ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN REVENGE TRAGEDY

ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN REVENGE TRAGEDY

A STUDY OF POWER RELATIONS IN

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY, THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY, THE DUCHESS OF MALFI, AND THE CARDINAL.

By

ANDREW REYNOLDS, B.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

September, 1992

MASTER OF ARTS (1992)
(English)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Elizabethan and Jacobean Revenge Tragedy: A Study of Power Relations in _The Spanish Tragedy_, _The Revenger's Tragedy_, _The Duchess of Malfi_, and _The Cardinal_.

AUTHOR: Andrew Reynolds, B.A. (Toronto)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Richard Morton

NUMBER OF PAGES: vii, 82

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine power relations in four Elizabethan and Jacobean revenge tragedies: Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy, Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy, Webster's The Duchess of Malfi, and Shirley's The Cardinal. Beginning with Kyd's prototype, each writer afterwards expresses his own particular view of the proper function of power through his treatment of the figure of the revenger and the role of abstract justice.

My method is to examine recurring elements in these plays, such as: madness, as a reflection of the creation of an alternate form of reality; the ritualistic quality of the enactment of revenge, usually expressed in dumbshow or a masque; the revenger's apprehension of himself as the instrument of divine vengeance; and the position of women in these plays, and the imagery used to describe them. These elements are, typically, stock components of the subgenre which, interpreted in combination, present parallel commentaries to the surface narratives of these plays, commentaries that often are contrary to the overt meanings of the plays. My approach to the material is conditioned, in part, by the writings of the historian Michel Foucault and the work of the psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut on the subject of narcissism and narcissistic rage.

In this thesis I hope to show how each playwright addresses the issues of power and abstract justice, a subject that links these major writers across a span of more than fifty years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with gratitude that I record my sincere appreciation to Professor H. Ostovich, Professor R.W. Vince and Professor B. John for their careful consideration of this thesis and their helpful comments. I would also like to express my special thanks to the supervisor of my thesis, Professor Richard Morton. His constant encouragement, careful editing, and thoughtful guidance of my work have greatly contributed to the completion of this thesis.

Most of all I wish to thank my parents, to whom I owe a great debt for their encouragement of my studies, and for their understanding and love in helping me complete them, and Alice for her steady support and love.

"Revenge is a kind of wild justice, which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out."

Francis Bacon, "Of Revenge"

"Vengeance shall think no way forbidden her -- all law, all faith,
All honour shall be dead."

Seneca, Thyestes, tr. E.F. Watling.

CONTENTS

Page

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: _The Spanish Tragedy_ 7

Chapter 2: _The Revenger's Tragedy_ 27

Chapter 3: _The Duchess of Malfi_ 40

Chapter 4: _The Cardinal_ 59

Conclusion 76

Works Cited and Consulted 79

Notes appear in the text.

INTRODUCTION

The late Fredson Bowers's study, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy: 1587-1642 (1940), has long been recognized as a pioneering and brilliant definition of a dramatic subgenre. His survey of the form, its sources, and history, together with his close and perceptive analyses of the key examples, is still influential in critical approaches -- as can be seen from the frequency of reference to his book in recent editions and critical writings. In the present thesis, I attempt to stand on Professor Bowers's shoulders, to peer a little more closely at an aspect of the form which he rather neglects: the issue of power -- political, moral, linguistic, and even psychological -- as a motivating force in the actions of the plays.

I address four plays -- Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (c.1587-89), Cyril Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy (c.1606), John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi (c.1614) and James Shirley's The Cardinal (1641) -- investigating particularly the aspect of power.

Kyd's play is the seminal treatment of the revenge theme, notwithstanding the speculative Ur-Hamlet. The investigation of power relations is here most fully enunciated of all the plays

studied in this thesis -- none of the other playwrights vocalizes the overarching principle behind revenge, as Hieronimo does when he exclaims "*Vindicta mihi!*" (III.xiii.1). Kyd aggressively interrogates the links between the revenger and abstract justice through his portrayal of an individual, motivated by justice, who repudiates that justice when confronted with the abusive exercise of power. More than any other of the playwrights studied here, Kyd problematizes the perception of the revenger. By pairing two disparate modes of characterization within Hieronimo, he provokes a reconsideration of the moral basis of the revenger.

By contrast, The Revenger's Tragedy takes a less sympathetic approach to the revenger. Political power exerts an overwhelming influence on the audience's experience of the play. The final development of the plot is exclusively concerned with power; Antonio wrenches the focus of the play from the retributive efforts of Vindice and Hippolito and centers the attention of a distracted audience on the foundations of abstract justice, concluding: "Pray Heaven their blood may wash away all treason!" (V.iii.128). Antonio consciously joins state and divine justice, diverting the audience's sympathies. A play that follows the formula of Kyd's successful effort, the sober dénouement exposes Tourneur's rhetorical project. By amplifying to inflated levels the violence and corruption on which the subgenre thrives, Tourneur provokes a retrenchment of traditional viewpoints. Antonio's firm grasp of political power is a far steadier concluding image than appears in any of the other plays

discussed here. This renewed monopoly on justice represents a substantial divergence from Kyd's inquiry into the arbitrariness of abstract justice; despite the free rein given to the revenger's desires, Tourneur succeeds in affirming the necessity of hierarchical power structures.

The Duchess of Malfi offers yet another gloss on the Kydian standard. In a play that partakes of revenge tragedy motifs, yet is not wholly a part of the subgenre, Webster effects two daring changes. The first of these involves the titular Duchess who becomes, contrary to the conventions of the subgenre, a focus of goodness and integrity. The second change is the elevation of the villain to the status of protagonist. Vindice, although surely the focus of The Revenger's Tragedy, is not demonstrably a villain until the play ends, whereas Bosola enters the play with the rare quality of complete self-knowledge. Together these two changes call into question the influence of power on justice. In focussing attention on the Duchess and her goodness, Webster is one of the few playwrights who renders a positive acknowledgement of a woman's vulnerability. Whereas Kyd's Bel-Imperia and Shirley's Rosaura are each active plotters, and are tacitly linked "to the hated class of Elizabethan husband-poisoners" (Bowers, 233), the Duchess is victimized by evil persons and maintains her integrity and her faith in the justice of Heaven. Webster targets the corrupt functioning of earthly justice, while maintaining a belief in the value of Christian ethics. Bosola, as protagonist, functions as an emblem

of the misdirected nature of the court. His relentless pursuit of power is merely an emulation of the world around him. Webster's approach to the tragedy of revenge is a modulated version of Kyd's own concern for temporal corruption.

The Cardinal appears long after the other plays discussed in this thesis; however it shares with them the same concerns for power and justice. Shirley shows signs of attempting to address revenge by distinguishing two types of revenger: the honest and the dishonest revenger. In doing so, Shirley, like Webster, posits conditions for the enactment of revenge, yet still displays a concern for the "fix'd order" (The Duchess of Malfi, I.i.6) that Kyd radically subverts. Like Tourneur, Shirley fills his play with decadent scenes of blood and horror, and the purpose seems to be the same: to shock the audience with the show of excessive violence and deceit. However, these scenes become truly horrific only during the Cardinal's ascendancy, and are absent during the revenges of Columbo and Hernando. The last revenge tragedy produced before the closing of the theatres is a synthesis of those tragedies performed earlier.

The tragedies concerning blood revenge between The Spanish Tragedy (c.1587-89) and The Cardinal (1641) enjoyed significant popularity primarily through their faithful rendering of a set of circumstances which made violent retribution inevitable. The transmission of these conditions was consistent through a period of more than fifty years. Fredson Bowers points

out that these circumstances were conveniently codified in a number of guides for the Elizabethan public and so were familiar to the audience. Through such media, major playwrights were able to consider the same basic problems as their forebears in the theatre. One of these guides was the translation entitled _The Courtiers Academie_ (c.1598) which stipulated that revenge could ethically be pursued if an innocent individual had been maliciously injured, although his or her family members could intervene only if the individual was physically incapable of doing so (Bowers, 38). This text, like many other such guides imported from Italy, set out the conditions of revenge which, translated to the stage, could function as the elements of a successful revenge tragedy.

I do not deal specifically with _Hamlet_ (c. 1600), although I recognize that revenge tragedy without _Hamlet_ is very much like _Hamlet_ without the Prince. My justification is largely practical -- the immensity of the play and its critical issues would inevitably swamp a short study such as mine. However, the issues of the play form a constant undercurrent to my thinking. Modern productions of _Hamlet_ tend, I believe correctly, to make more of the power relationships (sexual certainly, but more centrally political) than those of a generation ago. Fortinbras (who is simply omitted from Olivier's classical film version) gets more attention nowadays, and Polonius appears less of a _pantalone_ and more of a subtle counsellor to the Royal Court of

Denmark. Ian Holm's restrained and moving performance of this role was one of the more acceptable aspects of the recent Mel Gibson film of the play. Similarly, modern productions regard the two women in the play and their peculiar marginalizing -- Ophelia by Hamlet (who wants her just to go away) and Gertrude by King Hamlet (who does not bother becoming visible to her, and who orders his son to exclude her from his plans) -- as worth closer attention. Kings, counsellors, mothers and loved ones in other revenge plays -- from <u>The Spanish Tragedy</u> to <u>The Cardinal</u> -- have their more obvious (and normally less subtle) power relationships, and it is my hope that the present thesis can illuminate some of these.

CHAPTER 1

The Spanish Tragedy

Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (c.1587-89), establishing the basic pattern of Revenge plays, shows a powerful, corrupt court, within the structures of which the villains are, to a degree, protected. The victims of their machinations realize their own political and social powerlessness, and attempt, inevitably vainly, to empower themselves by self-destructive violence -- suicide --, by adopting their enemies' techniques of disguise and manipulation, by, ultimately, taking refuge in the alternate state of madness.

The opening scene in The Spanish Tragedy is useful not only as a brief summary of events that have gone before, as Andrew Cairncross notes in his introduction to the play (xxiv). The induction also creates the effect of a courtroom scene in which some sort of verdict is expected from the audience. Judgements occupy much of the scene, which begins with the solemn address of the ghost of Don Andrea, like a witness giving testimony, providing particulars of the story the audience needs to know. What is being judged is not readily evident, but as the play progresses it becomes more clear that a judgement on the activities of Hieronimo must be made.

Fredson Bowers is unequivocal in his assessment of

Hieronimo's behaviour and the audience's perception of him, noting that "when Lorenzo foils him in his attempt at legal redress and he consciously gives up an open revenge in favour of a secret treacherous device, according to English standards he inevitably becomes a villain" (Bowers, 77). However, when viewed through the filter of the issue of power relations, the judgement of Hieronimo is problematized. Kyd's play is a much more complex study than those his imitators produced; there is a moral "grey area" he explores but leaves unresolved. Open revenge may be a more honourable resolution, but it is always liable to be hindered by the desires of the powerful, whereas secret revenge is an empowering option for the vulnerable.

The Spanish Tragedy examines the influence of power and the question of justice for the weak when power relations are exploited. The influence of power on the organization of the court of Spain becomes evident when we consider the changes that Hieronimo undergoes in relation to the character of Lorenzo, the condition of Bel-Imperia, and how she responds to this condition. Further indications of the overarching importance of power are also present in the theatrical elements of murder, self-mutilation, and madness. The final characterization of Hieronimo as the human agent of divine retribution also points to his severe psychological trauma which results in a split between Hieronimo's new role and his previous sense of his honoured position in his society and his world.

Throughout the play Lorenzo is affirmed as a source of

power in the court of Spain. Indeed, Bowers notes that the "second act... is given over entirely to showing the ascendancy of Lorenzo" (Bowers, 67), and he calls him a "guiding spirit" (68). He enjoys status as the nephew of the King, but his power is also that of a stage manager. At times two distinct worlds appear: the overt court existence and Lorenzo's own world of secret devices and deft manipulation. Two words are crucial to the characterization of Lorenzo. The first is "*stratagem*" (II.i.35,110), referring to the plans of action that Lorenzo formulates to assure Balthazar's possession of his sister; the word carries a martial resonance. Using a different form of the same word later in the play Lorenzo exults that "He runs to kill whom I have holp to catch,/ And no man knows it was my *reaching fatch*" (III.iv.45-46). The other word associated with Lorenzo is "*policy*" (III.iv.38) -- denoting a kind of shadow order or government. As a villain Lorenzo is a flat character, and these two words constitute what might be called his "character zone"[1] -- active, violent and deceitful.

---

[1] The term "character zone" is the coinage of the Russian scholar Mikhail Bakhtin, and appears both in The Dialogic Imagination (1981 ed.) and The Dialogical Principle (1984 ed.). In the context of an explication of the dialogical contact between an author and a character in the author's work, Bakhtin (in the former text) outlines the concept of the character zone as a "complex language-image ..... not set off from authorial speech in any formally compositional or syntactical way; it is a zone demarcated purely in terms of style" (p.46). In The Dialogical Principle he expresses the concept as zones

> formed from the characters' semi-discourses, from various forms of hidden transmission for the discourse of the other, by the words and expressions scattered in this discourse, and

By contrast Hieronimo is a sympathetic character from the beginning. He is an innocent man, and almost childlike in his belief in justice. Charles and Elaine Hallett comment on this quality in <u>The Revenger's Madness</u> (1980):

> ...in Hieronimo's happiness... there is an element of naïveté and innocence. Knight marshal though he may be, this virtuous man has been living at the level of appearances. He believes that the world is just, that the rewards and punishments it metes out have something to do with desert. He is little prepared to comprehend injustice on a mammoth scale (Halletts, 146).

These features are most evident in his first major soliloquy after the death of Horatio. His grief and anger have become more abstract since the discovery of his son's death, and he contemplates the larger implications of the misfortunes that have befallen him. The speech shows eyes newly opened to the true nature of power in the universe. The assumed order of things in which he had placed his trust is upset and he struggles to comprehend a new and alien order in which he is seemingly powerless.

> Oh world! no world, but mass of public wrongs,
> Confus'd and fill'd with murder and misdeeds.
> Oh sacred heavens! if this unhallowed deed,

> from the irruption of alien expressive elements into authorial discourse (ellipsis, questions, exclamation). Such a zone is the range of action of the character's voice, intermingling in one way or another with the author's voice (p.73).

The character zone is an authorial intrusion of the most subtle order. Characters are given their natures not merely by direct descriptions, or the contents of their speech, but also by their modes of speech.

> If this inhuman, barbarous attempt,
> If this incomparable murder thus
> Of mine, but now no more my son,
> Shall 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.3-11)

This profound realization of cosmic injustice is an extreme shock to his sense of his place in creation. The repetition of "just" and "justice" betrays the staggering weight of Hieronimo's preoccupation. Suddenly the world has become a "mass of public wrongs", a topsy-turvy world in which "The ugly fiends do sally forth of hell,/ And frame my steps to unfrequented paths" (III.ii.16-17). This speech marks a shift in Hieronimo's character from his previous naïveté to a more worldly caution. When the letter purporting to reveal the identities of Horatio's murderers appears, Hieronimo's instinct now leads him to suspect betrayal, and he determines "by circumstances [to] try,/ What I can gather to confirm this writ,/...To listen more, but nothing to bewray" (III.ii.48-49,52). A victim of intrigue, he now becomes a schemer, hiding his true feelings.

Hieronimo's awakening to the influence of power is not yet total. His next major soliloquy is delivered when he receives the letter found on Pedringano's body implicating Lorenzo and Balthazar in the murder of Horatio. Prior to reading the letter he laments that his tortured soul beats "at the windows of the brightest heavens,/ Soliciting for justice and revenge" (III.vii.13-14) even though nothing results. However, even after reading the letter he maintains faith in his

perception of order and the power that motivates it. He determines that he will "go plain me to my lord the king,/ And cry aloud for justice through the court" (III.vii.69-70).

This intermediate step in his migration from simple honesty towards Lorenzo's "character zone" problematizes any easy judgements of Hieronimo's decision to pursue private revenge. A character with whom Hieronimo is often compared is Alexandro, a nobleman in the Portuguese court who is unjustly accused of murdering Balthazar by Villuppo, another noble who seeks to profit from the other's misfortune. Alexandro seems to be a touchstone figure whose "action of unshaken faith -- is the action that would be taken in the face of gross injustice by a man who accepts his society's symbols" (Halletts, 135). Had Hieronimo moved directly to a policy of secret revenge this touchstone figure would be an accurate gauge of his decline, but Hieronimo is more complex than either Alexandro or Lorenzo; they seem to represent poles between which he moves.

It is only when his attempt to gain a hearing with the king is thwarted by the machinations of Lorenzo that Hieronimo loses confidence in the world view which previously had sustained him. The path he now follows is a kind of demonic inversion of the allegiances he formerly held, as he swears to "marshall up the fiends in hell" (III.xii.77).

The subsequent speech of self-revelation (III.xiii.1-44) reveals the final destination in Hieronimo's journey. The first words he speaks, "*Vindicta mihi!*" (III.xiii.1), the biblical

"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans xiii.19), announce his blasphemous usurpation of the Divine role. Unlike Lorenzo, whose "character zone" he completely occupies now, Hieronimo is a man without any legitimate basis for his power. Despite the madness that periodically grips him, Hieronimo is still perceptive enough to realize that:

> Nor aught avails it me to menace them,
> Who, as a wintry storm upon a plain,
> Will bear me down with their nobility.
> No, no, Hieronimo, thou must enjoin
> Thine eyes to observation, and thy tongue
> To milder speeches than thy spirit affords...
> (III.xiii.36-41)

As a result he reframes his identity so that he imagines himself imbued with the righteous fury of Heaven, a shift in his subjective reality that I will return to.

This speech also marks his determination to pursue revenge indirectly, in secret rather than "with open, but inevitable ills" (III.xiii.22). Hieronimo wholly occupies Lorenzo's "character zone" by becoming a rival stage manager, working his devices behind the scenes. Indeed his willingness to adopt disguise is shown immediately; petitioners arrive and to deal with them Hieronimo must "bear a face of gravity" (III.xiii.56). His earlier penchant for staging dumb shows, masques and plays assumes a darker cast when he prepares to play the tragedy of Soliman and Perseda, saying "nothing wants but acting of revenge" (IV.iii.30).

Ironically, as Hieronimo more completely occupies Lorenzo's "zone", Lorenzo himself fades away from the main focus

of action; his earlier domination of scenes is supplanted by Hieronimo. It is Hieronimo who proposes the show for the King and the Viceroy, and he also assigns the roles; each of the players receives a symbolically significant part. Lorenzo and Balthazar passively accept theirs (IV.i.131-37), in sharp contrast with their earlier aggressiveness.

What is most notable about Hieronimo's shift is his implicit status as a divided man. Emerging suddenly in his speech of self- revelation, the split between his just nature and his new, corrupt tendencies underscores the ethical dilemma Hieronimo faces. This division has a recontextualizing effect on revenge for the audience, and problematizes any casual appraisal of his character or his motives. This sudden prompting of the audience to a re-evaluation of comfortable opinions is a hallmark of the revenge tragedies discussed in this thesis. Through a gradual development of complexities, conventional attitudes are defamiliarized, provoking a rethinking process focussed on power relations.

The character of Bel-Imperia offers another persuasive illustration of the importance of power relations in the play. Unlike Hieronimo, she is naturally more attuned to the imbalances of power in her society, and the death of Horatio does not cause her character to disintegrate as it does Hieronimo's. The way she describes herself reveals her awareness of her vulnerability. After determining that Horatio will be her second love, when they

meet again she confides to him that

> My heart, sweet friend, is like a ship at sea:
> She wisheth port, where, riding all at ease,
> She may repair what stormy times have worn,
> And leaning on the shore, may sing with joy
> That pleasure follows pain, and bliss annoy.
> (II.ii.7-11)

It is a particularly resonant image, suggesting her position in her society, abused and at the mercy of powerful laws and conventions she has no control over, much as a ship is rocked by the forces of nature. In the same scene the perspective shifts, and nature becomes a place of refuge when she tells Horatio that they must meet in "thy father's pleasant bower.../... The court were dangerous; that place is safe" (II.ii.42,44). However, this sanctuary too is beyond her ability to protect, and her power to exert control over her own affairs is diminished even here.

The lone ability that she appears to possess is her power over language. Her encounters with Lorenzo and Balthazar demonstrate her obvious facility in verbal jousting. Their first meeting ends in a 'victory':

> Bal: Ay, by conceit my freedom is enthrall'd.
> Bel: Then with conceit enlarge yourself again.
> Bal: What, if conceit have laid my heart to gage?
> Bel: Pay that you borrowed, and recover it.
> Bal: I die, if it return from whence it lies.
> Bel: A heartless man, and live? A miracle!...
> Lor: Tush, tush, my lord! let go these ambages,
> And in plain terms acquaint her with your love (I.iv. 83-91).

This victory in "line topping" is underscored by the mechanical

quality of the men's speeches. In II.i, the repetitive nature of the language of both Lorenzo and Balthazar is emphasized by the former's "In time..." (II.i.3-7) speech and the latter's monotonous formula: "Yet might she love me.../Ay, but..." (II.i.19-28). Balthazar in particular employs this relentless, implacable cadence.

However, even this power of hers is threatened. When Bel-Imperia next meets the two men she is initially caught off guard by her brother's honeyed words, saying "Brother, you are become an orator -- / I know not, I, by what experience, /... Since last I saw you" (III.x.83-86). Her domain is being usurped; the realm of language over which she has exercised mastery is encroached upon. But she reacquires her dominance by the scene's end, so that Lorenzo must forcibly take the battle elsewhere, saying "you argue things so cunningly,/ We'll go continue this discourse at court" (III.x.104-05). Clearly he means to settle her fate by patriarchal power: with their father who controls her absolutely. Thus the sole source of her power is betrayed by its extreme vulnerability, and once more Bel-Imperia reverts to her role as storm-tossed vessel.

All that remains for Bel-Imperia is to work through others in order to maintain some measure of control over her fate, a position she shares with Shirley's Rosaura. Bowers notes somewhat cynically that "Her suicide, thus, was not so necessary to satisfy morality as it was the usual move of the woman in romantic fiction who refused to outlive her slain lover after

seeing vengeance done" (Bowers,82). Given her extreme weakness, her final act would seem to be far more meaningful in what it reveals about the boundaries of her power. As a woman who must submit to the conventions of her society to the extent that every one of her abilities is denied or nullified, the ability to take her own life is a poignant reminder of the only power she has.

The preponderance of self-mutilation and murder in the play seems to support this idea. Blood is often explained solely as a theatrical device pandering to the low tastes of the audience. However, seen as a reaction to implacable force, these acts of violence, like suicide, take on a larger significance. Two incidents in particular illustrate the moral importance of this violence.

The first involves the twin destructive acts of Hieronimo's wife Isabella; she destroys the tree on which Horatio was hanged, and she kills herself. The suicide seems to share the same motivation as that of Bel-Imperia. Isabella vows that she will have revenge "upon this place" (IV.ii.4) and proceeds to destroy the arbour. Certain phrases she utters during the act, such as "Fruitless forever may this garden be,/ Barren the earth" (IV.ii.14-15), and "as I curse this tree from further fruit,/ So shall my womb be cursed for his sake" (IV.ii.35-36) suggest that this act is a symbolic suicide which precedes the actual one she commits on herself. The tree itself upon which Horatio was hung is earlier described by Hieronimo as the tree he nurtured into maturity "when our hot Spain could not

let it grow" (III.xiiA.64.[Fourth Addition, p.129]), much as he raised his own son. In a sense then Isabella also kills her own son when she destroys the tree and when she commits suicide, an apparently futile act but one that symbolically suggests a last effort to exercise power over her own family.

The second incident occurs in the final scene of the play; Hieronimo bites his own tongue off to avoid providing information to the King about the murders during the tortures. Despite the fact that he has already related most of the motivations for his deeds, he swears that "never shalt thou force me to reveal/ The which I have vow'd inviolate" (IV.iv.187-88). This self-destructive defiance underscores the extremely limited sense of power that Hieronimo keenly feels. Like the letter Bel-Imperia writes in her own blood, the futile efforts of Hieronimo and Isabella show just how vulnerable these excluded characters are.

Perhaps the most symbolic act of adaptation and defiance, and the one that is most fully developed, is the creation of a new, subjective reality by the disenfranchised figures in the play through their descent into madness. In Bowers's study madness is treated simply as an "important dramatic device" (Bowers, 72). However in _The Spanish Tragedy_, as in _The Cardinal_ (1641), madness is an effective allegory which suggests a removal from the objective world into a more personal, individual world that, paradoxically, liberates the character involved. The

Halletts state that the revenger must undertake a "radical shift in the way the psyche views the world. The process through which the revenger hardens himself to carry out the entreaties of the ghost is a process of reshaping the world" (Halletts, 10). This "hardening" can also be seen as the only possible response of the revenger to the realities of the hierarchical structures of power that surround him/her.

The first instance of this subjective reordering of reality appears as Hieronimo discovers the body of his son in the arbour. To be sure, he is motivated by extreme feelings of grief, but there is nevertheless an element of insane denial as he inspects the corpse while refusing to accept the possibility that he is looking at his son (II.v.15-60).

The irrevocable decision to retreat into an alternate reality is made when his plea for an audience is denied through Lorenzo's machinations. He states: "I'll make a pickaxe of my poniard,/ And here surrender up my marshalship" (III.xii.75-76), while digging distractedly at the earth with his blade. His statement is a renunciation of temporal authority, provoked by his brutal treatment at the hands of this authority, and the action that accompanies it confirms the desperation he feels. This single defining moment leads him to refuse a later opportunity to reveal his knowledge of the murder (III.xiv.130-149) and, in the throes of his mad passion, he develops a grievance with the Duke of Castile as well, saying "He who shows unaccustomed fondness for me has betrayed me or wants to betray

me" (III.xiv.168-69, note).

The symbolic representation of this alternate reality is the tragedy that Hieronimo proposes to act for the King and the Viceroy. As the Halletts note,

> Having successfully established in the play-within-the-play a private world which is approbative of his desire for revenge, the revenger acts, and in so doing, draws the tragedy to a conclusion. By acting within the framework of the mock play, the revenger is symbolically confusing the real world with a world created out of his own psyche which he has projected upon it (Halletts, 10).

In Hieronimo's subjective world, he not only relishes revenge: he is empowered by his suspension of the mores and conventions of the objective world.

An additional aspect of this empowering private world is the veneer of ritual that it exhibits. The sense of moment and ceremony that accompany the revenger's design, when acted out in a formal drama, seems to mimic the corresponding formalized gestures and protocols that accompany similar displays of power in the objective world. This attempt to duplicate the ceremony of daily court life, or, for example, the procedural qualities of a public execution, seems to lend a kind of objective legitimacy to the mad schemes of the revenger. Apart from extending the suspense prior to the performance of <u>Soliman and Perseda</u>, Hieronimo actively relies on the sense of momentous occasion to spur him on, saying:

> Bethink thyself, Hieronimo,
> Recall thy wits, recompt thy former wrongs...
> The plot is laid of dire revenge:
> On then, Hieronimo, pursue revenge,

For nothing wants but *acting* of revenge.
(IV.iii.21-22,28-30, my italics).

As Vindice does with disguise, and Rosaura does with her language and periodic spells of madness, so does Hieronimo in his new capacity as stage manager, usurping authority from Lorenzo and rewriting the scripts of power in his subjective world.

The Revenger's Madness sums up Kyd's play as "the story of one man's attempt to understand justice within a civilization that is at a point of crisis and of his tragic failure to do so" (Halletts, 141). When the play is examined with respect to the power relations that underlie this civilization, it becomes evident that Hieronimo begins to understand his society and its justice all too keenly. Having appropriated power in his own name he learns how arbitrary is the idea of justice. He misunderstands justice and the power from which it is derived only until the institutions in which he had placed his faith betray him. Once more the play does not afford the possibility of an easy judgement. Hieronimo's subjective world, created in his madness, is as easily legitimate as the objective world, the major difference being that the old man's new reality is temporary and does not survive him. However Kyd has succeeded in provoking a reevaluation of power relations in the hitherto unexamined objective world.

Another approach to the characterization in The Spanish Tragedy can be made following the thesis of Heinz Kohut in his

essay "Thoughts on Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage" published in the second volume of <u>The Search for the Self</u> in 1971. The type of narcissistic personality disturbance he describes is presented in the play through the character of Hieronimo.

Kohut's paper deals with the development of an individual's psyche from the earliest age to maturity. "Narcissism" is the sense in healthy individuals of belonging to, or feeling linked with their society. In infant children, this proto-awareness takes the form of complete oneness with the surrounding environment, which consists largely of the faces of the child's parents. The face of the parent, especially the mother, is the idealized, omnipotent, self-object[2] with which the child merges in a mirroring relationship.

Kohut explains that in the development of healthy children, these mirroring and confirming responses, through increasing selectivity, gradually transform their grandiose selves into

> realistic self-esteem and into pleasure with [themselves], and [their] yearning to be at one with the omnipotent self object [becomes] the socially useful, adaptive, and joyful capacity to be enthusiastic and to admire the great after whose lives, deeds, and personalities we can permit ourselves to model our own (Kohut, 620).

For Hieronimo, the court and the justice that it embodies

---

[2] Kohut's use of the term "self-object" describes the thesis that an infant makes no distinction between his/her self and the environment (ie. of persons or things) until a more advanced age. An "omnipotent self-object" is an external object that the self/mind of a child sees as part of its own consciousness.

function as an idealized self-object: the parent, as it were, that nurtures him, the court, in a peaceful state, is the object of merger for the grandiose selves of its subjects. The King and the mother are analogous. For a personality like that of Hieronimo, who was a lawyer before becoming Knight marshal, and therefore, through his professional life, an Officer of the Court, his identification with the king is the mature part of his healthy psyche. As the Halletts note, "a definite order is assumed.... Christian values are still operative" (Halletts, 134). The King hopes to recreate divine justice in his own kingdom, and is portrayed making good judgements, as in the decision he reaches regarding the ransom from the capture of Balthazar (I.ii.178-90). The Spanish monarch is contrasted sharply with the Portuguese Viceroy, who is capricious and rarely applies good judgement -- a contrast made apparent in his dismissing the accused Alexandro's defence with a curt "No more, I say! To the tortures!" (III.i.47). However the monarch's sudden departure from this customary pattern of behaviour produces a kind of psychic injury in his followers. The healthy equilibrium of Hieronimo, Isabella and Bel-Imperia suffers a rupture. While the state continues to function for all others, these three undergo disillusionment followed by alienation. As their formerly cohesive selves break down, each is forced to refigure the world. The product of this narcissistic injury is what Kohut calls "narcissistic rage", manifested as

> the need for revenge, for righting a wrong, for undoing a hurt by whatever means, and a

> deeply anchored, unrelenting compulsion in the pursuit of all these aims, which gives no rest to those who have suffered a narcissistic injury (Kohut, 637-38).

Much of Hieronimo's own self is invested in the institution of the monarchy through his identification with it. It is the resulting narcissistic injury that produces the madness he displays, and, later, the secretive quality of his revenge. Kohut notes that

> the aspirations of the grandiose self may indeed seem to subside, and the yearning for a merger... will be denied. The suppressed but unmodified narcissistic structures, however, become intensified as their expression is blocked; they will break through the brittle controls and will suddenly bring about... the unrestrained pursuit of grandiose aims and the resistanceless merger with omnipotent self-objects (Kohut, 619-20).

This pathology exactly traces the progress of Hieronimo's revenge. In an effective piece of theatrical metaphor (III.xv), the chorus returns; the figure of Revenge is symbolically asleep and when awoken by Andrea, Revenge contends that "though I sleep,/ Yet is my mood soliciting their souls" (III.xv.18-19). This slumber aptly represents the rage of Hieronimo that has gone underground, only to erupt in an explosion of violence. When his revenging spirit does awake, it has undergone a kind of metamorphosis, and has become identified with divine justice. On two occasions Hieronimo clearly reveals his merger with omnipotent Heaven. When Bel-Imperia challenges his inactivity, he counters with his secret plan, saying "I see that heaven applies our drift" (IV.i.31). In the same scene, Hieronimo

exults over the near fruition of his scheme, crying "Now shall I see the fall of Babylon,/ Wrought by the heavens in this confusion" (IV.i.190-91). He identifies himself with the Chosen People or the early Christians, protected by the fierce justice of God (Jer.51,7; Rev. 14,8 and passim.).

This profound feeling of grievance and injury always underlies his actions in the play. As a result of a psychological malady expressed in madness and brought on by the effects of the powerful institution of the monarchy, Hieronimo's actions are again problematized. Unlike the madness of Vindice, which seems largely factitious by contrast, the old man's madness is plausibly and deeply rooted in his psyche, as a product of the society in which he lives. An uncomplicated judgement is impossible in these circumstances.

The question of power severely hampers any clear judgement of Hieronimo's actions. Unlike the following plays, a host of mediating factors are introduced into The Spanish Tragedy which obscure the moral implications of the revenger's action. The gradual shift Hieronimo undergoes as he occupies Lorenzo's "character zone" creates a kind of inevitability or hopeless desperation about his decision to imitate the politically powerful figures in his society. Further, the helpless quality of Bel-Imperia underlines the truly desolate status of the weak and vulnerable. The symbolic values of murder, suicide, and self-mutilation also act as emblems of the limited freedom each

of the affected characters possesses. When the only freedom remaining is the existential choice to commit suicide, the influence of power in the play can only be more sharply delineated. Finally, the psychological ramifications of Hieronimo's narcissistic personality disturbance also serve to cloud the audience's judgement. Kyd has fashioned a highly complex dramatic piece that interrogates the assumptions of the pursuit of vengeance.

CHAPTER 2

The Revenger's Tragedy

Performed nearly twenty years after Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1587-89), Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (c. 1606) deals with many of the same concerns and preoccupations, although each playwright differs in his treatment of them. The issue of power is of central importance in *The Revenger's Tragedy* especially as it relates to individuality, an individual's social position and to ethical questions of the state's monopoly of legal face. These concerns are perennial marks of the revenge tragedy.

Specifically Tourneur's play addresses the effect of revenge on the identity and self-conception of the protagonist Vindice; the social significance of Vindice's outcast status is a central issue. Finally, Tourneur provides his own moral argument concerning the necessity of state, and by extension, divine, monopoly of power; his argument is far more rigorous than those of other playwrights considered here.

The revenge that Vindice pursues is from the beginning distinguished from those of other revengers in the play, and he is himself even distinct from his co-conspirator Hippolito. Whereas others, with exception of Antonio, pursue revenge for minor personal injuries or for personal gain, Vindice gives

himself the veneer of an avenging angel and at one point says "Forgive me Heaven, to call my mother wicked;/ O lessen not my days upon the earth" (II.ii.96-97). The similarity with Hieronimo in Kyd's play is striking, and suggests that another element be added to the Kydian formula outlined by Bowers (71-73). As the instrument of a divine justice, Vindice creates for himself a moral authority. Other characters already uniformly possess varying degrees of political power; Vindice invents his own power.

Another resemblance with The Spanish Tragedy, and indeed with many tragedies of revenge, is the manner in which this moral authority is made manifest. Vindice, for a time, believes in his own heavenly mandate, but other characters in the play know nothing of it. A means of publicly displaying this belief is the masque that he, Hippolito and the two Lords enact. This ritualized mode of revenge creates a useful spectacle on stage, but it also has a more significant function. As Ronald Broude, in his essay "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy" (1975), notes:

> Renaissance criminology was extremely primitive, and, unless he were unlucky enough to be discovered in the act, a clever felon intent upon hiding his tracks stood an excellent chance of escaping altogether (52).

Clearly Vindice wants to be seen. The positioning of the masque comes at a significant moment as well. The scene opens with the stage direction: "In a dumb show the possessing of the young Duke [Lussurrioso] with all his Nobles" (V.iii.1.S.D.). A reflection of the official investiture of Lussurrioso, the masque

Vindice creates is an attempt to legitimize his endeavour, to partake of the sacred authority held in trust by the state. As if to underline this mirroring attempt, the episode is completed by the comic appearance of the murderous stepsons and Spurio, intent on accomplishing the same coup as Vindice has, but too late. Surrounded by these two "plays", Vindice's own production is deflated, perhaps the first step in the dismantling of Vindice's self-created authority. However, the attempt to merge with the ceremonial aspect of justice is nonetheless indicative of Vindice's powerlessness.

The creation of personae is further means of inventing power. In this courtly society, Vindice is a man literally without identity. He has been physically absent from the court for nine years; Lussurioso actually asks if Hippolito's rumoured brother truly exists (IV.i.40-45) because no one knows him. As if to reinforce this lack of identity, his position on stage at the play's opening is assumed to be in darkness as the Duke and the Duchess pass by lit by a torch. Both figuratively and literally Vindice has no visible self, and paradoxically it is the act of revenge that creates an individual identity for him. The use of descriptive names in drama is an ancient device, much used in this play; but Vindice's name has a particular significance. Lussurioso, for example, has presumably been "luxurious" or "lecherous" for a long time; Vindice is only validly named within the action of the play. Prior to the opportunity for revenge Vindice is without power, but during an

almost mystical moment, his decision to pursue revenge creates him as an entity and engenders within him an ability to act independently.

The moment does seem like the birth of a living organism. The unfolding of Hippolito's tale is compared to food on two occasions by Vindice (I.i.59, 98), providing a kind of sustenance for the infancy of his blood revenge. After this initial phase of growth, Vindice determines to "put on that knave for once/ And be a right man then, a man o'th'time" (I.i.93-94); acquiring, that is, a definite persona. Before the decision Vindice was powerless and impotent but the decision produces an individual self, which is a necessary antecedent for revenge.

This dynamic is not accidental or unintentional, but is part of a definite mode of characterization. Vindice's newly created persona is limited by the fiction and does not survive the play. His individuality is entirely defined by the sole element of revenge: his past consists of the poisoning of Gloriana and the humiliation of his father; his present concerns are the machinations of revenge; and his future is an almost certain execution for the murder of the Duke. Clearly the persona conferred on Vindice by vengeance is not meant to survive the time-frame of the play, and its fragility is further suggested by the diverse forms it takes.

Apart from the identity as revenger, Vindice puts on and casts off several personae. He opens the play as the prototypical exemplum of familial piety. As the Duke and his

family file by, Vindice reviles them for their moral turpitude, saying

> Duke; thou royal lecher; go, gray'hair'd
> adultery;
> And thou his son, as impious steep'd as he;
> And thou his bastard, true-begot in evil;
> And thou his duchess, that will do with devil
> (I.i.1-4).

The last insult is a particularly vile expression of moral outrage. This guise is expanded slightly to include a lover's concern for Gloriana, and filial piety for his father who "died/ Of discontent, the nobleman's consumption" (I.i.126-27). The audience realizes that this persona is one of many when, in short order, Vindice changes his shape twice. Prior to meeting his sister and mother, Vindice warns Hippolito that "We must coin./ Women are apt, you know, to take false money" (I.i.103-04). He has scarcely finished with that "face" when he tells his brother that "I'll quickly turn into another" (I.i.134). It is as "Piato", the hidden, or covered, one that Vindice adopts most of his masks, and this persona represents the apotheosis of his shape-changing drives. When he first appears as Piato, Vindice ironically asks Hippolito if he is "far enough from myself" (I.iii.1), which begs the question of who he is. The profusion of identities Vindice claims only underscores how fleeting and inconsequential is his "true" identity, and how empowered the act of revenge makes him.

Even as a revenger his persona exhibits significant modulation. At first his concern is for his own honour, but later in the play he casts himself as a moral scourge for the

corrupt court, telling the lords to "Let our hid flames break out, as fire, as lightning,/ To blast this villainous dukedom vexed with sin" (V.ii.5-6). A further modulation provides a significant authorial comment on Vindice's actions -- the gleeful, bloodthirsty self that Vindice displays ("the violence of my joy" -- III.v.27) when his machinations are fully realized. This side of Vindice reinforces the play's censure of revenge. His earlier vow to pursue open revenge (II.ii.90-93) is later subverted; the murders during the masque are covert and treacherous. As Bowers notes, Elizabethan audiences generally approved of revenge in the absence of a just king or during a failure of the law (40) but they "were afraid of the influence of the Italian secret, deceitful revenge, which, they thought, was utterly foreign to English temperament" (Bowers, 55). Thus in spite of the complete success of Vindice's vengeance, his final position in the play is that of the villain and the censure is absolute. Finding the only role he can play, he has become increasingly obsessed with his performance; finally, he forgets his purpose and hence his moral value. The play becomes, indeed, a revenger's tragedy.

A different approach to the question of the self in _The Revenger's Tragedy_ anticipates James Shirley's _The Cardinal_. Whereas no male figure shares the same essential powerlessness of the female characters in the latter play, Tourneur offers Vindice as a corollary to the abjection of Castiza and the wife of

Antonio. While women in both plays are alienated from patriarchal structures of power by virtue of their gender, Vindice is an outcast because he has no place in the social structure, consequently no influence on events. Having no identity, he has no empowering gender, as it were.

The women in Shirley's play can only circumvent this limitation by recourse to an alternate reality -- madness or the supernatural. Tourneur's dispossessed characters resort to similarly futile measures in an attempt to exert some control over their own persons. The many disguises Vindice employs appear as bids literally to step outside of himself. While his pseudonym "Piato" means "covered", perhaps a more appropriate name might be one that signified "other". The two plays are not entirely consonant in their treatment of these powerless figures. Shirley's women have no recourse to personal revenge whereas Vindice's schemes succeed spectacularly. Yet in the end both suffer similar fates.

Perhaps the most telling illustration of the interconnectedness of power, revenge and individuality appears in the example of Antonio's wife. Significantly she is never named, yet her importance to the play is central -- the injury committed to her person begins the play's frantic action. Her vulnerability is extreme, and her absence from the stage is a negative manifestation of her powerlessness. We only hear of her in the third person, and personal information is limited to the relation of her suicide. Antonio's gradual revelation of this

event is grotesquely perverse. He avers that "violent rape/ Has played a glorious act" (I.iv.3-4) while the other lords chime in with "That virtuous lady!", and "Precedent for wives!" (6). Antonio ends the suspense with a eulogistic, single word verse: "Dead!" (9); the audience thus learns that she has committed suicide.

Her extreme action functions as a substitute for revenge. Antonio relates that he discovered her lifeless body with a note affirming the maxim that it is "Better to die in virtue than to live in dishonour" (I.iv.17,note). To be sure, this is a distinctively feminine response to dishonour; she had no power to claim personal revenge. Despite Hippolito's contention that "Sh'as made her name an empress by that act" (I.iv.49) it remains that her only recourse was a self-destructive one even as Hippolito sees her now as politically empowered -- "an empress"[3].

---

[3] An interesting corollary to the silent wife of Antonio is Gloriana, the woman Vindice loves, and who was poisoned by the Duke. Her only appearances in the play are as the skull Vindice holds in the opening scene, and as the false "lover" he tricks up to poison the Duke in return. In her essay "Painting Women: Images of Femininity in Jacobean Tragedy" (1984), Laurie Finke astutely notes that

> Gloriana's skull functions here and throughout the play as a grisly emblem uniting two dialectical notions of femininity: woman as ideal, as an object of adoration, and woman as death's head, as a figure which evokes fear and hostility. Both of these images are, in effect, reflections of Vendice's mind, masculine perceptions of woman that transform her into extreme projections of man's own fears of mortality" (357).

The silent skull is always a prop for Vindice in the play; on physical and psychological levels she is controlled and her power

Her situation then is an apt parallel to that of Vindice. Each is removed from the ability to decisively control their own persons and, in spite of rhetorical flourishes, their options are ultimately futile. Although Vindice can go beyond the female characters in that the objects of his hatred are destroyed, his victory is tainted by his death, not at the hands of his victims, as is the case with Hamlet, but,the audience must assume, at the hands of the legitimate society's executioner. Unlike Othello, but like Iago, he cannot control his end. His self-creating revenge is as equally illusory as the attempts of the women to appropriate power.

Just as Shirley would later deliver his own subtle commentary on the ethical and moral obligations of power, so too does Tourneur use his revenge tragedy to illustrate the subject. Whereas there is some semblance of an "honest" form of revenge in the actions of Columbo and Hernando in The Cardinal, contrasting with the "dishonest" vengeance of the Cardinal, Tourneur offers no such dichotomy. His one-track approach to the ethics of private revenge, combined with clear evocations of the anarchic consequences of corruption, will produce in the audience a strong sentiment favouring traditional and conservative conceptions of power.

Tourneur's method is shrewd and highly persuasive. The corruption of the Duke's court is plainly stated. From the self-

---

severely circumscribed.

describing names of the vice-ridden main characters to the relentless preoccupation with all that is gross in human behaviour (especially sexuality), Tourneur effectively portrays a state in which power is abused and justice neglected. Up to this point, Tourneur and Shirley have constructed similar worlds. However they diverge in their respective explorations of this terrain. Shirley's balanced view of the power of revenge is contrasted with the curious spectacle of the aggressive revenger Vindice. Vindice's motivation begins as an earthly enactment of divine retribution; a promise that the corrupt society will be purged and cured by this living instrument. Tourneur encourages this response. On two occasions (IV.ii.198-99, V.iii.42-43, 47), Vindice draws attention to the alleged divine sanction of his actions, and stage thunder rolls as though in metaphysical confirmation. Bowers notes that Tourneur has achieved "a triumph in objective character-portrayal" (133) by creating a villain whose motives are apparently those of a heroic figure. Vindice is a character whose literary successors have enjoyed particular attention, especially in contemporary writing and film. Faulkner's Percy Grimm (Light in August) and Scorsese's Travis Bickle ("Taxi Driver")[4] are two prominent examples of this

---

[4] Faulkner introduces Percy Grimm in Chapter XIX solely for the purpose of hunting down Joe Christmas and brutally slaying him. Throughout the brief episode the language used reflects the sense of fatality that drives Grimm and his belief in his divine sanction, as in: "his face had that serene, unearthly luminousness of angels in church windows. He was moving again almost before he had stopped, with that lean, swift blind obedience to whatever Player moved him on the Board" (510). Similarly, Travis Bickle takes on the role of the avenging arm of Heaven, which he pictures

character type.

Tourneur's great achievement is in the extent to which he has successfully deceived the audience into sympathizing with Vindice. Vindice exhibits his bloodthirsty nature by macabre humour at various points throughout the play. When disclosing the sudden opportunity for vengeance on the Duke to his brother, Vindice exults, saying "O sweet, delectable, rare, happy, ravishing!" (III.v.1). In the same scene he tells the Duke that the lady he has brought for him, who is actually the disguised (and poisoned) skull of his dead love, has "somewhat a/ grave look with her" (III.v.137). However these revealing hints are largely submerged under Vindice's established status as a virtuous revenger in a corrupt court, and deflected by their comedy, so that the audience enjoys laughing at them and, as it were, becoming co-conspirators in the amusement.

It is only the sudden shock of the surprise ending that forces the audience to alter these conceptions. Antonio's definitive judgement and punishment of Vindice and Hippolito functions as a moral corrective for what suddenly, and convincingly, appears as anarchic, self-indulgent destructiveness. What Bowers considers to be a fault of the play, namely the multiple pursuits of revenge (136), may actually aid Tourneur's rhetorical purpose. By inserting so many revenge plots the action of the play continues unimpeded, as incident follows incident with little time for reflection. Thus the

---

as 'a real rain, that'll wash all the scum off the streets'.

audience is suitably caught off guard when Antonio delivers his verdict and collectively is forced to reevaluate a position hitherto accepted uncritically.

The surprise ending appears to be a deliberate strategy in which a more conservative and prohibitive approach to revenge and power is taken. By allowing the audience to revel for a time in the excesses practised by Vindice, and then by introducing a stern proponent of discipline who delivers a curt denunciation of what has gone before, Tourneur succeeds in conveying a view of life that is profoundly moral, ordered and opposed to private blood revenge. The restoration of a strong centre is much more definite than the implicit suggestion that closes Shirley's play. The absolute necessity of a powerful monarch who reserves the right to vengeance reaffirms the entrenchment of power in orthodox institutions. The result is a world view that is at once more bleak and more authoritarian, and one in which the hierarchies of power that engender revenge are maintained. There is no real lament for the powerless as there is in The Cardinal. Instead Tourneur utilizes the subgenre of the revenge tragedy as a means to indicate the dangers of such self-empowerment as is represented by the anarchy of Vindice's revenge.

The Revenger's Tragedy displays a high degree of sensitivity towards questions of power, despite its reputation as a mere play of incident. However these explorations into the nature of power are subordinated to the overriding vision in the

play -- sympathetic to a traditional and conservative view of the uses and places of power. Tourneur employs the tragedy of revenge to illustrate the individualizing process Vindice undergoes as a result of the empowering act of taking revenge. However that process is also shown to be limited; Vindice's persona is wholly dependent on revenge and thus fails to outlast the frame of the play. As a further development, Tourneur shows the excessive fragility of Vindice's persona, modulating through several different disguises. In this respect The Revenger's Tragedy shares with The Spanish Tragedy a recognition of the unity of power and individuality. Hieronimo is the primary focus of the earlier play, while Vindice, and his attempt to solidify his grasp on his sense of self, is the focus of Tourneur's work. The success of each varies, yet the end result is the same. The illusory nature of their efforts to escape their powerlessness is the final moral lesson of the plays. The most significant divergence between the two playwrights is Tourneur's use of the surprise ending to reinforce his sterner view of the royal right to control vengeance. Vindice's revenge is utterly condemned and provides no positive portrayal of private revenge. Thereby Tourneur consolidates power in existing institutions.

CHAPTER 3

The Duchess of Malfi

In The Revenger's Madness, a study of revenge tragedy motifs, the authors end their analysis of John Webster's tragedies The White Devil (c.1612) and The Duchess of Malfi (c.1614) by concluding that "Webster's great plays, as much as they call to mind the plays of the revenge tradition, are not themselves of it" (Halletts, 295). Ashley Thorndike stipulated that revenge should be the central issue in his early definition of the subgenre (Thorndike, 125). It is true that The Duchess of Malfi does not exactly follow the pattern of other, more representative plays in the subgenre; however it is surely one of the group of similar plays that succeeded Kyd's seminal play, The Spanish Tragedy. Although the play's main action is only partially devoted to revenge, Bowers notes that "Webster's debt to Kydian tragedy... has been noted in detail -- the wanton bloodshed, torture, use of the tool villain, omens, and the like" (178). But even though Bowers includes the play in his discussion of the tragedy of revenge, its relationship to the tradition is problematic. In his modified version of the nature of the revenge tragedy, Bowers affirms that

> ...the catastrophe is brought about by a
> human or divine revenge for an unrighted

> wrong. The workings toward this revenge need not necessarily constitute the main plot, which may, instead, be concerned with developing the tragic situation which induces the revenge. Revenge, however, must be concerned in the catastrophe and must not enter the play solely as a fifth-act *deus ex machina* to resolve the plot (Bowers, 64).

The Duchess of Malfi straddles the boundaries of critical definitions.

In this chapter I will attempt to show how The Duchess of Malfi uses the elements of the Kydian tragedy of revenge to create a conventionally familiar dramatic mode, and then alters them to focus on a searching examination of power and justice. These themes are central components of the revenge tragedy; Webster's historical source limits the possibilities of a pure revenge plot, but the playwright realizes that his audience will recognize the claustrophobic world of the Italian court as the appropriate environment to illustrate those questions of power that are raised by the more conventional examples of the subgenre. The recurrence of the word "poison" as well as images of sickness and disease, the prevalence of trapping and confinement metaphors, the critique of a corrupt society, and the ceremonial performance of vindictiveness by the Cardinal and the Duke are stylistic aspects of this examination. Webster concentrates on the characters of the Duchess and Bosola as primary exemplars of these motifs. Essentially, the play interrogates the idea of justice as an impartial, unbiased abstraction whose operation follows that of Heaven, which is to

say that its criteria are objective and good. Opposed to this idea is that of "popular justice", also called revenge, based on personal ambitions and emotions. What emerges is a picture of a political order that is by turns corrupt, as when manipulated by the monarch unjustly, or horrifying, as when the failure of the natural order is unmasked. In both instances the playwright forces the audience to undertake a substantial reevaluation of the ethics of personal revenge. The household of the Duchess originally embodies an ideal of order and propriety; her wooing of Antonio fractures this order, and projects her behaviour into something like that of her brothers -- deceit and suspicion begin to rule her household, as they did that of Hieronimo in The Spanish Tragedy -- the Duchess and Antonio, we might say, move into Ferdinand's "character zone", with Bosola as their guide.

In a debate with Pierre Victor (1972), Michel Foucault expresses the dichotomy between these two axes of justice by comparing them to the activity of courts and the spontaneous acts of the people in revolutionary situations:

> [the] idea that there can be people who are neutral in relation to the two parties, that they can make judgements about them on the basis of ideas of justice which have absolute validity, and that their decisions must be acted upon, I believe that all this is far removed from and quite foreign to the very idea of popular justice (Foucault, 8).

For Foucault the court is the symbol of an organized attempt to transform abstract justice into a form of property (4), which gives rise to a " 'judicial' order which had the appearance of

the expression of public power: an arbitrator... of whom the task was both to 'justly' resolve disputes and to exercise 'authority' in the maintenance of public order" (Foucault, 6). Foucault considers this usurpation profoundly undemocratic, in part because the 'judicial' order legitimizes the 'popular justice' of revenge, turning it into a highly structured legal procedure. In Wild Justice (1985), Susan Jacoby confirms this subtle shift when she asserts that

> The very word "revenge" has pejorative connotations. Advocates of draconian punishment for crime invariably prefer "retribution" -- a word that affords the comfort of euphemism although it is virtually synonymous with "revenge" (Jacoby, 4).

The influence of power on revenge and the subjectivity of justice are all key themes in Webster's tragedy. The final tableau in the play reflects this investigation of these themes. In determining to begin anew with the Duchess's last surviving son, Delio (albeit unsteadily) expresses the faith in Christian virtues which Webster implies are absent in the corrupt, amoral court, and present in the martyred Duchess.

The tone of the play is set in the opening exchange between Delio and Antonio. Delio inquires of Antonio the nature of the French court, to which the latter man replies:

> I admire it;
> In seeking to reduce both state and people
> To a fix'd order, their judicious king
> Begins at home. Quits first his royal palace
> Of flatt'ring sycophants, of dissolute,
> And infamous persons, which he sweetly terms
> His Master's master-piece, the work of heaven

(I.i.4-10).

This typical rendering of a blissful kingdom which is in accord with then-contemporary conceptions of the divine right of Kingship does not last long. The optimism of Antonio's "fix'd order" quickly gives way to a cautionary note that deflates the early harmony. Antonio proceeds to give a warning that the court is vulnerable, saying: "but if't chance / Some curs'd example poison't near the head,/ *Death and diseases through the whole land spread*" (I.i.13-15). Almost immediately Bosola appears, further darkening the atmosphere as Antonio dubs him -- "The only court-gall.../Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,/ Bloody, or envious, as any man" (I.i.23-27).

The spectre of the poisoning of the body politic provides a picture of a gloomy and corrupt world in which abuses of the monarchy can be so great as to cast doubt on the validity of any abstract idea of justice. The play suggests that impartial and objective justice, and natural order are mere fictions. We glimpse a world where the state, ideally ruled in trust by the monarch in the name of Heaven, is revealed as a world where abstract justice is no more than savage revenge. The audience's consequent sense of evil is so pervasive that it is the dominating impression left as the play ends, despite the good intentions of Delio to establish a new, legitimate, and decent order on "this great ruin" (V.v.111).

The word "poison" occurs over a dozen times, supplemented by references to specific sicknesses, such as leprosy. Together

the weight of these accumulated allusions provides a parallel commentary to the events in the play. In the first scene the term recurs, this time referring to Bosola: "This foul melancholy / Will poison all his goodness" (I.i.76-77). In the shadow of the first reference, this use indicates the spread of a malaise arising from Bosola's frustrated courtly ambitions.

This metaphorical poison begins to infect all the female characters in their turn. The Duchess is the next to experience its sting, as Ferdinand intimates that her fame will be poisoned (I.i.308) -- a passage which darkly suggests both the potential punishment she will suffer if she disobeys him, and his power to impose his will upon her. Later, the untruth that Bosola has poisoned her with apricots will be given out by Antonio (II.i.167), an unintentional preview of her fate at his hands. Cariola also makes a fatal allusion to the secret of the Duchess's marriage, likening herself to a dealer in lethal substances (I.i.352-54). Although both these women meet their deaths, Julia, the mistress to the Cardinal is the only character who actually dies from poison, kissing the poisoned book as she swears secrecy. While not a sympathetic figure, Julia is nevertheless innocent of any of the violent acts in the play, her only sin being the cuckold's horns she gives to her husband, the aptly named Castruchio. The significance of this death is in the impartial manner of the metaphorical sickness in the body politic: ironically, the poison is embedded in a supposedly sacred text; she absorbs it while making a sacred pledge; her

murderer is a supposedly holy man. Clearly, nothing can escape the toxicity of this world. Regardless of justice, poison infects and kills both good and evil, and so betrays the "fix'd order" under which the characters in the play believe they operate. This sense of betrayal was a commonplace in the period. As Robert Watson writes in The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama (1990):

> Though no single paradigm can accurately describe the range of Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedies, a remarkable number of the memorable heroes are destroyed by some version of this confrontation between the desiring personal imagination and the relentless machinery of power...... It is hardly surprising that English Renaissance tragedy rehearses obsessively this archetype of betrayal; in all other theatres of life, the liberated self was repeatedly colliding with powerful impersonal machinery (Watson, 304).

The use of poison to epitomize this subversion of justice and power has a conventional basis in drama. Both Romeo and Claudius use poison, and both the honest lover and the vile usurper find their poisons accidentally but inexorably fatal.

The prevalence of images of entrapment and confinement also indicates corruption of the institution of justice and of power. Near the end of the play a moment of grotesque humour occurs when Ferdinand declares that "I do account this world but a dog-kennel" (V.v.67). There is also a pathetic aspect to his statement, as even the powerful in the world of the play are humbled. Ferdinand is eventually confined within the imaginary

canine prison of his crazed lycanthropy.

On various levels most of the characters are involved in traps of one kind or another. The imagery saturates the play. Bosola, condemned to the hideous imprisonment of the galleys, is spoken of as a man who "fell into the galleys" (I.i.34) in the service of the Cardinal, much as a man might fall into a well or sink-hole while undertaking some journey on behalf of a patron. He reveals his acute understanding of his predicament in the second scene of the play when the Duke recruits him to become an intelligencer. Although the Duke feigns ignorance about the actual status he is asking Bosola to assume, Bosola is highly aware of the trap set for him. When the Duke awards him a minor patronage post saying "is't not worth thanks?" (I.i.270) Bosola sharply retorts that:

> I would have you curse yourself now, that
> your bounty,
> Which makes men truly noble, e'er should make
> Me a villain: oh, that to avoid ingratitude
> For the good deed you have done me, I must do
> All the ill man can invent (I.i.271-75).

Bosola's response betrays the utter melancholy of a man unable to escape himself or his station. His sensibilities are far removed from any belief or trust in an implicit order that sustains the fortunes of women and men. Of all the characters in the play, Bosola is the individual most attuned to the influence of power.

The Duke and his brother, the Cardinal, are responsible, in large part, for Bosola's education into betrayal, as they are practiced men in the laying of traps. In giving his character to

Delio, Antonio asserts that Ferdinand "will seem to sleep o'th bench / Only to entrap offenders in their answers" (I.i.174-75). Delio's reply to this profile is equally revealing from the standpoint of power and justice. He concludes that

> ... the law to him
> Is like a foul black cobweb to a spider,
> He makes it his dwelling, and a prison
> To entangle those shall feed him
> (I.i.177-80).

The illusions of free will, choice and justice are dispelled by this intrusion of the predetermination of a cruel judge. Spiders are, of course, poisonous -- see Donne's "Twickham Gardens" -- and seize on anything that falls into their web; indiscriminate slaughter could not be further from the ideal of a judge.

The main object of these images of confinement is the Duchess, and her imprisonment is pictured in a variety of ways before it becomes physical confinement in fact. Primary among these are the bestial images of control that surround her. Bosola initially applies this image to her when he says

> Whether is that note worse that frights the
> silly birds
> Out of the corn; or that which doth allure
> them
> To the nets? You have heark'ned to the last
> too much (III.v.102-04).

The Duchess accepts this designation but puts her own gloss on it when Bosola claims to represent her brothers's genuine concern for her. She scornfully replies that "With such a pity men preserve alive / Pheasants and quails, when they are not fat enough / To be eaten" (III.v.111-13). Later the same image will be modulated to express the Duchess's despair after she is

captured. Child-bearing is in metaphor "confinement", and so the Duchess's pregnancies are a foreshadowing of her fate. When her brothers imprison her in her own court, Cariola counsels endurance, but the Duchess, grimly resigned to her fate, says: "The robin red-breast and the nightingale / Never live long in cages" (IV.ii.13-14). A further image of women as captive birds appears in the Cardinal's characterization of Julia as a falcon. The image fully conveys the control the Cardinal glories in, as he says "I have taken you off your melancholy perch, / Bore you upon my fist, and show'd you game, / And let you fly at it" (II.iv.28-30). The falcon's tether restricts its movement and the hood its eyesight. The syntax the Cardinal uses arrogates Julia's personal liberty entirely. This earlier image of captive birds embeds the meaning of absolute control over women into the play so that when it is revived later it gains greater resonance.

As the story progresses, it becomes evident that every part of the Duchess's environment has the potential to become a dominating trap. As Elizabeth Brennan writes in an introduction to her edition of The Duchess of Malfi (1964), even her marriage becomes a confining entity. The forbidden quality of the secret marriage restricts both her movements and emotions (Brennan, xix). The secrecy of the union prevents her from ever displaying open affection for Antonio, and the only place the two can meet as lovers is in her private chamber. This physical confinement to her chamber is renewed in the later stages of the play when her brothers force her to remain there, and surround her with

madmen (IV.ii.1-3). Modern productions have pointed out the stifling nature of the Duchess's house by varieties of box-like sets.

The actual seduction scene, which we would expect to be a scene of freedom and liberation, expresses these confining images as well. The Duchess offers herself to Antonio "In a winding sheet?" (I.i.389), thus producing an odd pairing of sexual desire with the restrictions of death. Similar images of confinement include the wedding ring (I.i.404-05), whose circumference, as well as the symbolic significance of the binding union, contribute to its meaning of restriction, and the Duchess's coolly erotic reference to the "wealthy mine / I make you lord of" (I.i.429-307). The accretion of these images of entrapment and imprisonment creates a claustrophobic sense of powerlessness in the fallen world of the play; those who wish to enter Heaven must pass under Heaven's arches "Upon their knees" (IV.ii.232-34). Characters are either pursued and captured by the machinations of corrupt authorities, or learn they are at the mercy of an impersonal, inscrutable form of order, from which none of the traditional comforts is available. In this light, revenge takes on a new significance. A means of recognizing the influence of constructed hierarchies of power in society rather than a debased form of justice, revenge appears as an alternate way of comprehending justice as an expression of popular will.

A curious addition to the play is the Duchess's relation of the fable of the Fisher and the Net (III.v.124-140), another

instance of the large number of images of confinement. However, here the moral quality of the image is inverted. Being caught in the Net of the Fisher is an opportunity to know one's value. Brennan suggests that the parable is "a comment on the difference between divine and human estimation of worth" (xxi) and she sees inclusion of this tale as related to the play's treatment of courtly rewards and deserts.

Webster's critique of courtly reward focusses on the system as a shadow form of conduct that operates counter to Christian morality and the "fix'd order" of the world. As such, it is both a corrupting force and an emblem of power, in that it gives the lie to universal, ideal justice on earth because it is by definition a tool for the repayment of corrupt personal service. Webster does not portray courtly reward flatteringly. In the first scene of the play, Bosola rails against the "Miserable age, where only the reward of doing well, is the doing of it!" (I.i.31-2).

The idea of courtly reward is closely related to the figure of Bosola. His motivating force is the pursuit of elevated stature and position in the court, and he returns to this preoccupation subconsciously and in round-about ways. Yet from the beginning he realizes that success in this world is denied him. In Act II, scene 1, the cynical attitude he takes towards the use of cosmetics by the Old Lady (II.i.23-9) seems a thinly disguised excuse for pessimistic rumination on the

futility of aspiring to any kind of wish. Sounding every bit the melancholic malcontent, he carps that

> Though we are eaten up of lice, and worms,
> And though continually we bear about us
> A rotten and dead body, we delight
> To hide it in rich tissue: all our fear,
> Nay, all our terror, is lest our physician
> Should put us in the ground (II.i.55-60).

Further, his speech about the base origins of princes and the importance of lineage which follows the above outburst seems to underscore his own sense of dislocation and weakness. He forcefully asserts that "there's the same hand to them: the like passions sway them" (II.i.103-04) in reference to princes -- an opinion tempered by his acute awareness of his personal vulnerability.

Bosola is unwavering in his quest for higher station even as he recognizes his moral degradation; his self-recrimination is evident in his words when he calls himself "the devil's quilted anvil" (III.ii.323). His obedience to the necessities of power make him a perfect emblem of the opposition between ideal justice and personal vindictiveness. He has some knowledge of the good but his latent rebelliousness is quashed with terse reasoning:

> ...What rests, but I reveal
> All to my Lord? Oh, this base quality
> Of intelligencer! why, every quality
> i'th'world
> Prefers but gain, or commendation:
> Now for this act, I am certain to be rais'd
> (III.ii.326-330).

By allying himself with the forces of corrupt justice and the power elite that controls it, Bosola plans to assure himself of a

position in that hierarchy, yet his suppressed yearnings imitate the barely controlled struggle between the powerful forces in society and the people over whom they rule. While in no obvious sense a sympathetic character, Bosola's growing, almost hysterical commitment to the "character zones" of the villains matches Hieronimo's progress from just to corrupt.

Webster's criticism of the system of courtly reward that Bosola participates in emphasizes the malign influence of power. The revenge motif that he manipulates is the villainous speech of self-revelation. Throughout the play the issue of revenge is a minor issue: the word itself is mentioned only twice prior to Bosola's revelatory speech in the last scene; the cry of revenge and the motivations behind it are shown to be shams. Bowers asserts that the heroism of the Duchess has proven to Bosola "that his theories are false" (Bowers, 179); however, the death of the Duchess elicits the statement that "My estate is sunk / Below the degree of fear" (IV.ii.363-64). Bosola's revenge itself is crazily misdirected; his assault on the Duchess is not so much a redress for personal injury as a confession of his own weakness. Both the Duke and the Cardinal rebuff his requests for reward and the latter prepares to kill him (V.iv.30-31) before he is overheard and pre-emptively struck down. This awareness of the weakness he feels draws out once more the overarching influence of power.

As in the other plays treated in this thesis, the role of the dumb-show is once again linked to central concerns in the

play. In both The Spanish Tragedy and The Revenger's Tragedy the masques and dumbshows serve to reflect the revenger's consciousness of the ritualized quality of state justice; appropriation of vengeance is symbolically completed by an attempt to imitate the stylized forms that surround state ceremonies.

In The Duchess of Malfi the dumb-show again asserts the ceremonial aspects of state justice. The banishment masque is a crystallized instance of what Foucault calls 'the reinscription of justice within institutions which are typical of a state apparatus' (Power/Knowledge,1). The key aspects of the masque are symbolic. At no time in the stage directions does the Cardinal expel the Duchess and her family by direct violence. Rather he is symbolically invested with objects of power:

> Here the ceremony of the Cardinal's instalment in the habit of a soldier: perform'd in delivering up his cross, hat, robes, and ring at the shrine; and investing him with sword, shield, helmet and spurs. Then Antonio, the Duchess and their children, having presented themselves at the shrine, are (by a form of banishment in dumb-show expressed towards them by the Cardinal, and the state of Ancona) banished (III.iv.S.D.).

This ceremonial expression of power is the model which revengers in the other plays I discuss emulate when they determine to pursue their own acts of personal justice. Later, when Ferdinand contemplates the death of his sister, the ritual quality of state justice affects him greatly, as he recognizes that his status as Duke empowered him to assume control of state justice. This sudden realization prompts an overflow of self-recrimination:

> Was I her Judge?
> Did any ceremonial form of law
> Doom her to not-being? did a complete jury
> Deliver her conviction up i'th'court?
> (IV.ii.299-302).

Ferdinand's own revelation of his selfish misdirection of power clearly dismantles any possible notion of an impartial and objective authority on earth, whose ideal he belatedly recognizes.

The final inquiry into the nature of justice and power that the play undertakes is a familiar one. The portrait of the Duchess is an examination of the status of women in society, and the subtle ways by which they are controlled. Watson calls it

> a particular version of the tragic conflict between individual desire and powerful impersonal mechanisms: the disastrous insistence that a woman subordinate her marital preference to the interests of a greedy and tradition-bound patriarchal society (Watson, 320).

Once again the control of language is an indicator of the vulnerability of women, as well as the use of bestial images as discussed above.

Early in the play the Duchess is praised by Antonio for her speech and her "look":

> ...her discourse, it is so full of rapture,
> You will only begin, then to be sorry
> When she doth end her speech.....
> ...whilst she speaks,
> She throws upon a man so sweet a look,
> That it were able to raise one to a galliard
> (I.i.190-95).

Speaking and looking are her special forms of expression; she has a mastery over them. However, this ability is taken away

from her, much as Lorenzo neutralizes Bel-Imperia's special gift. As the brothers take their leave of her, they subject her to a barrage of commands heavily seeded with veiled threats of imprisonment. During this whole speech, which the Duchess calls "studied" (I.i.329), she is scarcely able to interject a single word. Her sole objection (I.i.299-300) is promptly dismissed by Ferdinand. Each brother forms one half of an implacable linguistic onslaught which denies the Duchess her voice. She, whose voice is her strength, is visibly silenced. As if she were keenly conscious of her plight she tells Antonio that "so we / Are forc'd to express our violent passions / In riddles, and in dreams" (I.i.444-46).

The Duchess again shows her powers of language and clear thought, when during the course of her trials her unwavering sense of her own rightness never falters. At no time does she admit that she is acting sinfully. Her self-confidence is again in contrast to her painfully evident political impotence. This confidence casts her vulnerability in a kind of negative relief. She protests that:

> Why should only I
> Of all the other princes of the world
> Be cas'd up, like a holy relic? I have
> youth, And a little beauty" (III.ii.137-40).

In response to her logical inquiry her brother's reply shows a determined illogicality: "So you have some virgins, / That are witches. I will never see thee more" (III.ii.140-41). The Duchess's mind is unclouded by the tension of her situation. She is always able to think clearly whereas her brother, who has

absolute control of the physical situation, is unable to counter her legitimate arguments. The ease with which she is dispatched, however, accentuates her weakness and reinforces the growing awareness of the potency of private justice. Significantly, she is strangled; not only is this act physically horrible in its staging -- it clearly represents (as opposed to stabbing or poisoning) the silencing of the voice by the cutting off of breath. Once more the importance of power relations makes itself felt through the medium of gender. Justice and power reveal themselves not as institutions divorced from society, but as constructed forms under the control of patriarchal hierarchies.

The Duchess of Malfi is an engaging work that is difficult to unpack. Its status as a tragedy of revenge rests solely on the elements of the Kydian formula found within the play; however, these elements are radically altered, leaving only a semblance of the subgenre. The result is an often bleak depiction of justice and power in a fictional society that is perhaps presented as parallel to Jacobean England. The play offers a layered treatment that disputes the idea of a divine authority exercising impartial and beneficent judgement on behalf of men and women. Such a view validates the use of power to maintain state justice. Revenge, or popular justice, is stigmatized in such conditions, and its practice is sharply criticized. Webster chooses to illustrate the effects of power on a society that is poisoned, and the result is a portrait of a

fundamentally unjust society in which the strong prey on the weak and a corrupt system of courtly reward replaces Christian morality. Surrounded by all the evil shown in the play, the figure of the Duchess, with her piety intact, functions as a moral touchstone. By creating a figure of unalloyed goodness and subjecting her to the caprice of patriarchal manipulations of justice and the vast indifference of Fortune, Webster provokes a significant reconsideration of the ethics of private revenge.

CHAPTER 4

The Cardinal

In spite of the absolute biblical injunction against exacting personal revenge for individual injustices, the impulse to write plays reassessing the moral implications of revenge continued throughout the Elizabethan period and to the closing of the theatres. The final revenge tragedy, written in 1641, was The Cardinal by James Shirley; it continues to exhibit most of the themes in Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (c.1587-89), the play that defines the subgenre.

Some commentators, such as Clifford Leech, Georges Bas, and Muriel Bradbrook, have criticized Shirley's play for a lack of depth and oversimplification. In one of the more recent evaluations of The Cardinal, in The Cambridge Companion, Shirley is dismissively called "businesslike" (315) and the play is labelled "an unsatisfactory echo" (315) of Webster's The Duchess of Malfi. However, one of the chief elements which characterize the subgenre is the question of political and social power and its exercise, an issue that Shirley explores at length, reflecting the perennial concern for the subject. His treatment of this central question is complex, and intertwined with an exploration of earthly justice.

The issue appears at various points in the play. Framing the plot and moving it forward, the concept of the punishing gaze, that Michel Foucault (among others) has described, is an emblem of the exercise of power. Further, The Cardinal carefully distinguishes between "honest" and "dishonest" revenge, which problematizes the concept of divine justice. As Bowers's study suggests, the former is the product of justifiable anger or choler, whereas the latter proceeds from envy and hatred (Bowers, 20-21). A related concern centers on the historical role of the king -- the source of all authority, which included the power to control acts of vengeance. Reflecting the contemporary position of Charles I, Shirley's play offers a poetic argument for the necessity of a powerful monarch. For a modern audience The Cardinal may be of most interest as a revealing study of the gender-based assignation of power in a fictional world analogous to the Stuart court. These concerns are focussed through the device of the tragedy of revenge.

Although Foucault's area of interest is the eighteenth century, his observations are equally applicable to the exercise of authority and power in the seventeenth century. The significance of the punishing gaze arises as an issue as a result of the curious question of Hernando's impulse toward revenge, which is the starting point for the climactic revenge that succeeds it. Contemporary courtesy-books stipulated that revenge could be pursued for malicious injuries. Columbo's accusation of

cowardice against Hernando scarcely qualifies, because none of the other officers present are aware of it. Even the fact that the insult still exists between the two men is discounted by evidence of accepted practices of the concealment of embarrassment, such as Columbo's "pretty court way/ Of dismissing an officer" (II.i.64-65). Indeed the accusation of cowardice does not seem to explain his actions at all, considering that an immediate challenge to a duel would seem more appropriate. Without Hernando's enmity there is no revenge tragedy. The accusation is severe, but as Bowers notes of Hernando, "His anger is rather too personal and pronounced" (232) as the play progresses.

Hernando's actions are driven by his keen sense of being scrutinized by those around him. In Discipline and Punish (1979), Foucault concretely establishes the powerful ability to hold an individual within a gaze as a commonplace in Western society. He draws particular attention to the Panopticon, a device created by Jeremy Bentham. The structure is very much like an eye; a tower sits in the center of a ring of cells through which light pours, illuminating those within, exposing them to the surveillance of the guards in the tower. As Foucault elaborates in Power/Knowledge:

> He [Bentham] poses the problem of visibility, but thinks of a visibility organized entirely around a dominating, overseeing gaze. He effects the project of a universal visibility which exists to serve a rigorous, meticulous power (152).

The establishment of the gaze as a form of power is a subtle

expression of control that is elusive and silent.

The ability to fix one's gaze on another also implies that the powerless are deprived of that privilege. From the subject who must kneel or bow his/her head in the presence of the monarch, to the strict management of the monarch's availability for viewing in public, or in the aptly named "presence chamber", the importance of visibility establishes the power of the gaze.

Foucault's final elaboration of this particular systemic exercise of power insists on its being internalized. The end result of ultimate visibility is, paradoxically, the disappearance of the gazer. When individuals are convinced of the inevitability of being observed, scrutiny takes on the appearance of convention. As Foucault notes,

> There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself (Power/Knowledge, 155).

Perhaps the most well-known literary instance of the gaze and its interiorization occurs in Sartre's play Huit Clos (1962) in which the character Garcin admits helplessly that "L'enfer, c'est les autres" (91), -- 'Hell is other people'.

This type of awareness and internalization mirrors the experience of Hernando in the second act. When Hernando advises his general to let the Aragonians, Columbo takes him aside saying

> ...thou hast no honour in thee,
> Not enough noble blood to make a blush
> For thy tame elegance (II.i.44-46).

His choice of words here is significant because his charge provokes just such a shameful blush in Hernando. Hernando's recognition of the blow and the injury is instant. He tells Columbo that

> ...yet there are
> Some that have known me here; sir, I desire
> To quit my regiment (II.i.47-49).

This reaction is the precise equivalent of the flight instinct in animals when threatened, and reflects Hernando's sudden sense of vulnerability, as though all eyes were upon him.

Heinz Kohut utilizes the model of the fight/flight impulse in his analysis of narcissistic injuries. In the paper referred to above (Chapter One, p.21-22) Kohut describes the responses of the individual who has suffered "ridicule, contempt, and conspicuous defeat" (638). The internalized reaction to such blows is not only a conviction that others are watching the individual (632), but also a desire to expose the person responsible "to his own and to other people's gaze" (639). Thus the element of public exposure is clearly linked to a desire for revenge expressed as retributive justice.

Columbo's exposure of Hernando makes him aware of the gazes of others and produces a severe loss of face. The revelation of the gaze is a useful motivating force in the play; it prods Hernando into a confrontational moment with Columbo, thus precipitating the Cardinal's vengeance. The incident also leaves him predisposed to Rosaura's request for his aid in her own revenge.

Other evidence supports the contention that the society of the play is a world of gazes. Every act except for the second is introduced by the nameless Lords who observe the doings of the court and report on them. In addition to revealing the thinking that goes on offstage, the questions and remarks the Lords make -- such as "Who is that?" (I.i.1), which opens the play -- suggest that the court is a place of intense scrutiny. In the same scene, the oppression of the all-seeing gaze is implicit in the Lord's comment to his fellow: "Take heed, the Cardinal holds intelligence/ With every bird i'th'air" (I.i.19-20). This remark reflects an operative principle of Bentham's Panopticon which Foucault explains by arguing that "power should be visible and unverifiable... the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at at any one moment, but he must be sure that he may always be so" (Discipline and Punish, 201).

Additional instances of the prevalence of the gaze occur in relation to the character of Rosaura. As a woman, she is always conscious of the scrutiny of powerful societal conventions. Even when among other women she feels she must "counterfeit a peace" (I.ii.27). The power of the gaze is personified by the Cardinal, who directs it upon her, as the chief representative of the Church, the favourite of the King, and as a man. In Columbo's absence he informs Rosaura that "I shall perform a visit daily/...If you accept my care" (II.ii.1-3). Significantly, he "looks with anger" (II.iii.65), and his eyes are often likened to fire (II.ii.75). A final manifestation

of the Cardinal's observation occurs after Columbo's death when he contrives to become her guardian.

Power is clearly a primary motive force in the play. The influence of the gaze as an extension of social power provides a useful framing device for the plot and moves it forward.

By carefully defining two distinct modes of revenge, Shirley constructs a dialogue within the play which addresses the complicated relations between divine and earthly justice. The early revenges are retributive whereas the final revenge is retaliatory. Columbo and Hernando are the exemplars of the former mode while the Cardinal typifies the latter.

All aspects of the characterization of Columbo suggests his highly developed individualism. When he is first introduced by one of the lords he is called

> ... a man of daring
> And most exalted spirit; pride in him
> Dwells like an ornament, where so much honour
> Secures his praise (I.i.24-27).

In addition to the military prowess that sets him apart from other characters, Columbo is further distinguished both by his inability to ape the manners of the court, the primary setting for the action of the play, and by the fact that he is "the last of his great family" (I.i. 35-36). Like Othello, Antony and other soldier heroes, he is hot-headed, old-fashioned and alienated.

A corollary to this distinctiveness is his attention to matters of honour, fame and reputation; and his speeches are

uniform in their treatment of these subjects. In the first act Columbo speaks of the privilege of Rosaura's love as an "honour" (I.i.112), and implies that his military triumphs are now important only in that he may bathe her in his shared glory (I.i.115-17). Similarly, the second act focuses on his assessment of these qualities in others. For Columbo, all action is a reflection of inner beliefs. As a result when Hernando counsels a cautious approach on the Aragonians the general's reaction is immediate, branding him a coward and a traitor (II.i.36-37). In like fashion, Columbo responds violently when he receives Rosaura's request for freedom. Upon reading her plea, his first thoughts are not of disappointed love but rather that he is "shrunk in fame" (II.i.97) and his name become the object of ridicule, a reaction that suggests his own sensitivity to the exposure. Interestingly both poles of the fight/flight axis are represented in the play; Hernando's shameful withdrawal stands in direct opposition to Columbo's forceful strike in response to the censuring gaze he feels as a result of Rosaura's humiliation.

As Columbo confronts the King with his murder of Alvarez, his speech again turns to the question of his honour:

> ... I have but took his life,
> And punished her with mercy, who had both
> Conspired to kill the soul of all my fame.
> Read there -- and read an injury as deep
> In my dishonour as the devil knew
> A woman had capacity or malice
> To execute (III.ii.127-133).

It is consonant with his preoccupation with honour and reputation

that Columbo resorts to private justice to restore his injured sense of individualism.

His motivation remains constant as long as he is an active character; after the third act, his revenge is superseded by those of Hernando and the Cardinal.

Like Columbo, Hernando has a touchy nature, but concern for his reputation is less elaborate and centers on only one event: his public humiliation in the field by Columbo. This concern provides a more traditional provocation toward revenge. The injury Hernando suffers is completely attributable to Columbo, whereas Columbo himself had contributed to his own injury by responding in such an unfair manner to Rosaura's reasonable entreaty.

Despite these differences the motivation toward revenge is shared by both men; personal justice is their means of affirming honour and name. Bowers remarks that in the Tudor period

> The state had been regulated and laws had been written on the books, but personal character, with its inheritance of fierceness and independence, had not changed. The idea of redress by private action was still very much alive, particularly among an aristocracy which prided itself on its individuality (Bowers, 15-16).

Thus the revenges pursued by Columbo and Hernando manifest the empowerment of the individual and are bound to gain some sympathy from the audience. Indeed neither Columbo nor Hernando are unlikeable characters. Columbo has none of the fatuity of the

miles gloriosis figure, and the man he kills, who seldom speaks and appears infrequently before he dies at the midpoint of the play, has not made any emotional impact. Hernando is also a agreeable character who confronts his opponents openly in an honest duel. Bowers notes that English gentlemen did not condemn revenge but "when the more treacherous and Italianate features were added... or when accomplices were hired to revenge... he considered revenge despicable" (Bowers, 37).

By contrast to these "honest" revengers, the activities of the Cardinal are far more reprehensible and represent a fundamental abuse of power. Whereas Columbo and Hernando seek no material advantages the Cardinal is obsessed with accumulation and consumption. The flame imagery which surrounds Columbo -- a combustible personality -- has a different valence when applied to the Cardinal. Rosaura describes his fiery aspect as he reads Columbo's letter and his burning, envious blood (II.iii.76-78); later she accuses him of "eating up whole families" (II.iii. 144). For the Cardinal, power assumes a very different meaning. His interest in the Duchess's fortune betrays his pursuit of self-aggrandizement rather than justice, and his motivation springs from no injury to his honour or reputation. Divorced from such legitimate imperatives, the Cardinal's manipulation of the king is a gross violation of justice; the nature of his revenge is affected accordingly. For a powerful political figure like the Cardinal, revenge is not the manifestation of a bold, if anarchic, individuality; it becomes an attack of totalitarian

brutality.

This "dishonest" revenge clearly is not sanctioned in the play. Some commentators have criticized the Cardinal's apparently unexplained transformation into a monster of malignity, but they ignore the repeated remarks of the lords which from the beginning have identified him as a man of cunning and duplicity. What is interesting is the differing appeal the two types of revengers possess. The righteous indignation that Columbo and Hernando can make some claim to is absent in the case of the Cardinal -- he projects merely hatred and envy.

Commentators regularly affirm Shirley's strong Royalist loyalties; a set of beliefs that are diametrically opposed to any concept of a righteous earthly revenge. However, I propose that Shirley could not have mistaken the inevitable sympathy the audience feels for both Columbo and Hernando. Indeed these mixed emotions contribute to the power of the tragedy. By problematizing these two revengers and providing a well-defined negative touchstone in the character of the Cardinal, Shirley clearly shows an awareness of the difficulties involved in reconciling two modes of justice, the earthly and the divine. In a severe appraisal of this disjunction in her essay "Tragedy, Justice and the Subject", Catherine Belsey remarks that

> In _The Cardinal_ the pressure of the tragic contradictions of revenge is such that the play collapses into incoherence. The absolutist project of the text is unable to generate a narrative, and in the gap between the ideological and the formal constraints there insists the continuing crisis of justice which in 1641 remains unresolved

(179).

The charge of incoherence is extreme, but the function of power in two increasingly incompatible modes of justice is the central concern of the play.

At another level, The Cardinal is a dramatized philosophical treatise of power. In revenge tragedies, the role of the King is of great importance; royal weakness is a prerequisite for legitimate private revenge. Bowers remarks that the disappearance of the traditional system of private justice and the vendetta begins with the consolidation of a state which claims the divine right of vengeance as its own (Bowers, 5). At its head, therefore, must be an authority -- normally a monarch -- who is determined to enforce his own power in order to keep the peace, and maintain his own leadership. Quelling the vendetta is of the utmost importance because it concentrates and reserves deadly force for the throne. It is surely to preserve his own authority that the Prince of Verona acts, rather than to protect the Montagues and Capulets. In The Cardinal, Shirley presents a bleak view of the consequences of a weak king. As the play opens, the lords of the court are already commenting on the overweening influence of the Cardinal. By the fourth act the corruption of the throne is unmistakable. Columbo has been pardoned after a damning display of indecision from the King in III.ii.; the courtiers show surprise and a degree of fear in view of the "chains of magic" (IV.i.10-11) by which the king is

held. The threat of treason is never voiced but the state is near to foundering. By contrast with the legitimate use of force against the rebellious Aragonians in the second act, the later action of the play shows the unrestrained, anarchic explosion of blood and violence as the court of Navarre disintegrates. The Royalist James Shirley and the embattled Charles I would have recognized the lesson of the play: weakness and vacillation in a monarch lead straight to chaos in the land. In the King's final line -- "*None have more need of perspectives than kings*" (V.iii.296) -- he seems to be ironically chiding himself for his own poor judgement, certainly in his mistaken trust of the Cardinal, but also in his generally incompetent rule of Navarre. By its negative example, the play valorizes the strenuous exercise of Royal power.

But power structures are more than just the lines of authority in political administration. The creation and maintenance of each individual and independent persona in a society such as that of the Renaissance drama depends on the patriarchal structures which permeate it. When gender-based roles are assigned, power becomes a commodity that is carefully managed. The Cardinal has a revealing, if momentary, shift during which customary roles are subverted, before patriarchal authority is firmly reasserted.

That Rosaura is powerless is beyond dispute. The conditions of her existence are routinely predetermined without

comment. The play opens with the announcement, by the two lords who set the scene, of the King's selection of her next husband. Following this royal fiat, the union is beyond the power of Rosaura to deny or alter, although Columbo can choose to free her from obligation. When conditions change and she is momentarily free, Columbo reasserts his power to exact a revenge which is a complete denial of Rosaura's individuality. He is not content with merely eliminating his rival, but in a chilling encounter Columbo displays his absolute power over her, and by extension the power of all men over all women. He instructs her to

> Live, but never presume again to marry,
> I'll kill the next at th'altar, and quench all
> The smiling tapers with his blood; if after
> You dare provoke the priest and heaven so much,
> To take another, in thy bed I'll cut him from
> Thy warm embrace, and throw his heart to ravens (IV.ii.68-73).

The violent images that he evokes merely serve to buttress his claim to ownership. Significantly no woman is an active revenger in the play. Celinda is merely a pawn that the Cardinal uses because he knows that her reputation is in his power to destroy. By agreeing to make Columbo her heir unsolicited after his death (V.i.63-76), she betrays some unspecified weakness. Suffice it to note that her syntax indicates that a surrender ("this way / Is only left to tie up scurril tongues", V.i.68-69) is her only recourse.

The powerlessness of women is indicated in another way which paradoxically shows the only means available for this

condition to be momentarily subverted. By resorting to the supernatural or to a reality outside that of the play, Rosaura can gain a brief reprieve from her position of vulnerability. After her first encounter with the Cardinal Rosaura reflects that

> Do I not walk upon the teeth of serpents;
> And, as I had a *charm* against their poison,
> Play with their stings? (II.ii.18-20)

In the same scene the use of the word "charm" recurs when her secretary Antonio arrives from the battlefield bearing Columbo's letter and remarks that "I used some soft and penitential language/ To *charm* the bullet" (II.ii.37-38). As a servant, Antonio's position has much in common with that of Rosaura and each chooses to resort to a fantastical explanation to account for a momentary exercise of individual control. Significantly both charms will fail as the play ends, and Rosaura finally succumbs to the serpent's poison.

In another instance of a momentary subversion of patriarchal authority, Rosaura must again resort to an alternate form of reality as if to underline the chronic vulnerability she suffers from in her own society. This alternate reality is the realm of insanity, whose borders Rosaura crosses (V.iii.23-40) or pretends to cross. Whether lunacy or antic disposition, her behaviour does succeed in expediting her own plan for revenge, albeit carried out by Hernando. However, this respite from her condition is only temporary. The patriarchal structures of power assert themselves as the play ends.

The Cardinal is a play that is deceptively plain. Despite the exceptional coherence and tightness of the action, there are various ambiguities and contrasting levels of meaning apparent. The question of power in the play resolves itself into four general issues. First, the presence of the punishing gaze that represents the collective authority of societal mores is a primary locus of power in the play. The impulse that drives Hernando forward in his quest for retribution is more than the accusation of cowardice -- the withering power of the scrutiny of his society is an exercise of social power that begins a chain reaction culminating in the Cardinal's revenge. Secondly, the level of an individual's political power has a profound effect on how that individual's revenge is perceived. In anger, the marginalized Columbo and Hernando seek to exert themselves solely to redress personal injuries; their revenge appears just and honest, while the efforts of the Cardinal, motivated by no such injury and propelled by sheer ill will, are condemned. This distinction creates a complex internal debate within the play concerning the competing modes of human and heavenly justice. Thirdly, the actions of the King develop into a thinly veiled argument for the necessity for a powerful king, an argument which may be rooted in the political activity of Charles I. Finally, a modern audience will carefully examine the role of gender in the distribution of power and its relation to the establishment of an individual identity. Indeed, the issue of individualism is tightly interwoven in all the questions of power

in the play.

CONCLUSION

The question of power relations in the tragedy of revenge is a primary one in Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy. Across a span of fifty years the debate over the ethics of private revenge is represented in succeeding plays: The Revenger's Tragedy, The Duchess of Malfi, and The Cardinal.

The ethical quality of revenge was certainly a live issue, as demonstrated by the plethora of religious and secular writings against the practice, enumerated in Bowers's book and in Lily B. Campbell's article. That citizens were having second thoughts about the divine monopoly on justice and vengeance can hardly be disputed.

Kyd's initial consideration of the subject lead to a wildly popular play which spawned numerous imitators. His pioneering dramatic inquiry into the subject of revenge reveals a balanced study of power and its influence on abstract justice. By tracing the movement of the just Hieronimo from "the good" to a position outside the conventional morality of the day, Kyd exposes the unexamined workings of power. In describing the character zone of Lorenzo, Kyd implicitly explains Hieronimo's motivation for occupying it. Reinforcing Hieronimo's weakness in a corrupt court is Bel-Imperia and the other women in the play, as well as the propensity of all these weak figures toward

murder, suicide and self-mutilation. Functioning as the emblem of this weakness is the ritualized play-within-a-play world. As an attempt to refigure reality and symbolically legitimize the revenger's efforts, this alternate reality offers a strong mediating factor in Hieronimo's defence and disrupts the ethical condemnation of private revenge.

Tourneur's play, perhaps as a reaction to the implied critique of institutions of abstract justice in Kyd's play, suggests an opposing position. By heightening the revenge tragedy conventions to exaggerated levels, he provokes an orthodox reaction to lawlessness, which he remedies in the sudden reversal that ends the play. The alternate reality, which exposes the weakness of the revenger in The Spanish Tragedy, is here a source of turmoil and destructive instability, and is deflated by the comic spectacle of the late arrival of the similarly hostile stepsons and Spurio. The result is a conservative view of abstract justice and power and censure of private revenge.

Webster's play, inasmuch as it partakes of the revenge tragedy subgenre, maps a course separate from the previous two plays. Power relations are still a preoccupation in his bleak depiction of abstract justice on earth. His critique of courtly reward offers a window into his approach to power. The Duchess and her untainted virtue act as touchstones for the evil surroundings of the play, engendered by the amoral system of courtly reward, and ably represented by the villainous

protagonist Bosola. Both his revenge, and that of the Duchess's brothers, are misdirected primarily because they have no basis in Christian virtue. Paradoxically, in The Duchess of Malfi, Webster persuasively shows how the ethics of private revenge are nonetheless subordinate to this Christian morality, despite his clear recognition of the weakness of the vulnerable in the face of the powerful.

The final play in this study, Shirley's The Cardinal, represents at once a synthesis of these views and a return to the original Kydian model. The influence of power is clearly seen in the effect of the punishing gaze of societal mores that Hernando feels, and in the submissive role Rosaura is forced to assume. Shirley's addition to the Kydian model is his differentiation between the "honest" revenges of Columbo and Hernando and the "dishonest" revenge pursued by the Cardinal. The Cardinal closes on an ironic note in which the incompetent monarch, who gives license to revenge by default, advises the audience of the need for a strong monarch who will properly administer abstract justice.

Together these tragedies of revenge address the dilemma of the honest individual's approach to abstract justice and revenge in a world that is chronically unjust. The power relations that these plays address are, then as now, a pervasive and subtle influence on these perennial concerns.

Works Cited and Consulted

Primary Sources

Kyd, Thomas. The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy. Ed. Andrew S. Cairncross. Regents Renaissance Drama Series. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.

____________. The Spanish Tragedy. Ed. Philip Edwards. The Revels Plays. (Citations taken from this edition.) London: Methuen, 1959.

Shakespeare, William. Hamlet. Ed. Harold Jenkins. The Arden Shakespeare. London: Routledge, 1982.

Shirley, James. The Cardinal. Ed. E.M. Yearling. The Revels Plays. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986.

Tourneur, Cyril. The Revenger's Tragedy. Ed. R.A. Foakes. The Revels Plays. London: Methuen, 1966.

Webster, John. The Duchess of Malfi. Ed. Elizabeth M. Brennan. The New Mermaids. London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1964.

____________. The Duchess of Malfi. Ed. John Russell Brown. The Revels Plays. (Citations taken from this edition.) London: Methuen, 1964. Reprinted 1974.

Secondary Sources

Bakhtin, M.M. The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson & Holquist. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981.

Bakhtin, M.M. The Dialogical Principle. Ed. & Trans. T. Todorov. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Belsey, Catherine. "Tragedy, Justice and the Subject" in 1642: Literature and Power in the Seventeenth Century. Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature. Eds. Francis Barker et al. Colchester: University of Essex, 1981.

Bowers, Fredson T. Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy: 1587-1642. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940. Reprinted 1966.

Braunmuller, A.R. & Hattaway, Michael (Eds.). The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Broude, Ronald. "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy in Renaissance England" in Renaissance Quarterly. 28 (1975), 38-58.

Burner, Sandra A. James Shirley: A Study of Literary Coteries and Patronage in Seventeenth-Century England. Lanham: University Press of America, 1988.

Camoin, Francois, A. The Revenge Convention in Tourneur, Webster,and Middleton. Salzburg, Austria: Universitat Salzburg, 1972.

Campbell, Lily B. "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England" in Modern Philology. 28 (1931), 281-296.

Champion, Larry S. Tragic Patterns in Jacobean and Caroline Drama. Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1977.

Faulkner, William. Light in August. The Corrected Text. New York: Vintage Books, 1987.

Finke, Laurie A. "Painting Women: Images of Femininity in Jacobean Tragedy" in Theatre Journal. 36:3 (October 1984). 357-370.

Forsythe, Robert Stanley. The Relations of Shirley's Plays to the Elizabethan Drama. New York: Columbia University Press, 1914.

Foucault, Michel. Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1977.

________________. Madness and Civilization. A History of

Insanity in the Age of Reason. Trans. R. Howard. New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1973.

Foucault, Michel. Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977. Ed. Colin Gordon. Trans. Colin Gordon et al. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980.

Hallett, Charles A. and Elaine S. The Revenger's Madness: A Study of Revenge Tragedy Motifs. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1980.

Hawthorn, Jeremy. A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory. Kent: Edward Arnold/Hodder and Stoughton, 1992.

Jacoby, Susan. Wild Justice: The Evolution of Revenge. London: William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd., 1985.

Kohut, Heinz. "Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage" in The Search for the Self: Selected Writings of Heinz Kohut, 1950-1978. Ed. Paul H. Ornstein. v.2. New York: International Universities Press, 1978. 793-843.

Lucow, Ben. James Shirley. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981.

Malatches, Leo. Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy. A Study of the Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus. Hamilton, Canada: McMaster University, 1987. (M.A. Thesis).

Ratliff, John D. "Hieronimo Explains Himself" in Studies in Philology. LIV (1957). 112-118.

Ribner, Irving. Jacobean Tragedy: The Quest for Moral Order. London: Methuen, 1962.

Ricks, Christopher (Ed.). English Drama to 1710. London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1971.

Ridley, Jasper. The History of England. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981.

St. Clare Byrne, Muriel. Elizabethan Life in Town and Country. London: Methuen, 1925.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. Huis Clos. Eds. Jacques Hardre & George B. Daniel. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962.

Sarup, Madan. An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989.

Thorndike, Ashley H. "The Relation of Hamlet to the Contemporary