

CENSORED SUBJECTS:
INDIRECTION ON THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE STAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines eight Renaissance plays containing the bodily figurations of madness, ghosts, death, and violence. My thesis is that these figurations can be best understood using a psycho-semiotic theoretical approach employing concepts devised by Jacques Lacan and by Julia Kristeva—especially their concepts of "Otherness" and "abjection."

I contend that the audiences of each of these plays, in responding to the staged tensions between the social and the corporeal identities of the subject—that is, between the social Other and the psychic other—would particularly recognize the inadequacy of language to voice the central concerns of the play. My thesis questions the representational power of the word for the mortified bodies staged in the "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, who refute the unfitting misrepresentations of Symbolic signification and who refuse to be alienated in its system. The compensatory bodily performance in the "non-verbal" register interrogates what language does to, and what it fails to do for, the subjects who use it. My readings explore the linguistic impediments to the self's disclosure—they deconstruct the symbolically constructed subject to show how much of the subject is excluded from conventional characterizations.

The first chapter outlines my critical approach. Subsequent chapters consist of readings of the individual plays: *The Maids Tragedie*, *Phila]ter*, *Bu]]y D'Ambois*, *The Spanish Tragedie*, *The Tragedie of Philotas*, *The Tragedy of the Dv]chesse of Malfy*, *'Tis Pitty Shee's a Whore*, and *The Atheist's Tragedie*. I believe that the conditions of the Renaissance theatre--the great variety of weekly performances, *ad hoc* rehearsals and spontaneous player modifications--would have compelled the playwright to stress key phrases and key ideas that are readily translated to the performance text of the play from the written one. It is a focus on these key elements that directs the present study.

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CHAPTER 1

i

Ultimately a play is an event,
an interaction of the dramatist's, the actors',
and the spectators' imaginations. (Farrell 34)

Assuming that the Renaissance in England had, as Keir Elam argues, an "intense linguistic consciousness" (2), scholars should recognize this awareness could, conceivably, register linguistic failure as well as success. Elam incisively notes the influence of such a consciousness on the "linguistic make-up" of the Elizabethan drama, "not only in its rhetorical complexity but in its very concern with language in its manifold aspects." Yet Elam also attends to the "physical and behavioural context" (12) of theatrical language, and he recognizes that "The sphere of meaning is overtly extended beyond language as such" (114) in Shakespeare's comedies. For his part, John Russel Brown argues that "Shakespeare's verbal art is, in fact, a trap; it can prevent us from inquiring further" (1). I believe that a similar care and caution with respect to the verbal dimension must be exercised in the Renaissance plays by

Beaumont and Fletcher, Chapman, Daniel, Ford, Kyd, Tourneur, and Webster that I shall consider. An appreciation of "linguistic consciousness" involves attending to what happens without words, not just with them. To this end, my focus is on the "bodily figures" of Renaissance drama; in my view, these compensate for inadequacies in its "verbal figures" (Elam 307).

This study considers the signifying capability of the body in cases where it is maddened, physically violated, and killed. It addresses the question of why so many Renaissance plays use what I shall call (for lack of a better term to denote its difference from the verbal) a "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence. If, indeed, as critics are wont to suggest, words were credited at the time with the power to alter the world—to "create, imitate, and ennoble ... falsify and deceive" (Giamatti 451), to be fought over and died for (Elam 115), the very presence of this register seems more telling than any word. In my reading of the plays, an alien verbal text is recited only to be re-sited by "non-verbal" means which disclose the alienated subject that it misrepresents. The representational power of the word is thus at issue within selected Renaissance dramatic worlds where the characters are as broken as the words they utter. My line of inquiry is born of addressing the question: "What figures?" about Renaissance plays where thoughts are as likely to be embodied as bodied forth in words, where words seldom hit the mark—being either inflated or deflated—where knowledge is disclosed (often with fatal results) in all of its limitations and where there are repeated attempts to access the other side of life (whether in the

hidden terms of the private side or of the deathly one) that is either unrepresented or misrepresented. The other side of life--the private as well as the maddened, the deathly and the violent--is explored to expose the other side of signification--the sentences which never get passed and which the subject never gets past lacking. I read the mortification of the body in such plays as a repudiation of the unfitting misrepresentations of Symbolic signification. In my estimation, the noteworthy component of revenge in Renaissance dramas stems from the subject's refusal of the frustration, thwarting, and loss produced by its entrance into the Symbolic order--a refusal, fundamentally, of alienation. The revenge component is not, as one might expect, the outcome of a life reacting to a death but rather, it is more precisely a revenge on life--death in reaction to an unliveable life and in response to its unresponsive terms. From within a psycho-semiotic perspective (and recognizing that theory always follows after practice), the plays I consider stage "the hazardous act of putting into play the disappearances of the symbolic ..." (Kristeva, *Revolution*: 226). They disclose the extent of the violence of Symbolic representation on the body. My reading of the Renaissance plays, like an analytic reading, is "the reading of a difference that inhabits language" (Felman 21), as disclosed both by what language does to and by what it fails to do for the subjects who use it.

Julia Kristeva and Jacques Lacan provide the psycho-semiotic theory on which I ground my readings. I also consider the psychoanalytic significance of the theatrical process on the contemporary spectator of the drama as it unfolds in the

"theatre" of his/her mind--the spectator's own experience of censored and indirect discourse, in plays where political relevance and topicality were often at a premium (as one of the most popular and notorious of Renaissance plays, *A Game at Chess*, attests). I hold that the political level can be reached through an appeal to the psychological experience of the subject--the experience of the spectator reflecting that presented by the staged protagonists. What Elizabeth Wright says of the postmodern effect in Brecht, I find is equally apt for the Renaissance plays that I consider. The effect is perceived, if not spoken, by the spectator in the heavily censored Renaissance society: "The spectator's own subjectivity is brought into question along with the representations on the stage; the desires of the body are to be reached so that it awakens to an understanding of its own socialization and the discovery of its political repression" (62). The gap experienced between the corporeal and the social makes the subject aware of "the limiting structures which have governed subjectivities so far" (80) as the alienated psychic identity disrupts the represented social identity.

Theatrically, the "non-verbal" semiotic register devalues the Symbolic one in a bodily performance that we might define as postmodern: it deconstructs ideological formations, it discloses the way in which subjective space is structured by erroneous symbolization, and it shows the way in which the psychic other is alienated by the social Other. Mitchell Greenberg concurs that theatre "holds up to view both the individual desires of the spectators and the societal Law that informs these desires and prohibits their fulfillment" (19). Harry Berger Jr., in "Psychoanalyzing the

Shakespeare text," articulates the approach that I have found fruitful for my study of other Renaissance dramas:

Shakespeare's text, then, is not the representation of drama *per se* but rather the representation of its construction *out of* the text's discourse of the Other and *against* that discourse--the representation and, in the positive sense, the critique of the self-concealing motivational conditions of embodiment. Insofar as theatrical performance is the ritual reinforcement of the drive to embodiment, its actualization in living bodies, it intensifies the defensive flight of drama from text, imposing itself on the contours of drama like a template that masks its underlying textuality.... To represent performed drama *as* a flight from text is to enrich it with the transcendent fringe of meanings, the signifying nothing conspicuously concealed by the sound and fury of the words, conspicuously frustrated by the splendors of embodiment. The fury, splendor, and frustration can be experienced together only in performance; we have to feel the presence and pressure of the theatrical template, submit to its fair designs, in order to measure both *its* power and the shadowy counterforce of the power it represses But the fury, splendor, frustration, and politics can only be understood and evaluated by the excavation that psychoanalyzes the text. (228-229)

Renaissance theatre gives rise to the critical spectator who registers the unbridgeable gap between what is lived, socially, and what is felt, psychically, as a sense of non-being. This gap is desire--what we now recognize as the Imaginary mediation between the Real and the Symbolic levels of being. The coercive Symbolic Other is deconstructed under the pressure of the desiring Imaginary other, whose bodily significations are metaphoric while the unfitting discourse of the Symbolic is only metonymic. The circulation of desire through the body-centered "non-verbal" semiotic register marks the body's attempt to cut through Symbolic constraints. This

circulation accounts for the "horrifying" qualities that critics conventionally perceive in the Renaissance plays that I consider. On the Renaissance stage, the lack in representation is disclosed in bodily figurations of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, each of which speaks an alienated and inaccessible psychological content. It is simplistic and dismissive to attribute the presence of madness and ghosts and death and violence on the Renaissance stage either to generic convention or to the spectator's appetite for extravagant, decadent and sensationalistic dramatic spectacle. Madness, ghosts, death and violence form a "non-verbal" semiotic register that discloses the primary instincts lost in symbolizations of the master discourse. The "non-verbal" register enables the playwright, as John Russel Brown asserts of Shakespeare in the tragedies, to "build theatrical intensity and revelation with the barest verbal material" (4).

Along the lines stated above, I shall read: *The Maids Tragedie*, *Philaſter* or, *Loue lies a Bleeding*, *Buſſy D'Ambois: A Tragedie*, *The Spanish Tragedie*, *The Tragedie of Philotas*, *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy*, *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore*, and *The Atheist's Tragedie: Or The honeſt Man's Reuenge*. Each of the readings builds on the prior one, moving from the deconstruction of stories or myths as dead ends to the violence of constructed identity and the subject's refusal of its misrepresentations as he or she strives to disclose the corporeal identity at odds with it—that is, the psychic other in tension with the social Other. In searching the corpus of Renaissance plays, I was mindful that the "non-verbal" semiotic register would be

best illustrated by choosing plays containing most, if not all, of the elements of madness, ghosts, death, and violence. These elements do tend to appear in isolation in most Renaissance plays: whether a farce, such as *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, dealing graphically with the abuse of language as abusive language that, in being broken, breaks in "Jo fearfull a fraye" (Prologue) the bodies at which and from which it is aimed until the breach is mended into a complex and uneasy whole; or whether a comedy, like *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, where "the pleasures of the world" (I.i) triumph only within the frame of "the strongest eternall le[t" (IV.i), creating a "Laborinth of intricate mi[d]doubts" (V.i) involving feigned madness and death to bend or break the will of characters too full of their social selves. I am interested in studying the intensified effect of the combination of madness, ghosts, death, and violence—which occurs mostly in tragedy—as best exemplifying my thesis. Even so, I seek not to favour one genre over others because as I see it, genres deal with the various interlinking facets of the same issue: the subject. Tragedy questions the possibility of a different identity for the subject—an identity differing from the social identity which comedy treats in its limitations and from which romance disengages as it engages the desire of the subject. Each comes down to the body—what it bares and what it is made to bear. I focus on the body with its corporeal and social identities as the site of a struggle between the social Other and the psychic other, played out in a "non-verbal" register that deconstructs the social impediments to the self's disclosure.

My readings will be part-driven (and consequently, brief plot summaries are included in the Appendix) because, as Graham Bradshaw reminds us: "it is worth remembering how Elizabethan actors were given parts and cues, not complete texts ..." (37). A prioritizing of the parts, in addition to being a fundamental way into the text, reflects the contemporary performance style--the mode of popular consumption of these works. Priorizing of the parts, leading to what must have been a relatively consistent rendition of the play for censorship purposes, would overcome the widely acknowledged constraints of the staging and performance when the company often produced a different play each day. A.R. Braunmuller, for instance, paints an illuminating picture of what the contemporary theatre was up against:

Given the theatre's insistent demand for new material and a repertory system that often saw three or more different plays performed in a single week, rehearsals and performances must often have been chaotic: a mad hurry simply to memorize or recall parts; actors drunk, absent, forgetful, on stage too soon or off too late; improvised lines and gestures to restore the play's general direction or to take advantage of some topical application or of some spectator in the audience. Playwrights often complained about how far a performance departed from the texts they had set down.... (57)

If departure from the set text was the order of the day under the circumstances of performance, the specifics of each play could, conceivably, be modified from performance to performance. I focus in my readings on the direction provided by key phrases and key concepts on which each play seems to be hinged. My assumption is that the players did the same. I submit that in anticipation of the theatrical conditions

with which they had to contend, the playwrights, too, highlighted key phrases and concepts that could, in practice, be interchangeable from character to character, based on a principle of repetition, reinforced by the doubling of players. Playwrights would structure their play as a reflection of the player's technique--assuming, as does David Wiles, that "The dramatist was ... obliged to write to the requirements of his actors" (42).

Far from being a reflection of the company's size limitations, doubling may be crucial to a full reception of the play and may, in fact, as Ralph Berry points out, be "a principle of organization" (3) of the play. Berry demonstrates that doubling possibilities "are coded into the text" (1). He selects *Hamlet* as "designed for productions in which actors appear and reappear in different guises hauntingly reminding the audience of what was said and expressed earlier in similar voices, other habits" thus, conceivably, reinforcing key terms by their repetition. Berry contends that doubling can illuminate "a hidden relationship" (8) or disclose "the underground logic" (13) of a play. Doubling serves to centralize the marginal and to marginalize the central as it brings such "underground" connections above board, so to speak. It can thus disclose "the underground identity of the part" (57)--what I read as the psychic other repressed by the social Other. However, I disagree with Berry's assertion that the "underground logic" of *Hamlet* "could not have been realized in the performances of Shakespeare's day" (13) because of repertory considerations, company limitations and the absence of a director. I hold that the playwright's liberal use of

key phrases and key concepts, when combined with player doubling, constitutes an in-built form of direction for the play that could not be lost on the audience.

Since, in my view, key phrases and key concepts are the building blocks of the play, I make them the building blocks of my readings--reading the text "in its own terms," as it were. I have used what I account for as either the earliest or the least controversial contemporary editions of the plays, retaining their old spellings (j=s, i=j, u=v, v=u) and using Act and scene references as the only given components for citation purposes. The contemporary editions of the plays, such as the ones that I have used, bear the traces of revisers, compositors, annotators, bookkeepers, and printers. Since I write with a view toward the texts in contemporary performance (ever mindful of the belatedness of their frequently faulty transcribing and printing in written texts), I do not wish to remain any more bound than the players themselves to the written text--concentrating my energies, as I assume they did, on key phrases and key concepts that point in a particular direction. Hence, I do not involve the assumptions, alterations, and collations of the play's modern editors. Where it is necessary to choose between editions, I make my own comparison/contrast and explain my choice, as the chapters on *The Maids Tragedie*, *Phila]ter*, and *The Spanish Tragedie* demonstrate.

ii

What is signified is not what is
to be signified. (Champigny 13)

Language is born of the loss of the unity of the maternal body and the fall into the system of the Symbolic father, signifying the splitting of the self and the recognition of Otherness which is "Indispensable for communicating with an other" (Kristeva, *Revolution*: 48). Subsequently, for the subject within it, "a fragmented body is an image essentially dismemberable from its body" (Lacan, *Seminar Bk. I*: 148). Renaissance theatre focuses unflinchingly and unsparingly on the fragmented body, anatomized as the abject embodiment of the subject. This theatre stages the violent issue of a misguided belief that language is everything. It does so by its valorization of those subjects who refuse to submit to lacking and groundless linguistic constructions of the self. These subjects are open "to taking on the variable, broken, fragmented, sometimes even unconstituted and regressive, images" (158) of themselves. Hence, madness, ghosts, death, and violence transgress and disrupt the Renaissance stage world by registering an unspeakable body of experience. The Renaissance stage exhibits the constructed subject, who renounces everything when it is impossible to pronounce anything. *The Tragedy of the Dytchesse of Malfy* is exemplary in revealing the fictionality of the constructed subject who is "caj'de-vp" (III.ii) more in life than ever in death and made into a subservient "creature" (I.ii)

without "leave to be honest in any phrase" (II.i) or to disclose its self in society's Symbolic terms.

The psycho-semiotic traditions of Lacan and Kristeva are central to my reading of Renaissance drama. (My summary of Lacan and Kristeva which follows and the summary of Foucault and Lacan on the subject of madness in section five, appear also in my article included in the bibliography.) According to Lacan, the formative and socially deterministic Symbolic order constructs the subject and defines the terms on which it speaks, means, and is. Passage through this order:

decisively tips the whole of human knowledge into mediatization through the desire of the other, constitutes its objects in an abstract equivalence by the co-operation of others, and turns the I into that apparatus for which every instinctual thrust constitutes a danger, even though it should correspond to a natural maturation – the very normalization of this maturation being henceforth dependent, in man, on a cultural mediation as exemplified, in the case of the sexual object, by the Oedipus Complex. (Lacan, *Écrits*: 5)

In Barry Cameron's astute summary of Lacanian theory: "The subject is defined by a linguistic structure that does not address in any direct way its being but that determines its entire social/cultural existence" (139). It is precisely this condition of being spoken rather than of being able to speak one's self that the protagonists of Renaissance plays find so unliveable. Lacan posits a dialectical mirror stage in which the infant moves from the fundamental Imaginary to the determining Symbolic order (from which the Real escapes and remains unknowable) by perceiving itself as an image. It thereby undergoes a split into perceiver and perceived. As Lacan observes,

"We aren't present, in the reflection; to see the reflection, we are in the consciousness of the other" (*Seminar Bk. 2*: 112). The unconscious is menacingly interposed between the subject and the Symbolic system as "a schism of the symbolic system, a limitation, an alienation induced by the symbolic system" (Lacan, *Seminar Bk. I*: 196). The alienated subject in this system never coincides with the gaze of its ego because "It is in the other that he will always rediscover his ideal ego, from whence develops the dialectic of his relations to the other" (282). Thus the coercive Symbolic eye is demeaned by the desiring Imaginary gaze in a way that demeans all voice.

Renaissance protagonists disclose as much when they seek out alternative, marginal, and even fatal experiences in a endeavour to access and to exercise the lacking side of the self that Symbolic signification does not address. In the unconscious, the subject is "caught by the letter of signifier without signification" (Vergote 214). Julia Kristeva sees "the bar between signifier and signified" in the Symbolic system as "the first social censorship" (*Revolution*: 63). Although the unconscious, having the structure of the signifier, speaks autonomously, signification must cross "the bar" to be accessible; it does so only by becoming metonymic instead of metaphoric, adhering to socially-mediated construction. Bryan Turner affirms, in his study of social theory, that "Language represents the authority of society over the unconscious" (20).

The unconscious is marked by a disjunction between the corporeal body and the social body that does not accommodate it. The formative split in the orders of consciousness is reinforced by the acquisition of language, which splits speaker and

spoken. The spoken cannot signify everything that the speaker desires to represent, but psychoanalytically and linguistically, language defines and determines a subject who never gets represented outside the differing terms of a dialectical signifying practice. The speaking subject is, thus, "a split subject -- divided between unconscious and conscious motivations, that is, between physiological processes and social constraints" (Roudiez 6). Within such a context, the two signifying modalities are the semiotic--with its unconscious psycho-somatic receptacle of drives and primary processes of the fragmented body's intra- and inter-connectiveness--and the Symbolic--with its constitutive and constrained system of intersubjective relations. The Symbolic is not installed without a sacrifice which has permanent implications for the subject, as Lacan explains: "the symbol manifests itself first of all as the murder of the thing, and this death constitutes in the subject the eternalization of his desire" (*Language*: 84). Renaissance plays excavate the tortured private domain as well as the torturing public one. These plays show that the private realm of the body is always rudely invaded by public imperatives that do not answer to it.

Kristeva observes the potentially radical consequences of the instinctual lack in the Symbolic:

... we shall have to represent the semiotic ... as a 'second' return of instinctual functioning within the symbolic, as a negativity introduced into the symbolic order, and as the transgression of that order. (*Revolution*: 69)

She designates as "abjection" the potentially disruptive force of unconscious content when the linguistic is insufficient to mediate the libidinal. Madness, ghosts, death, and violence can be seen to "abject" the Renaissance stage in a way that solicits the spectator to recognize his/her own abject nature within the obtaining Symbolic milieu. Even "the [sweetest words]" (*The Maids Tragedie*, II.i) framed in such a milieu prove ineffectual lies as "A few fine words haue ouerthrowne my truth" (IV.i).

The Kristevan semiotic designates bodily, primal, instinctive, unconscious, and unsymbolizable communications which cross the Symbolic. Kristeva relates the semiotic, whose influx "remodels the symbolic order" (*Revolution*: 62) to "abjection": an impossible revolt "Within the being of language" (Kristeva, *Powers*: 45) incited by "recognition of the *want* on which any being, meaning, language, or desire is founded" (5), and which is encountered "as soon as the symbolic and/or social dimension of man is constituted ..." (68). Philotas, for one, is abject nature in an unforgiving Symbolic milieu. He shares the plight of all subjects who, in becoming socialized and politicized, "*haue los[t deeply by our gaine*" because "*our greatnes makes vs much the les[s]*" (V.i) in human terms. The abject recognizes the "structural violence of language's irruption as the murder of soma, the transformation of the body, the captation of drives" (Kristeva, *Revolution*: 75) as "an Other has settled in place and stead of what will be 'me'" (Kristeva, *Powers*: 10)—an Other that is, unbearably, "indispensable for communicating with an other" (*Revolution*: 48). Abjection is freedom from the prison-house of social censorship. Kristeva maintains that for

society to exist, subjects must participate in a law over which they have no control; but she sees the unconscious as potentially disruptive of the Symbolic through abjection. This is oppositional and challenging, as it "disturbs identity, system, order" (*Powers*: 4) in a bid to raise what is seen as a radical subjectivity from the ruins of social constructions. Kristeva defines the symptom of abjection as "the rejection and reconstruction of languages" (45), so that the social body is marginalized out of the bounds of the physical body which refuses it. The currency of abjection is those things which the constructed subject must impossibly reject, refuse and forfeit. It is usually associated with bodily experience "beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable" (1). Abjection is Kristeva's designation for what is refused: out of the bounds of the social body because, unsanitized, it pours out of the bounds of the physical body. It is a "mechanism of subjectivity" (208) insofar as it situates the collapse of meaning under the pressure of what is "radically excluded" (2) from social constructions. Renaissance drama, at its best, plays with such excluded content. The drama repeatedly pursues Tamburlaine's "One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the leaft, / Which into words no uertue can digeft" (Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, Pt. 1: V.ii). Like its quintessential protagonist, the drama redefines the dictionary, rewrites the annals and redraws the map so that center and margin are inverted to disclose those "Regions which I meane to trace" (IV.v) in the landscape of the mind and the heart and the body that would otherwise remain uncharted.

In his study of subjection, Francis Barker contends that:

The split subject is designed at an abject inner distance from itself and from the ambivalent, supplementary body which has been exiled, in one of its aspects, from the interior consistency of the subject's discourse to a ghostly, insubstantial place at the margins, and in its other phase, to a location outside discourse as one amongst its objects in the world. (67)

Renaissance theatre stages the misrepresentation resulting from the subject's experiential split, in order "to signify what is untenable in the symbolic, nominal, paternal function" (Kristeva, *Desire*: 138). The "untenable" content manifests as an imaginatively-induced darkness on the Renaissance day-lit public stage, tapping into the subject's inner inaccessible darkness and inspired by the dark content of the "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence. It is an imaginatively-constructed darkness which transgresses Symbolic constructions by emphasizing the unspeakable, deadened, and inaccessible experiential content of the subject. *The Maids Tragedie* provides an apt illustration of this creative use of darkness on the Renaissance stage. In the play, the wronged story is righted by the prominence of reconsiderations, revisions, reinterpretations, and redefinitions that center on darkness, so that its entire action is tantamount to a counteraction. Conventionally lacking representations are reframed by the subversive structure of the play, which emphasizes its antimasque and night-time associations. These constitute an alternative vision that enables an alternative reading. Thus, the play can "appeare another" (III.i) in order to "trie [the subject's] truth" (II.i) and so to effect a "misbeleefe of all the world" (IV.i). *The Maids Tragedie* discloses that there is more than one story to tell and that the

actual one is not in circulation. The story of the night rivals the story of the day and impugns the conventional governing of the subject's body. The night discloses the non-disclosure that enables the day—by implication, the non-disclosure of the Imaginary that enables Symbolic signification.

Beaumont and Fletcher draw the spectator's attention to what is hidden behind the presenting circumstance of their play; they show that a whole other version is apparent by the dark of night. Their antimasque exposes the night that redefines the day as it "doe[st] awake [something that troubles]" (V.i) the subject and which ordinarily gets repressed. The spectator sees in the play of night what is forbidden in the play of day and threatens to disrupt the story that it would tell. The distinction between night and day in the play parallels the Lacanian distinction between the Imaginary and the Symbolic. Beaumont and Fletcher make "another world" (III.i) of night to counteract the violence that the world of day enforces in the name of the Law.

Eros is associated with the night in Renaissance drama. Robert Knapp, in his analysis of Shakespeare, aptly maintains that: "eros wishes to free the flesh from the power of the symbolic, from discipline, from representation ..." (138). According to Knapp:

At the one pole (the symbolic), we actively write on a passive, neutral medium -- a page, a set of minds and feelings, a pacified people; at the other (the semiotic), we are secretly written -- by the rhythms and transferences of unconscious life; biological, psychological, and social, and by illicit cross talk within any medium whatever. (130)

Renaissance theatre continually depicts the disruptive force of desire and passion--the private language of the heart--for which social terms are empty. A case in point is *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore*, where an affair of the heart cancels any possibility of an affair with the word. The subject is compelled to speak precisely that which cannot and must not be spoken: to give voice to an experience for which it has not been given a voice. Instinctual drives serve to speak the unspeakable experiential content. Renaissance theatre shows how the body of language disembodies the corporeal body and leaves its thoughts unbodied--as exiled or ghostly presences bearing unrecognized traces and clues of a lack. This theatre posits the physical body as a haunting reminder of everything that is "thrust aside in order to live" (3) and it affords the subject who "is nothing" (Kristeva, *Strangers*: 19) in social terms, the ability to "sacrifice everything."

'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore excavates how much is "thrust aside." The play stages what Frances Mascia-Lees and Patricia Sharpe, with reference to the body in culture and text, term "the contest over the right to define the body's meaning" (5). Ford's locus for this particular contest is Annabella's body--a feminine site of masculine imaginary projection--which pits the non-conforming body against the masculine institutions, which envelop it in place of the maternal womb. Ford plays with the breakdown of the social structuring of the subject in order to disclose the corporeal body as being socially subjected to interdiction and prohibition. Because of such "censoring," the social body does not fit the human body, which it buries under

restrictions that drain it of life, rendering subjects "Traytours to [their] owne delights" (V.i). The real disguised identity in Ford's play is social identity--the "borrowed [h]ape" (II.i)--which conceals the life of the body because its maintenance requires counterfeiting. For example, the "covert" hidden lives of Soranzo, Hippolita, and Richardetto redefine them as possessing drives outside of social identity. These characters are the opposite of what deceptive language would construct them to be.

'Tis Pitry Shee's a Whore foregrounds the prohibited other story instead of the socially sanctioned one--what "I durft not [s]ay" nor "[s]carce[ly] thinke" (I.i). Ford is concerned less with what happens between the self and other subjects than with happenings within the subject itself. In his play, the social Other loses out to the psychic other which, from a social perspective, is deemed mad. Incest represents the primary anti-social rebellion which refuses acquired social identity. Ford uses incest and its issue in motherhood for Annabella to mark the state prior to the fall into signification--the nature underlying the culture. It is the repression of instinctual drive and of enduring relation to the mother that enables language as a Symbolic function. Insofar as Annabella's child is unborn, she disrupts the system which she and Giovanni find unliveable. Ford thus stages the breakdown of signification to convey an instinctually enacted knowledge that contradicts mere words. His play is body-centered, not word-controlled, in order to show that the real "barre twixt you and her" (II.i) is a linguistic one.

In *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore*, Ford decodes the codes of love in favour of enacting passion to the very heart. Physical language for him counterpoints the inadequacy of Symbolic language and liberates the meaning that it cancels. Ford fills the word with the body to flesh out the subjects' "*uncompleted narratives*" (Bersani 29)—censored, prohibited, and impossible to enact socially but, nevertheless, necessary to life. Silence and death are more pregnant than the word in Ford's play—the word which can conceive of nothing and only deceives. The play makes clear that what is trapped in the heart is non-existent in the dominant discourse, because the heart is not touched by "vayne and v[e]le]f[e] speech" (V.i).

These abject subjects in Renaissance drama who are not living by law, are not permitted by the Law of the Father (King) to live and cannot speak their knowledge to justify themselves because language does not do them justice. For example, Philotas cannot "iu]stifie the speech" (II.iii) that is not his own to begin with, and Hieronimo, in *The Spanish Tragedie*, employs "vnknowne languages" (IV.i) in his playlet to make the point that all language is fundamentally alien. The defiance of such characters is registered in the "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, and so bears out Peter Lloyd's observation that in the Renaissance: "The play-going public became fascinated by outrageous characters bent on self-gratification" (2). Central to the Renaissance stage were characters who would, as Richard Stamelman says of modern French poetry, "speak that which cannot be

spoken," who would "imagine that which no image can fully convey," and who would "experience that which no word can completely express" (218).

But when the subject serves out a sentence on its own terms, it is invariably a death sentence for its "unbecoming" discourse. The resulting corruption "is the socialized appearance of the abject" (Kristeva, *Powers*: 16). The subject is arrested for attempting to live on its own terms: facing a choice of either prison or misprision unless, under the impetus of abjection, it "emerges out of its jail" (47). *Phila[ster Or, Loue lies a Bleeding*, stages the effect of subjects who are no longer "re]olu'd to be rul'd" (I.i); it shows an unsettled political state reflected in an unsettled state of being. The play tries the constitutionality of its embodiments--publicizing a miserable life to test the limits of its acceptability while facilitating experimentation.

There is a psycho-social subtext within the political pretext of *Phila[ster*, and its marginalized story of desire usurps the main story of usurpation. Beaumont and Fletcher wring an unconventional twist on a conventional story because the conventionalities that one is "bound to vtter" (III.i) do not address unconventional experience which would "out-doe [tory" (II.i). *Phila[ster* displays unconventional methods devised "To hold intelligence" (I.i) when the conventional one fails. Rival stories disclaim the erroneous politically-imposed imperatives. As the main story of political usurpation shifts to the marginalized one of desire, there is a parallel shift from a register of falsehood and misrepresentation, keeping misleading characterizations in circulation, to a corrective "non-verbal" one capable of disclosing

actual character because "apt to ſpeake, / What you are loth to heare." The body in *Philaſter* is instrumental in the most fundamental and vital of communications because its natural constitution is based on what the political one censors; its "language they / Are borne in" (II.i) confounds politically coercive language. In Beaumont and Fletcher's play the medium, not the message, is put on trial. Verbally, nobody in their play understands anybody. Words alone never reach the heart of the matter; they say nothing and effect the downfall of everything. It is only when the word becomes the sword--involving the body and the heart--that the point can be made and taken.

In the Renaissance, psycho-social awareness of the subject coincided with the contemporary mode of religio-political interrogation, problematization, and challenge, contesting the age's absolutes. Social stability was disclosed, on its stage, to be founded on the suppression of other subject positions and sites of knowledge. These the stage recuperated by soliciting the desiring gaze into an awareness of the lack that is suppressed. Bryan Turner contends that:

The role of culture is to impose on the individual the collective representations of the group and to restrain passions by collective obligations and social involvements. (21)

The Renaissance stage presents the transgression of these "collective representations" under the pressure of unrestrained passion; subjects that society seeks to ignore are disclosed in its texts as part of its deconstruction of the dominant ideologically-laden discourse. On this stage, characters make differences to convey difference. When not

challenging claims, the characters claim challenges. As a result, the spectator sees rival characters put into play rival stories which rival those in everyday circulation.

The only recourse for the self subjected by an already constituted signifying practice is to divest of Symbolic status by disclaiming and demeaning the significance that he/she is made to bear. Part of the resulting challenge to the dominant discourse is a privileging of what is learned *from* the heart not *by* the heart, and of actions--often violent--which answer to errant words. Renaissance theatre, with its "misfits," demonstrates the risk, indeed the fatality, of words whose representations are cryptic and grave. It implicates and impugns the governing of the subject's body. Having no identifiable self apart from that endowed by language, "The subject doesn't know what he is saying ... because he doesn't know what he is" (Lacan, *Seminar Bk. 2*: 244). The possibility of a definitive subject is blocked by the constructed subject who is mired in the delimiting ways of the world and its terms of signification. For instance, *The Tragedie of Philotas* discloses how the subject betrays its self--makes "[it] [*elfe le*][*e*" (Li)--in order to live in the dominant order. The main characters in *The Tragedy of the Dytchesse of Malfy* each show the fatal effects of the system that governs the subject without addressing either its body or its humanity.

iii

If the once-full body is so often
 presented as a shattered wreckage of disarticulated fragments,
 it is because the disintegration of this world
 and its significations is already upon it. (Barker 41)

Renaissance plays stage the breakdown of signification in a Symbolic system that is seen to be semiotically lacking. On the stage, the inaccessible inner experience is semiotized through a body language that amounts to the indirect discourse of mad, ghostly, violent, silent, dead, or gesticulating bodies. The player's body can discourse indirectly by drawing attention to the lack and error in utterance and by things left unsaid or said out of turn. John Russel Brown argues that physical language can strike the most responsive chord in an audience:

Had Shakespeare been content to communicate by words, the actor's speaking of them and his movements in sympathy with them, he would have cut off one of two hands. He would have lost the wholly physical language which is the chief means of expression in primitive theatres and has been at the service of dramatists every time an actor steps on to a stage; he would have ignored traditions of visual excitement that ... were strong in Elizabethan theatre. His means of expression would have lost something of its power, for physical movement is a language to which an audience responds before it can be aware of doing so.... Moreover gesture and movement form an instinctive language and are therefore capable of showing many of the psychological, physical or sociological realities that lie behind, and not infrequently enrich or deny, the more conscious interchanges of speech. (33)

The body on stage appeals to the spectator's body in an experience not contained by the word.

Since the body of the player is the intermediary between the written and the performance text, it is the evidence of the inner life--the senses and the desires--of that body, as registered on the pulse of the spectator, that can demystify, transgress, and captivate the most. This inner life may be forbidden and censored by the Law of the monarch and of the Father. The repressed content of the written text can be recuperated on the stage, as Johannes Birringer hints:

Theatre begins to work when it can trace and retrace the desire of its language to speak, to appear, to show, and to *think through* its elusive, vanishing, yet 'breath taking' appearances in that space.... It yields moments, under pressure, that may bring back to consciousness what has been repressed.... (81-82)

In this conceptualization, what is staged is not the self but the Other; it is by what the spectator experiences the Other to exclude, that the play reveals the construction and the fictionality of the subject. The subject is perceived, in the words of Herbert Blau, to be spoken by "an invisible presence in our speech whose voice is not, so to speak, speaking on our behalf" (78). The stage, thus, puts into play the false character in which the subject must find a voice. Madness, ghosts, death, and violence provide a code by which to access the other who refuses to be Othered with an unfitting social identity. In this way, the stage is a particularly potent locus for disclosing the

disjunction of the self, as Barbara Freedman suggests in tracing the psychoanalytic significance of the theatrical process:

The appeal of theater ... depends upon an uncanny awareness of a fundamental loss in relation to the mirror image through which subjectivity is procured. (56)

Our apprehension of the loss and desire
 inscribed in theater's alternating play
 with presence and absence,
 repression and representation,
 points to the value of theater
 as a way of knowing. (Freedman 56)

Theatre and psychoanalysis, alike, traffic in censorship and the indirect discourse of double-meaning. Robert Knapp comments on how Shakespeare's tragic heroes manifest latent content:

... Shakespeare's tragic heroes choose rather to be what they are, by their wholehearted actions acknowledging and bringing into theatrical view a being that would otherwise remain latent and obscure. (226-227)

The Renaissance stage can be considered to manifest latent content through the device of the "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, disclosing the subject's other experience that refuses social Othering. There is a certain resistance to such sensitive content betrayed by both political and psycho-social censorship--the external and the internal limits of censorship, as Francis Barker points out:

While censorship is a state function, an exterior apparatus of control, in so far as the domain it polices is the production,

circulation and exchange of discourses, it is one that reaches into the subject itself. (52)

The "non-verbal" register permits the subject to "act out" when he/she cannot speak without being spoken--when there are no words in the language of the Other for what he/she desires to say.

Psychoanalysis detaches the signifier and signified from significations enslaving the subject. Like abjection, it presumes censorship of the unconscious by the conscious, of the id by the superego, and of the Imaginary by the Symbolic. But the abjected attempts to resist censorship by refuting the order of the word: the Symbolic order that imposes "internal limits to what can be said" (Lacan, *Seminar Bk. I*: 269). Characters in Renaissance theatre disclose the lack in representation resulting from both internal psycho-social, and external religio-political, censorship by signifying the desire for language, not only as an alienated subject in the symbolic order, but as a subject of court censorship. Given these internal and external limits to utterance, there is no true speech because there is no free speech.

Both psychologically and politically, censorship stipulates, as Lacan maintains, that "Nothing is more to be feared than saying something that might be true" (*Écrits*: 253). This fear means, he maintains, that "The subject invited to speak in analysis does not really reveal a great deal of freedom in what he says.... a full speech ... is painful to him." The discomfort of psycho-social censorship is reinforced by religio-political censorship; the performance text of the theatre, like the dream text,

must "overcome the inhibition from the censorship" (Freud 165). Both the theatre and the dream employ "indirect representation" (88) in response to censorship restrictions. Patrice Pavis has maintained that "stage representation ... is comparable to dream representation" (31-32). Theatre, insofar as transference is indirect discourse and dreams are indirect representation, functions as an objective correlative of psychic life: the other side of the mirror that relates the Real with the Imaginary. This specular order is, according to Lacan, "The fundamental, central structure of our experience" (*Seminar Bk. 2*: 37). Lacan explains that: "the real is obviously right here, on this side of the mirror. But what is beyond it? First of all, there is ... the primitive imaginary of the specular dialectic with the other" (*Seminar Bk. 1*: 148). Renaissance theatre installs itself in the specular gap, reflecting no one living. Its bodies and properties signify what cannot be represented in the available register: the content is abjected and out-of-bounds and, as Franco Moretti notes: "in order for the repressed psychical contents to reoccupy the stage, they must put on a 'mask', or more exactly take on a 'form' different from their original ..." (35).

Renaissance theatre is theatre of unspeakable experience, with its pervasive "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, facilitating the accessibility of the other on the Renaissance stage. It posits an unconventionally identified subject: a disfigured subject unable and unwilling to live life "in character." In seeing the utter lack in convention, the spectator is in a position to recognize how

much convention excludes (generically and subjectively) and to witness the surpassing of it in the protagonist's alternative, marginal, or even fatal experiences.

To Lacan's question: "Will we manage to escape unscathed from the symbolic game in which the real misdeed pays the price of imaginary temptation?" (*Écrits*: 143), Renaissance theatre, with its "non-verbal" repertoire of "perversity," answers with a resounding "NO." This negation leaves nothing in its wake of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, but "the Jacobean spectacle of the full body *in extremis*" (Barker 73), manifesting the murderous impulses of the Symbolic order that kills to signify. Even the restorative and recuperative impulse of contemporary humanism partook of such violence, as Thomas Greene asserts: "At the core of humanism lies this instinct to reach out into chaos, oblivion, mystery, the alien, the subterranean, the dead, even the demonic ..." (235). Perhaps it is only the truth of such horror that is able to cut through the lie of all else. For the spectator of Renaissance drama, the pleasure is in having his/her alienation recognized as constructed presences are absented in the onslaught of madness, ghosts, death, and violence. The Renaissance playhouse stages, fundamentally, the drama of nothing becoming everything.

v

In the Renaissance, madness was present everywhere
and mingled with every experience by its images
or its dangers. (Foucault, *Madness*: 70)

The Renaissance stage insists on incorporating the margins both in terms of its physical location (in the "liberties") and in terms of its content. In Jacobean times, particularly, the content was often what might conventionally be considered aberrant:

The Jacobean stage was, and remains, distinguished by unusual abnormality, extravagance, and bombastic utterance; its average temper, figuratively speaking, was not a great deal short of madness.... (Reed 1)

It is revealing to inquire into the usefulness of this spectacle of madness and into the function of madness itself as a theatrical convention. Robert Weimann offers an important clue by suggesting that madness can provide one of the "indeterminate vehicles of unsanctioned significations" (502), thereby constituting "a theatrical code that can disrupt certain Elizabethan meanings of justice and authority." According to Weimann, who sets *Troilus and Cressida* and *King Lear* as his point of reference:

... the dominant political, religious, and juridicial discourses of authority were interrogated on this stage as nowhere else in late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth-century England.... in this half-licensed place the mimesis of madness and blindness could be used to shed the assumptions of identity and rank and to challenge the dominant discourses articulating (or silencing)

contemporary practices of courtship, vagrancy, class, and power. (502-503)

Madness achieves the end of the world as it is known; it negates dependence on the social order to reach something other than that order provides. Michael MacDonald notes the potential social consequences of such a rejection: "behavior that threatened to destroy the relationships and objects that defined a person's social identity was gravely irrational" (131). The mad character speaks the self on its own terms, as it were, without the madness of fictional symbolic mediation that relates only to the social body at the expense of the corporeal body. Madness thereby discloses the effects of a breakdown of social identity; it figures the lack and the loss entailed in the subject's relation to society and by the subject's assumption of social identity. This figuring renders madness "an absurd agitation in society ..." (Foucault, *Madness*: 37).

John Webster, in *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy*, stages within the Duchess's alienating family context the larger "signs of alienation from the fundamental values of ... society" (MacDonald 165). Webster explores the possibility of the subject's disclosing its self from within a system that serves only to betray it, as the Duchess's corrupt brothers do to her and to everybody, including themselves. In Webster's play, language is a "fix'd Order" (I.i) no less than is the social hierarchy, and the subject is a "creature" (I.ii) of both. Language and the social hierarchy are shown to be equally destructive of "inward Character" since neither allows the subject

"leau[e] to be hone[st] in any phra[se]" (II.i). Webster explores the social and the linguistic impediments to the self's disclosure that make "outward forme" incongruent with the "in-[i]de" of the subject; on these terms, there is merely "mi[s]pri[si]on" (V.iv) in circulation, and it is only in death that the subject is fully and finally able to "appeare [its] [i]elfe." His recourse to death is Webster's way of showing that social stability is founded on the suppression of other sites of knowledge and other subject positions. Those who break with the system--like the Duchess and Antonio and, ultimately, Julia, Bosola, and Ferdinand, who forsake power--are not permitted to survive any more than are those within it, who are "A deal of life in [i]hew, but none in practi[se]" (IV.ii).

Webster's play, like each of the Renaissance plays considered in this study, is horrifying in its excavation of the secrets released by the "graue" of the "Bo[dy]" (V.ii) no less than by the grave of the corpse. However, it is not words that disclose the secret. Since words are not credible in the world that Webster constructs, he stages a corporeal release of what the subject lacks a voice to say--one example of which is the Duchess's pregnancy that makes her body speak and affords her more real power than she could ever possess in the body politic. The Duchess and Antonio, as well as Julia, Bosola, and Ferdinand, show the fatal effects of the system that governs the subject without addressing its body. The subject is shown to be different corporeally than it is socially. Webster illustrates that corporeal identity is glimpsed only through the ruin of social identity, because the body truly comes alive only when it is socially degraded. In *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy*, Webster stages the

personal price and the social effect of the subject's rejection of acquired social identity.

In keeping with his rebellious character of the Duchess, Webster apparently sought to break with the established norms that were insufficient for his purposes. Violence, madness, and death provide him with a visceral means to signify the extreme plight of the violated and unfitted characters that he presents. The social degradation, with its corresponding corporeal restoration, is presented in the state of madness--liberating Ferdinand, for example, from the social body that has alienated his corporeal body. Webster in this way enables the spectator to see what the social order will not reveal. His grand finale grounds Webster's audience together with his characters.

Madness was a popular curiosity in Renaissance society, and its perceived danger lay in its very appeal to the Imaginary which discloses "the threats and secrets of the world" (Foucault, *Madness*: 24). Madness stages the nothingness within, effected by the nothingness without and "it is nothing until it is fleshed out with interpretation" (Doob 49). In signifying nothing and lending itself to a plethora of interpretations, madness is a subversive threat to both political and social censorship.

Madness is particularly appropriate as a theatrical convention dependent on imaginatively constructed darkness in the day-lit public playhouse. A day at the Renaissance public playhouse could be overcast by the painted stars of a night-time heaven beneath which canopy was staged the spectrum of human desire bringing to

light the darkest inner recesses of human experience. *The Moids Tragedie*, we recall, is about characters who must "inuent the forme" (II.i) of their story which "keeps night here" (V.i), allowing them a voice. Michel Foucault, in fact, describes madness as "joining to the figures of night the powers of day, to the forms of fantasy the activity of the waking mind; it links the dark content with the forms of light" (*Madness*: 106). From this perspective, the theatrical convention of madness prioritizes Imaginary dark content over real light content, to comment on the darkness within the world of the body which is brought to light and recognized only by extraordinary means. Madness "lets the light be darkened" (Foucault, *Madness*: 111) to disclose what would otherwise be lost, and to reflect the truth of the subject's experience.

Madness valorizes the corporeal body with its drives and desires and senses, over the constructed and fictional social body; it gives precedence to the Imaginary which social identity rejects because madness, in the words of Foucault, "consists merely in allowing the image a spontaneous value, total and absolute truth" (*Madness*: 94). As Lacan defines it, "A madman is precisely someone who adheres to the imaginary, purely and simply" (*Seminar Bk. 2*: 243). Lacan finds in madness "the negative freedom of speech that has given up trying to make itself recognized" (*Écrits*: 68) and "the singular formation of a delusion which ... objectifies the subject in a language without dialectic (69)." The mad character becomes the other that the Other rejects, suppresses and censors, because he "constitutes madness in the attachment he bears for himself and by the illusions he entertains" (Foucault, *Madness*: 26). Foucault

defines madness as having "the simple structure of a discourse" which discourse he elaborates as "both the silent language by which the mind speaks to itself in the truth proper to it, and the visible articulation in the movements of the body.... a discourse which liberated passion from all its limits, and adhered with all the constraining weight of its affirmation to the image which was liberating itself" (100). The mad character gives free play to the passions which the social body restricts. Madness transgresses and alienates the social body because it refuses that body's alienation of the corporeal body; the mad become other when they will not be Othered with a social identity. Madness is, as Foucault notes: "the paradoxical manifestation of non-being" (*Madness*: 115).

The mad character is the ghost of a presence which refuses to settle for an imposed absence. Both the mad and the ghostly figure are radically other and unknowable. *The Spanish Tragedie* employs both, as Hieronimo foresees that "the end is death and madne[[e]" (III.i). The ghost reinforces the alienating sense of non-being associated with the mad figure.

vi

The ghost makes easy and intense a kind of psychic
 thrust and counterthrust that connects inner states
 of feeling--desire, fear, hatred--with
 movement and change in the external world, the
 transformation, essential to drama, of activity
 into action. (Goldman 28)

The ghosts haunting the Renaissance stage connect life with death and serve as a reminder of the death in the social subject which has lost and is lacking. Elisabeth Bronfen alludes to "the ghost hovering in a liminal zone, neither living nor dead, neither absent nor present, staging a duplicitous presence, at once sign of an absence and of an inaccessible other scene, of a beyond" (116). So Bussy D'Ambois, in his fight to secure the lacking side of the self, becomes for his single-minded detractors "your Ghost to haunt you" (I.i) with the potential hidden life that they have forsaken. The disembodied ghost stages the impossibility of being embodied as a subject whose representation is purchased at the cost of difference. It figures "the ghosts of the alternative stories" (Sinfield 21) that society is "trying to repress" in its own story. The ghost makes present what cannot be presently seen, by staging the scene of the return of a hidden life.

The disengaged and disembodied body which is the ghost constructs an environment rather than being a construct of it; it constructs an environment presided over by loss and lack and nothing, where these effects are disclosed to circulate as a function of the social identity which constructs and reinforces them. The ghost figures the "invisible truth" and the "visible secret" (Foucault, *Birth*: 172) of death. The ghost is, according to Kristeva, "a symbolic formation beyond the mirror" (*Tales*: 35). Being of the other side, the unrepresentable ghost signals the unfulfilled potential, as Holderness, Potter, and Turner argue, with reference to *Macbeth*:

... the Ghost is subversive because it embodies what we mean when we say of ourselves 'I was beside myself', 'I don't know what came over me', 'I was out of my mind', 'I was a man possessed'. It is an erinnic image of the passion that lies on the far side of taboo and that returns to haunt us when we say 'I could not lie easy in my grave unless - '. It cannot be placed, it cannot be measured, it cannot be integrated, it cannot even be named ... for the return of the repressed does not announce itself with a visiting card. (56-57)

Ghosts disclose that of the past which remains alive because it has not been completely killed. A ghost can return to agitate with its unreal experience, as does the ghost of Andrea.

There are many ghosts that agitate in *The Spanish Tragedie*, appearing more alive than the living. Thomas Kyd's play is three plays in one, each of which presents a "liuely forme of death" (III.i); the play itself consists of a framing play, initiated for a vengeful ghost mistrustful of its execution, which contains, in turn, a play by a madman that is all execution. A ghost frames Kyd's play to signify the

framing of all living subjects who are constructed in a way that deadens their most significant experiences. *The Spanish Tragedie* thus stages the deadening effects of life; it demonstrates how the soul is unsettled not only in death but also in life by being denied the terms of its fulfilment--its own terms. The spectator sees that neither Bel-imperia nor Hieronimo can love or live on Balthazar's terms--the established ones --because his terms require the burying of a part of the self. Kyd counterpoints the "reflex passions" of Bel-imperia and Hieronimo with those suppressed ones that the establishment--as represented by Balthazar and Lorenzo--manages to "thwart." *The Spanish Tragedie*, through Hieronimo's playlet, brings Kyd's characters from being only the ghost of a presence to the attainment of the presence itself, as each is ultimately reclaimed in Andrea's framing play. Hence, *The Spanish Tragedie* stages the return to an intact and unmediated state by subjects who cannot function within the obtaining partial and political terms. The real hell in Kyd's play is the preserve not of the dead but of the deadened who live. The nightmare left in the wake of the play is that the subject's dreams are grounded upon his/her rude awakening to an unfitting and an unliveable Symbolic "reality."

The staged characters in the plays of Andrea and of Hieronimo mean not to live, but to die; the state of death is where their meaning, and Kyd's meaning, lies. Death discloses all in *The Spanish Tragedie* precisely because meaning lies with the dead body and not with the feeble words that would embody it. The corpses littering the stage represent, ironically, everything that has been absent from the life of the

body encumbered by a deadening language. Language is disclosed by Kyd to be "the author of thy death" (I.i). He demonstrates that words violate thoughts instead of holding thoughts, because words are inevitably and invariably unrepresentative.

Hieronimo rejects the counterproductive word, and his production undercuts the word to put false subjects and false words in their proper place. Hieronimo feels pressured to give voice to a passion for which he has not been given a voice; Lorenzo physically restrains him from the King's presence to render him inexpressive. Even Hieronimo's "moſt diſtrefull wordes" (III.i) cannot accommodate his woe, and so he resorts to a display of the thing itself.

Much of the destructiveness in *The Spanish Tragedie* stems from utterance being incommensurate with experience. Hieronimo searches for an alternative means of communication in painting and, finally, in performing, because representation by word misses the point. The characters in Kyd's play are constrained to give "notice in ſome ſecret ſort" (II.i) because their experience is secret--unstatable, unsharable and, ultimately, unliveable. Hieronimo's recourse is to renounce when he is disabled from pronouncing. The violations and offences against Hieronimo serve to erode all conventional claims upon him. Hieronimo does not respond politically or diplomatically and so he can be understood in no conventional way; thus Kyd insists that his spectator reconsider conventional interpretations.

Kyd's introduction of the element of madness--after the ghostly presence, death, and violence--serves to solicit the spectator to reconsider the conventional

perspective. Hieronimo's madness discloses a reality refused by his society: a reality of the subject's irremediable violation by society. Hieronimo dies to escape subjection to the violence and to translate the impulses of his violated psyche. His final truth is that the social subject is a dead subject--a "dying Jelfe" (III.i) which lacks a living means of representation.

Hieronimo stages, in effect, the psychic other in opposition to the social Other because he recognizes--on behalf of the spectator--that what is conventionally staged is not the self but the Other: a fictional mock-up of the subject as it is spoken by a foreign speech. Hence, the sundry languages in his playlet betray linguistic constructions as lacking and uncommunicative. Hieronimo does not settle for speaking words not his own--words that are foreign and unknown. His corporeal spectacle undercuts the word by silently answering to everything.

vii

Reading the corpse is meant to guarantee
the possibility of true signification. (Bronfen 84)

Lacan says that "Life is concerned solely with dying ..." (*Seminar Bk. 2*: 233). In *The Spanish Tragedie*, Kyd inverts the stages of life and death to stage a "liuely forme of death" (III.i) and to comment on the deadening effects of life. Nuntius, in *Bully D'Ambois*, notes that "life and death in all respects are one" (II.i), and Tamyra finds herself in a dilemma where she "cannot liue / Vnless I compa[[e that that holds my death." Death merely figures the non-existence of the subject: makes present its absence in a Symbolic order that kills to signify. Death absents experience as does the censored and unrepresentative dominant Symbolic order. Elisabeth Bronfen argues that "representations of death refer to the absence of full meaning by signalling the presence of meaning elsewhere" (85). It is precisely this "signalling" which makes death so productive on the Renaissance stage.

Renaissance plays illustrate that death is neither unspeakable nor silent and they insistently disable their audience from being dead to its significance. The character who dies discloses that one always speaks for nothing in a dead-end language. Death is "a signifier of lack which itself lacks a fixed signified in the symbolic register ..." (Bronfen 72); it is "the limit of language, disrupting our sign system and image repertoire. Signifying nothing ..." (54). But meaning lies with the

dead body. Foucault calls death "the great analyst that shows the connections by unfolding them, and bursts open the wonders of genesis in the rigour of composition" (*Birth*: 144). Death reifies difference as it merges the real with the imagined to make present absence. Death, thus, makes all the difference in the world. The Renaissance stage shows that death is not the end, even as it shows that there is no end of death. Death figures the emergence of that within the self which is not deadened. It discloses the subject to be the victim of an image: left out or behind by words which go beyond his or her being, creating the terms of a life experienced as death because unrepresentative of experience. What can be represented of life culminates in death, which bears out the lack. In Renaissance plays, death comments on life. Death represents all that life is not and so, death serves in the plays, paradoxically, to define life's potential by disclosing its lacks. Life is dramatized as a potential state in the shadow of death, which completes it.

The corpse represents everything that is absent from the life of the body; it is beyond the Law whose language deadens:

Life is only caught up in the symbolic piece-meal, decomposed.
The human being himself is in part outside life, he partakes of
the death instinct. Only from there can he engage in the
register of life. (Lacan, *Seminar Bk. 2*: 90)

Language makes the body dead and it is this socially dead body that dies on the Renaissance stage, impersonated by the player who is himself considered, in the well-known polemics of theatrical abuses, a liminal or socially-dead menace. In fact, the

subject, such as in *Bussy D'Ambois: A Tragedie*, knows more about death than about life.

In his play, George Chapman shows that social identity is a mythic dead end for the subject. The protagonist, Bussy, discloses his mythic identity as Hercules to be apt in ways never expected. Bussy becomes a rival character in a rival story that problematizes readings based on conventionally limited classical assumptions. Neither Bussy nor the classical epic and heroic allusions are as they appear at first glance; the joke is on the spectator for getting sucked in. Chapman leads the spectator from the cosmic implications of mythology to the individual ones which redefine it. The spectator's insight is in knowing when characters are selfishly selective in their characterizations and readings of Bussy, so that he/she is able to fill in the gaps of the misreadings in circulation. The heroic associations are not Bussy's; Bussy tries to demean those demeaning fictional representations that he is "Made to expre[[e]" (V.i) and in this way serves as the monster that society has created and that he tries to vanquish. Interestingly enough, Bussy's assigned mythic identity as Hercules is as ambiguous and tortured an identity for him as for the man-god-hero. Both struggle for humanization as they signify that identity cannot be fixed or stabilized to be "alwaies one" (IV.i); constructed identity which attempts to do so is a violent denial of the subject, tantamount to Montsurry's physical torture. From this perspective, the limitations so often remarked upon are not in Bussy but in the story, in which he is an "abus'd creation" (V.i), made to play a part that does not contain him. Bussy is

neither idealistic nor deluded since he does not fall for the social identity assigned to him at the expense of his personal identity, and revealing more about those who use them than about Bussy. Bussy insists on his difference; he proves a subject in his own right and on his own terms.

Chapman displays all the ways in which Bussy is "a man vnknowne" (II.i) in spite of everybody who presumes to characterize him. He is the ghost of a presence that will not be denied--as ghostly as the lacking social subject disclosed to signify no body because "forme giues al their eſſence." Chapman plays with deadening myths about absent subjects who are as immobilized as statues, in order to show the terms on which life is a "Dreame / But of a ſhadow" (I.i)--always mediated, filtered, and contingent so that it never becomes the thing itself. Tamyra and Bussy are the actual characters in Chapman's world of moulded and mythical characters; they reject the myth rather than the self. Bussy and Tamyra defy the convention to become the thing itself; they live down the myth which can never be lived out, achieving in death the "generally censored violence which disintegrates the officially sanctioned discourse ..." (Amossy 59).

viii

Physical pain does not simply resist language
 but actively destroys it, bringing about an
 immediate reversion to a state anterior to
 language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes
 before language is learned. (Scarry 4)

Like madness, ghosts, and death, violence, too, serves a deconstructive function on the Renaissance stage. The deconstruction extends to the social state, making the theatre a dangerous rebuke of its mystifications, as James Shapiro argues, with reference to *The Spanish Tragedie*:

The lines separating official and theatrical violence are blurred, as Kyd's play insistently seeks out representational no-man's-land, testing the boundaries between the prerogatives of the state and those of the theater. In so doing the play raises the possibility that it is not the opposition between state and theater, but their potential confusion and indistinguishability, that makes theater powerful and (to the political authorities) dangerous. (100-101)

Francis Barker makes a similar argument for the coincidence of Jacobean state and stage representations of corporal punishment:

The glorious cruelties of the Jacobean theatre ... articulate a mode of corporeality which is structural to its world. Although the involvement of the body in punishment is only an essential and typical section across the way in which discourse invests it with a fundamental ... meaning, it none the less represents a generalized condition under which the body, living or dead, is

not that effaced residue which it is to become, beneath or behind the proper realm of discourse, but a materiality that is fully and unashamedly involved in the processes of domination and resistance which are the inner substance of social life. The stage of representation and that other scaffold of corporal punishment are ... effectively continuous with each other. On both, the spectacularly visible body is fully in place within signification, coterminous with the plane of representation itself. (23-24)

Renaissance stage violence functions to enable dramatists to resist the censorship of the struggles of the state no less than of the subject; the violent act bears what Huston Diehl terms an "iconographic significance" (200) which is accessible to spectators familiar with the Tudor moralities from which it springs. Renaissance theatre--remarked for its decadence, particularly in its Jacobean incarnation--stages characters whose refusal to part with the psychic other for the social Other destroys the body it is within, in order to make that body the vehicle for representing the other. The body, closed in violence, can be opened up only with a violence that exceeds all limits.

The real war in a play such as *The Maids Tragedie* is a "fight with words" (I.i) which are antagonistic toward passions. The lack of arbitrariness of this staged violence comments on and critiques the arbitrariness associated with societal violence; the social body cancels the anomalous desiring body which is other to it in non-conformity and which violently rebukes the hidden violence of its misrepresentations. Renaissance stage violence is neither sensationalist nor exhibitionist. The theatre merely manifests the internal violence of the Symbolic order, thereby anatomizing a life defined by death. Elisabeth Bronfen contends that:

"Culture allows life to prevail against death by employing internalised violence against externalised violence" (193).

One gets violated--as a mad, ghostly, or dead figure--for speaking otherwise, and it is thus that the unspeakable is communicated. Disembodiment through the "non-verbal" register of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, represents the unbodied thoughts that otherwise elude signification. *The Tragedie of Philotas*, for instance, stages the violent errancy of signification. Daniel's play is informed by a rumor with a questionable object. The spectator is left to ponder its many implications: whose life does it aim at; whose death does it plot; what is given the lie in its prosecution? Daniel's protagonist, Philotas, counterplots Alexander's rumor-based plot to disclose as death the life that Alexander claims. This life can never "iustifie the speech" (II.iii) that Alexander gives to it. The spectator sees that the rumored plot means differently for the violated than for the violator.

Daniel illustrates that Philotas is the object of the state's treasonous practice by structuring his play on an opposition between the governing practices of Philotas and those of the king, as reflected in their responses to the rumor. Daniel makes the spectator consider why Alexander, who can "make the hearts of all his subjects bleed" (V.ii), has the law on his side, and consider what is at stake in the aborted plot. This analysis is complicated by the fact that the spectator never gets the whole story, only a version of the master story which Philotas counters with his violated rival story. Philotas's fight against his part in the rumor is a fight against

treacherous and erroneous representations that make his life a death. His protagonist's fight enables Daniel to question the terms on which the subject lives and those on which it dies. His play raises the spectre of a world in which everything is a death sentence; there is no sentence of life because all "*haue lost deeply by our gaine*" (V.i). *The Tragedie of Philotas* discloses a state which deludes its subjects into thinking that they can live on its terms. Daniel's play stages the consequence of a subject's daring to go "beyond his terme" (II.i) both in rank and in word.

Philotas's undoing is the undoing of the system that constructed him and that seeks "T'amuze the world with things that neuer were" (III.i) but are only said to be. The deconstruction enables Daniel to excavate what is a tortured private domain confined by a torturing public one that confounds it. *The Tragedie of Philotas* stages the treason of the tongue against the heart, which makes torture inescapable. All manner of speaking becomes a violation and a torture of the subject, who must "forg[e]t / Him[elfe]" (V.ii) in order to use it. Thus, the violations of torture are seen to parallel the effect of symbolization; they each "batter downe my truth" (II.iii) by taking voice instead of giving it. The violence of *The Tragedie of Philotas* exposes the self beside the words which demean it; it murders the symbol which murders the sense inspiring life. Derrida posits an "economy of war" in which silence is the only peace from "the violence of speech" (148). Violence splits asunder the Symbolic order which splits the subject by disclosing the arbitrariness of its words and the

fictions that they construct. These characters cut the other in by cutting the Other out.

The subject is always already violated even before torture arrives on the scene. With torture, "the signified is withdrawn" with the result that "anything is equal to anything" because the signified is only ever "*errancy*" (Sáez 133); this conceptualization of torture parallels the effect of the Symbolic order. Torture makes the victim speak words not its own (and answer for words that never answer for it), as does the Symbolic order: both, effectively, take voice instead of giving it. But torture, as *The Tragedie of Philotas* illustrates, in addition to taking over the subject's voice, can also liberate the subject by reclaiming its lacking and alienating voice. Philotas excavates the tortured private domain as well as the torturing public one. He shows that the private realm of the body is always rudely invaded by public imperatives that do not answer to it.

Renaissance theatre gets the subject to experience subordination to an alienating signifier so that it recognizes its lack in language which suppresses the other; its violence signals the impossibility of maintaining presence and the triumph of absence and loss. Characters on the Renaissance stage fight against being nothing and making no difference. These characters do not accept an acquired social identity won at the expense of personal identity. Renaissance plays stage the personal price and the social effect of the subject's rejection of acquired social identity, even if the corporeal counterclaim to the social spells out a corporal sentence.

Renaissance plays show that the social body does not fit the human body which it buries under prohibitions and restrictions that drain it of life to the point of madness, violence and, ultimately, death. The Renaissance stage fills the word with the body instead of filling the body with words. On it, the body pushes its own boundaries when it is unable to push the boundaries of the word. The result is staged in a "non-verbal" semiotic register that involves madness, ghosts, death, and violence--marking the violated subject's war on the unfitting Symbolic order that kills to signify.

CHAPTER 2

THE MAIDS TRAGEDIE

The Maids Tragedie is thought to have been written about 1610 (F. Bowers, Vol.II: 3). Both Q1 of 1619 and Q2 of 1622 have textual authority. Fredson Bowers explains the textual history of the play as follows:

Q1 was printed from late-stage foul papers in Beaumont's hand, including Beaumont's rewriting of Fletcher's scenes. It is considerably corrupt because of several factors, among them the ineptness of Okes's Compositor A and the condition of the manuscript itself, which seems to have been roughly and irregularly written and which contained cancellations and interlineations. Q2 was printed from a copy of Q1 into which had been introduced readings from a fair copy of the foul papers, probably also written out by Beaumont, who made some changes in the process. (Vol. II: 24)

I have chosen to use Q2 because its text elaborates on Q1 in a way that emphasizes potentially difficult or problematic content. Such content supports my argument about the revisionist potential of the play. For example, Melantius's Lady is considered by Callianax to have been incorrectly placed at the masque "fo neere the pre[sen]ce of the King" (I.i). The description does not appear in Q1 and can be deemed to equate king and subject, hence positing the real division as that occurring within, rather than

without or between, subjects. In addition, Cinthia in Q2 notes her "power" being "Gaz'd on" by "none" but "vnquiet eyes"--an implicit and potentially subversive valorization of the desiring gaze which registers what is lost to the register of the coercive eye because it invokes an order other than the obtaining Symbolic one. Still with the "maske," in Q2, Neptune boasts that his subjects "will dance vpon the riſing waue, / And court me as the ſayles, my *Tritons* play / Muſicke to lead a ſtorme"--an apparent celebration of subversive and anarchic forces. Then there is in Q2 direct reference to "a Kings bloud / Violently ſhed" (V.i) that reinforces the violence of representation throughout the play and hints at an alternative inner experience, incongruent with those representations.

The conventionally lacking representations are subject to a redefinition and reframing by the subversive structure of the play, which emphasizes its antimasque and night-time associations. These constitute an alternative vision upon which to base an alternative reading that can, even in performance, bring out the counteractive potential of the written text in a reinterpetive or revisionist capacity. Because of the operative censorship--both political and psychological--which keeps in play an incongruency, the spectator knows that the characters only "know in part."

In *The Maids Tragedie*, representation is problematized by the circulation of misrepresentative identities. Amintor realizes "I doe not know my ſelfe" (III.i) by a "dull calamitie" (IV.i) that results in his "ſtrange misbeleefe of all the world, / And all things that are in it." In a play based on "miſconſtruction" and misconception, the

characters are unable to conventionally decipher "What tis you meane," or the developments which take control of their lives, leading them in unexpected directions where "things are ſo ſtrangely carried." The powers-that-be keep in circulation conventional categorizations that provide easy but inadequate descriptions of characters whose whole story is inaccessible: Aspatia is "neglected"; Evadne is "whore"; Amintor is "honorable"; Melantius is "noble"; the king is "divine." Callianax, in fact, tells Amintor that Melantius, whom he also condemns, is "iust ſuch another as your ſelfe" (I.i). Characters are lumped together in conventional ways that are patently inaccurate and unrepresentative and that provoke the later reconsideration and renaming. For instance, Melantius valorizes "friend" over "family" (III.i) and Evadne counters her victim's "I am thy King" with "Thou art my ſhame" (V.i). Evadne's apparent ambiguity is recalled in Vittoria of *The White Devil*, whose forceful self-defense at her mocked-up trial is considered impudent by the cardinal/prosecutor who calls her a "whore" while the English ambassador defends her as "braue" (The Araignment of Vittoria).

Consequently, the only jeopardy in the play is that wrought by jeopardized identities who refuse to live a lie. A character can, as Evadne says, "loue my life well" (III.i) by giving precedence to night-time attitudes, whereas they will, like Amintor, come to "hate mine" by striving to "keepe that little credit with the world" which "can inforce me be" somebody unbecoming. Melantius urges Evadne to "tell me quickly, / Doe it without inforcement" (IV.i) in contradistinction from "the King

that forjt me" (II.i) to break word, promise, troth. Thus, when the play begins, it is not only Melantius who has been in "long abfence" (I.i): everybody has been absent from their selves. Within such a context, reconsideration and representation is all.

The rewriting begins with Aspatia's reinterpretation of the Theseus-Ariadne myth under the impetus of her own miserable experience. Aspatia would make the victimizer all, seeing Ariadne as Theseus in Antiphila's needlework because "You meant him for a man" (II.i). Her own later assumption of the role of her brother for the purpose of engaging in a suicidal duel betrays the utter falsehood of a convention which crosses and contradicts experience instead of addressing it. Aspatia's experience has informed her of how the story "[h]ould ha beene" and she would have Antiphila "Doe that feare to the life" in order to recuperate truth from falsehood and to "make the [t]ory wrong'd by wanton Poets, / Liue long and be beleeu'd." The play begs the spectator to distinguish between "truth" and "periuries." In the twisted world of *The Maids Tragedie*, what is believed is unbelievable and what is believable is unbelieved. This is why Aspatia counsels satirically that one must "learne to lo[e your [e]lves, / Learne to be flattered, and belecue and ble[ss]e / The double tongue that did it" if one is to "Make faith out of the miracles of ancient louers": faith has for her been destroyed by an experience that dictates its contrary. Evadne struggles to evade the fate of those women who "die, like tales / Ill told, and vnbeleu'd" (IV.i). Every tale is always only ill-told and unbelieved because it is contradicted by experience, which underscores its incongruity.

Ironically, it is only in dying that the characters disclose how much within them is not dead but rather the victim of inadequate representation, as was Ariadne. In such a contrary environment, it is life-confirming to be told that "thou hast death about thee" (IV.i). It is the subject who desires death, such as Aspatia, who puts loss and lack and absence with all of its unconventionality into circulation in order to disrupt the circulation of falsehoods and untruths and misrepresentations. Even in her grief, Aspatia seeks the unconventional—"Some yet vnpractis'd way to grieve and die" (II.i)—that would remove the commonplace from her uncommon experience.

Death's "absence" merely figures the subject's absence in a Symbolic order that kills to signify, just as the mythical examples which are conventionally relied upon and invoked offer dead figures to illustrate and interpret live experience. Aspatia offers a counterpoint because her experience negates the myth, disclosing its unreliability and inadequacy in comparison with experience. She, in effect, absents the myth so that her own experience will not be absorbed and absented by it. Aspatia's own death thus renders the conventionally-illustrative myth a dead-end.

The Maids Tragedie solicits the spectator to consider how the story went wrong. Antiphila protests of Aspatia's rewriting of the myth in the needlework, "Twill wrong the storie" (II.i). Aspatia, however, knows from experience that there is more than one story to tell, and that the actual one is not in circulation at all. Evadne concurs with Aspatia's scepticism when she responds to Melantius's vow to "find truth out" (IV.i) by questioning "What truth is that you looke for?" Stigmatization and

isolation is, as Aspatia and Evadne know, the price to be paid for taking back one's life from convention which does not answer it and which disables it from being one's own.

The entire play hinges on the misrepresentations that it exposes as the conventional norm. It does so by constituting a rival story impugning the conventional governing of the subject's body. The spectator's attention is drawn to what is hidden behind presenting circumstance. The masque is instrumental in this reconsideration: it exposes the night that redefines the day and discloses a contradictory experience that is capable of transforming everything, as it transforms the virgin maid into an "*other ki[t and]aid*" (I.i). The night, as Amintor discovers, by removing the bearings of convention, makes one "*lo[s]e all]en]e*" (II.i) in conventional terms, in order to expose a usually repressed unconventional sense capable of revising everything. Evadne's new language "*awake[s]]omething that troubles me*" (V.i), and that had been repressed and dormant throughout the play. The play itself will "*]ay more*" than it is "*able to maintaine*" (I.i) within a censoring and censoring world.

What the play discloses is that the world in the light of day is not only "*cen]uring*" (II.i) but is censoring: a whole other version is apparent by the dark of night. William Shullenberger acknowledges the importance of the masque ruled by the powers of the Night and the split that it creates when "*The conventions ... prove inadequate to bind the energies unleashed in the masque*" (139). He goes so far as to suggest that Night's masque sets the play's tone of "*apocalyptic antagonism toward the*

daylit realm ..." (137). I suggest that this perceived "antagonism" between night and day parallels the Lacanian delineation between the Imaginary and the Symbolic. The latter's effect of censure and consequent repression is identical to that of the former. In the play, the audience distinguish what is "Jpoke according to our Jtraine" (III.i) in order to detect the split existing between the dictates of the Imaginary order and those of the Symbolic order. It is not, as Amintor conventionally suggests, "The gods" who "part our bodies" (IV.i) but rather, the entrance into an incongruent Symbolic order that makes the split.

The masque in *The Maids Tragedie* unleashes the dark Imaginary forces whose desire changes the complexion of the subsequent story, which proves powerless to contain it. In this way, the masque functions as an antimasque for which there is no masque proper. In effect, Beaumont and Fletcher reinvent the masque in order to change the context of the play and so make it "Appeare another" (III.i). Their masque-cum-antimasque is the anarchic and revisionist frame which sets off and recontextualizes, or reframes, the otherwise faulty words of the play with its "poore picture" (II.i) and its "Jound" that "will not become our loues" (III.i). The play's milieu is ruled by night with the moon in ascendance; a metaphor for the inner darkness usually banished from view by the sun. Existing in this inner darkness are different lives than those which see the light of day. In exploring what "may chaine life euer to this frame" (V.i), the play contradicts convention, or "What noble minds Jhall make thee Jee thy Jelfe" (IV.i). The story of the night rivals the story of the day,

just as the Imaginary story rivals the Symbolic one. *The Maids Tragedie* is about experience which, in the spectator's perception, "Made me imagine" (I.i) something otherwise. This experience directs the spectator's attention from the outset to the many contradictions and counteractions that will be the staple of the play.

The masque is presided over by Night in a "reigne" (I.i) that counteracts that of the king while seeming to support his rule. Night mentions the spectators' "longing eies" which are in a receptive attitude to perceive the desires unleashed with her performance. Night admits that Cinthia, the moon, enables her to "finde" what could not be found "without thee" in a solicitation of the spectator to penetrate what would otherwise be missed. The "cleareſt" moon enables one to "diſcouer" what would not be admitted or perceived otherwise; it enables the "gaze" that would otherwise be blocked—a desiring gaze of "vnquiet eyes" that give "knowledge." The songs serve to "diſcouer" as does the "maske" itself and Neptune admits, on behalf of the spectators, that "now I ſee / ſomething entended."

The masque's Cinthia, in a parallel to Aspatia, revises the conventional story of herself and Endimion, telling Night, who recites the conventional version, that "Thou dreamſt" such "bold tales" as poetic license falsely advances, while Cinthia herself vows to demonstrate "Of what theſe louers are" (I.i). Cinthia, in effect, counterpoints the king's "gouernment" with her own government, and the king's command with her own command. By her, the "power of the deepes" can "Be proud to be commanded." Her philosophy is to "Let looſe thy ſubiects" instead of keeping

them bound—that is, except for Boreas. With his "foule" temperament and his condition of being "faſt chaind," Boreas parallels the king who, likewise, incites "rebellious" natures and "hath rais'd a ſtorme" which is the play.

The Maids Tragedie is built upon a disabling of the "rules of flatterie" (I.i) which relate to a masque but not to an antimasque—"rules" which serve to discredit rather than "credit any / thing the light giues life to" (II.i) so that "There ſhall no credit lie vpon thy words" (IV.i). The play is about characters who must "inuent the forme" (II.i) of their story which "keepeſ night here" (V.i), allowing them a voice. The antimasque serves to "let in all the world" (I.i) against which the selective reigning powers would bar the door in order to maintain what is a false sense of stability and security—false because based on the repression of conflicting and contradictory sites of knowledge. The night makes such sites evident in its disclosure of "This ſtory (that will make ſucceeding youth / Neglect thy ceremonies) from all eares" (II.i). The night discloses the non-disclosure that enables the day. Once the doors swing open, they cannot be "ſhut agen" (I.i).

The Maids Tragedie enables the spectator to "ſee it all performd" (I.i). The play is built upon the disclosing and discounting of what "the King forbade." Beaumont and Fletcher disclose "the ſtate of my body" (V.i) and, in so doing, disclose the body of the state and all "ſuch blacke ſoules" that constitute it. The animal imagery of the "wolfe" helps to distinguish between uncivilized and civilized modes of behavior and, by extension, to distinguish between the uncultivated Imaginary and the

cultivated Symbolic orders. Amintor, under the pressure of abuse, perceives that it is but a fragile balance that keeps the latter in ascendance: "Though I am tame and bred vp with my wrongs, / ... I may leape / Like a hand-wolfe into my naturall wildne[[e, / And doe an outrage" (IV.i). The potential always exists for the repression to break down and the alternative identity, now hidden, to manifest itself. Ferdinand, in *The Tragedy of The Dutchesse of Malfy*, realizes this potential. Callianax, too, when caught in the interstice between loyalty and disloyalty—between the king and Melantius—speaks the "wilde words" that Amintor thought mad in Evadne and Evadne thought mad in Amintor. The play is witness to "What a wild bea[st is vncollected man!"

In *The Maids Tragedie* characters speak otherwise to reveal the extent of their otherness within the prevailing context. We see in the play of night what is forbidden in the play of day and threatens to disrupt the story that it would tell. What is terrible is not the desire and the passion that are released under the power of darkness, but the way that these would be manipulated by the power of daylight which seeks to kill them. Similarly, the king killed the love of Amintor and Aspatia and made a travesty of his own association with Evadne. On his wedding night with Evadne, Amintor can only "finde her in the darke" (II.i). The focus of the spectator is always on that other story that is being denied and disallowed so that the lie can supplant it. This makes "another world" (III.i) of night to counteract the violence that the world of day enforces in the name of the Law. The world of the psychic other

that is consequently created succeeds in deconstructing the obtaining one of the social Other. Thus, characters such as Aspatia and Evadne are enabled to become what it is socially impossible for them to be and they have the power to disclose a socially-impossible script, subverting from within the socially-given and socially-acceptable one. For Evadne, "Forgetfulne[ss]" that is, self-forgetfulness, "forfets your life" (IV.i) so that one is lost in a life that the Other has constructed and controls. The characters do not even know themselves and what they are capable of until they are provoked into an unguarded moment: "To what things di[st]mall, as the depth of hell, / Wilt thou prouoke me?" (V.i). *The Maids Tragedie* is provocative because so provoking.

Even "the [s]weetest words" (II.i) framed prove ineffectual lies in *The Maids Tragedie*. The play stages the breaking of words through the breaking of promises, such as the breaking of the troth between Amintor and Aspatia and the breaking of oaths between Amintor and Evadne. It is always the case that "A few fine words haue ouerthrowne my truth" (IV.i) because words are incapable of containing truth and are always only hearsay or heresy, and not to be credited. The play reduces itself to the "few words" that are "enough to make me vnder[st]and" (V.i) in "this dead time of night," which affords its own "fine eloquence." Words break under the pressure of an unsymbolizable interiority with its unspeakable primal instincts that have "but a cour[se] name" (III.i) which, like every other name, does not do justice. It is the split within as a result of the repression of such experience that makes the subject "be[si]des your [s]elfe." The spectator witnesses a contradiction in being—an incongruency—in

conventional characters such as Amintor. These characters are set apart from the unconventional ones such as Aspatia and Evadne, who act outside of the socially circumscribed roles and who live lives that "The world wants lines to excu[e]" (V.i). Society's "gilded things" with their Other "skins" can "Choake vp my bufine[ss]" (IV.i) which is unfit for society and is, therefore, rendered unspeakable.

In *The Maids Tragedie*, the linguistically-constructed self deconstructs in a torrent of renouncings exemplified in the broken words, broken promises, and broken oaths out of which it flows. All strictures against the voice and the body are disclosed and dissolved. Evadne's binding of the king before she kills him symbolizes the binding of the body and its voice throughout. She tells him that in the end his screams would not be understood for what they are, because all along, nothing has been as it appears, anyway. The king's screams would be just as "di[ordered]" (I.i) as Melantius's speech: the former cutting off life just as the latter "Cuts off my loue." *The Maids Tragedie* is about what is caught or bound in chains, as are Boreas and the king, and about what is caught out, as are the workings of the day by the workings of the night. It discloses what "all the binding words" (II.i) bind the subject to.

The Maids Tragedie plays with the discovery and recognition of faith-destroying lacks, differences, and absences which appeal to the desiring unconscious gaze by a deadening of the coercive Symbolic eye. That eye, as Melantius perceives, is too "blunt" (IV.i) and coarse for the vital discriminations that require acute night vision. Amintor knows that: "Mens eyes are not ſo ſubtill to perceiue / My inward

miſerie" (III.i), and this is precisely why Evadne evades the untrustworthy evidence of that sense, preferring instead to "loue with my ambition, / Not with my eies." The evidence of the eyes in the world of the play is not to be believed; it is the desiring gaze that pierces more--the "ſudden gaze" with which Amintor searches the face of Melantius after the revelation of the night. This is a play in which Aspatia and Evadne function to "trie thy truth" (II.i) and thus to "trie my faith." Evadne proves how "You are deceiu'd" and launches Amintor into a state in which "I dreame," that being the only state in which he can overcome his bondage to the false Symbolic order whose Father has betrayed his law. Evadne thus removes the scales from Amintor's "dull eyes." She does not help to "make me hold this worth" but rather, leads Amintor to a far greater worth with "thine eyes," in which "doe dwell / The ſpirit of loue," opened. The play thus serves to "Let thine eies looſe" (V.i) with respect to the characters and, by implication, the spectators.

With untrustworthy, false, and misrepresentative "evidence" in circulation, the play makes prominent its reconsiderations, revisions, reinterpretations, and redefinitions as its entire action becomes a counteraction. Melantius redefines his friend, Amintor, as "my Siſter, Father, Brother, Sonne, / All that I had" (V.i) in his devaluation and revaluation of conventional terminology under the pressure of his overstrained heart. Evadne redefines her liege and lover who asserts "I am thy King, " by responding "Thou art my ſhame." Aspatia, as we recall, redefines the Ariadne-

Theseus myth in a parallel to Cinthia, who redefines the Endimion myth; Aspatia also redefines herself as her brother, to die at Amintor's hand.

This insistent redefinition redefines the play's operative war as a "fight with words" (I.i) which are antagonistic toward passions. *The Maids Tragedie* discloses the subject to be more demeaned by words than by acts. The play itself is no less "poore in words" than are its characters; it is framed from beginning to end in the actions of a "filent death," in poignant opposition to its torrent of pointless words. In the context fashioned by Beaumont and Fletcher where talk is cheapened, the only revenge possible is against the offending symbols which make non-sense of life. The fight, contrary to what Callianax maintains (but cannot defend), is not "for what he saies" (IV.i) as much as it is against what is said. *The Maids Tragedie* is all about one's "desire / To speake with" (V.i) another and about one's desire finally to speak in action, if not in word. Significance is a function more of the hand than of the tongue, as Amintor perceives: "There is preface of some important thing / About thee, which it seemes thy tongue hath lost: / Thy hands are bloody, and thou hast a knife."

It is noteworthy that Evadne's conversion, which Shullenberger contends "involves a repudiation of this 'monstrous' sexuality..." (149) and Anne Haskelkorn maintains is "a betrayal of her character" (123), is really the only way for Evadne to actively betray a character of her own by repudiating rather than reinforcing the repressive order maintained by the Law of the Father (King). Evadne takes direct aim at the source of Symbolic enthrallment when she acknowledges that "I could not find a

way / To meet thy loue fo cleere, as through his life" (V.i). The spectator sees that the Law which keeps the Symbolic order in operation had to be contravened to make Imaginary signification possible and meaningful. Her "faire name" could be answered with "nothing but thy death," she tells the king; the name that would otherwise have been dead is thus freed. In the final analysis, Evadne stands up to the king as Aspatia--after Cinthia's example--had stood up to the myth. Each contradicts the prevailing dictates with the evidence of their own selves. "No I am not," retorts Evadne to the king who solicits her "sweet and gentle" and compliant, senses; she responds with the nature of "a Tiger" in answer to his fatal misreading that she was "not meant thus rugged." Just as Evadne led Amintor to perceive that "reputation / [is] a word, no more" (II.i), so the play, by its demystification of his "sacred name," leads the spectator to see that the fallible king, too, is merely "a word" signifying nothing.

Shullenberger expresses concern that "if culture itself provides patterns of identity, the collapse of culture noted by Danby provides the playwrights little information about how to account for and to master the ungovernable energies they have summoned to the stage" (133). Perhaps the flooding of the stage with such "ungovernable energies" is the entire point, in counterpoint to contemporary claims of absolutism which, like the culture in Shullenberger's argument, was steadily collapsing. This does indeed, as Shullenberger notes, bespeak "a crisis in the Renaissance world order...." While the new king in *The Maids Tragedie* resolves, in

the wake of the slaughter confronting him, to "rule with temper" (V.i), which the old absolutist order would never have conceded, nevertheless the "faine" exhibited at the end between the new king and Melantius discloses the distance remaining in the unbridgeable gap between orders.

The Maids Tragedie is about the collapse of the identity that shores up a collapsing culture. In the disintegration unleashed in the process, Amintor is "fo ore-gone with iniuries / Vnheard of, that I loſe conſideration / Of what I ought to doe" (III.i) and, by implication, ought to be. Such characters, as Aspatia and Evadne demonstrate, are free to assume alternative identities in what becomes for them an alternative culture. If, in the end, there is "no one aliue" (IV.i), the spectator must remember that "There is ſome hidden power in theſe dead things / That calls my fleſh into 'em" (V.i).

The Maids Tragedie ends in the murderous "dead time of night" as it had begun, with Melantius redefining as "innocence" Evadne's apparent "Treaſon." This play of appearances which begins with the appearance of a masque, serves by the end to discover who "lookes as if he had the better cauſe." With the shattering of illusions under the pressure of harsh reality, the subject is enabled to "let me ſpeak it" instead of being repressed to the extent that "I dare / not tell." By play's end, the spectator indeed gains a vision of "all that I ſhall ſee at laſt" (II.i), which experience silently composes and completes the play.

CHAPTER 3

PHILA[TER OR, LOUE LIES A BLEEDING

Just as does *The Maids Tragedie*, *Phila[ter* illustrates how the subject is encumbered by stories or myths that his/her experience contradicts. In both plays, the contradiction problematizes the identities that these inadequate stories construct. *Phila[ter* shifts from a conventional and misrepresentative register to a corrective "non-verbal" one disclosing actual character based on its natural constitution. Thus, characters usurped in the obtaining political constitution are able to usurp their usurpation by registering their rival claims and rival stories.

Fredson Bowers follows E.K. Chambers's suggestion that the date of composition for *Phila[ter* is 1608-1610 (Vol.I: 369). Q1 is dated 1620 and Q2 is dated 1622 and differs significantly from its predecessor. The play appeared in nine quartos during the seventeenth century. However, in Bowers's estimation:

Since later editions have no authority, critical attention must centre on Q1, which preserves a text of the play generally regarded as inferior, and Q2, which preserves a superior text with a substantially different beginning and end and from which all subsequent prints were directly or indirectly derived. (372-373)

Bowers sees Q2 as "set up from composite copy" with its beginning and ending evidently "composed from a manuscript" while "the middle section was set from a copy of Q1 that can only have been very heavily annotated" (379). According to Bowers, "The source of the annotations and the new beginning and end was, to all appearances, authoritative..." (379) with the result that "editors and critics have always regarded Q1 with suspicion and its beginning and end with some contempt" (380). It has been suggested that Q1 represents a tamer court-associated, censored, pirated, hack, or revised version, or that its ending is a formulaic contrivance to make up for missing portions of the manuscript. I use Q2 for the reading of *Philaster* which follows because, although I consider both versions to be thematically congruent, fundamentally, the characterization of Philaster in Q2 best confirms my thesis.

In Q1, Clerimon says of the ill-prepared citizens that "I could wi[h] their experience an[sw]ered their loues" (I.i), thereby setting up a play in which one's love never coincides with one's experience. Q1 and Q2 part tellingly in the characterization of Philaster; he is less credible in the very perfunctory 1620 quarto. In the beginning of Q1 the people, called a "giddy-headed multitude," are discredited in such a fashion that their support of Philaster does not reflect positively on him. Philaster shows himself in Q1 to be as smooth a politician as the antagonist, Pharamond; he pays off the mutinous citizens with a purse as "Te[st]imonie of my loue" (V.i), thereby showing a disrespect for their loyalty, which should not have to be purchased. In Q2, Philaster refuses "to flatter you" (V.i). In addition to its problematic

characterization of Philaster, Q1 is too neat and perfunctory in tying up loose ends: Bellario "di[s]couers" herself without hesitation and her father recognizes her immediately (V.i); Arathusa's reputation is forgotten and seems merely incidental rather than being instrumental in provoking the ending as in Q2.

Representation is problematized and pressured in *Phila[ster]* where a counteracting alternative is set in play as Beaumont and Fletcher put the medium on trial in a case pitting the state of being against the political state which crosses the body and the heart out of its coercive language. There is a psycho-social subtext to the political pretext of the play, and its marginalized story of desire usurps the main story of usurpation when the natural constitution effectively tempers the political one.

Like Aspatia in *The Maids Tragedie*, whose experience would lead her to reinterpret Ariadne as Theseus in the myth, Arathusa in *Phila[ster]* seeks to rewrite the myth of Diana, substituting herself for Actaeon—a maid with a man (as does the disguised Bellario)—to be ripped "by cruell hounds" and "haue my [s]tory written in my wounds" (III.i). Arathusa would work an unconventional twist upon a conventional story, the better to suit her own experience, which otherwise would not be addressed. Philaster recognizes that the subject is, "being taken all together, / A meere confu[s]ion, and [s]o dead a *Chaos*, / That loue cannot di[s]tingui[h]."

The confusion which clouds *Phila[ster]* overwhelms the subject with Symbolic imperatives that are incongruent and do not answer to it. Thus, Philaster feels "bound to vtter of you" only those "[s]ad texts" that he knows do not represent him and senses, instinctively, do not represent

Arathusa. He believes, for instance, that his own experience with Bellario of "The loue of boyes vnto their Lords" is such that it "would out-doe story" (II.i). Cleremont draws attention to the many levels of the play in which "There's already a thousand fatherlesse tales amongst vs" (IV.i)—tales pointing to Philaster who appears fatherless but is, in effect, fathering a revision of the presenting script in which his father "was by our late King of *Calabria*, vnrighteously depoſed from his fruitfull *Cicilie*" (I.i). Philaster confronts a situation in which he is "the right Heire" whom "the people" admire for "the brauery of his minde" and so persevere in "lamenting his iniuries," which are, in effect, their own injuries.

Philaſter shows that when the socially-constructed identity is so compromised and corporeally unliveable, it collapses; the subject that the social order is unable to sustain (or restrain) refuses to sustain it. Arathusa uses a metaphor derived from her sense of this violation when she describes Philaster as the cure for her own sense of contamination. She registers the transgression of her father, in which she feels implicated, as a toxin with Philaster as the only antidote. She speculates that "If a bowle of blood / Drawne from this arme of mine, would poyſon thee, / A draught of his would cure thee" (I.i). Such corruption is the socialized appearance of the abject who, until so imperilled, lack the conviction to maintain, as Arathusa does only after uniting with Philaster, that "theres nothing that can ſtirre me from my ſelfe" (V.i). Philaster never submits to the way he is constructed and represented; neither do the public who refuse to accept the lie that is perpetrated on

him and, through him, on them. *Philaſter* instead stages the rival stories that disclaim the erroneous politically imposed imperatives in what amounts to a profound interrogation of subjectivity; it impugns the governing of the subject's body by a system that founds its stability on the repression of other subject positions.

Bellario points to that other site of knowledge--the repressed inner life--when she tells Philaster that "your words / Fall not from off your tongue ſo euenly" (III.i), the quality of speech being more communicative than its content. Philaster's words halt and hesitate and equivocate because, being conventional, they cannot address his unconventional experience. In *Philaſter* words prove to be as foreign as is the Spanish prince, Pharamond--both being proffered in situations that are out of their league. Differences such as these force the spectator to sort out the rival claims and rival stories. The spectator follows the cue of Philaster, who begins to credit an alternative to the damning interpretation already in popular circulation about Arathusa: "ſhe may be abuſde, / And I a loathed villaine" (IV.i). This play of jeopardized identity thus puts alternatives into play which Philaster tests: "If ſhe be, / She will conceale who hurt her." In an ironic twist on the operative mode of his society, where to tell is to conceal, in Philaster's counteraction concealing is telling.

Philaster refuses to "liue now like him, / Vnder this tyrant King" (III.i) and to "Beare all this brauely." The play stages what happens when people--inspired by the politically-wronged Philaster--no longer "Pleaſe to let him be a Prince": the King's presence is an affront and a violation to them. Arathusa poses the question to which

the whole play responds: "What will you doe *Philaſter* with your ſelfe?" (I.i). She counsels him to "hide thy ſelfe," which is what she and everybody else does, but he is adamant that "I hide me not." *Philaſter* publicizes "a miſerable life" (IV.i) the better to test the limits of its acceptability.

Philaſter is preoccupied with how characters are entitled and identified.

The namesake is not as he appears and neither is the usurper king, nor the pretender Pharamond, nor the honourable Arathusa, nor the faithful Bellario. Philaster censures Bellario: "All theſe Iealouſies / Had flowne to nothing, if thou hadſt diſcouered / What now we know" (V.i). What is disclosed is that somebody has been misrepresented. However, this is true not only for Bellario, who is disclosed to be a woman not a man, but also for Arathusa who is disclosed to be innocent, not guilty; for Philaster who is disclosed to be king, not subject; and for Pharamond who is disclosed to be unruly, not a ruler. The unsettling state of being in *Philaſter* reflects the unsettled political state and constitutes a psycho-social subtext within the political pretext of Beaumont and Fletcher's play which ultimately usurps the usurpation.

The usurpation which frames *Philaſter* transcends the political to underscore a violated affective kinship element in kingship which undermines its legitimacy. It also problematizes representation by grounding the play on a failure to recognize kin when they are subject to misrepresentation; hence, the emphasis on pretenders and imposters and impersonators and foreigners. The king's heir must be foreign since he himself, as usurper and not successor, is foreign to the throne.

Pharamond, the foreign appointed heir, is, accordingly, considered a "stranger Prince" (IV.i). Pharamond and the king both seek merely "to shew / In outward ceremonies, the deare loue / Writ i[n] my heart" (I.i). The hollowness of their grandiose claims is only too evident. Philaster speaks the popular judgement when he says to Pharamond that he is "nought but a valiant voyce." In counterpoint, Philaster, whose tongue is in tune with his pulse, is thought to be mad by those who, like the king, have reason to fear what he says and so wish to discredit it: "your pulſe keepes madmans time, / So does your tongue" (IV.i). Pharamond says of Philaster, "He's mad, beyond cure, mad," and the king says that "hee's poſſeſt" (I.i). This labelling is a testament to Philaster's being radically other and unknowable to his usurpers. Gallatea, upon whose judgement the spectator is to rely for her forthright quick-wittedness, says of Philaster that "He is the worthieſt the true name of man," while Megra is taken with Pharamond, the "prince of wax" out of the conventional mould whom she takes for "a fine compleate Gentleman." Pharamond betrays his concern with outward show and form and conventions and rules, when he promises the unconvinced people that "My reigne ſhall be ſo eaſie to the ſubiect, / That euery man ſhall be his Prince himſelfe, / And his owne law : yet I his Prince and law." In contradistinction to Pharamond, Philaster assures the people that "there ſhall be nothing in my power / You may deſerue, but you ſhall haue your wiſhes" (V.i), thereby rendering power in the service of desire. Philaster emphasizes inward as opposed to outward qualities.

Pharamond stipulates "Thy owne tongue by thy iudge" (IV.i) and yet the only judgement it passes in *Philaſter* is an accusatory, deceptive or wrongful one, concealing more than it reveals. The play, in the manner of Pharamond, can "talke of nothing" because, as Gallatea points out, its subject is "nothing" (II.i). Its fate, if it followed Pharamond, would be to "hang ... vp for ſigne" (V.i)--a sign, like Pharamond, that signifies nothing. What gets staged in *Philaſter* is not the self but the Other, disclosing the fictional construction of the subject who is spoken by a speech that crosses it. The play illustrates many ways in which the unanswered subject is made to "Withdraw your ſeife" (I.i). We see the compromising of the self in the usurper king, in the usurped Philaster, in the pretender Pharamond, in the victimized Arathusa, and in the disguised Bellario. In *Philaſter* those things apparently matched are broken apart, while those things apparently broken are matched: "this match ſhall breake" (II.i) announces Arathusa of her pairing with Pharamond, while the one with Philaster, which she claims is "ſo oppoſite, ſo contrary" (I.i) in nature, prevails.

The double structure of the play--a psycho-social subtext within a political pretext--by positing an alternative choice to the main king/Pharamond composite in the form of the marginalized Ghost king/Philaster composite, discloses the extent to which the characters "wrong your thoughts" (II.i) in the presenting political circumstance. The play is built upon systematic contrasts: between king and king; between king and subject; between subject and subject; between nation and nation; between Court and Country; between elitism and populism; between ghost and flesh; between dream and

wakefulness. These external divisions are also seen to invade the internal realm of the body. *Philaster* is all about what happens when the subject is no longer "reſolu'd to be rul'd" (I.i) and shifts the system ranged against it. Similar to Philaster himself, each character has a score to settle and so refuses to "ſay I might haue beene," and actually dares to be. Arathusa and Philaster in particular, as the main protagonists, manage to twist "the plot caſt for my ouerthrow"—the plot which would twist them—by their insistence on being "my ſingle ſelfe" without imposed encumbrances (III.i). The play addresses Arathusa's question of "How ſhall we deuife / To hold intelligence" (I.i) with the display of unconventional methods—illicit affairs, disguise, transvestism, hiding and duelling—in an effort to shift from a register of falsehood and misrepresentation, to a corrective "non-verbal" one capable of disclosing actual character.

Arathusa perceives the representations and characterizations in circulation as false constructions that contradict truth. She feels a life which preys upon itself to be a kind of death since people "feede vpon opinions, errors, dreames, / And make vm truths"—they even "ſtrike the Monuments / Where noble names lie ſleeping : till they ſweat, / And the cold Marble melt" (III.i). Arathusa recognizes that words defeat actions, whether present or past. She knows that she is living only (and intolerably) at a remove—as symbolized by Bellario being her romantic go-between with Philaster—just as the spectator is led to recognize that everybody, in effect, lives at a remove through the auspices of a filtering order that does not answer to their needs or desires.

These get exercised only outside that order. Arathusa feels at a loss with the loss of Bellario, her channel of communication with Philaster: "Who ſhall now tell you, how much I loued you? / Who ſhall ſweare it to you, and weepe the teares I ſend? / ... Who ſhall ſing / Your crying Elegies? And ſtrike a ſad ſoule / Into ſenſeleſſe pictures, and make them mourne?" Indirection abounds when a go-between is needed to "beare our hidden loue" (I.i). Arathusa's queries beg for an acknowledgement of her responsibility for her own feelings. The spectator senses with her questions that Arathusa is just as usurped as Philaster: consigned to communicate only from a distance, conveying senses and feelings that are contaminated and counterfeited in the always impersonal verbal exchange process. This, in actuality, is the "world of treaſon" that Bellario sees is "practiſde vpon you, / And her, and me" (III.i).

Bellario thanks Philaster, who "did take me vp when I was nothing" (II.i), in what the spectator takes as an acknowledgement that everybody is "nothing" in this play. In *Philaster*, identity is constantly in jeopardy as a reflection of the jeopardized identity in society—jeopardized by its misrepresentation in language. Dion professes to know about Philaster "what you are, and who you are" (I.i), thereby underscoring the fact that the two do not coincide—that a sovereign being may not be sovereign and vice versa. In fact, in the world of *Philaster*, truth is incompatible with social propriety. Philaster acknowledges that "My zeale to truth made me vnmanerly" (III.i), implying that truth is considered indecorous and unpolitic and is fundamentally socially unacceptable. *Philaster* discloses what gets concealed in order to live up to

imposed social standards; in the process the characters live down these standards--to more human levels. This play deals not merely with a misuse of language, as Nicholas Radel contends (139), by characters who violate it but rather, it deals with the abuse wrought by language itself so that the medium, not the messenger, is put on trial. It is not merely the manipulation of words into particular "methods of speaking" that "may limit one's knowledge and understanding of the world" (131). The words themselves are limiting as they are foreign, manipulative, and misrepresentative. Philaster hesitates to "Ipeake vm freely" (I.i), knowing that speech is never free.

Dion knows that nobody is transparent, that "mens hearts and faces are Iofarre aIunder, that they hold no intelligence" (I.i). There is a fatal discordance between the eye and the heart, and the innocent one "dies beleeuing" the "Istory of a womans face" (III.i). The outward show does not coincide with the inward state and it is this split in the corporeal body--between the outward-looking face and the inward-looking heart that do not communicate--that reinforces the split and the lack of communication in the subjugating governing body. The governing body creates a state of nothingness that is not to be believed, and Philaster stands in bodily defiance of this state as instituted by a Father who, because of his imposition of unresponsive terms, is incapable of sensing or experiencing the discordance. Radel is correct in his conclusion that Beaumont and Fletcher in the play "dramatize the predicament of characters who do not command words but are commanded by them" (139)--I would add that one is never otherwise than commanded by words which set all the terms.

Philaſter is, thus, the drama of nothing becoming everything; the usurped subject becomes sovereign and sets the terms.

In *Philaſter*, it is not Apollo who oversees all with "His hand and voyce binding your thoughts in ſleepe" (II.i); this office is filled by the Law of the Father, which commands the repression and censorship of dangerous matter. In the world of *Philaſter* as ruled by the king, passion and desire are deemed dangerous. It is only when Philaster questions and second-guesses his acute and passionate instincts of desire that he is truthfully lost: "it cannot be, / Can it? ... Iſt poſſible?" (III.i). Instinctively, he believes the damning report of Arathuſa to be false: "you are deceiu'd," he tells his credulous friends: "You are abuſd, and ſo is ſhe, and I." Philaster senses from personal experience that "all the world's abuſde, / In an vniuſt report." But this is the only kind of report that circulates in the world of the usurper king. For the king, everybody and everything "muſt be mine" (II.i), coming under his command and his imperatives. He commands the people to "diſperſe your ſelues" (IV.i) in a reprise of the classic divide and conquer strategy, when the spectator can see that the only hope for the people is in collecting themselves. *Philaſter* stages the disruptive force of desire and passion for which social terms are empty and ineffectual, as the king and Pharamond demonstrate in their ultimate deference to Philaster. The play illustrates the subject giving voice to an experience—either repressed or censored—for which it has not been given a voice. *Philaſter* is about being "apt to ſpeake, / What you are loth to heare" (I.i). Dion clarifies that Bellario is

"Betrayed; no, apprehended: (IV.i); the subject can be apprehended--in the sense of being perceived--only by taking drastic measures so that it will not be betrayed. The presenting order facilitates knowledge only at the price of betraying--destroying--the subject to whom it will not allow a recognizable voice: something that the subject can find only by betraying the order.

Nicholas Radel posits a comic vein in *Phila[ster]* insofar as it exposes "its characters' absurd failure to use language correctly and their subsequent failure to perceive their positions in the world around them" (131). In my reading, the characters are only too well aware of their absurd position of dependency on a contrary language that can be used only oppositionally. Given this, characters are always the opposite of how they appear to be because language does not touch them.

Robert Turner maintains that in *Phila[ster]* dramatic irony works

with the audience against the misjudgments of wrongheaded characters. This provocation ... leads the audience to reconsider their understanding about passion: not to abandon their principles about the need for restraints, but to apply their principles with flexibility by acknowledging the possibility of exceptions. (122)

Phila[ster]'s is not the irony where the spectator knows more than the characters, but rather, the irony where the characters know more than they can say and have to employ unorthodox methods to disclose their knowledge so that the spectator can come to an appreciation of the inadequacy of words. Alternatives are presented by virtue of the differences, splits and divisions that structure the play. *Phila[ster]* is

noteworthy precisely because of what it fails to say verbally--that failure being a function of the political binding of the subject in the repression and censorship that predicate the play, necessitating alternative significations.

Phila[ster] discloses everything that is usually repressed and censored in a main story involving the king and Pharamond; the main story is ultimately replaced--usurped--by a marginalized one involving Arathusa and Philaster. The social order as installed with its misrepresentative fictional mediation is short-circuited and taken out of play by what amounts to a corrective replay accentuating the countermanded imperative of desire that threatens from the margins to which it has been banished. Banished with it are its representatives, Arathusa and Philaster, who counter the political constitution with the natural one. *Phila[ster]* stages desire that contravenes the Law which would contravene its prior natural law. Marginal presences are instrumental in *Phila[ster]*, from the desirous Philaster/Arathusa combination which gets marginalized as disruptive, to the Philaster/Ghostly king composite which is marginalized when Philaster is branded as mad for upholding it. Each of these variations serves Beaumont and Fletcher as a liberated vehicle "of unsanctioned significations" (Weimann 502). The boy players alluded to in the play who, according to Megra--herself a marginalized figure of the incontinent woman--"can doe little, and that [small they doe, / They haue not wit to hide" (II.i), serve as a similar vehicle. All are socially dead, outcast, and scandalous--finding the manifestation of their sensibilities branded as outrageous and socially discredited. Their marginal

endeavours become a form of social criticism by virtue of their constituting an alternative story contradicting the present order. The stage occupied by desiring, ghostly, mad, or satirically exuberant acting figures gets turned on its head, as the uncrownings in *Phila[ster]* demonstrate.

Desire and passion counterpoint, countermand and counteract the master script which they contradict in *Phila[ster]*. Part of this is conveyed generically by the romantic undercurrent that Beaumont and Fletcher added to the tragic direction of their play. This is an aspect of the play often subject to critical depreciation. Lee Bliss attributes the introduction of "the benevolent Providence of romance" to "the characters' inadequacy, their inability to handle a tragic world" ("Three Plays in One": 167). Far from being a mere redeeming compensatory mechanism, however, romance in *Phila[ster]* is the only way to come to terms with a pervasive tragedy in which the subject finds itself alienated and isolated. Romance strikes the balance necessary to make of potential social withdrawal an integration to a more accommodating social order that accepts the terms it had before rejected, denied, repressed and censored. Bliss has argued that: "Beaumont and Fletcher typically suppress or ignore their characters' individual psychological complexity. Here they do not examine the process by which Philaster's love is overturned. Instead they emphasize a fundamental and disturbing similarity between the hero's romantic and idealistic response and the court's" (158). Rather, I suggest, the play is all about a love--romantic, filial, patriotic--that when provoked to the limit will not allow itself to be compromised or

overturned by an unresponsive system that would usurp its power and from which it is alienated. What gets overturned in the play--along with the usurpation--are the unjust terms of the Court, which are overturned by subjects who reject the distortion resulting from its misleading impositions, setting all the terms without ever answering to them. Everything so imposed is deposed in *Philaſter* to recuperate an order of being which obeys natural, instinctual commands, not unnatural, conventional ones. *Philaſter* stages desire which crosses the Law that would cross out its law.

When Megra tries "the ſeverall conſtitutions of mens bodyes," she is acknowledging that these are several and different from what (and whom) "the ſtate keeps" (I.i). Megra's brand of natural constitution is based on what the political one censors. She gives expression to a constitution that will not be politically constructed and so is not socially acceptable. Megra does so "by making experiment vpon" her own body, which reverberates through the body of the "Common-wealth" with which it has nothing in common--Megra being an outcast. Just as Megra tries the "conſtitutions of mens bodyes" so, too, the play tries the constitutionality of its embodiments; the body in *Philaſter* becomes instrumental in facilitating experimentation. Megra, as such, is the "profitable member" who dismembers the elite who strive not to remember what she knows they know. She catches out "Your deſires vpon you"--betrays desires that are ill-contained. She can see how those branded "very ſtrange" are "not ſo ſtrange." As Megra scripts it, the only strange thing is to deny the impulses to which she gives free rein, as does the unruly Pharamond

who, in contradistinction to her, is "a mortefied member" (IV.i)—dead politically because not dead physically.

What the king strives in vain against is the undermining of his own "offer'd language" by all those "who[e eye /]peakes common loues" (I.i). In his active stance against passion, the king is akin to Francisco in *The White Devil* who, after he receives the report that Vittoria and Brachiano have fled, determines that "The hand muſt act to drowne the paſſionate tongue." However, Arathusa's desire and her passion for Philaster prove stronger than the king's power to contain it. For Arathusa, the land is nothing in itself until it is linked with Philaster. She tells Philaster: "I muſt haue them, and thee" (I.i). Arathusa's desire for Philaster outweighs her desire for the land: without him the land is of no significance for her. She admits that his love is her real goal: "Thy loue: without which, all the Land / Diſcouered yet, will ſerue me for no vſe." Megra, who relates to Arathusa's desire, can say "I know her" (II.i) in a sense that is inaccessible to Arathusa's father. The king counsels Pharamond to teach the innocent Arathusa "nothing but her feares and bluſhes, / Deſires without deſire, diſcourſe and knowledge, / Onely of what her ſelfe, is to her ſelfe" (I.i), the irony being that these desires and kinds of knowledge which he suppresses are exactly the corporeal commands to which she listens and which instruct her, in spite of the king, to happily succeed where he fails. The king devalues the language of the "common people," which he calls "a new language, that all loue to learne" because it requires "no Grammer" (III.i). However, *Philaster* shows that it is precisely this understanding

of the "common people" that confounds the king and his coercive language. Megra may have a "name" that is "common through the Kingdome" (I.i) but it is that very common name that will bring down the king, who is the common talk of the kingdom.

Phila[ster] traffics in censorship and the indirect discourse of double-meaning. Philaster counsels Pharamond to "Giue not a word, not a word backe" (I.i) because words, which are not owned, cannot be given or taken in any but an offensive way. This registers also as a self-censorship policy for usurped subjects that "none dare vtter" (IV.i) to contravene the king's commands. There is a threat of violation for speaking otherwise and that threat is made good with the ongoing violence that keeps the social order in place. In the play dismemberment--through marginalization, discrediting by madness, invocation of ghostly influence, desire for death and proffered violence--signifies the unbodied thoughts that are otherwise lost to signification. Philaster succeeds in the end as the one who has "caught my Jelfe" by violating the violation of his bodily person.

Phila[ster] problematizes meaning and understanding with a mode of indirection whereby Dion's complaint that "An[swers] more direct I could not get" (II.i) is commonplace. Philaster appreciates the inadequacy of words when he threatens Bellario with: "Tell me thy thoughts; for I will know the leaſt / That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart / To know it" (III.i); words alone never reach the heart of the matter. Beaumont and Fletcher have constructed a play in which verbally, nobody understands anybody; it is in vain that Arathusa asks her father to "let me vnderstand

you." All that is understood in *Philaſter* are falsehoods and misrepresentations. The king determines of Arathusa that "I will haue her cleerd or buried" (V.i) and the spectator gathers that in his realm to be "cleer" is to be buried under a meaning that is never clear and always awaits clarification in vain. *Philaſter* plays with ambiguity that begs for clarification of what "I meane" (I.i) or "what meane you" (V.i) or what "is ... [o meant" (I.i). Life in these terms depends on discrediting and fighting words which "if I did beleeeue" (V.i) would not be outlived. The written text of *Philaſter* betrays a resistance of censorship. The questionable signifiers allow the spectator to glimpse unconscious Real content through the proffered conscious Symbolic content. The mediating Imaginary, with its release of desire in a "non-verbal" semiotic register, signals movement from the unconscious to the conscious realm. Beaumont and Fletcher's marginalized story of desire is the corrective to the main story of usurpation in *Philaſter*--its alternative story contradicting the present line just as its "non-verbal" register discloses the actual character that the misleading verbal one cannot reach. *Philaſter* involves making "what I haue knowne" unconsciously, to be consciously "as publique as a print" by giving rein to the normally censored promptings of "the language [subjects] / Are born in" (II.i). This language is signified by the desire that all bodies are instinctually given license to speak "free and commonly" in popular revolt against pretentious constraints.

Constraints are no match for the heart that refuses to be confined in *Philaſter*. The unaware king asks the overwrought Philaster of "the iniuries you aime

at in your riddles," to which Philaster challenges "Dare you be f'till my King" in light of his "fufferance" and "griefes" and "broken fortunes" and "want's" (I.i). Philaster suggests that if the king "had my eyes," born of his exacting experience, he would see things differently and would not presume to be Philaster's king. Dion marks the king as the "regardleffe King" (III.i), discrediting him as heartless, regardless, or blind to the fact that he is not regarded as a king by his subjects. Philaster knows the remedy and elicits it. He says to Bellario that it is only when "thy heart will melt" that "thou wilt vtter all," because only the broken or impaired or pressured or violated heart can speak. In finally abdicating to him, the king solicits Philaster to "Be your felfe" with an acknowledgement that "I haue wrong'd you"; the king makes way for Philaster to "be what you were borne to" at the only juncture of the drama in which the king has allowed that "my heart fpeakes" (V.i).

Phila[ster] stages "what you dare imagine" (II.i) in a solicitation of the imaginative realm which counteracts the unimaginative obtaining one. In thus accommodating the unconventional, the stage solicits the desiring gaze into an awareness of the lack that is repressed by the coercive Symbolic eye. Philaster wishes, conventionally, that "like beafts, we could not grieue our felues, / With that we fee not" (III.i). Beaumont and Fletcher have shown society to be bestial for judging only on the basis of what is seen—which is misleading--while discounting the unseen--which is all-motivating. Arathusa asks "Where fhall a woman turne her eyes / To

finde out con[tancy?]"—*Phila[ter* silently gestures inward, where one's focus is beyond the distraction and manipulation of external forces.

The inward turn is pivotally manifested in the play by the dream. When Dion, for example, bids good night by saying "May your dreames be true to you" (II.i), the spectator is alerted to the operation of another level in the play, whereby such manifestations as dreams are all that is true. Dreams are, after all, credited with the preventative uprooting of Bellario and with the restorative resolve of Philaster. Dion says of his wayward daughter that she "Has vndertooke a tedious pilgrimage" which he says was "for the penance but of an idle dreame" that is later seen to be a self-sacrificing love (I.i). Philaster couches a treasonous impulse within a dream of his father who "giues me [hapes" that he acknowledges he must "[uppre[ss," but that overturn his downturn by the king.

In taking steps to reclaim her identity from the misrepresentations to which it has been subject, Arathusa recognizes the discordance and incongruence between inward and outward selves. This is exemplified by Arathusa's suggestion that Bellario "was di[gui[ed" (IV.i) as she is herself under the weight of others' misjudgements. The disguise of Bellario is, no less than the dream of Philaster, "a [trange found out antidote" (II.i) to counteract the reigning ill of "this regardle[ss King" (III.i). Bellario must, in the end, "di[couer all" (V.i). However, she does this not by fulfilling the king's command to "[peake" publically but rather, by speaking privately with Dion, whom she identifies as her father. In this context only, she admits that "my tongue /

Vrg'd by my heart, ſhall vtter all the thoughts / My youth hath knowne." Such is a version of "your owne word" that the king says to Philaster will grant liberty.

The many divides noted in *Philaſter* are predicated on the divide of words. The revolutionary Captain calls on those "nimble tongs" (V.i) that specifically "forget your mother" because it is the repression of instinctual drive and of enduring relation to the mother that enables language as a Symbolic function. The prevailing system of "Gibberifh" to which he alludes is born of a "lacke" of maternal unity for the Symbolic subject, making language, ironically, an inadequate "mother tongue" that provides small recompense for the loss of the mother. The Captain prevails on the people to "ſet your mouthes / Vp" with the "cry *Philaſter*," which revolutionary cry signifies the only effective communication in the play. The system which the Captain would reject is disclosed in the operation of Pharamond. Pharamond is relieved, after sampling the sharp wit of Gallatea, to find Megra who "giues good words" (II.i)—good words here denoting those words which adhere to the conventional formulae. Such words are discredited by the sensible characters with whom the spectator is to identify. It is the insincere "lynes" and "neate poetry" and "pretty begging blankes" which Megra admires in Pharamond—the sweet nothings—which, in saying nothing, effect the downfall of everything. In *Philaſter*, Symbolic language is a dead-end. The body of language breaks down repeatedly and does not do justice. Philaster is considered a threat by the unjust order because he obstinately retains "my ſelfe about me," which silently makes claims more powerful and credible than any advanced by the pretenders

who are his superiors and whose "offer'd language" amounts to nought (I.i). Under the circumstance, a "non-verbal" register is called upon to stage otherwise unsymbolizable communications.

The "Countrey Fellow" distinguishes between the obfuscation of rhetoric and the clarity of physical contact. The words of the Court hunting party are an indecipherable noise to the "Countrey Fellow" who "can heare nothing but [howling" (IV.i) in their verbalizations. He resorts to reading actions when words fail him: "I vnder[stand you not; but I know the rogue has hurt you," he declares to Arathusa whom Philaster has wounded. The "Countrey Fellow" responds with actions which he deems more effective than words: "I know not your rethoricke, but I can lay it on if you touch the woman," he warns Philaster. At this pivotal juncture for Arathusa and Philaster, the "Countrey Fellow," and with him the spectator, indeed "haue [eene [omething yet" which words could not convey.

The forest in which the "Countrey Fellow" is at home serves in *Phila[ster* to deconstruct the conventional terms which pervade everybody. These are shown to break under the strain of the broken bodies that are left in their wake. Philaster initially tries to impose conventional terms on it. Disillusioned, he conventionally covets a pastoral withdrawal "in the[se woods" where he imagines that if he "dig'd [him] [elfe a Caue," he would be protected from the violations that he has confronted (IV.i). But these are only clarified by his experience in the woods. Bellario contradicts the pastoral myth by describing herself as having become "A wretched

creature wounded in the woods / By beasts." The spectator thus perceives the insufficiency of the pastoral alternative--the myth of it--when Bellario, who trusts that "Nothing assaults me here" is instead confronted with the inescapability of passion and desire and with the instrumentality of the body to the most fundamental and vital of communications. *Philaster* contains both currents of pastoral conceptualization--Arcadian and Realistic--the former as the idealistic preserve of withdrawal or retreat sought after by Philaster and the latter as the indifferent trial for the unsuspecting which the despondent Arathusa finds it to be when she follows "boldly" her "feete" instead of her "troubled head" into its precincts (much as the wandering Actaeon, to whom she alludes in the myth of Diana). What the forest functions as, in both instances, is "a prelude to self-discovery (Leach 44)--a prelude to the characters' integration with a society rehabilitated to accommodate their own terms.

The body in *Philaster* signifies what cannot be represented in the available register--abjected and unreachable content. Philaster experienced himself as being forfeit to the Other. He calls his usurpation his fate and claims that he himself is "dead" because of it (I.i). His father's death invades life as Philaster's purported "factions spirit" which requires suppression insofar as it is capable of undoing the presenting order. Philaster is subject at once to this anarchic spirit and to the usurping king. He is the very locus of abjection where "an Other has settled in place and stead of what will be 'me'" (Kristeva, *Powers*: 10): the "Other" being the usurping king and "me" the actual king as signified by the ghost of the dead king. Abjection discloses

that other voice--in this case of Philaster's ghostly usurped father--that goes unrecognized in the Other's discourse. The unspeakable gap in Philaster's story is recuperated by the composite of Philaster and his dead father which enables an alternative signification of Philaster--the usurped and actual king--that the imposter would have censored and silenced. In the resurrection of the double death undergone by both his father and Philaster which transforms his father's death into his life, Beaumont and Fletcher construct a replay of the subject's unwilling entrance into an unaccommodating oppositional order, exhausted by the restorative play on its margins by which Philaster regains the throne. It is the shift between center and margin that constitutes *Phila[ster]*: its titular figure a restored king who has undergone marginalization to keep his desire alive in an effective way.

In the play, characters live only when they have to "Shift" (IV.i). In order to shift from a register of falsehood and misrepresentation that keeps misleading characterizations in circulation, these subjects must shift to another register which, in being "non-verbal," provides the corrective capable of disclosing actual character. In *Phila[ster]*, "my wounds" and the willingness to suffer instead of evade them, provide the only credible "marke to know me" and by which to correctly characterize the subject. It is not, as Radel would have it, that Philaster "retreats behind rhetoric" (136) but rather, that in his world there is only rhetoric until somebody is put on the line to problematize and discount the words that would else have their way at the expense of actuality. In *Phila[ster]*, it is only when the word becomes the sword--

involving the body and the heart—that the point is made, in what amounts to a counteracting rather than a playing out of the set script. The play discloses that those who refuse to perpetuate a lie must cease to speak in word and speak only in deed. *Phila[ster]* disposes of "rhetorical absolutism" (Radel 133) in the same stroke as it deposes monarchal absolutism—both being the effect of weak words that cannot be backed up or defended. Since there is shown to be nothing in language worthy of being "live[d] up to" (136) it can only, like the shaky throne upon which it rests, be lived down, by "liuing actions" (V.i) in place of "dying words." Words, *Phila[ster]* shows, merely succeed in "killing truth" which only a "damned act" can restore (IV.i). Philaster does not accept or get over his subjection by language; he cuts his way through it.

The sword is the instrument that reaches where words cannot reach: "take this [sword, / And [earch how temperate a heart I haue," Philaster implores Arathusa (IV.i). The sword crossed the word to seize power in the bloody usurpation and it traces the erased word back to its inception in the spilt blood of succession by which Philaster has "caught" himself as a sovereign, not a subject. Philaster's wounds are described as the "scratches" that the Captain promises will damage Pharamond's crown as though it were "[scratchd with a Musket" (V.i). Bellario does illustrate that the sword can lie no less than the word, when she marks the sword with her own blood to conceal and protect the identity of her beloved culprit. However, because the sword in this instance lies in the hand of a woman who lies in disguise as a man, it is

contaminated. Nevertheless, the contamination is a necessary prelude to Philaster's utterance of his "owne word" because it takes into account the heart and the body, in ways that the usurping and subjugating words put into circulation by the king do not. Violence thus exposes the self beside the words which demean it. The sword murders the symbol which murders the sense inspiring life by wresting control from it. Control is then accorded to its victim, who emerges victorious from combat with its victimizer. The sword which is the instrument of *de facto* rule becomes also the instrument of *de jure* rule, undercutting the usurpation of the subject in every sense. Characters in *Philaster* cut the psychic other in, only by cutting the social Other out.

Philaster's place in society depends on the Other--his current sovereign--but also on the other--his dead father--who provides Philaster with an excuse to say and to do that which countermands his usurpation. In *Philaster*, the non-existent subject (both the dead king and Philaster himself) makes an unreal difference. The ghost of Philaster's father is the presence behind the play which sets it in motion. This ghost haunting the margins of *Philaster* serves as a reminder of the death in the lost and lacking social subject who is nobody. It makes present the presently unseen hidden life of the social subject. The ghost of the usurped king presides over an environment of loss and lack and nothing, attributable to the social identity which reinforces them. Philaster's father signifies a prior experience which remains alive to return and to agitate. The presence of the dead usurped king haunts the stage in the preoccupations of the characters who populate it and it merits a direct invocation by

Philaster who calls his father's spirit "A dangerou[s] ſpirit" which "bids me be a King" (I.i). This ghost in *Philaſter* thus serves as a pretext for a censored and submerged psycho-social subtext. The ghost is extraordinarily made to bear all of the unspeakable significations that conventional significations lack. It enables an indirect discourse for the abused subject. Philaster connects the "factious ſpirit" with the dream state whereby it "diues / Into my fancy, and there giues me ſhapes, / That kneele, and doe me ſeruice, cry me King." Philaster comments on the presenting situation in terms of an absented order so as to comment on its senselessness. He acknowledges that the threatening spirit of his dead father which he invokes requires that "I'll ſuppreſſe him." The king, however, recognizing the power of the suppressed to return, vows to "diſpoſſeſſe you / Both of life and ſpirit" as he has already dispossessed Philaster of his crown and identity. The king is aware that the ghost Philaster invokes is seductive as a repository for unacceptable impulses. The ghost can bear the burden of impulses, motivations and actions that living subjects have an interest in not owning or admitting. The ghost, thereby, functions as a external manifestation, crystallizing an identity otherwise unspeakable. The supernatural inspires the natural to depose the unnatural. Bellario even confused Philaster with a God: "I ſaw a God / I thought, but it was you" (V.i); Philaster incarnates the repressed and so is considered a natural saviour.

The ghost, together with death, violence and purported madness in *Philaſter* serves to disarticulate what the divided subject cannot articulate. Each

maintains the ghost of a presence which refuses to settle for imposed absence. Death remains in *Phila[ster]* an effect of the imagination which reinforces the other imaginative possibilities that desire puts into circulation. The subjects manifest the murderous impulses of the Symbolic order that kills to signify; they deconstruct the linguistically constructed self in a counteraction, employing the sword to destroy the social self that has been raised with misrepresentative words which absent experience no less than does death. It is a social death that is perpetrated in *Phila[ster]* where everybody is only seemingly known in the social context. Philaster sees that the subject lives as "but a shadow" (III.i) that is different "I'th morning" than "at night" when the darkness within the world of the body is shed on the body of the world. The play ends with a dispelling of the shadow of public spectacle with which it began. It ends when "all is quiet as this dead of night, / As peaceable as sleep" (V.i) which itself brings a social death. It is "peace" that sets the terms for Philaster's "selfe" of congruence. He proclaims, finally, that "I am my selfe, / Free as my thoughts are," confirming that these were heretofore repressed and distorted by his usurpation and subjection to a false order. Now, he is congruent: "I am what I doe desire to be, your friend, / I am what I was borne to be, your Prince." Philaster ultimately assumes the power to "make your word truth" by tempering it with the force of desire—the landscape of the mind and heart and body—heretofore unheeded, and "without which, all the Land / Discover'd yet, will serve me for no v[e]" (I.i).

CHAPTER 4

BUSSY D'AMBOIS: A TRAGEDIE

Similar to *Philaster* and *Arathusa*, *Bussy D'Ambois* fights against what is said about him, which does not address him. Representation is problematized and subjectivity is interrogated in both plays. Bussy contradicts mythic pronouncements with the evidence of his self. His death betrays the dead-end of myths as it rescues his life from the strangle-hold of convention.

George Chapman's play, *Bully D'Ambois: A Tragedie* (1607), is Chapman's colossal joke about "forging a Colofus" (I.i) from an inescapable and unliveable script. Bussy is forged by his society no less than that society forges the metaphoric "Coloficke Statues" which, from their invocation at outset, preside as larger-than-life presences over all. Representation is lacking in respect of Bussy as it is in respect of the hollowed-out statues to which Bussy alludes. These serve, for Chapman, to show that classical allusions are not all that they appear at first glance. Mythic statuary is the touchstone, invoked at the beginning of the play, which "great men ... doe imitate." But the statues are discerned to be "Vnskilfull" in a note of caution that applies equally to Bussy and to the mythic Hercules he is presented as. Though the popular Herculean associations assigned to him highlight a ferocious and

defiant strength, his life is an exercise in redefining this myth. Bussy's experience is Herculean in that both share a tortured and ambiguous identity; Bussy parallels the man-god-hero insofar as he does not expect things to be cast in stone. He knows that "None can be alwaies one" (IV.i). Bussy, thus, exemplifies the "Protean Law" (III.i) which Hercules had to contend with in one of his twelve labors for immortality. Hercules wrestled with Nereus's Protean and elusive nature in order to learn the location of the Garden of the Hesperides containing the Golden Apples (Morford and Lenardon 364). The attempt to fix or stabilize an identity, be it in a statue or a story, results only in an "abus'd creation" (V.i) of incongruence. In Chapman's play, both statues and myths are mere "Heroique formes" (I.i) incompatible with life and disclosing the fictionality of the subject.

There are those who would claim that the myth of Hercules is used to legitimize Bussy's self-assertions. Gordon Braden argues that: "The story of Hercules, so invoked, gives mythic legitimacy to Bussy's claims that his own detachment from the social norms and constraints of his milieu fits the pattern of an older style of heroic independence" (175). But to think thus would be to suspect, as does Guise, that Bussy has a hidden, illegitimate agenda that needs a palatable cover so that "the manly freedome / That you [o much professe, heereafter prooue not / A bold and glorious licence to depraue" (III.i). Contrary to Braden's assertion, the myth does not legitimize "Bussy's claims," since it is not he who invokes it. Bussy's entire difficulty is in being compelled to live under the assigned reputation of mythic proportions.

Rather than upholding the one-sided mythic identity, Bussy is a rival character who labors to liberate himself in a rival story that serves to renounce the pronouncements made about him. This revisionism fits with Lee Bliss's argument, in *The World's Perspective*, that Chapman's play has a "dominant pattern of statement-counterstatement" (62) as the playwright counterpoises "heroic potential with reductionist interpretations" (64), the better to show, by a technique of "juxtaposition" (63), that Bussy's "unheroic, even antiheroic aspects" problematize interpretation. Bussy exposes the myths for the groundless linguistic constructions that they are. He mourns what he was "Made to expre[ss]"—that being the "[t]rength, valure, vertue" (V.i) which he could not carry. Richard Ide finds a "disjunction between Bussy's heroic idealism and his unworthy actions ..." (91). The idealism, I suggest, is not Bussy's but rather, the unfitting assumption foisted upon him; Bussy's actions are, indeed, anything but fabled. The Hercules parallels reflect as much on those who use them as on Bussy; they attend to only a select aspect of the myth, and so underscore the identity problems of the subject that Bussy experiences. In the popular tradition in which it is invoked, the Hercules allusions are fixated upon "scenes of conflict and of battle, of bloodshed and the massacre of men." Homer ascribes this savagery to the outward show of "the golden belt he wore as a baldric over his breast" (Bk. XI, 610). Chapman excavates the workings within that breast. He shows that if Bussy makes differences, it is to convey difference. Chapman's Bussy fights for recognition in his own right and on his own terms; he will not be like the English that Henry defends,

who "much wrong their reall worth, / In affectation of outlandiſh Scumme" (1.i).

Bussy does not consider his character as subject to justification, with the result that he is mortally subject to misreadings.

Buſſy D'Ambois is a double-dealing play of jeopardized identity. In it, Chapman betrays the ideological construction of myths by showing what is left out of the limited, conventionally selective popular accounts. It is this refused, abjected content that demeans and redefines the text, whose margins it haunts like the ghost that Bussy promises to be. Chapman scratches the conventional surface of myths as he works their depths to discover the most disconcerting implications for human identity. His subtext, in *Buſſy D'Ambois*, is the text of these mythical allusions that are not immediately apparent in conventional terms. By pushing beneath the surface of the myth invoked, Chapman opens a revisionary window on the play; he liberates Hercules as a man, not just a problematic hero or a god. Paul Diel offers an illuminating reading of the Hercules myth that is apt to my revisionist reading of Chapman's play. According to Diel, "The story interweaves the two aspects of the symbol 'Heracles': the hero of purification, on one hand, and on the other, the faltering man who is frequently a victim of his own weakness" (177-178). Diel maintains that Hercules's destiny is shaped by "the opposition between Zeus and Hera --between the strength of the spirit and the gift of love--which is reflected in the myth of Heracles" (174). Fundamentally, both Bussy and Hercules struggle for humanization and the recognition of this aspect in them. To this end, Chapman brings

the audience from the cosmic implications of mythology down to the individual ones which redefine it. Bussy accomplishes this movement by working a practical twist on the myths: he problematizes the capacity of "each priuate Arme" to "Jphere the world" (I.i); he humanizes the plight of Icarus by noting that "men that fall low muſt die, / As well as men caſt headlong from the ſkie"; he associates "Protean Law" (III.i) in a deflationary way with being "great," and he compares great men's titles with so many Hydra's heads. What Bussy's reworking shows is that myths are ideologically constructed and appropriated in a way that reveals more about the one assigning them than about the one to whom they are assigned. In other words, the myth reflects on the "Raiſers Jpirit" (I.i) because it is evident that "no man riſeth by his reall merit," either in stature or in statuary.

Montsurry holds that "each naturall agent workes but to this end, / To render that it works on, like it Jelfe" (III.i) because, as he for one demonstrates, a selfish reading is the only one possible. Montsurry acts faithlessly out of what he is faithlessly convinced is an abused honor; Monsieur acts out of a sense that his ambition has been betrayed; the courtiers and attending women act out of a sense of envy and frustrated desire. Such personal issues color the way in which Bussy is viewed. The spectator's insight comes from knowing the individual agendas sufficiently to compensate for the characterizations advanced. The spectator fills in the gaps in the limited characters' selective misreadings. Deborah Montuori asserts that: "the play is not about a superior man's fall but rather about a man's misreading

of the world around him and his own role in it" (296). The misreading, I suggest, is not on the part of Bussy, but on the part of the world, which misreads him through the distorting lenses of myth. Henry's misreading of Bussy rebounds with a vengeance when he is "put in his place" by the very figure he blindly romanticizes. Henry describes Bussy in idealistic Golden Age terms, ascribing to his character the intact and exquisite sensibility of a bygone time when: "No enuie, no diſjunction had diſſolu'd, / Or pluck'd out one ſticke of the golden fagot, / In which the world of Saturne was compris'd, / Had all beene held together with the nerues, / The genius and th'ingenuous ſoule of D'Ambois" (III.i). Henry's invocation of the Golden Age of Saturn foreshadows Bussy's upsetting of the mythical ideal, just as Hercules's father did when Jupiter supplanted Saturn. The only aspect of Saturn that Bussy takes on is the carnivaleque one; that of the festival of Saturnalia "when slaves had almost complete freedom of speech" (Morford and Lenardon 438). Such freedom Bussy maintains in the play, most notably with Monsieur in his challenge to "vtter ... The full and plaine ſtate of me" and "Euen from the roote of thy free heart, diſplay mee." Both come back to regicide—the end of Saturn—as "the ſubiect / Of all theſe your retir'd and ſole diſcourſes" (III.i). Even the crown that Bussy imagines impaling the king is called "Worthie of the head of Titan." As well as referring to Saturn's defeat by Jupiter, the image recalls the jealous Juno's inspiring the Titans to attack the child, Bacchus, whom they dismembered and devoured "as he was looking in a mirror" (Morford and Lenardon 208). This intriguing version coincides with Lacan's mirror stage split.

Jupiter, however, resurrects Bacchus's salvaged heart and in revenge, destroys the Titans, from whose ashes humankind emerge. This myth of humankind's origin posits a duality in these beings; they issue from the remains of the Titans' gross body and combine this with the pure soul of the god they consumed (209). Bussy's dual perspective discloses the dual nature of the myths invoked.

The binary of Bussy and Monsieur exhibit Hercules's constitutional duality as a demigod—the offspring of a god and a human—who, denied Juno's tempering of the potent gifts of his father, Jupiter, is forever subject to human weakness. Such dissipation of power he strives to subdue in his quest for immortality and for Juno's favor. Diel maintains that: "It is important to distinguish two aspects of the symbol 'Heracles'; the hero, son of Zeus, champion of the spirit, and the man, marked by Hera's disfavor, and threatened by banalization in the form of debauchery" (177). Such a struggle with the body is evident in Bussy's description of Monsieur, in which Bussy centers all the evil that he imagines on Monsieur's body, labelling it "foule" (III.i). Monsieur's "political head" is said to be "the curſt fount / Of all the violence, rapine, crueltie, / Tyrannie & Atheiſme flowing through the realme," from Monsieur's "[c]andalous" tongue, to his killing breath, to his kiss of "horror." Bussy, for the benefit of the lecherous Monsieur's understanding, equates evil and foulness with the body—dangerous in its uncontrolled and unpredictable passions and in its bloody and murderous instincts. Monsieur, for his part, describes Bussy in terms most apt for one that is his instrument—a being whose strongest qualities are perverted because not

informed by a "joule" and therefore, lacking in its own purpose: "That in thy valour
th'art like other naturals, / That haue strange gifts in nature, but no joule / Diffus'd
quite through, to make them of a peece...." The implication is that such a lack makes
the human instrument infinitely exploitable.

The Hercules myth, as Chapman uses it, is about a superhuman attempt to
rectify a lack in identity that splits body and soul into warring factions rather than
peaceful allies. Bussy's state mirrors that of the tormented demi-god. In death, Bussy
wonders, "is my bodie then / But penetrable flejh? And must my minde / Follow my
blood? Can my diuine part adde / No aide to th'earthly extremitie?" (V.i). He sees his
death as being unjust and proof that one can "Define life nothing but a Courtiers
breath," capable of lowering a victim as well as raising a victor. Thus, to Bussy, life
seems the "Dreame / But of a shadow" (I.i) that is always mediated, filtered and
contingent so that it never becomes the thing itself. Over the distance, it distorts and
deflects rather than reflects. It is only by looking "vpwards euen in death" (V.i) that
Bussy's soul, like Hercules's, is finally liberated from an appropriating (versus an
appropriate) court life that puts him into a "Passion of death" (I.i).

Paradoxically, it is only in death that Tamyra begins to live. Her love is
predicated on the associated risk, because she "cannot liue / Vnlesse I compasse that
that holds my death" (II.i). Tamyra chooses Bussy for a companion; he, like
Hercules emerging from Hades, has "Turn'd to Earth, aliue" (I.i). Bussy considers
himself "apt t'encounter death and hell" (V.i) unflinchingly. Tamyra vows to enter the

abyss that Bussy represents for her, "And cast my selfe off, as I ne're had beene" (II.i). Such an avowal suggests that Tamyra believes that with Bussy she can let go of the lie she has been living and the life that has not been hers. Tamyra's passion, like her self, has been imprisoned within the walls of the Court. Bussy helps her to see that her repressed passion "Exceeds his prisons strength that should containe it" and "Riots within me" so that "not my name and house / Nor my religion to this houre obseru'd / Can stand aboue it." Vertue for her is merely a word for everything that stands to be lost; when Tamyra no longer fears losing it, she gains it as more than a myth. Bussy and Tamyra defy the convention to become the thing itself.

Tamyra chooses Bussy for his very quality as "a man vnknowne" (II.i), in defiance of the conventional labels that would define and circumscribe him. He can, thus, elicit in Tamyra the woman who would else be unknown and conventionally inaccessible. Tamyra admits to Bussy that: "in thy close embraces, / I haue set open all the doores of danger / To my encompass't honor, and my life" (III.i). Bussy serves to liberate Tamyra from the constraining conventionalities whose bounds he has himself burst. Bussy's seduction is that he offers his fellows not only congruence with their own desires, but life in a non-appropriating society of congruent kindred spirits. Such a society would, in effect, constitute an alternative society like the one that he, Tamyra and the Friar belong to, in which "three powers" in "one soule" are "vnited."

Similar to Hercules in his fight to secure the lacking side of the self, Bussy becomes for his single-minded detractors "your Ghost to haunt you" (I.i) with the

potential hidden life that they have forsaken. Bussy is the ghost of a presence that will not be denied--the ghost of the self that is lost when one speaks and lives only for the Other. In keeping with the death motif, Guise nominates Bussy's hand "the Hermean rodde" (III.i). Hermes guides souls to Hades, and Hermes figures prominently in Hercules's life: assisting him in extracting Cerberus, the Hound of Hell, in the final of the twelve labors; assisting him by instituting the Delphic cure for Hercules's murderous madness by auctioning him into slavery; and advancing Hercules's purpose by providing what would become the object for the Argonaut expedition--his gift of the golden-fleeced ram (see Morford and Lenardon). Thus, like Bussy, he helps to pave the way for a clarifying self-definition.

Chapman's Bussy has his own monsters to battle. The biggest of these is the mythic monster which Bussy deconstructs as an unfitting epic/heroic conception. Bussy discloses the other, human, side of both myth and mirror. In the reflective state that Bussy constructs, everybody must "Jhew your owne face in your owne affaire" (V.i) because the ground is destabilized and the preconceptions shaken about them. Bussy does not accept a social identity won at the expense of his personal identity. He becomes "mad as Ajax" (III.i) for taking on another identity instead of the proffered social identity. The "madness" marks his death but it is really only the death of his socially-dead body and the fictional mediation that maintains it, at the expense of the corporeal body which gets nothing to live on. Bussy, thus, blurs the lines between life and death, just as between dreaming and waking. Monsieur judges of

him that "Thou dream'st awake," all because Bussy unabashedly allows himself to experience the forbidden. No zone is off-limits to Bussy; he is dangerous because unbounded, and this makes him unfit for his unheroic, bounded society. Monsieur slyly promises to outfit Bussy in a manner that will liberate "thy long [mothered] spirit" as long as he consents to "Be rul'd by me then" (I.i). Bussy upsets their best laid plans by liberating himself into a self-government that rivals the Court's self-serving government.

That Bussy is mired in a non-epic society bounded by rules and restrictions is exemplified in Montsurry's declaration that while "I am apt / To outrages that I [shall euer rue," he will, nevertheless, "not passe the verge that boundes a Christian, / Nor breake the limits of a man nor husband" (V.i). To these "boundes / Of manhoode, noble[ss], and religion" he pays only lip service, as his barbaric torture of Tamyra demonstrates. Tamyra knows that if Montsurry forgets himself in his self-conscious adherence to a self-serving code, then she has no chance; she will be "dead / As you are absent" (II.i)—his absence to himself renders her absent and makes her as dead as he is to himself. In his "self-denial" of living a false ideal, Montsurry passes what is, in effect, a death sentence on himself and everybody else, including Tamyra.

Bussy would make himself the axis of the world, achieving the self-government sought by the divided Hercules when he assumed the burden of the heavens from Atlas, freeing him to pluck the Golden Apples in his own quest for immortality before he was tricked into reassuming the load (Morford and Lenardon

364). Such indirection and innovation is Bussy's byword as he is beset by a world in which "the direct is crooked" (II.i) and indirection leads everywhere, like the labyrinthine ways of the Minotaur's maze. Bussy seeks to cast off the forms that beset him, whether they be the heroic mythic moulds that would immobilize him as a statue, or the restrictive "Court forme" that would, likewise, make "Semi-gods / Of their great Nobles" (I.i). Tamyra recognizes that she would have been spared much grief had she never probed beyond the "forme" or had she been content with a "common" life, numbing "All sense of scruple" (V.i). Instead, she is deemed offensive for trying to prevent an offense to her body. What distinguishes the actual character of a Tamyra or a Bussy from the moulded character of their fellows is that they do not accept that "forme giues al their essence" (II.i). Form alone is represented by the vacuous statues alluded to in the opening of the play. Hence, the play is all about what becomes of those "Dispos'd to Court conditions" (I.i) and what becomes of those, like Tamyra and Bussy, who reject such conditions.

Bussy maintains that he violates "no iust law" (II.i) and so, in turn, he expects not to be violated by the law. Bussy admits that he does not rest in the law as a remedy; he is not averse to being "King my selfe" and doing "a iustice that exceeds the law," because "Who to himselfe is law, no law doth neede, / Offends no King, and is a King indeede." In Bussy's self-government, he knows where he ends and the Other begins. He is careful not to place himself under obligation to one who will make claims upon his sovereignty, telling Henry: "What you haue giuen ... is euer

yours." If he succumbs to their imposed constructions, Bussy knows that he would become, as Jonathan Dollimore points out, "not in fact autonomous but the more exploitable" (185).

Bussy D'Ambois is riven by the divisions of the statues—hollow outward shows of magnificence—and of the demi-god, Hercules—he of the immortal soul in the mortal body. These divisions are replicated in the bodies within the play, from the hypocritical Monsieur, to the dichotomous courtiers, to the repressed Tamyra who senses that "Our bodies are but thicke clouds to our ſoules; / Through which they cannot ſhine when they deſire" (III.i). Bussy, like Hercules battling Thanatos and emerging from Hades, has the experience of his own liberating "rebirth" from poverty to prosperity, and so can to guide Tamyra to "Diſperſe our paſſions fumes." Tamyra blames "vrgent deſtiny" and "Nature" that "Enforceth my offence" so that "We cannot keepe our conſtant courſe in vertue." She manifests Hercules's split between natural and divine aspects of being, which reflects Bussy's experience of the "fraile condition of ſtrength, valure, vertue" (V.i). Bussy becomes "a hollow tree" shorn of its "vertuous treaſurie," like the Tree of Life which Hercules robs of its Golden Apples in the Garden of the Hesperides. Bussy's motivation, like Hercules's before him, is "to try to control his own weakness, and not the world" (Diel 176); self-government is the quest of both. For Bussy as for Hercules, "It is not by ruling the world that he will accompliſh his deſtiny, but by maſtering his own deſires" (176). The presumption of any other kind of mastery would defeat this aim, as Henry acknowledges: "Kings had

neuer borne / Such boundleſſe eminence ouer other men, / Had all maintain'd the ſpirit
and ſtate of D'Ambois" (III.i).

Chapman's Bussy believes, subversively, that people enthrall themselves and so defeat themselves by vesting more power in outside forces than they claim for themselves: "our faulty apprehenſions forge / The formes of Dragons, Lions, Elephants, / When they hold no proportion" (III.i). Bussy perceives that people create their own bug-bears to exercise their fears, instead of conquering them after the manner of Hercules; after killing the Nemean Lion, he bore the skin of the defeated "king" of beasts (Morford and Lenardon 359), just as Bussy is said to bear "a Lions caſe" (I.i), signifying his own defeat of a "king." Bussy's "disguise" serves to make him more himself, in contradistinction from the courtly apes who are "apt to leape out of themſelues" in their radical disfigurement, epitomized by Montsurry on his murderous mission in the Friar's weed. The making of "Horns at Mountſurry" (IV.i) signifies cuckoldry, but it is also an allusion to the golden horns on the Cerynean stag which Hercules wounded and carried off in one of his twelve labors, denying responsibility when confronted by Diana (Morford and Lenardon 359). From this perspective, the episode represents not a betrayal of the other as it might appear on the surface, but a betrayal of the self in a lie, which Bussy and Tamyra reject.

Critics of the play are wont to see Bussy as self-deceived, and there is support in the play for such a reading: Bussy is scoffed at as "a fellow that has newlie ſhak'd off his ſhackles" in "one of the beſt liggies that euer was acted"; Bussy's fellows

predict that by dint of a "fixt imagination" he will be overcome with delusions of grandeur and imagine "him[elfe to be the Mon]sieur" (I.i). Richard Ide contends that Bussy is "blind to his own limitations" (88) and Deborah Montuori that Bussy has a "mistaken perception of himself" (287) because he does not "recognize himself, his true possibilities and his limitations" (290). It is not, as Ide suggests, that Bussy is deluded into imagining "that his heroic conception of self can be unmetaphored into actual behavior in a degenerate society" (87) because the "heroic conception" belongs not to Bussy but to his society. Bussy's "attempt to unmetaphor an epic conception of self" (75), is an endeavor not to invest himself with perceived exaltedness but, quite the contrary, to disclose such a conception as deadening. Chapman means to undermine the "heroic conception of self" (87), which is precisely why "An inconsequential quarrel has led to a heroic duel, an adulterous tryst into the heroic cause of chivalric service" (86). The heroic associations are not Bussy's; Bussy tries to demean those demeaning representations, and in this way becomes the monster that society has created and which he strives to vanquish. Heroism is mythical, unsupportable, and unsustainable in Bussy's unheroic milieu. Bussy knows that such a conception does not fit him, and his life discloses that the myth does not fit the circumstance. Bussy is not "like an Atlas vnderneath the King" (III.i) as he is made out to be by envious courtiers. If he is like Atlas, it is only in the sense of being compelled to assume a punishing burden. As I see it, the limitations are not in Bussy but rather, in the story in which he is made to play a part that does not contain him.

James Krasner is closer to my conception when he attributes the incongruence between "The Bussy described by Monsieur" and "the Bussy on the stage" to "the limitation of Monsieur's use of language" (115). This, I submit, is a borrowed language that cannot do any subject justice because it is nothing but a dead end. That Bussy's language does not address the subject is evident when he says of "'murther'd'" that "That word had ne're beene nam'd had all beene D'Ambois" (V.i), with a sense of self intact.

Chapman's play, ironically, focuses on the reasons not to believe what is written; what is cast in stone is not credible, from the empty colossal statues alluded to in the opening of the play, to the fragmented heroic forms which can take on an unconventional spin as well as a conventional one, to the enforced bloody writs extracted under torture and hoped by the victims to be beyond belief. Montsurry explains to Tamyra that Monsieur "would haue reſolu'd mee ... not by his word, but writing" (IV.i). However, the play shows how writing dissoles everything, instead of resolving anything. As he tortures Tamyra, Montsurry equates writing with singing and with speaking (V.i). Each is as seductive as the Sirens' singing in the received myth, but in each, a dimension of the actual is lost since voice is taken, not freely given. Under torture, Tamyra agrees that "He write, but in my bloud that he may ſee, / Theſe lines come from my wounds and not from me"; one writes only from a wound. It is not only Tamyra who "writ the ſummons of thy death: / The forced ſummons, by this bleeding wound." The Symbolic order, no less than torture, makes the victim speak words not its own; both take voice instead of giving it. Brachiano in *The White*

Devil is the personification of such a systematic appropriation of the voice; in his first scene with her, he indicates his desire to insinuate himself "into [Vittoria's] boſome" so that she would "Powre out inſtead of eloquence my vowes." Such appropriation is graphically displayed in the torture of Daniel's Philotas. The point made by each of these plays is that death merely figures the non-existence of the subject in a Symbolic order that kills to signify.

Chapman shows that what is experienced can never be included in what is written or spoken. When Tamyra challenges Monsieur to speak what he knows, he retorts enigmatically, but aptly, "No tis enough I feele it" (IV.i). What is felt is not what is written and it is not what is spoken, rendering knowledge fundamentally incommunicable. When Montsurry wonders who can "ſet fit outcries for a ſoule in hell?" (V.i) he is close to acknowledging the inadequacy of received accounts. Nuncius experiences the same when he is charged with giving an eyewitness account of Bussy's battle, but has to admit that "A tale ſo worthie, and ſo fraught with wonder, / ſticks in my iawes, and labours with euent" (II.i). He becomes, indeed, like the "Lion, skard with the throat of a dunghill Cocke" (I.i).

Chapman's allusive play demonstrates that knowledge is lacking because voice is lacking; and the lacking voice is one's own voice--not an epic voice which overwhelms one's own voice at every turn. I agree with Krasner that "The epic voice, like the epic eternizer, is a thing of the past" (118) but that does not prevent things of the past from being constantly and unfittingly applied to the present, however much

the present is merely a shadow of the past. The subject is constructed out of borrowed words which do not address it. Bussy does not put any more store in such lacking, treacherous, and fatal words than does his mythic parallel, Hercules. In Ovid's rendition, Hercules claims that: "'I am better with my hands than with my tongue: provided I can defeat you in the fight, you can have your verbal victory!'" (Bk. IX, 204). The corporeal body can disembody the lacking body of language.

I agree with Montuori that: "The alteration of his original heroic ideal begins as the man beneath the mythic surface is detected" (290)--provided that the "heroic ideal" is understood to be harbored not by Bussy but by his society. The "man beneath the mythic surface" is available for detection by virtue of Chapman's use of a mythic parallel for Bussy--Hercules--who is of ambiguous identity as a man-god-hero. Chapman's play reads differently for the different identities assigned to Bussy--human or (anti)heroic--and the valence of degeneration--Bussy or his society--shifts accordingly. Montsurry unwittingly poses the question that motivates the entire play: "what troubled my true loue? my peace, / From being at peace within her better Jelfe" (III.i). The point of the play is that Tamyra's "better Jelfe" is lost in her constructed identity, whether it is, mythically, the equivalent of *Ave* or *Eve*. The violence of this constructed identity, denying her as Bussy's mythic baggage does him, transcends physical torture. Chapman plumbs those "infinite regions betwixt a womans tongue and her heart" to disclose their interception and non-communication. The mythic and legendary Tamyra and Bussy are no one living. It is, finally, Umbra's "old humanity"

(V.i) that is forsaken and lost in the epic perspective which cannot address anything other than itself. Ultimately, Bussy and Tamyra live down the myth which can never be lived out.

CHAPTER 5

THE SPANISH TRAGEDIE

Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedie* (1602) fleshes out the violence of constructed identity seen in *Bully D'Ambois*. Both plays graphically underscore the dead end of language--Tamyra through her torture and Hieronimo through his slaughter--as these characters go to extremes to defend the hidden life within their selves.

In Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedie* ("Newly corrected, amended, and enlarged with new additions of the Painters part, and others ..."), the ghost of Andrea can be considered, from a psychoanalytic perspective, to be in the order of the inexpressible and deathly Real. His desire--revenge for the disruption of his bodily desires--signifies a lack that frames the action of the play which it motivates, including Hieronimo's playlet, and mediates between the two orders; the determined Imaginary order containing the suffering group of players judged to be his friends, and the determining Symbolic order containing the suffered group of players judged in the end to be his foes. The friends are pleased at the end of the play, the foes pained. Kay

Stockholder places the "dreamer" Hieronimo in a position as "the figure in our dreams that we identify as ourselves when we awaken" (97). This situation is precisely what I take to be the Imaginary--the order in which "the specular image traps the subject in an illusory ideal of completeness" (Sarup 66). It is, I argue, the subject's desire to retain this ideal of fulfilment in life that results in the tragic enactments of Kyd's play. In what functions thus as an objective correlative of psychic life, Kyd's use of the framing ghost to pressure the Symbolic serves to disclose experiential content that is disallowed in the obtaining Symbolic constructs. The ghost is a constant reminder of that fulfilment which will always be denied to the Symbolic subject. If the ghost is sceptical of his desire being fulfilled in death--as is indicated by his constant prodding of his companion, Revenge--it is only because this desire was not fulfilled in his lifetime. As a ghost, Andrea's experience frames Kyd's play to signify the framing of all living subjects who are constructed in a way that deadens their most significant experiences. Hieronimo's spectacular playlet serves in conclusion to underscore the unliveable effects of the radical and tragic noncommunication between the limiting Symbolic order and the limited Real and Imaginary orders.

From the ghost's opening observations, it is evident that the terms of Andrea's life involved violence and lack of communication. Andrea recalls living "imprisoned," possessing a "secret," and being forced into "divorce." He indicates that because he was killed in a "conflict" and taken unprepared by "the Ferri-man of Hell," he had "to crave a passport for [his] wandering Ghost," at which point it was in dispute

as to whether he belonged with "Louers" or with "Martialisfies." As Kyd demonstrates, the compelled and compounded roles in which the subject is lost on earth are in the underworld reduced to a singular strain, in which the subject is able, at long last, to find his/her self. En route to "*Pluto's Court*" for a decision, the ghost of Andrea "[a]w more figh[s] then thou[and] tongues can tell, / Or pennes can write, or mortall harte[can thinke." Proserpine is permitted to decide on his doom and it is she who has Revenge "lead [Andrea's ghost] through the gates of Horror: / Where dreames haue pa[ss]age in the f[i]lent night" (I.i). Here dreams are not grounded as they are on earth, where "worldlings ground what they haue dreamd vpon" (III.i) in their rude awakening to an unfitting and an unliveable Symbolic "reality."

Dreams provide an alternative instinctual mode of communication that is not to be discounted in Kyd's play. While I disagree with Kay Stockholder's reading of *The Spanish Tragedie* as "Hieronimo's dream" (98), I nevertheless maintain that the Imaginary dream of fulfilment motivates the "plays" of Andrea and of Hieronimo, which are worked out in the Symbolic realm. Hieronimo and Isabella are shown to "haue had f[ra]nge dreames to night" (II.i)—on the eve of Horatio's murder—and Viceroy's forshadowing "nightly dreames haue told me" (I.i) of his son's impending demise. Dreams enable one to "feelingly perceiue" (III.i) what gets anaesthetized in the cold light of day when the senses, ironically, are made to "[s]leepe" and "Be deafe" and "Die" (II.i), as Balthazar explains it, the better to preserve the social self. In contrast to the prosaic Pedringano who maintains, "It is no dreame that I adventure

for" (III.i), Bel-imperia and Hieronimo live to fulfill their dream against a force that seeks to betray their dream as it did Horatio's. Horatio was fooled into believing that he would be honoured for bravery—even as a subject against a Prince—no less than Pedringano was fooled into thinking that he would be saved; the truth that Kyd demonstrates is that the subject is always violated in the association.

In Kyd's play, passions, too, get framed as the subject is politically appropriated; thus Andrea was appropriated as a courtier who lived on loan, as it were, to serve the needs of others, abdicating his life, in effect. Hence, Andrea comes into his own only in death. Bel-imperia, likewise, is appropriated into a marital alliance that is designed to forge a league between Spain and Portugal, where she functions as the "meanes to make vs firiends" (II.i). For Bel-imperia, as her uncle the Spanish king emphasizes, "her owne estate and ours" are linked and the state of both is politicized, as her private body is co-opted into the body politic. Kyd stages a counteractive circulation of desires and drives which overwhelm life as it is constructed. He stages the clash of desire and societal law as embodied by both Bel-imperia as a future queen and by Hieronimo as the Knight Marshall. *The Spanish Tragedie* is a play of their "restles passions" (III.i) which will not brook Symbolic limitations by the likes of Balthazar or of Lorenzo.

Critics such as Charles and Elaine Hallett read the play in terms of a subjective-objective dialectic centering on Hieronimo. I agree with them that Hieronimo imposes upon witnessed events "meanings derived from his own psyche"

(149); conventional meaning from the cultural script has, for Hieronimo, broken down in his unconventional *extremis*, where the old rules no longer apply. Hieronimo does not respond politically or diplomatically (at least, not without a sense of irony) as the others do; Hieronimo responds from within, not from without. If such a singular response by Hieronimo is to be considered "subjective," it does not correlate with an "objective" state in Kyd's play because Kyd problematizes the "objective" and discloses its political constructedness by the established princely powers. Hieronimo dies to escape subjugation to the established power and to translate the impulses of his violated psyche. Kay Stockholder reads Hieronimo's struggle as "the conflict between hierarchical and the nascent individualistic values" (106), but I read Hieronimo's struggle as a psychical, rather than a philosophical one. Kyd's play stages the return to an intact and unmediated state by subjects, like Hieronimo, who cannot function within the obtaining partial and political terms. The ghost of Andrea represents the ghost of that intact presence and it seduces Hieronimo and Bel-imperia, who are determined to reach, in death, his clarified and unencumbered state.

The terms on which Hieronimo judges are the terms of a self which does not coincide with the conventional, as foreign to it as conventional language. Hieronimo himself puns on the marshalling denoted by his title of knight marshal when he explains that he will "[s]urrender vp my Mar[shal]ship: For Ile go mar[shal] vp the Feendes in hell" (III.i). Hieronimo is associated with the life of darkness which is lost to the day. He contends all along with "this deede of darkenes" (II.i), most pointedly

manifest by the murder of Horatio, slain and hanged in Hieronimo's bower when "the night begins with fable wings, / To ouer-cloud the brightnes of the Iunne." Thereafter, for Hieronimo, the night is "fad Isecretarie to my mones" (III.i) which can, paradoxically, "With direfull vijions wake my vexed Ioule" that otherwise would be anaesthetized. His son's death is the culmination of the repeated violations and offenses against Hieronimo which serve to erode all conventional claims upon him. When critics say of Hieronimo that "the more his rage grows the narrower his vision becomes" (Hallett 149), it should be noted that this is true only from the conventional standpoint that Hieronimo disables and refuses; the narrowing for Hieronimo, like the reduction for Andrea, far from being restrictive, is clarifying.

The Spanish Tragedie counteracts the stable and misinformed interpretations that its characters wish to fix on one another—Hieronimo initially perceives Bel-imperia to be a schemer and she considers him to be inhuman. The play discloses that the subject remains fundamentally unknown in the obtaining role-based and hierarchical social economy, which precludes communication and is exemplified by all the obstacles that Lorenzo erects to inhibit Hieronimo. The resulting disparity between what the characters believe and what the spectator perceives alerts the spectator to the operation of a surface/depth discrepancy where he/she is privileged with a whole view that counters the partial ones within the drama. Even the ghost of Andrea, who accounts for the revenge which motivates the play, is misguided in viewing the result through "earthly" eyes which make him sceptical of ever being

satisfied; seeing "Nothing but league, and loue, and banqueting" (I.i), he believes impatiently that he will never be revenged. Revenge has to reassure Andrea that other conditions apply:

He turne their friendſhip into fell deſpight:
 Their loue to mortall hate, their day to night,
 Their hope into diſpaire, their peace to warre,
 Their ioyes to paine, their bliſſe to miſerie.

Huston Diehl argues that *The Spanish Tragedie* inverts "traditional associations of high and low" (206) in order to render them meaningless. According to Diehl, "Kyd's world thus defies traditional explanation; unintelligible to the characters who live and take action in it, the world of this play can only be understood by the audience in terms of its inversion, its destruction of the traditional order of things." The kind of inversion that Diehl considers is perhaps most apparent in Hieronimo's diatribe against the world which he finds to be so contrary: "Oh eyes, no eyes but fountaines fraught with teares, / Oh life, no life; but liuely forme of death: / Oh world, no world but maſſe of publique wrongs" (III.i). With his inversions, Kyd insists that the spectator reconsider conventional interpretations; I would go as far as to suggest that in *The Spanish Tragedie*, Kyd fundamentally inverts the states of life and death to disclose the deadening effects of life. Kyd's play constitutes a series of deconstructions: from the first act of versions of hell, of war and of personal and political relations, to the second act of dis-unions involving shaky personal and political alliances, to the third act of misrepresentations, misidentifications, miscalculations and misunderstandings, to

the fourth act of de-compositions where all is exploded. Kyd's play is three plays in one: the play proper consists of a play initiated for a vengeful ghost mistrustful of its execution, which contains, in turn, a play by a madman that is all execution, as Kyd inverts life and death in his staging of a "liuely forme of death" where even the living subject must bury a part of its self.

Much of the destructiveness in *The Spanish Tragedie* stems from utterance being incommensurate with experience. To begin with, several versions of the Spanish-Portugese battle are provided in which the spectator can see the operation of distinct agendas and motivations. In the first version, the king asks the General to "vnfolde in briefe di[cour]se / Your forme of Battell, and your Warres [succe]sse" (I.i) through which the spectator gets a graphic military account by the victor, diplomatically highlighting the role of socially prominent figures. In the second version, Viceroy has Villuppo "tell thy tale at large" implying, with the word "tale," that he expects a fiction--a notion reinforced by its occurring after Alexandro had maintained that Balthazar survives as a prisoner of war, which earlier events have disclosed to the spectator. Villuppo's "enuious forged tale" deceives the king, himself a master of (self) deception, and betrays his enemy, reducing itself to the three main actors who fulfill his false purpose. In the final version, Bel-imperia entreats Horatio to "relate, / The circum[st]ance of *Don Andreas* death" which he constructs as a war of the gods, who favour Balthazar because envious of his opponent, Andrea. Within such a context of clashing versions, it is understandable that Hieronimo would distinguish

between "What haue I heard" and "what haue mine eyes beheld?" (III.i). The spectator will prioritize what is seen over what is only heard and subject to dispute. Hieronimo can assert that "Tis neither as you thinke, nor as you thinke, / Nor as you thinke: you'r wide all" because without voice, he can be understood in no conventional way but rather, must have recourse to a presentation of the thing itself.

The disputed battle issues in a dispute between Lorenzo and Horatio who each claims Balthazar as his prisoner in a contest of one-up-manship that makes a mockery of the initial victory. Lorenzo maintains that "This hand firſt tooke the courſet by the raines," to which Horatio challenges that "firſt my launce did put him from his horſe"; Lorenzo retorts that "I ceaz'd his weapon and enioyd it firſt," to which Horatio counters "But firſt I forſt him lay his weapons downe" (I.i). This "mock battle" nourishes scepticism in the spectator, who sees that there is little hope for him/her to discriminate amongst the various accounts and versions of unwitnessed events which the play comprises--not even the participants can agree on an interpretation of their actions. The contested captor, Balthazar, puts his own diplomatic spin on the affair by claiming that "I yeeld my ſelfe to both." He explains that: "He ſpake me faire, this other gaue me ſtrookes: / He promiſde life, this other threatned death: / He wan my loue, this other conquered me." Balthazar rationalizes that words are more potent than actions simply because he has lost in the field of action; like Pharamond in *Philaster*, Balthazar is merely all talk amounting to nothing.

and he signifies nothing for those who, like Hieronimo and Bel-imperia, see through him and his wordy insubstantiality.

Kyd's problematizing of interpretation means that the only outlet available to the stifled Hieronimo is to demean and void the inadequate and erroneous representations of reality in circulation. Even the king perceives of Hieronimo that "I haue not [eene him to demeane him]o" (III.i). It is thus that Hieronimo serves to disarticulate what cannot be articulated in his experience: "My grieffe no hart, my thoughts no tong can tell," he maintains. Kyd's play stages rival characters playing out rival stories. This clash of rival stories is evident even in the quasi-amorous interlude of Bel-imperia and Horatio in the bower prior to his murder. Bel-imperia counters Horatio's loving classical allusions with more sinister interpretations in keeping with her foreboding of "[o]me mi[]chance" befalling them in the bower (II.i); he invokes *Flora* offering the blessing of "her flowers" while Bel-imperia considers that *Flora* may "[p]ie" with "Her ielous eye." Horatio notes that "the birds" sing "For ioy" but Bel-imperia thinks that "*Cupid* counterfeits the Nightingale" to sweeten "*Horatio's* tale"--Horatio considers that "If *Cupid* [i]ng; then *Venus* is not farre" and Bel-imperia could well be the goddess, but she replies that "If I be *Venus*, thou mu[]st needes be *Mars*, / And where *Mars* raigneth there mu[]st needes be warre." Horatio takes Bel-imperia's response as the beginning of their "love wars," in the midst of which she pleads for him to release her "for in my troubled eyes, / Now maye[st] thou read that life in pa[ss]ion dies"; for her, passion is deadly and only a passionless and therefore,

deadened, life is possible under the royal command whose dictates her deceased love did not meet, with fatal results.

In a similar diversity of interpretation, Hieronimo betrays that an action can have more than one meaning, when he stages the making of peace with his son's murderer under the watchful eye of the Duke, saying, as he embraces Lorenzo: "Friends (quoth he) [ee" (III.i). Hieronimo underscores the misrepresentation involved by noting that: "men may thinke what we imagine not." Then, too, the Portuguese nobles, under the pressure of their disbelief of Alexandro's falseness, conclude that "wordes haue [euerall workes." The victim of the wrongful accusation himself gives up on the words which he feels have betrayed him: "Nor di[contents it me to leaue the word, / With whom there nothing can preuaile but wrong." As Kay Stockholder notes, Alexandro is as unable "to speak" as Hieronimo, who cannot "reach the King's ear" and who ultimately suffers a "self-imposed silence" (101). Characters such as Hieronimo and Bel-imperia, who have experienced violation, resort to making differences in order to convey difference—Hieronimo through the device of his playlet and Bel-imperia through her refusal of Balthazar and, by implication, the establishment that he represents. Hieronimo, most notably, fights against making no difference as he returns voice to those silent subjects robbed of voice: himself, Horatio, Isabella, Bel-imperia, and his clients. In the world that Hieronimo constructs, language, far from being everything, becomes nothing. It is not that Hieronimo's conceptualization outruns his capacity to articulate—that he is somehow an individualist ahead of his

time, as Kay Stockholder contends (106)—rather, Hieronimo is gesturing to a fundamental speechlessness in the obtaining order. This speechlessness is only exacerbated by Horatio's death. His death is not, as Stockholder argues, the cause enabling Hieronimo to "overcome ideological impediments to venting his pent-up rage and frustration" (114) but rather, it is the culmination of the violations against Hieronimo. The "internal restraints" (117) are psychical, not ideological. Hieronimo, in effect, stages the psychic other in opposition to the social Other because he recognizes—on behalf of the spectator—that what is conventionally staged is not the self but the Other: a fictional mock-up of the subject as it is spoken by a foreign speech; hence, the sundry languages in his playlet which betray linguistic constructions as lacking and uncommunicative.

In his playlet, Hieronimo refuses to submit to those linguistic constructions which, being in the conventional tongue, are lacking. The spectator is told that the playlet is acted in a variety of languages—thus (as further discussed below), normal communication is thwarted, and a different language is valorized. Hieronimo's stage is transgressed by death and violence as the only available means to register what is an unspeakable body of experience. Gordon Braden perceives that Hieronimo "inhabits his plot by situating himself just outside it, where he can size it up" (205), the marginalized position enabling him to project "a new and more powerful self, speaking with the voice of Senecan rage, waiting the chance to enter the plot on its own terms." His "own terms" compel Hieronimo to renounce when he is disabled

from pronouncing. Some critics attribute the associated acting-out mode of communication to Kyd's difficulty "with the expression of feeling" (Zitner 79) which he tries to "externalize." Sheldon Zitner argues that Kyd wrote out of a poetic tradition that was restrictive theatrically because it tended to diminish human feeling and emotion through such techniques as personification. These, he maintains, impacted negatively on Kyd's characterization of subjectivity. Zitner contends that "lacking an adequate diction and syntax for strong feeling, Kyd has to fall back on less effective strategies" (87). I submit that what Zitner perceives to be "Kyd's difficulties with language" (86) and in particular with "the language of passion" (90), reflect a deficiency not within Kyd as a dramatist but rather, a deficiency within language itself. It is not merely a case of linguistic corruption reflecting a moral corruption. Because of the deficiency in language, the subject—in this case, Hieronimo—is compelled to speak precisely that which cannot and must not be spoken: to give voice to an experience and a passion for which he has not been given a voice. For example, Lorenzo physically restrains him from the King's presence to render him inexpressive and doubly to "thwart his passions" (III.i) which cannot be vented. Kay Stockholder attributes "the puzzling silences of the play" (118) to "That which can be felt but cannot be spoken, that which lacks the concepts to generate overt speech." I submit that such a reading confuses the relation which Kyd establishes in his play, where the lack is not in conceptualization but rather, in the voice on which it is predicated; Hieronimo's agonizing violation is his voicelessness. Hieronimo provides

a haunting example of the inadequacy of language when he invokes "God, confuſion, miſchiefe, torment, death and hell" (II.i) in order to "eff the ineffable" as he is confronted with his experience of the incomprehensible murder of his son. For him, as for the bereaved old man, "my moſt diſtrefull wordes" (III.i) cannot accommodate such woe. The incongruence between voice and experience accounts for what Gordon Braden, with reference to Iago, terms "the unspeakability of his motivation" (215). Hieronimo must, likewise, resort to a display of the thing itself.

Words are dismissed in Kyd's play as "trifling words" (II.i) or "faire wordes." Hieronimo perceives words to be "vnfruitfull wordes" (III.i); he knows that "plain tearmes" (I.i) are a linguistic impossibility—terms are always weighted, so that they never in themselves make the point that one seeks to make unless, like Lorenzo, one is part of the established power and can, to a subordinate, with "flattering wordes ... make him falſe" (III.i). When Lorenzo commands Pedringano at knife point to "feareles tell the trueth" (II.i), the spectator sees what an impossibility this is for the subject who is always constrained and subjugated, as exemplified by Lorenzo's lacky. The subject is false to the self as a condition of playing by the obtaining rules; this is precisely why Hieronimo breaks with the rules. Hieronimo says of his playlet: "It was determined to haue beene acted, / By Gentlemen and ſchollers too: / ſuch as could tell what to ſpeake" to which Balthazar responds: "And now it ſhall be ſaid, by Princes and Courtiers, / Such as can tell how to ſpeake" (IV.i). The implication is that the inflections of power substantiate weak words. But Hieronimo's action serves to

undercut the word. Hieronimo and Bel-imperia refuse to fall for the flatteries in circulation; Bel-imperia checks Balthazar's sweet nothings with "theſe are but wordes of courſe" (I.i), thereby putting him and his words in their proper place. In the irony of ironies, Balthazar perceives that Horatio is out to "captiuate" (II.i) him body and soul when the spectator sees that the real captive in the whole affair is the unsuspecting subject, like Horatio and also Andrea, whose death sentence Balthazar passes. Whereas Andrea admitted that he had to serve others' needs as a Courtier, Balthazar, as a Prince, is in "pleaſing ſeruitude" (I.i) to his own appetities--in liberty even when captive and a prisoner only by "conceite."

It is a wiser Balthazar who rejects Lorenzo's feeble attempt to couch Bel-imperia's resistance of him in nature metaphors, insisting instead that "ſhe is wilder and more hard withall, / Then beaſt, or bird, or tree, or ſtonie wall" (II.i). Balthazar's comment here serves Kyd to demystify the establishment by suggesting that its available limiting register, in attenuating the truth to render it more palatable, misrepresents that truth. Balthazar perceives that he misses his aim because "My wordes are rude, and worke her no delight. / The lines I ſend her are but harſh and ill, / ſuch as doe drop from *Pan* and *Marſias* quill." When Balthazar, ironically, concludes of Bel-imperia: "I feare ſhe can not loue at all" he is more correct than he knows; she cannot love, or live, on his terms. Balthazar will always signify for Bel-imperia the force "that murdered my delight" (I.i); this association is, for Balthazar, the "cauſe there is that lets you not beloued" (II.i). Balthazar is the cause of the death

that for Bel-imperia, as for Hieronimo, has "buried my delights" (I.i) because life on Balthazar's terms requires the burying of a part of the self.

Hieronimo will not be made to speak words not his own, as exemplified by his playlet in sundry languages and by his mutilation of his own tongue. Hieronimo knows that even for the voiceless, voice will be taken regardless of what he says. Therefore, he contrives a means to present the thing itself--unfiltered, unmediated, unadulterated. Some critics imply that Hieronimo's use of the sundry languages for his playlet indicates, by his insatiable appetite for them, an acceptance of words; what it indicates, to the contrary, is that Hieronimo holds words cheaply. James Shapiro argues that: "Kyd goes to considerable lengths to show that it is not the words by themselves that are transgressive; in fact, for no apparent reason Hieronimo insists that his play be spoken in sundry languages ..." (108). Sheldon Zitner dismisses the words as "largely means to accompany an elaborate spectacle and the modulations of its main emotion, horror" (93), describing the sundry languages in the playlet as Kyd's exploiting of "the portentousness of the Babel story" (90). Kay Stockholder maintains of Hieronimo's "entertainment" that: "In creating this tower of Babel he signifies to his on-stage audience his desire to throw into impotent confusion, to silence, the entire oppressive social hierarchy ..." (118). I maintain that it is not the social hierarchy that Hieronimo endeavors to deconstruct as much as its discourse, or--more to the point--the lack thereof. Gordon Braden finds the Babel analogy useful to his cogent argument of the indeterminacy of communications:

Hieronimo's own play conceals far more than it communicates; the seemingly gratuitous confusion of tongues guarantees the incomprehension of guilty and innocent alike, with an image of human life as a Babel of mutually inexplicable intensities. It may be ventured that the special fate of characterization on the English Renaissance stage is to a great extent the evoking of indeterminate private recess behind any overt action or declaration. (215)

The Spanish Tragedie boasts the most "private recess" of all because the death which frames it—beginning and ending Kyd's play—hollows out all of the "filler material" which diminishes to nothing in its wake. Death undercuts everything.

The Spanish Tragedie breaks into Latin in some of its most telling moments, which are thus understated for an unlearned spectator. Sheldon Zitner argues, with respect to Hieronimo's first lament, that: "Kyd had patched together fourteen lines of Latin when he needed highly-charged emotion and either lacked effective language or was unwilling to use it" (90). I submit that such recourse to Latin prepares the way for Hieronimo's entertainment in sundry foreign languages that are undercut by the ensuing spectacle. The Latin casts doubt also on the communicative capacity of the native tongue which is rendered incapable of climactic content. Between the play's secrets, differing versions and admissions of the inaccessibility of the most profound emotions, the spectator knows better than to expect an uncontroversial record. The sundry languages in Hieronimo's playlet signify that what he has to say is, after all, incommunicable in words because unspeakable by any but corporeal means. The subject is displayed as fundamentally speechless in

what is an inexpressive and inexpressible state. Hieronimo's search for an alternative means of communication leads him first to his discussions with the painter (1602 ed.), and finally, to theatrical performance--for which the body becomes instrumental. For Hieronimo, the bloody end of his playlet "¶hall prooue the inuention" and his "¶trange and wonderous ¶hew" shall dissipate any confusion or lack of understanding to "make the matter knowen" as it is "concluded in one ¶cene"--a scene that employs "our vulgar tongue" (IV.i). Hieronimo employs "vnknowne languages" in his playlet to make the point that all language is fundamentally unknown and unexperienced and his "tongue is tun'd to tell his late¶t tale" only because "this ¶pectacle" of his son's corpse silently answers to everything.

The addition of the painter's sequence in the 1602 edition of *The Spanish Tragedie* has been the source of much speculation in the play's criticism. Although I agree with D.H. Craig that "questions of disputed authorship still carry implications for interpretation" (211), I nevertheless hold that the most important of these is to consider what was perceived in the play to account for the nature of the additions, quite apart from the identity of the author of them. D.H. Craig provides an intriguing explanation for the 1602 addition:

The Spanish Tragedy, first acted in 1587, was in its original form a breakthrough with its emotionally charged revenge material, its formulaic rhetoric of high drama, and its alienated and driven protagonist, Hieronymo. It was imitated and parodied throughout the 1590's. The 1602 additions drawing on the changes in characterization and dialogue that had taken place in Elizabethan drama since 1587, bring a new interior

focus and a more informal and fragmented rhetoric to the play.
(210)

It is precisely because representation by words is inexact for the self that Hieronimo searches out other means of representation, the first of which is painting.

Hieronimo quizzes Buzalto: "Art a Painter? can't paint me a teare, or a wound, / A groane, or a sigh? can't paint me such a tree as this?" (III.i). Because Hieronimo cannot find the likeness for what he experiences in words, which miss the point, he trusts that he may find a likeness in pictures to equal his experience. But he sees that the picture comes no closer than the word to capturing the subtleties of the human condition; in frustration, Hieronimo resorts to a bodily performance which, alone, answers his passion fully. Hieronimo is aware of the constructedness and artifice of pictures when he instructs the painter to draw him "five / Yeeres younger then I am" and appoints his preferred setting and sitting arrangement for the artful composition of himself, Isabella and his deceased son. The intolerable mediation of the art form is betrayed when Hieronimo requests the painter to "draw a murderer." The painter assures him that "I haue the patterne of the most notorious willaines that euer liued in all spaine," but Hieronimo wants them to be "worfe, worfe" and implores the painter to "stretch thine Arte." The painter acknowledges, however, that he can paint only "seemingly" the likeness which Hieronimo desires. For Hieronimo, the corporeal face is, ultimately, the only true canvas. He tells Buzalto: "Thou art the liuely image of my griefe, / Within thy face my sorowes I may see," inexpressible as

these are. This is the turning point connecting the canvas with the stage for Hieronimo.

Some critics read Hieronimo's recourse to action in his playlet as suggesting that action alone is where meaning lies. Peter Sacks maintains that:

At Hieronimo's insistence, the play within the play is enacted in various languages, as though to emphasize his sense of the opacity of *any* language, and to 'breed confusion,' an impossibility of interpretation such that action itself will seem to have the only meaning. (584)

James Siemon, however, suggests that action is just as problematic as rhetoric in *The Spanish Tragedie*:

... *The Spanish Tragedy* is remarkable for its complication of the notion of an unrhetorized, unconflicted 'reality' that might be set over against rhetoric or of a realm of physical 'acts' against which to measure the sufficiency of 'words.' ... neither words nor things appear free of opacity and conflicting claims. Instead of providing a grounding, referential 'reality' against which characters' utterances may be measured in a dialogue of easily indexed points of view, the play treats objects, words, and actions as similarly conflicted arenas of contending values and significances. (92)

I agree with Siemon's perception of the problematization in the play. Furthermore, I concur with Michel Foucault that the thing and the word do not bear identical meaning:

Between word and image, between what is depicted by language and what is uttered by plastic form, the unity begins to dissolve; a single and identical meaning is not immediately common to them. And if it is true that the image still has the function of speaking, of transmitting something cosubstantial with language, we must recognize that it already no longer says

the *same thing*.... Figure and speech still illustrate the same fable of folly in the same moral world, but already they take two different directions, indicating in a still barely perceptible scission, what will be the great line of cleavage in the Western experience of madness. (*Madness*: 18)

The "two different directions" delineated by Foucault are betrayed in *The Spanish Tragedie* by Hieronimo's desperate recourse to painting and performing when speech proves inadequate. Ultimately, for Hieronimo, performing gains the edge in displaying the thing itself.

The Spanish Tragedie problematizes any assertion that "theſe wordes, theſe deedes, become thy perſon well" (I.i). Hieronimo betrays the fact that words and deeds are mutually exclusive modes of communicating, and do not reinforce each other—in his playlet he resorts to the display of Horatio's corpse to "make the matter knowen" (IV.i) which language can only confuse. Kyd's juxtaposition of bodily figuration with linguistic representation discloses the lack in the word which he makes up through the devices of madness, ghosts, death, and violence. Kyd's characters in *The Spanish Tragedie* are constrained to give "notice in ſome ſecret ſort" (II.i) because their experience is secret insofar as it is unstatable, unsharable and, ultimately, unliveable. The body of the subject is experienced as fragmented and abject; it strives to become what is seen only as socially unbecoming to the point of death.

Kyd's characters are all, like Andrea, only the ghost of a presence, having to settle in life, as does Andrea in death, for an imposed absence. However, *The Spanish Tragedie*, through Hieronimo's playlet, brings Kyd's characters from being

only the ghost of a presence to attainment of the presence itself as each is ultimately reclaimed in Andrea's framing play. Within the context of a lacking life, if character is deemed to be unstable, it is only because the word which constructs it is so. All is discord since the cord which tied Bazulto to his son, like the one tying Hieronimo and Isabella to Horatio, is cut; with the loss of a son, they are, indeed, "Three parts in one, but all of diſcords fram'd" (III.i). The cord with which "*Horatio* was ſlaine" has, for Hieronimo undercut any "cordes" that might be woven with words. Pedro says of the distraught Hieronimo that "your miſeries and ſorrow, / Makes you ſpeake you know not what," but they merely liberate him into cutting the artificial cord that binds him to the society which betrays him; Hieronimo, in effect, cuts the psychic other in by cutting the social Other out or off. In his madness, Hieronimo valorizes what his society rejects--he valorizes the corporeal body with its drives and desires and passions and senses which society would suspend (as Bel-imperia's loves, Andrea and Horatio, are suspended) over the constructed and fictional social body.

It appears, from a conventional perspective, that Hieronimo's "madness has reached a stage where his vision of the world is so distorted that it no longer bears any relation to reality" (Hallett 156). However, Hieronimo's madness discloses a reality refused by his society: a reality of the subject's irremediable violation by society. The importance of the madness to Kyd's play, I believe, is that it constitutes an alternative way of seeing and not, as Kay Stockholder contends, that it is Hieronimo's excuse for subversion (105). Hieronimo's motive is not selfish;

Hieronimo avenges not only the death of his son but through it, the death of every social being. Hieronimo's madness is a demystification that compels everybody to relate at a basic emotional level to what they would deny. The killing spree seems all that he can do to share and to end the outrage of his violation:

And greued I (thinke you) at this ſpectacle?
 Speake Portugues, whoſe loſſe reſembles mine,
 If thou canſt weepe vpon thy *Balthazar*?
 Tis like I waild for my *Horatio*.
 And you, my L. whoſe reconciled ſonne
 Marcht in a net, and thought himſelfe vnſeene,
 And rated me for braine-ſicke lunacie,
 Which God amende, that mad *Hieronimo*,
 How can you brook our playes Cataſtrophe? (IV.i)

Confronted with the bereaved fathers of his victims, Hieronimo inquires of them: "But are you ſure they are dead?"; he thereby implies that since they thought their sons to be living when dead in Hieronimo's terms, the sons may now, paradoxically, be alive when dead. Hieronimo is undeniable in his madness as he never was in his sanity and he acknowledges that: "... I am neuer better then when I am mad, / Then methinkes I am a braue fellow, / Then I doe wonders: But reaſon abuſeth me, / And there's the torment, there's the hell" (III.i). The real abuse, torment, and hell in Kyd's play is reserved not for the dead but for the deadened who live; this is the real horror of *The Spanish Tragedie*.

Hieronimo is, no less than Andrea, a disembodied ghost of a man; he signifies in life--as in death--the impossibility of being embodied as a subject. The ghost is Kyd's critique of the social subject in signifying no body and serving as a

reminder of somebody lacking in the inadequate social terms. I disagree with Kay Stockholder that the ghost "merges ... the personal into the public" (95) because, I submit, Kyd discloses that the dissonance between the two orders is at the root of his tragedy. As reflected in a linguistic inadequacy, the ghost becomes a dead subject without a living means of representation. It is, for Kyd, a dead language which deadens life, rendering life a mere ghost of a presence with its most vital part buried, as Andrea and Horatio are, in effect, "buried" for Bel-imperia and Hieronimo. But they are not buried deeply enough that they cannot continue to be haunting presences of unanswered desire that succeed in disrupting life.

The subject who desires death—like Hieronimo and Bel-imperia—does so because he/she recognizes the self as already living at a loss, a knowledge from which his/her fellows recoil. Gordon Braden says of Hieronimo: "He brings a knowledge they do not want to have and that ... they band together to refuse as long as they can. His difficulty obtaining retributive satisfaction is bound up with the resistance that any social arrangement has to acknowledging and accommodating the impact of individual mortality" (208). Braden paints a picture of Hieronimo as isolated with "unbearable truths that others will always try to hold at a distance." Hieronimo's final truth is that the social subject is a dead subject—a "dying *ſelfe*" (III.i) which lacks a living means of representation. Hieronimo speaks of the soul that "*ſolely delights in interdicted things / ſtill wandring in the thornie paſſages, / That intercepts it ſelfe of happineſſe.*" However, in Kyd's play, the sense of interdiction and interception holds not only for

the unsettled soul in death but also in life, where it is denied the terms of its fulfilment: its own terms. Hieronimo--no less than Andrea's ghost--represents what "liues not in the world," not only in terms of what he acknowledges to be the travesty of any sense of justice but also in terms of life, denying itself a living at the only level that matters. The ghost knows and Hieronimo knows that the staged characters in each of "their" plays mean not to live but to die; the state of death is where their meaning, and Kyd's meaning, lies in *The Spanish Tragedie*.

It is ironic that Lorenzo says "Thy death ſhall bury what thy life conceales" (II.i), because death discloses all in Kyd's play. Meaning lies with the dead body and not with the feeble words that would embody it. The corpses littering the stage represent, ironically, everything that has been absent from the life of the body encumbered by a deadening language. Language is disclosed to be "the author of thy death" (I.i) in *The Spanish Tragedie* and "the authour of this endles woe" (II.i) in Hieronimo's tragedy, where all are voicelessly "bound to death" (III.i). Hieronimo acknowledges that "all as one, are our extremities" which can be represented only by the body *in extremis*.

Kyd's theatre in *The Spanish Tragedie* manifests the internal violence of the Symbolic order, thereby anatomizing a life defined by death because "Where words preuailes not, violence preuailes" (II.i). Hieronimo concedes of Horatio that: "He neuer plea[d his fathers eyes till now" (I.i), being the occasion of Horatio's capture of the violator of his friend's life--a violator in more than just a physical

capacity, as a representative of the repressive Law of the Father. Words violate thought, they do not hold thought, even as the histrionic Viceroy, given to extravagant self-exhibition, perceives: "with thy words thou slaieſt our wounded thoughts" (III.i), because words are, invariably and inevitably, false and injurious. Hieronimo wishes "to expreſſe the rupture of my part" (IV.i) with the taking of "my tongue" because "I haue no more to ſay" with a meaningless tongue that never reaches to the heart and so can serve only to "ground" what one has "dreamd vpon" (III.i), converting it to the unending nightmare of a life that is a fate far worse than death.

CHAPTER 6

THE TRAGEDIE OF PHILOTAS

As does Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedie*, Philotas refuses to submit to linguistic constructions which are lacking. Philotas takes upon himself, as torture, the violence and death that alone can register his unspeakable body of experience. Both plays, thus, manifest the internal violence of the Symbolic order.

The following reading of *The Tragedie of Philotas* uses the 1607 edition, which closely follows the text as first published in 1605. But for the 1607 publication, Samuel Daniel was compelled by the Privy Council to attach an Apology, disclaiming its suspected allusion to the Essex affair. This Apology provided Daniel with a legitimate opportunity to eulogize a figure he evidently admired. In the character of Philotas, Daniel has rehabilitated an uncompromising revolutionary sensibility; he in effect counterplots the treasonous plot attributed to him.

Philotas considers the treasonous rumor of a plotted regicide to be "baite" for "trechery" (III.i) against himself, not against the king. Daniel's play is structured on an opposition between these two figures and their governing practices, as reflected

in their responses to the rumor. The rumored plot is a vehicle for Daniel's own political agenda; by facilitating Philotas's counterplot against Alexander's plot, which exploits the rumor, he catches out the terms of a life and death story. This double plotting is the means by which "*oppre[sion is oppre]t*" (Chorus); the counterplot of tell-tale signs, far from convicting Philotas, discloses "the deepe[st] secrets of my hart" (I.i) that escape "[o]metime[] vnwares of me" in the rumored plot that bears their traces. Thus it is that the accusation against Philotas, which stems from the rumored plot, serves, like the accusation against his beloved Antigona, to "but quote / The mergin of [o]me text of greater note" (III.ii). The accusations are Daniel's pretext for the airing of an unruly, irrepressible and oppositional instinctual element, represented by Philotas, that threatens the continuance of the precarious dominant order. The choice to accept or to reject the rumored plot signifies a choice, respectively, of social life or social death. This choice plays on a much more fundamental level for Daniel to reveal the subject's stance on a private/public opposition; *The Tragedie of Philotas* debates the opposing ways of the Court and of Philotas, since Philotas, in ostensibly fighting against his part in the rumor, fights in more general terms against treacherous and erroneous representations that make his life a death.

The Tragedie of Philotas addresses the dilemma articulated by Antigona ("[h]all I betray my loue, / Or dye di[sg]rac'd", II.iii) by deconstructing her particular conflict to show its general application: how everything involves everybody in a life and death decision, because one must always betray oneself--"*make thy [elfe le]e*"

(I.i)—in order to live in the dominant order. Such a betrayal of the life of one's self is shown to be tantamount to death, because there is an operative trade-off in which, as Philotas demonstrates, social death is exacted for private life and, as Craterus demonstrates, private death is exacted for social life. Alexander's court is "diſtracted" and "diſtruſtfull" (V.ii), beginning "To feare themſelues and all" because they feel the pull of the corporeal counterclaims which Philotas refuses to deny. The people "doe not knowe ... who lookes beſt / In this fowle day, th'oppreſſor or th'oppreſt." But they do know that the corporeal counterclaim advanced by Philotas spells out a corporal sentence that one either gives or receives. Polidamas calls himself "the inſtrument of ſhame" when Alexander would have him ransom his own life with that of his friend. He admits that "Thus muſt we do who are inthral'd to kings." Sostratus's disbelief formulates itself into the question that is central to Philotas's oppositional play: "hath the King commanded ſuch a deed, / To make the hearts of all his ſubiects bleed?" In Philotas's milieu, private and public lives are tortured, and Philotas's crime is in his uncompromising honesty, unlike those complicit "men [who] ſuppoſe our hell, a heauen the while" (II.ii).

Philotas discloses the subject to be in a hopeless situation: either killed with ſignification, which represents deadly personal abdication, or killed without ſignification, rejection of which represents social death; either way is a dead-end. *The Tragedie of Philotas* discloses that the dominant order facilitates meaning only at the price of betraying or destroying the subject to whom it will not allow a

recognizable voice. The problem, as illustrated by Philotas and the accused plotters, is that they cannot "iustifie the speech" (II.iii) that is not their own to begin with.

What Philotas says is deemed to be without significance because his demystifying representations are considered "*fit to be suppress't*" (Chorus). For Alexander, Philotas "Nor ought reuales" (IV.ii) precisely because he does not reveal what Alexander wants or expects to hear (as signified by the feared rumor implicating him). Alexander maintains that Philotas's "silence shews deceit" because it speaks a rebuke of his Law. Craterus would have it that "words according to the person weigh" and are culpable according to "his designs"—but "his designs" are those of the king which, with regards to Philotas, are constructed as sedition.

It is not, for Philotas, that "your designs" do not square with "your desires" (I.i), because he is caught up in designs not of his own making which are imputed to desires that are foreign to him. Alexander alludes to "words that read the vicers of his hart" (IV.ii), but Daniel shows that the king's reading is never passive. His active construction is seen in Alexander's interpretation of Parmenio's intercepted letter to his sons. This letter picks up on Philotas's letter from his father that opens the play, exhorting Philotas to be less himself in order to survive. Alexander interprets the intercepted letter to support his foregone damning conclusions of Philotas: "see but how close he writes, that if these lines / Should come vnto his sonnes, as they are sent, / They might iucourage them in their designs, / If interpris'd might mock the ignorant. / But now you see what was the thing was ment, /

You see the fathers care, the Jonnes intent." In a state that usurps the author function and constructs its own story--making lives yield to its plots and conclusions--Daniel emphasizes that "the Authors of his good" (I.ii) are always silenced.

In a mockery of a trial, Philotas is condemned for using "the speech your grace hath vs'd" (IV.ii) which holds a quotient of meaning for his audience that is denied "his native language" which the Law compells him to reject. Vittoria in *The White Devil* duplicates Philotas's stance when she demands that the prosecutors at her trial speak their native Italian, not Latin--the "strange tongue"--so that the audience would be able to follow the proceedings. Philotas discovers that there is a hazard in using language in an unprescribed/ unproscribed manner. The hazard is that words can turn against one; words "freely vs'd" by Philotas "out of my loue" are construed as "an argument of my disgrace" (IV.ii) because they do not adhere to the "strange preſidents" (III.ii) or formulae set forth. Daniel's Philotas is set upon--torn apart limb by limb because he refuses to "act our part" in the set script. The state can mete out only death, because it does not admit the plurality of responses required by a passion more plural than politics in its manifestations. Politically, only one identity is acknowledged; in a society that imposes a singular and stable identity, the subject cannot be seen in any other light. Evidence of multiple subject positions--Philotas as man and son and lover and soldier--is fused to support only one--an oppositional one of traitor. Philotas is abject nature in an unforgiving symbolic milieu. He shares the

plight of all subjects who, in becoming socialized and politicized "*haue loſt deeply by our gaine*" because "*our greatnes makes vs much the leſſe*" (V.i) in human terms.

The Tragedie of Philotas stages not the self of Philotas but the Other that is a fictional political construct. The self is shown by Daniel to be a jeopardized identity in society, hemmed in by "popular dependences" (I.i) from which Philotas becomes independent at the price of forsaking the power associated with them. The self is regained only when social identity collapses in the socially dead subject; until such a time, it is victim of an erroneous politically generated image that is nothing but "diſcourſe" (II.i). That discourse does not permit "The language of my heart" to "be vnderſtood" (IV.ii), with the result that Philotas's cherished honor is bound together with his devalued life, at the mercy of political dictates.

The Tragedie of Philotas registers the deconstruction of a linguistic construct that is not viable. Philotas signifies for Alexander "The mappe of change, diſturbance and vnrest" (II.i), all of which the king can "view within his face" as the identity that refuses his misidentifications. Philotas, in his demystification, can, as Alexander fears, "vndoo, / All the whole wonder of our enterprize...." He thus, can disclose the real inhumanity of a monarchy which claims superhuman descent and seeks, as it accuses others, "T'amuze the world with things that neuer were" (III.i) but are only said to be. As Daniel perceives, Philotas cannot be undone, without in the process undoing the system that constructed him. The Chorus play a large part in underscoring the demystification of a prince who "*will put the leaſt conceipt of*

*dis*content: / Into the greates[t ranke of treacheries" and who will twist virtue into vice "As accessaries vnto endes vniust." As such, the Chorus sees "*affliction act a better scene, / Then prosperous fortune;*" that is, they see Philotas act a better scene than Alexander, even if they cannot admit as much. Daniel's Philotas is socially and politically appropriated to a different story than he would otherwise construct. This story has a twisted plot, a contrary theme, and an incongruent characterization which he cannot ultimately be made to bear, and so he bares for all to see. Philotas emphasizes the inadequacies in the case advanced against him, where words are made to seem interchangeable. He finds that he cannot fight with words that have already wronged him and that gravitate toward an erroneous but foregone conclusion. The spectator thus senses how much is excluded and unaccounted for in the public version of events; Philotas "ha[] not power to cleere thy blame" (III.i) because he has not the power of words upon which the Law is founded.

Philotas's society is "gouernd" by "forme," to which the subject is expected to "conforme" (I.i). It is these "outragious practises" with which Philotas refuses conformity or complicity in a stance that poses more of a revolutionary than a treasonous threat to the state. The Chorus articulates the revisionary challenge posed by Philotas: "*For selfe opinion would be seene more wi[e / Then present counsels, customes, orders, lawes, / And to the end to haue them otherwise, / The common wealth into combustion drawes*" (Chorus). Daniel shows that the independent-minded subject will "combust" before the commonwealth does, in a trumped-up charge that

serves as a public excuse for a private attack. The Persian observer notes (V.i) that Alexander is amiss to proceed:

*By all theſe ſhewes of forme to find this man
Guiltie of treaſon, when he doth contriue
To haue him ſo adiudgd, doe what he can,
He muſt not be acquit though he be cleere,
Th'offendor not th'offence is puniſht here
And what auailes the fore-condemnd to ſpeake
How ever ſtrong his cauſe, his ſtate is weake.*

The Persian points out that this practice constitutes a private form of law: "*your law ſerues but your priuate ends.*" It is this private quality that motivates Philotas to concede the advantage to Craterus, saying that "the law is yours to ſay what you will ſay" (IV.ii).

Daniel gives Philotas the awareness that the advantage rests with authority, which "will make good, all that it will" (IV.ii). The system which is so focused on defending its own truth discounts and discredits others' truth, with the result that the prejudged and condemned Philotas is at a loss how "To ſatisfie the time, and mine owne hart." It is his refusal to do "wrong to others truthes" (III.i) that makes Philotas suspect to authority. In giving countenance to a truth that is not their truth, Philotas is condemned for denying the state's truth. But Philotas determines that "Tis better to deny, then to delude" (I.i); he sees that what the state does to its subjects is delude them into thinking that they can actually live on its terms.

Craterus counsels Alexander to "Worke to repreſſe a ſpirit ſo mutinous" (II.i), but the spectator can see that Alexander already represses his subjects in order to

implant his own edicts. Thus is instilled a self-consciousness such as that exhibited by Craterus, who considers only how an unsolicited revelation of his self-interested condemnation of Philotas to Alexander would reflect on himself. Consequently, he remains silent until Alexander indicates his receptivity to the characterization of Philotas which Craterus then obliges in supplying:

... long ere this my conscience vttered had,
 But that I fear'd your maiesty would take,
 That from some priuate grudge it rather bred
 Then out of care for your deare safties sake
 Or rather that I sought to crosse your grace
 Or to confine your favour within bounds,
 And finding him to hold so high a place ...
 I thought the safest way to let it rest,
 In hope that time some passage open would....

This degree of self-consciousness and dependency betrays the subject as being not his/her own or free but rather, as being constrained by unnatural considerations that stifle natural instincts. Only one story gets publicized and anything in disagreement with it

—such as Philotas's story—is discredited. Daniel discloses that in such a state, the spectator never gets the whole story; everything and everybody gets appropriated by the glosses, interpretations, and versions of the master story into which they are incorporated and from which they must take their cue on pain of death.

The tongue is always, as Antigona perceives, "inconfidrate" for speaking, "Without my hearts consent" (II.iii), those practised words always uttered by heart, not from the heart. The tongue, thus, can only betray; it "hath beene the traytor to my

hart," and is guilty of the only treason in Daniel's play. *The Tragedie of Philotas* is about the treason of the tongue against the heart. This treason is instituted by the Father/King who imposes his own unfitting terms--no other than a sentence of death. Philotas is not the only character who speaks with an imprisoned "prisoners tongue" (IV.ii); he is no less "incaptiu'd" (I.ii) than Antigona or any other subject in the play. Philotas's "language of my heart" (IV.ii) is violated by the torturous experience of an order that "command[s] our harts to lye / Out of their place" (I.i). The heart is always given the lie by the dissociated tongue, which obeys an external authority that is its death sentence. Philotas refuses to speak with another tongue or to see with "other eies." His "vulgar honeſty" prevents the transformation of his heart "In t'other ſhapes of thoughts."

Desire and passion are the disruptive private bodily language of the heart, and they are not permitted a voice in the dominant order. Alexander is, indeed, "arbiter betwixt my hart / And their opinion" (II.i) because his desires formulate the professions of his subjects. Primary instincts are admitted into the dominant order only to be exploited for damning "evidence" in support of that order; evidence gathered from intimate private moments, when one's guard is down and one is most vulnerable, is acknowledged to be unspeakably telling. The dominant order seeks to make inexpressive those subjects who are not already inexpressible in its own terms. It is the anomalous exposure of "his vaſt deſires" (IV.ii) and their impact on Philotas's public conduct that challenges Alexander. What is at issue for Daniel in *The Tragedie*

of *Philotas* is the imparting of "the deepeſt ſecrets of my hart" (I.i) in a state that has a stake in keeping the heart speechless. In the final analysis, the corporeal body is seen to utter as passionately in torture as in seduction. The difference is that torture discloses a master's truth, not the body's own truth, which "rackes ſhould not reueile" (I.ii). *The Tragedie of Philotas* interrogates the possibility of reaching "the whole of their intents" (III.i) by excavating the tortured private domain as well as the torturing public one.

Alexander disturbs even the peace of night and its slumbers by using its dark cover for his own black ends, which destroy its Imaginary ones. Daniel shows that it is only his "ſoundeſt ſleepe" (IV.i) that provides *Philotas* with the sound of his own voice to block out, for a time, the voice of authority. Thus, *Philotas* would not be awakened by Attarras who came to arrest him "Till thrice I calld him by his name, and thrice / Had ſhooke him hard." Sleep arrests the potency of words. The private realm of the body is always rudely invaded by public imperatives that do not address it.

Philotas is condemned for going "beyond his terme" (II.i) both in rank and in the word with which rank is associated. Daniel's protagonist refuses to countenance or to give back the words that he is given until physical torture betrays the torture of his life as a subject. For *Philotas* under torture, "*to hide or vtter was all one; / Both waies lay death*" (Nuntius) since he is just as tortured living a lie as he is dying for truth. *Philotas* is "ſure to ſay enough to die" when he could never say enough to live;

he has to answer for words that never answer for him. Philotas gives up on words--throws them away--when his own life is on the line because they have all along given up on him. Vittoria in *The White Devil* takes a cue from Philotas when, at the conclusion of her mockery of a trial, she avenges herself in words: "For since you cannot take my life for deeds, / Take it for wordes." Vittoria empties her tongue on her judges as a way of dismissing their words which are too weak to answer for her deeds. Words and deeds are no match in either play. The Chorus, initially impressed with Philotas's heroic, resolute endurance of the torture, hold that his suffering proves his innocence. They do not want any unwelcome detail of his capitulation to mar the tragic cast of life in which they see him: "*Leaue so and let the Tragedie here end: / Let not the leaſt act now of his at laſt / Marre all his act of life and glories paſt.*" Even in death, a script is imposed on Philotas that he is expected to play. Since it has room only for "the vſuall theames" (IV.ii) to which Philotas's exceptional experience does not correspond, his confession is considered to "*iarre*" and "*marre*" conventional expectations. Those in *The Tragedie of Philotas* who stray from "*The ſelfe ſame line of action*" (The Epistle) that is "*wrought upon the ſelfe-ſame frame*" of conventionality are "*vnpiſſied*" (Nuntius).

The violations of torture parallel the effect of symbolization; they each "batter downe my truth" (II.iii). The tortured subject and the subject in the Symbolic order are each subordinated to an alienating signifier and made to speak words not their own. The effect of torture and the effect of symbolization is to take voice

instead of giving it. But Philotas realizes that torture, through death, has the potential of liberating the subject by reclaiming its lacking and alienating voice. To Philotas, life must be died for when there is nothing to live for. In torture, the dominant order claims the last word to exhaust the vocabulary that has already exhausted the body, throwing it away as so much garbage. Torture, however, enables Philotas to register his rival, violated story--the marginalized one that the dominant order suppresses in its errant version by disembodiment of its body of language. *The Tragedie of Philotas* thus shows that the subject is always already violated by its "owne mouth" (IV.ii); not, after all, its *own* mouth but rather, one socially constructed and controlled. Torture expresses a confession from the subject that is actually a profession--a profession of the corporal power of the governing body with its "*Racke, Irons, Fires*" and "*grijsely torturers*" (Nuntius) over the corporeal body. Under torture by these instruments, Philotas "*forgot / Himselfe*"--the only condition under which the state can appropriate his voice as it has done with its other submissive subjects. They, by repressing the memory of their violation and torture, contribute to the monarchical "fiction of power" (Scarry 18). What subjects experience under Alexander's repressive worldly government, as distinct from Philotas's self-government, "Blots out all memorie of what they were" (IV.ii). Vittoria in *The White Devil*, as Brachiano confronts her with the false letter, would have the "world recant / And change her *speeches*" before she confesses to the worldly truth. She, like Philotas, would have the world take back its words which are always contradictory and say the opposite of what one desires to say.

In confronting the word, each is seen by society to be the oppositional one, although the spectator is presented with a different perspective that shows the social body as oppositional to the corporeal body.

Philotas pleads for acknowledgement of a personal dimension not subject to monarchical bestowing: "Though all be theirs our hearts and hands can do, / Yet that by which we do is only ours" (IV.ii). Thought is the dimension that Philotas would have sovereign. However, the repressive and censorious policy of government imposed by the state would have the subject "deny / Passage vnto the thoughts that gouerne him" (II.i). Philotas in himself refuses to do this--to replace his control-by-thought with political thought-control that distorts and misleads, as Craterus's self-conscious performance demonstrates. Alexander can afford to scoff at the capacity of words to alter his thoughts: "as though what breath could giue, / Could make mine own thoughts other than they are." He can alter his subjects' thoughts to suit his own, making their lives a sham of incongruence between their "hart" and "minde" (I.i). Panderers who have mastered the disassociation necessitated by his government reinforce Alexander's policy, while Philotas, in seeking congruence between his heart and mind, challenges it. Philotas finds the congruence he seeks only in the death that ends his tortured life.

That Alexander does not have a heart for the dictates of his mind, is demonstrated by his conduct throughout Philotas's "trial" and torture. Alexander absents himself from hearing Philotas's defense, effectively voiding it, as Philotas

perceives: "Nor can I by his absence now be clear'd, / Whose presence hath condemn'd me thus unhard" (IV.ii). During Philotas's torture, Alexander "*stood behind / A Trauers, out of sight*" and "*was hard to speake*" (Nuntius), prompting Nuntius to claim: "*I neuer thought a man that had a mind / T'attempt so much, had had a heart so weake.*" It is seen that the heart and the mind need to be dissociated in order to function in the required political mode; for the heart to inform the mind is lethal as Philotas, prone on the torture table overseen by the unseen king, demonstrates. The king is no more "open" than is the "fact" (IV.ii) that he imputes to Philotas without facing up to his victim, who could else outface him.

Alexander describes himself in a metaphor of the sun as the "orbe of rule" (III.i). The play comes full circle when the sun obliterates the circle of the face, as literalized by the tortured voice in the chamber, where one can imagine Philotas echoing the king behind the screen where he hides. The circle of fortune in *The Tragedie of Philotas* traces a downward path outlined by the "*neuer ending circle of our paines*" (V.i) when the circle of the sun obliterates the circle of the face. With this act, the wars of the play also come full circle since, as the Grecian tells the Persian: "you have vs vndone, who vndid you" (V.ii). For Daniel, the sword between kingdoms comes down to the word between peoples—both as broken as Alexander's promise.

CHAPTER 7

THE TRAGEDY OF THE DVTCHESS OF MALFY

The Duchess is akin to Philotas in suffering the pain of being identified by only a limited role that is politically generated. Tragically, neither can be made to bear their misrepresentative characterizations.

A skeletal outline of the five acts in John Webster's *The Tragedy of the Dytchesse of Malfy* (1623), discloses Webster's staging of the violence of symbolization; in each, the subject, tragically, asserts its self in an "environment" of "otherness" (Birenbaum 54). Act One invokes the ideal of the French Court, which reduces all to "a fix'd Order" (I.i), thus emphasizing the studied self in its rigid social identity, while gesturing to the inaccessible "inward Character" (I.ii) of subjects who, publically, carry "Themselues alwayes a long with them" (I.i). Hence, the social subject is seen to be "an impudent traitor" (I.ii) to his/her private self and no more than a "creature" of politic construction. Furthermore, by complicating 'nature' in all of its human, inhuman, and superhuman aspects, this act effects a breach of that fixed order which, ultimately, is disclosed to be riven by a "wilderne[[e]" of one's "owne way." This wilderness is negotiable only insofar as one can "progre[[e] through your

[elfe" to the disregard of all else, as do the Duchess and Antonio and also, in the final analysis, Julia, Bosola, and, ultimately, Ferdinand. They each forsake power to preserve their humanity. The play progressively peels away the acquired encrustations that impede the self's disclosure. Act Two offers Bosola's recital of the tricks of courtiers and ladies that mask the self and underscore the real deformity of "outward forme" which does not fit the "in-[ide" (II.i). The cataloguing of humanity's animal nature exemplifies this concept. Act Three plays with the concept of "Mi[[e-rule" (III.ii) in the subversive, carnivalesque venture of the Duchess and Antonio, liberating the self in defiance of her brothers' opportunistic political government, which is only the excuse for their perverse self-government. Act Four, by contrast, discloses Bosola's appreciation of the Duchess's self-government under "aduer[itie" (IV.i), bringing about his change and his determination to stage a replay based on "the booke / Of anothers heart"—which Ferdinand misguidedly forsakes--instead of on his own self-interest. Act Five displays animal nature to comment on the unnaturalness obtaining before the invocation of the supernatural when Bosola rejects the "mi[pr[i]on" (V.iv) in circulation and refuses to be the mere echo of a set script. He sets out to "be mine owne example," like the Duchess before him, even if it is only in death that he is finally able "To appeare my [elfe." The "fix'd Order" (I.i) to which the subject accommodates itself is shown by Webster to include language no less than the rigid social hierarchy of rank, and it recalls Philotas who was condemned for going "beyond his terme" (II.i) both in rank and in the word with which rank is associated.

In *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy*, Webster interrogates social boundaries; he questions their use when no body is accommodated within them. Bosola knows that social identity sentences one to a life of masquerade whereby "though continually we beare about vs / A rotten and dead body, we delight / To hide it in rich tiffew" (II.i). He wonders if anybody can submit to the betrayal of their selves and "not loath your felues." The Duchess resents her masked and cloaked state; her surroundings are as stifling and claustrophobic as the identity with which the subject is unfitted. Given the circumstances, it is impossible for the Duchess and Antonio, together with Julia, Bosola, and Ferdinand, to become human. They become human only as they die. Through them, Webster stages the transgressionary circulation of desires and drives which, by contrast, shows up the emptiness of such deadly social terms as those maintained, hypocritically, by the unrepentant Cardinal. The Duchess's imprisonment merely magnifies the effects on her of the insensible society whose "restraint / ... Makes her to passionately apprehend / Those pleasures she's kept from" (IV.i). The spectator recalls that her one request of Antonio was to "Make not your heart so dead a peece of flesh / To feare, more than to loue me" (I.ii). The Duchess's defiant passion and vitality amidst her sterile society has contributed to critical readings which show Webster's dramatic preoccupation with the conflict between "public life and personal desire" (Goldberg 9), or between "individualism and law" (10), or between "natural passion and the social codes which seek to repress it" (78). Each of these conflicts pits the subject against society--in modern terms, the

"heroic individual" against an "antiheroic society" (Pearson 85). Postmodernist readings see as futile the struggle against constructedness which this chapter (and this thesis) explores through characters who go mad, become violent, and die in their struggle. In the modern conception there is still a possibility of intervention which postmodernism denies.

Webster presents the constructed subject as having a jeopardized identity in society. In *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy*, the subject is seen to be a problematic index of meaning which needs to be constantly inquired into and investigated insidiously. It is not that the play's characterization is inconsistent, but rather that character is shown by Webster to have more than one identity--to be unfixed and unstable--and to be different corporeally from what it is socially. This difference is embodied by the pregnant Duchess bearing within her another life. It is for this reason that Susan McCloskey says of the Duchess: "She presents herself to her beloved in the variousness no stereotype can comprehend ..." (38). In his play, Webster stages the personal price and the social effect when the subject rejects acquired social identity, to enable the manifestation of a different one. Webster thus discloses how much of human nature is suppressed, perverted, or constricted by the artificial overlay of an acquired, unnatural social identity. In the Duchess's account, such unnaturalness, as instituted by her brothers, makes "this world a tedious Theatre" in which, she notes, "I doe play a part ... 'gainſt my will" (IV.i). Cariola notices the difference also when she tells the Duchess that she looks "Like to your picture in the

gallery, / A deale of life in ſhew, but none in practiſe: / Or rather like ſome reuerend monument" (IV.ii). The Duchess is, in her immobilizing and inescapable social identity, a mere still-life, literalized with her death. Webster's point is that the subject is not permitted to fashion an identity for him/her self but is, rather, made to assume an erroneous and constricting social identity. Antonio says that on such fatal terms: "to liue thus, is not indeed to liue: It is a mockery, and abuſe of life" (V.iii). Antonio complements the Duchess's condition—as a portrait or a monument—by being himself no more than the "artificiall figure" (IV.i) that Ferdinand commissions. The wax effigy merely literalizes the moulded and shaped constructs that are all Ferdinand can command. The Duchess's horror at ſeeing the waxworks of her family is not so much because "ſhe takes them / For true ſubſtantiall Bodies" but rather, because she perceives clearly in that moment that society takes "true ſubſtantiall Bodies" for mere mouldable wax figures. Ferdinand's world is reduced to the lifeless, hollow shell of nothing to which he reduces everybody else's world before his transformation. The wasted selves of his subjects duplicate Ferdinand's own wasted self, literalized in his lycanthropy—a manifestation of his repressed primal instincts.

Bosola provides the open resistance in Webster's text by refusing, ultimately, to do what is set out for him or scripted for him. Bosola acts according to primary instincts that are unrecognized in the censored and censoring Symbolic system of which he is part. But when he wakes from its anaesthetizing "ſweet, and golden dreame," Bosola is "angry with my ſelfe" and considers "What would I doe wete this

to do again?" (IV.ii). What follows is Bosola's sensitized replay of his former misplay. His rival story is enacted only after he breaks with the master story that has repeatedly failed him, and determines to no longer "Imitate" (V.iv) but rather, to "be mine owne example." Bosola's fight, ultimately, is against making no difference. The Cardinal, feigning ignorance of the Duchess's fate, says to Bosola: "I'll'd make you what you would be" (V.ii). The irony is that he, indeed, serves to do this, but in a provoking way that the Cardinal least expects.

The Duchess, Antonio, Julia, Bosola, and Ferdinand all show the fatal effects of the system that governs the subject without addressing either its body or its humanity. Antonio perceives that the Duchess is "expo]d / Vnto the wor]t of torture, paine, and feare" (II.ii). The Duchess herself says that "I am full of daggers" (IV.i) in a situation where sensibility merely "brings vs to a truer]ence / Of]orrow" (III.v) without remedy. Her statement, "I am Duche]]e of *Malfy*]ull" (IV.ii), far from being the triumphant assertion that many critics make it out to be, is the Duchess's mournful acknowledgment of the cursed but inescapable social identity that is lost only when her life is forsaken. At that moment, she says, "I]hould learne]omewhat, I am]ure / I neuer]hall know here...." This recourse to death is Webster's way of showing that social stability is founded on the suppression of other sites of knowledge and other subject positions. Because she distrusts the social definitions in circulation, the Duchess tells Antonio: "If you will know where breathes a compleat man, / ... turne your eyes, / And progre]]e through your]elfe" (I.ii)--the only uncontaminated locus

available, since Webster's playing space becomes more clarified the closer it is to the self: from a palatial room to a mean tomb. Webster is thus able to reveal the fictionality of the constructed subject who is "ca]de-vp" (III.ii) more in life than ever in death and made into a subservient "creature" (I.ii) without "leauē to be hone]t in any phra]e" (II.i), so disclosing its self in Symbolic terms. Ferdinand, in his lycanthropy, is the only "creature" in the play who is not subservient. The spectator perceives in the contrast that what gets staged is not the self but the Other. It is not only Ferdinand who "]peakes with others Tongues" (I.ii), as Antonio observes; Ferdinand is the power who dooms everybody to the same incommunicability according to his own perverse "Chronicle" (III.i) with its selective and limited register. Insofar as Ferdinand is thus in a position to kill the subject he denies, he is, as Bosola says of the Cardinal: "nothing el]e, but murder" (V.ii) until he, in effect, murders his social identity in his lycanthropic madness when he imagines himself to be a wolf. Ferdinand's lycanthropy makes him "alter'd much in face / And language," rendering him unrecognizable as a social being. The account of how he "howl'ũ fearefully" recalls Lear's anguished "Howle, howle, howle" upon Cordelia's death (*The Tragedie of King Lear*, V.iii). For both Lear and Ferdinand, howling sounds the death knell of the social self that blocks the impassioned promptings of the corporeal self—a self fully liberated only in its social death.

Even in the wild, howling bears upon the social dynamic. For the wild wolf, howling "evidently serves to assemble separated pack members" (Harrington and

Mech 128) but it can also serve the pack to stake its occupancy claim to territory or to sound a warning (130). Therefore, howling has the paradoxical function of announcing both group presence and individual absence. Such a dual function sheds light on the operation of lycanthropy as an attempted assertion of the self, which is lost or absent without group integration. Self-assertion bespeaking an identity crisis is perceptible from the beginning in Ovid's rendition of Lycaon, who figures in the story of the destruction of the human race. The world of Jupiter, so the story goes, as it moved from the Golden Age of Saturn through to the Iron Age, became a treacherous, violent, and warring place. Even the gods were targeted by the giants until Jupiter vanquished them with his thunderbolt. But the pitying earth resurrected the human race from its bloody remains. Since this too, proved to be a bloodthirsty race, the gods determined to destroy it. In order to personally ascertain the state of affairs, Jupiter descended to the earth disguised as a human. When he revealed himself as a god, Lycaon was the sceptic determined to test him with an attempt on his life. Jupiter, offended at Lycaon's display of murder and cannibalism, set fire to his house, causing Lycaon to flee to the countryside where he metamorphosed into a wolf. Jupiter then flooded the earth. Deucalion and Pyrrha were the sole survivors upon whom the new race was founded.

Ovid's description of Lycaon's metamorphosis is instructive for our consideration of Ferdinand's lycanthropy. Ovid describes the wolfish attributes as an extension of Lycaon's "own savage nature" (Bk. 1, 35). In Ovid's account, Lycaon

"uttered howling noises, and his attempts to speak were all in vain." The howling in Ovid's account is associated with a lacking conventional voice. It is this sense of inadequacy that contributes also to Irving Massey's conception of metamorphosis as "a critique of language" (1) that "denies the primacy of language" (51). Massey sees the metamorphosis as being inspired by a sense that words do not do justice to experience so that "The metamorphic character is almost always engaged in a struggle to stay out of the clutches of the forces of linguistic impersonality ..." (35). He contends that the metamorphosis "gives testimony to the sinister power of language" (185) and that it is "antilinguistic as a desperate measure ..." (187) to access "the other side of language" (1). In these terms, metamorphosis is a reaction to linguistic limitation, which limitation limits identity by circumscribing experience and foreclosing on possibilities.

The lycanthrope--as Webster's Ferdinand illustrates--refuses such limitation. Ferdinand sheds his social identity with his "skinne"--becoming other in his attempt to disclose unaccessed and unexercised aspects of the self--becoming, as Irving Massey would put it, "alien to ourselves in order to be anything at all" (19). Ferdinand is reported to have noted in his lycanthropy that the only difference between himself and a wolf is that "a Woolffes skinne [is] hairy on the out-ſide, / His on the In-ſide" (V.ii). Ferdinand struggles to turn inside-out, reflected in his plea that onlookers "Rip vp [my] fleſh." Ferdinand's lycanthropy marks his struggle to get out of his skin--or, more precisely, out of the "foreign" skin with which he has been fitted in the social role that he overcomes only in his madness, as his sister does only in her

death. The doctor, significantly bracketing Ferdinand's title, asks him "Are you mad / (My Lord?) are you out of your Princely wits?" and such is precisely Ferdinand's aim, but he fears that he is shadowed by the identity that he forsakes. With his body bared and unaccommodated in madness, Ferdinand approaches Lear's metamorphosis upon the disintegration of his social identity when he recognizes that "Mans life is cheape as Beaſtes" (II.ii). Ferdinand's lycanthropic display of the two identities is a graphic and traumatic display of the misrepresentation that occurs in a single fixed identity. He likens his fellows to "beaſts for ſacrifice," who consist of nothing "but tongue, and belly," thereby showing the social animal to great disadvantage when compared with the one that it preys upon and thinks to "tame." The social body is recognized from within the context of lycanthropy to be a crippling domestication of the corporeal body.

In his play, Webster discloses the difference which complicates all stories by valorizing what is a hidden life for the subject and disclosing all else to be nothing. Culminating in the womb/tomb, Webster's play comprises his excavation of the hidden and the inaccessible—centering on the "whiſpering roomes" (I.ii) of the subject's corporeal experience. Renouncings, not pronouncings, comprise his play. Rick Bowers perceptively traces what he terms the "arithmetic progression" (380) of *The Tragedy of the Dutcheſſe of Malfy* that includes a "mathematics of ... language" (379) which can be inflated or reduced. Webster does emphasize the formulaic nature of language in his play; according to Catherine Belsey: "The play itself draws attention to

the 'studied' quality ... of the patterned, formal, joint monologue of the brothers, which is punctuated by the strikingly more natural interjections of the Duchess ..." (103), to say nothing of her pregnant body. Studied and self-interested set speeches are all in the Duchess's corrupt milieu, which resounds with an echo of "meere gulleries, horred things / Invented by some cheating mountebanckes / To abuse vs" (III.i). The Duchess and Antonio, and, ultimately, Julia, Bosola, and Ferdinand, find a way to demean the script which they reject. Bowers uses his mathematical metaphor to envision this movement of diminishment as a subversive process of "cancellation" (378) and he extends it to "the geometry of extinction" (379)—his term for the play's final homicides. Bowers reads the play as a grinding down to the ultimate "nothingness" (380) of death. However, I disagree that the process of decline is toward "pointlessness," since Webster's entire point, paradoxically, is the subject's fundamental incommunicability in the state of life when compared with death—death communicating on an experiential corporeal level that is repressed in life.

Each of Webster's main characters bears an unspeakable burden which they are under compulsion to speak—an unspeakable body of experience: for Bosola, it is resentment of his corrupt moulding and manipulation by the powerful; for Ferdinand, it is the power of his repressed animal nature; for the Cardinal, it is a worldly preoccupation which countermands all divine edicts; for Antonio, it is the wealth of the uninhibited self; for the Duchess, it is the liberation of a congruent form of self-government; and for Julia, it is the betrayal of power for the passion which it

has corrupted. The Cardinal need not inquire of Julia: "why imagine I haue committed / ſome ſecret deed, which I deſire the world / May neuer heare of?" (V.ii) because everybody harbours the unspeakable--a knowledge gained only with the price of death, as it is for Julia. Julia had erroneously believed that she could "winde my tongue about his heart" to access the Cardinal's secrets, but she learns the fatal lesson that there is no communication between the tongue and the heart even to access one's self, let alone another. Julia dies to rehabilitate and communicate the passion corrupted by the power which she ultimately betrays. The Duchess, it turns out, had the right idea when, speaking on after Antonio had quietly left her room, she wondered aloud because of his lack of response: "haue you loſt your tongue?" (III.ii); the ear is deaf to the speechless tongue. Silence, in Webster's play, far from being golden, is a "deformed" (III.iii) subtext of inaccessible experiential content: it assumes a significance in *The Tragedy of the Dutcheſſe of Malfy* which belies the text of words. Bosola's response to Ferdinand's inquiry after the imprisoned Duchess--"her ſilence, / (Me thinkes) expreſſeth more, then if ſhe ſpake" (IV.i)--can stand as Webster's interpretive clue to his play; it is to be registered on the pulse and not on the ear. The secrets released by the "grauē" of the "Boſome" (V.ii), no leſſ than by the grave of the corpse, make up the real horror of all the plays considered in this study. In Renaissance plays, "It lies not in" the "grauē" to conceal any more than it does in the subject.

However, it is not the word that discloses the secret; words are not credible in the world of Webster's play. When Bosola asks the Duchess whether her children speak, the Duchess says: "No: / But I intend, [since they were borne accur]d; / Cur[se]s [hall be their fir]st language" (III.v). She recognizes that coercive language is a curse to the body and to the heart. The Duchess's pregnancy, as it is body-centered, discloses, by contrast, the corporeal substance of the impoverished accursedness to which she refers. It would be easy to hold that her pregnancy betrays what the Duchess would prefer to hide; I submit, on the contrary, that it liberates what the Duchess cannot keep hidden, by speaking what she lacks a voice to say. For instance, Susan McCloskey argues that "Once she becomes pregnant ... her body begins to speak part of the truth her lips have concealed.... When her body becomes articulate ... her silence robs her of the power she possessed before her marriage: the freedom to interpret herself accurately to the world" (39). I maintain that her pregnancy affords the Duchess a freedom to disclose which lacked before and, consequently, her corporeal body makes her more powerful than she ever was in the body politic. By contrast, the body politic is shown up in all of its degradation. "When her body becomes articulate," to use McCloskey's phrase, the Duchess's life is no longer circumscribed by her speech: a hidden life is disclosed within her and it shows how inarticulate is speech. The Duchess's pregnant body obviates her tongue. McCloskey insists on reading the Duchess's silence as a defensive measure:

By the end of the second act, then, the irrepressible text of the Duchess' body has translated her protective silence into her undoing.... Having lost the gift of speech that Antonio so richly praises in her, she appears the sexual adventuress her brothers imagine her to be. No longer free to challenge this misreading, she stands at the center of her world as a defective dramatic text—a woman cut off from speech and cursed with an eloquent body. (40)

I contend that the pregnant Duchess is less of a "defective" text because it is precisely in pregnancy alone that her tongue finally communicates passionately from the heart. Moreover, Ferdinand is jealous not of his sister but of her babies, who will experience the unity of the maternal body that he has irretrievably lost; he envies her not in the capacity of a lover but in the capacity of a mother. For Ferdinand, the social Other is poor recompense for the loss of the mother. When Ferdinand orders the Duchess's babies killed, to the astonishment of Bosola who pleads for their innocence, it is, mercifully, so that they will not have to endure the separation from the maternal body that marks entrance into the Symbolic order. The curse, thus, is not on the "eloquent body" but on the "defective" speech which, alone, cannot touch it or disclose it. It is not that the Duchess "is prevented from interpreting through speech the drama her body enacts" (39), as McCloskey contends, but rather that speech is shown to be incommensurate with corporeal experience—"the drama her body enacts." Far from rendering the Duchess "an ambiguous text," her pregnancy fully clarifies the Duchess's own choice of the hidden life within her. Only the character (or the spectator) who

clears the blinding social preconceptions from his/her vision can gain the perception of such a choice.

The changes that Webster made to his source, "Duchess of Malfy," from William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1567), show his strengthening of the character of Bosola and his introduction of the theme of madness. This theme is perhaps based on a comparison of madmen and lovers in the source: "you see that Louers conceyue all things for their aduantage, and fantasie dreames agreeable to their most desire, resemblinge the Mad and Bedlem persons which haue before their eyes, the figured Fantasies which cause the conceipt of their fury, and stay themselves vpon the vision of that which most troublith their offended Brayne" (12). Webster's modification of his source to concentrate all the deaths at the end, indicates that he wished to signify a break with the established norms, which were inadequate for his purposes. Violence, madness and death provide Webster with a visceral means to signify the extreme plight of the violated and unfitted characters that he has presented. In the source, the Duchess comments on the life of tyranny; Webster fleshes out the reference in various instances of social degradation: "I thinke we be the dayly slaues of the fond and cruell fantasie of those Tyrants, which say they haue puissance ouer vs: and that traininge our will to their tiranny, we be still bound to the chaine like the Galley slave" (13). In Webster's play, Bosola remarks of Ferdinand that: "He seemes to come to himselfe, now he's so neere the bottom" (V.v). This is an apt description of Webster's technique of disclosing the subject's corporeal identity only through the ruin of his/her

social identity—the body truly comes alive for Webster only when it is socially degraded.

It is only in madness, for instance, that Ferdinand can give free play to the passions which his social body restricts. Madness, far from being a metaphor for "abnormal desires, unnatural inclinations, sinful deeds," as Vanna Gentili argues (22), liberates the subject, such as Ferdinand, from the social body that has alienated the corporeal body. When he will no longer be absent from his self—and from his animal nature which he had denied—Ferdinand becomes mad. In his madness, Ferdinand brings to Webster's play the end of the known world which other characters had attempted to achieve through the trick of glasses and mirrors. Through the device of madness—and allied ghostly effects—Webster places the unknown before the desiring gaze of his spectators and enables them to see what the social order will not ordinarily reveal to its subjects. The Duchess says of the state of madness, "I am not mad: / I am acquainted with [ad mi]fery" (IV.ii), thereby redefining madness not as a loss but as a gain of insight. The eight madmen unleashed by Ferdinand to perform for the Duchess are a lawyer, a priest, a doctor, an astrologer, a tailor, an usher, a farmer, and a broker, each representative of Other-oriented secular occupations subjugating the subject to unnatural applications that distract it from being "wholly bent vpon the world" of the self. Bosola observes that the Princes are "bent vpon the world" but only, significantly, when in their humanized and "down-to-earth" condition of death. These madmen, whether dancing a masque or an antimasque or a morris or a

charivari, in any event represent a carnivalesque life-affirming liberation from their confining social identity. Bosola and Ferdinand were as compromised as they in their social identities. When each casts off his acquired inhuman identity, he is, like the madmen, free to act on his own human terms without the madness of society's fictional mediation in its social identity. Thus, he can rectify his Symbolic misdeeds-- Bosola by killing the unrepentant, deterministic Cardinal, and Ferdinand by killing Bosola as his compliant former instrument. Both Bosola and Ferdinand, finally, become the sought-after other instead of the menacing Other; what they desired all along is the self ultimately achieved only in death. The corpse represents everything absent to them in life.

The violence of these deaths is telling; it serves to tear the subject away from what are exhausted and meaningless words that violently effect death. Death is the only state that allows the subject to escape from an unrepresentative register, just as the Prince's tombs in Bosola's story alone "Do not lie" (IV.ii) because they bring the exalted figure down to earth in death. In these terms, death can be seen, paradoxically, as a liberation into one's desired, unattained, life. The Duchess herself acknowledges that: "death hath ten thousand severall doores / For men, to take their *Exits*: and 'tis found / They go on such strange geometricall hinges, / You may open them both wayes...." Life leads into death which, in turn, leads into life. Antonio, mortally wounded, considers himself "A most wretched thing, / That onely have thy benefit in death, / To appeare my selfe" (V.iv). The Duchess's "eccho" (V.iii) in

death is a literalization of the echoing (mocking) voice in life which is tuned only to formulaic set speeches that say nothing--the true "deadly Accent" for the subject who uses them without ever finding his/her self in them. For Webster, as for the other Renaissance dramatists considered in this study, words are fatal and their representations grave as they tend toward the only state that is not a "direfull miſpriſion" (V.iv)--the state of death to which, unfailingly, "we ſtrive, / To bring our ſelves" (III.v).

CHAPTER 8

'TIS PITY SHEE'S A WHORE

John Ford echoes Webster in his staging of the tragic incongruity between the subject's social identity and his/her corporeal identity—but this is not all; that there is an incestuous undertone in *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfi* involving Ferdinand's feelings toward his twin sister, is almost a critical commonplace; Michael Neill suggests that John Ford's handling of the incestuous relationship between Giovanni and Annabella in *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore* (1633) derives from Webster's technique in the earlier play—that Ford realizes its incestuous undertone by fulfilling the potential of the principals' intercourse (both physically and socially or linguistically) and with it, "the fear of what might fill" (169) the inevitable silences in their halting and hungry speeches. According to Neill:

It was surely from Webster that Ford learned to write the spare, broken dialogue, stumbling between prose and irregular verse, which he turns to such moving effect in the courtship of brother and sister that brings the first act of *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore* to its climax. Indeed the entire episode seems to be closely modelled upon the equivalently placed scene in *Malfi* (I.i.368-477) where the Duchess and her steward pick their hesitant way towards mutual confession of their love. In

sequences like this, Webster had shown himself a master of the language of barely contained emotion.... The couple's nervous repartee provides the thinnest of ironic masks for anxiety so acute that the most delicate of rhythmic adjustments can threaten to release a torrent of ungovernable emotion, for whose consequences neither will be answerable--a cataclysm that seems only just held off by the ceremonial restraints of ring-giving and kneeling. Ford's scene depends on the same tense conjunctions of effect, the dialogue stretching and swaying like a tightrope over an abyss.... (169)

While I agree with Neill that Ford plays with lines stretched tautly over an "abyss" of ungovernable emotions, I maintain that in employing this technique, Ford is disclosing the uncontainability of those emotions and so echoing Annabella's problem with naming: "What needs all this, / When 'tis [superfluous?]" (IV.i). It little matters what is said because the saying is incommensurate with the doing. In *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore*, it is not the word but rather, silence and death that is pregnant; the body pushes its own boundaries when it is unable to push the boundaries of the word. Ford shows that the word can conceive of nothing, it can only deceive. Therefore, he fills the word with the body instead of the reverse; from this perspective, the 'sexual aberration' that he stages can "become intelligible as the sickness of *uncompleted narratives*" (Bersani 29)--narratives which are censored or prohibited or impossible to enact socially but, nevertheless, are necessary to life. Ford's play stages what Frances Mascia-Lees and Patricia Sharpe, with reference to the body in culture and text, term "the contest over the right to define the body's meaning" (5), which pits the non-

conforming body against masculine institutions that envelop it in place of the maternal womb.

The contest to define the body's meaning is played out in the locus of Annabella's body—a feminine site of masculine imaginary projection—first with the associations of *Ave* and then of *Eve* in "the image of the Virgin Mary without a tomb, and Eve as the womb from which death enters the world ..." (Bronfen 69). Rick Bowers, in reading Annabella as a dead entity that passively receives inscription, refers to "Giovanni's manic egoism" (356) as he defines everybody and everything through his self and on his terms. In fact, as a social being, Annabella is dead before Giovanni begins physically to awaken her. Bowers defines Annabella as "a mere extension of Giovanni's ego" (363), but Ford's point is that nothing else is possible in love because, as Lacan argues, "It's one's own ego that one loves in love, one's own ego made real on the imaginary level" (*Seminar Bk. I*: 142). The sibling relationship between Annabella and Giovanni accentuates the desire to possess not the other but specifically the self, thereby disclosing its loss in the obtaining order. If Giovanni is, as Annabella remarks, "carele]]e of him]elfe" (I.i), this is only in a social capacity which argues for his preservation of a deeper level of the self. Annabella finds this "self" seductive after the parade of empty-headed suitors who come before her grotesquely full of their social selves. In his play, Ford wishes to disclose the real "barre twixt you and her" (II.i)—the barrier not merely of a rival suitor but of a rival way of being that is body-centered, not word-controlled. Even the superficial

Bergetto, his passion inflamed, asserts that he will "breake the Dukes / peace ere I haue done my selfe" (III.i). He refuses to be done with his self under his uncle's machinations and, thereby, begins "to grow valiant" and come into his self. In his determination, Bergetto echoes Giovanni's challenge: "Shall a peeuiſh ſound, / A cuſtomary forme, from man to man, / Of brother and of ſiſter, be a barre / Twixt my perpetuall happineſſe and mee?" (I.i). Bergetto is dismissed as a "foole" because he will not know what everybody else thinks they know—he refuses the "cuſtomary" social code that is passed off as the common knowledge which it really seeks to obscure.

When Florio indicates that he hopes the Friar will teach Giovanni "how to gaine another world" (II.i), Giovanni has already found "a world of variety" in "that little round" of his sister's face. Their incest is the ultimate rebellion, redefining society from an antisocial perspective. When acquired social identity is refused in the rebellious act, the previously unacceptable comes to the fore—in this case, the unconventional love shorn of conventional trappings as "When firſt I lou'd and knew not how to woe" (V.i), recalls Giovanni of his striking out on his own course in an attitude reminiscent of the Duchess of Malfi. In Ford's contrary play, it is not that "Annabella's otherness is denied through their incest ..." (Bowers 356), but that she is liberated into an otherness that would be denied in the Other's conventional terms. These she mocks when they are all that Giovanni uses. When Giovanni claims: "Poets faigne (I read) / That *Iuno* for her forehead did exceede / All other goddeſſes:

but I dur[st] sweare, / Your forehead exceeds hers, as hers did theirs," Annabella scoffs at his poetic conventionalities. He says: "Such a paire of starres / As are thine eyes, would (like *Promethean* fire) / (If gently glaun'[t]) giue life to [en]le[ss]e stones," to which Annabella responds "Fie vpon'ee," as she questions his sincerity: "D'ee mock mee, or flatter mee" (I.i). The love of Giovanni and Annabella has nothing in common with the classical gods to whom Giovanni alludes, and so he might well assert that he "hold[s] my selfe, in being King of thee, / More great, then were I King of all the world" (II.i). Giovanni and Annabella have found a world that enables them to assert their difference from the obtaining one—a world where "we become other to ourselves," which the obtaining world considers "a most horrifying state of madness ..." (Krasniewicz 43). The distinction that Ford valorizes and maintains is not between the self and other subjects, which he refutes in his protagonists' incest, but within the subject itself as the social Other loses out to the psychic other which it would deny. It is little wonder, given such a fundamental overturning, that Antonin Artaud drew on the incest in Ford's play in defining his own theatre of revolt. According to Artaud: "In the true theater a play disturbs the senses' repose, frees the repressed unconscious, incites a kind of virtual revolt ... and imposes on the assembled collectivity an attitude that is both difficult and heroic" (28). Artaud sees Giovanni as being "heroically criminal" for not permitting barriers to restrain "his convulsive passion"—a "rebellious and equally heroic passion" that is shared by Annabella. Artaud constructs theirs as a "superhuman passion" that they will not permit the law to touch. He maintains that

Annabella's facing--even provoking--her execution "is the absolute condition of revolt" (29)--a revolt that is beyond remedy or, perhaps, from another perspective, is its own remedy.

The revolt of incest is reinforced in Ford's play by the language of madness which, in effect, scapegoats the single subject to save the collective. When, for instance, Giovanni reveals his incest with Annabella, their father, Florio, exclaims "hee's a frantick mad-man!" (V.i), just as Giovanni's confidant (or father-confessor), the Friar, had done earlier in calling him a "foolish mad-man" (I.i). Lacan links love and madness in conventional terms, saying that "When you're in love, you are mad, as ordinary language puts it" (*Seminar Bk. I*: 142); even when the love is not incestuous. What society judges as mad is simply the free play of socially forbidden passions, so that when Florio wonders of Giovanni "Why mad-man, art thy selfe?" (V.i), the spectator sees that Giovanni has never been more himself; he has succeeded in reversing the alienation of the corporeal body. Annabella describes her intercourse with Giovanni as "theſe ſtolne contents" (II.i) and Giovanni is determined that they not be "growne Traytours to our owne delights" (V.i). The spectator begins to recognize that the real madness is in the exclusive affirmation of the social body at the expense of the corporeal body. Madness and incest, as well as the maternal body, serve to break the distinction between self and Other. By forsaking social identity to disclose the lack and the loss contained therein, Annabella and Giovanni expose what their society would deny--the body of its subject which is socially subject to interdiction

and prohibition. Henry W. Sullivan elucidates the incest prohibition as socially structuring the subject who submits to it:

The taboo is the one law in the sense that it arises from the primordial prohibition of unlimited access to the (m)Other, in the Name-of-the-Father, and actually structures the emerging human subject as a speaking, representational being. Thus, the model of law as prohibition and the function of the Father's Name as a curb on the desire to which such prohibition has given rise together provide the framework of all future laws and prohibitions, as well as a receptivity in the subject to enter the world of compromise and law as a socially submissive being. (184-185)

But for those who do not submit, such as Annabella and Giovanni, the fact of the prohibition itself could provide the seductive motivation to break it, quite apart from the object of the illicit desire. François Roustang intriguingly distinguishes between: "... what in incestuous desire derives from the incestuous object and what derives from its prohibition" (100). Such speculation, when applied to Ford's play, opens the possibility that Annabella and Giovanni in their incestuous act are rebelling against the interdiction and the prohibition of the desiring corporeal body rather than lusting particularly after each other. Thus, we might ask of Giovanni and Annabella what Julia Kristeva asks of Romeo and Juliet: "Do they joy in the fullness of being together or in the fear of being reproved?" (*Tales*: 211). Annabella, for example, tells Giovanni (I.i) that:

... what thou haſt vrg'd,
My captiue heart had long agoe reſolu'd.
I bluſh to tell thee, (but I'le tell thee now)
For euery ſigh that thou haſt ſpent for me,

I haue ſigh'd ten; for euery teare ſhed twenty:
 And not ſo much for that I lov'd, as that
 I durſt not ſay I lou'd; uor ſcarcely thinke it.

Furthermore, Putana maintains that but "... for the ſpeech of the people; elſe 'twere nothing" (II.i). Like Romeo and Juliet, Giovanni and Annabella are in a cathartic defiance of social strictures as a condition of preserving the ſelf inſtead of ſubmitting to its ſocial deſtruction. *'Tis Pitty Shee's a Whore* ſtages the foregrounding of the prohibited other ſtory inſtead of the ſocially ſanctioned one—but it is "a tale whoſe euery word / Threatens eternall ſlaughter."

In ſeeing the utter lack in convention by a marked contrast between the conventional and the unconventional, the ſpectator is in a poſition to recognize how much convention excludes and to witness the exceeding of it—the unwrapping of Annabella's "woefull thinge / Wrapt vp in grieve" ſo that it appears a mere "ſhadow of a man" (I.i). The real "borrowed ſhape" (II.i) in *'Tis Pitty Shee's a Whore* is the 'diſguiſe' of ſocial identity which conceals the life of the body becauſe its maintenance requires counterfeiting and being otherwiſe. In rejecting his catechiſm and the ſcholasticism from which he derives no ſatisfaction, Giovanni demystifies the ſubjugation that theſe inſtitute; of futile penances, he ſays: "I find all theſe but dreames, and old mens tales / To fright vnſteedy youth; I'me ſtill the ſame, / Or I muſt ſpeake, or burſt" (I.i). He diſcards what he ſees as weak intellectual endeavours by ſaying that: "a ſchoole-rod keepes a child in awe" (V.i). In this act of rejection, Giovanni takes after Flamineo in *The White Devil* who, with his poſſeſſion of two

pistols, dismisses "grammaticall laments" in the same breath as sermons, neither of which, he perceives, addresses one's experience. The spectator sees how out of touch and unfit such precepts are when the Friar proceeds to "reade a Lecture" (III.i) at a woman whose experience exceeds the bounds of the lecture as well as the presumption of the lecturer. Hence, Giovanni ironically calls them "words / Of ghofly comfort," that provide only the ghost of a comfort and nothing to live on. Giovanni advises his auditors to "*Let Poaring booke-men dreame of other worlds*" (V.i), which they can never attain on the page as he has on his stage. Well might Giovanni term the Friar's counsel "a voyce of life" (I.i) because any dissenting voice--such as the corporeal one to which Giovanni and Annabella adhere--is, by contrast, a voice of death, although its adherents consider it, paradoxically, to be more liveable than the alternative.

Giovanni and Annabella enact a rival story that disclaims socially-imposed interpretations. They valorize the socially masked corporeal body which registers an unspeakable body of experience. Their incest cuts through imposed prohibitions to disclose "a desire that is, perhaps, the prototype of all desire" (Roustang 95)--a desire stimulated by the maternal body that is erased from their story (as it is in so many Renaissance plays) and whose Imaginary unity they strive to regain. In feeding this desire, Annabella herself attains the state of motherhood--as Kristeva maintains: "a process that is prior to the social-symbolic-linguistic contract of the group" (*Desire*: 238). Kristeva explains that "biology jolts us by means of unsymbolized instinctual drives and ... this phenomenon eludes social intercourse, the representation of

preexisting objects, and the contract of desire." Motherhood affords a return to what is anterior to the Symbolic, and it serves as a reminder of the unity that the divided Symbolic subject loses. According to Elisabeth Bronfen, the maternal body is forbidden precisely because it marks the loss that the Symbolic denies: "... the maternal body is also forbidden in a figural sense, as a trope for the 'soma' which must be restrained or renounced by the child as it moves from the position of primary narcissism to that of the speaking subject bound by symbols and laws of the community" (32). Both motherhood and incest, then, serve to disclose the nature underlying the culture--the nature that threatens always to subvert culture once the subject recognizes that: "I haue too long ſuppreſt the hidden flames / That almoſt haue coſum'd me" (I.i). It is the repression of instinctual drive and of enduring relation to the mother that enables language as a Symbolic function--the mother must be erased for a recognition of the Other. Annabella, in being the incestuous "Mother to a Child vnborne" (V.i), doubly disrupts the Other's system, which she and Giovanni find unliveable. In his play, then, Ford stages both the repression and its rejection--life being associated with the former and death with the latter. In addition, the stifling effect of the Symbolic order is reinforced by his introduction of incest which, like the order it reflects, eradicates individual difference.

Ford's incestuous lovers point up the lack and the inadequacy in all the available discourses, and so emphasize, by contrast, the unspoken as the repository of the only content worth having. Signification threatens forbidden content just as does

the incest taboo. The breakdown of signification appeals to the spectator on an instinctual level to convey a knowledge enacted by Giovanni and Annabella that contradicts mere words. Similarly, Ford's exposure of the covert 'hidden' life of such as Soranzo, Hippolyta, and Richaretto redefines them as possessing drives outside of social identity. It is because word and deed are incommensurate and nonreflective that Annabella says to Soranzo: "You are no looking-glasse, or if you were, I'de dre[[e / my language by you" (III.i). Deception is all that is possible on such terms. Giovanni gets no relief after all his words are exhausted, because words never reach the heart of the matter. Even after he has "Empty'd the store-hou[se of my thoughts and heart, / Made my selfe poore of secrets; haue not left / Another word vntold, which hath not spok[e / All what I euer dur[st, or thinke, or know" (I.i), there is still that within him which is not spent, because it can never be touched by Symbolic means. Annabella's heart, which Giovanni extracts, is "the life obscured by language ..." (Rosen 320).

Annabella and Giovanni represent that which eludes signification. They show that the Symbolic order kills to signify, because within its unliveable confines the subject is dead before the death of its body. Giovanni culminates his excessive but inadequate poetic conventionalities in tribute to Annabella with the offer of a dagger for her to "Rip vp my bo[some, there thou shalt behold / A heart, in which is writ the truth I speake" (I.i). Giovanni's gesture in this instance anticipates his cutting out of Annabella's heart; both gestures serve as physical language to counterpoint the inadequate Symbolic one and to liberate the meaning that it conceals. The "plaine

termes" (IV.i) that Vasques demands can never "tell all." "All" is trapped in the heart and non-existent in the dominant discourse. Kathleen McLuskie contends that Giovanni's appearance with Annabella's heart on his dagger gives the lie to the play's currency of "affairs of the heart" (120); McLuskie asserts that Giovanni's posture here is "a theatrical fact which goes beyond rhetorical prevarication, a gruesome, theatrical spectacle which lays bare the hideous irony that here is no physical reality supporting all this talk of affairs of the heart." I argue that Giovanni's violence to the heart discloses the violence to the heart of the subject done by its entry into the Symbolic order, which splits it into a "mi[giuing heart" (V.i) no less horribly than Giovanni splits the flesh and bone of Annabella to get at her heart. What Ford thereby discloses is that the only reality is a physical one; *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore* is, ultimately, an affair of the heart that cancels any possibility of an affair with the word.

The degrading of the affair with the word in Ford's play begins with Giovanni's devaluing the utility of his intellectual accomplishments in the fulfilment of his passion. As Michael Neill points out: "His first attempts to articulate his love are hedged about in a self-conscious petrarchizing artificialty which Annabella's irony only too easily laughs off ..." (170-171). Susan J. Wiseman finds in the play "the languages of courtly love, platonism and pragmatism" (189), each of which can be seen to manifest "the failure of the secular and sacred languages" (194) in the face of instinctual drives. The real fall, as staged in *'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore*, is the fall into language. Even Soranzo finds that his experience belies the text that he consults.

Thus, when he reads, "*Loues mea[s]ure is extreame, the comfort, paine: / The life unre[t], and the reward di[s]daine*" (II.i), he is dismissive:

... [s]o writes
 This [s]mooth licentious Poet in his rymes.
 But *Sanazar* thou lyeest, for had thy bo[s]ome
 Felt [s]uch oppre[s]sion as is laid on mine,
 Thou would[st] haue ki[t] the rod that made the [s]mart.
 To worke then happy Mu[s]e, and contradict
 What *Sanazer* hath in his envy writ.

Soranzo would have it that: "*Loues mea[s]ure is the meane, [s]weet his annoyes, / His pleasures life, and his reward all ioyes.*" As Kristeva defines it: "*Love is something spoken, and it is only that ...*" (*Tales*: 277). Ford decodes the codes in which love is spoken by enacting it to the very heart in an "ordeal" that "puts the univocity of language and its referential and communicative power to the test" (2); Annabella did as much when she saw no point to naming her lover.

Language makes the body dead and it is this socially dead body that dies on the Renaissance stage. When the Friar counsels Annabella to "feare not to [s]peake" (V.i) she retorts that "I feare much more then I can [s]peake," thereby acknowledging that language is prohibitive--that the subject cannot be free either with it or in it. At the banquet, Giovanni asks the guests of the heart he displays on his dagger: "Looke well vpon't; d'ee know't?" He wants each to recognize it as his/her own heart, that is gutted and betrayed by a reliance upon language, ultimately flying in the face of what the subject is all about. Each of the characters is the opposite of what language would construct them to be: Giovanni is a rebel; Annabella is experimental; the Cardinal is

self-serving; Soranzo is dishonourable; Florio is controlling; Donado is careless; Bergetto is courageous; Grimaldi is cowardly; Richardetto is deadly; Hippolita is vulnerable. It is language that deceives and disguises actions with which it is incommensurate. Where words do not do justice and cannot be trusted, the heart itself is sought out as the only repository of trustworthy knowledge, as Soranzo recognizes: "Not know it, Strumpet, I'll ripp vp thy heart, / And finde it there" (IV.i). In Ford's play, it is only death that allows to emerge what in life is kept concealed. What Vasques says of Giovanni, "hee is fold to death," is true of all subjects whose purchase of life sells them into death with the split from the maternal body and the entry into language that marks a continuous fall. Annabella takes leave "of that life / I long haue dyed in" (V.i) and, thereby, defends with her death what her life has not already deadened.

'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore, like the other Renaissance plays which have been considered, trafficks in "a dying time," not a lifetime, in order to devalue "vayne and v[er]eleffe speech" as futile in keeping the subject alive (V.i). The real horror of these plays is that the social body does not fit the human body, which it buries under prohibitions and restrictions that drain it of life. The body that submits to being so ruled and subjected dies to its self to live for the Other; Annabella and Giovanni die to the Other to live for their self, as do their peers in the other plays considered in this study.

CONCLUSION

Renaissance plays are sometimes criticized for disclosing characters' "va[il] de[si]res" (*Philotas*, IV.ii) impacting on the public domain in treasonous, rebellious or anti-social ways. Renaissance characters such as Aspatia and Evadne, Philaster and Arathusa, Philotas, Bussy D'Ambois and Tamyra, Hieronimo and Bel-imperia, the Duchess, Antonio and Bosola, and Annabella and Giovanni, figure the haunting presence of unanswered desire on the Renaissance stage. These plays are set in motion on a tragic and, some would say, a horrific, course by the characters' determination to finally live the passion which they had repressed in a coercive and constrictive social identity rather than being "re[folu'd to be rul'd]" (*Phila[ster]*, I.i) by it. However, the unbearable and unliveable horror for the characters is in being scripted to an unfitting role of mythic proportions that fails to address their own human experience. These Renaissance characters thus fight what they are "Made to expre[ss]" (*Bu[ssy] D'Ambois*, V.i) even to the point of death, as a comment on how much of the self is already deadened by the inadequate terms of the obtaining order. The plays illustrate how much of human nature gets repressed, perverted, and corrupted by the artificial overlay of an acquired, unnatural social identity. The characters are constrained by unnatural considerations that stifle their natural instincts. Renaissance

plays typically revolve around a character who is, from a psycho-semiotic perspective, absent from his/her self; Charlemont in Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedie: Or The honest Man's Reuenge* (1611) is an apt illustration. Tourneur's play serves at once both as a culmination and as a summation of the operation of the "non-verbal" register in Renaissance drama, and so is a fit concluding illustration for the present study. The play serves as a summation by disclosing and disposing of the artificial and restrictive social identity that stifles the natural impulses of the subject; it serves as a culmination in that it employs the concepts of atheism, dispossession, war, rape, and anatomization as metaphors for the unburdening of the subject's corporeal identity.

The discussion between D'amville and Borachio in the opening lines of *The Atheist's Tragedie*, while it appears on the surface to concern the religious governance of the human spirit, is actually about the socio-political governance of the human will. D'amville asserts that when the human being's "Nature, is / Not full and free," then that being becomes like a "beaſt" (I.i). The concept can apply equally to the effect of socio-political strictures and religious ones on the subject. D'amville, like each of the Renaissance protagonists we have considered, rejects all "articles of bondage caſt vpon our freedoms by our owne ſubiectiions" (IV.i). Borachio, in taking D'amville's assertion as proof that the human being is nothing other than nature, foreshadows the ineffectuality of any socially, politically, or religiously induced modifications to human nature--modifications serving only to mortify the human body. It is no surprise, then, that ultimately a "spiritual" anatomy will not suffice for

D'amville. The implications of the play are not contained by religion, and the title itself draws satiric attention to the artificial gods that are raised socially, politically and juridicially. The play, like so many of its Renaissance counterparts, exposes these gods and tears them down. Charlemont says of the ghost of his father: "You torture me between the passion of my blood, and the religion of my soul" (III.i). Tourneur's play discloses and disposes of the various restraints on passion, be they religious, social, political, intellectual, psychological, or physical. It is the sacrificial gesture of Charlemont and Castabella that finally points the way to liberation from such deadly impositions. The gesture devalues the body to the point of death; it is encumbered by artificial demands which stifle and corrupt its natural impulses.

The Atheist's Tragedie--similar to the other Renaissance plays considered in this study--discloses the greatest imposition to be linguistic, where the subject is constrained to use words that he/she neither trusts nor believes. The play's major exemplar of shifting with words is the shifty Languabeau Snuffe. Satirized as a stereotypical Puritan, Snuffe admits that "I want words" in all his professed "plainness" (I.i). The spectator sees, from his duplicitous and exploitative use of them, that words are always obfuscating, misleading, misrepresenting, untruthful, and incongruent. Words, for Snuffe, are no match for physical or material bodies and they easily "vanish into air" because they have no grounding--no basis--in substance. Words are not backed up by substance for Snuffe; neither are his actions born of these words. Snuffe exploits words but he never permits himself to rest in them.

Consequently, he is never betrayed by them, unlike his fellows such as Charlemont and Montferrers, who place their trust and their faith in words. In his play, Tourneur explores the tragedy befalling those who trust in linguistic constructions. D'amville recognizes the lack of agreement between what Snuffe says and what he does: "Yet but compare'] profession with his life; / They]o directly contradict them]elues." The spectator sees that such incongruence is not the exception but rather, the rule—one is misled if one expects anything other. Tourneur shows that the subject for whom word and deed do not coincide is not some sinister or ulterior anomaly; the truth is that words are incommensurate with deeds, so that the spoken word cannot on any terms be matched with living actions. If this incongruence between word and action is to be the excuse that D'amville provides for why "I am confirm'd an Athei]t," then his so-called atheism has a linguistic rather than a doctrinal basis.

Castabella is the character in *The Atheist's Tragedie* who experiences the spiritual crisis. She is pulled in opposing directions by love and by duty, and falls into the ministrations/machinations of Snuffe. Castabella is, however, self-possessed enough to warn Snuffe that if religious assistance proves inadequate to her state, then "I]hall be forc'd to uiolate my faith" (I.i). Significantly, Castabella would choose to violate her faith rather than allow it or anything or anybody to violate her self. Upon being "betraid" into a mock marriage with Rousard, Castabella urges her tormentors to: "be not brib'd by that you]o neglect, / In being the worlds hated in]strument, / To bring a iu]t neglect vpon your]elfe!" Castabella—like the other Renaissance

protagonists we have considered--is the one character who does not lose sight of the self by being caught up in things outside the self, which the worldly privilege. She is, as Snuffe notes, "not yeelding to any light impreſſion of her ſelfe" that the world can make. When Castabella says to Snuffe: "I know your heart cannot prophane / The holineſſe you make profeſſion of," she is speaking of his religious profession / presumption, but she can see from human experience that the heart and the tongue may not always coincide. She would choose to sacrifice the latter to spare the former, just as she would choose to sacrifice her faith to save her self. In Castabella's estimation, only affections--the "heart"--can speak freely: "our affections cannot be compel'd, / Though 'our actions may" (III.i). Actions are potentially as corrupt as words, and neither can be an adequate reflection of the subject, who can be misrepresented by both. The tragedy in Renaissance plays--and Tourneur's is an apt instance--is that the tongue does not die: it kills everybody it speaks.

Tourneur shows in *The Atheist's Tragedie* that the family is no more able than the church to save the subject; he thus inquires into the socio-political as well as the religious ideologies that burden the subject. William E. Gruber compares *The Atheist's Tragedie* to Brecht's *Mother Courage*, which "makes visible the economic substructure of society" (205). He maintains that Tourneur's play can be seen to foreground "the 'story' of Jacobean social and political ideology" (204). The ideological component is perhaps most clearly disclosed in Charlemont's suit to his father for his release into military service. Charlemont speaks for the social subject in

general when he says of his father's refusal to accept him in any identity but a social one: "By the command of his authoritie, / My diſpoſition's forc'd againſt it ſelfe" (I.i). Charlemont's father threatens to cut him off financially in an effort "To put me in the habite of my ranque." He hinders his son's attempt to occupy any but a social role, thereby denying him any but a social identity. When Charlemont explains to his father that "my affection to the warre, / Is as hereditary as my bloud," he is arguing for the acceptance of his militaristic identity to somebody who is blind to all but the social one. Charlemont does not wish his life to amount to no more than "a vaine Parentheſis, / In 'th' honour'd ſtory of your Familie," occupying a constructed and predetermined place to which he can contribute nothing of his own experience. Reduced to arguing in terms that his father would understand, Charlemont bases his argument on "reputation," which alone can appeal to his father's brand of social concern. Montferrers, both in life and in death, betrays that social stability is founded on the suppression of other sites of knowledge and other subject positions; what he would deaden in life comes back to haunt himself and everybody else in his death.

In his argument with his father, Charlemont is focused on a "conqueſt of the hearers ſenſe" (I.i), so that he makes intellectual appeals to advance his cause. D'amville, by contrast, makes appeals that are body-centered, placing "Man and Beaſt" on the same level in terms of their natural inclinations and appetites. He calls to "haue all my ſences feaſted" before his death. It is by not considering the body-centered claims that Charlemont unleashes the tragic chain of events. Like his

unfeeling father, Charlemont will not allow himself to be moved by Castabella's tears, although he senses "ſomething within me" to which "Reputation will not yeeld." Thus, in dispossessing Charlemont of his inheritance, D'amville has "diſpoſſeſ'd (II.i) Charlemont of the very encumbrances that possess him to disregard the instinctual passions and desires of his heart. Charlemont disregards the promptings of and for the live body, in order to feed the morbid appetites of his forebearers, dead and alive, with his own deadened body. It is the "diſpoſition" of his body and its dispossession which enables him to confront the ghost. Charlemont concludes, of the ghostly visitant, that "It muſt be ſomething that my *Genius* would / Informe me of." Indeed, the ghost informs him of the self that he has denied in order to affirm what is only a dead self. Charlemont needed to go to war in order to express the war within him between his corporeal and his social identities. With the loss of his dispossessed identity, he maintains that he has become more powerful—the emperor of a world in which "My paſſions are / My ſubiects" (III.i). Charlemont, like his Renaissance peers, benefits by being 'reduced' to a fine focus on the world of his own body instead of being focused exclusively on the body of the world. Like Charlemont, who is taken for a ghost that has returned from the dead, Snuffe disguises himself as a ghost with a sheet, to accommodate the needs of his natural body. Thereby he discloses that his bodily urges are incompatible with his represented identity—that only a dead man can engage the bodily appetites because, indeed, the discovery of his indulgence makes him socially dead.

Since for the characters of the play, their bodies are, in effect, raped by their world with its discordant demands, Tourneur literalizes the rape of corporeal by social identity. D'amville's attempted rape of Castabella follows Sebastian's crying the same foul upon her forced marriage to his brother, just as Vittoria in *The White Devil* shouts "rape" when sentenced because justice has been "rauijht" and bent to the will of its masters, which makes victims of everybody else. Tourneur's play stages the rape of the body's identity by all the constructs—which "are the authors of / Our miſerie" (III.i)—that it acquires with its birth, thereby echoing birth's violation as shown in *The Tragedy of the Dytchesse of Malfy* and in *'Tis Pitty Shee's a Whore*. The subject, as staged by Tourneur and his fellow playwrights, gets into trouble by acquiring and being acquired, instead of heeding the natural requirements of its own body. The true subject is, for these Renaissance playwrights, always absent in the prevailing order where it is only ever Other-identified. It is only fitting that Tourneur's D'amville makes "His abſence the foundation of my plot" (I.i); all of the characters are, in effect, absent from themselves and they "come to" only as they confront death.

The subject, as Tourneur shows, is absent in death but also, in a very real sense, is absent in love. Leuidulcia cannot comprehend Castabella's preference for "th'affection of an abſent Loue" (I.i). But love, as we have seen in *The Tragedy of the Dytchesse of Malfy* and in *'Tis Pitty Shee's a Whore*, is based on absence—the absent unity of the maternal body which lack the desiring body strives in vain to fill. *The*

Atheist's Tragedie stages the resulting clash between subjective desire and coercive, constraining societal law. Leuidulcia devalues the "barren minde" upon which a societal premium is placed, in favour of the "fruitfull body" which it denies: "You mis[take the way into a woman, / The passage lyes not through her reason, but her blood," she informs Snuffe. Leuidulcia's positing of the mind-body dichotomy clarifies the struggles witnessed in the play between word and deed, and between faith and self. Leuidulcia, luxurious and insatiable, reinforces D'amville's sensual body focus by pointing out that creation itself is body-centered. Her reminder brings full-circle the human cycle in which the body is born and the body dies--the sex act enabling the former and mimicking the latter. Tourneur traces the birth into death and the death into birth. For example, the judges respond to D'amville's objection to their treatment of Charlemont by saying "He suffers by the forme of law" (V.i). The spectator perceives that each subject suffers according to the Law into which he/she has been born and out of which he/she dies. The judge sentences Cataplasma, Soquette, and Frisco to "come as neare to death, / As life can bear it"; this is no less than what Charlemont and Castabella, who are likewise mortified in society, experience--their life is death and so it is all one to them whether they live or die.

D'amville laments "this vncertaine state of mortall man" (II.i) that all too certainly leads inexorably to death. D'amville focuses on "vnalterable" (I.i) facts such as the fact of death which permits of no remedy. The significance of death for D'amville's inquiring mind is that it permits the inner workings of the body that are

not revealed in life to be examined, excavated, and anatomized. It is not, as Una Ellis-Fermor contends, that "Touneur anatomizes minds" (153); he specifically anatomizes the body. Paradoxically, the body has a mind of its own, that would deny its very life when that life is experienced as death. D'amville seeks to go beyond the spiritualizing and philosophizing and theorizing in life to investigate "the true state and constitution" (V.i) of the body as revealed in the process of its death. Devon Hodges considers the motivation of an anatomy to be the "separation of the symbolic order from the plenitudes of truth and nature" (51), which implies an inadequacy in the obtaining forms. D'amville, having exhausted life's worldly resources without finding answers to his questions, seeks them within the last remaining body of truth available to him--the inspired body which expires in death. D'amville begs for Charlemont's "body when t'is dead for an Anatomie" in order to "finde out by his Anatomie; / What thing there is in Nature more exact / Then in the constitution of my selfe" because "in me the resolution wants, / To die with that assurance as he does. / The cause of that, in his Anatomie / I would finde out." D'amville seeks to know "from whence / the peace of conscience should proceede." The spectator sees that it proceeds from the exacting and courageous congruence of thought and deed and word.

D'amville seeks in the subject of his anatomy not to expose "the difference between external form and inner substance" (Hodges 27), but to trace the possibility of its congruence. He finds the one being in whom there is no discordance between appearance and reality as the subject for his anatomy and he thereby seeks to excavate

not the corruption—of which he is only too well aware—but its opposite. D'amville seeks to anatomize the world not as it is, but as he believes it could be with Charlemont as his lost ideal of unity "in his mothers wombe" (II.i). He recognizes, ultimately, that there is more to be had than the world will afford—more than he can "compa[[e]" (I.i) in his lifetime. D'amville's efforts to prematurely incorporate the wealth of knowledge of the beyond into the here-and-now backfires, and his own death results. D'amville, with his concern about legacies and inheritances was preoccupied in his life by the knowledge of death. Ultimately, he receives more than he bargained for, and no less than the thing itself.

The "other world" for which Renaissance characters such as D'amville strive is neither the "underworld" nor the "overworld" but rather, the world of the self which is within the self. The horror in *The Atheist's Tragedie*, as in the other Renaissance plays which have been considered in this study, is that the subject is not allowed to live in the world of the self. The subject has an instinctual knowledge of this world of the self and its riches, but is denied experience of it. The closest that these Renaissance characters can come to living for the self is to die for it. Thus, the spectator perceives that what is conventionally staged in Renaissance plays is not the self but the social Other which is in mortal combat with the psychic other.

Renaissance plays stage the return to an unfiltered state by subjects who cannot live on the Other's terms, and who will not be "Othered" with an unfitting social identity. If these Renaissance characters are deemed to act monstrously, it is

only because they are monsters of society's creation--made to bear a stifling identity. When they cannot live by the obtaining terms, these characters die to translate the impulses of their violated psyches. In the process, they disclose the fatal effects of the system that governs the subject without addressing either its body or its humanity. Renaissance plays wipe the slate clean, with the aid of madness, ghosts, death, and violence, each of which serves to effect a "[t]ränge misbeleefe of all the world" (*The Maids Tragedie*, IV.i), preparatory to the protagonist's radical and unsparing revision of it. The Renaissance protagonist thus recuperates the primary instincts lost in symbolizations of the master discourse. The shattered and fractured body without words is figured, in its "jouissance," on the so-called decadent, perverse, and aberrant Renaissance stage. The figuring is accomplished by the irrepressible and wounded, mad, ghostly, dead, and violent misfits who populate its precincts in all of their disembodied, dismembered, disruptive, and deconstructive, otherness. They serve, finally, to give the psychic other, repressed by the social Other, its due.

APPENDIX

The Maids Tragedie:

In order to conceal his affair with Evadne, the king arranges for her a marriage of convenience, selecting the honourable and unsuspecting Amintor to be her husband, despite the fact that he is committed to Aspatia. Unaware of the cover-up, Amintor concedes to the king's wish. The demise of all four characters ensues. Evadne, brought by her brother and Amintor's friend, Melantius, to a sense of her violation, exacts revenge on the king and then takes her own life when Amintor rejects her. Amintor, unknowingly, kills the heartbroken Aspatia in a duel that she initiates, dressed as the indignant brother of the neglected woman. Amintor kills himself upon recognition of what he has inadvertently done.

Philaster:

The rightful successor, Philaster, motivated by the ghost of his father and aided by a popular revolt incited by a sympathetic Captain, regains his throne from the usurping king. Philaster also wins the king's sensitive daughter, Arathusa, who wants him together with the land. The page, Bellario, is the go-between for their clandestine affair. Bellario tries to save Philaster by taking the blame when he wounds Arathusa in the woods, faithlessly believing a story that she has wronged him with the page. The story is concocted by the outcast, Megra, for self-preservation when the king catches her together with his chosen suitor for Arathusa, the foreign prince, Pharamond. Philaster believes the story because his friend, Dion, bears false witness to its truth. The truth of Arathusa's faithfulness is disclosed when Bellario reveals herself as Dion's long-lost daughter, Euphrasia, who has secretly disguised herself as a boy for access to her beloved, Philaster. For her loyalty, she is ultimately taken into his family with his wife, Arathusa.

Bussy D'Ambois: A Tragedie:

The uninhibited Bussy, favoured by Henry and resented by the courtiers as a

presumptuous interloper, briefly upsets the status quo and with it, one of the court's most storied marriages as he conducts a clandestine affair with Tamyra using the Friar as a go-between. Henry's brother, Monsieur, when Tamyra rejects his advances and when the uncontrollable Bussy is not his expected compliant instrument to secure power, discloses the affair to Tamyra's husband, Montsurry, and together, they seek revenge. Spirits are raised to further the causes of the respective camps. The Friar dies by accidently falling on his drawn sword, and later appears as a ghost. Bussy is killed by murderers while in the process of fighting with Montsurry. Montsurry, professing to forgive Tamyra, rejects and banishes her.

The Spanish Tragedie:

Horatio captures Balthazar, the foreign prince who has murdered his friend and Bel-imperia's beloved, Andrea, who returns as a ghost seeking revenge. Horatio is, in turn, murdered at her brother, Lorenzo's, instigation to clear the way for the non-compliant Bel-imperia to marry Balthazar and so to secure a league between two kingdoms, since she is the king's neice. Hieronimo, the knight marshall, with Bel-imperia's assistance, avenges his son, Horatio's, death in a playlet involving Lorenzo and Balthazar--ostensibly for the purpose of celebrating the marriage. In the action of the playlet, Hieronimo kills Lorenzo and Bel-imperia kills Balthazar and herself. Hieronimo accounts for the slaughter by presenting the body of his slain son on stage. He is captured by the bereaved fathers and manages to kill himself with a pen-knife after biting out his tongue in response to their redundant queries.

The Tragedie of Philotas:

Philotas falls from grace after being implicated in a rumored plot of treason against Alexander's life by a court party suspicious of his high regard for himself. His beloved, Antigona, is made to betray him for evidence in the mocked-up case against him. Philotas is tried and tortured into confession. The people are divided in the process--some diplomatically condoning Alexander's action, some deluded by Philotas's capitulation, and some resentful of the political expediency they have witnessed.

The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy:

The Duchess, for the sake of preserving her stature and estate, is exhorted by her brothers, Ferdinand and the Cardinal, not to remarry. However, she secretly unites with Antonio and together, they have three children. Ferdinand's spy, Bosola, discovers and reveals the arrangement. The Duchess, preparing to flee the wrath of her brothers, sends Antonio ahead to make preparations under the pretence of accusing

him of financial mismanagement. However, she reveals the plan to Bosola, who betrays her. The Cardinal banishes his sister and Antonio and confiscates her property, much to the dismay of the citizens. Antonio leaves with his son. Ferdinand attempts to destroy his sister by showing her waxworks of Antonio and her son which he presents as their murdered bodies. He compounds the torment by closeting her with madmen. The Duchess and her remaining children are ultimately strangled. Bosola, impressed by her composure throughout the ordeal, has a change of heart and determines to help Antonio against the brothers—soliciting the assistance of Julia who is the Cardinal's spurned lover—while Ferdinand succumbs to lycanthropy. However, Bosola accidentally kills Antonio. The Cardinal kills Julia after confessing his misdeeds to her, overheard by Bosola. Bosola stabs the Cardinal before Ferdinand mortally wounds Bosola who, in turn, kills him. Bosola survives long enough to tell the story and the Duchess's remaining son comes into his rightful inheritance.

'Tis Pity Shee's a Whore:

Annabella, believing that none of her suitors can compare to her brother, Giovanni, embarks on an incestuous relationship with him. When she becomes pregnant, she agrees to marry Soranzo in order to preserve the secret. Grimaldi, a suitor to Annabella, accidentally kills Bergetto, mistaking him for his enemy, Soranzo. He receives sanctuary from his relative, the Cardinal, much to the dismay of the citizens. When Soranzo discovers that he has been used as a cover for incest, he is vengeful. During his birthday banquet, revenge plots converge. Hippolyta seeks to avenge her abandonment by the false Soranzo, but Vasques intervenes to give her a dose of her own medicine, thereby saving the life of his master. Giovanni further disrupts the festivities by arriving with Annabella's heart on his dagger and admitting to their incest. The shock kills his father, Florio. Giovanni stabs Soranzo and is killed by banditti. At the end, Richardetto, the physician, unmaskes as the supposedly dead husband of Hippolyta, returned to mark the decline of his adulterous wife and, in the bargain, witnessing the destruction of a society.

The Atheist's Tragedie:

D'amville, seeking to secure the estate of his brother, Montferrers, encourages his nephew, Charlemont's, aspiration to go to war despite his father's opposition. With Charlemont out of the way, D'amville sets out to bring about the marriage of Charlemont's intended, Castabella—heir to the Belforest fortune—to his sickly son, Rousard—a proposition supported by her parents. D'amville disguises Borachio as a soldier to break news of Charlemont's death in battle. His father, Montferrers, tormented, is persuaded by Languagebeau Snuffe, at D'amville's urging, to write his will, after which D'amville arranges for his brother's death. Montferrers's ghost appears to Charlemont telling him to return home because D'amville has orphaned and

disinherited him. Charlemont reveals himself to Castabella at what is supposed to be the double funeral of himself and his father. D'amville has Charlemont committed to prison for debt but Sebastian, impressed with his character, bails him out with the allowance his father gave him. D'amville plots the murder of Charlemont and the rape of Castabella for an adequate heir since both his sons disappoint him. Charlemont escapes the assassination attempt by Borachio, killing him in the process, and he stumbles upon the disguised Snuffe's assignation with Soquette, before taking cover in the charnel house where he saves Castabella from D'amville's assault. Charlemont gives himself up for the murder of Borachio and Castabella insists on sharing his punishment. D'amville is visited by the ghost of Montferrers and faced with the death of both his sons: Rousard by disease and Sebastian by Belforest who discovers him with his wife who later kills herself. D'amville intervenes with the judges deciding Charlemont's case. He requests to be the executioner and to anatomize Charlemont's body. It backfires when he unwittingly kills himself, instead. Charlemont is freed to unite with Castabella.

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