leadeth, what coward would not fight?
> Ill acts moue some, but myne's a cause that's right.[4]
> (sig. B1^{r})

Even more of an incentive is the active intervention of heaven at this point, confirming for Hoffman the justice of his cause with "thunder and lightning." He takes it for a summons, but also an admonition; for he has neglected to take revenge, apparently for a number of years:[5]

> See the powers of heauen in apparitions,
> And fright full aspects as insenced,
> That I thus tardy am to doe an act
> which iustice and a fathers death excites,
> Like threatening meteors antedates destruction. thunder
> Againe I come, I come, I come. (sig. B1^{r})

In the course of his subsequent revenges he never doubts that his actions are divinely inspired in the most literal sense.

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[4]This line is the first evidence of Chettle's concern to do more than present a thrilling spectacle of blood. The subsequent emphasis on Hoffman's "right" cause indicates that the traditional Kydian concept of the revenger is being given expression through Hoffman's own view of his actions in order more forcefully to discredit it.

[5]The execution of Hans Hoffman must have occurred long before the play's action begins. The bones are "dry," and Martha, who aided the young Hoffman after his father's death, does not recognize the revenger when they meet in Act IV.

Horestes excuses the killing of his mother on the grounds that

> I neuer went, reuengment for to do,
> On fathers fose tyll by the godes, I was comaund there to.
> Whose heastes no man dare once refuse, but wyllingly obaye. (sig. E1^{r})

The lines could equally well be used by Hoffman. Unlike Pickering, though, Chettle could not allow them to excuse his hero.

Connected with the summons that Hoffman senses comes from heaven is his belief in a participating nature. Nature's thunder and lightning link him with heaven, but it is more than a medium. The sense of "iron gloom" that critics have felt in reading the play is partly attributable to the wild (supposedly Baltic) landscape that contains the action and is integrated with it. The natural world's violence suits well with the turmoil Hoffman experiences within himself, and naturally enough, for he is at once its product and its reflection: in it he has preserved his father's remains,

> pluckt vp
> By murderous winds, infectious blasts and gusts, (sig. B1^{r})

and matured his hate. For Hoffman, nature is allied with his father and heaven in seeking from him the vengeance he now plans:

> Roare sea and winds, and with celestiall fires,
> Quicken high proiects, with your highest desires.
> (sig. B1^{v})

Later he tells Lorrique to "kisse the earth" and request her to provide

> The fat of Lambs rap't from the bleating Ewes,
> The sweetest smelling wood she can deuise;
> For I must offer vp a sacrifice.
> To blest occasion that hath seconded
> With opportune meanes my desire of wreake.
> (sig. E4^{v})

And when he is confronted with the apparent need to kill Martha--a task he willingly relinquishes temporarily--his uncertainties are reflected in the physical environment:

> The candle shall suffice, yet that burnes dim;
> And drops his waxen teares as if it mourn'd
> To be an agent in a deed so darke. (sig. H2^{v})

While a particular task might be unpleasant, Hoffman's cause is, as far as he is concerned, completely pure, and it is his lasting conviction that with his father

> hand in hand
> Wee'le walke to paradise (sig. B1^{v})

that accounts for his refusal to call upon heaven as he faces death.

While Chettle preserves intact Hoffman's image of himself, however, he very quickly deprives him of any real sympathy from the audience. The relationship with the villainous accomplice Lorrique affords an example of the

skilful use of irony by which Chettle qualifies and exposes his revenger while maintaining his self-righteous stance. To Hoffman, Lorrique is a convenient tool in a good cause but is probably damned because he has no reason beyond self-preservation for the murders he commits. Their relationship is therefore different from that which unites Barabas and Ithamore. Hoffman's contempt for Lorrique is evident from the words he uses to enlist him--"wilt thou turne villaine speake" (sig. B2^{r})--and his later reference to him as "murders slaue" (sig. C2^{v}). But he enjoys the companionship afforded and the schemes Lorrique contrives ("Oh my good villaine! how I hug thy plots" [sig. K3^{v}]), and the distinction between the two becomes blurred. As a result, a heavy irony operates against the "justified" Hoffman in scenes like this:

> Thou hast a tongue as glib and smooth to lyes,
> As full of false inuentions, and base fraud,
> As prone to circumuent beleeuing soules,
> As euer heretique or traytor vsd,
> Whose speeches are as hony, their acts gall,
> Their words rayse vp, but their hands ruine all.
> Lor. By vertues glorious soule.
> Hoff. Blasphemer peace, sweare not by that thou hat'st;
> Vertue, and thou haue no more sympathie,
> Then day with night, Heauen with Hell.
> Thou knowest, I know thy Villanyes excell. (sig. K2^{v})

The only redeeming feature about Lorrique is his employment in a worthwhile cause; just possibly, "His sufferance heere may saue his soule from hell" (sig. D3^{v}). It does not save

him from Hoffman, though, who kills him at the first suspicion of treachery and hides him in a ditch:

> giue dogs there due,
> He that will proue a mercenary slaue
> To murder, seldome findes soe good a graue. (sig. K4^{r})

He sees Lorrique in the same category as his enemies--"our friends thou meet'st in hell" (sig. K4^{r})--but by his actions he unmistakably though unwittingly categorizes himself at the same time.

Ironically, his only "sin," as his final speech makes clear, is to have fallen in love with his "foes wife," and even this is simply a "sin against all conceit" whereby he has "slackt reuenge" and deserves the pain his executioners inflict on him (sig. L2^{v}). It is indicative of Chettle's successful handling of the character that what the audience recognizes as Hoffman's one virtuous action should be seen by the revenger as his only sin. For what he is ashamed of is the disinterested pity he shows towards the duchess in the first brief moment of their confrontation:

> Sleepe sweet fayre Dutchesse, for thou sleep'st
> thy last:
> Endymions loue, muffle in cloudes thy face,
> And all ye yellow tapers of the heauen
> Vayle your cleare brightnes in Ciamerian mists;
> Let not one light my blacke deed beautifie;
> For with one stroake vertue and honour dyes. (sig. H2^{r})

In one of the most effective of the several techniques he uses

to alienate his hero, Chettle allows Hoffman to look back on this one instance of compassion as a crime against heaven, nature, and his father. As the play draws to its end the audience can view the revenger's ironically indignant outbursts with complete detachment, untouched by the last self-righteous diatribes.

Unfortunately, Hoffman was not printed in its entirety, the 1631 quarto ending in the middle of what should obviously be seen as Hoffman's final speech. Probably not a great number of lines is lost. The final speech, however, is one of the most important since it reinforces the fact of Hoffman's humanity where reinforcement is most needed, and illustrates the author's dramatic method. Chettle could not be content to leave his audience with the conclusion that private revengers deserve their due or that villainy carries the seeds of its own destruction, for in a real sense the play is less about the villainy than the tragedy of its revenger. The danger is that it will be seen as a villain play despite the care the author has taken to make his audience aware that for Hoffman the "cause" is still "right." It would be easy to bring him to a realization and admission that his deeds deserved divine punishment, to give him a line like Eleazer's "Devills com claim your right." That would

probably satisfy an audience. Something of Chettle's serious concern for the genre he is working in is therefore revealed when his revenger dies believing his death to be as unjust as was his father's.

Although the final lines of the quarto break off abruptly, there is no doubt about how the play ends:

> Sax. We pardon thee, and pray for thy soules health.
> Hoff. Soe doe not I for yours, nor pardon you;
> You kild my father, my most warlike father,
> Thus as you deale by me, you did by him;
> But I deserue it that haue slackt reuenge
> Through fickle beauty, and a womans fraud;
> But Hell the hope of all dispayring men,
> That wring the poore, and eate the people vp,
> As greedy beasts the haruest of their spring:
> That Hell, where cowards haue their seats prepar'd,
> And barbarous asses, such as haue rob'd souldiers of
> Reward, and punish true desert with scorned death.
> (sig. $L2^{v}$)

Some lines earlier Hoffman speaks of those he has killed as having been offered "to the fiends," and in his last moments defines the sort of person that hell awaits. It is as if he has performed a service for God in the course of his revenges, for these last lines make clear his monstrous conviction that a heavenly reward is in store for him. Accordingly, the play turns out to be a much more devastating attack upon the morality of private revenge than Lust's Dominion, for Hoffman is a much more credible vindictive personality than Eleazer. Presumably, every vindictive

person feels that right is on his side and thus that villainy is a characteristic of his enemies, certainly not one of his; Lust's Dominion, then, succeeds in doing little more than knocking down a straw revenger. Hoffman challenges vengeance on its own terms and discredits it objectively and effectively.

The irony that turns every righteously indignant outburst against the revenger goes far to undermine his heroic stature, but is not of itself sufficient to account for the finality of the judgment Chettle makes upon him. Other aspects of the play contribute to Hoffman's reduction. Before they are looked at, though, it will be as well to stress that the counter-revenge is not one of them.

It might be expected that the counter-revenge situation would have afforded Chettle an opportunity to further define Hoffman's revenges as the villainies they are, or to present a positive counter to the case for private vengeance that Hoffman puts forward. In fact it does neither. Lorrique is forced by circumstances to reveal to Saxony, Rodorick, Mathias, Martha, and Lucibella the plots he and Hoffman have been responsible for, and the knowledge that their lives are endangered calls for immediate action against their enemy. The group represents the centre of national

power and therefore has the responsibility to execute justice disinterestedly. It is unreasonable to expect that some element of vindictiveness would not be present in the plan to trap Hoffman, and Martha's

> I that neuer knew reuenges power,
> Haue entertaind her newly in my brest (sig. I4^{r})

is understandable. Vindictiveness, though, shapes the actions of the group to such an extent that the idea of justice is forgotten. Chettle's cynicism extends beyond Hoffman to the counter-revenge, as Martha is agreed "To any thing how euer desperate" (sig. K1^{r}) in order to revenge herself upon the murderer of her son, and her friends gloat over their schemes in the same way that Hoffman and Lorrique have been doing. Although Mathias tells the others that "Reuenge should haue proportion" (sig. I4^{v}), his elaboration of what he has in mind destroys any illusion that Chettle intended his counter-revengers to present an alternative to the "justice" of their enemy:

> By slye deceit he acted euery wronge,
> And by deceit I would haue him intrapt;
> Then the reuenge were fit, iust, and square,
> And t'would more vex him that is all compos'd
> Of craft and subtilty to be outstript
> In his owne fashion, then a hundred deaths. (sig. I4^{v})

Lorrique, whom they make their chief agent in the vengeance they now initiate, has made himself even more of a villain in the audience's eyes by his "confession," which is as full of

lies as his earlier protestations of innocence. To save himself he inverts the truth, telling the duchess that Hoffman

> purpos'd your graces death,
> And had opposd my strength of my teares,
> You had bin murder'd as you lay a sleepe. (sig. I4^{r})

The actual circumstances were different:

> Lor. Nay, good my Lord dispatch.
> Hoff. What ruthlesse hinde
> Shall I wrong nature that did ne'er compose
> One of her sexe so perfect? (sigs. H2^{r}-H2^{v})

Chettle allows the group a ceremonial swearing of revenge, with Lorrique the intermediary between it and "the gods"; which is as it should be, of course, since there is in reality nothing sacred about the justice they undertake:

> ioyne hands, and ring him round,
> Kneele, on his head lay our right hands, and sweare
> Vengeance against Hoffman.
> Om. Vengeance, vengeance, fall
> On him, or suddaine death vpon vs all. (sig. K1^{r})

Fifty lines later Lorrique is able to boast of the cunning that has saved his life and to dispell any false impressions that may have arisen in the minds of the audience following his "conversion":

> I laught to see
> How I out-strip the Prince of villany. (sig. K2^{r})

Chettle makes no attempt to present the counter-revenge as the justice that Hoffman's actions demand, avoiding

the word where it most naturally suggests itself and allowing Martha to urge the others on with "Come forth deere friends, murder is in our powers" (sig. $L1^{v}$). Even at the end there is nothing noble about these characters, as a cruel sarcasm and a sadistic pleasure in their own idea of retribution make clear:

> Sax. Talke noe more to him, he seekes dignity,
> Reason he should receaue his desperate hire,
> And weare his crowne made flaming hot with fire:
> Bring forth the burning crowne there. (sig. $L2^{r}$)

C. V. Boyer stated the problem that the lack of any positive counter to Hoffman's unremitting hatreds poses: "It might be expected that we should experience some satisfaction from the villain's death, but it in itself is too cruel to leave us at the close of the drama with any feelings that could be called elevated, 'purged,' or even satisfied."[6] It can hardly be argued that Chettle was concerned to do no more than cater to a contemporary vogue for bloody melodrama, for he goes out of his way to withhold from the audience the usual satisfaction that right always triumphs over wrong. There is, in fact, no life-affirming correlative to the evil forces that the play contains (as there is in The Revenger's Tragedy, the tone of which most closely resembles that of Hoffman), and the author's cynicism towards the characters and the action is a real factor

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[6] The Villain as Hero, p. 144.

to be reckoned with.[7] It is strongly suggested by the way Hoffman himself is developed, and through the means used to make him the subject of the audience's disapprobation. Chettle's concern, of course, is almost entirely with him, everything else being subsidiary to the main issue--the moral stature of the "justified" revenger convinced that his cause is pure.

What best illustrates the integration of diverse situations into the cynical vision that condemns Hoffman during the course of his revenges is the rebellion of the "witlesse foole" Jerome, the lawful heir to the Prussian throne. Because his father has preferred to disinherit him and make Hoffman (whom he believes to be his nephew Otho) his successor, Jerome, with the help of a few discontented citizens, plots armed rebellion, convinced that this is the only course open to him:

> Noe more Stilt, I haue it heere; 'tis in my head, and out it shall not come, till red reuenge in robes of fire, and madding mischiefe runne and raue: they say I am a foole Stilt, but follow me; ile seeke out my notes of Machiauel, they say hee's an odd politician. (sig. C4^{r})

It is at once obvious that Chettle's sole reason for incor-

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[7]Admittedly, Lucibella (deceived by Hoffman into believing that Ferdinand intends her and her lover harm) shows her humanity when she pleads with Lodowick to forgive the Duke of Prussia. Later, however, she becomes mad, and her words in the final scene mock the sentiment she shows at sig. E1^{r}.

porating this character in the play is to comment sarcastically upon the other revenger. Jerome may be a burlesque of bombastic revengers generally, but his relation to Hoffman is all-important. He is the grotesque in Hoffman magnified and isolated, the supreme qualifier for the pretentious dignity of the "heroic" protagonist:

> Well, sword come forth, and courage enter in,
> Brest breake with griefe; yet hold to be reueng'd:
> Follow me Stilt; widdowes vnborne shall weepe,
> And beardlesse boyes with armour on their backes
> Shall beare vs out, Stilt we will tread on stilts,
> Through the purple pauement of the court,
> Which shall bee, let me see, what shall it be?
> No court, but euen a caue of misery.
> Ther's an excellent speech Stilt, follow me,
> pursue me, will accquire,
> And either die, or compasse my desire. (sigs. $C4^{r}$-$C4^{v}$)

Here it is the posturing, the melodramatic bombast, that is under attack, but later the target is the morality of revenge as Stilt tells his father to

> remember this, that more then mortality fights
> on our side; For we haue treason and iniquity to
> maintayne our quarrell.
> Old Stilt. Hah! what say'st my sonne? treason
> and iniquity?
> Stilt. Reason, and equity I meant Father; ther's
> little controuersity in the words. (sig. $F1^{r}$)

Noticeably, both of these scenes follow hard upon the sort of language they are designed to qualify, so that the point cannot fail to be made. Possibly Jerome also serves the purpose of "aesthetic safety release," allowing Hoffman to maintain his credibility for an audience, to be kept "in

the unrestrained vein" more convincingly.[8]

Chettle further compromises his hero through tonal contrasts. In Act II the joy that accompanies Saxony's recognition of his "long lost brother" in the hermit Rodorick is contrasted with the unhealthy glee that attaches itself to the revenger. As Saxony and his friends depart with

> By heauen my heart with happinesse is crow'nd,
> In that my long lost brother now is found, (sig. D2^{r})

Hoffman enters "solus" with the lines

> so run on fate, my destinies are good,
> Reuenge hath made me great by shedding blood.
> (sig. D2^{r})

Thus Hoffman's morbid fascination with his own success is disparaged by its opposition to the positive good humour of his enemies. A similar effect is gained here:

> Goe on afore, ile stay awhile, and weepe
> My tributary teares paid on the ground
> Where my true ioy your Princely vncle fell:
> Ile follow to driue from you all distresse
> And comfort you, though I be comfortles.
> Art not thou plumpt with laughter my Lorrique?
> (sigs. G4^{v}-H1^{r})

The tonal contrast here is really a manifestation of Chettle's larger concern to highlight the discrepancy between appearance

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[8] Douglas Cole--"The Comic Accomplice in Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy," RenD, IX (1966), 134--uses these phrases in relation to Lorrique, not Jerome. Yet it is Jerome's speeches and not anything that Lorrique says or does that prevents the entire play from becoming a farce. In any case, Lorrique is hardly a "comic accomplice."

and reality--in Hoffman, of course, but also in Lorrique, Jerome, and the counter-revenge.

Lorrique's soliloquies and asides are equally revealing in their dispassionate appraisal of the main character. Although he readily falls in with Hoffman's schemes, sharing the villainy equally with his master, he suffers no illusions about Hoffman's real nature, or his own:

> I am halfe a Monarke: halfe a fiend
> Blood I begun in and in blood must end
> yet this Clois is an honest villaine, ha's
> conscience in his killing of men: he kils
> none but his fathers enemies, and there
> issue, 'tis admirable, 'tis excellent, 'tis
> well 'tis meritorious, where? in heauen?
> no, hell. (sig. $D2^{r}$)
>
> Clo. Follow Lorrique; we are in the right way. Exit.
> Lor. To hell I feare. (sig. $D4^{v}$)

Unlike Hoffman, he is detached from the crimes he commits, and fills the role of cynical commentator whenever the dramatist feels the need to objectify the behaviour of his protagonist.

It is by these means, and not at all through the counter-revenge, that Chettle effectively destroys the audience's sympathy for the revenger. The dominant vision behind the play is a cynical one, extending beyond Hoffman to

embrace practically every other character as well. Irony, too, pervades the play and is closely related to the author's cynical view of his characters. The ending is not even free from it, for that, as J. M. R. Margeson rightly points out, is simply an ironic reversal, "the climax of all the ironic reversals that have gone before rather than the intervention of some power of justice."[9] The "sinister gloom" that Harold Jenkins detects[10] does not emanate from Hoffman but from Chettle.

Brian Gibbons has said of Vindice that he "is a revenger of blood who believes his motives to be pure and so retains the characteristic heroic stance."[11] An analysis of Hoffman indicates the recklessness of this statement--shows that the heroic stance of any tragic hero depends as much upon the dramatist's conception of him as upon the hero's conception of himself. For in Hoffman there is no doubt about the revenger's sincerity, or his conviction that his cause is justified. The play takes as its text the line "Ill acts moue some, but myne's a cause that's right," and proceeds

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[9] The Origins of English Tragedy (Oxford, 1967), p. 142.

[10] The Life and Work of Henry Chettle, p. 71.

[11] Introduction to the New Mermaids edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy (London, 1967), p. xv.

systematically to destroy the heroic stance of the revenger despite his "pure" motives.

Hoffman shows Chettle consciously reacting against the traditional concept of the noble revenger, the type of Hieronimo and Hamlet, shows him to be as much concerned for the genre he is developing as for the impact the play will have on its audience. The two are probably bound up together, since it seems a reasonable statement to make that at this time "the Elizabethan audiences were growing increasingly chary of accepting the bloody heroes as good and admirable men."[12] What distinguishes the play is that its entire plot represents an exercise in iconoclasm, with the morality of the hero as the dominant theme.[13]

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[12]Fredson Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 127.

[13]Perhaps indicative of Chettle's concern to use his play to descant upon earlier tragedies of blood is his use of what Douglas Cole terms "the metaphor of tragic performance" ("The Comic Accomplice in Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy," p. 134. Cole, however, would see the following examples as "distancers" to preserve the credibility of Hoffman's language.) Periodically, Hoffman is made the "presenter" to his own actions, or uses language that forces upon the audience the realization that the play concerns the hero of revenge tragedy as much as it does the history of Hoffman:

> This but the prologue to the'nsuing play.
> The first step to reuenge, this seane is donne.
> (sigs. $B4^{r}$-$B4^{v}$)
>
> He was the prologue to a Tragedy,
> That if my destinies deny me not,
> Shall passe those of Thyestes, Tereus,

The little amount of scholarship that has concerned itself with Hoffman has reached somewhat similar conclusions to those arrived at here, but the criticism tends to be impressionistic rather than analytic. There is a general recognition of the "originality of [Chettle's] departures from the strict type"[14] as well as of the consciousness of those departures, and Bowers, in the course of his brief discussion, emphasizes the historical importance of the play.[15] Hoffman contains little, however, that might suggest its being "fundamentally concerned with Elizabethan legal objections to the vendetta."[16] Chettle's real concern is of a different order, and can only be gauged after an analysis of the cynical detachment that ironically inverts every pretension to virtue, and not only Hoffman's.

Iocasta, or Duke Iasons iealous wife;
So shut our stage vp, there is one act done
Ended in Othos death. (sig. C2^{v})

This Act is euen our Tragedies best hart. (sig. F4^{r})

Next plot for Mathias and old Saxony,
There ends shall finish our blacke tragedy. (sig. K4^{r})

Whether or not Chettle intended the lines to serve this purpose, the preceding analysis shows adequately enough the depth of his involvement in the problem of the hero's stature.

[14] The Life and Work of Henry Chettle, p. 77.

[15] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 125-130.

[16] G. Dekker Wood, "Retributive Justice: A Study of the Theme of Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy," unpublished University of Kentucky doctoral disseration (1958), p. 121.

CHAPTER VIII

THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY

The authorship of The Revenger's Tragedy (c. 1606) is still in doubt and, because of the absence of reliable external evidence, is likely to remain so.[1] Many of the arguments for both Tourneur and Middleton are unconvincing, and even a scientific bibliographical approach to the problem, such as that of George R. Price,[2] seems incapable of finally settling the matter. Sensibly, Allardyce Nicoll suggests that instead of trying to determine whether one author wrote both The Revenger's Tragedy and The Atheist's Tragedy, many of Tourneur's critics might more profitably adopt an approach that will

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[1] See Samuel Schoenbaum, Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship (Evanston, Ill., 1966), and esp. pp. 200-217. Here (as in his article, "Internal Evidence and the Attribution of Elizabethan Plays," NYPLB, LXV [1961], 102-124) Schoenbaum emphasizes the dangers of using internal evidence to ascertain authorship, and revises his earlier view that Middleton was the author.

[2] "The Authorship and the Bibliography of The Revenger's Tragedy," The Library, 5th series, XV (1960), 262-277. See also Peter B. Murray, "The Authorship of The Revenger's Tragedy," PBSA, LVI (1962), 195-218--which appears in more or less the same form in his A Study of Cyril Tourneur (Philadelphia, 1964), pp. 158-189.

"appreciate the plays themselves in their dramatic and theatrical interrelationships, without thought of the particular dramatists responsible."[3] Nevertheless, many of the large number of essays on the play's authorship remain valuable for the scholarly approaches their authors incidentally make to the play as a play.[4]

For the purposes of the present study it does not matter who wrote the play. Because the name has been traditionally associated with it, and for lack of convincing argument that Middleton could have been responsible for a work so unlike the plays he was writing at the time, the author of The Revenger's Tragedy will be referred to here as Cyril Tourneur.

The play is difficult to categorize. "Revenge

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[3]"The Revenger's Tragedy and the Virtue of Anonymity," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hosley, p. 316.

[4]Three critics, for example, try to solve the authorship problem by analyzing the imagery. See Una Ellis-Fermor, "The Imagery of 'The Revengers Tragedie' and 'The Atheists Tragedie'," MLR, XXX (1935), 289-301; Marco K. Mincoff, "The Authorship of The Revenger's Tragedy," Studia Historico-Philologica Serdicensia, II (1939), 1-87; Inga-Stina Ekeblad, "An Approach to Tourneur's Imagery," MLR, LIV (1959), 489-498. Interestingly, Ellis-Fermor and Ekeblad conclude that Tourneur wrote the play while Mincoff thinks the imagery shows that Tourneur could not have written it.

tragedy" seems a useful label but really misrepresents it, as its roots go back to the Morality tradition and beyond this into such amorphous elements of medieval tradition as the Dance of Death.[5] Closer to Tourneur, other literary kinds make themselves felt. Vindice can be understood as primarily a satirist,[6] or his cynicism can suggest the tradition of Complaint as a major influence.[7] T. S. Eliot accepted The Jew of Malta as a farce but was less generous with Tourneur, seeing only a "loathing and disgust of humanity" in The Revenger's Tragedy: "its motive," he asserts, "is truly the death motive, for it is the loathing and horror of life itself."[8] Yet Samuel Schoenbaum, Peter B. Murray and others see Tourneur as concerned to develop the comic possibilities of his material, a concern that results in a good

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[5]For the first, see L. G. Salingar, "'The Revenger's Tragedy' and the Morality Tradition," Scrutiny, VI (1938), 402-424. Schoenbaum sees the play as "the culmination of the Danse Macabre theme in England. Its appearance at this time indicates that medieval themes--so long dormant--were once more exerting a powerful influence on the minds of men." See his article, "The Revenger's Tragedy: Jacobean Dance of Death," MLQ, XV (1954), 203.

[6]Alvin Kernan--The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance (New Haven, 1959), p. 224--claims that Vindice "resembles the satirist more than he does the tragic hero."

[7]See John Peter, Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature, pp. 255-287.

[8]Elizabethan Dramatists, p. 116. The Tourneur essay was written in 1930.

deal of farcical burlesque.[9] The result of the considerable critical attention the play has received is the realization that "Neither melodrama nor tragedy, neither farce nor satire, it has attributes of all these genres."[10] It is at once "Revenge Tragedy, Satiric Comedy and Morality."[11]

Tourneur's characters are as difficult to describe as his play. Consistent with their names (several of which seem to have been taken directly from Florio's dictionary), most of them are individually flat, grotesque inflations of passions like lust, ambition, or vindictiveness.[12] Yet their unreality becomes the most disturbing and dramatic thing about them. They do not readily lend themselves to analysis because, like

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[9]See Schoenbaum's Middleton's Tragedies (New York, 1955), pp. 23-24; R. H. Barker, Thomas Middleton (New York, 1958), p. 73; Inga-Stina Ekeblad, "On the Authorship of The Revenger's Tragedy," ES, XLI (1960), 232; T. B. Tomlinson, A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy, pp. 111-116; Murray's A Study of Cyril Tourneur, p. 255; Brian Gibbons, Introduction to the New Mermaids edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy, p. xv; Lawrence J. Ross, Introduction to the Regents edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy (London, 1967), p. xxii.

[10]Schoenbaum, Middleton's Tragedies, p. 33.

[11]Ekeblad, "An Approach to Tourneur's Imagery," p. 489.

[12]This is Schoenbaum's view, which I share; but see below, n. 42. See also Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 224; and Irving Ribner, Jacobean Tragedy: The Quest for Moral Order (London, 1962), p. 74. Charles Osborne McDonald--The Rhetoric of Tragedy: Form in Stuart Drama (Boston, 1966), p. 238--excepts Vindice.

the play that contains them, the dramatic achievement they represent makes itself felt as a total impression. The bits and pieces of character and event that make the impression cannot be analyzed properly without considering their relationship to everything else.

Because of the play's complexity it is dangerous to analyze it as if it were simply a Kydian revenge tragedy; it is this, but it is more than this. Tourneur may be said to have made use of the basic elements of revenge tragedy to form the skeletal features of his plot. His interests extend beyond a concern with effective theatre, however, and the central quest motif--Vindice's search for a vengeance that will at once requite the deaths of Gloriana and his father and eradicate the basic cause of such injustices in a corrupt and idle court--affords an opportunity to escape the limitations of the traditional form. Vindice becomes a scourge of villainy, an upholder of a decaying social order the values of which are being denied before his eyes, as well as a revenger.

It will be necessary here to approach the play from several points of view, one at a time, so that the relationship between play and revenge genre can be established with some finality. Admittedly this procedure is unfair to Tourneur

as it suggests that the play's complexity is little more than the sum of the various themes and elements that make it up. In fact the vision behind the play is a remarkably unified one.

The basic elements that place the play in the tradition initiated by Kyd can be listed at once. The protagonist is first and foremost a revenger. He seeks blood revenge for the murder of a loved one, compelled like Hieronimo to take this course of action by the corrupt nature of the court's justice. The revenge is delayed for some time; Vindice has been awaiting his opportunity for nine years. Hoffman preserves his father's skeleton, Vindice the skull of Gloriana. Like the skull in Hamlet it is a meditative focus, although Tourneur makes it his central symbol. As in Antonio's Revenge and Hamlet, an erring mother is made to repent by a son loyal to the father's memory. The final revenge takes place in a masque, recalling the ending of The Spanish Tragedy and Antonio's Revenge. The ritualistic swearing of vengeance by (Tourneur's) Antonio and his friends is a common genre device. Like Hoffman, Vindice sees his actions as virtuous and necessary, calls upon heaven for support, and is answered.

Other features suggest a debt to plays outside the Kydian type. The names of certain characters are almost

certainly borrowed--Dondolo from Marston's The Fawn (c. 1605), Lussurioso and Castiza from Middleton's The Phoenix (c. 1604), as critics have been quick to point out. Schoenbaum sees a connection between Vindice, Middleton's Phoenix, and Fitsgrave in Middleton's Your Five Gallants (c. 1605).[13] Certainly Tourneur was also much influenced by Marston's The Malcontent (c. 1604): Vindice and Malevole are equally malcontented, and both use disguise to achieve their ends. They attack similar evils. R. A. Foakes suggests a link with King Lear (c. 1605), noting similarities between Lear III.ii and The Revenger's Tragedy III.v.60ff.[14]

Yet while the similarities with earlier plays are noteworthy, the differences between Tourneur and his predecessors in revenge tragedy are more significant. It seems pointless to list derived features of Elizabethan plays as if the information were of high significance. The detection of influences can assist appreciation of the literary concerns of individual dramatists, but influences are inevitable for any writer not working in isolation from his contemporaries. Meaningful departures from tradition are not. For Bowers the

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[13]See Middleton's Tragedies, p. 172.

[14]See his Introduction to the Revels edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy, p. lxix.

play stands "at the crossroads of Elizabethan tragedy," anticipating the villain tragedies whose "depiction of horror and tortuous intrigue is of such prime importance that revenge, while still the leading motive of the plot, does not carry the main interest of the audience except as a means to an end."[15] He praises Tourneur's handling of Vindice. Like Hoffman, Vindice is secure in his "right" cause, but Tourneur keeps the audience in doubt as Chettle did not.[16] Harold Jenkins recognizes "a new kind of revenge and a new kind of revenger." The author's concern is to "strain the conventions of the revenge tragedy" (in The Atheist's Tragedy he "snaps them").[17] Henry Hitch Adams analyzes the various revenge situations in the play to show "that Tourneur was exploring the entire idea of revenge, attempting to illustrate it in all its aspects" and "to come to grips with the moral aspects of the problem."[18] It is a commonplace notion that Tourneur's handling of revenge is original, but there has been little

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[15] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 138. Cf. Tomlinson, A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy, p. 111: "Tourneur is summing-up, and relying heavily on, values implicit in traditional Revenge writing." Novelty lies in the play's "comic sharpness and vivacity" (p. 112).

[16] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, pp. 133-134.

[17] "Cyril Tourneur," RES, XVII (1941), 26.

[18] "Cyril Tourneur on Revenge," JEGP, XLVIII (1949), 74.

discussion about what exactly makes it original. Its originality results from Tourneur's moral reaction against the treatment of revenge in The Spanish Tragedy and Hamlet and from his development of the new hero-villain of Hoffman.

The novelty of Clois Hoffman lies in his curious moral position. Soon recognized as evil by an audience (and not simply misguided), he yet remains virtuous in his own view of things. His villainy is quite unconscious. Perhaps importantly, Chettle disposes of the ghost, alienating his hero from direct contact with any clear spiritual sanction. Accordingly Hoffman has to seek his sanction from the very manifestations of divine wrath (thunder and lightning) that underline his villainy. The audience is at the same time more aware of the insecure moral grounds upon which revenges are usually built. The play balances the idea of "justified" private vengeance for a father's unjust execution against the degenerative effect vindictiveness has upon Hoffman. It mocks the heroic stance of the revenger through the idiot Jerome. Even apparently necessary counter-revenge is not treated sympathetically. Hoffman represents Chettle's attempt to portray the character of revenge and revenger more realistically (unlikely as this may at first seem). Blood revenge is depicted as murder, the revenger as murderer--and of course

Hoffman has the characteristics an Elizabethan audience would expect of a murderer. He is also a dramatically convincing character, as Eleazer and Barabas are not. Eleazer's motives are clear but their existence engenders little sympathy in an audience, probably because Eleazer is so conscious of his own villainy. Like the earlier non-protagonist revenger, Alexander, in Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, Hoffman's actions are understandable because his suffering and sincerity are felt to be real.

Clearly Tourneur's conception of the revenger owes much to Hoffman--and more than has previously been realized. Tourneur's study, though, is subtler. Chettle's audience would rapidly have lost any doubts about Hoffman's moral position but, as Bowers points out, "with Vindice . . . there is that doubt, directly caused by the curious moral atrophy of the play."[19] In the following pages Vindice's character as a revenger will be closely scrutinized. The attempt to define the nature of Tourneur's response to the genre of Kydian revenge tragedy he is developing will then be furthered by a consideration of the secondary revenge schemes that run through the play, and of the farcical and parodic elements that make themselves felt from time to time. By this

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[19] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 132.

threefold approach it should be possible to do what Eliot would not have thought feasible: to talk about Tourneur's attitudes instead of the attitudes of a Tourneur-Vindice.

From the very beginning Vindice implicitly sets up a standard of conduct by which the court is condemned as unfit to survive the vengeance he meditates. As the duke, the duchess, Lussurioso, and Spurio, "with a train," pass silently over the stage, Vindice is both of the drama and of the audience--a "presenter" who interprets and judges:

> Four excellent characters--O, that marrowless age
> Would stuff the hollow bones with damn'd desires,
> And 'stead of heat, kindle infernal fires
> Within the spendthrift veins of a dry duke,
> A parch'd and juiceless luxur. O God!--one
> That has scarce blood enough to live upon,
> And he to riot it like a son and heir?
> O, the thought of that
> Turns my abused heart-strings into fret. (I.i.5-13)[20]

The skull he holds is of his betrothed, whom the duke poisoned because she refused to submit to his advances. Immediately Vindice shows a fascination with the very emotions he inveighs against. It is the measure of Gloriana's former beauty

> That the uprightest man (if such there be
> That sin but seven times a day) broke custom,
> And made up eight with looking after her. (I.i.23-25)

Certainly he is no saint himself--he cannot contemplate

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[20]All quotations are from Foakes's edn. of the play.

private revenge as anything but a noble course in his circumstances--and his very name suggests his Italianate attributes to an audience. Necessarily, however, he generates sympathy: he is the only apparent alternative to the way of life the court represents, and audience identification with Vindice is immediate. Antonio is ineffectual, and rarely seen in any case; and the rape Junior commits upon the wife of Antonio (which the latter swears to avenge if justice is not seen) makes Vindice's plans seem all the more urgent.

Vindice is at first no more than a "detonator" for the destruction of the vicious. He suggests that Lussurioso enter the duke's bedchamber, but the events that follow--Lussurioso's imprisonment and release, and Junior's execution--are not foreseen. The court is in an advanced state of decay, individuals are setting traps for one another, and for the first half of the play Vindice has little more than a commentator's role to fulfil.[21] In Act III, however, he takes a hand in his own revenge to murder the duke, becoming more actively engaged until the final revenge-within-a-masque is achieved. He degenerates almost imperceptibly until his own

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[21]Peter Lisca, "The Revenger's Tragedy: A Study in Irony," PQ, XXXVIII (1959), 245, suggests that Tourneur's concern is with "the intestinal division of evil itself, a division which while seeming to lead to multiplication ironically ends in cross-cancellation."

character becomes as vicious as his victims'.

Pervading the various plots is the theme of transformation. Peter Lisca emphasizes its "centrality to the play's moral content."[22] The skull is its symbol, its subjects practically every other character in the play, including Vindice. His transformation, of which he is completely unaware, is forecast early and suggested throughout by the use of irony that is such a strong feature of this work. The greatest irony is that Vindice is inevitably condemned by the very standards of conduct that he himself has set up.[23]

In the first scene he calls upon a personified Vengeance, "murder's quit-rent," the "tenant to Tragedy," to

> keep thy day, hour, minute, I beseech,
> For those thou hast determin'd! (I.i.41-42)

Yet his lines give the clue to his own future fate ("who e'er knew / Murder unpaid?" [I.i.42-43]) as one who takes divine judgment into his own hands. The maxim in the final lines of Beaumont and Fletcher's The Maid's Tragedy--that God will punish his own scourging agent--is repeatedly suggested by

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[22]"The Revenger's Tragedy: A Study in Irony," p. 247. This theme is also dealt with at length by Murray, A Study of Cyril Tourneur, pp. 193ff., and by Ross, Introduction to the Regents edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy, pp. xxviiff.

[23]This has been pointed out by Peter, Complaint and Satire, p. 267.

Tourneur. Vindice goes disguised to the court solely for purposes of revenge. On arrival he adopts the role of pander, but in reality that of single-minded revenger. Away from the court he is a son or a tempter, Piato or himself. At the court his vengeance is everything. The language of the play highlights his transformation.

Hippolito informs his brother of the sort of personality he must cultivate: "some strange-digested fellow," "Of ill-contented nature," "A man that were for evil only good" (I.i.76, 77, 80). The description fits the Italianate avenger as well as it does the pander, and Vindice's replies develop the irony:

> I'll put on that knave for once,
> And be a right man then, a man o' th' time;
> For to be honest is not to be i' th' world.
> Brother, I'll be that strange-composed fellow.
> (I.i.93-96)

> I'll quickly turn into another. (I.i.134)

On his next appearance Vindice is suitably disguised, asking Hippolito "What, brother? am I far enough from myself?" (I.iii.1). In fact he is so successful in his first minutes with Lussurioso that the latter immediately employs him to corrupt Castiza, Vindice's own sister. The first transformation is of Vindice into Piato. This is only a surface transformation, however. The "real" Vindice is in

control of his new persona. It is this "real" character, Vindice beneath the mask, that is slowly being perverted. He swears to Lussurioso "to be true in all" (I.iii.161); and although the situation demands that he make the promise, what he says next (Lussurioso having departed) suggests that he intends to keep it not because he wants to but because he feels morally bound to. The lines imply a distorted scale of moral values:

> Now let me burst; I've eaten noble poison.
> We are made strange fellows, brother, innocent villains;
> Wilt not be angry when thou hear'st on 't, think'st thou?
> I'faith, thou shalt. Swear me to foul my sister!
> Sword, I durst make a promise of him to thee;
> Thou shalt dis-heir him, it shall be thine honour.
> (I.iii.169-174)

Perhaps the point ought not to be insisted upon, as it strains the credibility of the character, but Vindice seems to make no distinction between the relative seriousness of the sins of forswearing, "fouling" his own sister, and killing Lussurioso. If anything, he regards forswearing as the greatest evil of the three.

Reconciled to the prospect of playing bawd to his sister, he now attempts to justify it. There is really nothing wrong in carrying out his promise, because

> Another might have had the self same office,
> Some slave, that would have wrought effectually,
> Ay, and perhaps o'erwrought 'em. (I.iii.178-180)

Determined to "forget my nature" (I.iii.182), he leaves the court,

> though I durst almost for good
> Venture my lands in heaven upon their blood.
> (I.iii.184-185)

In the light of what follows, this is prophetic at least.

After the shattering realization that his mother is not worth venturing his lands in heaven upon, Vindice returns in a dilemma. He can tell Lussurioso that Castiza is impregnable. That, however, might be a lie, since possibly Gratiana will prove more effective than "Piato" ("Women with women can work best alone" [II.i.250]). If he tells the truth, revealing everything including this last possibility, Castiza is in greater danger than before; but he has "sworn." His relationship with Lussurioso is in some ways comparable with the Bosola-Ferdinand relationship in The Duchess of Malfi (c. 1614). He does not enjoy the role he has agreed to play, but he must play it. Realizing it is to his own shame, he decides upon the "lesser" evil:

> Now must I blister my soul, be forsworn,
> Or shame the woman that receiv'd me first;
> I will be true, thou liv'st not to proclaim;
> Spoke to a dying man, shame has no shame. (II.ii.37-40)

Again the normal scale of relative values is reversed: honesty gets precedence over honour, with life the least important commodity of the three.

As a result of his knowledge that his own mother is corruptible, Vindice's cynicism extends beyond the specific objects under attack at the beginning of the play. He now begins to see women in general as weak, eminently corruptible, and the cause of the dissolution of things. This has its effect on his attitude to his dead mistress: his treatment of her in Act III shows the extent of the change. Lawrence J. Ross sees her as transformed "from chaste victim into a whore and murderess just as he has turned himself into a pander and murderer."[24] "Chaste" is perhaps a debatable adjective here--Vindice mentions her provocative powers in the first scene--but there is certainly a marked change in his attitude to her. He dresses her for the role of country slut, addresses her mockingly (III.v.43-48), and reveals her to Hippolito, whose reaction ("Why, brother, brother!" [III.v.49]) is only natural. Vindice chides himself

> For doting on her beauty, though her death
> Shall be reveng'd after no common action. (III.v.70-71)

In the "silk-worm" speech that follows he is unaware of the

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[24]Introduction to the Regents edn. of The Revenger's Tragedy, p. xxviii. Murray--A Study of Cyril Tourneur, pp. 211-212--supports the view that "Vindici is driven . . . to tempt Castiza so that he can prove the existence of the value his vengeance is to affirm. When Gratiana turns bawd his faith in Castiza's virtue is shaken." Gloriana also suffers from his disillusionment, so that "it is at least as much the unnaturalness of his treatment of Gloriana as the unnaturalness of his revenge against the Duke that is the measure of his departure from himself."

application many of his lines have to himself. Like the highwayman he is putting "his life between the judge's lips," but "For the poor benefit of a bewitching minute" of vengeance (III.v.77, 75). He speaks out against the folly of expending labours "To refine such a thing" as woman (III.v.72-82, 84-89), but is himself quite prepared to engage in murder for "the bony lady," even though he has lost respect for her. Gloriana has become as unrecognizable as Piato-Vindice, whose "nine years' vengeance crowd into a minute" (III.v.123)--a minute of refined Italianate horror.

The murder of the duke would almost certainly have disquieted an Elizabethan audience. Poisoning was considered a peculiarly Italian means of murder, but it was practised frequently enough in England to seem more than an imaginative theatrical spectacle.[25] As the duke kisses the poisoned skull, Vindice refers to his brother and himself as "Villains" and "knaves" (III.v.154, 159). As a regicidal Italian refining his revenge for pleasure, Vindice gives the clue to his own future fate: "When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good" (III.v.205).

In Act IV Tourneur continues to involve his revenger

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[25]See Fredson Bowers, "The Audience and the Poisoners of Elizabethan Tragedy," JEGP, XXXVI (1937), 491-504.

in ironies. Vindice sees himself as a conductor of heaven's vengeance upon a corrupt court, but when Lussurioso blatantly avows that he "Trampled," "spurn'd," and "bruis'd" Piato for attempting to seduce Castiza, Vindice's

> Has not Heaven an ear?
> Is all the lightning wasted? (IV.ii.158-159)

goes unanswered. He gets his reply forty lines later when he ends a diatribe upon Lussurioso with

> Is there no thunder left, or is 't kept up
> In stock for heavier vengeance? There it goes!
> [Thunder sounds.]

If he is unmindful of his relation to the "heavier vengeance" that is coming, the audience should be prepared for it. Vindice's "I'm in doubt whether I'm myself, or no" (IV.iv.24) is a response to Gratiana's denial that she acted as bawd to her daughter, but it recalls such earlier comments as "Brother, I'll be that strange-composed fellow" (I.i.96), "I'll quickly turn into another" (I.i.134), and "What, brother? am I far enough from myself?" (I.iii.1). When she repents Vindice suggests they forgive her: "Let's marry her to our souls, wherein's no lust" (IV.iv.57). Yet he harbours a lust more intense and serious than any other character's.

By a trick he "kills" Piato (the dead duke disguised) in Act V, extracting himself from a dangerous situation and clearing himself of suspicion for the earlier murder, and

expresses understandable pride in his own cleverness:

> Thus much by wit a deep revenger can,
> When murder's known, to be the clearest man.
> We're furthest off, and with as bold an eye
> Survey his body as the standers-by. (V.i.92-95)

This sort of over-confidence is theatrically effective preparation for the fall of the revengers at the end, which must be anticipated as Vindice's vengeance begins to take its toll of innocent bystanders. The first noble is carried off to execution (suspected of complicity in the murder) as the brothers congratulate each other on the turn of events. The third noble's suggestion that

> time
> Will make the murderer bring forth himself (V.i.156-157)

and Vindice's reply--in an aside--that "He were an ass then, i'faith" both ironically prove correct, and it can only be concluded that Tourneur meant by these lines to increase the impact of the final ironic reversal.

In the final scene thunder sounds as Vindice and the others kill Lussurioso and his nobles:

> Mark, thunder! Dost know thy cue, thou big-voic'd
> cryer?
> Dukes' groans are thunder's watchwords. (V.iii.42-43)

The pretension is comic, the play close to farce at this point:

> No power is angry when the lustful die;
> When thunder claps, heaven likes the tragedy.
> (V.iii.46-47)

There follows the second masque and the deaths of Ambitioso,

Supervacuo, and Spurio. The one survivor of this group is accused by Hippolito and Vindice of treason and readily accepts responsibility for Spurio's death. In the confusion, however, Vindice is able to make it appear that this character was more deeply involved:

> Vind. Hark!
> Luss. --Those in the masque did murder us.
> Vind. Law you now, sir;--
> O marble impudence! will you confess now?
> 4 Noble. 'Sblood, 'tis all false. (V.iii.68-71)

Vengeance has become reckless, haphazard, involving the innocent and guilty alike.

Convinced of their virtue, Vindice and Hippolito now feel free to admit that they killed the old duke. "'Twas all done for the best, my lord" (V.iii.95), they assure Antonio. As the new ruler, he might be expected to congratulate them, since he himself has earlier sworn Hippolito, Piero, and others to avenge Junior's rape. Instead, he orders the brothers "to speedy execution" (V.iii.102) on the pretext that "You that would murder him would murder me" (V.iii.105). Vindice's final lines,

> We have enough, i'faith;
> We're well, our mother turn'd, our sister true;
> We die after a nest of dukes. Adieu. (V.iii.123-125)

are the expression of an honest conviction that all has been for the best, and Antonio's action may seem unjust. Madeleine

Doran's view that "Antonio's judgement on Vindici and his brother is purely political" is understandable, though it is a rash conclusion to draw that Tourneur is not interested in moral questions, that "revenge for him may be just a technique for making a play."[26] Like Doran, Robert Ornstein sees no restoration of moral order here: Vindice and Hippolito are to be executed for no other reason than that "Antonio is a politic ruler who fears that those who killed the old duke might also kill him."[27] Certainly it is true that Antonio has given every indication of his approval of the final slaughter. He answers Vindice's

> The rape of your good lady has been quited
> With death on death (V.iii.90-91)

with "Just is the law above!" But it is not very difficult to reconcile this with his judgment on the revengers. The vengeance he looks forward to in Act I is to be only upon Junior, and he takes no action subsequently. He accepts the deaths of the old duke, Lussurioso, and the others as divine justice, but he cannot accept its agents as virtuous. His

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[26] Endeavors of Art: A Study of Form in Elizabethan Drama (Madison, Wis., 1954), p. 358.

[27] "The Ethical Design of The Revenger's Tragedy," ELH, XXI (1954), 87. Murray inclines to agree (in A Study of Cyril Tourneur, p. 223, where he takes issue with critics who "regard Antonio as a moral touchstone and therefore see in his succession to power a restoration of justice"). Ross, in his Introduction to the Regents edn. of the play, p. xxvi, sees the whole episode as just another ironic reversal.

judgment upon them need not simply be dismissed as self-interest.[28]

What is more important is that Vindice deserves the punishment he is given. To an Elizabethan audience his must have seemed a particularly vicious kind of vengeance. He has not forced his victims to damn themselves by forsaking all hope of divine grace, but he has devised other gruesome techniques and enthusiastically executed them. Had Antonio simply exiled him, the ending could hardly have seemed right.[29] For Vindice's early moral sense has been atrophied long since in a play where "the moral scheme is everything."[30] If he is seen as a satirist he is a satirist operating within and

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[28]There is little indication in the play as to how one should respond to the character, so that Irving Ribner is able to go to the other extreme and see Antonio as one who "by his Christian patience and refusal to avenge his wrongs attains the final triumph." See Ribner's Introduction to the Revels edn. of The Atheist's Tragedy (London, 1964), p. lii.

[29]Compare the cardinal's judgment upon Vasques at the end of Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore (c. 1632; first edn. 1633):

> Fellow, for thee; since what thou did'st, was done
> Not for thy selfe, being no Italian,
> Wee banish thee for euer, to depart
> Within three dayes, in this wee doe dispense
> With grounds of reason not of thine offence. (sig. K4r)

Vindice, of course, is the epitome of the Italianate revenger.

[30]John Peter, Complaint and Satire, p. 268. See also p. 267: Vindice is condemned by the very standards he has set up for others, "and any attempt to save him from 'falling' would merely indicate vacillation and inconsistency."

infected by his society.[31] As a revenger he has little claim to divine sanction, yet it is difficult to see how "Heaven is responsible for his fall, and Heaven alone."[32] Perhaps the crowning irony of the play is that it is the sin of pride, and not any of the others he is guilty of, that brings about his downfall.[33] His tragedy lies in his becoming accustomed to the idea of revenge and in his inability to see the transformation his lust for vengeance is effecting in him. By the end of the play he has lost any ability to see his own conduct objectively and falls into the trap of assuming Antonio's standards to be the same as his own. Antonio, like Charlemont in The Atheist's Tragedy, has been prepared to await patiently the justice that the phrase "Vindicta mihi" promises, although he also knows the passion for vengeance. His words in the final scene establish the sanity that is to replace the nightmarish unreality of the world that has been the only reality before. Vindice may have represented "the

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[31] See Alvin Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 228: Vindice, like other satirists, "inevitably reveals that he too is morally sick." J. M. R. Margeson, The Origins of English Tragedy, p. 143, argues that Vindice gradually "loses the objectivity and the freedom of the satiric commentator," ironically becoming increasingly involved.

[32] M. C. Bradbrook, Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge, 1935; edn. cited 1960), p. 174.

[33] I owe this suggestion to my supervisor, Dr. Alan Brissenden.

only possible moral order, one that is perverse in nature and eminently corruptible because it has no higher purpose than the accomplishment of revenge,"[34] but with the passing of the society that necessitated him he is not only irrelevant but morally unacceptable.

From a study of Tourneur's protagonist two things become clear: that Tourneur's presentation of Vindice is objective, not subjective as Eliot believed; and that his conception of the revenger is a cynical one, which he conveys by subtly exploring both the moral features of the personal vendetta and the sort of personality the revenger develops. Tourneur, in showing what becomes of the real revenger, stands in opposition to the position Kyd adopted. In 1587 Hieronimo might merit a place in heaven, but by 1606 the reaction against what was essentially a non-Christian approach had become firmly established. Tourneur's relationship to his central character and to the genre he exploits cannot be adequately accounted for, though, by a study of Vindice alone.

It has been suggested that Tourneur may have meant

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[34] Ornstein, "The Ethical Design of The Revenger's Tragedy," p. 86.

his play's title to be read as "The Revengers' Tragedy."[35] Besides Vindice there are other characters who for one reason or another pursue vengeance. The first of these to initiate revenge is the duchess, whose anger at the duke's refusal to set free her son Junior leads to the formulation of a plan to cuckold the duke with his own bastard son. Her "courting" of Spurio proceeds by direct attack and absurd innuendo ("Nay, set you a-horseback once, you'll ne'er 'light off" [I.ii.144]), and she provides the one excuse for incest that he finds appealing:

> Who would not be reveng'd of such a father,
> E'en in the worst way? I would thank that sin
> That could most injure him, and be in league with it.
> (I.ii.156-158)

There is a relationship of sorts between Spurio's revenge and Vindice's, for both are revenges in kind. The old duke is poisoned by the skull of the woman he himself earlier poisoned. Spurio's excuse for revenge is a sexual aberration of his father's that deprived him of his rightful inheritance, so he punishes his father by a sexual aberration of his own. Seen in this way, Spurio's vengeance is similar to Vindice's, only less serious since there is no intention to murder. Certainly

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[35]This is a possibility put forward by Adams, "Cyril Tourneur on Revenge," p. 74. Adams traces several revenge actions in the play and (rather superficially) shows them as variations on Tourneur's anti-revenge theme.

the connection is stronger than that which Adams traces between the duchess' adultery and Castiza's chastity.[36] For Tourneur uses Spurio's revenge to comment on Vindice's.

That he intends a comparison to be drawn is further attested when he brings the two revenge actions together in Act III. As Vindice and Hippolito enact their revenge upon the old duke, Spurio and the duchess enter. And it is almost as much the sight of his wife and bastard enjoying their "taste of sin" as Vindice's poison that kills the duke (III.v.222). Both Spurio and Vindice thus effect their revenge at the same time, in the same place, and upon the same object--although Spurio is unaware of his father's presence. The duchess' ironic words on her husband seal the connection:

> The thought of him rubs heaven in thy way.
> But I protest, by yonder waxen fire,
> Forget him, or I'll poison him. (III.v.212-214)

Unwittingly, she and Spurio do this as effectively as Vindice has done. The comparison, of course, is to the disadvantage of Vindice, alongside whose particularly vicious vengeance Spurio's incest is a venial sin.

The execution of Junior causes another plan of vengeance, that of Supervacuo and Ambitioso against the heir

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[36] "Cyril Tourneur on Revenge," p. 74.

apparent, Lussurioso. They hold him responsible (how, it is not clear) for their brother's death, and Ambitioso determines to be avenged:

> Well, no more words, 'shalt be reveng'd i'faith.
> Come, throw off clouds now, brother, think of vengeance,
> And deeper settled hate; sirrah, sit fast,
> We'll pull down all, but thou shalt down at last.
> (III.vi.91-94)

Although this vow leads nowhere,[37] the intention is similar to the central revenger's. Vindice's only enemies are (presumably) the old duke and Lussurioso (the latter since he has had designs on Castiza), but the thought that to achieve his ends he might have to "pull down all" perturbs him no more than it does Ambitioso. This is, of course, precisely what he unhesitatingly does.

Later, Supervacuo and Ambitioso plot yet another revenge action, this time against the bastard. They find their mother's incestuous affair abhorrent and plan to kill Spurio under cover of a masque at the same time that they dispose of Lussurioso (solely for reasons of ambition). Just as Tourneur has earlier placed two sets of revengers side by side, so in the final scene the revenges of Vindice-Hippolito and Supervacuo-Ambitioso parallel each other. The latter is

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[37] In a sense it does, for their masque is a plot against Lussurioso as well as Spurio. By this time, however, ambition is their only motive as far as the former is concerned.

not successful--Vindice's group has already accomplished what the others planned--but in all other respects the two are similar. For both groups "A masque is treason's licence" (V.i.181) and both plots culminate at the same place and (practically) the same time. Moreover, similar motives are involved. Supervacuo and Ambitioso plan to destroy Spurio because through his agency their mother has turned base; while Vindice and Hippolito desire Lussurioso's death because his sexual appetites have threatened Castiza and been the cause of their mother's fall. Each group contains four masquers.

These are the most important of the subsidiary revenge plots apart from Antonio's.[38] Each, as a reflection on a lower level of the main revenge action, is important to Tourneur's central concern with his protagonist. Each is a deglamorized counterpart to the vengeance of Vindice, which is gradually seen for what it is partly because Tourneur places it alongside the secondary actions that resemble it. They act, that is to say, as qualifiers for the pretentious dignity of the "heroic" protagonist, providing a standard of reference for the primary revenge action in a play where everything, including the comic, serves a serious moral

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[38] Adams includes the "killing" of Piato, which Lussurioso organizes.

concern.[39] At the beginning of the play Vindice is inevitably seen as an admirable representative of the traditional values the court has brushed aside, morally elevated above the world he denounces. He becomes increasingly involved in that world, however, degenerating almost imperceptibly until his own character is on a par with his victims'. The sort of deliberate and extensive devaluation of his hero that has already been noted leads one to believe that Tourneur would have foreseen the opportunity to use the minor revenges to assist in this general reductive, objectifying process which allows the audience to see Vindice as the villain he has become, not as the hero he still considers himself. All the evidence points to the conclusion that the dramatist is quite consciously using parallel action as reductive technique. He deliberately forces the moral equation of Vindice and Hippolito with Spurio and the duchess in III.v in order to underline the increasingly villainous nature of the "heroes," which is emphasized again in the final scene, where the two groups of masquers are not only morally but physically indistinguishable. This scene provides the culminating deflation of the hero: dressed alike, similarly motivated, the two masques of murderers are separated in their entrances by only eight lines

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[39] In this sense they are comparable with the Jerome scenes in Hoffman.

of text. Lussurioso is not even aware that there are two groups, blaming "Those in the masque" (V.iii.68) and allowing Vindice, no longer costumed, to fix the guilt elsewhere.

It is partly as a result of there being so many other revenge actions in operation throughout the play that Vindice's initial moral superiority is forgotten. Additionally, because the other revengers are such absurd characters, and because Vindice comes to be recognized as little better than his enemies, his actions often tend to appear as farcical as his counterparts'.

There is, in fact, so much farce and burlesque in The Revenger's Tragedy that one can easily minimize Tourneur's serious preoccupations. The intensity of the language and co-operating imagery testify to a profound concern with traditional sanctities and the accelerating breakdown of the traditional social order. The comic elements, though, are in no sense a distraction, as they are always geared to support the serious themes. Tourneur's handling of Vindice provides one example of the reinforcement of the serious by the comic. The serious preoccupation is with Vindice the catalyst, hastening the end of a corrupt Italian court society but ending corrupted himself. To highlight his revenger's

degeneration the author uses farce and burlesque, exposing Vindice's pretensions and the amorality of revenge generally. The term "comic relief" is not applicable here, or anywhere else in the play for that matter.

The play is at least in part a parody of traditional revenge melodrama, and the precise nature of Tourneur's relation to his contemporaries can only be appreciated after his mocking of various conventions has been taken into account. The danger, of course, is (as Murray points out) "to assume that an author cannot be serious in a play that burlesques the 'prevailing style of tragedy'."[40]

It has not been appreciated how conscious Tourneur is of the dramatic conventions he uses. There is, for example, a disinclination to accept seriously what is perhaps the most secure convention of all--the aside. He uses it very frequently with Vindice, of course, but is always aware of its potential comic effect. In Act II Vindice, returned from his mother's house, is questioned by an impatient Lussurioso. Vindice tells him of Castiza's constancy, but then adds "O, the mother, the mother!" The result is the following exchange:

Luss. I never thought their sex had been a wonder

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[40] A Study of Cyril Tourneur, p. 256.

Until this minute. What fruit from the mother?
Vind. [Aside] Now must I blister my soul, be forsworn,
Or shame the woman that receiv'd me first;
I will be true, thou liv'st not to proclaim;
Spoke to a dying man, shame has no shame.--
[To him] My lord!
Luss. Who's that?
Vind. Here's none but I, my lord.
Luss. What would thy haste utter?
Vind. Comfort.
Luss. Welcome.
(II.ii.35-42)

In this instance Tourneur is exploiting the fact that the aside delays Vindice's answer, but whether he is mocking the aside as a dramatic device (through Lussurioso's "Who's that?" and "What would thy haste utter?") or simply using the delay to create a humorous situation out of Lussurioso's impatience is not clear. Either way he is certainly aware of the convention's comic potential.

The play affords other examples of convention being exploited for a similar effect. The revenger's vow becomes absurd in Spurio's hands:

I'll be reveng'd for all; now hate begin,
I'll call foul incest but a venial sin. (I.ii.170-171)

His ludicrous justification is that

a bastard by nature should make cuckolds,
because he is the son of a cuckold-maker.
(I.ii.203-204)

Lussurioso's wooing of Castiza by gifts is a commonly accepted modus operandi, but the duchess is unaware that a reverse

situation can easily seem farcical, as it does here:

> And here comes he whom my heart points unto;
> His bastard son, but my love's true-begot.
> Many a wealthy letter have I sent him,
> Swell'd up with jewels, and the timorous man
> Is yet but coldly kind. (I.ii.110-114)

Paradoxically, some of the play's most serious statements are couched in comic terms. Vindice has "been witness to the surrenders of a thousand virgins, and not so little," has "seen patrimonies washed a-pieces" and "fruit-fields turned into bastards" (I.iii.49-52). To Lussurioso's question whether Vindice knows "I' th' world strange lust?" he replies "O, Dutch lust, fulsome lust!" (I.iii.56) and proceeds to catalogue various forms of incest, becoming progressively more serious until he is able to speak of

> that eternal eye,
> That sees through flesh and all. (I.iii.65-66)

Tourneur's language is unusually forceful and adaptable, able to move from the comic to the profound in moments. As Schoenbaum has pointed out, while "the characters and situations are often broadly comic, the language is not of the kind usually associated with farce."[41]

The comic element is not limited to a few lines here and there. It takes over complete scenes, upsetting normally

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[41] Middleton's Tragedies, p. 24.

serious situations so that the audience becomes accustomed to suspect any character's pretensions to nobility or tragic grandeur. In the trial scene, for example, Tourneur is supposedly concerned to demonstrate the impossibility of any kind of justice functioning in a court as corrupt as this. The failure of justice shows that Vindice is a temporary necessity, so that the trial is important to an understanding of the moral ambiguity of the revenger. Serious in this way, the scene is nevertheless comic, and can be compared with the trial scenes in Volpone (c. 1606), in which the serious and the comic are co-operative. Tourneur's method is to underline the corrupt nature of the duke's justice by showing it to be a burlesque of normal law-court procedure. A judge refers to rape as "Double adultery" (I.ii.44) and the prisoner claims he was motivated (naturally enough) by "flesh and blood"--since "What should move men unto a woman else?" (I.ii.47-48). Junior cannot accept even the prospect of death seriously. His "fault being sport," he has no other wish but to "die in jest" (I.ii.66). The duchess complains,

> O what it is to have an old-cool duke
> To be as slack in tongue as in performance. (I.ii.74-75)

Solemnity and absurdity proceed side by side, leading to the travesty of justice the audience knows is coming:

> 1. Judge. Let that offender--
> Duchess. Live, and be in health.

1. Judge. Be on a scaffold--
Duke. Hold, hold, my lord.
Spurio. [Aside] Pox on 't,
What makes my dad speak now?
Duke. We will defer the judgment till next sitting.
(I.ii.81-84)

Upon this episode follows the equally comic one of Spurio's seduction by the duchess.

The secondary characters--the duchess and Spurio, Lussurioso, Ambitioso and Supervacuo, Junior, the duke, and others--are all little more than two-dimensional character-types, representing single facets of personality like lust, ambition, and idiocy, as their names suggest. There is little more to say about them, except that in common with Vindice and Hippolito they have a sense of humour and are dramatically successful. Vindice is a much more complex character, yet even he seems two-dimensional: his personality is predominantly vindictive and his speeches are always centred on the vices of others. Emotion makes itself felt in him only when he speaks of incest, vengeance, or the security of his mother and sister. He is complex chiefly because of his moral ambiguity as a seeker of vengeance in a corrupt court. Since all the characters at the court are by and large manifestations of folly or vice, their words and actions more readily assume comic overtones, usually without their realizing the effect

themselves.[42] Ambitioso and Supervacuo, discovering that their "trick" to free their brother and execute Lussurioso has caused their brother's death, threaten the officer with the head he has brought them: "Super. Villain, I'll brain thee with it" (III.vi.81). Their only emotion is one of rage, in a situation so farcical that Ambitioso's "Well, no more words, 'shalt be reveng'd i'faith" (III.vi.91) causes the atmosphere Vindice has been building up around his own "noble" vengeance to be diminished. Tourneur goes so far as to make his protagonist the unwitting butt of the audience's laughter. Vindice's "When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good" (III.v.205) reduces the whole revenge motif to the level of farcical melodrama and Vindice to the level of Ambitioso and the others. In instances such as this Tourneur seems to be consciously disparaging the heroic stance he has earlier developed for his protagonist.

It is as though twenty years of revenge melodrama and ranting heroes of varying degrees of virtue have made it impossible for Tourneur to take seriously the foundations

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[42] Schoenbaum--Middleton's Tragedies, p. 23--goes so far as to claim that they are simply "puppets hurled from one situation to another, automata whose misfortunes stir sardonic mirth rather than terror or compassion." This view may be a little too simple. Dramatically they are very successful characters who probably seemed more disturbingly monstrous to an Elizabethan audience than they do to readers today.

upon which his plot is built. The revenge situation proves useful for conveying his serious moral point of view, but it is no longer possible to present in all seriousness the revenges of an injured malcontent as admirable or acted out under the aegis of heaven. Vindice falls at least partly because Tourneur is not able to contemplate him in a consistently serious way. And the play is often farcical because in 1606 Tourneur is aware that the Kydian sub-genre, of which his play is still a part, has to all intents and purposes exhausted itself.

Much of the play's comic tone, therefore, appears to be there to "control the melodramatic effect of the Revenge plot."[43] The conventional language of the revenger is frequently transformed into the ridiculous, when, for example, Vindice speaks of "the fly-flap of vengeance" (V.i.15) or refers to revenge as "murder's quit-rent" (I.i.39). Much of the exaggerated passion is little more than self-conscious burlesque on Tourneur's part, and it is difficult to take seriously lines like "'Tis I, 'tis Vindice, 'tis I" (III.v.168) or

> 'tis but early yet, now I'll begin
> To stick thy soul with ulcers, (III.v.174-175)

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[43]Ekeblad, "On the Authorship of The Revenger's Tragedy," p. 233.

let alone "the brook is turn'd to blood" (III.v.222) and

> The dukedom wants a head, though yet unknown;
> As fast as they peep up, let's cut 'em down.
> (III.v.225-226)

Vindice's stabbing of the dead body of the old duke is in a similar vein--belonging to the world of farce rather than to tragedy--and even in his fall Vindice is able to leave the stage on a note of light-heartedness. Yet the play remains "the revenger's tragedy" since Vindice (in another dimension of the play, the tragic) has been condemned as unfit to survive because of his descent into the world of the vicious moment and his involvement in the very evils he so forcefully exposes.

The Revenger's Tragedy is a complex work that must be appreciated on several levels at once. In analysis, unfortunately, it is hard to avoid compartmentalizing different aspects of the play. It is a revenge tragedy, a comic burlesque, and a morality play, each and all of these, and any one dimension has important roles to fulfil in relation to the others.[44] Thus the comic lines and episodes work

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[44]Finally, everything is structured to the serious moral concern, a factor which Murray (A Study of Cyril Tourneur, p. 256) does not fully recognize. There is no need to cite "the ironies of medieval drama and art, which had attempted to reach equilibrium by balancing yes against no, reverence against mockery" to explain The Revenger's Tragedy.

either to support or undermine the tragic dimension as Tourneur desires. The revenge of Spurio and the duchess is basically comic--the comedy of the absurd--but because a comparison is forced between it and Vindice's revenge on the old duke, it helps to place the amoral features of the hero more definitely. Vindice's tragedy, by such means, is reinforced, as the action of Antonio at the end becomes more and more predictable. At the same time, a vein of burlesque running from beginning to end serves to remind the audience that Kydian revenge tragedies are essentially unrealistic and out of date and that, while Tourneur is taking moral issues seriously, he is aware that the genre he uses to explore those issues has come to seem slightly ridiculous. There is never any question of "reconciling" the serious and the comic, because they both reflect the bitterness, scorn, and mockery that a sardonic vision implies. Tourneur's play is perceived as a harmonious unity not of opposites but of different facets of the same vision.

With The Revenger's Tragedy the reaction, within the sub-genre of Kydian revenge tragedy, against the revenger as hero is almost complete. Vindictiveness damns Tourneur's revenger as it did Eleazer and Hoffman. It is not only the hero who is exposed, however, for Tourneur is as disinclined

as Chettle to take the traditional revenge motif seriously. He treats it as scornfully as he does his hero's pretension to moral superiority, and by the end of the play the validity of both is objectively discredited. Marston, the authors of Lust's Dominion, Chettle, and Tourneur, all by their more orthodox moral outlook make obsolete and unacceptable the sort of noble, arguably justified, stage revenger that Hieronimo and Hamlet represent. Between them, these authors explore the whole concept of revenge and revenger and foreshadow the concentration on villain tragedies that follows. The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois and The Atheist's Tragedy, like the revenge tragedies preceding them, are explorations of the morality of private blood revenge, but they embody a different kind of hero, the "honest revenger" who waits patiently until he can secure vengeance by morally acceptable means or until heaven accomplishes its own revenge. They represent the culmination of a period in which the concept of the avenging hero is being subjected to continual questioning, and a new (though short-lived) direction in revenge tragedy, written against, and illustrating the powerful influence of, a background of conscious change.

CHAPTER IX

THE REVENGE OF BUSSY D'AMBOIS AND THE ATHEIST'S TRAGEDY

Dedicating The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (c. 1610) to Sir Thomas Howard, Chapman argues for "materiall instruction, elegant and sententious excitation to Vertue, and deflection from her contrary" as the "soule, lims, and limits of an autenticall Tragedie."[1] In Act I the hero Clermont complains of the prevailing style of drama:

> we must now haue nothing brought on Stages,
> But puppetry, and pide ridiculous Antickes:
> Men thither come, to laugh, and feede foole-fat,
> Checke at all goodnesse there, as being prophan'd.
> (sig. C1^{v})

Presumably the play is supposed to counter this and uphold the principles set forth in the dedication.

To judge from the dedication, however, it would seem that The Revenge was not well received by contemporary audiences. The main reason for its failure on the stage was

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[1] The Reuenge of Bussy D'Ambois (1613), sig. A3^{v}. This edn.--the first--is cited throughout.

probably Clermont. He is the chief repository of "materiall instruction," a Stoic hero who upsets the whole tradition of revenge tragedy by refusing to avenge his brother's death by other than noble means, whose death bears no relation to the (somewhat subsidiary) revenge motif, and who remains for most of the play the passive centre of intrigues he has little control over and less desire to control. Most critics agree that the play fails as tragedy.[2] Its principal interest is as propaganda.

There are two obvious reasons for the existence of the play. Chapman had become personally committed to Stoic philosophy and felt the need to express his new outlook dramatically.[3] In relation to that outlook he wanted to

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[2]See, e.g., Irving Ribner, Jacobean Tragedy: The Quest for Moral Order, p. 22; T. B. Tomlinson, A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy, pp. 261-264; G. R. Hibbard, "Goodness and Greatness: An Essay on the Tragedies of Ben Jonson and George Chapman," Renaissance and Modern Studies, XI (1967), 53-54.

[3]Thelma Herring rightly warns against attempts to define too rigidly Chapman's world view at any one time: Stoicism, Neoplatonism, and Christianity are not always there "in the same proportions." See her article, "Chapman and an Aspect of Modern Criticism," RenD, VIII (1965), 154. Nevertheless it is safe to say that Chapman becomes progressively more "Stoic" in outlook from Bussy D'Ambois (c. 1604) to The Revenge. Attempts like Ennis Rees's to see the whole Chapman corpus, including even The Widow's Tears (c. 1605), as a reflection of traditional Christian ethics should be resisted. See his The Tragedies of George Chapman: Renaissance Ethics in Action (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), and the rejoinders of

present a novel revenge action and a novel revenger, and here he becomes vitally concerned with the genre. Although the play's title might suggest some concern for what John William Wieler calls "'box office appeal'," [4] there is little in the revenge "action" to supply it--with the exception of the duel at the end that Clermont uses to make his revenge at least partially acceptable. Chapman's main object as far as the revenge situation is concerned is to take up the moral issue of the protagonist revenger that had already obsessed Marston, Dekker and his collaborators, Chettle, and Tourneur. He adopts their moral posture (more or less) but rejects their methods. Instead of providing an example of what the wronged protagonist should not do (Antonio, Eleazer, Hoffman, Vindice), Clermont exemplifies the preferable response.[5]

Irving Ribner, "Character and Theme in Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois," ELH, XXVI (1959), 482; Samuel Schoenbaum, "The Widow's Tears and the Other Chapman," pp. 336-337; Robert Ornstein, The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy, p. 48; Thelma Herring, "Chapman and an Aspect of Modern Criticism," p. 154.

[4] George Chapman: The Effect of Stoicism upon his Tragedies (New York, 1949), p. 81.

[5] Only in this sense is the play a reaction against its immediate generic predecessors. Thomas Marc Parrott is probably correct in describing it as "a protest against a popular type of contemporary tragedy" (Introduction to The Revenge in his edn. of The Plays and Poems of George Chapman: The Tragedies [London, 1910], p. 576), but he puts Hamlet in the same category as Antonio, Hoffman, and Vindice (p. 573), and thus misrepresents Chapman's relationship to Marston, Chettle, and Tourneur.

His disinclination to take action against Montsurry, one of the characters involved in Bussy's death in Bussy D'Ambois, "But in the noblest and most manly course" (sig. $B2^r$) is made clear at the outset by Baligny. Clermont has claimed revenge as his own prerogative on the ground that Bussy's ghost has bidden him "suffer none but his hand in his wreake" (sig. $B2^r$). The kind of vengeance he has in mind, however, hardly appeals to Tamyra (Montsurry's wife), or to Clermont's sister Charlotte, neither of whom experiences any moral qualms about the revenge of Bussy. They are contrasted with Clermont from the beginning, and throughout represent traditional responses that Chapman attacks through his hero. Clermont, in the words of Monsieur,

> breathes his brothers valour; yet his temper
> Is so much past his, that you cannot moue him.
> (sig. $B3^v$)

He is a model of self-control, and only for his natural zeal for right

> Hee will be fiery, when hee sees it crost;
> And in defence of it; yet when he lists
> Hee can containe that fire, as hid in Embers. (sig. $D2^r$)

Tamyra, by contrast, is eager to "ioyne with all helps, in her friends reuenge" (sig. $B2^v$), while Charlotte would like to see her husband Baligny (who has been relieved of his own vow of vengeance as a result of Clermont's experience with the ghost) take action at once. Baligny fears

> To see her, when I haue a while beene absent,
> Not showing her before I speake, the bloud
> She so much thirsts for, freckling hands and face.
> (sig. B2^{v})

While Clermont speaks of a

> Challenge,
> Which I will pray my Brother Baligny
> To beare the murtherous Earle, (sig. C2^{v})

Tamyra delivers the kind of soliloquy audiences had grown accustomed to hear:

> Reuenge, that euer red sitt'st in the eyes
> Of iniur'd Ladies, till we crowne thy browes
> With bloudy Lawrell; and receiue from thee
> Iustice for all our humors iniurie,
> Whose wings none flye, that Wrath or Tyrannie
> Haue ruthlesse made, and bloudy. Enter here,
> Enter, O enter: and, though length of time
> Neuer lets any scape thy constant iustice,
> Yet now preuent that length. (sig. C2^{v})

She recognizes the implication of the biblical "Vindicta mihi" in the same breath as she resists it.

The arguments for and against revenge clash in Act III, where Chapman allows Charlotte and Clermont to argue the central point at issue in any debate on private retributive justice: whether it is right to "reuenge a villanie with villanie." That is Clermont's question-as-reply to Charlotte's

> Send him a Challenge? Take a noble course
> To wreake a murther, done so like a villaine?
> (sig. E3^{v})

Requiting villainy with villainy is, in her scale of values,

"equall" (sig. E3^{v}), and when Clermont asks

> Shall wee equall be
> With villaines?
> Is that your reason? (sig. E3^{v})

she can only reply that

> Cowardise euermore
> Flyes to the shield of Reason. (sig. E3^{v})

There would appear to be a strong pressure of family honour behind Charlotte's words, a pressure that, because of its validity as motive, makes Clermont's lines seem all the more brave. Perhaps the word "should" is therefore significant when Charlotte chides her brother for disputing "when you should fight" (sig. E3^{v}). In any case Chapman has so planned the confrontation that Clermont's cool, rational approach to the subject is more admirable and persuasive than the stock emotional response that characterizes Charlotte here.

It has not been adequately appreciated how vital to Chapman's concerns in this play are Charlotte and Tamyra. He is doing much more than promoting Clermont's Stoic attitude to the wrongs his family has suffered and implicitly attacking the concept of the revenging hero; he explicitly attacks it by giving it full play through these women, allowing it to discredit itself in the verbal confrontations with Clermont's philosophy. Particularly with Tamyra, the motive for revenge is rather questionable in any case. Her desire for vengeance

is closely associated with her infidelity to her husband: in Bussy D'Ambois she cuckolds him, in The Revenge she incites others to kill him because, out of sexual jealousy, he has assisted in the death of Bussy. Revenge for both is a response to sexual frustration, but for Montsurry it is more easily justified.[6]

Clermont's argument against revenge, however, does not depend upon the cause in this particular case being right or wrong, but upon the belief that a private individual can have no sanction to kill another in any circumstance. That he brings himself to take the noblest kind of revenge at the end of the play is really a contradiction of his own philosophy. This is a problem that is inescapable, for Clermont's judgment on revenge in sigs. E3^{v}-E4^{r} is final:

> I repent that euer
> (By any instigation in th' appearance
> My brothers spirit made, as I imagin'd)
> That e'er I yeelded to reuenge his murther.
> All worthy men should euer bring their bloud
> To beare all ill, not to be wreakt with good:
> Doe ill for no ill: Neuer priuate cause
> Should take on it the part of publike Lawes.

To say that Clermont is "a revenger acting according to the

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[6]Insofar as Clermont has a "cause" it is obviously "tainted from the start," as Bowers says (Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 146), and for the same reason: it involves a sympathetic attitude to adultery. Since to Clermont any revenge is distasteful, though, he is hardly in a similar position to that of the women.

highest and most generous ideals of an English gentleman"[7] is to avoid the problem. And there is little in the play to support Eugene Waith in his contention that Chapman was implying "that however superior Clermont may be, he has something to learn from his brother."[8] A duel might be Clermont's honourable way out, but it remains a fact that the motive for the duel is revenge, and that any sort of revenge is precluded in sigs. $E3^{v}$-$E4^{r}$.[9]

The answer, perhaps, is that Clermont is himself uncertain about the justness of his cause. At the beginning of the play we learn that he has undertaken to be his brother's revenger and intends to effect vengeance "in the noblest and most manly course" (sig. $B2^{r}$). He sends Montsurry a challenge. What motivates him to do this is the appearance of his brother's ghost urging revenge. By Act III he has persuaded himself that the ghost was nothing more than an apparition "imagin'd" (sig. $E3^{v}$), and regrets that he undertook his brother's revenge. Later the ghost reappears

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[7]Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 149.

[8]The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden (London, 1962), p. 109.

[9]The paradox is emphasized by Una Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama, p. 69; Richard H. Perkinson, "Nature and the Tragic Hero in Chapman's Bussy Plays," MLQ, III (1942), 275; Ornstein, The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy, p. 74.

and Clermont proceeds with his "manly course." It is dangerous to try to deduce Chapman's own attitude to revenge, but an attempt must be made because of the uncertain position of the hero. Clearly revenge of the kind practised by Vindice, Hoffman, Eleazer, Antonio, Titus, and Hieronimo is not approved. Tamyra and Charlotte have to be suffered but their idea of vengeance is quickly dismissed as amoral. The question is whether Chapman condones revenge by the duel or disapproves of any kind of vengeance. Clermont is most convincing when he takes a Stoic position (which happens to coincide with the Christian attitude of turning the other cheek). Epictetus, generally acknowledged as Chapman's chief source for his Stoicism, answers in the negative the question, "What then, shall not I injure him who has injured me?"[10] There is the apparently inescapable paradox of a Stoic hero taking an "honourable" revenge; the ending seems completely out of temper not only with Clermont but with the whole tenor of the play.

Explanations suggest themselves. Perhaps for Clermont the ideal of inaction as far as revenge is concerned is simply impossible in the circumstances. The ghost is persuasive by

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[10] The Works of Epictetus, trans. T. W. Higginson (Boston, 1865; edn. cited London, n. d.), p. 123.

his presence alone, and Clermont is not prepared to argue with him. Tamyra and Charlotte demand vengeance, and Clermont prefers to take it openly in a duel rather than leave it to others who (like Achilles) will prove "Wrathfull, reuengefull and insatiate" (sig. F2^{v}). This seems plausible enough: Clermont is acting against his principles, but in the cause of preventing greater wrongs. Certainly there is no indication that Chapman disapproves of Clermont's actions.

Another possibility is that the ghost is meant to be seen as an evil spirit. Catholics accepted the existence of spectres of the souls of the dead, Protestants thought any ghost with the appearance of the dead must be a devil.[11] Possibly the reasoning of Bussy's ghost is meant to be sceptically regarded: Clermont is converted to the idea of a just revenge for the wrong reasons, but the revenge by duel is nevertheless the best course available, all things considered.

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[11]At least these were the official positions. The Protestant line is best represented by Lewes Lavater's Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Nyght (Zurich, 1570; English trans. cited here, 1572); and by the third book of James I's Daemonologie (1597). Largely a Catholic reply to Lavater, Pierre Le Loyer's IIII Liures des Spectres (Paris, 1586) was translated into English only as far as the end of the first book, in 1605. Catholics believed that Satan could take the shape of the dead in order to deceive and mislead.

In fact each of these possibilities is confirmed by the play and Chapman seems to have not one but two positions on revenge. Two wrongs can never make a right and, whenever possible, injuries should remain unrevenged since

> Hee that striues t' inuert
> The Vniuersals course with his poore way,
> Not onely dust-like shiuers with the sway,
> But crossing God in his great worke; all earth
> Beares not so cursed, and so damn'd a birth. (sig. F3^{v})

The "Senecal man," however, can adjust his actions to suit circumstance, and inaction is not always appropriate. Thus, when he finds himself in Baligny's trap, surrounded by soldiers, Clermont tries to escape. This is not necessarily "t' invert / The Vniuersals course" and involves no betrayal of his own philosophy. The Stoic is not restricted to sitting and waiting. Taking revenge is a betrayal, but for Clermont the situation dictates that philosophy must give way: the duel is preferable to Tamyra and Charlotte, and anyway the ghost has proved too persuasive. So Chapman's second position on revenge is that there are times when recourse to revenge is unavoidable, and that at those times only the most noble course--that of the duel--must be followed.

Act V opens with the ascent of the ghost

> Vp from the Chaos of eternall night,
> (To which the whole digestion of the world
> Is now returning). (sig. H4^{r})

His stated purpose seems, on the face of it, acceptable:

> To vrge the iustice, whose almightie word
> Measures the bloudy acts of impious men,
> With equall pennance. (sig. H4r)

The ghost tells the audience that punishment ("pennance") inevitably accompanies crime. He then refers to religion rather off-handedly,

> her head
> Cleft to her bosome; one halfe one way swaying
> Another th' other, (sig. H4r)

an obvious reference nobody appears to have noticed to the schism of reformation, and says that the relation of crime to punishment can be appreciated better by analogy with the physical universe than by reference to religious teaching. It is understandable that he should not want to discuss punishment for sin in a Christian frame of reference, for he will soon be urging Clermont to take upon himself what according to Christian teaching is God's prerogative.[12] The ghost does not attack the church, he simply asks the audience to forget it for the moment. This is both a good trick on the ghost's part and subtle technique on Chapman's. Chapman could hardly make him admit openly that he is the devil's advocate. The ghost pretends to be a good spirit, while Chapman hints at his real nature sufficiently only to make the audience

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[12] One recalls that Bussy forgives his enemies at the end of Bussy D'Ambois.

highly suspicious yet at the same time ready to accept that Clermont can find the ghost convincing.

Clues to the ghost's origin are given from time to time. One wonders why they have generally gone unnoticed.[13] He ascends

> Vp from the Chaos of eternall night,
> (To which the whole digestion of the world
> Is now returning). (sig. H4^{r})

The movement is up from darkness, and the second and third lines here suggest both the running down and the hell-bent degeneration of the world. In the next line the ghost says he must "bide the cold dampe of this piercing ayre," as if his natural element is the opposite, the hot, dry one of fire. He mentions that virtue is rewarded but dwells on punishment. That he urges man to reform is not necessarily out of character: Mephistophilis in Doctor Faustus (c. 1592) frequently warns of the loss involved in forsaking virtue and

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[13] Eleanor Prosser is the only critic to have noted any, and she overlooks most of them, regarding Bussy's ghost as merely a "confused" spirit or a "pagan ghost." See her Hamlet and Revenge, p. 257. Robert Ornstein remarks that the ghost's "aspersion of Clermont's Stoicism could be taken more seriously if his Christian ideal of justice was not used to vindicate an unlawful and immoral act," but draws no inferences. See The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy, p. 75. Jean Jacquot is puzzled by the fact that the ghost "is now made to require vengeance in the name of eternal justice, but what he did before he died satisfied both charity and justice." See "'Bussy D'Ambois' and Chapman's Conception of Tragedy," English Studies Today, II (1961), 141.

God.[14] In his confrontation with Clermont he shows a total lack of understanding of the Stoic personality:

> Danger (the spurre of all great mindes) is euer
> The curbe to your tame spirits; you respect not
> (With all your holinesse of life and learning)
> More then the present, like illiterate vulgars.
> (sig. I1^{r})

He exploits and perverts religious teaching to argue for private retributive justice:

> Your minde (you say) kept in your fleshes bounds,
> Showes that mans will must rul'd be by his power:
> When (by true doctrine) you are taught to liue
> Rather without the body, then within;
> And rather to your God still then your selfe:
> To liue to him, is to doe all things fitting

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[14] Lavater is interesting on this point:

> If those spirits whiche seeke helpe at mens hands be not soules, but Diuels, many will say, why then do they persuade men vnto good things, exhorte them vnto vertue, and call them from vice. For they saye, Iudge vprightely, take heede of thefte and extortion, restore goodes vniustelt gotten vnto their owners, beware of periurie, surfets, and drunkennesse, enuie and hatred, lying and deceite, pray earnestly, come to the Churche often &c.
> . . . . . .
> Vnto this argument I aunswere thus: he dothe thys for his owne aduantage. If he should shewe him selfe so, as he is by nature, he should little proffite. That whiche he dothe, he doth it to this ende, that he may purchase credite vnto his words, and that he might the better thrust other things vpon men, and bring and driue them into sundry erroures, whereby they forsaking the worde of God might giue eare vnto Spirits. (sigs. Y2^{r}-Y2^{v})

According to Le Loyer a man may determine whether a spectre is genuine or counterfeit, "for the Devil may begin with speaking truth but will end by commanding things contrary to the law of God." This is May Yardley's paraphrase of Le Loyer in her Appendix ("The Catholic Position in the Ghost Controversy of the Sixteenth Century") to J. Dover Wilson's facsimile edn. of Lavater's Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Nyght (Oxford, 1929), p. 246.

> His Image, in which, like himselfe we liue;
> To be his Image, is to doe those things,
> That make vs deathlesse, which by death is onely;
> Doing those deedes that fit eternitie,
> And those deedes are the perfecting that Iustice,
> That makes the world last, which proportion is
> Of punishment and wreake for euery wrong,
> As well as for right a reward as strong:
> Away then, vse the meanes thou hast to right
> The wrong I suffer'd. What corrupted Law
> Leaues vnperform'd in Kings, doe thou supply,
> And be aboue them all in dignitie. Exit.
> (sigs. $I1^{r}$-$I1^{v}$)

Clermont is convinced of the ghost's presence this time--it is not just something "imagin'd." Nevertheless he is not quite sure even now that what the ghost urges is right, referring sceptically to

> the iustice
> (As hee esteemes it) of his blouds reuenge. (sig. $I1^{v}$)

Later in the final act Tamyra, Charlotte, and Renel make final preparations for Clermont's revenge upon Montsurry, who still cowardly refuses to meet Clermont (as he has from the beginning). The ghost enters as a kind of supervisor, warning that none but Clermont "must auchthor this iust Tragedie" (sig. $I4^{r}$). Tamyra moves to embrace him but is immediately cautioned to

> Forbeare. The ayre, in which
> My figures liknesse is imprest, will blast. (sig. $I4^{r}$)

He assures her that "Clermont shall not dye" in the course of his revenge--apparently he cannot foresee or conveniently

forgets that Clermont is going to die anyway--and speaks of "The blacke soft-footed houre" of vengeance

> Which for my iust wreake, Ghosts shall celebrate,
> With dances dire, and of infernall state. Exit.
> (sig. I4^{r})

One wonders what sort of ghosts dance this way.

Clermont finally meets Montsurry, determined that

> not a minute more
> My brothers bloud shall stay for his reuenge,
> If I can act it. (sig. K1^{v})

Montsurry decides to fight only when Clermont threatens to allow Tamyra to torture her husband with a poniard. The duel is preferable as far as both men are concerned. Montsurry acquits himself so well, though, that Clermont, in an about-face of considerable significance, offers him his freedom if he can "scape but one more charge" (sig. K3^{r}). His natural disinclination to revenge his brother's death, even in an open duel, here overcomes the incitements of both the ghost and Tamyra and Charlotte. Montsurry's death can be seen as more of an unfortunate slip on his part than the triumph of Clermont's vengeance. He forgives both Clermont and Tamyra, dying "Noble and Christian."

When he learns of his best friend the Guise's death on the orders of the king, Clermont commits suicide. He could with difficulty bring himself to accept that revenge

by the duel might at least be a "iust reuenge," but

> There's no disputing with the acts of Kings,
> Reuenge is impious on their sacred persons. (sig. K3^{v})

Clermont has to die because he has killed Montsurry. What is worth noting is that Chapman allows him to die by a noble suicide which is unrelated to the duel and the revenge.

There is still the paradox of a Stoic "Senecal man" taking revenge at all, but it should be stressed that Chapman at least makes Clermont's actions understandable. Clermont disapproves of revenge throughout the play, but the pressures upon him prove too great and he gives in to the ghost. Even then he hardly becomes a blood revenger, and feels no personal sense of victory in Montsurry's death. He merely trusts that his brother will now "rest in endlesse peace" (sig. K3^{r}). The earlier speech about the injustice of requiting "a villanie with villanie" remains valid for both Chapman and Clermont. It is still true that a "priuate cause" should not usurp "the part of publike Lawes." Unfortunately, though, there are times when even for a Stoic that course may prove unavoidable, and then the duel is the only method that can be sanctioned.

As its title suggests, the action of The Atheist's

Tragedy (c. 1611) is largely concerned with the crimes and downfall of its atheist protagonist, D'Amville. He murders his brother and tries to murder his nephew Charlemont in a vain attempt to secure his posterity. The other characters tend simply to react to him. The sub-title, "The Honest Man's Revenge," sums up what for convenience may be called a counter-action. Charlemont is its nominal hero, but he consistently refuses to act against D'Amville, following the instruction of his father's ghost in the matter. Bowers is misleading when he claims that this "counter-action comprises a complete story of a revenge for a father's blood directed against the villain protagonist."[15] God is the only revenger in this play, and his vengeance is not effected until the very end. Charlemont and his betrothed, Castabella, are for most of the play "spectators, or at best accessories, to D'Amville's calamitous fall," and God is the real hero.[16] In this sense the play is hardly in the Kydian genre at all. It deserves some attention from the point of view of this study, however, even if the relation of the play to the genre is fairly self-evident.

Tourneur's play has been accounted for as the

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[15] Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 140.

[16] Robert Ornstein, "The Atheist's Tragedy and Renaissance Naturalism," SP, LI (1954), 202.

expression of its author's Calvinism,[17] as a logical extension and dramatization of the conclusion reached in The Revenger's Tragedy,[18] and as an answer to Chapman's Bussy plays.[19] Each of these explanations has merit. The first has been disputed,[20] but there can be little doubt that the revenge tragedies immediately preceding The Atheist's Tragedy are of prime importance. There would really be little point in Tourneur's writing the play unless he had these in mind, for it clearly represents a conscious attempt to sum up and conclude.

The clearest indicator of Tourneur's conscious and critical awareness of the genre is the nature of this play's relationship to The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois. Briefly, Clifford Leech sees a significance in the similarities between the names Clermont and Charlemont, D'Ambois and D'Amville. D'Amville is in part a dramatic comment on Bussy, "as if Tourneur, in revulsion from the Senecanism of Chapman,

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[17]Michael H. Higgins, "The Influence of Calvinistic Thought in Tourneur's Atheist's Tragedy," RES, XIX (1943), 255-262.

[18]Henry Hitch Adams, "Cyril Tourneur on Revenge," p. 79.

[19]Clifford Leech, "The Atheist's Tragedy as a Dramatic Comment on Chapman's Bussy Plays," JEGP, LII (1953), 525-530.

[20]See Peter B. Murray, A Study of Cyril Tourneur, p. 142.

comes with a sentence of damnation for d'Ambois himself."[21] Charlemont is Clermont Christianized. Leech's argument that Tourneur implicitly attacks Bussy's ghost by incorporating in his play a Christian ghost is perhaps not so sound: the evidence suggests rather strongly that Chapman knew what sort of ghost he was presenting. That Leech cannot cite parallel passages to support his case is probably not important; it seems safe enough to argue from the similarities in names alone (bearing in mind the respective characters) that Tourneur's play is some kind of dramatic comment on Chapman. Chapman rejects revenge for Stoic reasons, Tourneur for Christian. The Atheist's Tragedy is The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois made orthodox.

If Bussy's ghost is really a devil and Chapman conforms to Protestant thought in his presentation of him, Tourneur's ghost of Montferrers is either Catholic or a mere stage convenience. In Act II he tells his son not to take revenge under any circumstances:

> Return to France, for thy old father's dead
> And thou by murder disinherited.
> Attend with patience the success of things,
> But leave revenge unto the King of kings.
> (II.vi.20-23)[22]

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[21] "The Atheist's Tragedy as a Dramatic Comment," p. 528.

[22] References are to Irving Ribner's Revels edn. of The Atheist's Tragedy.

Most likely he is not to be considered in relation to either side in the ghost controversy. He is the opposite not of Bussy's but of Andrugio's ghost in Antonio's Revenge. Tourneur, it must be allowed, shows an awareness of the Protestant position on spirits. In III.ii Sebastian and Languebeau Snuffe react to what they think is Charlemont's ghost (in reality Charlemont returned from the wars), D'Amville pretending to be as shocked as they are:

> Seb. What art thou? Speak!
> Char. The spirit of Charlemont.
> D'Am. O stay. Compose me. I dissolve.
> Lang. No, 'tis profane. Spirits are invisible. 'Tis the fiend i' the likeness of Charlemont. I will have no conversation with Satan. (III.ii.20-24)

Seven lines later, though, a real ghost enters, obviously no devil.

The Christian injunction against private revenge is closely associated in this play with the idea of the fallibility of all but divine justice. Charlemont is about to kill Sebastian as a sacrifice to a personified Vengeance as his father's ghost enters:

> Revenge, to thee I'll dedicate this work.
> Mont. Hold, Charlemont!
> Let him revenge my murder and thy wrongs
> To whom the justice of revenge belongs. (III.ii.31-34)

Later, having been thrust into prison, Charlemont questions the administration of divine justice: punishment seems to be

exceeding "The measure of our sins" (III.iii.3). Earthly standards, however, he sees are inapplicable: our interpretation is not always God's (III.iii.12-16). This being so, mercy is the safest course for man, as Castabella argues in the following scene. To her, D'Amville justifies imprisoning Charlemont:

> I
> Ha' done no more than justice. Charlemont
> Shall die and rot in prison, and 'tis just.
> (III.iv.1-3)

So it is according to temporal law. Charlemont stands in D'Amville's debt to the sum of a thousand crowns. Castabella, though, counters with an argument for mercy that is more persuasive:

> mercy is an attribute
> As high as justice, an essential part
> Of his unbounded goodness, whose divine
> Impression, form, and image man should bear.
> And methinks man should love to imitate
> His mercy, since the only countenance
> Of justice were destruction, if the sweet
> And loving favour of his mercy did
> Not mediate between it and our weakness. (III.iv.4-12)

If God's sense of justice were man's, no-one would be saved. The argument is used by Portia in The Merchant of Venice (c. 1596) and by Isabella in Measure for Measure (c. 1604). It strengthens the case against private revenge, as well as pointing up the limitations of earthly justice of any sort.

Frequently, divine justice manifests itself as poetic

justice. D'Amville's gift of a thousand crowns to his son Sebastian, for example, frees Charlemont from prison. "'Tis none o' my deed," says Sebastian; "thank my father for 't. 'Tis his goodness" (III.iii.51-52). And at the end of the play God intervenes dramatically as D'Amville strikes out his own brains with the axe he intended to use to execute Charlemont and Castabella.

The conclusion is a vindication of Charlemont's Christian fortitude, of leaving things to heaven; and D'Amville's atheistic naturalism is demonstrably countered by a deliberately unnatural act of divine intervention.[23] D'Amville already has reasons enough for crediting God's existence, but when he strikes his brains out he has to admit (one wonders how) that God "commanded it" and that "man's wisdom is a fool" (V.ii.247-248). He had made earthly justice serve his own designs, and the judges

> didst want discretion for
> The sentence, but yond' power that struck me knew
> The judgment I deserv'd, and gave it. (V.ii.264-266)

This underscores the fallibility of any kind of justice but the divine. If courts of law and judges can make grave errors then how much more likely that private retributive justice

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[23]See Robert Ornstein, "The Atheist's Tragedy and Renaissance Naturalism," p. 201.

will be wild.

The fall of the axe is all-important. Robert Ornstein complains that D'Amville "is more of a farcical dupe than a tragic protagonist," and that Tourneur sacrifices "credibility to didactic effect" in the final scene (and elsewhere).[24] This is true up to a point. The faith D'Amville places in gold continually reminds one of The Alchemist (1610), where faith of a similar kind generates a good deal of the humour. D'Amville is clearly absurd, for example, when he advises the doctor how to restore his son to life:

> Take this gold; extract
> The spirit of it, and inspire new life
> Into their bodies.
> Doct. Nothing can, my lord.
> D'Am. You ha' not yet examin'd the true state
> And constitution of their bodies. Sure,
> You ha' not. I'll reserve their waters till
> The morning. Questionless, their urines will
> Inform you better.
> Doct. Ha, ha, ha. (V.i.88-95)

What makes him tragic is his atheism. When the doctor laughs the audience is certainly meant to take up the cue; there is an element of madness in D'Amville, the sort of madness one can laugh at. But there is no laughter when the axe falls. "Strange is his death and judgment," comments a judge (V.ii.269). It is, in fact, "the direct vengeance of God

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[24] The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy, p. 125.

against the atheist,"[25] and an unnatural act that by its very nature refutes D'Amville's naturalism.

D'Amville's death is proof of the maxim, "Vindicta mihi, ego retribuam." In this sense the atheist's tragedy and the honest man's revenge are indistinguishable, as Charlemont realizes; and the only reliable arbitrator is God:

> Only to Heav'n I attribute the work,
> Whose gracious motives made me still forbear
> To be mine own revenger. Now I see
> That patience is the honest man's revenge.
> (V.ii.275-278)

The last line, of course, is particularly important in the light of this study; for Tourneur's italics embody, in a nutshell, a principle towards which authors in the genre had been working since Marston first questioned the moral stature of the Kydian revenger.

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[25] Peter B. Murray, A Study of Cyril Tourneur, p. 59.

CONCLUSION

The preceding study of revenge tragedy over the period 1587-1611 has provided insights into the dramatists' concern for the possibilities and development of the form, and the hypothesis upon which the dissertation rests has been shown to be valid. With the exception of Kyd, who began the genre, the dramatists dealt with most closely here were plainly concerned with "the idea of a particular kind of play,"[1] to borrow Clifford Leech's words, and an analysis of their work adds weight to the suggestion that "the nature of major dramatic writing in our period is often largely determined by the effect of dramatist on dramatist and by the effect of a man's own sense of his growth."[2]

Of the plays analyzed, the clearest example of a consciously-felt relation between dramatist and generic tradition is found in Marston's Antonio's Revenge, although

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[1] Clifford Leech, "The Dramatists' Independence," p. 17.

[2] "The Dramatists' Independence," p. 22.

the others provide evidence varying in degrees of conclusiveness that their authors were aware of the changes they were bringing about in the form of revenge tragedy and particularly in the concept of the avenging hero. The period offers a good example of the sort of dramaturgic process Leech is concerned with, though other sub-genres which show significant changes over a relatively short period might prove to be just as fruitful for this kind of research. The important point is that the research itself is worthwhile and deserves to be extended through the whole Renaissance period, simply because it can afford new insights into the creative processes behind some of the best literature in the language. It need have no other justification.

While this project can claim to have opened up and tested an important avenue for research, it would seem to close another. One of the most important chapters, the first, demonstrates, at least to the satisfaction of its author, that inquiries such as Lily B. Campbell's and Fredson Bowers' into what prominent Elizabethans felt on the subject of private revenge cannot take us very far in understanding an Elizabethan audience's response to, say, Hieronimo or Hamlet. In fact the results that inquiries such as theirs tend to produce, while valuable in themselves, are probably

counter-productive when applied to revenge tragedy. Much more important, if we wish to learn something about the average Elizabethan's potential spectrum of response to the Kydian or Shakespearian revenger, is the narrative literature.

The major results of the inquiry aside, the thesis has effected a radical reinterpretation of Marston's Antonio's Revenge which might, hopefully, make that play a little less confusing to future students; thrown new light on the origins of Lust's Dominion as it has come down to us; provided a fairly intensive examination of Chettle's Hoffman, the only known play written solely by him; and given an account of the technique of parallel action that Tourneur uses to reduce his revenger to the moral level of the enemy. These are a few of the more tangible rewards that the central inquiry and the research behind the first section have provided.

APPENDIX

THE REVISION OF

LUST'S DOMINION

It was mentioned in Chapter VI that the question of the date and authorship of Lust's Dominion poses problems that are relevant to the discussion of the play's importance as a revenge tragedy. In 1657 Francis Kirkman brought out the first edition, attributing the play to Marlowe. Serious doubts were cast upon Kirkman's accuracy and integrity when, in 1825, J. P. Collier argued that it ought to be identified with "the spaneshe mores tragedie" (usually rendered as The Spanish Moor's Tragedy), for which Henslowe gave as part payment, on 13 February 1600, three pounds to Dekker, Day, and Haughton.[1] And, while there have been dissenting voices,[2] most authorities on Lust's Dominion have followed

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[1] Henslowe's Diary, ed. R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert, p. 131.

[2] A. W. Ward, A. H. Bullen, and George Saintsbury, for example, saw little in the play that could connect it with Dekker, or Day, or Haughton, and Saintsbury went so far as to claim the play for Marlowe. See, respectively, A History of English Dramatic Literature (rev. edn., London, 1899; first

Collier.[3] At the same time, it is generally agreed that an earlier play underlies the surviving work, and that Dekker, Day, and Haughton were paid to do no more than revise this old play.[4] If there is strong evidence to support this view, then any attempt to see Lust's Dominion as an example of a new kind of revenge tragedy is called into question immediately. That one feels the authors to be doing something new in the genre is not evidence that the play was originally composed in 1600.

Essentially, there are three reasons adduced in support of the theory of earlier authorship: it is argued that three pounds is well below the figure that a new play could be expected at this time to command; there appear to be

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publ. 1875), II, 467; The Works of John Day, p. 642; A History of Elizabethan Literature (London, 1887), p. 77. More recently, S. R. Golding ("The Authorship of Lust's Dominion," N&Q, CLV [1928], 402) regarded Collier's theory as "doubtful"; and E. A. Gerrard, on p. 284 of his Elizabethan Drama and Dramatists, 1583-1603 (Oxford, 1928), thought that the play was written by Tourneur.

[3] In "The Authorship of 'Lust's Dominion'," SP, LV (1958), 39-61, Gustav Cross argues persuasively for a fourth collaborator, Marston, who received from Henslowe two pounds for an unnamed "Boocke" on 28 September 1599.

[4] Both Golding and Cross, for example, uphold the theory of earlier authorship, echoing earlier critics like F. G. Fleay (A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559-1642 [London, 1891], I, 272-273) and C. F. Tucker Brooke (The Tudor Drama, p. 219).

verbal echoes of Marlowe's work; and there is evidence that revision has taken place at some stage in the play's history. As a reason for dating original composition before 1600, each is open to question.

That three pounds was the total amount paid for the play is improbable. Although he makes no further reference to "the spaneshe mores tragedie," Henslowe's three pounds was only a "pte of payment." Gustav Cross believes that a sum of two pounds recorded some three months earlier as having been paid to Marston was for a contribution to this play,[5] and if his reasoning is accepted then at least five pounds changed hands. It should also be noted that Henslowe never mentions more than one author when he specifies payments for alterations to, or "mendynge" of, plays (although for additions to Doctor Faustus and II Black Dog of Newgate [1602-1603] he employs two and four respectively).

The second piece of "evidence" for earlier authorship is the number of Marlovian echoes detectable in Lust's Dominion. But these parallels--and there are not many--confirm nothing beyond a probability that one of the authors was influenced by Marlowe. The parallelographers, of course,

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[5] "The Authorship of 'Lust's Dominion'," pp. 47ff.

have long since discredited themselves.[6]

The evidence of textual irregularities is usually brought forward as the most serious objection to dating the play's original composition at 1600. In II.iii.187-192 an older reading exists alongside a revised one.[7] And at III.ii.10 two alternative adjectives lie side by side. Furthermore, it appears that a character named Verdugo originally had a role in the play. These textual anomalies, and others of less significance, may have their origin in the process of collaboration, although revision seems to be the more likely cause. There is no reason, however, to assume that it should have occurred in 1600. The play might just as well have been first written then and the manuscript revised at any time between that date and 1657, when it was first printed.[8] In fact the evidence for this supposition is at least as substantial as that for the other. The concluding lines of the play are these:

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[6]Typical of their methods is H. Dugdale Sykes's essay, "'The Spanish Moor's Tragedy'; or 'Lust's Dominion'," N&Q, CXXXIII (1916), 81-84. Sykes argued for Dekker.

[7]As in Chapter VI above, all references to Lust's Dominion are to Bowers' edn. in Vol. IV of his The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker.

[8]That the compositors worked from a manuscript, not a prompt-book, seems fairly clear. The best analysis of its probable physical characteristics is contained in the Textual Introduction to the Bowers edn.

> Philip. And now Hortenzo to close up your wound,
> I here contract my sister unto thee,
> With Comick joy to end a Tragedie.
> And for this Barbarous Moor, and his black train,
> Let all the Moors be banished from Spain.

The final two lines can be understood as embodying a reference to the expulsion of the Spanish Moors, which took place in 1609-1610, and it must therefore be regarded as a possibility that they were inserted during a post-1610 revision. Certainly the play could have originally ended satisfactorily without the final couplet. It can be (and has been) argued that the lines show nothing more than a familiarity on the part of the dramatists with a well-known and long-established aim of Spanish policy. But in view of there being evidence elsewhere in the play that revision has occurred, the most obvious explanation is that the lines were inserted in or after 1611.[9] On this theory, and Diary evidence, the play was first written in 1600 and revised subsequently.

One naturally searches for more substantial evidence to make the theory probable instead of merely possible. Ideally, what is required is a clear textual reference to another well-known contemporary event that occurred after

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[9]Another reference to the same event occurs at III.ii.46, and might be similarly accounted for.

1600. Now, while they cannot be proved to contain direct references, there are four places in the play where a contemporary event of considerable significance does seem to be hinted at. The first is at I.i.194-196: Eleazer anticipates that the queen's

> amorous flames
> Shall blow up the old King, consume his Sons,
> And make all Spain a bonefire.

The informing words here are "flames," "blow up," "consume," and "bonefire." The second "reference" comes late in Act II, where Eleazer, determined to destroy his enemies one way or another, considers a wild scheme to

> undermine the chamber where they lie,
> And by the violent strength of gunpowder,
> Blow up the Castle. (II.iii.157-159)

He clearly finds the plan appealing, for in Act III he warns the court that

> under ground
> A villain that for me will dig to hell,
> Stands with a burning limstock in his fist,
> Who firing gunpowder, up in the air
> Shall fling your torn and mangled carcasses.
> (III.ii.191-195)

Later, in Act IV, he cautions Mendoza against Philip; and the metaphors he chooses to emphasize the cardinal's danger are revelatory:

> Oh! have you found it, have you smelt
> The train of powder that must blow you up,
> Up into air, what air? why this, a breath,

> Look you, in this time may a King meet death;
> An eye to't, check it, check it. (IV.iii.71-75)

The last two lines suggest very strongly indeed that the choice of metaphor here (and, by inference, the imagery in the other quotations) is far from accidental. There is an insistence upon, a preoccupation with, the one theme that justifies one's asking whether at these points in the play there is not a quite overt reference to the Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

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   1. Original or early editions
      i. Plays
      ii. Prose and verse
   2. Modern editions
      i. Plays
      ii. Prose

II. CRITICAL WORKS
   1. Books
   2. Articles, parts of books, dissertations

I. GENERAL WORKS

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Anon

THE / HISTORIE OF / the two valiant Knights, / Syr Clyomon Knight of the Golden / Sheeld, sonne to the King of / Denmarke: / And Clamydes the white Knight, sonne to the / King of Suauia. / As it hath bene sundry times Acted by her / Maiesties Players. / [device] / LONDON / Printed by Thomas Creede. / 1599.

Beaumont, Francis

THE KNIGHT OF / the Burning Pestle. / . . . // [device] // LONDON, / Printed for Walter Burre, and are to be sold at the / signe of the Crane in Paules Church-yard. / 1613.

Beaumont, Francis, and
Fletcher, John

The Maides Tragedy. / AS IT HATH BEENE / diuers times Acted at the Blacke-friers by / the KINGS Maiesties Seruants. / [illustration] / LONDON / Printed for Francis Constable and are to be sold / at the white Lyon ouer against the great North / doore of Pauls Church. 1619.

Brome, Richard

THE / ANTIPODES: // A COMEDIE. // Acted in the yeare 1638. by the Queenes / Majesties Servants, at Salisbury / Court in Fleet-street. // The Author Richard Brome. // . . . // LONDON: / Printed by J. Okes, for Francis Constable, and / are to be sold at his shops in Kings- / street at the signe of the Goat, / and in Westminster-hall. 1640.

Chapman, George

THE / REVENGE / OF / Bussy D'Ambois. / A / TRAGEDIE. / As it hath beene often presented at the / priuate Play-house in the White-Fryers. // Written / By GEORGE CHAPMAN, Gentleman. // [device] / LONDON: / Printed by T S. and are to be solde by IOHN HELME, / at his Shop in S. Dunstones Church-yard, / in Fleetstreet. 1613.

Chettle, Henry

THE / TRAGEDY / OF HOFFMAN / OR / A Reuenge for a Father, / As it hath bin diuers times acted / with great applause, at the Phenix / in Druery-lane. // [device] // LONDON, / Printed by I. N. for Hugh Perry, and are to bee / sold at his shop, at the signe of the Harrow / in Brittaines-burse. 1631.

Davenant, William

THE / VNFORTVNATE / LOVERS: / A Tragedie; / As it was lately Acted with great / applause at the private House in / Black-Fryers; / By His Majesties Servants. // The Author William Davenant, / Servant to Her Majestie. // [device] // LONDON, / Printed by R. H. and are to be sold by Francis Coles / at his shop in the Old Bayley, Anno Dom. 1643.

Dekker, Thomas

Satiro--mastix. / OR / The vntrussing of the Humo- / rous Poet. / As it hath bin presented publikely, / by the Right Honorable, the Lord Cham- / berlaine his Seruants; and priuately, by the / Children of Paules. / By Thomas Dekker. / . . . / [device] / LONDON, / Printed for Edward White, and are to bee / solde at his shop, neere the little North doore of Paules / Church, at the signe of the Gun. 1602.

Dekker, Thomas, and
Webster, John

WEST-WARD / HOE. / As it hath beene diuers times Acted / by

the Children of Paules. / Written by Tho: Decker, and / Iohn Webster. / [device] / Printed at London, and are to be sold by Iohn Hodgets / dwelling in Paules Churchyard. / 1607

Drayton, Michael; Hathway, Richard;
Munday, Anthony; Wilson, Robert
The first part / Of the true and hono- / rable historie, of the life of Sir / Iohn Old-castle, the good / Lord Cobham. / As it hath been lately acted by the right / honorable the Earle of Notingham / Lord high Admirall of England his / seruants. / [device] / LONDON / Printed by V. S. for Thomas Pauier, and are to be solde at / his shop at the signe of the Catte and Parrots / neere the Exchange. / 1600.

Field, Nathaniel, and
Massinger, Philip
THE / FATALL / DOWRY: / A / TRAGEDY: // As it hath beene often Acted at the Pri- / uate House in Blackefryers, by his / Maiesties Seruants. // Written by P. M. and N. F. // LONDON, / Printed by IOHN NORTON, for FRANCIS / CONSTABLE, and are to be sold at his / shop at the Crane, in Pauls Church- / yard. 1632.

Ford, John
'TIS / Pitty Shees a Whore // Acted by the Queenes Maiesties Ser- / uants, at the Phoenix in / Drury-Lane. // [device] // LONDON, / Printed by Nicholas Okes for Richard / Collins, and are to be sold at his shop / in Pauls Church-yard, at the sign / of the three Kings. 1633.

Hughes, Thomas
The Misfortunes of Arthur (Certain Devices and Shows Presented to Her Majesty). [The title page is missing. The date given in manuscript is o. s. 1587.] 1588.

Kyd, Thomas

THE [within a device] / SPANISH TRAGE- / die, Containing the lamentable / end of Don Horatio, and Bel-imperia: / with the pittifull death of / olde Hieronimo. / Newly corrected and amended of such grosse faults as / passed in the first impression. / [device] / AT LONDON / Printed by Edward Allde, for / Edward White. [1592]

Marston, John

Iacke Drums Enter= / tainment: / OR / THE COMEDIE / Of Pasquill and Katherine. / As it hath bene sundry times plaide by the / Children of Powles. / [device] / AT LONDON / Printed for Richard Oliue, dwelling in Long / Lane. 1601.

Peele, George

THE / LOVE OF KING / DAVID AND FAIR / BETHSABE. / With the Tragedie of Absalon. / As it hath ben diuers times plaied on the stage. / Written by George Peele. / [device] / LONDON, / Printed by Adam Islip. / 1599.

Pickering, John

A NEWE / Enterlude of Vice Conteyninge, the / Historye of Horestes with the cruell / reuengment of his Fathers death, / vpon his one naturtll Mother. / by Iohn Pikeryng. / . . . / Imprinted at London in Fletestrete, at the / signe of the Falcon by Wylliam Gryffith, and / are to be solde at his shope in S. Dunstons / Churcheyearde. Anno. 1567.

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Bacon, Francis

THE / ESSAYES / OR / COVNSELS, / CIVILL AND / MORALL, / OF / FRANCIS LO. VERVLAM, / VISCOVNT S^{t}. ALBAN. // Newly Written. // [device] // LONDON, / Printed by IOHN HAVILAND for / HANNA

BARRET. / 1625.

Beard, Thomas
THE THEATRE / of Gods Iudgements: / Or, / A COLLECTION OF HISTO- / ries out of Sacred, Ecclesiasticall, and pro- / phane Authours, concerning the admirable Iudge- / ments of God vpon the transgressours / of his commandements. / TRANSLATED OVT OF FRENCH, AND AVGMEN- / ted by more than three hundred Examples, by Th. Beard. / [device] / LONDON, / Printed by Adam Islip. / 1597.

Cornwallis, William
[on a device] ESSAYES, / By S^r William Cornwallyes, / the younger, Knight. / Newlie corrected. / [below device] LONDON. / Printed by Thomas Harper for Iohn Marriott, and are / to be sold in Paules Churchyard by Ambrose Ritherdon / at the signe of the Bull head. 1632.

Gifford, Humphrey
A / POSIE / of Gilloflowers, eche / differing from other in / colour and odour, / yet all sweete. / By Humfrey Gifford Gent. / Imprinted at London / for Iohn Perin, and are to be / solde at his shop in Paules / Churchyard, at the signe / of the Angell. / 1580.

Goulart, Simon
ADMIRABLE / AND / MEMORABLE / HISTORIES CONTAI- / ning the wonders of our time. / Collected into FRENCH out of / the best Authors. / By I. GOVLART. / And out of French into English. / By ED. GRIMESTON. / The Contents of this booke followe the Authors / aduertisement to the reader. / [device] / Imprinted at London by / GEORGE ELD 1607.

Greene, Robert
Greenes farewell to Folly. / SENT TO / COVRTIERS AND /

Schollers as a president to warne them / from the vaine delights that drawes / youth on to repentance. / Sero sed seriò / Robert Greene / Vtriusque Academia in Artibus magister. / [device] / Imprinted at London by Thomas Scarlet / for T. Gubbin and T. Newman. / 1591.

Guevara, Antonio de

The Diall / of Princes. / Compiled by the reuerende father in / God, Don Anthony of Gueuara, Bys= / shop of Guadix. Preacher and Cro= / nicler, to Charles the fyft Em= / perour of Rome. / Englysshed oute of the Frenche, by / Thomas North, seconde sonne / of the Lorde North. / . . . / Anno. 1557. / Imprinted at London by Iohn Waylande. / . . .

Lavater, Lewes

[within a device] Of ghostes / and spirites walking / by nyght, / and of strange noyses, crackes, and / sundry forewarnynges, whiche / commonly happen before / the death of menne, / great slaughters, / & alterations / of kyng= / domes. / One Booke, / Written by Lewes Laua- / terus of Tigurine. / And translated into Eng- / lyshe by R. H. / [below device] Printed at London by Henry Benneyman / for Richard Watkyns. 1572.

Lodge, Thomas

THE / Life and Death of / william Long beard, the / most famous and witty English / Traitor, borne in the Citty / of London. / Accompanied with manye other / most pleasant and prettie histories, By T. / L. of Lincolns Inne, Gent. / [device] / Printed at London by Rychard Yardley and Peter / Short, dwelling on Breadstreat hill, at the / signe of the Starre. / 1593.

Margaret, of Angoulême

THE / Queene of Nauarres / Tales. / Containing, / Verie

pleasant Discourses / of fortunate Louers. / Now newly translated out of French / into English. / [device] / LONDON, / Printed by V. S. for Iohn Oxenbridge, / and are to be solde at his shop in Paules / churchyard at the signe of the / Parot 1597

Marston, John
THE [within a device] / METAMORPHO- / sis of Pigmalions / Image. // AND / Certaine Satyres. // [device] // AT LONDON, / Printed for Edmond Matts, & are / to be sold at the signe of the hand and / Plough in Fleetstreete. / 1598.

Marston, John
THE / SCOVRGE OF / Villanie. / Three Bookes of Satyres. / . . . // [device] // AT LONDON, / Printed by I. R. and are to be sold by Iohn / Buzbie, in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of / the Crane .598.

Nashe, Thomas
[below a device] THE / VNFORTVNATE / TRAVELLER. / Or, / The life of Iacke Wilton. / Qui audiunt audita dicunt. / Tho. Nashe. / [device] / LONDON, / [P]rinted by T. Scarlet for C. Burby, & are to be sold at his / shop adioyning to the Exchange. / 1594.

Norden, John
THE / MIRROR OF / HONOR: / . . . / [device] / Printed at London by the Widowe Orwin for / Thomas Man. 1597.

Painter, William
The Palace of Pleasure / Beautified, adorned, and / well furnished, with Plea= / saunt Histories and excellent / Nouelles, selected out of / diuers good and commen- / dable Authors. / By William Painter Clarke of the / Ordinaunce and Armarie. / [device] / 1566 / IMPRINTED AT / London, by Henry

Denham, / for Richard Tottell and William Iones.

Painter, William
The second Tome / of the Palace of Pleasure, / conteyning store of goodly Histories, / Tragicall matters, and other Mo- / rall argument, very re= / quisite for delighte / and profit. / Chosen and selected out of / diuers good and commen- / dable Authors: / By William Painter, Clerke of the / Ordinance and Armarie. / ANNO. 1567. / Imprinted at London, in / Pater Noster Rowe, by Henry / Bynneman, for Nicholas / England.

Perkins, William
THE / WHOLE / TREATISE OF / THE CASES OF / CONSCIENCE. / Distinguished into three Bookes. / Taught and delivered by M. W. PERKINS . . . / . . . / Newly corrected, with the two Tables set before / . . . / [device] / LONDON, / Printed by Iohn Legatt, and are to bee sold by Iohn / Winterson, at the signe of the Crowne in Pauls / Church-yard. 1635.

Pettie, George
A Petite Pal- / lace of Pettie his / pleasure: / Conteyning many pretie Histo= / ries, by him set foorth in comely / colours, and most delight= / fully discoursed. / . . . / [device] / . . . [? 1578]

Reynolds, John
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Saviolo, Vincentio

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Segar, William

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THE / DVELLO / or / Single Combat: / From Antiquitie deriued into this Kingdome / of England, with seuerall kindes, / and ceremonious formes there- / of from good authority / described. // . . . / [device] / LONDON, / Printed by G. E. for I. Helme, and are to be sold at his / shop in Saint Dunstans Church-yard, in / Fleet-streete. 1610.

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Silver, George

PARADOXES / OF DEFENCE, / . . . / By George Siluer Gentleman. /

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Spenser, Edmund
THE FAERIE / QVEENE. / Disposed into twelue bookes, / Fashioning / XII. Morall vertues. / [device] / LONDON / Printed for William Ponsonbie. / 1596.

Sutcliffe, Matthew
THE [within a device] / PRACTICE, PRO- / CEEDINGS, AND / Lawes of armes, described out of / the doings of most valiant and ex- / pert Captaines, and confirmed both / by ancient, and moderne exam- / ples, and praecedents, / BY MATTHEW SVTCLIFFE. / . . . / IMPRINTED AT LON- / don by the Deputies of CHRISTOPHER / BARKER Printer to the Queenes most ex- / cellent Maiestie. / 1593

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TRAGICALL / Tales translated by / TVRBERVILE / In time of his troubles out of / sundrie Italians, with / the Argument and / Lenuoye to / eche Tale / Nocet empta dolare voluptus / Imprinted at Lon= / don by Abell Ieffs, dwelling / in the Forestreete without / Crepelgate at the / signe of the Bell / Anno Dom. 1587.

Wotton, Henry
A Courtlie controuersie / of Cupids Cautels: / Conteyning fiue Tragicall Histories, / very pithie, pleasant, pitiful, and profitable: / . . . / Translated out of French as neare / as our English phrase will permit, / by H. W. Gentleman. / [device] / AT LONDON, / Imprinted by Francis Coldock, / and Henry Bynneman. / Anno. 1578.

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