

Devil, Vice, Mephistopheles

Supernatural Villains in English Drama
before Shakespeare

Explorations of the Interaction
Between the Human and the Demonic



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Vladislav Boskovic
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Referent: Prof. Dr. Gerd Birkner
Korreferent: Prof. Daniel T. Lochman

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
I THE DEVIL	11
1. CONCERNING THE CONCEPTION OF SATAN AND THE ORIGIN OF EVIL AS OCCURRED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT	11
1.1. Fall of Angels and the Combat Myth	15
1.2. Belial, Azazel and Asmodeus	16
1.3. Lucifer	18
1.4. Satan in the New Testament	19
1.5. The Beelzebub Controversy: The Demonic Possession	20
1.6. Satan in the Pauline Letters	22
1.7. The Defeated Satan, the Serpent and Hell	24
1.8. The Antichrist	25
2. THE DEVIL IN THE MIDDLE AGES	26
2.1. Religious Protection against the Devil	30
2.2. Satan is a defeated Prince	31
2.3. The Devil in the Folk Play	36
3. SOURCES FOR THE DEVIL IN THE ENGLISH MYSTERY CYCLES	40
3.1. The Devil Controversy: Relationship of Laughter and Religion	43
3.2. The Devil Introduced	46
3.2.1. The Devil's Animosity towards Humanity and How it All began	48
3.2.2. The Tempter	49
3.2.3. Uncertainties and Ambiguities Concerning the Devil's Binding and Liberty	57
3.2.4. The Devil's Role as Participant in Human's Sins	58
3.2.5. The Devil as Soul Fetcher	59
3.2.6. Hell	61
3.2.7. Satan as the Ruler of this World and as the Ruler over Humanity	63
3.2.8. The Direct Audience Address - Byholde dyvercyte of my dysgysyd varyauns	65
3.2.9. The Devils' True Nature in their Dealings with Humans on Stage	68
3.2.10. Physical appearance of the stage devil	69
3.3. The Devil in Noah's Ark; or, The Shipwrights' Ancient Play or Didge Newcastle upon Tyne	72
3.4. The Theatrical Antichrist	74
3.5. Conclusions: The Devil and Man	76
4. THE DEVIL AND MAN IN THE EARLY MORALITIES	78
4.1. Concerning the Bad Angel: doctrina de officio angelorum bonorum et malorum	84
4.2. Devil's Handiwork: The Devil's Role as a Tempting Agent in Human Psychology	86
4.3. The World, the Flesh and the Devil	90
4.4. The Seven Deadly Sins – The Seven Devils' Assistants?	93
II THE VICE	96
1. THE VICES	96
1.1. The Single Vice Figure and the Seven Deadly Sins	98
1.2. The Earlier Tudor Morality and Interlude: The Emergence of the Vice and the Superfluous Devil	100
1.3. The Vice as a Tempter: Spyrytuallyte! what the deuyll may that be?	108
1.4. How to Defeat the Vice	128
1.5. The Vice's Relation to the Audience: How like you this, my masters?	130
1.6. The Vice as the Fun-Maker and the Comic Villainy	141
1.7. The Vice, the Clowns and the Fool	158
1.8. The Vice and the Devil: The Vice: A Personified Abstraction or a Spirit?	163
1.9. "Move over, Lucifer": The "Snottynose Sathanas" and the Vice	167
1.10. Conclusions: The Devil and the Vice	175
1.11. Marginal Supernatural Entities	177
III THE FURY AND THE GHOST	182
1. THE GHOST AND THE FURIES IN EARLY ENGLISH TRAGEDIES	182
1.1. The Fury	188
1.2. The Fury and the Dumb-Show	197

1.3. The Fury of Revenge	200
1.4. The Ghost, a Departed Spirit: “I Shall Come, but as a Shade” (Nero)	203
1.5. The Ghost’s Place of Abode: The Description of the Geography of Hell	207
1.6. The Ghost Summoning	218
1.7. The Ghost and Hallucinations	222
1.8. The Revenge Ghost	234
1.9. Conclusions: The Fury, the Ghost and the Devil	241
IV MEPHISTOPHELES	246
1. EXIT THE GHOST, ENTER THE DEVIL	246
1.1. The Spirit Mephostophiles in the Prose Works	249
1.2. Nature and Self-Statement	252
1.3. Mephostophiles’ Character	261
1.4. Doctor Faustus’ Hell	277
1.5. Christopher Marlowe’s Mephostophiles	283
1.6. Mephostophiles’ Faculites and his Dealings with Faustus	284
BIBLIOGRAPHY	303
ZUSAMMENFASSUNG DER DISSERTATION	318
DISSERTATION SUMMARY	320

INTRODUCTION

The title of my thesis is “Devil, Vice, Mephistopheles: Supernatural Villains in English Drama before Shakespeare: Explorations of the Interaction between the Human and the Demonic.” The main focus of my study is concerned with the explorations of the direct interaction between the human and the demonic in English drama before Shakespeare.

As regards the title of the study, the devil comes foremost since he is the first supernatural evil character introduced in English drama. He preoccupies a great deal of plays before Shakespeare. The Vice is not normally supernatural. He is an allegorical abstraction, as ‘Vice’ means “an evil or bad, immoral quality in a person, or behaviour.” However, I have argued that the Vice is to be linked with the supernatural in some plays. This is a new hypothesis that I have introduced in this work. Mephistopheles is included in the title as if he is to be treated separately from a devil. This is an allusion to the assumption of certain modern researchers who have argued that Mephistopheles is not a devil. My research, however, has shown that he is not to be thought of out of this role. The following line, “Supernatural Villains in English Drama Before Shakespeare,” suggests that there are other characters contained apart from the three mentioned above, which would primarily be the ghost and the fury.

What is the criteria I have used to define the supernatural villain? I have defined him as a non-wordly being or entity, with evilness as an essential component of his existence and with purpose to do harm to humankind. In the main, the problems examined in my study are the origin and development of such a supernatural villain in English drama before Shakespeare, whereby the relationship between the supernatural and the human (both the dramatic protagonist and the spectator is meant) deserves special treatment. The dramatic characters in English drama up until the time of Shakespeare that would normally fit into my category of a supernatural villain are the devil, the ghost, the fury and Mephistopheles. These are the characters that come to the forefront. The dramatic genres included the English folk play, the mystery, miracle and morality plays, Tudor interludes, early English tragedies and Elizabethan drama written by the immediate forerunners and older contemporaries of William Shakespeare.

Evil can manifest itself in a variety of forms. The history of evil is not homogeneous, and supernatural villains are not necessarily to be traced back to the same origin. As a result, the supernatural is articulated in different ways in different forms of English drama. The supernatural plays an important and integral part in drama before Shakespeare. In order to fully comprehend the reason for the manifestation of a supernatural villain, it is necessary to consider

his historical classification. The historical significance of supernatural villains explains their inclusion among different forms of drama.

While the particulars of supernatural villains are discussed, an attempt is also made to distinguish between the evil in humankind and the evil in a human which may arise from a supernatural origin. That is to say, the present study considers the question where evil comes from; what exactly is to be ascribed to the wickedness of humankind and what to the supernatural villain?

The present study is interested in the direct dealings of supernatural villains with humans. It discusses their connection to the sins and their complicity in evil deeds of humankind, and it is interested in the supernatural scheme, temptation and deception techniques. It likewise answers the question why they exercise these functions. In addition, certain conclusions are drawn from direct comparisons of the supernatural evil characters.

The general approach I incorporated in my study is a chronological one, and it proceeds from earlier scholarly research. My methodology is based on close reading and comparative and contextual text analyses while following the development of genres. While reading and analysing the primary texts, special attention has been paid to general characteristics of the characters in question, as well as to their relations with the humans in and outside the stage. As regards their nature and origin, I have often substantiated my arguments with the inclusion of contemporary non-dramatic literature. My second step has been to take into account arguments based on existing research in order to show where I agree or differ from these. At times, and when necessary, references to historical and cultural context have been employed.

What is the point of the scholarly progress of my work? My analysis concerns many canonic traditions of the supernatural. Unlike the earlier works dealing with the supernatural in medieval and Tudor drama, I offer extended representations of evil and the supernatural, from biblical representations of Satan and Lucifer, to the devil in his various Christian and folk manifestations, as well as demons, the Antichrist, the ghosts, the furies and Mephistopheles. A great deal of medieval and Tudor plays that contain supernatural villains are discussed. My work invokes for the first time neglected, yet important contemporary, extra-dramatic discussions of evil and the supernatural for the sake of explaining the theatrical evil. This study is original as a whole, and in its specific chapters.

Furthermore, my analysis of the Vice figure is original, as I have shown that he can be an interiorised variation of the literary devil. This study also provides for the first time the answer to the question which characters are allegorised and which allegories are actually connected to the supernatural; which characters are entities and which abstract personifications. The scope of my

research points to a synthesis of Christian and classical plays, which is unique to drama, but it has not been discussed by anyone so far. We find ancient evils functioning as external powers and given a touch of Christian evil, at least not naturally belonging to them. The development of the traditions of supernatural villains in drama has become clear, and my study advances the understanding of the representation of evil in literary works that do not receive enough attention.

Considering the state of research, I have laid emphasis on the points in which my findings deviate from previous expert opinion. Referring to the theatrical devil, it is to be noted that important surveys on the English literary devil of the medieval and Renaissance times are Lysander William Cushman, *The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature before Shakespeare*; Hannes Vatter, *The Devil in English Literature* and Wilhelm Bomke, *Die Teufelsfiguren der mitttelenglischen Dramen* and John D Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred in English Drama, 1350-1642*. The comicality of the mystery devil in particular is discussed in Eduard Eckhardt, *Die lustige Person im älteren englischen Drama (bis 1642)* written in 1902. My work shines more attention on the relationship between the devil and the human. Unlike other accounts, concerning comicality, I have argued that the devil is funny or made a fool of only in his dealings with supernatural entities – good or bad – but not through his contact with human beings. In order to bring my point across, I have focused on the devil's activity in relation to man. Chiefly, his useless activity is comic, but his activity is not useless when he engages in encounters with human beings. As far as I know, no research to date has used this approach to analyse the comicality of the mysteries' devil.

The first chapters discuss the devil, who, as already mentioned, played the sole role of the supernatural villain in the medieval English drama. The continuous antagonism between man and the archfiend has its origin in the Bible, and the first chapters focus on the nature of the devil, as well as on the nature of evil as they occur in the Bible. Hereby, it can be observed that it was the New Testament in particular which provided the frightening features of the devil, a conceivability which has been carried on for centuries and which considerably influenced medieval thinking and the literary devil as occurred in medieval English drama.

The question of the devil's role as participant in human's sins mattered to all church scholars and has been answered in different ways. I see the notion of a metaphysical evil spirit that instigates temptation and leads toward sin advocated by many dramatists. This idea is new, and it serves the purpose of establishing a new evaluation of the status of the supernatural villain. It is meant to prove that the appearance of the supernatural in the mystery plays and allegorical moralities is by no means misplaced. This theoretic approach of an external tempter has also helped me to a new triage and definition of the evil antagonist. In this way, it is maintained that

the Seven Deadly Sins and the Bad Angel, as they occur in the morality plays and the early interludes, are not allegories, but rather real devil's agents. If they are not real demons or vice-demons, then they could be at least evil thoughts which have arisen from the devil. Contingent upon the subject matter, I have followed the relations between the Vice and the representative of humankind with special accentuation. Hereby, yet only in special cases, I see the Vice figure as a supernatural villain as well.

In this context the Vice figure is of particular interest. To begin with, what are the Vice's general characteristics? The most important works on the Vice figure in general and his roles on stage are such works as those by Lysander William Cushman, Bernard Spivack, Peter Happé, Harry Sheldon Anderson, Geraldine Bonnie Levenson, Robert Weimann, Rainer Pineas, Robert Withington, Werner Habicht, and Hans Jürgen Hentschel, among others. My method of analysis of the Vice figure was especially influenced by Lysander Cushman's study. To begin with, what are the Vice's general characteristics? The Vice is a cunning allegorical figure of evil. He would flounce on stage making sport of virtually everybody around him. The Early Modern Times, the advancement of Humanism and the Reformation led to secularisation of drama in England, and consequently the gradual extinction of the supernatural antagonist, at least in the first half of the sixteenth century. With the aid of the Tudor interludes, I have explained the disappearance of the devil and his replacement by the highly attractive Vice figure. The Vice takes the central position in English moral interludes of the Tudor period. Through the lack of individuality, he managed to enter into other dramatic genres as well. Originally an allegorical figure, the Vice has run through various metamorphoses and has little by little absorbed attributes of other dramatic figures. Here, the study concentrates on the emergence, versatility, modification and disappearance of this figure. Further, his manifoldness on stage can be described as "the chorus, the antagonist, the evil seducer, the corrupter, the comedian, the clownish buffoon and the satirical moralist."

It appears that there are two different roles of the Vice. As I have pointed out, the Vice is a figure of evil. A different view of the character called "The Vice" is taken in Sir Edmund Kerchever Chamber's *The Medieval Stage*, followed by Francis Hugh Mares' "The Origin of the Figure Called 'The Vice.'" Since then, several scholars have pointed out that the Vice is but a merry-maker in later interludes; or, what is more, that he is to be viewed as a professional comedian. The present state of research on the Vice figure tends to overemphasise his comicality, even going so far as to equate the Vice with the Fool or Clown, at times even entirely neglecting his evil nature. What underlines their argument is that the word "vice" was often used as a synonym for fool in the sixteenth century, that is, the terms vice and fool were used

interchangeably in sixteenth century England. My analysis of the Vice contradicts such a notion, restoring the Vice to his former definition of being the evil nature of humankind, claiming that the Vice is the epitome of evil. It follows that the Vice is not purely a comic figure; there is also a serious aspect not to be ignored.

Gradually, the traditional dramatic form would begin to alter under the influence of classicism. It is interesting to observe how two utterly different traditions have brought about different types of the supernatural. Following ancient drama (primarily Seneca, that is), the so-called University-Wits introduced new supernatural villains like the furies or revenge ghosts. Works dealing substantially with the pre-Shakespearean ghost are F. W. Moorman's article "The Pre-Shakespearean Ghost," written in 1906, Hans Ankenbrand's *Die Figur des Geistes im Drama der englischen Renaissance* (Leipzig, 1906) and Gisela Dahinten, *Die Geisterszene in der Tragödie vor Shakespeare: zur Seneca-Nachfolge im englischen und lateinischen Drama des Elisabethanismus* (Göttingen, 1958). Though thoroughly perceptive, in none of these studies is the evilness of the ghost discussed, a subject which is of overriding concern in this study. To my knowledge, there is no study devoted to the pre-Shakespearean fury. My research has shown that the furies function as external powers and that they can vex the mind since they are "aerial and unseen by human kind, and swiftly coursing, rapid as the mind."

The role ascribed to the furies and the ghosts is blurred and ambiguous. God can be both angry and punitive; wherefore the two characters often operate as God's hangmen. They plague and punish the sinner. Apart from that, it should be noted that both have their origin in classical drama. That being given, they also follow the rules and laws connected to Antiquity – laws which do not condemn revenge. As such, they vow to get revenge, appear from the underworld of classical mythology, plague the sinful sixteenth-century Englishman and plunge again into the aforementioned underworld as soon as the act of revenge has been completed. In other words, even though they associate with the Elizabethan Christian world in a bloodthirsty and revengeful manner, they are never clearly condemned as villains - and this is in spite of the fact that such ethics of revenge are uncommon in Christianity. In this part, I could observe a certain shift of circumstances – the supernatural figure is no longer a villain; rather, it is the human who comes to the foreground as the actual villain.

Finally, the revival of the devil as a dramatic figure in the second half of the sixteenth century is not only explained by Martin Luther's strong belief in devils and his impact on English playwrights like John Bale, but also by the intensified persecution of witches on the continent and the concept of the German "Historia von D. Johann Fausten," which had, at least in the form of PF's translation, served as a source for Christopher Marlowe and his conception of

Mephistopheles. Relevant works on Mephistopheles are Günther Mahal's *Mephistos Metamorphosen*, again, Hannes Vatter, *The Devil in English Literature*, as well as brief analyses of the character in widely scattered works that deal primarily with the character of Dr. Faustus, of which I shall name only a few: works by Frank Baron, William Empson's *Faustus and the Censor* and the new edition of the English Faust Book by John Henry Jones.

The German *Historia* introduces a radical, new feature of the old devil pact story. With Mephistopheles, an entirely new devilish figure was introduced to the English audience. Several attempts have been made to deny Mephistopheles' devilish nature and link him to other beings, such as the ghost, Kobolds, middle spirits, familiar spirits etc. Granted, he has some innovative and at times even contradictory character traits; however, taking into account the aspects and results gained from the analyses of the supernatural villains encountered in this study, it follows that he cannot be anything else but a devil.

To conclude, my thesis follows the history of early English drama. It ventures upon illuminating the dramatic treatment of evil in its diversity and complexity, beginning with the Bible and ending with the Renaissance.

I THE DEVIL

1. Concerning the Conception of Satan and the Origin of Evil as occurred in the Old Testament

For the sake of completeness, I have decided to begin with a brief sketch of the Biblical Satan, since the literary devils we are going to encounter have roots in the Bible. In the present study the devil takes pride of place with good reason, since he played, as promoted by the Medieval Christian Church, the sole role of supernatural villain in the medieval English drama. On this account, the first chapters begin with the devil. In addition, since the continuous antagonism between man and the archfiend has its origin in the Bible, the first chapter shall focus on the nature of evil as it occurs in the Torah, Jewish apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. The problem of theodicy, which is going to concern us throughout the study, was already wonderfully formulated by the Latin Christian apologist Lactantius in an argument made to Epicurus:

God either wishes to take away evils, and is unable; or he is able, and is unwilling; or he is neither willing nor able, or he is both willing and able. If he is willing and is unable, he is feeble - which is not in accordance with the character of God. If he is able and unwilling, he is envious, which is equally at variance with God; if he is neither willing nor able, he is both envious and feeble, and therefore not God; if he is both willing and able, which alone is suitable to God, from what source then are evils? Or why does he not remove them?¹

Likewise, the question of whether Satan is responsible for all sin is important in this context; for that purpose, some historio-psychological preliminaries for the literary representation of Satan are going to be taken into consideration.

The Torah had been written over a long period of time, approximately spanning the years 1000 to almost 100 BCE. Most of the books were written during the Babylonian Exile (586-538 BC). During the course of the second century BC many books of the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek (the Septuagint; Lat. LXX., or the “Alexandrian version of the Old Testament”).²

In the Torah, the question concerning the origin and nature of evil is answered in different ways. A dualistic explanation, according to which all the good is to be linked with the positive

¹ Lactantius, *De ira Dei*, 13.

² The Septuagint was the version of the Old Testament as to which books made up the canon accepted by the very educated Jews of their era. The books that were rejected by the Sanhedrin at Jabne (Yavne) as scripture in 90 CE, thus those that fell outside the canon, are today commonly known as apocrypha. Citations from the Bible in this study are from <http://www.biblegateway.com>

principle, that is to say, to God, and the bad to the God-opposing powers, stands in sharp contrast to Yahweh's claims of sovereignty over all creation.¹ Namely, in the early Biblical writings (Jer. 45:5; Ecc. 7:14) and especially before the Babylonian exile (sixth century BCE) it is Yahweh who is portrayed as performing, directly and indirectly, both good and evil deeds. In Jeremiah 45: 5 the Lord says: "behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh" and the Book of Isaiah says in Ch. 45: 5-7: "I am the Lord, and there is none else, beside Me there is no God; I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me. 7) I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil, I am the LORD, that doeth all these things."² Thus the Hebraic religion ascribed everything constructive or destructive in heaven and on earth to the one God with evil understood as both punishment from God and as a test of steadfastness for the religious.³

The Hebraic religion during pre-prophetic times changed the concept of God, moving away from an ambivalent God and turning to an all-good God.⁴ How did evil originate then? As seen by Genesis, the root of evil is man's disobedience to Divine Law. Here, the main reason for the existence of evil in the world is given in the Fall of Man (Gen 3, 1-24), which ultimate consequence was that "great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time"(Gen 6: 5).⁵ The snake in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3), which later became to be identified with the devil, is in this interpretation not to be understood as a personalized force of evil that relieves mankind from all responsibility for their doing but as an allegorical expression, a metaphor for human malice.⁶

Thus, it may be argued that Hebraic monotheism of the post-exilic period strove for a transfiguration of the image of God, avoiding bringing Yahweh in causal connection to evil. In the scriptures of that era one finds eschatological opposition between God's adversary, depicted as both an individual and collective⁷ and the people of God and Yahweh,⁸ which, according to many Biblical scholars, led towards a growing autonomy and independence on the side of Satan.¹

¹ Isabel Grübel, *Die Hierarchie der Teufel: Studium zum christlichen Teufelsbild und zur Allegorisierung des Bösen in Theologie, Literatur und Kunst zwischen Frühmittelalter und Gegenreformation* (München: tuduv-Verl.-Ges., 1991), 36.

² See also Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Biographie des Teufels: Das radikal Böse und die Macht des Guten in der Welt* (Wien, Köln, Weimar, 2000), 33. Also his *The Prince of Darkness: Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History* (New York, 1988), 28f. God's ambivalence is further witnessed in Ecclesiastes, *Qohelet* 7, 14: "When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other."

³ See Ingvild Richardsen-Friedrich, *Antichrist-Polemik in der Zeit der Reformation und der Glaubenskämpfe bis Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts*, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 36.

⁴ Russell, *Biographie des Teufels*, 35.

⁵ Grübel, 36.

⁶ Ibid, 36. See also Rainer Braun, *Teufelsglaube und Heilige Schrift*, in Georg Schweiger (ed.), *Teufelsglaube und Hexenprozesse* (München, 1987), 14f. A recapitulation of varied interpretations is offered by Martinek's analysis *Wie die Schlange zum Teufel wurde*, 49-55.

⁷ Richardsen-Friedrich, 54.

⁸ Ibid, 54. For a detailed account for all "adversity types" in the OT see Ernst, 1567, 179-264. Rauh limits his account to Josiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. See H.D Rauh, *Das Bild des Antichrist im Mittelalter: Von Tyconius zum*

The proper name “Satan” is an anglicization of the Hebrew common noun *s’ātān* (Semitic root word “s’tn”) and the research of C. Breytenbach and P. L. Day has shown that the meaning of this noun must be determined solely on the basis of its occurrences in the Hebrew Bible. This noun occurs in nine contexts: 1 Samuel 29:4, 2 Samuel 19:22, 1 Kings 5:4, 1 Kings 11:14, Numbers 22:22 & 32, 1 Chronicles 21:1, Job 1 and 2 and Zechariah 3:1-7. The term “accuser” or “adversary” is applied both to supernatural entities and human beings. Satan occurs in four contexts in the Hebrew Bible as a celestial being.² When the noun is used of human beings, however, it is not a proper name, but rather a common noun meaning “adversary” in either a political or military sense, or “accuser” when it is used in a legal context.³

In the Book of Numbers, Satan is not malevolent and God witnesses him preventing harm: “But God was very angry when he [Balaam] went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to [as his *satan – le-s’ātān-lō*⁴] oppose him” (Numbers 22:22).

In the Book of Job, the role of *s’ātān* is open to a number of different interpretations. Although most Biblical scholars would agree that *s’ātān* is not a proper name,⁵ he is nonetheless shown as one of the angelic “Sons of God”; a celestial being who is an actual personality. He is a prosecuting attorney against mankind in the heavenly court of God (Heb. *bene ha-‘elohim*) with the task to accuse, to offer resistance to and to inflict harm on the blameless Job. Yet even as such he is not the principle of evil; he is still a member of God’s council - a subject to God’s power who acts utterly according to Yahweh’s instruction.⁶ But, he also does not hesitate to question the justice of God. In arguing that man is only loyal because God gives him prosperity, Satan questions the validity of a moral order in which the pious unfailingly prosper.⁷ Further, as R. Sutherland points out in his book “Putting God on Trial: The Biblical Book of Job,” Satan acts as a “slanderer”; he “is not a just and impartial prosecutor of God’s justice. He presents a profoundly different verdict on the life of Job and, by implication, the lives of all men and women.” Satan challenges God to put Job to the test of suffering and ultimately manages to convince the Lord, who praises Job as an upright and God-fearing man, to strip the man of his

deutschen Symbolismus (Münster, 1973), 40-49; J. Ernst, *Die eschatologischen Gegenspieler in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg, 1967), 265.

¹ Mention is made of undefined figures such as a “spiritual being opposed to God,” Russell, *The Prince of Darkness*, 31-33. Joseph Francis Kelly, *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition*, 11-15. The heavenly beings – the “sons of God” (the *bene ha-elohim*), the “messenger of God” the (*mal’ak Yahweh*), the Book of Genesis 6:5, the pseudepigrapha – they all contributed to the shaping of Satan.

² Grübel, 36.

³ *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1999 [1995.], s.v. “Satan.”

⁴ See also Elaine Pagels, *Satans Ursprung* [The Origin of Satan], aus dem Amerikanischen von Jens Hagedstedt, (Berlin, 1998 [1995]), 75.

⁵ Breytenbach and Day, “Satan,” 726.

⁶ Russell, *Biographie des Teufels*, 41.

⁷ Breytenbach and Day, 728.

worldly wealth: “But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face” (Job 1:11). God accepts the challenge and decides to conduct an experiment with Job, but only with a condition: “Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger” (Job 1:12). God acknowledges that Satan has incited him against Job to ruin him without any reason (Job 2:3). Thus it is God who eventually authorises Satan to destroy all that Job has: to kill his animals, murder his employees, murder his innocent children and ultimately afflict “Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head” (Job 2:7). In respect thereof Satan also comes into sight as the ultimate prosecutor for God and even as his messenger – *mal’ak Yahweh*.¹

In a vision of the prophet Zechariah (Zech 3: 1-7), Satan is again portrayed as a member of God’s council. Here he is not Yahweh’s messenger,² however, but (assuming the role of a *haśśātān* – the accuser³) he is described as the adversary of the high priest Joshua and of the people of God whose representative the hierarch is.⁴ Satan and Yahweh’s messenger (the “angel of the Lord”) are on opposing sides of the question: whether Joshua should become the high priest.⁵ Satan objects to the selection, and the messenger vehemently reprimands him, not even allowing him to speak: “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you!” (Zech. 3:2). Again, Satan is subject to the authority of Yahweh, but he is not one of his messengers as he is in Numbers.

Interestingly enough, a dualistic outlook is evident in a comparison of two accounts of the story of King David’s sin of numbering his people, i.e. taking a census of Israel. Whereas in the pre-exilic account in II Sam 24:1 it is the “Anger of Yahweh” that serves as stimulus for the sin, in the post-exilic story of the same incident in I Chron 21:1 it is Satan, the divine Adversary, who motivates David to do this wickedly inappropriate act⁶ which resulted in the death of 70,000

¹ A very good discussion on the role of Satan in the Book of Job is offered by Peter Stanford, *Der Teufel: Eine Biographie*, aus dem Englischen von Peter Knecht (Frankfurt am Main und Leipzig, 2000), 65-71. Peter Maslowski speaks of an “accomplice and officer of Yahweh.” See also Peter Maslowski, *Das theologische Untier: Der sogenannte Teufel und seine Geschichte im Christentum* (Berlin, 1978), 18. A. Lods uses the term “*un agent de la police divine*.” See Adolphe Lods, *Les origines de la figure de Satan, ses fonctions à la cour céleste*, in: *Mélanges Syriens, Festschrift für René Dussaud*, Bd. II (Paris 1939), 660. G. J. Riley does not see a prosecutor in Satan at all; he views him rather as an adversary. He argues that no prosecutor “destroys the property of the defendant, then kills his children and destroys his health, in order to bring about hatred for the Judge. God and the devil in Job are competing for Job’s loyalty, which the Adversary calls into question.” See G. J. Riley, “Devil”, in: *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: DDD*, 1370. N. Forsyth, 177, followed by E. Pagels, 75, opines that Satan’s role as an agent resembles Persian agents among Jews at times of the author of Job were acquainted with, some of whom were known (and despised) as “The King’s Eye” or “The King’s Ear.”

² Braun, *Teufelsglaube und Heilige Schrift*, 18. It is debatable whether the *s’ātān* of Job 1 and 2 is the same celestial being as the *s’ātān* of Zech 3. See Brytenbach and Day, 728. Brytenbach and Day provide important information for the interpretation and understanding of this text in their article “Satan.”

³ *haśśātān* (שָׂטָן) can also stand for “obstructor” or “adversary.”

⁴ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 68.

⁵ Brytenbach and Day, 729.

⁶ See Howard Clark Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic in New Testament Times* (Cambridge UP, 1986), 70.

Israelites (I Chron. 21:14).¹ It is often suggested that the latter chronicler was influenced by Zoroastrianism, the religion and philosophy based on the teachings ascribed to the prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra, Zartosht), the first identified dualist.² Yet I incline to believe that the story of what is commonly known as “Zoroastrian dualism” is long and complicated and presents an issue which would need to be broadened beyond the scope of this study.³

The results reached by Brytenbach and Day concerning Satan in the Torah deserves special commendation in this study, since they point out that, given that in no text is the term *s’ātān* indisputably used as a proper name, “it is difficult to maintain, as many scholars have, that we can see in the Hebrew Bible a developing notion of Satan.”

Rather, as regards Satan’s transformation into the source of evil, particular attention should be devoted to one of the books of the Apocrypha, the Book of Wisdom or the Wisdom of Solomon (usually dated to the 1st or 2nd century BC), where the accuser develops into the devil that brings death and destruction: “for God created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity, but through the devil’s envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it” (Wis. 2:23-24).⁴

1.1. Fall of Angels and the Combat Myth

Several apocryphal and pseudipigraphal writings narrate how it was the [sexual] desire that motivated the angelic “Sons of God” to come down to earth. These stories originated in the account in Genesis 6:1-5, where it is written:

1 When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years”. 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown. 5 The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. 6 The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.

The first, and oldest, belief is that “the sons of God” were fallen angels who consorted with human women, producing giant offspring called *nephilim*. The post-biblical theology connected

¹ See also *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 14., s.v. “Satan.”

² It is believed that the later story was written after the Hebrews had been in exile in Babylon and had been exposed to Zoroastrianism.

³ Suffice it to say that Ahriman, the counterpart of the one universal and transcendental God – Ahura Mazdā, represents the spirit of darkness, destruction and evil (Russell *Biographie des Teufels* 26f.) and is considered by many scholars as a predecessor of the devil.

⁴ St. Jerome (ca. 342 – 419; Greek: Εὐσεβίου Σωφρόντιος Ἱερώνυμος, Latin: *Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus*), whose translation of the Bible from Greek to Latin was called the Vulgate (vulgar), criticised *The Book of Wisdom* as non-canonical and dangerously heterodox. See Stanford, 72.

this action of the *bene ha-Elohim* on earth with the creation of demons.¹ Namely, during the Maccabean wars, an anonymous author collected and embellished stories about the fallen angels, introducing the conception of division in heaven in *The Book of the Watchers* (a book of the Apocrypha), that is, with the exception of the book of Astronomy, the oldest part of 1 Book of Enoch. This view was widely held in the world of the 1st century CE, and was supported by Flavius Josephus and Philo, as well as in other subsequent centuries by Eusebius and many of the “Ante-Nicene Fathers,” including Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Athenagoras and Commodianus. Even in IV-V century, Saint Augustine discussed the fallen angels in particular in *The City of God (De Civitate Dei)*, 11.9, 11.11, and 11.19.

In one version of the apocryphal *Vita Adae et Evae*, it is Satan himself who narrates the story of his fall:

And Michael went out and called all the angels saying: ‘Worship the image of God as the Lord God hath commanded’. And Michael himself worshipped first; then he called me and said: ‘Worship the image of God the Lord’. And I answered, ‘I have no (need) to worship Adam’. And since Michael kept urging me to worship, I said to him, ‘Why dost thou urge me? I will not worship an inferior and younger being (than I). I am his senior in the Creation, before he was made was I already made. It is his duty to worship me’. (14:3)

Because of his refusal, Satan incurred God’s wrath, wherefore He banished him together with his angels from heaven (onto the Earth).

1.2. Belial, Azazel and Asmodeus

Whereas the pseudepigraphal work *Book of Jubilees*, sometimes called the Lesser Genesis (Leptogenesis), speaks of Mastema (“Hateful one,” lit. “animosity”) as the chief of the spirits engendered by the fallen angels and women in Genesis 6, the name Belial (or Beliar), as a variant of “Angel Mastemas,”² occurs several times at Qumran.³ In another pseudepigrapha, *The Testament of Twelve Patriarchs* too, Belial is presented as God’s opponent and leader of the hosts of evil (Test Levi 5:10, 6:4, Benj 3:3). In the New Testament, however, the word “Belial” is used only once, in 2 Corinthians 6:15, when it is used to refer to Satan when St. Paul asks how

¹ See Martinek, 71.

² Ibid, 72.

³ See Philip R. Davies, George J. Brooke, Phillip R. Callaway, *Qumran: die Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer*, aus dem Engl. übers. von Thomas Bertram (Darmstadt: Wiss Buchges., 2002). Belial is attested in the War Scroll (1QM) and the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH). That God created two divine spirits, good and evil, is expressed in the texts from Qumran (cf. 1QS 3:25: “God created the spirits of Light and Darkness”) See G. J. Riley, “Devil”, in: *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: DDD*, 244-249.

Christ and Belial can agree: “What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?”¹

Just as the Essenes knew Belial, so another equally enigmatic apparition is figured in Leviticus² 16:8:

He is to cast lots for the two goats—one lot for the LORD and the other for the scapegoat (azazel) 9 Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the LORD and sacrifice it for a sin offering. 10 But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat (azazel) shall be presented alive before the LORD to be used for making atonement by sending it into the desert as a scapegoat (azazel).

The passage suggests that Azazel is a desert demon, to which a goat is driven in the atonement ritual for Yom Kippur.³ It is of interest that the scapegoat was regarded as the focus of evil, to use R. Helm’s expression, a visible representative of the demonic.⁴

According to 1 Enoch, Azazel (here spelled ‘*ăzā’zyēl*) was one of the chief of the group of fallen angels who married female humans.⁵ The story of the cohabitation of the fallen angels with earthly women clearly has its background in Gen 6:1; Enoch depicts the fallen angels as the adversaries, not only of human beings, but also of God.⁶ Azazel in particular, is depicted as a corrupter and tempter of humanity and the main source of antediluvian impiety.⁷ According to 1 Enoch, chapter LIV:

And he said unto me: ‘These are being prepared for the hosts of Azâzêl, so that they may take them and cast them into the abyss of complete condemnation, and they shall cover their jaws with rough stones as the Lord of Spirits commanded. 6. And Michael, and Gabriel, and Raphael, and Phanuel shall take hold of them on that great day, and cast them on that day into the burning furnace, that the Lord of Spirits may take vengeance on them for their unrighteousness in becoming subject to Satan and leading astray those who dwell on the earth.’

In the pseudepigraphic work *Apocalypse of Abraham*, Azazel is described as an unclean bird, and he assumes the role of a tempter of the righteous Abraham, a role that had been ascribed to other Satan-like figures as well.⁸ Asmodeus of the Book of Tobit is likewise to be identified with him.

¹ On Belial see S. D. Sperling’s “Belial” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: DDD*, 169-171. On his equation with the Antichrist and with Satan, see Bousset, *Antichrist*, 99-101; 114-115; also Jenks, *Antichrist Myth*, 139-149.

² Leviticus is the third book of the Hebrew Bible and the third book of the Torah.

³ See Manfred Lurker, *Lexikon der Götter und Dämonen* (Stuttgart, 1989), 43.

⁴ See Robert Helm, “Azazel in Early Jewish Tradition”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 32.3 (Autumn 1994), 221.

⁵ Martinek, 77.

⁶ Kee, 22.

⁷ Helm, “Azazel in Early Jewish Tradition”, 219.

⁸ Martinek, 79. On Azazel see Janowski “Azazel” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: DDD*, 128-131. On Asmodeus, see M. Hutter “Asmodeus” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: DDD*, 106-108.

1.3. Lucifer

Satan is also very often equated with Lucifer (Latin: the “Light bearer”) who has been cast out of heaven, at least according to the argumentative insinuation in Isaiah 14:12: “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!”¹ Here, A. Di Nola suggests, the same Lucifer occurs as in Ezekiel 28:12, whom most exegetes identify as Adam.² J. Burton Russel points out that the pre-Christian Septuagint Greek version in Isaiah is rendered *heosphoros* (bringer of the morn, the morning star), which then mutated into *phosphorus* (light-bearer),³ a term used for Jesus Christ in the New Testament, as for example in The Book of Revelation: “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”⁴ Although in classical mythology this was the name given to planet Venus, the early church fathers took the same for the archangel by putting together two passages from scripture: the words of Jesus in Luke 10.18, “I saw Satan like lightning falling from Heaven,” and the already quoted Isaiah 14:12.

Adversus Marcionem (Against Marcion) by Tertullianus (anglicised as Tertullian) is the earliest Christian text that identifies Lucifer with Satan. Christian tradition accepted the fact that Lucifer was Satan’s name before his fall; moreover, most Church Fathers assigned him a position in the highest order of angels. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), too, thought that Satan was probably the supreme archangel, *Summa Theologica*. Because of the fall, the apostate angels became devils and demons. Lucifer suffered demonic disfigurement; the transition from angels to fiends required a debasement in form. One may say that Calvin adhered to this idea. According to him, by revolting they had ruined themselves. Lucifer is an impressive and admirable figure, until pride, vanity, envy, or conceit overcomes him, whereupon he becomes the apostate, the rebel against God. With the fall from Heaven, the transformation from archangel to the prince of hell is complete.

¹ The passage in the King James’ translation reads: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! It is here that one finds the term “Lucifer,” so popularised in England from this translation of King James. However, the name does not come from the Hebrew or even Greek translation, but from the 4th century AD Latin translation of this verse: *quomodo cecidisti de caelo lucifer qui mane oriebaris corruisti in terram qui vulnerabas gentes*. Even here one ought to bear in mind that the term Lucifer in fourth century Latin was a name for Venus. See Dennis Bratcher, “‘Lucifer’ in Isaiah 14:12-17: Translation and Ideology.”

² See Alfonso di Nola, *Der Teufel: Wesen, Wirkung, Geschichte [Il diavolo. Le forme, la storia, le vicende di Satana e la sua universale e malefica presenza presso tutti I popoli, dall’antichità ai nostril giorni]* (München, 1990), 181.

³ Russell, *Biographie des Teufels*, 47.

⁴ See Manfred Lurker, *Lexikon der Götter und Dämonen* (Stuttgart, 1989), 246.

Speaking of demonic disfigurement, in the Book of Revelation mention is made of “the beast that comes up from the Abyss” (11.7) and in a text among the New Testament apocrypha, the Gnostic Gospel of Bartholomew, Satan appears as a giant who has the fiery eyes of evil as identifying feature:

“[...] and the earth shook, and Beliar came up, being held by 660 (560 Gr., 6,064 Lat. 1, 6,060 Lat. 2) angels and bound with fiery chains. 12 And the length of him was 1,600 cubits and his breadth 40 (Lat. 1, 300, Slav. 17) cubits (Lat. 2, his length 1,900 cubits, his breadth 700, one wing of him 80), and his face was like a lightning of fire and his eyes full of darkness (like sparks, Slav.). And out of his nostrils came a stinking smoke; and his mouth was as the gulf of a precipice, and the one of his wings was four-score cubits” (IV, 13).¹

1.4. Satan in the New Testament

In the New Testament, Satan is depicted as the major opponent of Jesus Christ. The term “Devil” (Διάβολος) is used in the Septuagint as a translation of the Hebrew *s’ātān* and appears often with this meaning in the New Testament. As G. J. Riley points out: “The names ‘Devil’ and ‘Satan’ are used interchangeably without apparent difference in meaning (cf. Luke 8:12 and Mark 4:15)”.² Furthermore, *Daimonion* is the most commonly used New Testament word for demons; it occurs sixty times in the New Testament, fifty-two of which are in the Gospels and refer to cases of demon possession.³ Satan is also called “Satanas” in the New Testament and he, according to Di Nola, coincides with the Satan of the Old Testament; the archenemy and slanderer *per se*, the mythical carrier of evil who palpably adopts individual physiognomy.⁴ In fact he has miscellaneous names that are affiliated with each other: Satan, Devil, Beelzebub and Beliar. He is equated with the dragon, lion and snake as well,⁵ about which later more will be said. Other synonyms are the Strong, the Evil, the Accuser, the Tempter, the Spoiler, the Adversary and the Enemy.⁶ Satan as such is the author of all evil (Lk. 10:19), he takes away the word that was sown through the Gospels (Mk. 4:15), he tempts Jesus (Mt. 4:10; Mk. 1:13; Lk. 4); he inflicts physical harm (Lk. 13:16); he chases the Evangelists in order to sift them as wheat (Lk. 22:31); he has his kingdom in terms of time and space (Mt. 12:26; Mk. 3:26); he takes

¹“The Apocryphal New Testament”, M.R. James-translation and notes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), <http://www.essene.com/Gospels/bartholo.html> (accessed December 15, 2007).

² See G. J. Riley, “Devil”, in: *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible: DDD*, 247.

³ See also J. Smit, *De daemoniis in historia evangelica* (Roma, 1913). In the Vulgate, “as in Greek, diabolos and daimon were quite distinct, but they have merged in English and other Germanic languages,” <http://www.etymonline.com>.

⁴ Di Nola, 199.

⁵ Ibid, 199.

⁶ Günther Mahal, *Mephistos Metamorphosen: Fausts Partner als Repräsentant literarischer Teufelsgestaltung* (Göppingen, 1972), 39.

possession of the soul and feelings of Judas Iscariot (Lk. 22:3; John 13:27).¹ Intriguingly, Jesus calls the apostle Simon Peter by this name when he was tempting Jesus to evade the cross (Mk. 8:33: But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!”² he said. “You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men”).³ Satan attempts to circumvent the crucifixion, too, for Jesus must die because it is the cross that reconciles God in Christ with all humanity.⁴ So, as N. Forsyth puts it, “Peter plays a Satan, or *diabolos*, to Christ’s progress on the way toward his condemnation, death, and resurrection.”⁵ In adding the words “skandalon ei emou” (You are a stumbling block to me, Mt. 16:23), however, Matthew’s version makes it clear that “Jesus was using the word [Satan] in its generic Hebrew sense, not denouncing his chief disciple as a follower of the devil.”⁶ In John 8:44, it is written that “He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

1.5. The Beelzebub Controversy: The Demonic Possession

Synoptic Tradition also identifies Satan with Beelzebub, the principal of the devils.⁷ The etymology is not exactly certain, some have suggested that the term “Beelzebub” leads back to the Torah,⁸ in 2Kings 1-2 it stands: “After Ahab’s death, Moab rebelled against Israel. 2 Now Ahaziah had fallen through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria and injured himself. So he sent messengers, saying to them, “go and consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, to see if I will recover from this injury.” This is the passage where M. Martinek deduces that “Beelzebub” is an outer-Israelitic God (“no God of Israel”) who is associated with sickness.⁹ It is often suggested (after the Septuagint and Josephus, “Ant.” ix. 2, § 1) that Ba’al Zebûb’s name derives from *baal zebub* (Baal of flies or Lord of Flies – actually the name of a Philistine god). A. Di Nola points out that as the lord of flies, Beelzebub protects his believers against flies; the analogous characters being both Apomnios mentioned in Pausanias and romano Deus Myagron di Solino.¹⁰ T. Kelly Cheyne, on the other hand, suggested that it also might be a corruption of Ba’al Zebul, “Lord of the High Place” (or “the lord of the mansion”; see *Encyclopædia Biblica*, s.v.). Notably,

¹ The chronological order has been almost entirely borrowed from Di Nola, 199.

² In Greek: “Hypage opisō mou, Satana.”

³ See also B. A. E. Osborne, “Peter: Stumbling-Block and Satan”, *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 15, fasc. 3 (Jul., 1973), 187-190.

⁴ Russell, *Biographie des Teufels*, 50.

⁵ Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth* (Princeton, 1987), 288.

⁶ *Ibid*, 288.

⁷ See Mk. 3:22; Mt. 12:24,27; Lk. 11:15, 18-19.

⁸ The name Baal Zebub occurs merely four times in the OT (2 Kgs. 1:2.3.6.16).

⁹ Martinek, 85.

¹⁰ Di Nola, 200.

the name occurs nowhere else in Jewish literature. If truth be told, the fly was regarded by the Jews as impure and demonic. Most likely, however, the word “Zebul” (from “zebel,” dung) is a cacophonous corruption of “Zebub,” in order to give the name the meaning of “god of the dung.”¹ Whereas M. Martinek argues that the expression “prince of demons” has not been common in the Jewish language,² John Lightfoot (1602-1675) has shown that as early as in the seventeenth century “Amongst the Jews we may observe three devils called the *chief*, or *prince of the devils*: 1. “The angel of death”; who is called *Prince of all the Satans*. 2. *The devil Asmodeus* [...] 3. *Beelzebub* [...]”³ A corrupted version, “Belzeboub,” is used in Dante’s *Comedia*.

The episode in Luke 11:14-26 includes what is known as the Beelzebub controversy.

14 Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. 15 But some of them said, “By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons”. 16 Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.

17 Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. 18 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub. 19 Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. 20 But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. 22 But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.

23 He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.

24 “When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ 25 When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. 26 Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.”

Clearly, this is a quick, astonishing miracle: Jesus is casting out demons by the finger of God; he defeats Satan’s power by exorcising demons⁴ and curing the ill, whereby he inaugurates the reign of God which ends Satan’s rule. The exorcisms are regarded as the victorious combat with Satan and his kingdom.⁵ Jesus liberates the victims of Satan’s possession.⁶ Observing Jesus’ exorcisms, however, the Jewish religious leaders infer that he is able to control the demons because he is in a league with their leader – Beelzebub,⁷ thus declaring that he received his power to cast out demons from none other than the prince of demons (see Mt. 12:22-24). In telling the people that He was of Satan, clear blasphemy is expressed by the Pharisees.

Jesus’ purpose is the expulsion of demons. The episode and its two variants reveal that demons are allies or servants of Satan and that exorcism is therefore against the adversary

¹ Kaufmann Kohler, “Beelzebub”, in: *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*, 630.

² Martinek, 85.

³ John Lightfoot, *A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica*; vol. 3, Luke-John - 3. pr. - Repr. from the ed. Oxford Univ. Press, 1859. (Peabody : Hendrickson Publ., 1997), chap. 11. 15. II.

⁴ Many scholars argue that exorcism is a central concern of the synoptic gospels.

⁵ George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Michigan, 1974) 64.

⁶ Forsyth, 296.

⁷ Kee, 73.

himself. As N. Forsyth points out: “[...] in spite of the frequent mistranslation of *daimonia* as devils in English Bibles, the synoptic gospels do imply, in at least two instances, that the demons are a sort of loosely organized army under their general, Satan.”¹ But he remains cautious given the evidence “that the terms used generally for the alien spirits that Jesus exorcises, especially in Mark, are *pneumata akatharta* and *daimonia*, ‘unclean spirits’ and ‘demons’ (also called devils or evil spirits).”²

1.6. Satan in the Pauline Letters

References to Satan as the antithesis of God are not consistent in the Pauline letters. As a matter of fact, Satan is only seldom mentioned outside of the Corinthian correspondence. Many Pauline scholars incline to believe that, in the letters of Paul and in the letters imputed to him,³ Satan’s profile follows development direction in a dualistic manner in which it is a question of internalized dualism. Moreover, ontological dualism governs the argument in Paul: Satan is described as the enemy of Jesus, as light opposes darkness, love opposes hate. The assumption of St. Paul’s thought is that, even though the world was created by God and as such is good, there rules in it the power of Satan.⁴ 2 Corinthians 4:4 reveals that Satan is understood as the God of this world: “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” The Earth is Satan’s realm - “wilderness” - and the conflict between “this world” and God’s realm, which does not belong to this world, predominantly takes place in the knowledge of sin and in inward temptations to sin.⁵ Satan “masquerades as an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14) - the same passage reveals that he

¹ Forsyth, 293. Mk. 3:22-29 (Mt. 12:22-29; Lk. 11:14-22), the Beelzebub controversy and Lk. 10:17-20. See also Bernard J. Bamberger, *Fallen Angels* (Philadelphia Jewish Publication Society of America, 1952) 67-69.

² The demons are (wrongly) translated from the Greek as “devils” in the King James version (and in the Luther version). However, even though demons are associated with Satan, as they are his legions, they should not be confused with him – demons are not *the* devil, i.e. Satan. Here, I quote from my notes of a lecture by Peter Susemihl: the demons are incorporeal “spirit persons” (meaning they have personalities. They have emotions, as for instance fear (of Jesus), strong will, knowledge (how to tempt and harm people), self-confidence, conscience (though they never yield to it), and the ability to speak). There are three expressions used to describe them: unclean spirits, demons and evil spirits. There are also varying kinds of demons, as for instance a deaf and mute spirit (Mk. 9:25), a demon of weakness, etc. There is good reason to believe that demons are not fallen angels; that they are not bad angels. Bad angels live in “heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12), whereas the good angels reside in heaven proper. According to Pastor Susemihl, however, demons are bound to dwell on earth (Jesus did not send any demon to hell). Moreover, they have an intense desire to dwell in human bodies. Pastor Susemihl also holds the view that demons cannot fly (Mt. 13:43-44) and that they were not always incorporeal. See Susemihl, “Biblische Grundlagen über Dämonie und Befreiung,” Windows Media Player Audio File, http://www.geistlektionen.com/htm/okkultismus_und_befreiung_durc.htm (accessed June 19, 2009).

³ Undisputed Pauline Epistles are 1 Thessalonians, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Philemon and Philippians.

⁴ See Fr. John S. Romanides, “Original Sin According to St. Paul.” Compare the relevant passage to John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.

⁵ Di Nola, 204.

inspires “false apostles who travel to Paul’s churches and contradict his message” (2 Cor. 11:13-15).¹ He deceives humans and has the power to influence and blind. He blinds the minds of the unbelieving and he poses a threat to the Christian communities: “Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control” (1 Cor. 7:5); “in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes” (2 Cor. 2:11). Satan is explicitly the tempter at 1 Corinthians 7:5, where Paul advises his correspondents to marry rather than let Satan tempt them. Evidently, Satan here tempts to advance sexual indulgence.² Attention is drawn to 2 Cor. 11.3, where “the serpent cunning” that deceived Eve is mentioned as a warning example of consequences of minds straying from the “sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” Paul himself is tormented by “Satanas” (Σατανάς), but he masters him through the power of grace (II Corinthians 12:7ff.). Christ is the liberator from sin; he belongs to what is good and Paul identifies him as saviour at the forthcoming end of the carnal world.³ The Second Coming of Christ marks the beginning of “the Last Days,” the beginning of the eschatological era and the eschatological fall of Satan is expected, when “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you” (Rom. 16:20).

Paul speaks further in the Epistle of the Romans of both gentiles and Jews as sinners in need of salvation; their conversion leads them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God (Rom. 2:9). “Every time Paul uses the word Satan,” N. Forsyth argues, “he is referring to the opponent of human salvation, not to the figure who does battle with Michael in the Book of Revelation.”⁴ Paul tries in the style of Greek philosophy to favour the parting of body and soul, as for example in Galatians 5:16-24,⁵ thus emphasising that the flesh is at least one of sin’s hateries. Yet it is fairly obvious that the word “Satan” is used by Paul as a didactic instrument: Satan tempts with “heresy or sexual indulgence”;⁶ therefore, one ought not to be disobedient (Eph. 2.2; Rom. 16:17-20), one should avoid false teachers, try to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil (Rom. 16:19), as well as marry, etc. Anti-Pauline movements are referred to as servants of Satan. Paul’s talk of Satan arises out of social conflict over Paul’s authority in Corinth – thus Satan is not necessarily a reflection of Paul’s cosmology. In the Deuteropauline corpus, Satan is identified as the secret power of lawlessness in 2 Thessalonians

¹ Riley, “Devil”, 248.

² Forsyth, 267.

³ Martinek 88.

⁴ Forsyth 260.

⁵ Stanford 85.

⁶ Forsyth 267.

2:7. The author of the Epistle to the Ephesians uses the term *diabolos* regularly to describe the devil. Here, the adversary is the embodiment of Paul's own opponents.¹

1.7. The Defeated Satan, the Serpent and Hell

Satan is defeated at last in the Book of Revelations: "The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him (Rev. 12:9)"; hence, the biblical identification of Satan and the serpent rests on the Book of Revelations.² In Christian iconography Satan is depicted as either a snake (where Holy Mary steps on its head) or a dragon (defeated by Archangel Michael). It is also further prophesied in Isaiah 27:1:

In that day,
the LORD will punish with his sword,
his fierce, great and powerful sword,
Leviathan the gliding serpent,
Leviathan the coiling serpent;
he will slay the monster of the sea

One of his most interesting appearances also comes in the *Life of Adam and Eve*, or *Apocalypse of Moses* 17:1, where Satan appears in the form of an angel and he, as the devil, tempts Eve through the mouth of the serpent.³ It is further said that God emerges victorious in the cosmic struggle when "the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10).⁴ With relevance to this, the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Peter* (not to be confused with the Gnostic *Apocalypse of Peter*) illustrates the anguish of hell.⁵

¹ Ibid. 266.

² Ibid, 297.

³ *Apocalypsis Mosis* in R.H. Charles, *From-The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913.

⁴ Cf. also Mt. 25:41; Lk. 16:23; Isaiah 14: 9-10; Eccl. 11:3; Num. 16:31-35; Rev 21:8; 27. Hell is also called "a never-dying worm (Mark 9)." It is called an oven fire, hot (Mal 4:1). It is called a furnace, a fiery-furnace (Matt 13). It is called the bottomless pit, the unquenchable fire, fire and brimstone, hell fire, the lake of fire, devouring fire, everlasting fire, eternal fire, a stream of fire (Rev 21)." See John Bunyan's *Sighs from Hell or the Groans of the Damned Soul*, at <http://truthinheart.com/EarlyOberlinCD/CD/Bunyan/OpenInBrowser.html>.

⁵ Patrick Gray, *Abortion, Infanticide, and the Social Rhetoric of the Apocalypse of Peter*. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* – vol. 9, no. 3, Fall 2001, 313-337. On anguish in hell, consider also Lk. 13:28; 2 Thes. 1:9.

1.8. The Antichrist

The idea of the antichrist is founded on branched traditions under which the Bible, as God's revelation, certainly claims the highest authority.¹ The Antichrist was understood as Satan's son (also "son of perdition"), as Satan himself² or as a human – a man of sin (or a man of lawlessness, as spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2) or as a devil incarnate.³ The most relevant passages are as follows: the discourse upon the apocalypse contained in the synoptic Gospels (Mk. 13:14, Mt. 24-25, Lk. 21:20)⁴ talks of the "abomination that causes desolation" standing "in the holy place" (Mk. 13-14, Mt. 24:15) and the appearance of false Christs and false prophets (Mk. 13:5–6, 13:21–23; Mt. 24:4–5, 24:23–24; Lk. 21:8).⁵

The Antichrist comes from the Abyss (Rev. 11:7) in his own name (Jn. 5:43) in order to destroy (Dan. 8:24) and to do his own will (Dan. 11:36). He "denies the Father and the Son" (1 Jn. 2:22). He is "the lie" (2 Thess. 2:11). 2 *Thessalonians* 2 describes the Antichrist as a man who is doing the work of Satan. He is now "restrained," but he will lead the "great revolt" against God. His time is yet to come. The final Antichrist will appear at the end of time⁶ and "oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." Thus, he will try to usurp God's place and divine honours. He will do great (but false) miracles, wonders and make signs in order to tempt humanity (2:9).⁷ Yet he is "doomed to destruction," as he will be destroyed by Christ at the Parousia (2:1–12).

The name "Antichrist" occurs in the New Testament only in the Epistles of John (1 Jn. 2:18-22, 4:1-3; 2 Jn. 7). The *Book of Revelation* contains symbolic portrayals of Antichrist figures under the guise of two demonic main actors of eschatological opposition⁸ - two beasts. One

¹ Richardsen-Friedrich, 54. On the Antichrist, see also Gregory C. Jenks, *The Origin and Early Development of the Antichrist Myth* (Berlin and New York, 1991). G. Schüssler offers some of the most important bibliographical references on the Antichrist. See Gosbert Schüssler, *Studien zur Ikonographie des Antichrist* (Leidersbach, 1975), 1 n 1.

² On the relationship of the Antichrist to Satan see Wilhelm Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche: ein Beitrag zur Auslegung der Apokalypse* (Göttingen, 1895), 88. Also Gregory C. Jenks, *The Origins and Early Development of the Antichrist Myth* (Berlin and New York, 1991), 49-77. The Antichrist is not Satan, but his coming is "in accordance with the work of Satan" (2 Thess. 2:9).

³ Di Nola, 239. Perhaps it was this idea that influenced the later notion that the devil can appear in human form.

⁴ Cf. also Dan. 7:25.

⁵ A certain "eschatological opposition" to the people of God and to God's people bearing on the idea of the Antichrist is to be found in Isa. 14:14; 15; Dan. 8:24; 11:36; Zech. 11:16; 17). For a more detailed account of these and other Torah passages suggesting adversaries see J. Ernst, *Die eschatologischen Gegenspieler in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg, 1967), 179-264; as quoted in Richardsen-Friedrich, 54 n 2.

⁶ Also 1 Jn. 2:18.

⁷ He is the false imitator of Christ.

⁸ Richardsen-Friedrich, 57.

beast comes up from the Abyss or the sea with ten horns and seven heads (11:7, 13:1–10, 17:3–18, 19:19–21). His number is 666 (13:18). The other beast comes from the land as the servant of the first beast (13:11–17, 16:13, 19:19–21).

2. The Devil in the Middle Ages

The reader should be aware that I am only engaged in a general study of the devil in the Middle Ages. For the sake of brevity, I should merely refer to the representations of evil and the devil that are of relative importance for the theatrical devil.¹ I incline to believe that any objectivisation of the concept of the devil in the Middle Ages is precarious anyway, since it is not properly defined. Of course we cannot tell with certainty how the Middle Ages believed in the devil because one can only try to comprehend its full complexity through existent historical documents and literary evidence. Belief in Satan was chronologically and regionally different and by no means consistent. As P. Dinzelbacher points out: “Nur innerhalb einer Analyse des gesamten Systems der mittelalterlichen Religiosität, sowohl der offiziellen Doktrin in Theologie und Katechese der Amtskirche als auch der gelebten Religiosität in Hoch- und Volksreligion sowie auch der Lehren der antikatholischen Häresien könnte die übergroße Bedeutung der Teufelsangst in jener Zeit verständlich werden.”² The devil was ubiquitous, and he was a reality, but what an individual in the Middle Ages made of him depended solely, as R. Warning puts it, on how one dealt with him.³ At the same time one cannot deny a tendency to individualise the devilish figures that began to emerge in medieval theology. That is to say, the Middle Ages created the familiar image of the devil. During the medieval expansion of Christianity, Christian demonology adopted elements from the Mediterranean and Celtic regions, as well as from the perceptions of the world from Germanic tribes and other populations.⁴ The result was, roughly speaking, the dogmatic determination of the Council of Toledo in AD 447 wherein the devil emerged as a large, black, monstrous apparition with horns on his head, cloven

¹ Anyone who wishes to learn more about the devil in the Middle Ages may consult Jeffrey Burton Russell's *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London, 1984); Robert Muchembled, *A History of the Devil from Middle Ages to the Present*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge, 2003), Peter Dinzelbacher, *Angst im Mittelalter: Teufels-, Todes- und Gotteserfahrung: Mentalitätsgeschichte und Ikonographie* (Paderborn; München; Wien; Zürich, 1996) a.o. Equally, the opinions about the devil of individual apostolic and early church fathers, writers and chroniclers is going to be avoided in this study, but they will be referred to in my notes while discussing the theatrical devil.

² Dinzelbacher, 124.

³ Warning, 75.

⁴ Russell, *Lucifer*, 63; Vatter, 52-59.

hoofs, a hairy body, ass's ears, claws, fiery eyes, gnashing teeth, a huge phallus and a sulphurous smell whose distinguishing features kept recurring.¹

Medieval theologians fully succeeded in their aim to form a horrendous devil that would enter into the mind of ordinary men. Scores of devils in initial miniatures, manuscript illuminations and church sculptures or plastics had the function of affrighting people and deterring them from a sinful life; thus these animals and monsters symbolizing evil served a theologically didactic purpose, serving either as admonition for the believers (*signa Dei*) or as punishment for man (*poena hominum*) and signs of God's justice.

The intensification of the diabolical in the high Middle Ages is related to Cluniac reform movements.² It has been argued that this series of charges³ within monasticism and their mutual demonisation enhanced the widespread presence of the diabolical in literature and art.⁴ Of course, confrontation with heretical dualism of the Cathars was equally responsible for the increased focus on diabolism.⁵ P. Dinzelsbacher also refers to a cognitive emotional sensitisation that built a background for the new theoretical and practical mysticism of the 12th century as a further aspect.⁶ Likewise, since the early 13th century, sermons about the devil, demons and hell intensified fear activation in order to control the laity.

In regard to the Middle Ages, one can safely discuss a collective fear evoked by religion. Fear became easily exploited by Christian thinkers because they found rational legitimacy in the Holy Scripture. Typical for the era was the identification and production of fear.⁷ Threats of hell and its devils as sadistic torturers enforced obedience and loyalty; still, it needs to be borne in mind too that clerics believed devoutly in the appropriateness of their measures. They were convinced that they acted conscientiously and for the good of the people.⁸

A *communis opinio* in the 13th century held that the devil and his demons were pervasive and always up to mischief. The devil was presented as a misanthrope driven mostly by pride and

¹ On the contours and the development of the devil's outward appearance in particular see Link, 43-92; Russell, *Lucifer*, Gröbel, 120-139. Doubtless the list may be almost indefinitely extended.

² Dinzelsbacher, 90.

³ The Abbey of Cluny in Burgundy started the reform. Corruption within monasticism, particularly simony and concubinage, initiated the movement, as well as the demand that the monastery of Cluny should stand outside of the feudal system, their argument being that they should be subjected directly to the Pope instead of to a feudal lord. See Thomas D. McGonigle and James F. Quigley, *A History of the Christian Tradition from its Jewish Origins to the Reformation* (New Jersey, 1988), 143-145. This led to a conflict between church and state. Mutual demonisation between regnum and sacerdotium followed. Dinzelsbacher 91-92.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵ The Cathars posed a great threat to the Catholic Church. The theological dispute against the Cathar religion included demonization and persecution. The Cathars, on the other hand, demonised the Christian God. See John P. Newport, *The New Age Movement and the Biblical Worldview: Conflict and Dialogue* (Michigan, 1988), 535.

⁶ Dinzelsbacher, 93; 125. Thereby he refers to bridal mysticism, courtly love, etc. Provided it is true that people were more open to emotions in the High Middle Ages, Dinzelsbacher argues that it is also probable that dark emotions equally reached consciousness, projecting fear and hate onto heathens, demons, etc.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 12-18.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

egotism. He rejoiced over evil and misfortune given that he was evil *par excellence*. He was despicable, and he did everything to prevent good and spread evil. His antagonism to truth and freedom and his joy at falsehood and at people's slavery seemed enormous and indescribable. He scared and threatened people and was their unstinting pursuer. He always lied, deceived and corrupted in accord with his essential nature. It was this kind of devil that ensconced himself in the sermons. Until the Middle Ages the devil was contemplated as a bogey - he was considered as a material being, a flesh and blood evil spirit.¹ Later he was considered as having no fixed corporeal form but could borrow or counterfeit human or animal shapes. Presumably, as a master of deception and metamorphosis, he made his appearance in a form appropriate to his function.

As an informant about beliefs concerning the devil in his time, Caesarius of Heisterbach (1180-1240) is a first class source.² The *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi ordinis Cisterciensis Dialogus miraculorum*, most likely compiled between 1219 and 1223, was written in a form of an "interactive teaching" between a spiritual master and a neophyte. A full account on the devil of *Dialogus miraculorum* need not to be addressed in this study; here I shall merely paraphrase the recapitulation offered by P. Maslowski. According to Caesarius, the devil could appear in both bestial and human shapes. In the former, he could emerge on earth as a dog, cat, monkey, raven or vulture. In the latter, he habitually assumed the shape of an elegant gentleman or of a handsome soldier. Caesarius knew precisely Satan's peculiarities: he did not have any back;³ if one would catechise him, it would turn out that he could not repeat faultlessly the Lord's Prayer. To all accessible to his allurements, the devil could procure manifold advantages like property, money, beauty and knowledge. He would normally approach people who lived a non-churchly life. Alongside the good guardian angel a bad devil was also added to every man as his everlasting companion. And God permitted it so that man could have the opportunity to gain virtue and earn Heaven. Caesarius also speaks of sexual intercourse between man and the devil: the devil could torment by means of carnal desire (*per stimulans carnis*) to the extent that Maslowski accuses Caesarius of inventing tales full of pornographic content. The devil would take the form of a succubus to seduce men or of an incubus to have sexual intercourse with women.⁴ The monk narrated how the mere sight of the devil would be impossible to bear; people could easily faint or even parish from this horrendous sight before them.⁵ Yet P. Maslowski fails

¹ Carl-Friedrich Von Steegen, *Satan: Porträt des Leibhaftigen* (München, 2000), 250.

² One may also take into consideration Gervasius von Tillbury, Vincent of Beauvais (Vincentius Bellovacensis), Jacques de Vitry, Thomas of Cantimpre etc. See Dinzelsbacher, 98.

³ "*Licet corpora humana nobis assumamus, dorsa tamen non habemus*". See *Dialogus Miraculorum* III, 6; also Grübel, 89. On the Devil in *miraculorum* see Roskoff, 295-302.

⁴ The apprenticeship of *succubi* and *incubi* is not the invention of Isidore of Seville; St. Augustine was also familiar with it. See Von Steegen, 206.

⁵ Maslowski, 35-37. Note Dr. Faustus' reaction on seeing the devil for the very first time.

to mention that Caesarius' devil is not inherently bad¹; that is, it also occurs that the devil virtually shows his warm-hearted nature to man because he is, as W. Röther points out, also a servant of God.² In addition, the devil was also seen as an instrument of God's judgment.

It can be deduced that medieval people simply saw the devil everywhere – *diabolo instigante* - always ready to “prey upon man's weaker instincts and to tempt him away into paths of evil.”³ Deviant behaviour was seen as the devil's work, reflecting Anselm of Canterbury's view that “omnino Deum excusat et diabolum accusat.”⁴ Every single deed characterised as sin was projected onto the devil. Thus the devil appeared as the impersonation of all vices.⁵ In *Das Väterbuch* (late 13th century), for example, the devil is responsible for compulsive gambling and pleasure in dance; he initiates improper liberties, delinquency and tardiness, all of which cause evil desires and overreaching sinfulness. He creates envy and hate among monastics; he tries to disturb Christian contemplation (i.e. thinking “that is full heavenly,” *Hickscorner*, 129) and during the proclamation of the Word of God he seduces young monks to idleness.⁶ In addition, the devil was viewed as the cosmic enemy, as the source of all harm and the ultimate threat to all good things. He was accountable for “sickness, death, accidents, crop failure, and social conflict.”⁷

Saint Thomas' argument that the devils are situated partly on earth where they tempt and torment people and partly in hell became a prevailing opinion within the Christian community.⁸ According to St Thomas Aquinas, some of the devils are in hell to torment the damned and some are in the air to tempt humanity.⁹ Also, the devils that fill the air¹⁰ possess a finer corpse.¹¹

In general, medieval literature confirmed the idea of identifying the Middle Ages as the age of Satan.¹² Belief in the power of the devil reached its peak in the late Middle Ages.

¹ Although he should be by definition.

² See the tale “Die Sage vom Ritter Gerhard von Holbach”, for example. This matter will especially concern us in the chapter on Dr. Faustus.

³ Thompson, 469.

⁴ *De casu diaboli* 20, as quoted in Russell, *Lucifer*, 165 n 14.

⁵ Spreitzer, 45.

⁶ This is a rough translation into English. See Spreitzer, 45; Dinzeltacher, 129. A quite similar account is also given in *Liber revelationum* by Richalmus (Richalm von Schöntal). See Roskoff, 310-318.

⁷ John D. Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred in English Drama, 1350-1642* (Cambridge UP, 2000), 11.

⁸ Dinzeltacher, 127. Compare Rev. 12:9; Eph. 2:2; 5:12. This does not mean that one part dwelt in hell exclusively and the other on earth, however.

⁹ *ST* Ia. 64. 3-4. See also Russell, *Lucifer*, 203.

¹⁰ Ostensibly Ps. 73:23. See Ephesians 2:2; 6:12.

¹¹ Richalmus, *Liber revelationum* LXX, 438.

¹² Roskoff, 294; Spreitzer, 94.

2.1. Religious Protection against the Devil

As we have seen, the engagement in a never-ending struggle with the devil comes from the Torah: the devil loses against Job, but wins against David. Obviously, if you let him, the devil will take over. So how can we resist the devil? The Catholic Church offered a number of possibilities. Choosing for Jesus only starts with Baptism. Whereas the unbaptised literally belonged to the devil, the baptised were by their baptism bound to fight against the devil. We see that the devil has a very prominent role in the significance of Baptism. Not only is Baptism considered the sacramental sign of the new birth, but it is also presented as freeing the catechumen from evil spirits.¹ During the baptism of an adult, for example, the candidate would be asked by the minister: “Do you renounce the devil and all his works, the empty show and false values of the world and the sinful desires of the flesh so that you will not follow nor be led by them?” The candidate answers: “I renounce them all!” Saul’s baptism in *The Conversion of Saint Paul* shall serve its purpose here:

Ananias. Knele ye down vpon thys grownde,
Receyuyng thys crystenyng wyth good intent,
Whyche shall make yow hole of your dedly wound
That was infecte wyth venom nocent.
Yt purgyth synne, and fendys pourys so fraudulent
It putyth asyde; where thys doth attayne,
In euery stede, he may not obtayne! 318-324

Also, the “final moment,” the deathbed drama when the soul of the dying person is in deadly struggle between good and evil played an equal, if not a more important role,² as it can be seen from the presence of the devil at the deathbed in many of the woodcuts that accompany the *ars moriendi* tracts. The answer is at hand that the “fight of faith” is a lifelong struggle against the powers of sin and Satan. As Cyprian put it: “What else in the world than a battle against the devil is daily carried on, than a struggle against his darts and weapons in constant conflicts?”³ In the *Cornish Ordinalia*, a dramatic mystery cycle about which more will be said, Jesus delivers arguably the best recipe for our salvation and avoidance of temptation, saying that “prayer from a full heart” and God’s “mercy is a shield” against the Evil One’s power.⁴ “It is also necessary,”

¹ Dendle, 74.

² Cox, *Devil and the Sacred*, 12. Also Richard Wunderli, Gerald Broce, “The Final Moment before Death in Early Modern England”, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 20, no. 2 (Summer, 1989), 259-275.

³ Cyprian, *Writings*, trans. R. E. Wallis, Ante-Nicene Christian Library (Edinburgh, 1869-69), I, 455; as quoted in Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil* (New York, 1958).

⁴ 81. All references are to *The Cornish Ordinalia: A Medieval Dramatic Trilogy*, ed. Markham Harris, Washington, 1969.

Jesus proceeds, “to mortify the flesh through penance if the destructive power of the Devil is to be weakened.”¹

In his sermon entitled “Standing against the Wiles of the Devil,” Richard James provided a very helpful outline, here summarised, on how to wrestle against the tempter. 1) The Bible tells us in Colossians 2 that through Christ’s death on the cross, the forces of Satan and his demons have been disarmed. Therefore, we need to recognise that our spiritual foundation is Christ’s victory. 2) According to James 4:7, by submitting to God we resist the Devil. 3) By putting on the whole armor of God according to Ephesians 6:10-17. 4) By seeking spiritual guidance from God according to James 1:5 – “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him”. 4) By taking power over Satan and his demons according to Luke 10:17 and Revelation 12:11 - through the blood of Christ in the name of Jesus – “Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name’.” (Luke 10:17) “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death” (Revelation 12:11).

Faith in Christ is the basis for salvation. Catholic catechesis² offered further solutions: petition, alertness, benediction, sanctified objects, Holy Water. Charitable deeds assist in defeating the devil.³ The sign of the cross is repulsive to the devil, and he flees before it. Confirmation, too, is the sacrament through which the Holy Ghost comes to give power and strength for Christians to achieve victory and triumph over the devil.

2.2. Satan is a defeated Prince

J.Barth points out that, in the Middle Ages, two devil types had been juxtaposed as fundamental alternatives - the serious and eerie and the comic type.⁴ As A. Wünsche maintains: “Das Mittelalter kennt nebeneinander Furcht vor dem Teufel und Lachen über ihn.”⁵ As far as I am concerned, the comic devil is a natural consequence since the devil is the defeated one from the beginning. He is a buffoon every time something goes against his wishes. Many considered that, being the father of sin, he must also be the father of stupidity. F. J. Mone in his *Altdeutsche Schauspiele*, for example, saw in Satan’s pride, which caused his fall, a stupid act.⁶ In his *Der*

¹ *Cornish Ordinalia*, 82.

² Pius V *Der Römische Katechismus*; *Katechismen des Petrus Canisius*; *Summa doctrinae christianae* (1554); *Catechismus minimus* (1556) und *Pavlus Catechismus catholicorum* (1558). See Haag, 76.

³ Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred*, 24.

⁴ Barth, 22.

⁵ The Middle Ages knew of fear of the devil and of laughing at him - side by side. See August Wünsche, *Der Sagenkreis vom geprellten Teufel* (Leipzig/Wien 1905), 1-9; also Roskoff, 387.

⁶ Franz Josef Mone, *Altdeutsche Schauspiele* (Quedlinburg und Leibzig, 1841). As quoted in Rudwin 5 n 8.

Sagenkreis vom geprellten Teufel, A. Wünsche demonstrated how this perception came into being. First was the *pia fraus* theory: a ransom theory introduced by Irenaeus was followed by Origen, Ambrose, Augustine (to a certain extent), Leo the Great and Gregory the Great, and it was most likely derived from 1 Corinthians 2:8.¹ The theory argued that humanity was in the power of the devil and that God chose to pay the devil a ransom in offering Christ. The devil therefore had a claim on man, and Christ paid him his soul as the price. The devil was cheated, however, because he was unaware of Christ's sinlessness and divinity. He could not keep the soul because he was not entitled to take possession of one who was sinless. The ransom was therefore a trick; it was an act of deceit on the part of God: "Since Christ was God, the Devil could not hold him, and since Christ was without sin, it was a violation of justice to try to hold him, a violation that annulled Satan's claim to keep the rest of us in bondage. The slate, wiped clean, meant that we were free. Satan had been duped, gulled, cheated, and made a fool of."²

The second is derived from the giants of Germanic mythology.³ During the process of Christianisation, the giants were conflated with the devil. Presuming that "the giant and the devil were, of course, commonly confused in popular belief," as T. McAlindon points out,⁴ the devil evidently adopted the bearishness of the giants - bearishness that already served as cue for folk humour.⁵ In spite of their power and strength, the giants would lose the war against elves, gods and humans, exactly because of their plumpness and stupidity.⁶ Wünsche provides ample evidence that the devil takes the place of the duped giant; therefore, there is no need to repeat the examples here.

The Harrowing of Hell theme provided a fundament for Christ followers.⁷ Believers were required to follow the example of Christ (*Imitatio Christi*). In the struggle against the devil, only the real Christian can prove of value, therefore it is not a surprise that the saints continuously win against their common foe. The saints are those in whom Christ's victory over the devil is manifested. The lives of martyrs and hermits were understood as military in a conflict, supporting the notion that the devil is not invincible. Such saints are often portrayed as calm and imperturbable heroes while they are surrounded by demonic monsters; again showing in all their

¹ Wünsche, 4-9. Russell, *Satan*, 84 n 15. See also Adolph Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan, vol. III, 305.

² Dinzelbacher, 140.

³ See also Roskoff, 354; T. McAlindon, *The Emergence of a Comic Type in Middle English Narrative: The Devil and Giant as Buffoon*, *Anglia* 81, 3-4 (1963), 365-371; Watter, 98, Mahal, 111.

⁴ McAlindon, 367.

⁵ Roskoff, 354.

⁶ Wünsche, 19.

⁷ *The Harrowing of Hell* or *Descensus Christi ad Inferos* is a work dating probably from the third century, contained in the apocryphal work *The Gospel of Nicodemus* (xviii ff.). See also Cushman, 7. *The Gesta Pilati* (Gospel of Nicodemus) was very popular in the Middle Ages. See Rosemary Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* (London, 1972), 269. Cf. also Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:31.

fearlessness that the devil can be overpowered. Furthermore, asceticism, disregard and humility proved effective weapons against the devil.¹ St. Anthony fought against the archenemy with his anchoritic lifestyle and the power of prayer, probably furnishing the most prominent example.² In the case of hagiology, the saints' victory over the devil's insistent and at times physical attacks may rest more in their humble endurance if they perceive evil's work as sanctioned expressions of God's grace. Nonetheless, there are examples where a saint beats the devil until he pleads for mercy. St. Dunstan³ became famous in his dealings with the devil. Legend relates how the Old Nick, disguised as a woman, went to visit St. Dunstan and lead him astray in his lodge where he was blacksmithing. During the woman's seductions, the saint spotted hooves beneath the skirt, so he drove her off by clumping the devil's nose with a large pair of red-hot tongs from the blazing fire.⁴ Another story relates how "the devil paid a visit to St. Dunstan as a weary traveler in need of a horseshoe. When he was asked to reshoe the devil's horse, St. Dunstan nailed a horseshoe to the devil's hoof. This caused the devil great pain, and Dunstan only agreed to remove the shoe and release the devil after he promised never to enter a place where a horseshoe is over the door."⁵ St. Margaret also beats the devil. She seizes him by the hair and throws him to the ground and even goes so far as to pluck out his right eye. She breaks all his bones then sets her right foot on his neck and says to him: "Get away from my Virginity!"⁶ In such scenes, which serve the purpose of demonstrating the devil's powerlessness in front of a saint, the devil assumes the role of a stupid and ridiculous figure.⁷ It ought to be emphasised, however, that hagiographic literature is "more interested in the divine than the human; the experience of the saint in these scenes is far removed from that of frail mortals."⁸ Its primary aim is not simply to train believers. Interestingly, taking the poetic work *Juliana* as an example, P. Dendle notes that the devil claims that his defeat at the hands of a saint is of no importance for normal humans. The devil ironically laments that such a result is unprecedented since he has not been overcome by an ordinary person.⁹ "Such statements," Dendle concludes, "argue against the common contention that saints' lives are edifying in that the reader or hearer is somehow meant to emulate the saint; in fact, the point is often that the saint is beyond all bounds

¹ Dinzelbacher, 43-45.

² For further examples where the devils are viewed as "wreche foles" in the saints' legends of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see McAlindon, 355.

³ Dunstan (909-988) was Archbishop of Canterbury who was later canonized as saint.

⁴ A similar story is to be found in Hermias Sozomen's *Ecclesiastical History*, XXVIII.vi., only concerning Apelles instead of Dunstan.

⁵ Edward G. Flight, *The True Legend of St. Dunstan and the Devi* (London, 1871).

⁶ *Margaret* 124, chap. 14, ll. 8-12. See Peter Dendle, *Satan Unbound: The Devil in Old English Narrative Literature* (Toronto [a.o.], 2001), 51.

⁷ Spreitzer, 37. German "Passional" – a 13th century legends collection, compiled in Middle High German.

⁸ Dendle, 8.

⁹ *Juliana* II. 547-51.

of common human identification.”¹ Yet even if there would be a moral lesson, the message would be that the devil must be defeated through saintly virtue or by direct divine intervention; by no means is an ordinary man capable of doing so on his own. The message of the Church was that we must not resist him in our own ability or name; we can only stand against the devil in Jesus’ Name. As believers in Jesus Christ, we can have authority, not power over, the devil.

In narrating a tale of the cruel and bloodthirsty Emperor Julian, who renounced his faith and turned to the devil, Ælfric² offers other encounters between the human and the demonic. After the wicked and coarse Julian has mocked Basil and threatened to “aweste þinne buruh . and gewyrce tó yrð-lande” (“to lay waste thy town, and make it into plough-land,” line 224), Basil has a vision wherein he learns that Saint Mary had authorised the martyr Mercurius to kill the emperor. Eventually the dream comes true, for the emperor is slain by an unknown warrior; thus, God delivers Basil together with the citizens of “the Athenian city” from death.³ According to Ælfric, Julian deserved death, because he “truwode on þone hæðen-scype . þe hine to helle gebrohte” (“he trusted in the heathenism which brought him to hell,” line 291). In *Sancte Agnetis Virginis*, the devil strikes down a prefect’s son because he wanted to dishonour St. Agnes, line 171-179).⁴ The devil also kills Ægeas in front of people after St. Andrew has been crucified, I, 598,⁵ demonstrating that persecutors receive due punishment in being killed by a devil. The godless suffered a deserved death, but the humble are also powerless against the devil’s attacks and must rely on the help of a saint. In *Sancti Mauri Abbatis* we see that three workmen are possessed with devils, but St. Mauri manages to put “þa deoflu afligde” in the Lord’s name (he “in the Lord’s name put the devils to flight,” line 204).⁶

People are not immune to involuntary possession, but some voluntarily seek an alligance with the devil. Through the instigation of the devil, a young man falls in love with a girl, a daughter of an honorable thane.⁷ In order to gain the girl in marriage, he consults a sorcerer who knows the devil’s craft. The sorcerer brings the young man in front of “his deofle,” line 367, who demands that the lad renounce Christ and believe in him instead. The youth agrees, but the devil is sceptical. He wants to have it in written form, that “þæt þú wið-saca criste . and þinum fulluhte” (“that thou renoucest Christ and thy baptism,” lines 379-380). Eventually, the youth writes

¹ Dendle, 128 n 14.

² Ælfric, Abbot of Eynsham.

³ *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints, being a Set of Sermons on Saints’ Days formerly observed by the English Church*, vol. I, ed. and tr. Walter W. Skeat, EETS OS 76, 82 (Oxford UP, 1999 [1881-85]), 63-67.

⁴ *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints*, vol. I, 181.

⁵ *Ibid*, 181.

⁶ Ælfric, *Sermones Catholici*, vol. I, ed. Benjamin Thorpe (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York, 1983 [1844]), 598.

⁷ *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints*, vol. I, 161.

⁷ The story is narrated in *Depositio Sancti Basilii Episcopi*, *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints*, vol. I, 73-79.

down what the devil dictates, and immediately the devil sends foul spirits to the maiden in order to induce her lust for the man.¹

Belief in pacts with the devil provided further doubts about the human capacity to defeat the devil. In probably the most prominent tale of this type, the Theophilus legend, the cleric saves his soul only through divine interference. The legend appears first in a Greek version of the sixth century written by a “Eutychianus.” In the 8th century, Paulus Diaconis made a Latin translation that introduced it to the West, where the Benedictine canoness Roswitha von Gandersheim (Hrosvit or Hrosvita; c. 935; after 973) gave it poetic form.² Her *Book of Legends* contains the story of Theophilus in dactylic hexameter, while her *Book of Drama* contains six comedies in Latin and modeled in form if not in content on the works of the Roman playwright Terence. The work dramatised the legendary histories of Christian Saints and Confessors.³ In *Hroswitha*, the devil leads people to horrible deeds. In her legend of St. Gengulph (*Passio Sancti Gongolfi Martyris*), for example, Gongolf’s adulterous and lascivious wife Ganea⁴ undertakes a failed attempt to bring about her virtuous husband’s death after her lover, the clerk, has been manipulated by the devil, who stirs him up with hatred and a desire for revenge. Faust-like characters such as “Basilus” and “Theophilus,” from Hroswitha’s fifth and sixth legends, make pacts with the devil, exchanging their immortal souls for worldly gain. In the former, Bishop Basilus⁵ intercedes, while in the latter the Virgin Mary saves the soul of Theophilus. The Theophilus (“love God”) legend is generally considered a model for the Faust story since it is about an “unhappy and despairing cleric who has sold his soul to the devil but later repents and gains salvation through the intercession of the Virgin Mary.”⁶ Indeed, the Holy Virgin became Satan’s strongest adversary in demotic legends.⁷

That the devil appears as a jester received witness in the devil’s letters, these usually satirising the corruptness of the Church. In the year 1351 Pope Clement VI received just such a letter wherein the devil addressed him as his worthy representative on earth. The devil further expressed his gratitude and hope to meet the Pope in hell soon.⁸

¹ Ælfric, *Sermones Catholici*, vol. II, ed. Benjamin Thorpe (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York, 1983 [1846]), 598.

² See also Rutebeuf.

³ See John Addington Symonds, *Shakespeare’s Predecessors in the English Drama* (New York, 1969 (1924)), 76.

⁴ Hroswitha of Gandersheim is alone in providing her with a name - *Ganea*. She also alludes to her as ‘she-wolf’, ‘damnable harlot’, ‘brazen creature’, and a variety of other unflattering distinctions.

⁵ Basillius was archbishop of Caeserea from 370 to 379; Roswitha used the Latin version of the Greek vita (translated by Ursus) for her legend. See *Hrosvit of Gandersheim: a florilegium of her works*, translated with introduction, interpretative essay and notes, Katharina Wilson (Woodbridge; Suffolk, 2000), 1 n 21.

⁶ See Moshe Lazar, *Theophilus: Servant of Two Masters. The Pre-Faustian Theme of Despair and Revolt*. *MLN*, vol. 87, no. 6, Nathan Edelman Memorial Issue (Nov., 1972), 31-50. Baron, *Faustus on Trial*, 113.

⁷ Russell, *Biographie des Teufels*, 128.

⁸ Roskoff, 324; on the letters of a similar kind see also Russell, *Lucifer*, 88.

From the foregoing facts, it is evident that, regarding the relations between the people and the devil, there is good reason to believe that the medieval peasant got the wrong end of the stick. In such occurrences, a typical figure in folk tales is the comic devil. This type of devil is often silly, harmless and not even coequal with humans where an ordinary peasant needs a modicum of effort to fob him off or to get him down.¹ Also, he is comic when tricked and therefore must forego a soul, as the legend of the Bridge at Kentchurch (Herefordshire, England) illustrates:

Jack [o' Kent] and the devil built the bridge over the Monnow between Kentchurch and Grosmont in a single night. What they built by night fell down by day as long as the bridge remained incomplete, hence the need for haste. The first passenger to pass over the bridge was to belong to the devil, so Jack threw a bone across, and a poor dog ran after it. That dog was all the devil had for his pains.²

The lack of devilish intelligence in folk tales does not coincide with biblical teachings and it becomes fairly obvious that these stories often parody saints' activities. To explain this phenomenon, however, we would need a mental picture of the "more simple kind of folk" of those times. Some devil conventions and some echoes of the homilies appeared in folk tales. C.F. Von Steegen assumes that the ordinary person did not take the devil very seriously, which could be understood as an act of defiance against the Church or simply as the notion that evil is an integral part of life; so, to make the best out of it, medieval man created his own folksy devil – a devil with whom you can have dealings and diddle.³ "Folklore", J.B. Russell explains, "tended to make the Devil ridiculous or impotent, probably in order to tame him and relieve the tension of fear."⁴ Ridiculing the devil served as strategy to reduce fear. Also, in some cases, the people believed that the devil could be tamed like an animal, which is yet another fear-reduction strategy that made people believe they are not powerless in the struggle against the devil.⁵

2.3. The Devil in the Folk Play

How did the folk interpretation discussed in the preceding chapter cohere with the drama of the peasants – such as the St. George Play⁶, the Plough Monday play¹ and the Sword-Dance?²

¹ Mahal, 111.

² Ella Mary Leather, *The Folk-Lore of Herefordshire* (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver; London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1912), 164. The Giants were also often regarded as builders.

³ Von Steegen, 239.

⁴ Russell, *Lucifer*, 63.

⁵ Dinzelbacher, 121.

⁶ Although there are local and other variations and versions, generally speaking we could say that the principal characters are St. George, the Turkish Knight, Captain Slasher and the Doctor (minor characters are also present, such as Beelzebub and Devil D'out). There is a brief prologue, followed by the introduction of or (boastful) self-introduction by the combatants (often St. George and the Turkish Knight). A duel follows in which one of them is killed. Then, the Doctor enters, boasts his skill, presents his odd tools and eventually revives the slain. Sometimes

Other activities constituting the “folk play” include the Easter Pace-Eggers’ play, the Yorkshire Sword-Dance, mummings and mayings. These relate to the folk devil of the previous discussion only in one broad aspect, namely in their involvement of the comic. What they certainly have in common is that the devil (here represented by Beelzebub or Devil D’out) is comic in character, his purpose being that of amusement.

The folk plays were not dramas in the strict sense but rather seasonal festivals in villages and small towns, and they seem to have predated medieval and Tudor plays and later coexisted with them, as some rather brief, tenuous medieval and Tudor records testify. Today they are still performed seasonally by house visitors (troops of actors paying house-to-house visits in order to deliver an indoor performance), normally acted in disguise, and may also be performed as a play in the street. The old scholarship³ argued that these plays derived from pagan fertility rituals or shamanistic rites, and parallels with the Balkan folk plays were also spotted. But their pagan origins have been refuted by some modern scholars. Since the folk festivals contain episodes involving the death and revival of a character who might be revived by a medical doctor, the old scholarship argued that the death-resurrection motif is an ancient rite and custom. Thus, they argued that the folk play has both pre-Christian and medieval origins⁴ that promote the fertility of man and nature. Meanwhile, this argument is likewise refuted by modern scholars. Also, according to R. Woolf, the folk plays were influenced by the religious drama of the Church.

The St. George Play (formerly defined by the old scholarship as the Mummings’ Play)⁵ is considered here because it very likely existed during the medieval period. Nothing about it was written down, though, and there are no references to it before the eighteenth century. With

another duel follows in which the formerly killed is now victorious. The play ends with a collection and a merry dance.

¹ The Plough Monday plays, as the name suggests, are usually performed around Plough Monday. The principal characters are usually a Recruiting Sergeant, Tom Fool, a Ploughboy, Dame Jane and the Lady “bright and gay.” Tom Fool introduces the play. The Recruiting Sergeant gets the Ploughboy to enlist for a soldier and leave Lady “bright and gay.” Upon seeing this, Tom Fool woos the Lady. Then, Dame Jane enters with an attempt to palm her bastard child off onto Tom Fool. Beelzebub enters and knocks Dame Jane down with his club. The Doctor brings Dame Jane back to life. A dance and collection follows.

² The principal characters are the Fool, who wears animal’s skin, and the “Bessy,” a man dressed in woman’s clothes. The Sword Dance includes a mock-beheading: the dancers surround the Fool and put their swords round his neck. The Fool is killed, but, luckily, a Doctor steps in to revive him. R. Weimann says that the Sword Dance is documented in the 1490 “dawnce of Sygate.” See Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, ed. Robert Schwartz (Baltimore and London, 1978), 17.

³ E.K. Chambers, R. J. E. Tiddy, A. R. Wright a.o. A lengthy discussion on their viewpoints is offered in Millington’s work.

⁴ Documentary evidence is offered by Millington, who also offers a good bibliographical survey of folk-play scholarship. See Peter Millington, *The Origins and Development of English Folk Plays* (University of Sheffield, 2002).

⁵ The three classes of folk play, St. George Play (or Hero/Combat Play, St. George Play is one example of Hero/Combat Play), Plough Play and Sword Dance Play were also known as “mummings’ plays” or “mumming plays.” However, Millington has pointed out that “these are unsatisfactory names because the actors of such plays were not all called mummings, nor did all mummings perform plays.” Therefore, Millington introduced the new term “Quack Doctor Plays.” See <http://www.folkplay.info/Texts.htm>

unusual confidence, this is said to be a result of oral transmission, a theory questioned, however, by many modern researchers. T. Pettitt has pointed out that some related folk-play elements occur in early stage plays like *Mucedorus*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and perhaps *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and he argues that a folk-play scene appears in Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*.¹ In their extant form, the texts of the St. George Play contain devils, yet I do not know whether these supernumerary characters can be traced back in any version to earlier times.² If this is so, then Beelzebub deserves special mention here.³ The local variations of the mummers are numerous, of course, yet Beelzebub is normally introduced at the end of the play, after a doctor, a comic character, manages to resuscitate the slain warrior. Here, he has his own usual lines:

In comes I, Beelzebub,
On my shoulder I carry my club,
In my hand a wet leather frying-pan;
Don't you think I'm a funny old man?

The quoted introductory quatrain does not reveal much actually, except that the character is simply brought in and shown to the spectator with the sole purpose of declaring his name and his stereotyped attributes.⁴ Beelzebub⁵ also often describes his "big head and little wit" upon his

¹ See Thomas Pettitt, "The Folk-Play in Marlowe's 'Doctor Faustus'", *Folklore*, Vol. 91, No. 1 (1980), pp. 72-77. On Shakespeare's awareness of folk-festivals in general, see J. Spens, *An Essay on Shakespeare's Relation to Tradition*, Oxford, 1916, 33-62; G. Wilson Knight, 'Great Creating Nature' in *The Crown of Life*; J. Holloway, *The School of Night*, 1961, 73-4; as quoted in P. Happé, "The Vice and the Folk-Drama," *Folklore*, vol. 75, no. 3 (Autumn, 1964), 173.

² It must be borne in mind that it has been proved that the play has continuously been absorbing names, jokes and even incidents from topical events between the eighteenth century and the present day; therefore, it seems likely "that the texts received and written down by eighteenth-century observers had been equally roughly treated in preceding centuries." See Glynne Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre* (London, 1974, 145). P. Happé, however, tried to prove that there is "high probability that the recorded folk-play is a reasonable approximation to the folk rituals as they existed in the fifteenth century [...] a large number of references seem to indicate that the plays persisted in similar form for some centuries." See Happé, 172. Millington has argued that there were no pre-Shakespearean Quack Doctor plays. They "arose in the early to mid 18-th century, and were attached to non-play house-visiting customs that had existed for a considerable historical period beforehand." Millington, 285. There also appears to have been a single proto-text, Millington argues. However, if not the Quack Doctor plays, some forms of early folk drama did exist. Millington, 135. Nonetheless, the devil, as he occurs in the texts of these English folk plays, is discussed in this study. The texts are available at www.folkplay.info.

³ Of course, in St. George's case and elsewhere it is the dragon that symbolised evil and "lent itself well to homiletic interpretation as the devil," Chambers, *The English Folk Play* (London, 1984 [1933]), 172. Although often mentioned, the dragon appears rarely in the "mummer's play" of St. George. The dragon need not be seen as merely the legendary adversary of St. George, but also in relation to those other 'monsters' which, according to Philip Stubbes, formed part of the train of the Lord of Misrule, 38. There too, were 'hobby horses' and a dragon. On the ceremonial function of the dragon, see Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, 268 n 49.

⁴ See also Stuart Piggott, "The Character of Beelzebub in the Mummers' Play," *Folklore*, vol. 40, no. 2 (Jun. 30, 1929), 193.

⁵ According to E. K. Chambers, Beelzebub once wore a calf-skin, like other rural "Fools," but, "this feature has dropped out [...] Nowadays, Beelzebub generally carries a club and a ladle or frying-pan, with which he makes the *quête*. At Newport and Eccleshall he has a bell fastened to his back; at Newbold he has a black face." See Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, I, 214 n 1. Most likely due to mishearing or misunderstanding, the Beelzebub of the St. George

arrival.¹ In an episode of the Camborne Mummers' Play, Father Christmas describes Beelzebub as having "a head like a pig/ a body like a cow/and a great long nose like the beam of a plough." In the same play, with the help of other personages Beelzebub carries a dead Turkish Knight on his back.²

In some interpolated versions of the St. George Play, (Little) Devil D'Out³ is introduced as wielding a broom to more or less annoy those who come near him. Sometimes, he presents main characters, but more often he is the one who closes the performance with threats to "sweep the whole party out, or 'into their graves' if money is not given."⁴ Most likely, the devil would begin to sweep the floor while Beelzebub would carry his frying-pan or ladle around to gather contributions. As can be readily deduced, their main purpose is to ask the audience for money at the end of the performance (the so-called *quête*): Devil D'Out demands money from the audience, whereas Beelzebub commonly appears as a collector.

In the Bassingham play (*The Fool's Wooing*)⁵ an old witch is married to a Fool, a situation Chambers considers a perversion of and replacement for a lady variably called Jane, Dame Jane or Old Jane.⁶ Beelzebub is also found in some variants. He appears in the Cropwell Plough Monday play, where he knocks Dame Jane down and eventually kills her. Fortunately, the Doctor raises the dead to life again. A Dragon appears at times in the Plough Monday play, too (both the Dragon and Beelzebub being adopted from the Mummers' Play), together with the wild Worm and a Hobby Horse that fights with the Fool. The Dragon (interpreted as the devil in homilies) also makes an occasional appearance in the Morris Dance.

There are many references to Morris Dance in the 1500s, which is still performed on May Day, an English national bank holiday.⁷ In the sixteenth century, participants were encouraged to dance in villages. Morris Dances, which continue to evolve, were often accompanied by characters such as the hobby horse and fool, while Giants, which E. K. Chambers refers to as

Play was also known in Cornwall as "Hub Bub" and at Chiswick as "Lord Grub." He is at times identical with Old Father Christmas and he is occasionally referred to as Father Beelzebub.

¹ Beelzebub is sometimes confused with Big Head.

² Two additional versions are also communicated through A. B. Gomme. See Alice B Gomme, "The Character of Beelzebub in the Mummers' Play," *Folklore*, vol. 40, no. 3 (Sep. 30, 1929), 292-293.

³ A black face was a feature in the medieval representation of devils. The devil is called "Little Devil D'Out" or "Doubt," "Little Jack Doubt" or "Jack Devil Doubt." See Chambers, *The Medieval Stage* I, 214.

⁴ *Ibid.* I, 217.

⁵ C. R. Baskervill, *Mummers' Wooing Plays in England*, *Modern Philology*, Feb. 1924, vol. 21, no.3, 241-245; Chambers, *Folk Play*, 91.

⁶ Chambers, *Folk Play*, 102.

⁷ John Cutting defined the Morris-Dance as "Traditional English dances of ceremonial or display character which may be grouped according to the localities from which they were collected (Colswold, Lancashire, etc.)." See John Cutting, *History and the Morris Dance* (Alton, 2005), 66. The Morris Dance is a form of amusement and social entertainment. It is danced by small numbers. Cutting, 3.

Gogmagog and Corineus,¹ were seen in an urban procession as reported by Henry Machyn in 1553. A Giant was also common in “maygames and shewes”² and in the Morris Dances.

Disguise was very popular in the Middle Ages. Mummers were disguised and masked, and we know that some of those who went mumming in a long procession to visit Richard II were men “with black vizardes like deuils.”³ In *Anatomie of Abuses*, Philip Stubbes writes in 1583 that marching towards the church “the lord of mysrule”⁴ was followed by “hobbie horses, dragones,⁵ and other antiques” in order to “strike vp the Deuilles Daunce” and that, upon entering the church they, like madmen, would dance like “Deuilles incarnate.”⁶ According to Chambers, the “masked and blackened demon figures” of the Feast of Fools were influential in the shaping of the clamorous, rioting grotesque medieval theatrical devils.⁷

3. Sources for the Devil in the English Mystery Cycles

The devil does not appear in English liturgical drama, but he is present in five English Mystery cycles, also known as the Corpus Christi Cycle.⁸ The cycles are those of the Cornish *Ordinalia* (probably the earliest cycle), York, Chester, Towneley⁹ and N-Town.¹⁰ The usual name for these plays in England was *miracle*,¹¹ or in Latin *ludus*, or sometimes they were

¹ Chambers, *Folk Play*, 155.

² *Ibid.*, 157.

³ As quoted in John Cutting, *History and the Morris Dance*, 81. The mummers also wore animal heads.

⁴ On the “lord of misrule,” see Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, I, 173.

⁵ The dragon, as R. Weimann has pointed out, should not be seen as merely the legendary adversary of St. George, “but also in relation to those other ‘monsters’ which, according to Philip Stubbes, formed part of the train of the Lord of Misrule.” See Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, 38. There too, were ‘hobby horses’ and a dragon. On the ceremonial function of the dragon see Weimann, 38; 268 n 49.

⁶ Philip Stubbes’ account of the Lord of Misrule, as quoted in *Brand’s Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, 368-70. Stubbes should be identified as an unreliable witness, since he was arguing that all festive activities were precincts of evil. I am grateful to Professor Lochman for calling this to my attention.

⁷ Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, II, 91.

⁸ There are also single plays which, in all probability, belonged to some cycles, now lost: two from Coventry (see Hardin Craig, *Two Coventry Corpus Christi Plays* (London, 1902; EETSES, 87)), the Newcastle *Noah* play (discussed in a later chapter), the Norwich Grocers’ *Adam and Eve* and the Northampton *Abraham and Isaac*, contained in O. Waterhouse, *The Non-Cycle Mystery Plays* (London, 1909; EETSES, 104).

⁹ The cycles were subject to revisions, alterations and various improvements. The contribution of a gifted anonymous playwright (whom scholars call “the Wakefield Master”) from the fifteenth century on a number of plays from the *Towneley* (Wakefield) cycle, for instance, would be a typical example.

¹⁰ This cycle was formerly wrongly referred to as *Ludus Coventriae*. The cycle has nothing to do with Coventry. It was also called *The Hegge Plays* (named so after the seventeenth-century owner of the manuscript, Robert Hegge). Today, it is called N-Town, “formerly taken to designate some town whose name began with *N*, but the *N* is more likely to stand for the Latin word *nomen* and to indicate performance by a travelling company” (*A Literary History of England*, ed. Albert C. Baugh, 2.ed. (New York, 1967) 282), thus unconnected with any particular town (*The Reader’s Encyclopedia of World Drama*, ed. John Gassner and Edward Quinn, (Toronto, 1969) 607). Also Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 6 n 46.

¹¹ This definition is no longer valid today – the terms “Mystery” and “Miracle plays” are no longer used interchangeably. The plays that give a theatrical representation of a saint are called “Miracle plays,” or “Saint

referred to as *histories*. The name *mystery* is said to have been first used in England during the early eighteenth century by Dodsley, the editor of a volume of old plays. The plays passed “out of the clergy” to the “laity in their market-places.”¹ The cycles were able to be performed due to the craft guilds that financed, produced and also performed them.² The plays were performed processionally on pageant wagons,³ and they were normally performed by amateurs on the Corpus Christi day.

The Mystery plays enacted the events of the Bible - from the Creation to Judgement Day.⁴ The performances had both religious and commercial aims, and they were popular from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, until they were banned as “popery” under Queen Elizabeth.⁵ The visual aspect mattered to medieval drama. The Biblical incidents were “visually communicated” and thus made more comprehensible to the largely illiterate medieval audience.⁶ The visual presentation of the devils had to be spectacular and their “animalistic appearance”⁷ needed to point to the nature of evil.

As regards the conception of the devil, the writers of English cycle plays were not engaged in research such as with the modern historical novelist. As A. Williams conjectures, none of them had the resources of a Thomas Aquinas or even of a Geoffrey Chaucer.⁸ Thus one may safely conclude that for the images of the devil depicted in the cycles, clerics (as we suppose most of the authors were⁹) consulted graphic and plastic arts, social customs and attitudes, folklore and folkways, rather than the written word in books and records.¹⁰ Still, the liturgy was a principal source, and much of the liturgy comes from the Bible. Hence the Bible is still the most important source of the cycles. As A. Williams explains:

But “the Bible” does not mean just the plain text. By the time of the cycle plays the text of the Old Testament had been explained, refined, and sometimes distorted by fifteen or sixteen hundred years of

plays.” These are *Mary Magdalene* and *The Conversion of Saint Paul*. The Digby *Mary Magdalene* required a place-and-scaffold staging. See, for example, William Tydeman, *The Theatre in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge UP, 1978) 161.

¹ Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, vol. 2, 147.

² Each of the various pageants were assigned to a certain trade-guild: “At Newcastle the Noah play was assigned to the shipwrights and other watermen, the Magi to the goldsmiths, the Disputation in the Temple to the lawyers, the Flight into Egypt to the stable keepers, the Last Supper to the bakers, etc. See *A Literary History of England* 14 n 278.

³ Except N-Town. On the pageant wagons and staging, consult for example Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 49-51.

⁴ The Cornish Ordinalia is an exception here, as it does not contain Judgement Day.

⁵ Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, vol. 2, 111.

⁶ Charlotte Spivack, “The Appearance of Evil.”

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Arnold Williams, *The Drama of Medieval England* (Michigan, 1961), 116.

⁹ The men who had the greatest formative influence were very likely secular clergy, conceivably priests associated with guilds. See Introduction in *English Mystery Plays*, ed. Peter Happé, 20.

¹⁰ Williams, 116. Still, I would think that writing would have had some influence, given that the clergy wrote down the plays’ texts.

commentary, for Old Testament exegesis starts before the New Testament was written; and a somewhat shorter but equally intensive labor on the New Testament was available by the commentators, and by the Christian Church generally, is a vastly different thing from the bare text, so different as to deceive the unexpert.¹

Thus the plays were not invented but rather “derived by a scholarly process from what was already well established and well known.”² Certainly, many revisions of the cycles took place, and still “the revisers continued to use scriptural and homiletic material, scholastic histories, bestiaries, lectionaries, the Compendia (*les sommes*), all of which were approved by the Church and available for their use.”³ Hence, what was offered in the Corpus Christi plays remained in line with the teachings of the Church. Likewise, the compilers relied on patristic and scholastic scriptural exegesis and on the “New Testament Apocrypha”: “The main source for narrative is the Vulgate, but a wide variety of paraphrases and collections of apocryphal material was also available.”⁴ As it is further explained in the introduction of the *English Mystery Plays*:

There is a strong possibility that those who worked on the texts were clerics. The sources which they used were the devotional literature which was available to them. Most of the source books which we know about formed part of the wealth of medieval literature which was devised to train and support the priesthood and others who lived a life of devotion. Some of the works were rather more popular or encyclopaedic in type, perhaps reflecting the need to cater for some whose educational standard was low. The outlook of the authors as far as we can determine it is conservative. There appears to be little attempt to break the new ground, the intention being to present the essential truths of Christianity, with the implication that they were settled and apparent.⁵

The sources also vary, for while the gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, and the Gospel of Nicodemus, for instance, were the ultimate sources for York, we see that Towneley does not use them at all,⁶ while *The Stanzaic Life of Christ* served as a source only for the Chester Cycle. The authors of the cycles were not savants, Williams insists, but obtained their information from encyclopaedic works such as *Cursor Mundi*, the anonymous middle-English religious poem of about 30,000 lines dating from around 1300,⁷ the *Golden Legend*, the *Northern Homily Cycle* and the *Southern Legendary* and the *Meditations on the Passion of St. Bonaventure*.

Finally, the devil of the English mystery plays draws on motifs borrowed from the Bible and the Apocrypha and is therefore based on a traditional Christian background. His appearance in the cycles needs no excuse since as a Biblical character he forms an essential part of the drama;

¹ Williams, 117.

² Introduction in *English Mystery Plays*, ed. Peter Happé, 20.

³ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 26. The opinion of G. Cohen is cited by Bonnell: “[...] they searched in the apocryphal works of Bede and St. Augustine, in Isidore of Seville, Peter Comestor, Honoré d’Autun, Vincent de Beauvais, or in the *Meditations* of St. Bonaventure.” See Cohen, *Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre religieux français du Moyen Âge*, 129-131. Bonnell, 279.

⁵ Introduction in *English Mystery Plays*, ed. Peter Happé, 30.

⁶ Williams, 118

⁷ *Ibid.*, 119.

thus we may safely refer to him as a Semitic Satan.¹ He is indispensable to Biblical accounts on the temptation of Christ, maybe as well to the fall of Man and Judas, but since all the evildoings on earth occur under the direct influence of the devil according to the prevalent medieval view, his role expanded to other plays as well.²

3.1. The Devil Controversy: Relationship of Laughter and Religion

In the following brief discussion I sketch an outline of scholarly opinions regarding humour in the Corpus Christi Cycle, in order to show where I agree or differ from these. Recent literature has paid increasing attention to the nature of humour in the mystery plays. John Chrysostom (349-ca. 407) is known as the first to point out that Jesus never laughed and his statement had a consistent influence over the medieval argument over laughter.³ Least of all did theologians find evil as a metaphysical negativity laughable or ridiculous. G. Mahal speaks of an “amalgamation process” in this case. As a consequence thereof, the tendency towards belittlement sprang out of the introduction of comedic elements into drama. Earlier critics of medieval religious drama tended to denigrate comic scenes for attenuating religious statements in the cycles, deprecatingly calling them an “escape from piety” or “comic relief.”⁴ The sharpest and at the same time probably the most prominent phrasing of such a viewpoint H. J. Diller sees in the words of H. Craig, who dismissed “devils, raging tyrants, and clowns” as “excrescences and aberrations” that only lead away from the drama’s religious aim.⁵ Since then, a series of articles about this subject matter has been published, which try to prove that comedy had served religion.⁶ In this regard one cannot omit V.A. Kolve’s study. The elaborateness of the subject that V.A. Kolve brings to matters in his *The Play Called Corpus Christi* has been widely appreciated at all levels of scholarship, from students to established professors. Drawing upon E. R. Curtius, B. White⁷ a.o., he discusses the importance the Medieval Church attributed to laughter⁸ and he finds that laughing at characters who turn against the will of God found approval among the Church Fathers:

¹ See also Maximilian Josef Rudwin, *Der Teufel in den deutschen geistlichen Spielen des Mittelalters und der Reformationszeit* (Göttingen, 1915).

² Rudwin, *Der Teufel*.

³ Rainer Warning, *Funktion und Struktur: Die Ambivalenzen des Geistlichen Spiels* (München, 1974), 109.

⁴ See Hans Jürgen Diller, *Redeformen des englischen Misterienspiels* (München, 1973), 298.

⁵ Craig, *English Religious Drama*, 6.

⁶ Bibliographic references in Diller 299 n 155.

⁷ E.R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern, 1965), 419-434; B. White, “Medieval Mirth”, *Anglia*, LXXVIII (1960), 284-301. Hacker, 247 n 1.

⁸ See also Diller, 299.

In the Corpus Christi drama [...] the severance from God is chiefly a result from man's stupidity, of his failure to be intelligent. Lucifer falls from heaven as a fool who has attempted the impossible and who could have known (had he but considered) its fundamental impossibility. Cain thinks God can be cheated in offering. Satan makes a fatal mistake in setting under way the plot to kill Christ, and hell is harrowed as a result. Anti-Christ is likely a buffoon, a confidence man. Stupidity, even in social terms, is funny, but when it willfully expresses itself in opposition to God's plan – a plan not only intelligible but known – it becomes more than merely laughable. It is also, in some outrageous sense, perverse, and the laughter it attracts is correspondingly unrestrained and unsympathetic.¹

According to H. J. Diller, it is the pious version of Schadenfreude,² “[...] even triumphant derision, seems to be the intended reaction,” he adds in his essay, “Laughter in Medieval English Drama.” Kolve's theory, H. J. Hacker observes, is almost identical to the one of E.G. Jünger.³ Since the devil is metaphysically inferior - a quasi harmless adversary – E.G. Jünger considers mankind's laughter at him a reaction to the rejection of an inadequate provocation of a priori weaker party.⁴ R. Warning criticises Jünger's view, mainly on the basis of the German Osterspiel (Easter (passion) play), which demonstrated the return of the kerygma to the myth. Here, Warning argues, laughter lives on the vanquished fear; it is a ritualised victory over the invincible.⁵

H. J. Diller's comment that a failure to understand the art of laughter led L.W. Cushman to deny any humour to the Mysteries is rendered somewhat arbitrary, simply because this is not what Cushman claimed.⁶ Cushman maintained that “it is only in the treatment of some of the under-devils that the authors have freed themselves to any extent from tradition. Examples of this freer treatment of the figure of the devil occur exclusively in the interpolations and revisions, particularly of the Townley and Coventry Mysteries. Here some of the devils become comical and satirical.”⁷ In respect thereof we may say that the mysteries conspicuously lack the bawdy and obscene humour, characteristic of the German “Teufelsspiele” or French “Diablerie.” Indeed, the York and Chester plays were held in line with Scripture, avoiding the vulgarity that sometimes appeared in other places.⁸ But Cushman errs in believing that only the under-devils are funny, since the same can be true of Satan himself. He is also not right in saying that there are no obscenities: the devils verbally harass each other, using expressions like “lurdan,”⁹ “ribald,”¹⁰ “fayture.”¹ The N-Town Satan conspicuously lacks magnificence as regards his

¹ V.A Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi* (Stanford, 1966), 140.

² Diller, 303. See also Hacker, 247. Schadenfreude – a German word meaning pleasure derived from the misfortunes of others.

³ Hacker 247 n 4.

⁴ F. G. Jünger, *Über das Komische* (Frankfurt, 1948), 15.

⁵ Warning, 107-122.

⁶ See Diller, 299 n 159. Cushman, 16.

⁷ Cushman, 16.

⁸ Craig, 204.

⁹ Y I, 108, 115, 117.

¹⁰ Y XXXVII, 99.

actions and one is unfortunate enough to witness a display of coarse manners and inappropriate conduct on his part instead of Miltonic angelic grandeur and dignity:

Now to helle be wey I take,
In endeles peyn þer to be pyht.
For fere of fyre a fart I crake!
In helle donjoon myn dene is dyth, 79-82²

Yet on the whole the under-devils stand out in their obscenity. The Cornish devil Tulfric, for instance, uses boastfulness and vile language compared to the rather dignified and well-spoken Lucifer, Beelzebub and Satan. Diller is right in his assessment that this obscenity merely underlines their feebleness; by no means does it involve the feeling of superiority.³ Yet he is not right in forming a general conclusion because obscenity and comedy are not necessarily stage devils' inborn characteristics. For example, they do not appear in similar scenes from the Wakefield Cycle.⁴

In the main, comic elements were restricted to Biblical villains such as Cain, Herod, Pilate, Judas, the Pharisees and other infamous persons (especially in Wakefield), or to lower class characters.⁵ In this way the comic became attached to personalities not already defined in the Testament narratives.⁶

I think that critics have taken such pains to explain the existence and origin of the comic type of the devil in the mysteries and to refute Cushman's views, that they simply ignored that no version of the devil appears consistently in the mysteries.⁷ I wish to argue that the devil is funny or made a fool of only in his dealings with supernatural entities – good or bad – but not through his contact with human beings. Therefore, in the following chapters, we will focus on the devil's activity in relation to man. As far as I know, no research to date has used this approach to analyse the comicality of the mysteries' devil.

Take, for example, the two fallen angels who find themselves devils in hell in the York play "The Fall of the Angels." The startling contrast between their erstwhile brightness and the

¹ Ch I, 217. See also Diller, 301.

² This could be connected to the alleged obscene rites in the Middle Ages, the "Sabbat," where the devil-worshippers were said to kiss the devil under the tail. Heretics kissing the devil's behind traces back since the famous papal bull, the *Vox in rama*, issued by Pope Gregory IX in 1233.

³ Diller, 301.

⁴ See Dieter M. Schmidt, *Die Kunst des Dialogs in den Wakefield-Spielen* (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, Cirencester, 1980) 136 n 109.

⁵ For a detailed analysis of the comical aspect of these characters, see Frederick T Wood, "The Comic Elements in the English Mystery Plays", *Neophilologus*, vol. 25, no.1 (Dezember 1940), 194-206.

⁶ Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, II, 91.

⁷ See also Rudwin, *Der Teufel*, 8.

present feeble condition of Lucifer must have produced an astonishing effect on the audience.¹ The transition from the initial shock and disbelief to mutual accusations skilfully develops a tragicomedy.² Lucifer and Diabolus quarrel like angry curs who snarl yet are afraid to bite. While this produces a certain comic effect, it offers at the same time the full horrors of the position of an accursed apostate. H. J. Hacker notes that the “laughableness” ascribed to Lucifer is an identifying feature of his portrayal in every situation when his claim to power is being repulsed by the almighty will of God. Betimes it is also a direct effect of his diction, Hacker further observes, whose obscenity classifies him among the unregenerate.³ Chiefly his useless activity is comic, but his activity is not useless when he engages in encounters with human beings, as will be seen in the following chapters.

3.2. The Devil Introduced

In the five extant manuscripts of what has come to be called the Corpus Christi Cycle, the devil’s story begins in Heaven. The traditional account of the story of the fall of the angels is that God created the angels before the creation of the universe and its inhabitants. He bestows free will upon the angels, hoping that they are going to remain his faithful vassals. One of the angels,⁴ however, fraught with pride and envy,⁵ boasts that he must not serve God. He admires his own cleverness and the beauty of his shape instead, and turns away from the Almighty to contemplation of himself. As an insurgent vassal, he contemplates abjuring his rightful sovereign and establishing his own fiefdom in the heavens. He brags about being like God.⁶ He is not alone in his self-praise; a bad angel backs him and shares his narcissism and egotism although he had not been previously addressed by God at all,⁷ the only plausible explanation being that this angel must have been tempted to evil by the very first speech of Lucifer, resting therefore upon the

¹ See also Hans-Jürgen Hacker, *Zur Poetologie des mittelalterlichen Dramas in England* (Heidelberg, 1985), 244.

² Also Hacker, 244. In “Christ and Satan,” Satan acknowledges his guilt.

³ Hacker, 245.

⁴ Lucifer is considered the foremost angel in Tertullian *Against Marcion* 2.10. Augustine and Gregory the Great followed his views. Russell, *Satan*, 93 n 38. In N-Town, Lucifer’s status in heaven is not explained and absolutely no mention of him is made in God’s opening monologue, let alone that he has received any preferential treatment.

⁵ The York Lucifer fails to see why he should make himself equal to the rest of the angels when he clearly outperforms them in beauty and power; the author appears to follow Saint Bonaventure of Bagnoregio’s version of the fall of Lucifer, who argued that Lucifer was repudiated after he became aware of his beauty. In N-Town, the root of his pride is apparently his love for power, as Gregory of Nyssa argued in *Oratio catechetica magna* 21-24. See Russell, *Satan*, 187.

⁶ Lucifer is the “ape of God” – *Simia dei*. Lucifer/Satan mimics God on a number of occasions in the Mysteries. In a similar manner, Antichrist apes Christ.

⁷ In Chester, Lucifer is warned by the Nine Orders to abandon wicked pride that only leads to downfall, yet his companion “Ligtheborne” successfully functions as an abettor.

medieval notion that regarded Lucifer as the instigator and source of all evil.¹ Hence, deprived of the ability to discern the worthiness of the praise of the angel nearest to God, the bad angel smugly concludes that he should follow Lucifer in his sin of *superbia*. This impinges upon the justice of God, so he throws Lucifer and his followers into hell,² where they ultimately lose angelic grandeur. Conclusively, God himself explains that pride is the chief sin since it challenges the Divine Majesty.

Obviously, according to the Mysteries the corruptness of the Archangel comes from his pride³ and not from lust⁴ or envy of humanity because his sin occurred before the creation of the material world; his fall preceded the creation of Adam and Eve.⁵ The devil's envy arose from his pride; but, he envied God and not humans, just as St. Augustine argued.⁶

That the authors of the Corpus Christi cycles wished to create a contrapuntal effect where the angels exalt the Lord and Lucifer responds with self-praise has been observed by H. Vatter, yet he speaks somewhat sympathetically about Lucifer when he maintains that "God himself is not entirely free from guilt in provoking the fatal rebellion."⁷ There are plausible indications that God anticipated the oncoming rebellion by creating hell next to earth and heaven;⁸ still, the interpretation of Lucifer's fall wherein he was created perfect, but iniquity was found in him has been a tradition since St. Augustine,⁹ who sought not to compromise God. The dramatists certainly wished to follow the same pattern. In fact, Augustinian theodicy provided the most useful answer to the problem of evil and shaped medieval Christian thinking. The questioning about theodicy had been radically denied; the implicit charge against God had been reversed, with the result that it became an explicit accusation against mankind. Due to this paradigm shift a

¹ Satan was a liar from the beginning. See Jh 8:44.

² Significantly no battle takes place and nothing indicates an earlier or imminent menace. In the York play, Lucifer is shown as fallen from the moment that he spoke. This action in which an event in heaven is followed by one in hell called for two levels of stage. Arnold Williams suggests a trap door that could provide "an exit for Satan when he falls from heaven into hell and for the damned souls as they go to their eternal punishment." See Williams, *The Drama of Medieval England*, 106.

³ In this regard Rosemary Woolf points out that the York author sticks to the St. Thomas tradition that Lucifer wanted to be the source of his own happiness. See Rosemary Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* (London, 1972), 108. The other three mystery cycles depict Lucifer as a usurper. As Woolf further points out, Lucifer does not fall "as a penalty of judgement imposed by God, but as the inevitable consequence of what he himself says."

⁴ See the "watcher angels" story of Genesis 6:1-4.

⁵ Thus reflecting Origen's argument.

⁶ See also Russell, *Satan*, 130.

⁷ Vatter, 70.

⁸ Y, I, 27. This numbering confirms with that used in *The York Plays*, ed. Richard Beadle, York Medieval Texts, Second Series (London, 1982).

⁹ Irenaeus said that the devil fell from grace because he envied God, wishing to be adorned like his maker. *Against the Heresies* 5.22, 5.24; on Satan's pride 5.21. See also Russell, *Satan*, 81. God cannot be blamed for evil for he created Lucifer – an angel – as good in his nature. This angel, however, made himself into the devil. Tertullian disputed that the devil "was created in the presence of God as a good being is created in the presence of a good Being; but afterwards he was transformed by his own free choice into an evil being." See Tertullian *Against Marcion* 2.10. Russell, *Satan*, 92.

transformation of theodicy into anthropodicy took place – the question of the peccability of mankind replaces the one of the equitableness of God.¹ Whether it was truly God’s decree that made Lucifer proud or God’s design for Lucifer to desire His position is an issue that here, in my opinion, does not deserve the proportion Milton’s *Paradise Lost* for example enjoys. Here, it ought to be remarked that Lucifer sinned of his own will and that the angels fell of their own will.

3.2.1. The Devil’s Animosity towards Humanity and How it All began

The dramatists conventionally wanted to impart a message to the audience that the devils hate humans. How this animosity began is explained in different ways by Satan in the plays of the fall of man.² Immediately after their fall, the Chester Primus Demon knows about God’s future plan to create humankind, so he sends his “frende Ruffyn” to “make mankinde to do amisse.”³ The demons seek to corrupt their object of envy at any cost. Lucifer is highly motivated to destroy “mankynde” and he promises them the same fate that befell the fallen angels. It is he who draws up a plan for the corruption of mankind. Humans, however, are not to blame for his misfortune; it is only the sin of envy that drives him to act in such a way. The cause of envy is not always the same in the mysteries, however. It is explained in Wakefield that since the tenth group of angels fell with Satan, humankind was created to fill up the number and take the place of the fallen angels in heaven.⁴ Similarly, in N-Town, God asks the devil why he wished to see mankind brought down, and “the fiend replies that he had long cherished great enmity against man because man had been put into the place in heaven which Lucifer and his followers had forfeited: “for I am full of great envy, of wrath and wicked hate [...]”⁵ The York Satan, in his own form, also reveals that envy was the cause for his fall. But strangely enough, his envy is directed at man because he is no longer God’s new favourite. He expresses his bewilderment at the

¹ See Brigitte Spreitzer, “*Wie bist du vom Himmel gefallen...*”: *Einschlagstellen des Diabolischen in der Literatur des späteren Mittelalters* (Wien, Köln, Weimar, 1995), 17. Her authority is Herman Häring, *Die Macht des Bösen: Das Erbe Augustinus* (Zürich, Köln, 1979), 189 and Peter J. Berger, *Zur Dialektik von Religion und Gesellschaft: Elemente einer soziologischen Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973), 72-73.

² God has maide man with his hend/to haue that blis withoutten end,/The neyn orde to fulfill,/that after vs left, sich is his will/ And now ar thay in paradise;/bot thens thay shall, if we be wise, T, I, lines 263-267.

³ Ch, I, lines 259-260. Nonetheless, the temptation is not undertaken by Ruffyn in the Chester temptation scene but by Lucifer himself. The numbering confirms with that used in *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, Volume I: Text, ed. Rober Meyer Lumiansky & David Mills (Oxford UP), 1974.

⁴ T, I, lines 264-265. On the existence of a tenth order see Gregory the Great and the Old English homilist Ælfric. In N-Town, Lucifer narrates how he “lefte but tweyn a3ens on to abyde here in lyth;/But be ijide part come with me, may not be seyð nay” (N-Town, XXVI, 19-20). The numbering confirms with that used in *The Towneley Plays*, from the unique MS, ed. George England and Alfred W. Pollard, E.E.T.S., E.S. 71 1897. Rpt. London: Oxford UP for the E.E.T.S., 1966.

⁵ Cushman 32. N-Town, II, lines 235-242.

absurdity that since “we were faire and bright,/ þerfore me thoght that he/the kynde of vs tane myght,/and therat dedeyned me./ The kynde of man he thoght to take/and theratt hadde I grete envye.”¹ That God prefers the form of species made out of earth to that of an angel insults Satan; it disappoints him, it makes him envious and it incites his anger and envy even more.² His defiance has no limits, and he shows no signs of remorse. Instead, he rages out of his own cattiness; enviousness and embitterment overcome him at the sight of Adam and Eve, so he cries out:

Of yearly paradice now, as I weene,
A man is given masterye.
By Belsabubb, I will never blynne
till I may make him by some gynne
from that place for to twine
and trespasse as did I, Ch, II, 171-176.

It seems that he neither reckons that God did him wrong nor challenges him; rather, his motive for the temptation of Adam and Eve is jealousy, not vengeance.³ His hatred is so fully focused on them that it appears that he does not even try to win God’s sympathy again. He is emulous of Adam and Eve’s joy and is looking forward to spoiling it at all costs. This is also the case with the Cornish Serpent, who could not abide to see Adam and Eve joyous. He does not want to return to grace and since he does not show any signs of genuine contrition he cannot be saved.⁴

3.2.2. The Tempter

In the *Cornish Ordinalia* the devil’s craft as a tempter is vividly described by Jesus in his address to his disciples:

Pray that God the Father will preserve us from the Evil One, who at all times and in all places very cunningly tempts us to choose the bad and reject the good. Of this I speak truth. The Evil One labors unceasingly to bring upon mankind not salvation but the pains of the damned. That is his whole desire, 81.

¹ Y, II, lines 8-13.

² Compare Irenaeus *Against all Heresies* 3.23, 4.40, 5.21, 5.24, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 16. See also Russell, *Satan*, 81. Tertullian *Patience* 5, *Against Marcion* 2.10, *The Soul* 39, *Against Marcion* 5.17. R. Woolf points out that Satan’s explanation suggests a belief that the Incarnation was not dependent on the Fall, an unorthodox view peculiar to the Franciscans. See Woolf, 116. Wilhelm Bomke opposes her view. See Bomke, 62 n 58. That Satan is envious of Adam has its roots in the Apocryphal writings, the Talmud and Qumran.

³ This is different in York, where he wishes to overthrow God’s plan and so spoil his pleasure.

⁴ *ST* 1.64.2.

Although it rarely occurs in the mysteries that the devil associates with humans, the devil is always successful as their tempter, primarily because he functions as such only where the Biblical narration and patristic interpretation grants him such a role. The exception is, of course, Jesus Christ, but since he was tempted as human and as God the *Temptation of Christ* deserves treatment in this section, the more so because it displays the devil's technique of deception. His first experience in such a role traditionally occurs in the Garden of Eden. In the Chester play the Demon tempter uncloaks himself as Lucifer, at one point he says that he was previously "the bryghtest angell," recalling that pride cast him from Heaven to hell and that he once was a member of "gostlye paradise" until he fell through his sin.¹ Full of envy and wrath for our foreparents, the tempter reveals his strategy in a speech directed at the spectators: he will enter into the serpent² (how this was performed on stage no one knows)³ and try to steal Eve away from God by concocting a flagrant lie, thereby betraying God in order to spoil his pleasure. According to H. Vatter, that Satan assumed the form of a human-headed serpent is proof enough that the tempter "is not an actual serpent (as in Genesis), but Satanus in serpentine disguise."⁴ The stage direction in Wakefield *Creation – Satan grovels on his belly* – proves just as much. The same is true for the Cornish *Beginning of the World: The Devil, like a serpent, speaks to Eve from the tree of knowledge*, 6.

¹ This utterance, "the bryghtest angell I was or this," Ch., II, 165, might be even a clue that he still retained some of his former angelic appearance. See *English Mystery Plays*, 653 n 12.

² The serpent is controversial and parallels a problem faced by early Christianity. Is the serpent the devil? Or something like the devil? Or was the serpent merely the instrument of Satan, not wise in itself? To put it bluntly, Satan as a tempting serpent is not Biblical, but rather part of the exegetical tradition developed by the Church Fathers. See Bevington, 267. In the "Book of Adam," the serpent of Genesis is linked to Satan. In the *Apocalypse of Moses*, Satan appears first as an angel and then as a serpent. In fact, the serpent is seduced by Satan: "Be my vessel and I will speak through thy mouth words to deceive her." See Forsyth, 233-237. On this topic in *Vita Adae et Evae* see Haag, 240-245. St. Augustine adopted the doctrine of serpent-as-fallen-Lucifer in *The City of God* xi. 33 and xiv. II. See Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi*, 61. Thereafter, it became Christian orthodoxy. One also reads in the *Golden Legend*: "Then the serpent which was hotter than any beast of the earth and naturally deceivable, for he was full of the devil Lucifer, which was deject and cast out of heaven, had great envy to man that was bodily in Paradise, and knew well, if he might make him to trespass and break God's commandments, that he should be cast out also." *Golden Legend*, I, 172.

³ In the temptation scene in Chester, the Demon announces that he will assume the form of an adder that "wynges like a bride shee hase - feete as an edder, a maydens face," (Ch, II, 195) and the *direction* for the devil reads: *Supremus volucris, penna serpens, pede forma, forma puella* – meaning the upper part of the body with feather of a bird, serpent, by shape in the foot; in figure a girl. The York play lets Satanus utter: "In a worme liknes wille Y wende"; in N-Town he is "a worme with an aungelys face" (N-Town, II, 302). The York text is reticent as to how Satan went "in a worm's likeness, there being no stage direction to indicate whether he simply assumed an ophidian manner or whether he changed costume in front of the audience as he spoke. In *The Medieval Stage*, vol.II, E.K. Chambers gathered some interesting information from various records, reporting how "the necessaries for the play of Paradise at Beverley in 1391 consisted of the 'karre' or pageant, eight hasps, eighteen staples, two visors, a pair of wings for the angel [...] and a worm (the serpent)[...] For a similar play the Norwich grocers possessed in 1565 [...] that of the serpent being fitted with a tail [...]" See Chambers, 141. In the stage directions to Jordan's Cornish *Creation of the World*, Chambers proceeds, "Lucifer becomes 'a fine serpent made with a virgyn face & yolowe heare upon her head.'" Chambers, 142.

⁴ Vatter, 73. In the Old English poem *Genesis B*, it is Satan's messenger who takes the form of a serpent and approaches Adam instead of Eve.

The devil focuses on what was presumed the weaker sex,¹ fairly aware that a woman will do what she is forbidden to do for any trivial excuse.² “For wemen they be full licourouse,” he says in Chester. Lucifer, now changed to a serpent,³ moves to paradise and introduces himself to Eve as a friend.⁴ Even though he makes his appearance as a serpent, the Cornish Eve mistakes the devil for an angel. In N-Town, however, the tempter takes the disguise of an angel of light⁵ and he approaches Eve in a flattering manner: “Heyl, fayr wyff and comely dame”. As J. Dutka points out, this “helps to explain Satan’s success with Eve, for it allows Eve to be flattered not only by his appearance (that an angel would appear to her signifies her worth) but also by his words of courtly address [...]”⁶ In Chester, his face is deliberately that of a maiden in order to achieve some intimacy with Eve. Later, when asked by Eve to reveal his identity, he says he is “a worm that knows well how that ye may worshipped be.” Eve repeats the warning God had passed to them to the devil, who acts as though he is ignorant of the affair of the Tree of Knowledge:

For oure lord God forbeedis vs itt,
The frute therof, Adam nor I
To neghe it nere;
And yf we dide we both shuld dye,
He saide, and sese our solace sere. Y, II, 36-40

It catches the eye that the serpent’s Scriptural insidious response “You will not surely die,” is absent in all the Cycles. Whoever eats from the fruit, Satan says instead, shall gain the same knowledge that God possesses. In York, Satan promises Eve worship, honour and great gain. Both Adam and Eve will be wise like God; even more, Adam and she shall be gods. They shall be wise and knowing and all things shall be in their power. The Biblical utterance that they should know good and evil is even repeated twice in Chester.⁷ “3e xal be Goddys pere,” he pledges.⁸ The Chester cunning demon even takes the liberty of telling the truth to Eve at one

¹ The Biblical account offers no explanation why the serpent approaches Eve. Jewish legend, followed by the Church Fathers (e.g. Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* 11/30) “affirmed that the serpent approached her because she was the more gullible. Such an approach accords well with medieval antifeminist literary tradition”. See *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. II, 179-88 n 23.

² *English Mystery Plays*, 653 n 15.

³ Licifer changed to Satan first, as the stage direction informs in the creation version in *The Wakefield Mystery Plays*, ed. by Martial Rose (London, 1961), 67.

⁴ Y, II, 25.

⁵ As R. Woolf points out, the author of the N-Town, “like the authors of the late Norwich plays of the Fall, follows an apocryphal tradition, which had earlier appeared in the *Mystère d’Adam* and *Genesis B*, and which ultimately derived from the apocryphal Book of Enoch [...]” See Woolf, 117.

⁶ See Joanna Dutka, “The Lost Dramatic Cycle of Norwich and the Grocers’ Play of The Fall of Man”, *Review of English Studies*, 1984, XXXV: 8.

⁷ Like godes yee shalbe/and knowe both good and evill alsoe; And yee shall knowe bothe welle and woe/and bee like godes both too.

⁸ N-Town, II, lines 102-107.

point when he says “Take of this fruite and assaye [...] And but thou finde yt to thy paye/say that I am false,” but Eve is too arrogant to grasp the implicit criticism.¹ Taking the York play as an example, T. Stemmler has plausibly argued that the fall of man is viewed not only from the moral, but also from a cultic liturgical point of view. The fall of man is pictured in similar terms as the fall of Lucifer. Just like Lucifer, Adam and Eve succumb to the temptation to receive worship – a prerogative that belongs solely to God:

Eua. Why, what-kynne thyng art thou
þat telles this tale to me?

Satanas. A worme, that wotith wele how
þat yhe may *wirshipped* be

Eua. What *wirshippe* shulde we wynne therby?

Satanas. Nay, certis it is no wathe,
Ete it saffely ye maye.
For perille ryght ther none in lyes,
Bot *worshippe* and a grete wynnyng² (*italics mine*)

When the intruder deceitfully says “Yhe, why trowes thou noyot me?/I wolde be no-kynnes wayes/Telle noyot but trouthe to the,” Y, V, lines 75-78, it is expected the audience would know that he only pretends to be honest and cannot be trusted. The devil “is a liar and the father of lies,” Jn. 8:44, he utters a lie in unblemished Eden; Eve accepts the lie which has far-reaching consequences for every member of the human race. Eve disbelieves God and accepts the message of somebody who is “not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him,” Jn. 8:44. She accepts his words, but the audience should reject them. Eve yields to flattery. The result of the deception in Eden and the result of sin was that “death came to all men” (Romans 5:12). Satan is “a murderer from the beginning. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (Jn. 8:44). Who he really is and what he really offers he conveys best in his own words:

I am norsshere of synne to confusyon of man
Whosoever serves me, so reward him I can
That he shall sing "Well-a-way" ever in pains cruel.
N-Town, XXVII, 7-8

Adam is led to disobedience by Eve. Tempted by the idea that he could become a god and therefore know everything, Adam accepts the fruit from Eve and eats from it while Eve blames

¹ Bomke, 216.

² See Theo Stemmler, *Liturgische Feiern und Geistliche Spiele: Studien zu Erscheinungsformen des Dramatischen im Mittelalter* (Tübingen, 1970), 184.

the snake for enticing her. In turn, Adam blames his wife for being the “devylls suster.”¹ In the *Cornish Ordinalia*, Adam accepts the fruit only after Eve threatens to leave him. Here, Eve is accused by Adam of deceit. The devil tempted Eve, whereupon Eve seduced Adam. Yet God considers hers a weak excuse and explains that Adam is responsible as well, as he listened to Eve and so broke His commandment, 9-11.

All the devil’s cunning and baseness are demonstrated to the audience in the temptation of Christ.² As the play opens, we see that he has heard about Christ before but he scornfully dismisses him as a messiah although he knows what troubles Jesus has suffered since he was born, thus implicating that he, as an external observer and a crafty spy, knows perfectly well what is going on wherever in the world.³ Now that Christ is alone and unprotected in the desert, the devil will put him to the threefold test and so cause him to commit some sin. The devil assails by tempting Jesus. He approaches him with a coaxing, deferential gesture, only pretending to give a well-meant advice: he flatters him (“Thou witty man and wise of rede,” Y XXII, 55) and he provokes him in demanding proof of his Godly status and he cunningly seeks to build trust in trying to befriend him, assuring him that no one shall listen to what they are discussing. Such procedure is omitted in Chester, where Satan approaches Jesus with one mere “thou man,”⁴ later, as already mentioned, when his respect grows, he will show due courtesy in calling him “this syre,” Ch XII, 99 and “oure syre,” N-Town, XXXIII, 150. The devil attempts to abuse the fact that fasting has impaired Christ’s frame of mind in tempting him to gluttony,⁵ thus iterating the method he applied for Adam. He demands of him to make bread out of stone to relieve his own hunger. Seeing that his concept has gone awry, Satan decides to try some vainglory and so he again tempts Jesus to demonstrate his supernatural powers as proof of his divinity. Jesus ought to jump from a pinnacle and rely on angels to break his fall. Thereby the Devil quotes Psalms 91: 11-12⁶ and even goes that far as to threaten Jesus if he disobeys: “And but thou do I will be wrothe,/That I the hette,” Y XXII, 113-114. In Chester, he offers him his honour and veneration instead.⁷ If he does not work a miracle, he is not able to; if he does it, he

¹ Ch, II, lines 354-356.

² Mark is the oldest account. Scholars argue that the Q document served as source for Luke and Matthew.

³ This is different in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, where Satan does not believe that Jesus is God, but does know all too well that he shall redeem all men. Oddly enough, he further asserts that he can never manage to entrap Jesus before he has even tried anything. The question is why in spite of this awareness he decides to tempt Christ after all. I suggest that Satan’s confession might be inserted to edify and reassure the audience. Possibly that is why Christ’s power and Satan’s inferiority are juxtaposed in advance. This notion of Christ’s superiority is also strengthened in a later scene, where the devil fails to fetch Judas’ soul: “[...]your soul, you loathsome wretch, won’t come through your mouth because you have kissed the Christ,” 125.

⁴ Ch XII, line 57.

⁵ Y XXII, lines 43-48, Ch XII, lines 53-56; CO, 82.

⁶ As in the account of Luke and Matthew.

⁷ Ch XII, lines 111-112; 119-120.

does it under Satan's command – thus contrary to God.¹ We see that Satan wants to achieve death and corruption. He achieved it in tempting our foreparents, now he wants to achieve it with Jesus as well. Shocked by Jesus' reply and realising his inferiority, in another aside the devil decides to adopt his last resort - covetousness. For the devil everything is at stake for "if I went þus away and shrynkȳd as a snaȳle,/Lorn were þe labore all þat I haue wrought," N-Town, XXIII, 148-149. He is eager to know who his master is, but at the same time he wants to establish himself as master.² Jesus should kneel before him and worship him in return for all the kingdoms of the world. In N-Town Satan offers Jesus not only lands and cities such as Jerusalem, Galilee, and Zebulon, but also Spain, Italy, France, Normandy and Paris. A Williams speaks in this case of "artistic anachronism."³ York and N-Town even make explicit that Satan is the ruler of this world.⁴ Jesus has the following to say about this:

Satan, devil accursed, it is written in the Scriptures that you shall worship the name of the Lord your God alone. Depart from me, accursed one, into wilderness and darkness, your power over men's souls forever destroyed, CO, 84.

The devil wanted to get to know Christ, thereafter to entrap him and ultimately to lure him on to destruction, and although he departs in all the three cycles learning absolutely nothing, he has shown how dangerous he really is.

Sometimes, however, the devil's mere presence is enough to cajole people to obey him. In the York *Dream of Pilate's Wife*, the devil grows desolate since he becomes aware of Christ as the threat to his realm and ascertains that he must be God's son. If he is slain, he will bring salvation; he will save the man's soul from his clutches. For that reason he must thwart the sacrificial death of Christ. Aware he must act quickly to avert Christ's death, he betakes himself to the wife of Pilate, Procula, and begins to speak to her in a dream⁵ without revealing his actual identity.⁶ He warns her that Jesus must not die because he is innocent and that Pilate would suffer great anguish and loss of all their property if he condemns Jesus. Procula wakes in terror and, through the influence of this dream, advises her husband to acquit Jesus.⁷ Thereby the devil defeats

¹ Lavater, 66.

² Y, XXII, lines 133-140.

³ Williams, 123.

⁴ Y, XXII, lines 145-146; N-Town, XXXIII, lines 179-180.

⁵ Y, XXX, lines 157-176. Again, he uses a woman to procure the fall of mankind.

⁶ In N-Town, he appears to her in a most horrible guise.

⁷ Compare Matthew 27:19: "Sedente autem illo pro tribunali, misit ad eum uxor eius, dicens: Nihil tibi, et iusto illi: multa enim passa sunt hodie per visum propter eum./ While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him." J. S. Russell interprets the dream as follows: "the phrase "per visum," was a technical term in medieval oneiromancy which never referred to a divinely inspired dream; a *visum* was normally characterised as a hallucination or daydream or (in its more sinister sense) the incubi or bogeymen experienced in the moments

himself because, even though Pilate believes Jesus to be innocent, he does not capitulate to the demands of Annas and Cayphas, the persecutors of Jesus. Had Pilate heeded the warning of his wife and not turned Jesus over to the Jews, the Redemptive act would have been thwarted.¹ Still, I would argue that, although Satan is shown as doing the right thing for the wrong reason,² his tempting of Procula is nonetheless efficacious, as Procula does everything Satan wanted her to do.

All in all, we see that men, unlike Christ, are no match for the demons. Before the *descensus Christi ad infernos*, Adam and Eve and the holy dead dwelled in the Limbo “four thousand and six hundred years”³ thus implying that as a result of original sin all humanity had been in the power of the devil.⁴ The souls are detained in hell solely on account of original sin. “All earthly men to me are thrall,” Satan says.

Yet in conjunction with this it might be useful to determine who is actually tempting human beings. That the hierarchy of *perversitas* is hard to determine due to the apparent disagreement about their exact placement in hell has already been demonstrated in L.W. Cushman’s wide-ranging study *The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature before Shakespeare*.⁵ Indeed, a short glimpse into the classification of demons allows one to understand Lucifer and Lightborne⁶ in Chester as two entities, despite the fact that the word “Lightborn” is merely an anglicised form of Lucifer. Likewise, it is to be noted that often Satan is a different person from Lucifer.⁷ Lucifer is seen as the Prince of Hell, and “Syr Sathanas” as “sargeant of hell” in the Chester Harrowing of Hell, Ch, XVII, line 282. Intriguingly, it is not Lucifer who tempts Christ in the desert, but Satan: “From Lucifer, that lord, I am sent,” Ch. X, line 442. An explanation for this circumstance is offered by G.B. Russell:

The name Lucifer was often given to the Devil in both his fallen and unfallen states, but the name Satan was reserved for his condition after the fall. For this reason, Lucifer enjoyed a somewhat higher status, and some writers made him ruler of hell and Satan as his lieutenant [...] Although some modern writers have emphasized Satan’s subordination to Lucifer, it appears neither in theology nor in most

between waking and sleep. This would mean, at least to a medieval reader of the Bible and of dream visions, that the dream of Pilate’s wife was not one of those special and rare communications from God but was something more mysterious and exciting, perhaps Satan’s last attempt to frustrate Salvation History by preventing the sacrifice of the Son of God.” See J. Stephen Russell, *The English Dream Vision: Anatomy of a Form* (Ohio State UP, 1988), 32. The episode is also contained in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, where it is Beelzebub who betakes himself to Pilate’s wife.

¹ J. Stephen Russell, 32.

² *York Mystery Plays*, ed. Richard Beadle, 154.

³ Y, XXXVII, line 39.

⁴ T, XXVII, lines 36-39. Compare 1 Corinthians 15: 21-22: “For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.”

⁵ Cushman, 20.

⁶ The figure of Lightborn appears in *The Genesis and Exodus* and in Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II*.

⁷ *Cornish Ordinalia*, 17; L.C. XXIII. I have already referred to Lucifer changing to Satan after his fall in *The Wakefield Mystery Plays*, 67. We see that this notion is not consistent in all the Mystery Cycles, for reasons given by Russell in the passage quoted above. Origen is most likely the inventor of the identification of Lucifer with Satan. See Russell, *Satan*, 130.

major literature – not in Dante or Langland or consistently in the Corpus Christi plays [...] The writers who subordinated Satan to Lucifer did so without any theological justification and for purely literary purposes. The subordination is occasional, arbitrary, and trivial, having no conceptual significance whatever for the idea of the personification of evil. “Satan,” “Lucifer,” and occasionally other names such as “Beelzebub”, all designate the one ruler of darkness.¹

Indeed, for Dante, as P.B. Shelley expressed in bewilderment in his *Defence of Poetry*, Satan and Lucifer are one and the same. Still, the vast bulk of Christianity, I believe, was of the opinion that the beings were not distinct, as the Monk in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* recounts:

O Lucifer, brightest of angels all,
Now art thou Satan, who cannot escape
Out of the misery in which thou art fallen.²

In the Chester Fall of Man, the Demon (Lucifer fallen) swears to Beelzebub that he will destroy mankind,³ thus possibly implying that Beelzebub holds a hierarchically superior title. This is different in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, where Beelzebub is “prince, archduke of the realm,” 137. In the York Harrowing, Beelzebub says that he is “prince and principall”⁴ and that the devils should summon their lord Satan, as well as Lucifer, Astoreth, Anaball, Baal-Berith, and Belial in order to inflict harm upon souls. Consequently, Beelzebub places Satan above Lucifer. Beelzebub prays to Lucifer in N-Town to throw “myst” over the “wytt” of Jesus Christ. Sometimes they all anachronistically swear oaths to Mohound, but there is no indication whatsoever that he is their ruler or even an inhabitant of hell.⁵ As for Lucifer, there is a noticeable lack of definiteness concerning his rank. Whereas initially one encountered altercations between the demons accompanied by verbal and physical attacks, a more balanced power structure flowered in subsequent plays. Granted, the infighting of demons among themselves is to a certain extent repeated in the Harrowing of Hell episodes; still, we cannot say that there is any contest for leadership in the mysteries. In the *Ordinalia* Lucifer is Satan’s and Beelzebub’s god and what is more, they all love each other. Apparently any systematisation of hell’s personnel would be unreasonable and the confusion should come as no surprise anyway,

¹ Russell, *Lucifer*, 247.

² See also Luther Link, *Der Teufel: Eine Maske ohne Gesicht* [The Devil: A Mask without a Face] aus dem Englischen von Heinz Jatho, (Zürich, 1997), 30.

³ 2, 173-175, 22.

⁴ Y, XXXVII, 111.

⁵ Note that this is a common feature for the heathens as well – Herod swears by Mahomet; Saul swears by Belial before his conversion in *The Conversion of St. Paul*. Here, I believe that Arnold Williams’ definition of artistic anachronism is not applicable to the swearing on Mahound. Rather, the invocation serves a propagandistic purpose. The potential threat of the extension of the Ottoman Empire and the bitter taste over the loss in the Battle of Nikopolis might have still echoed in their minds. Perhaps even a plea for another Crusade.

given that we are dealing with a “kingdom divided against itself” and a Satan who is “divided against himself” (Lk. 11:17-18).¹

What we can say with all likelihood, however, is that the devil figures, the *satellites diaboli*, act as the “main beam” of all devilish activities,² which brings us to another problem.

3.2.3. Uncertainties and Ambiguities Concerning the Devil’s Binding and Liberty

One is left with the impression that the dramatists do not present Lucifer’s ability to move with certainty. To be precise, in some plays Lucifer ascends to the surface of the earth to tempt Eve or Christ, whereas in others he is incarcerated in hell along with his ministers long before the descent of Christ into hell; that is, his imprisonment occurs right after the fall of the bad angels. Because Lucifer is bound in the latter case, he is compelled to send Ruffyn³ to “keepe mankinde from blesse,”⁴ or Satan and Beelzebub to fetch Abel in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, respectively.⁵ Elsewhere Satan is elected by the council of hell to tempt Eve and Christ but then, after the Fall of Man, during the words of punishment God says to Satan that he shall be locked in hell’s lodgings and never have life outside hell again, N-Town, I, 315-316. On account of this it seems that only the minor demons have the privilege of harassing men on earth. In other cases, the binding of the archfiend occurs after the release of souls on Doomsday. One is accordingly left with uncertainly whether Satan is “bound just after his fall from heaven; or after his temptation of Adam and Eve; or at the Passion or harrowing; or at the Last Judgement.”⁶ Church tradition insists paradoxically that the devil is “simultaneously chained in hell and roaming about the earth.”⁷ Yet although he is bound by Christ in *Harrowing of Hell*, the devil is not entirely absent from the narrative setting between the Harrowing of Hell and the Apocalypse. To focus our attention on an exemplary case, at the end of the York *Death of the Virgin Mary* is written “cum

¹ Grüberl, 109. On the hierarchy in the Bible see Mt. 12:26, 45; 17:20, 25, 41; aforementioned Lk. 11:15-18, Rev. 12:7-9.

² Saint Isidore of Seville (c. 560-April 4, 636) speaks in this context of “*ipsius principis ministri, qui prius angeli fuerant, nunc daemones vocantur.*” See Isidore of Seville, *De ordine creaturanum* 8, as quoted in Grüberl, 109. These devilish subalterns are usually called demons in the Mysteries – a term applicable to all supernatural beings Grüberl, 112. Russell points out that “the use of the term “devil” as synonym for “demon” goes back “in Old English at least as far as about 825 and persists to this day [...]”. See Russell, *Lucifer*, 65.

³ Perhaps there is a connection to the Dragon in *Seinte Margarete*. The dragon’s name is Rufus, the devil’s brother. On the name Rufus and its demonic association in early England, see Price, 339 and 355 n 3. Jocelyn Price. “The Virgin and the Dragon: The Demonology of *Seinte Margarete*”, *Leeds Studies in English* 16 [1985]: 337-357.

⁴ Ch, I, line 261.

⁵ Another proposition could be of course the diversity among the devils in both order and action. Soul-fetching then, would be committed by lower orders (in case of the *Cornish Ordinalia*, by Satan and Beelzebub), whereas Lucifer, being noble and superior, does not indulge in such practices and only gives orders.

⁶ Russell, *Lucifer*, 269.

⁷ See Dendle, *Satan Unbound*, 66. The devil was supposed to be bound during the sixth age. See Dendle, 7.

uno diablo,” but he remains silent in the play, perhaps because the manuscript comes to a premature end.

3.2.4. The Devil’s Role as Participant in Human’s Sins

Apparently, the devil, though bound in hell, can nonetheless instigate temptation.¹ Yet it is difficult to accurately convey the extent of the devil’s involvement in human sin. I believe that this varies from case to case, depending on the message and pedagogical pressure the dramatists wished to apply. On one hand, they did not wish to excuse people from ethical and moral responsibility; on the other, they did not know any other explanation for evil in the world except the devil. Herod’s case in Chester exemplifies that the devil does not dwell in his soul or rule his affairs. The sin he committed was his own responsibility;² Herod is not under the charge of the devil, and he is not urged by him to vice, a portrayal that runs against Origen’s argument that Herod was “instigated by the blind and wicked devil who from the very beginning plotted against the Saviour, imagining that He was and would become some mighty one.”³ Herod is not tempted by the devil, neither is he possessed. If Herod had been possessed, I believe, he would not have the need to bequeath his soul “to be with Satanus.”⁴ The devil is prevented from tempting while Jesus walked on earth: “And where I decide to tempt, anon he me assails.” Then again, Lucifer says that he nourishes confused men with sins.⁵ The demon prompts Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus in Wakefield,⁶ or he praises and encourages him as in N-Town,⁷ quite differently than in German Donauschinger Osterpsiel where the actor who plays Judas had to hold a living

¹ The relationship between internal will and external temptation in Old English narrative literature has been studied at length by P. Dendle. There is good reason to presume that dramatists found themselves confronted with theology’s imprecise assertions whether sin arises from within or comes from the outside. Psychologically the devil is on the sinner’s shoulder, behind the ear, or in the heart, whereas mythologically he is simply in hell. See Dendle, 66.

² Neither does the Bible make the devil responsible for this act. Admittedly, another possibility could be that the devil is unnecessary as a tempting agent because he is simply already in league with the villains when the play opens.

³ Origen, “Letter Against Celsus”, ch. lxi. See Miriam Skey, “Herod’s Demon-Crown”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 40, 1977 (1977), 274. Satan functions as the tempter of King Herod to massacre the children in Gréban and in Benediktbeurer Passionspiel. See Rudwin, 48; Russell, *Lucifer*, 265. On Origen’s diabolology in general see Russell, *Satan*, 123-148. When Caesarius speaks of the devil being inside men he is not referring to the soul but the body – body cavity and bowels. See Roskoff, 301.

⁴ Ch. X, line 431. Rosemarie Woolf interprets these lines uttered by Herod as a travesty of the late medieval testamentary wills. See Woolf, *EMP*, 210; 393. Also *Chester Mystery Cycle* 430 n 157, Cox, 26. On the religious significance of will see Eamon Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 354-57; as quoted in Cox 217 n 20.

⁵ N-Town, XXVI, line 5.

⁶ See Jn. 13:2; 27; the fresco by Giotto di Bondone shows the black devil at Judas’ back while holding a sack of gold: Cappella Scrovegni (Arena Chapel), Padua 1304-1313.

⁷ N-Town, XXVII, lines 466-477.

(and fluttering) black bird with his mouth in order to show that he is possessed.¹ In the York Harrowing, however, Satan says that he entered into Judas,² and Satan counsels the Jews to arrange Jesus' death by all means.³ Hence, above all, Satan is to blame for Jesus' suffering. He gloats how he tempted "the folke in fowle menere," Ch, XVII, line 130 to crucify Christ and he says he is the one who prepared the cross, the nails and the spear to slay Jesus.⁴ Furthermore, the Bishop (Tercius Princeps) screams that the devil is in his head⁵ indicating that the devil entered into the Jewish chiefs to provoke them to mischief. Evidently, the devil assumes a peripheral role whenever the dramatist wished to stress personal responsibility. The danger that would arise here is that Satan would be reduced to a scapegoat and to a ready-made explanation for every act of malice. As P. Dendle says in a different context, "The literary context often determines whether it is personal will or external temptation that receives the greatest emphasis."⁶

3.2.5. The Devil as Soul Fetcher

The devils concentrate on their favourite occupation in the Mysteries; conveying the souls of the damned to Hell.⁷ In doing so, they are swifter than a doe⁸ and extremely efficacious. Tutivillus even brings "mo than ten thowsand / in an howre of a day" down to hell.⁹ The devils

¹ Roskoff, 344. Satan accompanies Judas in Gréban. There are all in all three devils in Jean Michel's *le Mystère de la Passion* that surround and incite Judas. In Haller Raitbuch a dog accompanies Judas etc. See Bomke, 46. Also, Lucifer's daughter Despair prompts Judas to suicide.

² Y, XXXVII, line 165.

³ Y, XXXVII, lines 163-164.

⁴ N-Town, lines 510-514.

⁵ N-Town, XLI, lines 389-390.

⁶ Dendle, 20.

⁷ Also in *Cursor Mundi* 16528. See also Cushman, 25.

⁸ Ch. X, line 435.

⁹ T, XXX, line 216. On Tutivillus see Margaret Jennings's article "Tutivillus: The Literary Career of the Recording Demon", in *Studies in Philology* 74, no. 5 (December 1977). In Towneley Doomsday, Tutivillus is conceived as a sack-carrying demon. Perceived as the sack-filling demon, he is brought in connection with the demon as described by Jacques de Vitry in his *Sermones Vulgares* of the late 1220s. See Jacques de Vitry, *The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares*, ed. Thomas Frederick Crane (London, 1890). Here, it needs to be remarked that this demon is also the *acedia*-demon. Spiritual sloth (*acedia*) was considered to be one of the seven deadly sins in the Middle Ages. Among the laity, *acedia* "could cause participants in religious services to 'jangle,' gossip, or simply engage in idle talk, while it caused members of the clergy to speed up the recitation of prayers, to mumble their words, even to skip entire syllables." Jennings 4, 12. Tutivillus was made directly responsible for church attendants' inattentiveness to the service at church during mass. Since the high Middle Ages the working of the *acedia*-demon changed position to the church interior, where he diligently recorded all the negligence from the clergymen. The *acedia*-demon gradually turned into a recording demon who noted down sins of anyone he saw in a church or monastery. He recorded chatting during the service and words that have been missed or mumbled by the members of the clergy during prayers. The basis for it was Matthew 12:36: "But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken." And Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books." See Grübel, 214-19.

come to snatch away the corpses¹ of the objects of popular hatred, such as Herod, Antichrist, and the like. Carrying off souls of the damned and torturing them subsequently have their origin in the Bible.² In the old German drama, the devils are most likely triumphantly dragging down the damned on a rope.³ M. Rudwin also points out that the devil used his pitch-fork to carry the souls to the cart.⁴ It would seem that in the English mysteries the devils used both hands to carry their victims to the everlasting bonfire.⁵ In Chester, the devil springs upon the stage and carries off Herod with two of his knights to hell. N-Town reads: “*Hic, dum buccinant, Mors interficiat Herodem et duos milites subito, et Diabolus recipiat eos*”, N-Town, XX. Likewise, “two devils carry off the soul of Antichrist, relate jokingly that they deeply regret his departure, and describe how he shall hang on a hook in hell, the *sucundus* demon says to his mate: ‘Thou take him by the top and I by the tail.’”⁶ At one moment the Third Torturer exclaims, “To hell with him on the Devil’s back”, line 235, and Beelzebub apparently helps Satan to put Adam on his back, CO, 25, a motif which will occupy us while discussing the devil in the interludes. R.M. Lumiansky and D. Mills suggest that here the soul and the body are distinct: “The soul is small enough for *Primus Demon* to hold it in his hand, and he presumably delivers it to hell during 683-4. The body is then removed at 691-4.”⁷ Thereby the devils are always all satisfied and rejoice:

All oure! All oure! þis catel is myn!
 I xall hem brynge onto my celle.
 I xal hem teche pleyys fyn,
 And shewe such myrthe as is in helle!
 It were more bettyr amongys swyn
 þat evyrmore stynkyn, þerbe to dwelle,
 For in oure logge is so gret peyn
 þat non erthely tonge can telle!
 With 3ow I go my way.
 I xal 3ow bere forth with me
 And shewe 3ow sportys of oure gle.
 Of oure myrthis now xal 3e se
 And evyr syng “Welaway!”
 N-Town, XX, lines 233-245.

¹ Catholics believe that the devil cannot destroy the sinner’s corpse, only the soul. The corpse of a sinner shall remain in hell’s possession only after the Second Coming of Christ and Judgement Day. This is not considered in the Mysteries, however, or for example in German Katharinenspiel. See Rudwin, 37.

² Mt. 25:41: “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels’”. Mt. 25: 46: “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” 2 Peter 2:4: “[...] God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment”; Jude 6: “And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.”

³ See Roskoff, 349.

⁴ See Maximilian Rudwin, *The Devil in Legend and Literature* (Chicago, 1931), 38.

⁵ See *The Wakefield Mystery Plays*, ed. Martinal Rose, 464.

⁶ Ch. XXIII, line 693. Also Cushman, 26.

⁷ *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. II, 678 n 348.

The devils' malicious joy at their prey also manifests itself in their ironic approach to the accursed. There can never be enough irony with them. In the passage quoted above the demon promises to Herod "pleys fyn" and "myrthe as is in helle," thus demonically parodying "the communal 'mirth' that God established in heaven [...]." ¹ Also the Cornish Lucifer and Satan are ironic when Lucifer calls Abel's future suffering in hell warbling of "Alas" and Satan says: "Let's whisk him [Abel] with us to Lord Lucifer. I'll stick to the plainsong while you [Beelzebub] improvise the descant above it," CO 17. Clearly, the devil is making fun of humans; even more, he is taking the mickey out of them.

It needs to be emphasised that in doing so the devils act both as instruments of divine justice and as instruments for sinners' punishment. They fetch incorrigible sinners like Herod and the blasphemous Bishop away to hell, ² where they eventually suffer boundless condemnation. They serve the same purpose in the York Last Judgement. ³ Unclean and sullied souls are justly seized by the devils and brought to endless pain because the devils have all the right to do so. ⁴ Charitable deeds are efficient in defeating the devil, ⁵ but Herod and the like cannot record any, so they reap the rewards of their own misdeeds in hell. God-fearing souls are never carried away by the devils on stage – only the wicked ones, which, a propos, very often happen to be the socially privileged, rich and powerful. ⁶ The devils come to claim those who belong to them in all the four Last Judgement plays. Here, the devils function as "prosecuting attorneys," to borrow from J. D. Cox. ⁷ They carry scrolls on which the names of the damned are inscribed and their task is to settle charges against humanity.

The Cornish Cycle is an exception in this regard. Regardless of their living life as God intended for them, Abel and Adam are brought to hell by Satan and Beelzebub, where they are to remain, as the devils presume, forever (elsewhere "until the world's end, 26). Why this is so shall be explained in a later chapter.

3.2.6. Hell

Once collected, the souls are brought down to hell. The Princes of Darkness live in a place where cacophony reigns "along with noisome fumes and intolerable extremes of heat and cold

¹ Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred*, 26.

² N-Town, XLI, line 482.

³ Y, 47, lines 217-228.

⁴ Which is, I daresay, odd, given that without Satan there would be no sin.

⁵ Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred*, 24.

⁶ The evil ones also experience sudden death – the "sodein deth horrible." "To die suddenly," T. Spencer explains, "was to be deprived of all the rites of the Church. See Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy*, 23.

⁷ Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred*, 27.

[...] and it resembles in its furnishing the privies, cess-pits, dungeons and torture chambers of [...] palaces and castles, or a wild country of hostile forests, barren deserts and volcanic eruption.”¹ As far as hell-mouth with devils is concerned, “[...] Hell-mouth was a vast pair of gaping jaws, armed with fangs, like a shark’s open swallow.”² Such representations of the place of torment may be seen in the *Biblia Pauperum* and as pen drawings in *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*³ “and other books illustrated with early woodcuts, all of which throw light upon the disposition of these medieval scenes.”⁴ Hell was constructed as a blistering stomach of a bodacious animal (big enough for the actors to pass through) with an open mouth that let the devils and their attendants in and out in order to “sport with sinners”⁵ and to carry off the damned. The monster is reminiscent of the Biblical dragon, Leviathan or of the Great Fish that swallowed Jonah. As G. Wickham points out: “The Roman ‘Avernus’, with its smoking cave at the entrance, its many-headed guard-dog and its Stygian gloom, became a legitimate starting point for an iconography that drew its realistic detail from whatever was bestial in human conduct and whatever occasioned fear or pain or grief in the human mind and heart.”⁶ One reads for example in the 1557 accounts at Coventry: “payd for keypyng of fyer at hell mothe, 4 pence” and again in the Doomsday scene at Coventry that the hell mouth was “provided with fire, a windlass, and a barrel for the earthquake.”⁷ The stage directions to Jordan’s Cornish Creation of the World reveal how “Lucifer goes down to hell ‘apareled fowle wth fyre’ about hem” and the plain is filled with “every degree of devylls of lether and spirytis on cordis.”⁸

A.H. Nelson points out that the N-Town hell is called “sty,” a “pyt,” a “celle,” and a “donjon.” “It is lower than heaven,” Nelson continues, “probably at ground level, since Satan falls and ‘slydes’ down at his expulsion. Like Heaven, it is provided with ‘gatys,’ also called a ‘darke dore.’ Hell may be located at a lateral remove from heaven, since after Lucifer has changed from an angel to ‘a devyl ful derke,’ he exclaims: ‘Now to helle be wey I take’”.⁹ In hell the souls suffer perpetual pain and darkness; they scorch and burn. They “stand forever in a

¹ Wickham, 27.

² Symonds, 90.

³ P. Poppe fixes the date for the anonymous *Speculum* about 1324. See Paul Poppe, *Über das Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (Berlin, 1887), as quoted in John K Bonnell, “The Serpent with a Human Head in Art and in Mystery Play”, *American Journal of Archaeology* vol. 21, no 3, (Jul, 1917), 259. J.K. Bonnell brings forward the argument that Lutz and Perdriget argue that the *Speculum* “was composed early in the fifteenth century at a Dominican convent in Strasburg by a Dominican of Saxon origin, whom they tentatively identify with a certain Ludolph of Saxony, a Dominican, who later became a Carthusian.” See Bonnell, 259 n 2.

⁴ Symonds, 90.

⁵ See Kolve, 206. Also T. Sharp, *A Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries anciently performed at Coventry*, 1825, 57.

⁶ Glynne Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre* (London, 1974), 27.

⁷ Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, II, 142.

⁸ *Ibid*, 142.

⁹ Alan H. Nelson, “Some Configurations of Staging in Medieval English Drama” in: *Medieval English Drama: Essays Critical and Contextual*, ed. Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson (Chicago and London, 1972), 133.

whiffling flame, ever agonized, ever crying out,” CO, 238. Tulfric cooks a million souls in a cauldron. As for the torments in hell, V.A. Kolve points out, they were “never enacted, though such a performance could have been both sensational and instructive; indeed, the descriptions of hell’s horror are almost as perfunctory as the descriptions of heaven’s bliss.”¹

3.2.7. Satan as the Ruler of this World and as the Ruler over Humanity

Satan’s status concerning his kingship over humans and his rights over them in general is arbitrary. Before the advent of Christ all men are given over to Satan, a fact the devils seem to be unaware of in some of the mystery plays, because they fancy themselves to be dominators over humankind or at least over the souls of the sinners. In instigating the crucifixion of Jesus, however, the devil forfeited all claims to the souls in Limbo.² Adam and Eve’s fall and the loss of the Garden of Eden - the original sin - was a fortunate fall (*Felix culpa*)³ because of the good that would come out of it. Their sin evoked the coming of Christ, who brings deliverance for the righteous from the grip of demons. So far we have seen that the temptation in the desert was motivated by Satan’s uncertainty whether Jesus is the messiah or just the son of the carpenter. As A. Williams has argued, N-Town “particularly emphasises this motif, which has a long history in Christian theology, by making the whole manner of Jesus’ birth, including the marriage of Joseph and Mary, merely a means of deceiving Satan.”⁴ Eventually, Jesus settles his account with Satan in *Descensus Christi ad Infernos*. The nucleus of the harrowing of Hell as recounted in *The Gospel of Nicodemus* was dramatised in all the English mystery cycles. What looked like a physical combat ends as rhetorical duel, because the centre of the dramatic action hinges on Christ’s and Satan’s argument over the ownership of the souls in hell. Christ explains to him that he does not have the authority to cause pain upon the souls.⁵ The souls have sojourned in this temporary custody for their own benefit as Jesus’ thralls and not as Satan’s. The York Satan is an excellent, sly debater. He accuses Christ for breaking his Father’s law. If you are truly God’s son, he contends, then know that you are placing the people of God in a desperate plight. God’s bidding had been broken by men at my instigation wherefore God punished them by putting them in hell. They are also here because they did not follow your teachings. Jesus replies that his descent to hell to save his “seruauntis” from the pit had been prophesied and that he has “boughte” them through his death. Now since you choose to “allegge the lawes,” Satan replies,

¹ Kolve, 206.

² Cushman, 7.

³ *Summa Theologica*, III, 1, 3, ad 3.

⁴ Williams, 109. See 1 Jn. 3:8: “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.”

⁵ T, XXVII, line 236.

you shall be convicted before we part, because those whom you cite are equally against you. Namely, according to Solomon and Job, Satan argues, nobody shall leave hell who has entered it.¹ Satan is beaten in the argument and somewhat touchily, as his last resort, moans about Christ's heartlessness if he takes the souls with him. To a certain extent, the souls function as goods that Jesus came to pick up. Satan acts as if he deals with commerce and wants to produce profit.² I. Janicka says that the dialogue between Christ and Satan echoes a medieval disputation: "He [Satan] treats the whole affair as a bargain which is to settle what is to be bought and sold, and thus puts himself in the position of a merchant."³ Jesus is eventually willing to leave the sinners to dwell with devils in hell forever:

Yoaa, witte thou wele, ellis were it wrang,
 Als cursed Cayme that slewe Abell,
 And all that hastis hemselue to hange,
 Als Judas and Archedefell,
 Datan and Abiron,
 And alle of thare assente,
 Als tyrantis euerilkone
 That me and myne turmente
 Y, XXXVII, lines 305-312.⁴

Although the demon assumes that all humans must belong to him, it is clear that only those who do not repent suffer eternal damnation, as the cases of Cain and Judas illustrate. Satan is allowed to harm only those souls that God does not wish to keep; in fact, such people belong to him while being on earth already.⁵ Satan is of course most pleased upon hearing this for he knows that sins are going to send many to hell:

Nowe here my hande, I halde me paied,
 This poynte is playnly for oure prowre
 Y, XXXVII, lines 325-326.

And he goes on immediately to offer another bargain: if Jesus takes the souls with him, then Satan must be permitted to go among men in order to tempt them. But the bargain is not established. Jesus has no intention in engaging in such proposal, for he has come to confound Satan and cause him to sink into hell's pit. Based on this account, one may arrive at the conclusion that the blood of Jesus saved the souls of those millions of people who lived and died before him, but that it also gives Christians who live a life agreeable to God the possibility to

¹ Compare Job 10:21: "before I go to the *place of no return*, to the land of gloom and deep shadow."

² Also Janicka, 68.

³ Ibid, 68.

⁴ Also in the *Cornish Ordinalia*: "All of you, O souls, who have done the will of my Father, come with me rejoicing. As for those who have not done his will, let them remain behind, dwelling forewer in joyless torment," 183.

⁵ Bomke, 193.

escape hell. It is important, however, to note that Jesus' death neither avails the damned nor causes hell to cease to exist, because after Christ conquered the devil he only led the souls of the just to Heaven. The York dramatist wanted to make the point that our salvation from our present fallen state depends on free choices. We are able to choose between alternatives - whether we choose to do good or evil depends on us but what everybody must know is that in rejecting God we embrace the devil.¹ If you belong to Satan, God wants you to change sides. If you are not able to believe and repent, then you are solely responsible for the consequences.

The defeat of the devils is absolute in N-Town and no souls are left to Belial. The Towneley 1st Demon (beyond doubt Satan) complains that they have an empty home "ffor all oure saules ar wente / and none ar in hell."² In Chester, Jesus takes with him only the offspring of Adam "that ryghtwise were in yearth livinge."³ Then again, Satan shortly afterwards complains that Jesus took away with him all his "prysoners" and "praye,"⁴ only to find out that sinners begin to fill hell anew.

3.2.8. The Direct Audience Address - Byholde dyvercyte of my dysgysyd varyauns

At times the Bible story is forgotten and the devil focuses on real life in situations where his speech is directed at medieval spectators. In a long prologue in the N-Town *Passion Play I*, the Demon confidently addresses the audience with the words "I am youre lord, Lucifer," "Prince of this Wer[l]d and gret Duke of Helle." Lucifer discloses his identity in this prologue and introduces himself exactly the way he is; he does not find it necessary to hide his true self. He is honest and frank with the audience and feels no constraint in summing up all his turpitude and evil. Any disguise appears superfluous and through his self-description he offers the spectators to recognize the face of evil among them.

Satan urges that "he [Satan] receive love and he will return a reward."⁵ Those who worship the devil are promised, in his sly game, wealth, the absolute abolition of poverty and all the delights that pamper human nature.⁶ Satan tempts with the allure of material goods, with the consequence that those who succumb to temptation for worldly gain fall into his web of deceit. The promise of worldly riches is false, and those who love money gain sorrow. The pleasures of

¹ In order to strengthen the appeal any idea of purgatory is omitted. See Bomke, 271 n 7.

² T, XXX, line 116.

³ Ch, XVII, line 207.

⁴ Ch, XVII, line 222.

⁵ Benkovitz, Miriam J., "Some Notes on the "Prologue of Demon" of *Ludus Coventriae*", *Modern Language Notes*>vol. 60, no 2 (Feb., 1945), 84.

⁶ N-Town, XXVI, lines 60-64.

the gain of worldly goods are of temporal – it must not be forgotten that people shall be taken from their earthly life as they entered it.

Satan invites the audience to follow the directives he issues, since they themselves come into contact with temptation and evil. The prince of darkness looks for new agents among the audience who roam throughout the world - “And all those that reprove pride, set them at nought,”¹ he says. “And where there is reproof for sin, see thou make debate.”² Satan knows the frailties of human nature well and, because “synne is so plesaunt to ech mannys intent,”³ Lucifer places his creations at their disposal, only with new names, in order to seduce them and take them to the bottomless pit:

You shall call Pride, "Honesty," and "Natural Appetite," Lechery,
And Greed "Wisdom" (where treasure is present).
Wrath, "Manhood," and Envy called "Correction"
(At assizes or sessions let Perjury be chief)
Gluttony, "Rest" (send Abstinence on vacation),
And he that will exhort thee to virtue, bid him be brief
N-Town, *Passion Play I*, lines 111-115.

In the coarsest manner, Lucifer “lashes satirically the vices of the times, and describes euphemistically the seven deadly sins.”⁴ Once this collapse in moral values is established, *his* name would become unknown, which is over all a tremendously crafty and cunning plan.

In an opening monologue for the York *Temptation of Christ*, the devil reveals himself as a constant threat to mankind, where he is alarmed at the commotion caused by Jesus. He is afraid he has delayed too long in doing evil and reminds the audience that he has dwelt among them ever since he had been cast down from heaven and that since then he has only contemplated how to inflict great harm and misery upon mankind. He takes credit for peoples’ defencelessness and unhappiness, and they all come to him, day and night, according to his design.⁵ Even more, his words “Make rome belyve, and late me gang!” indicate that he is making his way through the audience, symbolising that “the audience have to realize that the devil is among them, that they have constantly to be aware of him.”⁶ One must, therefore, keep constant vigilance. His speeches and monologues leave plenty of room for moral judgements, but the interaction with the audience indirectly serves the purpose of indoctrination – it admonishes the audience to think on

¹ N-Town, XXVI, line 75.

² N-Town, XXVI, line 83.

³ N-Town, XXVI, line 110.

⁴ Cushman, 33.

⁵ Y XXII, lines 1-17.

⁶ Watter, 76.

eternal life. As Lucifer says about himself: “Remembre, oure seruauntys whoys sowlys ben mortall [...] I am with 3ow at all tymes whan 3e to councel me call.”¹

The devil is also the personification of the consequences that follow after worldly indulgences.² He threatens the medieval audience with images of everlasting fire and torture. He reigns by dint of dread over thousands of devils who burn in flame and whoever serves him is sent to sorrow together with dragons and devils. Those who dwell on earth working for his will shall be harried by him while they burn in molten brass and brimstone.³ He swears by his fidelity that no one shall “traspas,” Ch. X, line 450 any longer, and he promises that more and more people will bear Herod company. Men shall receive no other grace other than hell.⁴ Mixing past and present, he uses modern comparisons to visualise hell. Whereas the N-Town devil is more subtle and uses ironic images of “mirth” and “place fine” to tease Herod, the Chester demon acts as the clerics’ mouthpiece, taking the opportunity to inform potential sinners among the audience of what awaits them: he lets false believers burn and dwell in hell in woe forever, while the fire “burnes bloe and brent.”⁵ Since the devil is a liar who persuades that what he proposes is right in order to cause people to sin, he would hardly characterise his prey as “false believers,” as the Chester demon does.⁶ Deceit and fraudulent concealment are not part of his approach; he indoctrinates the medieval audience in the Sacrament of Penance. Thus, since he works as the cleric’s mouthpiece, he does not have to pervert the truth. Likewise, Herod’s last speech ought to remind the audience what punishment awaits the incorrigible sinner. Herod has never committed a good deed and therefore his foe (and at the same time mankind’s foe) is going to fetch him to hell.⁷ When he as an ostensible victim complains bitterly of everlasting fire, he does so to illustrate God’s punishment of those who succumb to temptation.⁸

The devil is never (until doomsday, anyway) going to give up tempting humans and fetching their souls, Ch. X, lines 450-456. With each defeat he returns more ferociously; sometimes with threats and sometimes with promises. He is dignified in defeat and his doggedness is perhaps expressed best in Chester (the Harley MS), where after his unsuccessful effort to tempt Christ, the tone of his speech shifts from self-pity to sudden joyful defiance. In hell he even summons

¹ N-Town, XXVI, lines 121-124.

² See also Bomke, 199.

³ N-Town, XXXI, lines 486-497.

⁴ Ch. X, lines 450-456.

⁵ Ch. X, line 446.

⁶ See also the lamentations uttered by Wakefield demons. The presence of God at all the places and during all the times has been forgotten by people, the demons complain, they are not afraid of God and faith and truth are not firmly established. The right way of living is to remember the presence of God at all the place and during all the times. The right way to live is to be afraid of God.

⁷ Ch. X, lines 422-429.

⁸ Note that the devils, according to St. Thomas, are constantly tormented in a spiritual way by hellfire. See *Comm. Sent.* 2.6.1.3.

his servants to court and rewards them for serving him, Ch. XII, lines 153-164. And he promises that with his “crooked crambocke” he will scratch your back.

3.2.9. The Devils’ True Nature in their Dealings with Humans on Stage

Ever since their fall the devils despise humans and insult them throughout. The devil compares men to cattle;¹ Rybald characterises the souls in the Limbo as “thise lurdans.”² Lucifer, Satan and Beelzebub call Adam “rogue,” “great rogue,” “false scoundrel,” CO, 26. The Bishop (Tercius Princeps in the N-Town *Assumption*) refuses to believe in Jesus Christ, God’s son in unity, and immediately the devils draw the attention of Beelzebub, Belial and Sir Satanas to the Bishop, whom they scornfully call “harlotis.”³ In the York temptation scene, since the devil wrongly believes that he already knows everything about Christ, he does not believe the stories of men who relate how a “swain” shall suffer pain and death in order to redeem them. In other words, although his ignorance misleads him, he boasts that man cannot deceive him. In the N-Town Harrowing of Hell, whilst they are unaware of who is attacking the gates of Hell, Rybald, Beelzebub and Sathanas refer to Jesus as “brodell,” “tature,” “dastard” and “harlot.”⁴ In York they use abusive references such as “page,” “dastard” and “geldyng.” The same goes for the York Devil in *The Temptation of Christ*. At first he is convinced that Christ is human and not divine, and only because of this does he call him a “lurdan.” Later, when he realises who Christ really is or who he could be he addresses him as “sir.” Gradually, he would call him “gentleman.”⁵ Beelzebub is conscious that frail men cannot resist the threefold test,⁶ and he teases the souls in the Limbo that it is he and not Christ who will bring them salvation.⁷ The Wakefield devils, the Primus and Secundus Demon, dally with the sinners. The 2nd Demon takes out books of sins and reports that they are full of wranglers, twisters, briefs, carpers, criers, cutpurses, thieves, lubbers, backbiters, false indictors, liars and rioters, 141-151. He adds that he has more written records about women than he can carry: a woman is a wolf in sheep’s clothing, deceiving. Also, Secundus Demon states that if Doomsday had been delayed, they would have had to build a bigger hell, since the world is growing progressively more corrupt. They get “double store of bodies miscarried/ To the souls where they were together to be harried.”

¹ N-Town, XXXIII, line 37.

² T, XXV, line 96; Y, XXXVII. Lurdan means something like “good-for-nothing.”

³ N-Town, XLI, line 482.

⁴ See also Schmidt, 109.

⁵ Y, XXX, line 160.

⁶ N-Town, XXXIII, lines 49-53. These would be gluttony, vainglory and avarice – sins because of which Adam and Eve fell. Satan also tempted Jesus in these three ways.

⁷ T, XXVII, line 103.

3.2.10. Physical appearance of the stage devil

The public's view of what the devil would look like was essential for manufacturing and designing costumes for stage devils.¹ There was an effort towards realism in costuming, and we may assume that costume properties for the inhabitants of hell were identical in all Europe.² Still, each of these figures must have been distinguishable by some features so as to make them recognisable for the audience, which again forbids us to postulate a stage devil as such.³ A prototype that emerges, however, is black, ragged and frightful. Fancifully conceived, he is furnished with hairy suits and horns and is armed with a club.⁴ The devils' blackness emphasises evil, maculation and impureness; and it stands in sharp contrast to the beautiful white angels. The actor who had to play the part of the devil wore a mask that covered his whole head; thus completely depersonalising him as the wearer.⁵ L. Link holds the view that the devil costumes used for the stage had a significant influence over both the fine arts and the image of Satan among the populace. He points to the painting, *The Martyrdom of St. Apollonia*, by the French painter and miniaturist Jean Fouquet as an accurate depiction of medieval performance. It is, indeed, the most exact document we possess as to scenic effects in medieval mysteries. Here one may behold Hell Mouth and devils with horns, animal faces, claws and hairy bodies.⁶ The actors were wrapped in fur in order to create an image of a wild figure with animal characteristics; the result was, according to Link, that art in this age conventionally portrayed the evil one as a hairy

¹ Much has been written about the outward appearance of the devil of the English Mystery Plays. In general, it is from the town and guild records that one learns virtually everything about the particulars outside the texts of the plays themselves, of course. One may take into consideration T. Sharp, *A Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries anciently performed at Coventry*, 1825, 56-59: "Heare for the demons cotts and hose," "Devel's face," "head," "malle," "clubbe" and "staff." John D. Cox provides information about the costumes of the stage devils. See Cox, 5. The contents of the publication of the Records of Early English Drama series are adopted from his work. See the banns for the Chester mystery plays recorded in Rogers' Breviary, 1608-9 in *Records of Early English Drama*, Chester, ed. Lawrence M. Clopperm 2. vols. (University of Toronto Press, 1979), 1:244: "And nexte to this yow the Butchers of this Cittie the storye of Sathan yat woulde Criste needes tempte set out as accustomed vied haue ye the Deuell in his ffeathers, all Rugged and rente." *Records of Early English Drama*, Coventry, ed. R.W. Ingram (University of Toronto Press, 1981), 163: "for making ye demones head"; Ibid, 167: "payd to ye devyll/payd for a yard of canvas for ye devylles mall 1544." Further evidence in Bomke, 91-104; Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred*, 5. See also Jean MacInture and Garret P. J. Epp, "'Cloathes Worth All the Rest': Costumes and Properties", in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia UP, 1997), 269-85. A list of "players' gear" was found in the Worcester Cathedral, and there, only "the devil's apparel" is written. The scantiness of this information is most unfortunate; however, C. Spivack concludes that the phrase "implies something immediately recognizable." See Spivack "The Appearance of Evil."

² There were probably some variations in costuming from place to place.

³ See Bomke, 104.

⁴ M. Rudwin points out that the medieval devil often had a besom or a pitch-fork. See Rudwin, *The Devil in Legend and Literature*, 129. On the devil carrying a club, see also A. Nicoll, *Masks, Mimes and Miracles*, 1931, 189; as cited in Janicka 13 n 51.

⁵ Happé writes that the devils had "two faces." See Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 52.

⁶ Link, 81.

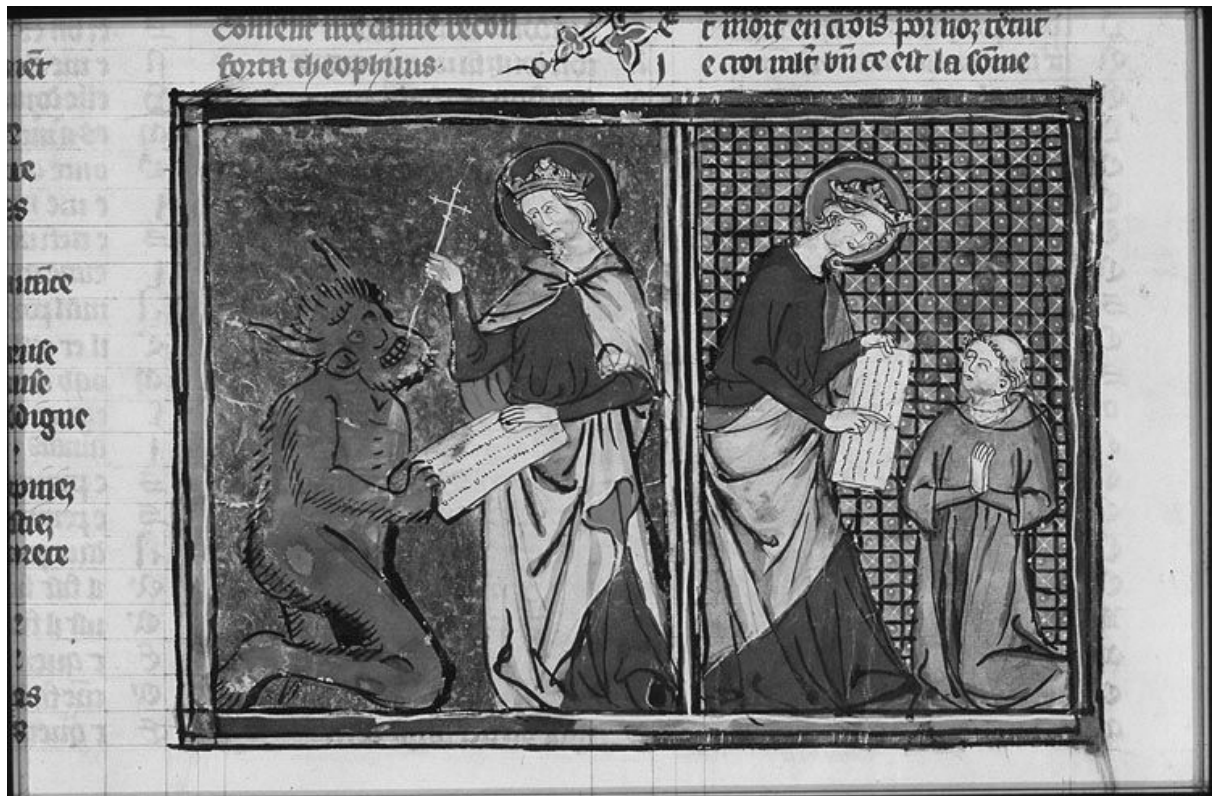
monster.¹ Even early portrayals of the devil in the Winchester Psalter (1150), so his argument goes, originate in the medieval devil costumes. Indeed, the devils in *The First Temptation*, *The Second Temptation*, and *Punishment of the Damned* wear costumes. Of course one is free to speculate about the interdependency between drama and art, and who would not agree that paintings and sculptures influenced costumes selection in the medieval masking tradition? Link insists, however, that it is the individual case that counts:

[...] wir stellen fest [...] daß der Teufel im Winchester-Psalter [...] Kostüme tragen. Die Einteilungen in der Hölle Fra Angelicos stammen vermutlich aus Mysterienspielen [...] nahezu mit Sicherheit auch der Teufel, der im Visconti-Stundenbuch von einem Engel von Haus zu Haus geführt wird, um unter den Ägyptern die Pest zu verbreiten; bis in alle Einzelheiten leitet sich dieser Teufel aus einem Kostüm her. Fouquets Teufel, der im Chevalier-Stundenbuch den heiligen Bernhard unterbricht, trägt ein Kostüm, ebenso wie die trommelnden Teufel, die in einem illuminierten Manuskript Karl des Großen herausfordern, und auch der Teufel, der in einer volkstümlichen Szene einen Sünder in den Höllendrachen befördert (so im *Jüngsten Gericht* an der Kathedrale von Chartres). Wenn wir diese Werke, die in der Zeit zwischen dem zwölften und dem fünfzehnten Jahrhundert entstanden sind, richtig interpretiert haben, dann ist die weitaus wichtigste Quelle für das Aussehen des Teufels sein Aussehen auf der Bühne.²

In this connexion I would draw attention to Gautier de Coincy's *Les miracles de Notre Dame*. *Les vies des Peres* where the devil is presented in the miniature "Mary takes away the contract from the devil," which is from the Hague, KB, 71 A 24, c. 1320-1340. Here, one beholds the devil accompanied by a distorted smirking grimace, in my opinion displaying all the characteristic features of a mystery stage devil.

¹ See also Stanford, 187.

² Link, 83.



Legend of the monk Theophilus: Mary takes away the contract from the devil, c. 1320-1340, Koninklijke Bibliotheek – National Library of the Netherlands.
http://www.kb.nl/manuscripts/search/images_text/extended/iconclass/11K2*

If the devil's appearance as a hairy monster with a club in his hand is meant as being "funny," I cannot see anything funny in it.¹ I cannot completely agree with G. Mahal either, who argues that the physical characteristics of the medieval stage devil did not make him more frightful, but that, on the contrary, they made him a gladly viewed unicum.² His argument that hideousness made way for conspicuousness³ can only be upheld if we make generalisations and ignore the fact that every audience consists of individuals. We cannot speak about the audience as a homogeneous group. To be sure, the devil's attractiveness was partly based on sensation-mongering individuals who longed to see something spectacular, but his repulsive appearance was also inescapably frightening. Else why would the stage direction in *N-Town Passion Play II* read *here entereth Satan into the place in the most orryble wyse*, if not to frighten the audience?⁴ Every time he appears in his own proper shape there is good reason to believe that many among the audience were frightened. For the same reason the Holy Virgin beseeches her son that she not face the horrendous fiend, for his horrible look would frighten and offend her. "Ther is nothyng I

¹ Eduard Eckardt, for example, held the view that a devil's outward appearance produces a comical effect. See Eduard Eckardt, *Die Lustige Person im älteren englischen Drama (bis 1642)*, in *Palaestra XVII* (Berlin, 1902), 58.

² Mahal, 161.

³ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁴ The stage direction in the Digby *Mary Magdalen* also reads: [...] *and here xall entyr a dylle in orebyll array* (963). "the devil's apparel." The phrase implies something immediately recognizable.

dowte but his dredfull presens,” she says.¹ Here and elsewhere, the devil plays a versatile role. His appearance on stage had a multifaceted approach; he could both contribute to comical scenes and pose a threat to the audience. After all, the audience would hardly be entirely relieved of the fear that the devil could do them harm, “for the Last Judgement was still in the future – with an uncertain outcome for every individual spectator.”²

The devil assumes a variety of forms in the mysteries. C. Spivacks points out that

As for the appearance of the devil himself, in the Fall of Lucifer plays we learn that when he fell from heaven, his feet became hooves, his hands claws, his skin tangled fur, and his wings were covered with tattered goose and hen feathers. In the Garden of Eden plays in the Norwich and Chester cycles, Satan tempts Eve by donning a disguise. He wears a woman’s face mask, false breasts, gloves to hide his claws, and snake-skin to hide his hooves. In some of the plays there are also references to his face turning black. The use of black to symbolize moral degeneration, as we have seen, also reappears in the morality plays.

The most intriguing one is certainly when he appears in a luxurious contemporary costume in the N-Town *Passion I*. To be more specific, he is shown on stage as the dandy-gentleman – in a human form. He also comes into sight as a man in the Doomsday scene of Towneley. Tutivillus is also called a “master lollar.”³

Apart from the Cornish devil who says that his only song is, “Alas, Alas!”, the noises conventionally made by the devils are “Owte! Owte! Harrowe!”⁴ I am afraid we can only speculate on whether the devil made excursions into the audience. Chambers made the point that they would harry the forward spectators.⁵

3.3. The Devil in Noah’s Ark; or, The Shipwrights’ Ancient Play or Didge Newcastle upon Tyne

In the New-Castle play *Noah’s Ark*, the devil is curious about Noah’s project,⁶ so he comes to Noah’s wife in human form,⁷ fairly convinced he will not have much trouble influencing her because she is his friend in faith. The devil’s task is to tempt Mrs. Noah to recalcitrance, and his

¹ N-Town, XLI, line 156.

² Hans-Jürgen Diller makes a similar point in his article “Laughter in Medieval English Drama: A Critique of Modernizing and Historical Analyses”, *Comparative Drama* vol 36, no 1,2 Spring/Summer 2002.

³ According to H. J. Diller, the Wakefield Master seems to have been hostile to the Lollards. The Lollards were also the sharpest critics of religious drama. See Hans-Jürgen Diller, “Laughter in Medieval English Drama.”

⁴ These noises are to be found in the speeches of the tyrants too, but not in the ones of the later vices.

⁵ Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, vol. 2, 148.

⁶ The devil cannot read Noah’s mind; an idea that fits to the churchly assumption. He can interpret them only through bodily movements. Concerning knowledge, it should be noted, he and his comrades rank behind the good angels.

⁷ L. W. Cushman reckons that the devil makes his appearance as a sailor since the play is a shipwright’s play. See Cushman, 43. The devil’s appearance is unique to this particular play and has no Biblical authority whatsoever.

methods and behaviour in this scene are quite similar to these of the Temptation of Eve.¹ Again, he does not reveal his true identity, although his “crooked Snout” might open the possibility of disclosure. He advises Mrs. Noah to disobey her husband’s commands:

I tell thee Jecretly,
And thou do after thy Husband read,
Thou and thy Children will all be dead,
And that right hafily.

It appears that Mrs. Noah declines because she observed that the stranger is the devil, saying: “Go Devil, how Jay, for Shame,” and as a rule we would expect the fiend to withdraw after such a rebuke as have seen in the Temptation of Christ episodes, but evidently in a misogynous satire a woman’s word is not as good, for the devil remains unshaken. Rather, he makes his next move by flattering her with empty words such as “le Dame” and “my own dear Dame,” but what bears fruit is the devil’s advocating egotism:

I swear thee by my crooked snout,
All that thy husband goes about
Is little for thy prow.

Ultimately, Mrs. Noah appears to be swayed by this, and one may even conclude that it is not the anxiety over the loss of her children that makes her falter but the realisation she could start a nonprofit business.² Mrs. Noah has faith neither in her husband nor in God. The devil’s ironical approach “Believe, believe, my own dear Dame,” illustrates this very clearly. Just as he did with Eve, he in subtle ways causes Noah’s wife to doubt God’s plans and eventually succeeds in making her becoming his instrument for deceiving Noah. The devil acts as Mrs. Noah’s advisor, and her league with the devil does double duty because it emphasises both her rebellious nature and the devil’s limited power. That is to say, since Noah is the only righteous, God-fearing man of his time, the devil is compelled to move crabwise in order to attain his goal. In order to conquer Noah and destroy the ark, the devil has to have an agent, and he even has to look for means to enhance the temptation by providing *Uxor* with an intoxicating potion for her husband so as to gain knowledge about God’s intentions. Nothing can be held against him, however, because despite the arduousness of the endeavour he has undertaken he manages to prevail. Noah fails to keep the secret and evil is about to enter the ark. The point is that Noah’s wife is

¹ Craig, 302. L. W. Cushman does not share this view; he refers the origin of the devil who uses an agent to the Legends of the saints, 37.

² Mrs. Noah is traditionally characterised as a shrew; but, if generalisation is permissible, the dramatist’s antipathy for the “weaker sex” reaches its culmination in this scene.

responsible for bringing trouble because the devil does not have power over all creatures, but the dealings with him are bound by law; her ignorance and her careless deed summons evil.

3.4. The Theatrical Antichrist

In the Chester *Prophets of Antichrist*, the prophets Ezechiell¹, Zacharias,² Dannyell³ and Johannes Evangelista⁴ make a prophecy about the coming of the Antichrist (as the title already suggests) and the end of the world.⁵ An interpretation of each of their prophecies is offered by the Expositor. Daniel describes the fourth beast that he saw in a vision: it was very powerful, had sharp teeth and nails and it devoured everyone that it could seize. The beast had ten horns. Three out of the ten horns were “consumed away,” but there was another in the middle, a “little horn” that “spread above all other in hye,” lines 139-140. The rest of the horns were humble towards it, and they had to endure it as their “highest” for many days. This little horn had eyes like a man and a boastful mouth. Daniel was told (by a bystander,⁶ in some interpretations the Archangel Gabriel) that the ten horns represent ten kings. The little horn shall oppose God, but it will be powerless and defeated in the end. In his interpretation, the Expositor adds that the beast represents the end of the world, whereas the little horn represents the Antichrist. The Antichrist shall control the world for three and a half years. He will defeat three kings and the other seven shall be subjected to him.

John the Evangelist saw in a vision how God sent two witnesses in order to ward off false faiths which were raised by His enemy. Clothed in sackcloth, the witnesses should prophecy one thousand two hundred and sixty days. God called them candlesticks of great light that are burning before the sight of Him. In order to destroy their enemies, fire should come out of their mouths. Anyone who tries to harm them shall die. During the time in which they are prophesying, the two witnesses shall have power to stop rain and to turn water into blood. Then, when they have done their service, a powerful beast shall come from “beneath,” line 203, and kill them in the holy city on the spot where Christ was crucified (after three and a half days, they

¹ In the Book of Ezekiel 37, Ezekiel sees in a vision a valley full of human bones. God comes to Ezekiel and orders him to prophecy that He shall revive these bones with flesh, sinews and skin and bring them to life again. Dead men shall rise in flesh and blood (Ch, XXII, 31-32).

² In the Book of Zechariah 6: 1-5, Zechariah sees in a vision “four chariots coming out from between two mountains.”

³ The Book of Daniel 7.

⁴ Rev. 11.

⁵ The historical background was often concerned with the Western Roman Empire. There are others, humans like Nero who were often viewed upon as the Antichrist or the precursors of the Antichrist. The Chester Antichrist, however, is supernatural.

⁶ See *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. II, 149 n 324.

shall rise again and go to heaven). The Expositor says that it is Enoch and Elias, the two witnesses, who shall be killed in Jerusalem by the mighty beast – which is the Antichrist.

The Antichrist is thus depicted as a beast, and imbued with satanic energy, line 239, as the Expositor further explains that he destroys and deceives God's people, lines 226-227. The fifteen signs of doomsday,¹ recapitulated at length by the Expositor near the end of the play, precede the coming of the Antichrist.

The dramatic Antichrist makes his appearance in Chester *De Adventu Antechristi*.² Here, we witness a humanisation of the beast.³ The Chester Antichrist is the false messiah – the pseudo-Messiah. He claims to be God the Father (or Jesus?), Creator of Heaven and Earth,⁴ and he claims divine honours. He says he has come to fulfill the Holy Scripture, yet it is obvious that he only masquerades as Christ and that his intention is to displace God from his sanctuary on earth since he says that he shall sit in the temple in Jerusalem (in the temple of God) and claim to be God.

The Antichrist has a special relationship to the Jews. The Jews are “his people,” and he has come to restore Herod's temple destroyed by Jesus⁵ and bring the united Jews back to Jerusalem.⁶ The Antichrist “exalts himself above all,” line 349; Dan.11:37. He demands to be venerated as God and to be accepted as Christ. People should live by the law of the Antichrist. All women should love him, and he has the intention to enjoy many. In return, he shall bestow upon people joy, power, plundered riches, land and “fee.” Like the N-Town Satan in the temptation of Christ episode, the Antichrist allures by promising all the kingdoms of the world: Lombardy, Patmos, Denmark, Hungary, Italy and Rome, lines 241-244.⁷

¹ It is said that the dead will arise on the eleventh day, lines 316-319. This is of particular interest for our study, because this and somewhat similar passages in the Bible might have influenced the nature of Zombies in the popular Zombie lore.

² On the Chester Antichrist, see also Richard Kenneth Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study in Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Manchester UP, 1981) 180-187.

³ The Antichrist is a man, line 288. However, in the same monologue, Elias seems to suggest that the Antichrist is the devil himself, line 299-300), but then again later on he returns to the assertion that the Antichrist is the devil's offspring, lines 313; 341-344; 354. The Chester play does not focus on the Antichrist's origins. Traditionally, the “Antichrist was of the tribe of Dan,” thus born from the Jewish people, Adso 90. I quote from the English translation of Adso's. *Libellus de Antichristo* translated by Bernard McGinn, *Apocalyptic Spirituality* (New York, 1978), born in Babylon and trained in evil”. 25 n 333. In the play he just comes from hell. He was engendered in sin, and he has led his life in sin, lines 633-634. This notion is adopted from Ps. 50:7; Jn. 9:34. See Adso, 90. Primus Demon (in all probability Satan) explains that he conceived the Antichrist with a whore, lines 667-674.

⁴ Lines 221-224; 314; 457-461; 468-473.

⁵ Similar to the devil, the Antichrist also insults people (in this case, it is Enoch and Elias who are berated with insults). The Antichrist also uses similar vocabulary to the devil, such as “lardans,” “false theeves,” “roysard,” “harlottes,” thereby disclosing his true nature.

⁶ In a note, Lumiansky and Mills point out that the “return of the Jews to their homeland and the re-establishment of the temple were accepted signs of the second coming (Adso, *Libellus de Antichristo* (PL 101/1293)”, 33-40 n 333. Irenaeus V.30.4. and Hippolytus 52.27.12. See Bousset, 104.

⁷ On the deliberate choice of these lands as areas where the Antichrist is active, see *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. II, 241-4 n 339-40.

As a daemonic and superhuman figure, the Antichrist has great powers of seduction. In order to convince people that he is Christ, he defames Jesus and perverts the truth.¹ He lies,² he makes false promises to mankind³ and he quotes the Scripture for his own ends. He also uses sorcery, witchcraft and necromancy, line 558, in order to win over the four kings and alienate them from Jesus. Whereas Jesus did works in His Father's name, the Antichrist performs false signs and miracles "through his owne accorde," line 100.⁴ The Antichrist claims he can invert growing trees and cause fruits to grow from the roots, lines 81-84. He also claims he can raise the dead.⁵ Moreover, in imitating Jesus, he says about himself that he shall die and rise again through his own power. The "resurrected" Antichrist ostensibly fills the kings with the Holy Spirit.⁶ Still, these are all fake "myracles" - "mervelles" achieved through the devil's craft. Nevertheless, his victory over the four kings is accomplished. Like Satan in the temptation of Christ, in order to deceive, the Antichrist promises "worldlye wealth," line 234. He beguiles, line 267, deceives, line 345, and bewitches people, line 347, leading them into a wrong way, line 347, i. e. into heresy. Through guile, "disceate" and "the devylls power," lines 287; 355, he carries within himself, the Antichrist eventually converts the four kings, begins his reign on earth and destroys God's people, lines 275-6.⁷

Eventually, during a heated debate, Enoch and Elias expose the proud Antichrist as a liar. The Archangel Michael defeats the Antichrist,⁸ and his body and soul go to the devil.

3.5. Conclusions: The Devil and Man

Hitherto it has been inquired that the devil began evil. As an apostate angel, he fell by *superbia* (pride) which transformed him from an angel into a devil. As such, he always looks

¹ He says that it was actually due to his dispensation that Jesus was "slayne," line 30.

² He says he is the one the prophets have prophesied of, he is the redeemer of Israel, he is God, he is God's son sent from God.

³ He promises joy and everlasting bliss to those who believe in him.

⁴ Cf. Jn. 11:37: "I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him." The idea of false wonders and miracles shares similarities with those of Simon Magus (Bousset, 118f.), but also to those of Dr. Faustus, see below.

⁵ Tradition has it that the Antichrist cannot raise the dead. Evidence in Bousset, *Antichrist*, 117. However, Adso, quoting Mat. 24:24, claims that the Antichrist can raise the dead, 92, and it appears that the Chester Antichrist really raises the dead. Still, even though the living dead appear there - Primus Mortuus and Secundus Mortuus - it is explained that these are but "devylls fantasye," lines 525-528. Emerson suggests that their "corpses are [...] inhabited by devils," *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, 185.

⁶ Jesus says to his disciples that he shall send the Holy Ghost to them from Heaven, Lk. 24:49.

⁷ His torture and persecution of the people of God are not enacted on stage.

⁸ Cf. Dan 12:1. On St. Michael's struggle with the Antichrist in the tradition, see Bousset, 150-153; Richard F. Johnson, *Saint Michael the Archangel in Medieval English Legend* (Woodbridge, 2005), 99-105. We are told that this is not to say that he thereby replaces Jesus because even though it is St. Michael who defeats the Antichrist, he does so by the power of Jesus Christ: "Whether the Lord Jesus Christ will slay him [the Antichrist] by the power of his own might, or whether the Archangel Michael will slay him, he will be killed through the power of Our Lord Jesus Christ and not through the power of any angel or archangel," Adso, 96.

ferocious. He is the archenemy, the slanderer, and he is envious and deceitful. The devil fiendishly opposes God and Christ, and he defies God's creation, which is humankind. Satan means "adversary," and this is how he continuously acts – as an adversary of mankind. The devil is hostile to mankind and he always seeks "to outwit us" (2 Cor.2:11). Thereby he normally assumes the role of a tempter, who lays snares about humans and seduces them in a fox-like manner. Much of his activities as a tempter draw on the Bible and patristic texts: the devil is the snake in the Garden of Eden; he is "the deceiver of Eve and usurper of Adam,"¹ or the tempter of Christ in the wilderness, where we witness the threefold nature of the devil's temptation (instigation, pleasure and consent – encouraging greed, vainglory and covetousness). The devil also stirs up the persecution of Christ. Jesus, however, allowed the devil to tempt him. He "deliberately underwent temptation" in order "to convince human beings of their own ability to overcome the devil by behaving righteously."²

The devil has great power over humans. He can often bend them to his own will, and he is often the one who pulls on humans' strings. Satanic influences vary, however: sometimes the devil "sows" sins in humans, sometimes he can turn their minds to commit sins and sometimes he seduces them by persuasion. Thereby he also relies on disguise, since he is the master of disguise.³ He can harden the heart and he can cause people to commit sins. His motives are usually jealousy, envy and hatred, but it should be noted that the devil also tests man with God's permission, in spite of the fact that the devil is God's adversary.⁴ At times he is also a fearsome enforcer, who, as the harvester of human souls, grabs hold of them and pulls them down to hell. Once in hell, the devil shows up as a tyrant and sadistic torturer. Sins, of course, please the devil. Sinners go to hell, where they suffer eternally in the tormenting, unquenchable fire. The devil is especially influential in idolaters. Idolaters have pledged themselves to Satan; they practice devil-worship and are instruments of Satan. Such characters are deservedly "cast into the lake of fire." The idea of a pact with the devil, however, is not dramatised in the mysteries.⁵

The audience was taught that Satan should be deeply distrusted. For that reason, the devil also serves a theologically didactic purpose. He usually teaches the medieval audience delusion, as he wants them to "believe a lie," but at times he also indoctrinates how humans can turn from

¹ Hippolytus, antichr. 14.2-15.5 (GCS I,11f), as quoted in Jenks, 78.

² *Old English Homilies from MS Bodley 343* (Early English Text Society Original Series). ed S.E. Irvine (London: published for the Early English Text Society by the Oxford University Press, 1993), 123.

³ He is transformed into an angel of light, he can be turned into a snake, etc.

⁴ His blasphemy (any abusive, contemptuous and irreverent language) towards God is prohibited in the mysteries. The devil uses pejorative terms for humans, however.

⁵ A pact with the devil could have been contained in Skelton's (now lost) play *The Necromancer*. On the play and an analysis of Beelzebub (the play's chief devil), see Cushman, 49.

evil and so deliver themselves from peril. The message is always very clear - God shields against the devil.

Some theatrical devils outside the Biblical scope become more comic, as for instance Beelzebub in the Folk Play, but some have retained their dangerousness, like the devil in the Newcastle play *Noah's Ark*. I have argued that the devil is not comic in his dealings with human beings. An exception is the folk play, which treated the devil in a different way. This folksy devil is a deviation from the Bible. So peculiar to folk, the delight at the idea that they could do the devil on a wager came in the foreground.

It has further been observed that the Antichrist is not the devil but the man of sin. He seduces and deceives by the devil's power, by being contrary to Christ, by imitating Christ, by acting as God, by gifts and prodigies. Thereby, he leads people astray. He deceives by making the Jews believe he is Christ, and he destroys Christians. While the devil is otherworldly, the Antichrist is a human being who is endowed with supernatural powers. Dr. Faustus, magicians and witches, for instance, would also fit into this category. Hence, in cases where he is not portrayed as a beast, like the Chester Antichrist, he can be labelled as a supernatural villain only in the broader sense.

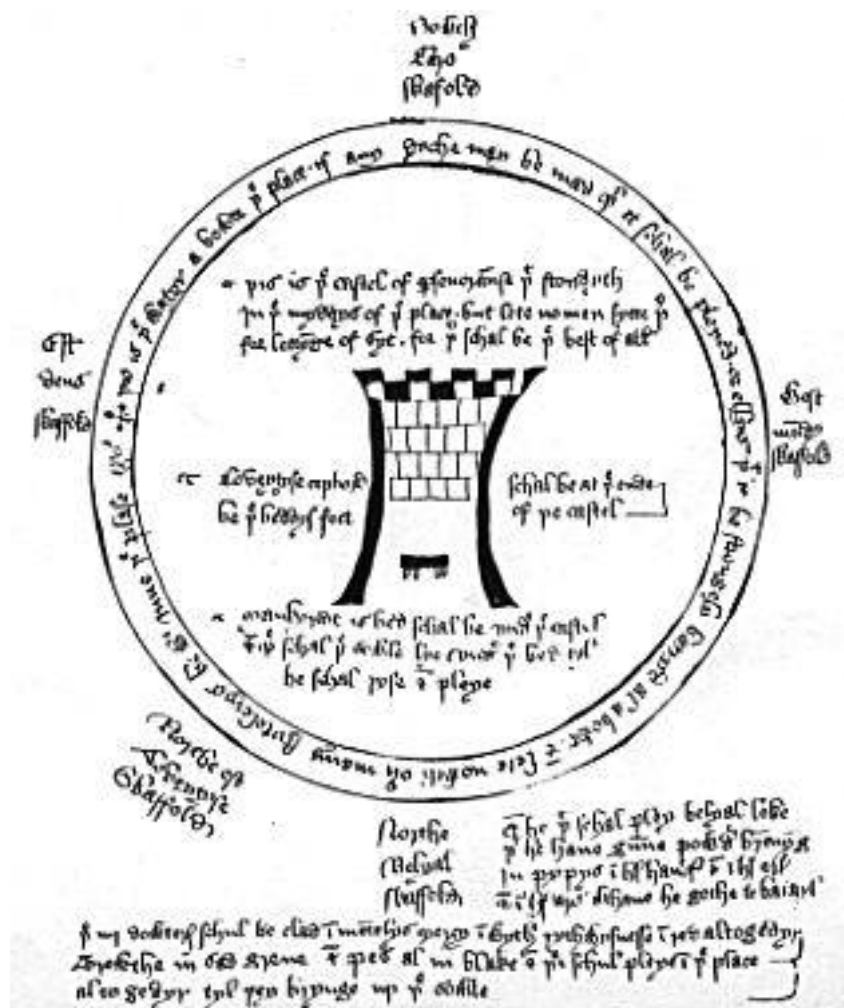
4. The Devil and Man in the Early Moralities

The morality play is a genre of theatre very popular from the early 1400s to the 1580s. It is a genre which made the transition from the medieval to the Early Modern period. No longer does the Bible mark an essential part of the drama; rather, the human situation presented allegorically, as well as a general concern of how life on earth should be lived, assumes the principal place. Heroes of the morality plays do not have much in common with heroes of classical drama. Since the subject concerns moral situations – temptation, sin, redemption, the central figure of the moralities is man. A personification of generalised man was the focus of interest in the earlier English moralities: *The Pride of Life* (ca. 1400),¹ *The Castle of Perseverance* (ca. 1400), *Mankind* (ca. 1465-70), *Wisdom, Who is Christ* (ca. 1460)² and *Everyman* (translated from the

¹ The fragmentary *Pride of Life* is considered the earliest play. The second half is lost. But, luckily, a summary of it is given in a Prologue.

² Texts are those of *The Macro Plays: "The Castle of Perseverance": "Wisdom": "Mankind"*, ed. Mark Eccles, E.E.T.S., O.S. 262. London, Oxford UP for the E.E.T.S., 1969. The three plays appear in one MS. The name "Macro" is derived from the surname of the man who owned these MSS in the eighteenth century, the Rev. Cox Macro. The *Perseverance* diagram survived. It shows the "Castle in the central space, and around the circumference are the scaffolds of World (west), Flesh (south), God (east), Avarice (north-east), and Belial the Devil (north)." Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 44.

Dutch, ca. 1500). *Everyman*, *Humanum Genus*, *Anima*, *Mankind*, *Humanitas* or *Man* – all of them appeared on the stage and represented moral situations. One question these plays raise is whether this generalised type had a character or the possibility to make decisions at all.¹ As H. Craig points out, “Mankind in the abstract must behave positively and objectively in accordance with an embodied concept of human nature and human action. Therefore when Temptation invites *Homo* or *Humanum Genus* to yield, he does so without inward struggle, because his *genus* habitually does just that, and, when Repentance asks him to return to his better nature, this abstraction is suddenly and immediately in a state of repentance [...]”² The hero is the man in his two minds, through whom both the inward and outward events are made visible on stage. Various figures and personifications but not “characters” are also taking part. These are, however, not to be merely reduced to virtues and vices. Man opposes the devil’s temptations or the personified earth; while doing penance, he faces death, the punishing judge or the merciful



Macro Manuscripts: *Three Morality Plays*, Folger MS V.a. 354.
http://www.folger.edu/html/exhibitions/pens_excellencie/Macro%20MSS.asp

The play may have been performed on a scaffold, although we cannot be sure that it “was ever performed”. Happé *English Drama Before Shakespeare* 53.

¹ Werner Habicht, *Studien zur Dramenform von Shakespeare*, Heidelberg, 1963, 21.

² Craig, *Religious Drama*, 341f.

redeemer. Other figures illustrate features of man's inward strength and character. His personified impulses, however, are the seven deadly sins and seven virtues, with each having its dramatic counterpart. Humankind is confronted both inwardly and outwardly with alternative possible futures of evil and good, death or eternity, condemnation or salvation;¹ thus, his moral situations are the quintessence of the drama.

In *The Castle of Perseverance* (ca. 1400), *Humanum Genus* represents life from birth to death; for that reason we witness repeated temptation efforts on stage. Accordingly, Mankind is prone to sin until his very last breath. When the protagonist enters the stage, he already carries the burden of original sin, which in return involves the dualistic tension between good and bad. This inner conflict is evident in the dramatic allegory. *Hummanum Genus* delivers a monologue in the form of a prayer, which unites his attitude and the inward dualism.² The intention at the opening of the play is allegorically to envision the expression of an untested and "untempted" man.³

In his article "The English Morality Play as a Weapon of Religious Controversy," R. Pineas points out that before the Reformation the morality play taught the audience the way to Heaven that can be achieved by means of believing in and practicing of the sacraments and by acknowledging priesthood in its sacramental role as the image of Christ. Furthermore, the plays taught that a man was justified by good works. There are many examples of the Virtues preaching about the sacrament and of their encouragement of hard labour as means of salvation.⁴ The plays equally emphasise the importance of the Church as mediator between man and God. The hero is also instructed to understand the path of salvation as repentance, confession and penance. The plays present such doctrines through dialogues involving the virtues or the vices with the hero or the vices and the hero or through "a straight sermon delivered by one of the "good" characters directly at the audience [...]"⁵

In order to bring across all these points mentioned above, the morality dramatists relied on the evil characters as well. The evil characters preach salvation either by telling the truth or by demonstrating evil actions and speech to the audience in order to show them what they should not do. In other words, they expose and at the same time warn against evil. While the vices' homiletic function of criticising evil is certainly a positive act, their involvement on stage is not.⁶ They homilize through their self-condemnation made manifest in obscene and impious language, swearing by the devil, parodying and ridiculing the good, which partly provides humour and

¹ Habicht, 24.

² Ibid, 32.

³ Ibid, 33.

⁴ This is later on criticised in the Protestant *Lusty Juventus*.

⁵ Rainer Pineas, "The English Morality Play as a Weapon of Religious Controversy", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 2, no. 2, Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring, 1962), 159. See also Spivack, 108.

⁶ Pineas, 160.

partly emphasises their evil nature. Arguably, the vices' chief task onstage apart from teaching and entertaining is to seduce their victim. As R. Pineas points out: "[...] the Vice takes as great pains to demonstrate his evil nature to his audience as he does to hide it from his victim."¹ It is his technique of deception that interests us the most in this study.

We have seen that the temptation itself (*temptatio deceptionis vel seductionis*) leads to a perversion of what was made in God's image. In the early Moralities it occurs in phases in an allegorical chain of events that happens on stage. The presentation of temptation occurs in stages with the aid of an external agent – a personified vice, the Vice, or the devil. This agent undertakes the task of leading the man astray. In this context the devil must be treated cautiously, however, because he appears in person as a tempter only in two pieces, *Wisdom* and *Mankind*. Despite this fact, it appears that the devil's attacks on humankind are more cunning and indirect than in the mystery plays, and that more than the usual amount of emphasis on psychological realism characterizes the temptation proper.

The devils Belial, Lucifer, Titivillus and the Bad Angel are introduced in the early moralities.² In *Wisdom, Who is Christ* (c.1460) stress is laid upon Lucifer's dialectical argument.³ Lucifer's apparatus of deceit includes physical disguise; he appears on stage disguised as a "prowde galonte." His declaration of intent elucidates the doctrine of temptation. On his first appearance he admits he is the founder of sin. Driven by frantic exasperation because he cannot do any harm to God, he wants to cause damage to humanity even more zealously by leading people astray and to hell. In *Wisdom*, Lucifer tempts by using cajolery. This persuasion stands in sharp contrast to exhortations preached by Wisdom.⁴ Moreover, his arguments are more suave and cunning compared to those of other morality evil figures since they follow a step-by-step approach. He first advocates the *vita mixta*,⁵ then switches over to the *vita activa* to prove a point against *vita contemplativa*.⁶ H. J. Diller has remarked that Lucifer's prudent temptation strategy operates only in his dealings with Mind, since, according to theology, the spirit can be tempted *per*

¹ Pineas, 163.

² Also, Belfagour (Belphegor – a devil who sometimes represents the sin of sloth) and Belzabub are summoned by Rex Diabolus in the Digby *Mary Magdalen*, line 725. In *The Castle of Perseverance*, the Bad Angel dispatches Flepyrgebet, which were to crystallise later as Flibbertigibbet, a devil among the Three Enemies that Mankind has entered the castle. In Samuel Harsnett's polemic, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, written in 1603, Flibberdigibbet is identified as a demon.

³ Texts are those of *The Macro Plays: "The Castle of Perseverance": "Wisdom": "Mankind"*, ed. Mark Eccles, E.E.T.S., O.S. 262. London, Oxford UP for the E.E.T.S., 1969. The name is derived from the surname of the man who owned these MSS in the eighteenth century, the Rev. Cox Macro.

⁴ Habicht, 36.

⁵ According to W. K. Smart, this stems from Walter Hilston's *Epistle of Mixed Life*. See W. K., Smart, *Some English and Latin Sources and Parallels for the Motality of Wisdom* (Menasha, 1912), 26, as quoted in Habicht, 36.

⁶ *Ibid*, 36.

suggestionem, the will *per consensum* and reason *per delectationem*. Dramatically, he argues, it is far easier to demonstrate suggestion than delight or consent.¹

In *Mankind*, the turning point is achieved by Titivillus' palpable action of sabotaging Mankind's labour by putting a wooden board in the soil for Mankind's spade to strike, line 533 and by mixing the grain seed with weed and darnel, line 536. These obstructions achieve the desired effect because the frustrated Mankind "loses his patience" easily, finding the soil so hard to till that he grows tired of labour. Faced with this run of bad luck, Mankind decides to abandon his virtuous life of hard work. His utterance, "Here I gyff wppe my spade for now and for euer," line 548, symbolises his renunciation of righteous *vita activa*.² He is not yet entirely demoralised, however, for he then takes prayers. But Titivillus, invisible to Mankind, creeps behind him and distracts him by encouraging him to consider the need to defecate. Thereby Titivillus also manages to undercut Mankind's *vita contemplativa*.³ He even throws Mankind's Paternoster beads away when the latter goes off stage. Mankind gives up everything virtuous, his labours, his prayers and his church attendance. Titivillus then puts Mankind to sleep when he ought to be attending Evensong, again whispering evil suggestions in his ear, and he makes Mankind dream that Mercy has been hanged for horse theft. "Trust no more on hym, he ys a marryde man," he says. "Aryse and aske mercy of Neu Gyse, Nowadays, and Nought," line 602, but this is Titivillus' new lie that the vices are new friends that he should confide. Titivillus' final demands are that Mankind should abandon his wife and choose a lover, i.e., lapse into lechery. After his moral defences have been disassembled, Mankind rather abruptly goes from bad to worse: "Of labure and preyer, I am nere yrke of both; I wyll no more of yt, thow Mercy be wroth," line 585.⁴ When he wakes, he has been successfully manipulated and entirely alienated from Mercy. We see that Titivillus has been justly identified by Mercy as "worst of them all," because unlike Nought, New Guise and Nowadays this crafty slipshod demon can be invisible and lead to "Mankind's fall by an assault on the weakness of the flesh."⁵ He is also a master of illusions; he works through suggestion rather than in the open, direct manner of the Worldlings, using

¹ Diller "Von den Misterien – und Mirakelspielen zu den Moralitäten", 61. It is also said in *Malleus Maleficarum* that "the devil cannot directly operate upon the understanding and will", Part I, Question 7, 51.

² Habicht, 36. Titivillus steals then Mankind's spade, line 549.

³ Ibid, 36.

⁴ Mercy is the single character in the play representative of the forces of good. References are of course made to the New Testament and Piers Plowman. On parallels with Mankind and Adam see Willard Farnham, *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Oxford, 1970 [1936]), 197; John Gannon, "The Authorship of Mankind: An Approach through Structure and Tone", 197. In this respect, I would also like to direct attention to the stage direction in *Mystere d'Adam: Interium veniet Diabolus et plantabit in cultura eorum spinas et tribulos, et abscedet*. Sister Mary Philippa Coogan and Kathleen Ashley have pointed out to diverse homiletic themes from Shrovetide that reappear in *Mankind*. See Sister Mary Philippa Coogan, *An Interpretation of the Moral Play, Mankind* (Washington, 1947) and Kathleen M. Ashley, "Titivillus and the Battle of Words in Mankind", *Annuaire Mediaevale*, 16 (1975), 144-46. Also Cox, "Devils and Vices in English Non-Cycle Plays."

⁵ See Stanley J. Kahrl, *Traditions of Medieval English Drama* (London, 1974), 115.

Mankind's flesh as an ally that overcomes through the sin of Sloth.¹ The body cannot resist sin that overpowers the soul. The soul calls for God, whereas the body follows the interests of the World and the Flesh.²

It is remarkable how the spectators are let in on the events. Not only do the three vices invite the audience to join them in singing an indecent song,³ but the unforeseen Titivillus enjoys an intimate relationship with the audience and addresses his asides and monologues directly to them. He explains to them his character, his plan and the very nature of his undertakings. Titivillus buys the audience's sympathy with the promise of "a good sport;" he implores the audience in the name of their entertainment and instruction to keep silent and watch him while he "hangs his net around" Mankind. He is clearly the agent, but he makes the audience complicit in his actions, for they, as good Christians, could warn the peasant Mankind to avoid the immediate menace; which they do not. As good audience members, they remain silent, thus becoming sinners themselves without being truly aware of it. What is more, Titivillus invites the audience to admire him - he boasts that he has brought Mankind to "myscheff and to schame." Clearly, the audience is amused and edified at the same time,⁴ both merriment and morality being appealing to the popular taste. Titivillus is involved in many comic scenes, since the play involves burlesque and low comedy. Loathing and humour are combined; grotesque figures are both funny and dangerous, for it must not be forgotten that the three Worldlings drive Mankind almost to suicide with their lies.

The play stages a devil together with vices because the vices need the presence of a greater evil-doer than themselves to deceive Mankind. For that reason Mischef wants to summon their chief Titivillus, but before the audience sees his "abhomyabull presens," line 465, a "man wyth a hede þat ys of grett omnipotens," the vices seek to take up a collection from the audience,⁵ threatening to prevent bringing on Titivillus if not enough money is given, proof that the devil was a main attraction and a highly popular character in the early Moralities.⁶ Titivillus is indeed treated like a star; his entrance marks the high point of the play. "His arrival is", as H. Vatter

¹ Kahrl, 115.

² The debate between the Body and the Soul motif occurs in *The Castle of Perseverance* and *The Pride of Life*. Cf. Equity's explanation in *King Darius*: "In Genesis also it is but found/ That our body is but very dung," 55.

³ The lines which the audience is invited to join in singing are full of coarse gutter speech, see also Diller "Laughter in Medieval English Drama." Bevington says it is "one of the most remarkable passages of scatology ever printed." Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 16.

⁴ Stanley, 126.

⁵ The three minor vices are asking for "red royals," gold coins worth ten shilling. Nowadays makes clear to the audience that Titivillus "loveth no groats, or pence or twopence." New Guise corrects him; any who cannot pay the one can pay "tother." Arnold Williams concludes that the corrupting masters made the piece into a sort of mummer's play. Williams, 156. We have already witnessed the request for money by a demon in the folk-drama.

⁶ See also Vatter, 93. The play was in all likelihood performed in the open-air. Southern has suggested a hall, *The Staging of Plays before Shakespeare*, 143-44. Weimann does not share his view, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, 278 n 17, arguing for a public innyard, 115.

notes, “announced by an explosion of powder, and when he comes, he is assumed to wear a grotesque mask.”¹ Apparently, their money buys the sight of evil; the audience is employed as “the Devil’s personal financiers,”² a clear sin.

It has been argued that, although Titivillus’ name is usually associated with that of a devil, he is only partly one because he has many characteristics of a vice. He seems to be, as P. Happé suggested, both devil and Vice at the same time.³ B. Spivack calls him “an allegorised figure,”⁴ a “figure of transition from devil to vice” whose guile is still very physical.⁵ Still, it must not be forgotten that Mercy, while preaching to Mankind on the subject of his spiritual enemies, says that “Titivillus syngnyfyth the Fend of helle,” line 886, thus identifying his devilish nature. Titivillus is what he is - a devil.

4.1. Concerning the Bad Angel: *doctrina de officio angelorum bonorum et malorum*

The good and the bad angels in *The Castle of Perseverance* are not mere embodiments of Humanum Genus’ inner voices that appear only externally as companions, as many scholars argued. They should not be regarded as merely externalising Mankind’s inner conflict in a moral situation.⁶ Rather, the angels were supernatural entities invisible to human sight. Every man has “a good & an euil Angel,” and “the good Angel” stirs “men vp to vertue, & defend them,” whereas “the euil Angell” hurts “men whersoever he’ can,” and seeks to “prouoke them to wickednesse.”⁷ Thomas Nashe wrote that “a bad spirit and a good one can never endure to dwell together.”⁸ Jacob Sprenger and Henry Kramer, the authors of *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) wrote that the Bad Angel is an immaterial spirit.⁹ The *Malleus Maleficarum* also indicates that “the angels, whether they be good or whether they be evil, are pure and spiritual intelligences. Therefore they can control what is below them,” 22. The same source states that our will is ruled by God and our understanding by the Good Angel. The Bad

¹ Vatter, 94. At least the word “hede” from the passage quoted above indicates such possibility. He also carried a net with him. See Cushman, 46. On Titivillus having his ancestor in the mumming play, see Walter K Smart, “Mankind and the Mumming Plays”, *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 32, no. 1 (Jan., 1917), 21-25.

² See the introductory note in *English Moral Interludes*, ed. Glynne Wickham (London, 1976), 4.

³ Happé, 171.

⁴ Spivack, 123.

⁵ *Ibid*, 125. R. J. E. Tiddy regards Titivillus as a Vice, which he is not. See R. J. E. Tiddy, *The Mummers’ Play* (Oxford, 1923), 128.

⁶ Habicht, 22. Brandl errs in equating the Good Angel with reason; XL. The Good Angel is a guardian angel. Every man has his own guardian angel, “who is of the lowest order of the Celestial Hierarchy, and whose task and service it is to guard only one individual soul.” See Father Noel Taillepied, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 8. On the bad angel see also Lavater, II. chap. xi, 149. On God assigning a good angel to us, see also his chap. xiiii, 160.

⁷ Lavater, II. chap. xi, 150.

⁸ *The Terrors of the Night*, 150.

⁹ Part II, Qn.1 chap. iii, 106.

Angel, therefore, seeks to darken our understanding. He confuses us by portraying bad things as being actually good, Part I, Question 7, 55. This teaching accords with the portrayal of the Bad Angel in the moralities.

The Bad Angel was not delegated by Satan to tempt Mankind, as E. N. S. Thompson assumed,¹ but, as Secundus Vexillator explains in *The Castle of Perseverance*, God has granted Mankind two angels, good and bad. The bad angel perpetually attacks Mankind, but he has free will, and it is solely within him “wheþyr he wyl hymself saue or hys soule spyll,” 26. Now, if Mankind decides to live a life of sin, Primus Vexillator informs us, then he will be brought by the bad angel to his enemies, the World, the Devil and the Flesh. This happens in the course of the play, and Mankind is, after being successfully seduced,² introduced by the Bad Angel to the World and his two attendants, Folly and Pride. Hence man is persuaded by the Bad Angel to indulge in sins. T. Thompson provides a very handy piece of information, when he paraphrases the Blickling homily, “The End of the World is Near”:

It warns man to keep ever in mind the hour when soul shall be separated from body, and the great fear and the great mystery of life shall be consummated. At that hour, angels and demons will flock about the dying man, and struggle to possess him. If he has lived a good life, observant of the virtues, they will then become his *Angeli Boni*, protect him from the demons, and lead him to a land of rest and joy. But if he has wasted his life, the vices to which he has yielded will become demons and seize his soul and carry it to unending misery.³

In addition, T. A. Spalding has mentioned a very important aspect concerning belief in the Good and the Bad Angels:

To the class of lesser devils belonged the bad angel which together with a good one was supposed to be assigned to every person at birth, to follow him through life – the one to tempt, the other to guard from temptation [...] so that a struggle similar to that recorded between Michael and Satan for the body of Moses was raging for the soul of every existing human being. This was not a mere theory, but a vital active belief, as the beautiful well-known lines at the commencement of the tenth canto of the second book of “The Faerie Queene,” and the use made of these opposing spirits in Marlowe’s “Dr. Faustus,” and in “The Virgin Martyr,” by Massinger and Dekker, conclusively show.⁴

In *The Castle of Perseverance*, the Bad Angel seduces Mankind; this external force draws him to sin. He tempts him to forsake prayer, promises him a sweetheart and riches and advises him to embrace the World and live his life in “liking” (pleasure) and lust. That given, the Bad

¹ Elbert N.S. Thompson, *The English Moral Plays*, New York (1970 [1910]), 312. This is the case in Digby Mary Magdalen, however, where Satan commissions the Bad Angel to tempt Mary Magdalene, lines 428-430.

² The Bad Angel dismisses the councils of the Good Angel as false: “Thou counsellist him not aryght” (*Castle*, line 341). Later on, similar accusations are launched by the Vice figure in order to discredit the representative of Virtue.

³ Thompson, 319. The Blickling MS is dated AD 971 within the folios.

⁴ Thomas Alfred Spalding, , *Elizabethan Demonology: An Essay in Illustration of the Belief in the Existence of Devils, and the Powers Possessed by Them, as it was Generally Held during the Period of the Reformation, and the Times Immediately Succeeding; with Special Reference to Shakspeare and His Works* (London, 1880), 36.

Angel also argues against *memento mori*. He says to Mankind that there is still enough time to ponder on mortality, enough time to draw to good when he gets old, when the Bad Angel may gloat over man's sinful soul and terrify him with pangs of hell. The Bad Angel's status is slightly modified in the Digby *Mary Magdalen*, where he is both Satan's messenger and a constant companion to sinners.¹ In this play, the Bad Angel ranks below Satan and can be classified as a servant figure.

Since these are all attributes found also in the Vice figure, discussed below, it is reasonable to assume that the Bad Angel is his literary ancestor - that he prefigures the Vice.

4.2. Devil's Handiwork: The Devil's Role as a Tempting Agent in Human Psychology

Can the representative of man in the early moralities and later interludes ever say: "The devil made me do it"? How does the devil work evil in us? In *Mankind*, Mercy explains that our "gostly enemy þe Deull," line 215 can go "invysybull" and "ronde in yowr ere and cast a nett befor yowr ey," line 304. In other words, he can tempt our senses as an invisible spirit. In *Wisdom Who Is Christ*, also called "Mind, Will, and Understanding," Lucifer says that he is familiar with all the man's complexions and inclinations. Consequently, he tempts until he utterly perplexes man, lines 343-348. If man listens to his declarations and accepts his false conjectures, he will bring him to wickedness. Using his retained angelic knowledge,² Lucifer declares he shall not attack the flesh, but man's soul, where three "partyes" exist, Mind, Will and Understanding, lines 363-64. He seeks to corrupt the "Mynde of þe Soule" in directing it to pleasure.³ Quite similarly when talking about human race in the miracle play *Mary Magdalen*, Satan announces he is going to "besegyn hem be every waye wyde/I xal getyn hem from grace whersoeyr he abyde," line 364. He besieges man's soul and brings it to obedience by convincing him that he may have joy if he abandons grace. Man's outcome would be that "That body and sowle xal com to my hold,/Hym for to take!"

We see that the devil is the instigator of the evil actions of men. By diverse means, he causes man to be persuaded to sin. Through him and his evil advice, our will becomes degraded. In Thomas Ingelend's *Disobedient Child*, Satan appears in a brief episode, saying:

¹ There are only two extant miracle or saint's plays: *Mary Magdalene* and *The Conversion of Saint Paul* (c. 1480-1520).

² In the later interlude, Thomas Ingelend's *Disobedient Child*, Satan the Deuyill speaks of his superiour intelligence, too: "My strength and power hence to the Skye/ No earthly tongue can well expresse./ Oh what inuencious, craftes and wites,/ Is there contayned within this head." He contines in like manner later, in the same monologue.

³ The devil in *Lusty Juuentus* says the same: "That in carnal pleasures they may have more delight."

Oh, it was my studye daye and nyght
 Conyngly to brynge this matter to passe:
 In all the earth, there is no wighte
 But I can make to crye alas [...]
 It was onely I that this stryfe dyd sowe
 [...] I had taken a smell:
 Of their good wyll and feruent loue,
 My thought I woulde not tarry in hell
 But vnto debate them shortely moue,
 Oh it was I that made hym to despise
 All wisdome, goodnes, virtue and learnynge
 That he afterwarde coulde in no wife
 Once in his harte fancie tearchyng
 Oh it was I, that made him refuse
 The holsome monition of his father dere
 Oh it was I, that made hym goe hence,
 And suppose that his father was verye unkynde,
 It was I, that dyd dryue hym to such expence¹

What can be said about the manner of this dealing? How does the devil manage to do this? One may see him either as an external tempter or a body-dweller. In my opinion, what the devil reveals in the above quoted passage cannot be viewed as demonic possession. “Typical symptoms” of a possessed person as described in the Bible, such as crying, yelling, refusal to wear clothes, supernatural powers, (Lk. 8:27), cutting oneself with stones (Mk. 5:5), having seizures, walking into fire or into water, rigidity, foaming at the mouth and gnashing of teeth (Mt. 17:14-21; Mk. 9:18-19; Lk. 9:3-42), etc. where the person is entirely deprived of self-control, are not described in the plays. The characters do not act as demoniacs; they are not possessed by devils. The devil does not speak through them, accordingly. Still, this is not to say that there are not examples where a demon is housed within a man or cast out from the body like an evil spirit. Mary Magdalene is just such a case, the episodes of her exorcism being treated in both the Digby *Mary Magdalene* and Wager’s *Mary Magdalene*. In the former seven devils, in the latter the Vice Infidelity is released from her body. This means that she was demonically possessed in a different way. She was full of sins.²

¹ A somewhat similar braggart devil occurs in the devil sequence in *The Conversion of Saint Paul* that was inserted into the manuscript and written in a different handwriting (this occurred in all likelihood in the 40ties or 50ies of the sixteenth century). In this inserted scene Belial makes his spectacular appearance with thunder and fire. His boasting of his power is accompanied by an aggressive tone, whereby he brings along a new epithet in his solemn declaration, not only elevating himself to the level of a second in command one next to Lucifer, but also in bragging about being a god (R. Withington regards Belial and Mercury as comic figures. See R. Withington “The Development of the “Vice””, in *Essays in Memory of Barrett Wendell* (Cambridge UP, 1926), 160. He is most possessive, which is accentuated by possessive adjectives: “My powre, my busshopys, my motyon, my prelatys.” His law is the law of the Jews, but there is more than meets the eye - not only that he, as god most high in majesty, reigns and rules over humanity, but also that he possesses the power of ordaining man’s mind as he pleases. This, however, is to be understood as follows: the devil possesses the mind of a man through sin.

² According to Calvin, “Mary Magdalene is said to have been delivered from seven devils by which she was possessed; and our Saviour assures us that it is an ordinary circumstance, when a devil has been expelled, if access is again given to it, to take seven other spirits, more wicked than itself, and resume the vacant possession. Nay, one

Returning to the above quoted passage from the *Disobedient Child*, even though it sounds as if he is the mover of man to this wicked matter in the truest sense of the term, he can sway man, but he cannot play him like a puppet suspended on a string. After all, men are men of decisions: “[...] no act of sin is committed unless the soul consents to the act.”¹ The devil can in no wise do anything without our will. This is concurrent with Erasmus’ explanation that “Satan can entice human concupiscence by external means, or also by internal ones, rooted in human circumstances,” but “the enticement itself does not necessitate sinning, as long as we want to combat it and implore divine aid.”² This brings us to the issue of man’s free will, discussed below. It follows that, in Erasmus’s view, the devil has got no power over man’s free will. The devil cannot see our inner thoughts. In addition, “all sins are not committed at the instigation of the devil, but some are of our own choosing.”³ Furthermore, the common belief was that the devil knows man’s inward quality from his outward actions. But, as G. Roskoff has observed: “Die Macht des Teufels über den Menschen findet [...] an dessen Willen eine Schranke, da es von diesem abhängt, jenem zu folgen oder ihn durch Widerstand zu besiegen.” The power of the devils, therefore, is only effective against unrepentant sinners.⁴ And, what is more, tempting activities are regulated by God, whose permission is necessary for all that the devil does.⁵ What is said in “The Obedience of a Christian Man” by William Tyndale concerning the tyrant’s relationship to God, that “God hath all tyrants in his hand, and letteth them not do whatsoever they would, but as much only as he appointeth them to do,”⁶ also applies to the devil, who also cannot do whatever he would, but only as much as God appoints him to do.⁷ This is not the case with heathens, however. Before his conversion, Saul in *The Conversion of St. Paul* belongs to the

man is said to have been possessed by a whole legion” (“Institutes of the Christian Religion”, vol. 1, chap. 14, section 14). Elizabethans believed in this diabolic phenomenon, and there is also no reason why they should not do so, as it is related in the Bible that Jesus expelled devils from the bodies of the possessed (Mt. 4:24; 8:31; 17:14-18; Mk. 1:23; 5:2; 9:14-27; Lk. 8:27-39; 9:37-42), as did the Apostles (Lk. 9:1; Acts.16:16; 19:12). Perhaps a typical defence is that of Father Noel Taillepied, who mocked those who viewed demonic possession as ‘sickness, lunacy and melancholic humours of the body.’ This issue is treated at the beginning of his *A Treatise of Ghosts*. Demonic possession in particular is discussed in *Malleus Maleficarum*, Part.II. Qn.I. chap. 10. Reginald Scot denied this, however, claiming that the seven devils were but the seven deadly sins, on which see *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, III. xiv, 367. On the manner how the possessed behave in the Bible, see Di Nola, 201.

¹ Pineas, 160.

² *Erasmus-Luther*, 42.

³ *Malleus Maleficarum* Part I, Question 7, 48.

⁴ Cox, 70.

⁵ *ST* 3.49.2. See Kelly, *Satan: A Biography*, 248.

⁶ As quoted in Meissner, 349.

⁷ Reference may also be made to a commentary in the *Malleus Maleficarum*: “This can only be done by the permission and indeed by the power of God, and that this is only done in order to correct or to punish, but that God very often allows devils to act as His ministers and His servants, but throughout all it is God alone who can afflict and it is He alone who can heal, for “I kill and I make alive” (Deuteronomy xxxii, 39), I, Qn.1, 8. Elsewhere: “No doubt the devil, owing to his malice which he harbours against the human race, would destroy mankind if he were allowed by God to do so. The fact that God allows him to sometimes to do harm and that sometimes God hinders and prevents him, manifestly brings the devil into more open contempt and loathing, since in all things, in the manifestation of His glory, God is using the devil, unwilling though he be, as a servant and slave,” I, Qn.1, 10.

devil.¹ Saul was given powers to pursue Christians by Annas and Caiaphas, two prelates who considered Belial's agents.

In this chapter we are again confronted with the issue whether sin arises from within or comes from the outside. This matter was touched on in a previous chapter, in the question concerning sin and devils of the Corpus Christi Cycle. In that discussion, it seemed that the devil has no power over the soul. We shall have to face the same problem again later, when we consider Faustus and Mephostophiles.

In the moralities, we confront the issue of the devil's confinement or liberty. Like the devils in the mystery plays, the "ffendis" in *The Pride of Life*, line 96 "takith the soule" of men. Satan is not yet bound in the Digby *Mary Magdalen*, since he comes together with other devils on earth to burn Simon's house down, saying to his servants: "Now to hell lett vs synkyn als, / To ower felaws blake." Belial in *Saint Paul* seriously suggests that he should be incarcerated in hell, for he relies on his agents as successful tempters on earth. This is not the case with the devil in *Wisdom*. Here, we encounter Lucifer, who is tireless in his efforts to defile man's soul, yet in order to achieve his goal he approaches as a "prowd galonte" (often condemned as a great sinner, accused of pride) or courtier, thus in disguise – a device that belongs to the Vice tradition as well, where he appears under the cloak of virtue.² In *The World and the Child*, Lucifer is to dwell in hell until doomsday,³ but this is obviously not the case with the devil in *The Disobedient Child*, who says that

And yet for all this, my nature is such
That I am not pleased with this company,
But out of my kyngdome I must walke muche
That one or other I maye take tardye (*emphasis mine*)

That the devil is not entrapped in hell is also testified through his presence at the deathbed in W. Wager's *Enough is as Good as a Feast*.⁴ One could perhaps sum up the whole matter with the explanation offered by Father Taillepied in his *A Treatise of Ghosts*:

As for the evil Angels, although they are all irrevocably consigned to the bottomless pit, nevertheless they are not all strictly confined below in this dispensation, for God permits evil Spirits to hover abroad in the foul murky air, and they bring hell to earth. After the thousand years be finished, Satan

¹ The other Biblical Saul, the first king of the land of Israel, was actually possessed by an evil spirit.

² This motif is already present in Prudentius' *Psyxhomachia*, in the figures Avaritia and Discordia. See Hentschel, 35.

³ *The World and the Child*, 173.

⁴ Such a notion has already been spotted in the mystery plays. On the sight of devils that appear at death in medieval literature see also *The Pricke of Conscience* (ca. 1340); *The Aeynbite of Inwit, Gesta Romanorum*, "Debate of the Body and the Soul," *The Gast of Guy*, as illuminated by Theodore Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy* (New York, 1960), 9.

must be loosed a little time, and by God's permission, he shall go forth and seduce the nations, chap. XVII, 116.

In the later interludes the devil becomes more and more dependent on the Vice figure, however, who takes over his function as a tempter. Here, it ought to be emphasised that the devil cannot roam about on earth not because he is entrapped in hell, but because he fears he is too ugly to seduce anybody. The later interludes, therefore, deprive Satan of his talent as a shapeshifter. No longer does he appear in various guises or in human form, as was the case in Old English homiletic and didactic literature. In fact, he is no longer associated with humans on the stage; therefore, his role as a dramatic figure in the interludes becomes negligible.

4.3. The World, the Flesh and the Devil

In the oldest of the three "Macro Plays," *The Castle of Perseverance*, it is clear from the outset that man has three enemies in his spiritual warfare: "The Worlde, the Flesche, and the Fende."¹ In *The Castle of Perseverance*, the devil Belial² is introduced sitting on his scaffold.³ He engages in debates and dialogues with the World and the Flesh, all boasting of their power and scheming evil for Mankind. Probably the best definition of their function is given by the personification Flesh when it says "Þe Werld, þe Flesch, and þe Devyl are knowe/Grete lordys, as we wel owe,/And þorwe Mankynd we settyn and sowe/ Þe dedly synnys seuene," line 1006. Normally, the devil has power over the world⁴ and the flesh⁵ and is our ultimate enemy. There are some discernible indications of this idea in the extant plays. For example, W. Habicht has pointed out that Lucifer in *Wisdom* and Titivillus in *Mankind* function as bearers of the idea of the world. A part of Lucifer's persuasive argument is the invitation to follow earthliness. "Be in

¹ *Wisdom*, line 294. This observation is also carried on in the Protestant belief. "Wir bitten Gott, daß uns der Teufel, die Welt und unser Fleisch nicht betrüge und verführe." As quoted in Haag, *Teufelsglaube*, 87 n 95.

² In pseudepigraphic literature, Belial is especially well-attested as the proper name of the devil, the powerful opponent of God, who accuses people and causes them to sin. It is explained in *Malleus Maleficarum* that Belial means "Without Yoke or Master; for he can fight against him to whom he should be subject," 30.

³ Conventionally on the north pole.

⁴ "The world represents people, religions, governments, or worldly systems that oppose Christ. The world that rejects the truth of Christ is under the control or deception of the god of this world, which is the devil." See http://www.battleinchrist.com/why_the_world_flesh_devil_in_spiritual_warfare.htm. Cf. 1 Jn. 2:16; 5:19; 2Co 4:4; Acts 26:18. In 1 Jo 4:6 stands: "For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world."

⁵ Arthur Golding points out that the flesh is prone to "filthy lust," and the filthy pleasures of the flesh defile our souls. It is "frail, filthy, weak and born to die, as made of earthly dross." If we "suffer fleshly lusts [...] then are we beasts." It is further stated that "The flesh is the fallen, natural, carnal state in which we are born, or our sinful nature that seeks to satisfy its own lusts and expresses itself in our thoughts and actions in a way that opposes the spiritual nature and life of God." See http://www.battleinchrist.com/why_the_world_flesh_devil_in_spiritual_warfare.htm.

It is written about the flesh in Rom 7:25, Col 2:11, Col 2:13, Phi 3:3, Gal 5:24, Rom 6:6, Gal 5:17, Gal 6:8, Gal 5:19-21. In Eph 6:12 it is written: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

þe worlde,”¹ he says often. Titivillus, Habicht further argues, functions as the avenger of New-Guise, Now-a-Days and Nought, who in turn are equated with the world: “The New-gyse, Now-a-dayis, Nowgth, þe ‘world’ we may hem call,” 878.² Mankind calls his flesh a stinking dunghill, and we have seen that scatology is associated with the devil³ and that stench is often mentioned as his accompaniment. Titivillus’ primary aim is to let the flesh triumph over the spirit. Such a notion is even explicitly mentioned in *The Disobedient Child*, when the devil declares that the world is his son, the flesh his daughter and that his allurements are covetousness, wrath, pride, lechery, gluttony, envy and murder.⁴

In *The Castle of Perseverance*, however, Belial forms the trinity together with Mundus (the World) and Caro (the Flesh). The swaggering Belial in *The Conversion of Saint Paul* reappears in *The Castle of Perseverance*, lines 850-853. Here, Belial introduces himself with an informative monologue:

Now I sytte, Satanas, in my sad synne,
As deuyll dowty, in draf asa drake.
I champe and I chafe, I choke on my chynne,
I am boystows and bold, as Belyal þe blake, lines 196-200.

He grips men in a sure grasp and is fully annoyed “unless men be destroyed.”⁵ The World and the Flesh are in this regard to be understood as external subjective forces which in reality belong to man personally; they are the motives and impulses of man’s own heart which “were taken from him, and, clothed in flesh and blood, given him again for companions.”⁶ Their mode of enticement differs, though. The World is coveted for its riches, and Flesh says: “I byde as a brod brustun-gutte abouyn on þese tourys/Euerybody is þe betyr þat to myn byddynges bent,” lines 235-6. The devil, in contrast, frightens people, lines 196-234. In *The Castle of Perseverance* the World’s courtiers are Pleasure, Folly and Vainglory. Backbiter is also World’s courtier, who promises to turn Mankind over to the Seven Deadly Sins. Covetousness, one of the Seven Deadly Sins, belongs to the World, while Gluttony, Lechery and Sloth belong to the Flesh. Belial is the overlord of Pride, Wrath and Envy.⁷ In *Mary Magdalen*, the World is accompanied by Pride and Covetousness; Flesh is the lord of Sloth, Gluttony and Lechery whereas Wrath and

¹ Lines 442; 464; 501.

² See Habicht, 37.

³ On the matter see John W. Velz, “Scatology and Moral Meaning in Two English Renaissance Plays”, *South Central Review*, vol. 1, no. 1/2 (Spring - Summer, 1984), 4-21.

⁴ For more proof, see Rudwin’s two chapters entitled “The Devil, the World and the Flesh” in Maximilian Josef Rudwin, *The Devil in Legend and Literature* (New York, 1970 [1931]), 243-271.

⁵ Lines 50-52.

⁶ Thompson, 315.

⁷ The same constellation appears in the poem *Jesu, Mercy for My Misdeeds*. In *Malleus Maleficarum* it is said that the devils’ spiritual sins are pride, envy, and wrath, I, Qn 3, 23.

Envy belong to the devil. They all share the same interest, namely that Mary Magdalene “at þe last may com to helle,” line 433.

What is perceivable is thereby a certain movement of the principle of antagonism between good and evil: whereas the devil assumed the sole role of an antagonist of mankind, the moralities introduced the World and the Flesh, two abstract evil figures, as further enemies. The devil shares his function with these allegorical figures. In later moralities, he will even hand over his function to other adversaries of God.

At this stage of the present study, the World takes priority over the other two overlords. The Bad Angel advises Mankind to serve the World. Although Reason warns the audience of the three chief enemies of the soul, it is to the World that Man, as utterly innocent, is first introduced in *Nature*. Here, the role of Mundus as a tempter is continued, but only up to the very moment Innocency is dismissed, when he disappears from the play. In *The World and the Child* or *Mundus et Infans*, a play that like *The Castle of Perseverance* treats Man’s life from childhood to old age, Mundus announces himself as master of man and is apparently the ruler of the Seven Deadly Sins.¹ In general, however, Mundus, as the dramatic tempting figure, embodies the world of pride, avarice and lust. Mundus gives the new-born child food and clothes and names him Wanton or Dalliance. When Wanton returns to the World at the age of fourteen, the latter gives him the name of Lust and Licking. Finally, at the age of twenty-one Wanton receives the name Manhood from Mundus and is counselled to follow the Seven Kings. We have seen that Lucifer’s apostasy from God has been judged an act of stupidity and is therefore somewhat inevitably associated with comedy. Here, a similar formula has been adopted. Namely, in following earthly pleasures man alienates himself from God. Wordly vanity; earthly things; transitory, false, vain pleasure; blindness and vanity of this world - call it what you will - in pursuing it, man acts foolishly since thereby he leads an abominable life. It does not come as a surprise that “Folye is felowe with the Worlde.”² Man is blinded by this very folly, which in turn worldly vanity. This is to be blamed, so the vanity of worldly worship becomes a theme of the later interludes as well. What the world represents is vividly described in one of Lydgate’s poems, “On Worldly Worship”:

Worldly worship is ioye transitory,
Vnsure assuraunce, highnes declineable,
Vayne gloryous gladnes, flattery proditory,
Disceyt disceyvous ful dissymulable,
To mannys soule most preiudiciable,

¹ On the poem “The Mirror of the Periods of Man’s Life” as a source for the play, see H. N. MacCracken, “A Source of *Mundus et Infans*.”

² *Mundus et Infans*, 619.

In whiche who hym most surely assurith
In most vnsuerte perilously endurith.¹

4.4. The Seven Deadly Sins – The Seven Devils’ Assistants?

He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning (1 John 3:8).

I have argued that the devil is not a personification but physically present as an independent character, a concrete creature; hence, somewhat curiously, in the moralities a mythological figure – or rather, a concretely historical figure, in the Christian mythos – and personified vices mingle. Yet it appears that he is not out of place after all. He was adopted as contributory to the dramatic presentation of the moral combat, because he was very alive in medieval and later thought and because as a dramatic figure he responded to the taste of people until the Vice figure appeared. The devil in the plays is real; he is not what Ph. Schmidt would call “die metaphysische Personifikation einer in ihren wahren innerlich-psychologischen Gründen nicht erkannten bösen Macht im Menschen selbst.”²

In some of the extant morality plays, the Seven Deadly Sins, Pride, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Luxury, Avarice and Gluttony³ are directly linked to the devil as agents that carry out his assault upon man or that as military figures lay siege to the fortress of the human soul. The devil’s presence in the moralities should not surprise us because sin and the devil are closely connected: the devil was understood as the father of sin. *Superbia* was often regarded as the queen of the seven sins, and we see that pride is almost always linked to the devil. In Henry Medwall’s *Nature*, Pride is described as “The sweetest darling of the devil of hell,” 81. In *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, Covetous says: “Covetous (saith the wise man) is the root of all evil:/Therefore, Covetous is the chiefest that cometh from the devil, lines 433-34.

As P. Dendle has pointed out, “demonic instigation mentioned in the Middle Ages is assumed, stated flatly, and passed over, rather than described, analysed, or evaluated.”⁴ The problem I see is whether the agents of evil in the early moralities are nonentities, sheer personifications, or whether at least some dramatists considered sins as objective beings and

¹ *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed- Henry Noble MacCracken, part II (London, 1997 [1934]), 709.

² Schmidt, *Der Teufels- und Daemonenglaube in Caesarius*, 30.

³ Gregory the Great is considered the author of the seven deadly sins formula, which gained acceptance by the thirteenth century scholasticism, although not without modifying the order into *superbia* (Pride), *avaritia* (Greed), *luxuria* (Lust), *ira* (Wrath), *gula* (Gluttony), *invidia* (Envy) and *acedia* (Sloth). According to Cassian, pride is the root and origin of sins, and Gregory imagined the seven sins as springing from the poisonous root of pride and attacking us as an army. Bloomfield, 72. The expression “Seven Deadly Sins” suggests that these sins are so heavy that, once committed, they inevitably lead to death and at the same time to the eternal torments of hell. This must not be the case, because even these sins can be forgiven through repentance and penance. See Grübel, 178.

⁴ Dendle, 31.

believed that individual sins in the form of demons could enter human bodies. In other words, there are indications that these evil dramatic figures ought not to be viewed as mere allegories which come from within but as spirits that function from the outside. The previously discussed medieval notion that the devil is incorporeal, that the air is full of demons who roam throughout the world, mirror Peter Lombard's notion that the innumerable devils live in the "Foggy Air" descending from the air to earth to tempt humanity.¹

To be more specific, the sins were considered spirits in the pseudepigraphal Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.² In some of Ælfric's sermons sins are interpreted as devils. In *Byrhtferth's Manual* (1011), the Seven Deadly Sins are described as pestilences of the devil.³ In some of the Old English sermons the sins are devil's weapons.⁴ It should be remembered that the devil was often understood as the father of the seven deadly sins.⁵ In some thirteenth century poems, for example, sins are conceived as Satan's children and compared to related animal forms. Here one might even recall the folkloric notion that the devil has a family, including seven daughters, the Seven Cardinal Sins, or two children, Death and Sin, whose incest in turn produces the seven vices.⁶ They are also identified as devils in W.O. Ross' collection of sermons.⁷ In a sermon entitled *Von zwelf jucherren des tiuvels*, Bertold of Regensburg preached that the devil authorised the seven deadly sins to collect souls down to hell after he had been bound by Christ.⁸ John Felton preached that three demons invited a man to follow them: Asmodeus, who incites gluttony, sloth and lechery, Mammon, who incites covetousness and avarice and Lucifer, who incites wrath and pride. Each has his own army.⁹

We do see, however, that in *The Castle of Perseverance*, Pride, Wrath, and Envy are called "the deuelys chyldryn thre" and that Satan calls Wrath and Envy "my knyhtys so stowth," line 373 in the Digby *Mary Magdalen*. The Seven Deadly Sins are called "the seuyn prynsys of hell," line 324. Clearly, in this play Satan, the "prynsse of pryde" is the originator of evil.¹⁰ He commissions the Bad Angel and the Seven Deadly Sins to debouch Mary. The devil literally says to Lechery: "entyr hyr [Mary Magdalene's] person be þe labor of lechery, /þat she at þe last may

¹ Kelly, *Satan: A Biography*, 238.

² Bloomfield, 44.

³ Morton W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins* (Michigan, 1967 [1952]), 114.

⁴ Bloomfield, 109; 110; 118;

⁵ Hereby the seven deadly sins are not to be confused with the fallen angels.

⁶ See also Russell, *Lucifer*, 77. In Gower's *Mirour de l'omme* the two children of the devil, Sin and Death, marry and produce seven daughters, "Orguil, Envye, Ire, Avarice, Accide, Glotonie, and Leccherie. Satan, enormously pleased with his grandchildren, sends them all over the world so as to win man over to his side." See Bloomfield, 194.

⁷ *Middle English Sermons*, ed. Woodburn Overstreet Ross (Oxford UP), 1940.

⁸ Grübel, 190.

⁹ Alan J. Fletcher, *Preaching, Politics and Poetry in late-Medieval England* (Dublin, 1988), 74.

¹⁰ See also Cushman, 47.

com to helle,” line 105. Eventually, the “seven bad spirits cast out of Mary Magdalene are in turn interpreted as the Seven Sins.”¹ This is confirmed in the stage direction that reads, *and al þe Seuen Dedly Synnys xal be conveyyd into þe howse of Symont Leprovs, þey xal be arayyd lyke seuen dylf [...]*. In *The Conversion of Saint Paul* the Seven Deadly Sins are referred to by Belial as spirits:

[...] as for concupiscence,
 (He) reigneth as a lord through my violence;
 Glutony and wrath every man doth devise
 And most now is praiséd my cousin Covetise, lines 493-495.

In *All for Money*, Satan summons his sons Gluttony and Pride, who are “dressed in devils apparel,” line 384. When they all make their exit, the stage direction reads: *Here all the devils depart*. Also, in *Virtuous and Godly Susanna*, Ill Report narrates how Satan sought to blind Susanna’s youthful heart with pride. Then he sought to blind her fancies with gluttony. Subsequently, he forced her to have an envious heart, followed by letting his servant sloth trail her. Ultimately, Satan gave her gold to make her covetous.

It is important to note that the Seven Deadly Sins link our world and hell.² In the early moralities, the members of the monarchical trinity contact with humans only through their subalterns; the World, the Flesh, and the Devil are located in a transcendental world.³ Belial’s elbow room, for example, is limited to hell.

These few examples demonstrate that the dramatists might have considered the Seven Deadly Sins as evil spirits or vice-demons.⁴ I am not arguing that this conviction is generally applicable to all moral plays; however, bearing in mind that mankind is a universalized type who fraternizes with his personal attributes in the dramatised *Psychomachia*.⁵ In trying to discover what is eventually considered “devil’s work,” one should certainly not give too much weight to the devil’s role as an internal tempter. His power is limited and his task is subdivided and handed over to other dramatic figures. However, it may well be that in the aforementioned plays the sins are not treated with freedom from the devils.

¹ Vatter, 101. In fact, it was Gregory the Great who interpreted “the seven devils which were cast out of Mary Magdalene as the “*universa vitia*””. Bloomfield, 73. The problem which we meet here is that then we cannot really speak of demonical possession taken in its proper sense, as already noted in an earlier chapter.

² See the introductory note in *Four Tudor Interludes*, ed. J.A.B. Somerset (London, 1974), 18.

³ Bomke, 175.

⁴ H. Craig made a generalisation that the abstract vices and sins are agents of Satan. Hardin Craig, “Morality Plays and Elizabethan Drama”, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Apr., 1950), 64. Also, R. Pineas speaks of the vices as disciples of Satan. See Pineas, *The English Morality Play*, 164. Ramsay regards Despair and Mischief in *Magnyfycence* as devils, clxx.

⁵ Spivack, 93. On the course of Prudentius’ *Psychomachia* through medieval literature, see Thompson, 320-333.

II The Vice

1. The Vices

It is important to keep in mind that sin and vice are not the same. Jesus described sin as follows: “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man ‘unclean’”.¹ The works of the flesh are contrasted with the Fruits of the Spirit in Paul: “The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.”² By the repetition of the same sins, sin can lead to vices.³ St. Augustine wrote that “Whatever is lacking for a thing’s natural perfection may be called a vice.”⁴ By definition in the Catholic catechism, “vices are bad habits and can be classified according to the virtues they oppose or by linking them to the capital sins.”⁵ Vices “are regarded as a weakness in the nature of man which preceded actual sin, and further, that it was this weakness which provoked man’s consent to sin”;⁶ vices oppose the good of virtue and lead to more sins.

As can be imagined, the vices as dramatic figures are abstractions put on feet. They are basic human aspects, personifications of attitude, who are as such allowed to interact with other figures. Normally, they live up to their definition and are acting according to their abstract idea. Gradually, however, they step out of their predetermined scope of action, acquiring a certain degree of roundness. That is to say, over a number of years, the vices would change from allegory into types and from types to individuals.

Regarding the representatives of evil in the miracle plays and pre-Reformation morality plays, I have referred to the devil sharing his function as a tempter with (or entirely giving up this role to) other allegorical figures and yet another supernatural entity, the Bad Angel. It has also been observed that the allegorical evil figures are the World, the Flesh, the Seven Deadly Sins and vices. As has been shown in the preceding chapter, in some plays the Seven Deadly Sins are linked to the supernatural inasmuch as they are sent by the devil to tempt humanity and are considered as evil spirits or evil thoughts inserted into man’s mind by the devil, thus externalising on stage his operation as an internal tempter. Ever since Prudentius the task of the

¹ Matthew 15:19-20.

² Galatians 5:19-21.

³ *ST II*, 1, qu. 71, art. 6.

⁴ *De Lib. Arb.* Iii.

⁵ This can be found online:<http://www.catholic.org.uk/library/catechism/sinandvices.shtml>.

⁶ Allison, “Paternoster Play and the Origin of the Vices,” 4.

Seven Deadly Sins has been chiefly to battle the Seven Virtues, but this concept is not always followed in the texts.

The last groups of evil to be considered are the vices. Some we have already encountered: Mischief, New-Guise, Now-a-Days and Nought (*Mankind*), Folly, the World and the Flesh, who in the broadest sense may be safely looked upon as vices. What all these characters have in common first and foremost is tempting humanity. Thereby sermons and non-dramatic contemporary literature do not always distinguish between the Seven Deadly Sins and the vices, i. e. the Seven Deadly Sins may be called vices. In the main, however, the distinction between sins and vices is preserved in the early moralities.¹ T. E. Allison's research has already shown that evil forces apart from the Seven Deadly Sins operate in the early moralities, their function being "to win the consent of Mankind to the Seven Deadly Sins."² These "lesser vices," she argues, are predecessors of the sins. In other words, their task is to lead man into a state of sin. As a matter of fact, they are tempters of man whereas the sins oppose the virtues.³ D. C. Boughner has also remarked that in "the English plays the sinister figures called Vices were the servants of the Seven Deadly Sins."⁴ The vices are thus tempters of humanity and servants of the Seven Deadly Sins. The following analysis is concerned with this group. Even though these dramatic figures are not designated with the name "vice," they are clearly recognizable as such. I shall call them by this name, simply because they are vices in their moral sense.

In *The Castle of Perseverance*, the task of the vices Lust-Liking and Folly is to ready Mankind to serve the World. Lust-Liking informs us that whoever is ruled by Folly is drawn to the Seven Deadly Sins, lines 486-88. In a direct address to the audience, he claims didactic purpose, speaking about the perils richness may bring, lines 491-504. Folly is to distract Humanum Genus from thinking of God and cause him to have folly in his mind in his stead. Backbiter too, promises to the World that he shall turn Humanum Genus to the Seven Deadly Sins, line 687.⁵ He further explains his very nature in a report. Backbiter is a liar; he says nasty things about a person while that person is not present: "To speke fayre beform and fowle

¹ This is not the always the case in later interludes. John Bale calls the Seven Deadly Sins "vyces seven" (*Three Laws*, line 1080). The Vice can also be called Covetous or simply Sin. In *New Custom*, Sloth is called vice instead of sin, 168, Envy is the Vice in *Impatient Poverty*, Avarice is the Vice in *Respublica*, etc. The Vice, thus, can also represent a chief sin.

² See Tempe E Allison, "The Paternoster Play and the Origin of the Vices", *PMLA*, vol. 39, no. 4 (Dec., 1924), 798. Their function is thus similar to that of the devil. Luther said that "Unszer feindt sucht uns [...] Das ist, alle unser glyde und synnen, inwendig mit bosem eingeben [...] reyzet, beweget [...] tzu unkeuscheit, tzorn, geytz und derglychen" (2,123, 12 (1519)), as quoted in Barth, 126.

³ R. Withington, "Development of the Vice," 158.

⁴ Daniel C. Boughner, *The Braggart in Renaissance Comedy: A Study in Comparative Drama from Aristophanes to Shakespeare*, Connecticut (1970 [1954]), 146.

⁵ This personification is also to be found in the N-Town *Trial of Mary and Joseph* as "Bakbytere" or Secundus Detractor. Together with another abstraction called Raise Slander he is operating as a defamer.

behynde,” 664. Eventually he is employed as *Humanum Genus*’ page and introduces him to one of the seven sins – Covetousness. He is maliciously delighted at the fruits his slanders have borne, for Belial, the World and the Flesh mercilessly beat up their retainers after finding out from Backbiter that they have failed in their corruption efforts. It ought to be emphasised, however, that their primary aim is “to cachyn Mankynde/ To þe Devyl of hell,” line 982.¹

Leading Mankind to the Seven Deadly Sins is not strictly the task of the vices in *Mankind*, yet they nevertheless lead their victim to a life of excesses and tempt him to hang himself, quite unlike *Nature*, where Sensuality acquaints Man with Pride, and narrates later how Man “hath called to his favour and acquaintance [...] Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, and Covetise,/ Sloth and Lechery,” 81.

1.1. The Single Vice Figure and the Seven Deadly Sins

With good reason, T. E. Allison sees the single Vice of the later interludes as the fusion of these minor vices. Still, there is more to it, and Allison, based on this assumption, somewhat hastily proceeds to refute Cushman’s theory that the Vice derives from the morality play – that he is what his name implies, “an allegorical representation of human weaknesses and vices, in short the summation of the Deadly Sins.”² As we shall see, the Vice figure is more than just that, even though gradually in the moralities the Seven Deadly Sins would merge together in one allegorical figure, the ‘Vice.’ L. W. Cushman’s theory that the Vice derives from the Seven Deadly Sins does not appear out of date after all, even though I shall argue in a later chapter against his view that the Vice is not derived from the devil. In *Mundus et Infans*, for example, the Seven Deadly Sins (Seven Kings) are compressed into the character Folly:

Manhood. Folly! what thing callest thou folly?
Conscience: Sir, it is pride, wrath, and envy,
 Sloth, covetise, and gluttony,
 Lechery the seventh is:
 These seven sins I call folly, 176.

In *All for Money*, the Vice of the play, Sin, says to the Seven Deadly Sins: “As either of you contain sin particularly,/ Even so I contain sins generally,” 458. In Wager’s *Mary Magdalene*,³ Carnal Concupiscence says that he is a summation of all sorts of vices:

¹ Cf. the speech of Luxuria, even though he is Flesh’s courtier, or the speech of Folly, who utters that he shall please Mankind “tyl þat he rewe/ In hell to hangyn hye,” 722.

² Cushman, 63, 68; Allison, 798-804.

³ Hereafter referred to as *Mary Magdalene*². In Bale’s *Three Laws*, Ambitio for example also says: “I oppen hell, By my counsel, / Maynteynyng every vyce,” lines 1081-2.

With my selfe you know that I contain a sort,
 Whiche by name before you here I will report.
 My name is carnal concupiscence of desire,
 Which all the pleasures of the fleshe doth require [...]
 I containe in my selfe all kind of lecherie,
 Fornication, whoredom, and wicked adulterie,
 Rape, incest, sacrilege, softnesse, and bestialitie,
 Blyndnesse of mynde, with euery suche qualitie,
 In constancie, headinesse, and inconsideration [...]

To this, Cupidity says:

With thee I may boldly compare I trow,
 For as many vices in me as in thee do grow,
 You know that my name is called Cupiditie,
 Whom Scripture calleth the roote of all iniquitie,
 Infidelitie in dede is the seede of all syn,
 But cupidity openeth the gate, and letteth hym in:
 I containe theft, deceate in sellying and bying,
 Puriurie, rapine, dissimulation, and lying.
 Hardinesse of heart otherwise called inhumanities
 Inquietnesse of mynde falshode and vanitie
 In me is all vengeance enuie rankor an yre,
 Murder, warre, treason, and gredie desire.

How can this be explained? To an extent, as the vices represented in the quotations do, the Vice conflates the Seven Deadly Sins and shows up as their allegorical representation.¹ The Vice, as illustrated above, is indeed an embodiment of the Seven Deadly Sins. Not only is he understood in some plays as a summation of them,² but he also has many dramatic characteristics in common with them, especially in his role as virtue's sworn foe and in his function as a tempter. They falsely pass themselves off as trustworthy. "On us t[w]o he may truste, / And levyn lovely, I trowe."³ Voluptas and Detractio are both flatterers. In the Digby *Mary Magdalene* for instance, a female Lechery tempts Mary with flattery, while Luxuria wishes to be employed as Mary's servant. She also urges Mary to abandon sorrow and "Prynt yow in sportys which best doth yow plese!"(459). Luxuria leads Mary to an inn where she contemplates intoxicating her and introducing her to other low characters. Subsequently, Pride, called Curiosity, as a young gallant dressed in the latest fashion, is successful in chatting Mary up. As we shall see, the Vice is also proficient in all the fields listed above.

¹ This is reminiscent of the Antichrist in Irenaeus (haer. V. 29. 2.), who embodies all wickedness. The passage can be found in Jenks' *Antichrist*, 51-52.

² My thinking is distinguished from that of H. S. Anderson, who argues that the Vice is not the Seven Deadly Sins, 253.

³ Voluptas in the *Castle of Perseverance*, 511.

1.2. The Earlier Tudor Morality and Interlude: The Emergence of the Vice and the Superfluous Devil

The devil is not present in the twenty extant Tudor interludes from 1495 to 1535. Is the devil's disappearance from the English stage connected to new ideas about religion emerging from Renaissance Humanism? Did the belief in the devil cease? Was his existence questioned? I tend to see that these possibilities were fairly unlikely. Doubts concerning the devil's existence are rather modern.¹ It is likely true in general that the man of the earlier English Renaissance (and thereafter. There are exceptions, of course) believed in the devil and the power of Satan. Although humanists did not ask as many speculative questions about the devil's existence, they did not deny his existence. Disbelief in the existence of the devil is not expressed in the works of the humanist Thomas More, a devout Catholic and defender of the Catholic faith who, in brief, believed that the devil could "do marvels," albeit God "suffereth ye deuill somtyme to delude with wonders & meruallys"² and laments that many cannot easily discern what is God's miracle and what is the devil's work, 95. He condemns necromancy, as it is forbidden by God; he believes that "the deuill dysceyueth" common people "in theyr blynde affeccyons" 123; and he mentions hell, cacodamens, Gehenna and other devilish things.

But what exactly happened to the devil between "medieval religious" and "modern secular" drama? The reason for his disappearance is to be sought first in the rise of Humanism. As we have seen, his existence was not denied, but, a more prominent role is given to man himself. In comparing diverse texts by More, one finds that he often used the devil as a metaphor for vice, as in his prose work *The History of King Richard III* (ca. 1513): "Such a pestilente serpente is ambicion and desire of vaigne glorye and souerainty, whiche amonge states where he once entred crepeth forth so farre, tyll with deuision and variaunce hee turneth all to mischefe," 12;³ or again he writes "[...] in lytell whyle after the dampnable spyryte of pryde that vnaware to them self lurked in their hartys / hath begonne to put out his hornis and shew hym selfe."⁴ Thomas More does not ascribe Richard's viciousness to the devil, only once employing the epithet that there was never "a tyrant yet so deuillish," 37; rather, he endeavoured to show "what manner of man" Richard III was, "that coulde fynde in his hearte, so muche mischief to conceiue," 6. His chief interest lay in man's nature.

¹ The existence of the devil and hell was denied by Italian Anabaptists, as voiced at synod of 1550 in Venice. But, as Russell writes, "both Protestants and Catholics took such harsh measures against its skepticism that it was scarcely heard." See Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 49.

² *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, 243. Page numbers refer to *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, vol. 6, *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, ed. Thomas M. C. Lawler (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1981).

³ Page numbers refer to *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, vol. 2, *The History of King Richard III*, ed. Richard S. Sylvester (New Haven and London: Yale UP), 1963.

⁴ *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, 123.

As already touched on, More did not deny the existence of the devil, but in this regard the parts are somewhat redistributed. The devil contributes a small part to the corruption of the soul, while the vice contributes “for the more parte.” Granted, Adam and Eve break the third commandment at the subtle suasion of the devil, 139, says More, but while reason showed Adam and Eve what was honest and profitable, sensuality shows “what was bestly and pleasaunte / which sensualityte laboured soo busyly to cause man to set by delyte aboue good and conuenyente / that for the resystence thereof/ it then bycame to be the spyrytuall busynesse and occupation of man,” 139. Adam and Eve could have ruled and bridled sensuality by reason, which they did not. Thereby it is interesting to observe how in discussing original sin Thomas More talks of the vice using personification as a figure of speech. He narrates how pride sprang out of the soul and, fascinated by itself, began to envy, whereupon it sought to ensnare people and to secure their loyalty out of covetousness and greed. In doing so, Envy could rely on Sensuality as his loyal minister, whom he could send to the soul of man, making it plain that the devil assists sin to some degree. Similarly God would assist reason “with his ayde and grace,” 140, but noticeably only there where “he founde the person wyllynge to worke therewith,” 140. It follows that a more prominent role is given to the vice.

But who or rather what is the Vice and what was achieved with his insertion? At this point, it should be necessary to bring our attention to the manners of man and his propensity for doing evil. The foundations are reason and free will. This is not to say that they were lacking in the early moralities, but the stress laid on reason and free will made the devil “to get off to sleep” and made him “wake up” as a chiefly comical figure in the later interludes. I return to this issue below. This also shows how the interludes are very unlike the early moralities. While the early moralities emphasised temptation, sin and penance and sharply contrasted vices and virtues, the interludes introduced human blindness and folly caused by vices, ascribing to the *Humanum Genus* figure a more active role (quite in the manner of the active spirit of the Renaissance) than the passive one exhibited in the medieval world, where he was subject to the dualistic conflicts of good and evil, soul and body, reason and sensuality. Let us observe the interludes of the first third of the sixteenth century.¹ Here, it is utterly out of question that the main protagonist is bewitched, seized by Satanic possession or even tempted by the devil. Rather, the poets, “finding in man generally much to reprove & litle to praise,”² replaced one evil with another. In other words, supernatural temptation is replaced by self-deception. From this time onwards we see that the Vice, the external abstraction, tempts man. So, what is the Vice doing?

¹ These are the anonymous *The World and the Child* (1508), *Hickscorner* (1513) and *Youth* (1520), Skelton's *Magnyfycence* (1515) and John Rastell's *The Four Elements* (1517).

² Puttenham, *Art of Poesie* (1589), 25.

The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing discussion is that each man is endowed with reason. Reason is man's natural disposition; reason is provided by nature. Nature is, under God, the chief goddess. By the aid of "Dame Nature," as she is called by Lydgate, man "passeth beasts in reason."¹ Through reason and understanding man goes the way of virtue. That is to say, reason "causeth man [...] to go the ryghte way."² By reason, man also has the intelligence to seek for things divine and spiritual. Since this is so, reason's road can lead to heaven.³ Accordingly, man should rule himself by reason only.⁴ But how does man wander from this way? Man takes life into his own hands due to false reasoning and self-deception:

Many fallyth in great peryll and damage
And greuous deth by the vyce of folysshness
Ship of Fools, 153 (*emphasis mine*)

The presence of the Vice means that man blinds himself, and we have to imagine that the entire action takes place within the mind of the central figure.⁵ Dramatists were thus at large interested in contemporary life, in the world of their days, in the present life of the protagonist and his mutability as it occurred in various dramatic situations that expose how evil works in him. Moreover, their aim was to teach and to delight; but mainly to teach how man may be led to virtue. The plays were supposed to work morally on the audience. This results in a shift of responsibility from the devil to man. Notwithstanding, as pointed out, the devil remained a reality for the dramatists of the More circle.⁶ Still, the humanists, as Russell has argued, simply ignored the devil.⁷ Free will is emphasised in this regard, as well as man's own responsibility for sin.

Free will is a mental faculty. Unlike the passions, reason is on the side of virtue, at least for humanists.⁸ Reason can contemplate faith in every point.⁹ Faith never goes without reason, says More, even though God's grace is of great importance and assistance, too. We cannot come to God without faith.¹⁰

¹ "Reason and Sensuallyte," p.11. All references are to *Lydgate's Reason and Sensuallyte*, ed. Ernst Sieper, *EETSES* 84, 89 (1901, 1903; reprint 1965), London, Oxford UP, 1965.

² line 673, 19.

³ line 844, 23.

⁴ line 762, 21.

⁵ Later on, I shall argue that this is not the case with all interludes. There are some plays where I believe that the Vice belongs to the devil.

⁶ On the 'More circle' see for example A. W. Reed, *Early Tudor Drama* (London, 1926).

⁷ Russell, *Lucifer*, 293.

⁸ Luther, however, considered reason an enemy to God and faith. More, on the other hand, endeavoured to prove that reason is a servant of faith.

⁹ Thomas More, *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, 128.

¹⁰ More, *Heresies*, 194.

Wherever there is lack of reason, man acts unreasonably and cannot rule himself.¹ Without reason, man does wrong, and, in doing so, gives vice its entrance. Vice is always without reason. Man is persuaded by the abstract Vice to discard reason and to follow excess. Whether or not man decides to follow the Vice, it is a possibility open to him, and unfortunately, he cannot draw a very clear line between good and bad. Thereby, man abandons reason and relies on his will. From his uninformed will he chooses wrongly to follow sensuality and overwhelm reason, corrupted by sin. A question that arises is whether every individual has unlimited degrees of freedom and, if so, whether anything in this world can curtail it?

In *De Libero Arbitrio* (1524), Erasmus takes issue with Luther's views of the human will, arguing that the Holy Scripture "contains many passages stating the obvious freedom of the human will."² Erasmus argued that man is not merely a tool of God and that human will has the power to turn away from eternal salvation. He believed that man can turn his will toward or away from grace, 29, and that man sins out of his own malice. If the knowledge of good and evil and the will of God had remained hidden from man, Erasmus argued, the wrong choice could not be imputed to man. Had the will not been free, sin could not be attributed to man. Unlike Luther, who was convinced that everything takes place by absolute necessity (*Assertio*, 36), and that God causes in us evil as well as good, 31, Erasmus believed that our reason suffered from the sin that has been passed on to us by our foreparents. But, faith heals our reason which has suffered from sin, 24.

All those "who gyde them nat by reason as creatures reasonable ought to do," says Alexander Barclay in his *The Ship of Fools*, "ar worthy to be called foles."³ This argument is also fortified in Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*. Folly argues that all emotions belong to Folly; after all, "we distinguish a wise man from a fool by this, that reason governs the one, and passion the other," 39. This Folly repeats in giving the Stoic definition: "[...] by the stoic definitions, wisdom is no other than to be governed by reason, while folly is to be moved at the whim of the passions", 22.⁴

But who are those that deserve to have a fool's hood and to come on board the Ship of Fools? The authors of the literary genre known as fool's literature went a step further, their argument going as follows: fools are all people who are full of iniquity, i.e., full of vice. That is to say, in exposing blind folly, Alexander Barclay aims to "blame all vyce."⁵ With this in mind, in increasing his folly man is given to villainy and prone to all sins. When it is said that man is "blynde" and that he has blinded his mind with folly, read that he "is doing foolishly" in

¹ *The Life and Death of Will Summers*, 2.

² Line 13, 20.

³ Sebastian Brant and Alexander Barclay, *Ship of Fools* (Kessinger Pub CO, 2007), 18.

⁴ Of course, this study of *Praise of Folly* omits the complexity of Folly in Erasmus' work.

⁵ *Ship of Fools*, 16.

following the Vice, who is making wrong seem right. Consider people with the following undesirable traits: defamers, backbiters, the ones who do not wish to follow good counsel, wild and vanton youngsters, false friends, gallants, despisers of the Holy Scripture, boasters, profit seekers, dice-cheaters, etc. Such are all fools.¹

These views about folly and vice are reflected in the early interludes (written by both Catholic humanists and non-humanists). In the humanist interlude the *Nature of the Four Elements* by John Rastell, whoever flees from reason is said to pursue folly, 50, and man's own responsibility is emphasised: "It shall be to his great trouble and torment,/ That he shall left Reason, and sued *his own folly*", 52. Accordingly, man is "put in *his own liberty*" and "the free choice is *his*", 54 (*italics mine*). Granted, sensuality is still necessary for the human being, but it is neither crucial nor does it make him a better person. Quite to the contrary, it causes man's fall into folly and "maketh him bestial", 52.

In Henry Medwall's *Nature*, Nature deposes Reason to man in order to "wean thee from th' appetite of vice", 46.² Man has free will; he has "free election [To] do what I will, be it evil or well / And am put in the hand of mine own counsel", 47. Man also follows worldliness with his free will.³ In exchange for his faithful service, the World bestows on Man worldly pleasures and renames him, as a sign of his depravity, Wanton, Love-Lust and Liking and Manhood Mighty. Likewise, in relying on his free-will and imagination, man strays from God in *Hickscorner*.

To recap, it has been observed that man's will alone is the cause of his sin. From that it follows that evil is caused by human malice; it springs from man's own wickedness,

for St. Augustine says, in Book LXXXIII, that the cause of a man's depravity lies in his own will, whether he sins at his own or at another's suggestion. 31 The cause is therefore not the devil but human will. Everyone is the cause of his own wickedness. And he reasons thus: that the sin of man proceeds from free-will, but the devil cannot destroy free-will, for this would militate against liberty: therefore the devil cannot be the cause of that or any other sin. Again, in the book of Ecclesiastic Dogma it is said: Not all our evil thoughts are stirred up by the devil, but sometimes they arise from the operation of our own judgement.⁴

The devil, argues Thomas Aquinas, is a cause of sin only by persuasion, or by proposing an object for appetite. He darkens man's reason so that it may consent to sin. The devil can also induce a person inwardly to sin. But, the devil cannot move man's will – his reason can resist. Who moves man's will to sin? Who is persuading reason to follow sin? We have seen who all these tempters were in the moralities. Hereafter, however, the Good and the Bad Angel as

¹ Thus the Elizabethan translator of Seneca's *Hercules Œtaeus*, J. S., translates the word *vitium* (vice) as 'folly': "[...] his folly frayle is cloacked by vertues name," 209.

² Henry Medwall, *Nature*, ed. John S. Farmer, Tudor Fascimile Texts, (Oxford, 1908).

³ *The World and the Child*, 164.

⁴ *Malleus Maleficarum*, I, qn 5, 31.

advisers are replaced by Reason and Sensuality; the Seven Deadly Sins are conflated to the single Vice; and emphasis is put on self-determination enforced by Humanism, which led to the disappearance of the devil in the twenty extant interludes from 1495 to 1535. In their stead, the Vice takes over the role of tempter.

The idea of the Vice and his role as a tempter require further consideration in the next chapter. All that needs to be said at present is that the Vice is a figure of evil. So far it has been shown that he is the descendant of the vices, the Seven Deadly Sins and the Bad Angel of the morality plays. His special connection to the devil, however, shall be discussed in a later chapter. It has also been shown how folly is linked to vice. The Vice, as we shall see, is going to demonstrate this and other follies on stage. This foolery is inescapably connected with comedy, to the extent that only the farcical traits of this character remains,¹ causing many critics to endorse the view that the Vice is a fool or buffoon. Under such circumstances, the Vice developed, too. The rise of low comicality² gave him a new dimension; the didactic purpose remained in the background. H. Vatter rightly observes that the Vice, as a historically undefined figure, provided greater freedom of treatment than the devil.³ This is developed by W. Griswold, who says that in the mystery plays

the role of the devil was severely constrained by biblical precedent and, even when liberties were taken, by his theological position. Dramatists could never give their inventiveness full rein with the devil, for Satan had to maintain a certain dignity, or at least seriousness, benefiting his position as God's adversary [...] The morality dramatists, having so much more freedom to shape the role of the Vice than mystery playwrights had with the devil, created an energetic, enterprising, and witty character who threatened to overshadow the allegorical point of the play altogether.⁴

Still, this is a far cry from saying that the Vice is a comical figure only. The problem is as follows: on the one hand, the Latin word *vitium* is defined by Thomas Elyot as “vyce, contrarie to vertue. Alsoo a faut or errour, also sycknes, an impedimēt.”⁵ The word ‘the vice,’ thus, is derived from Latin. On the other hand, the dramatic figure, the one with capital V – ‘the Vice’ – is defined in C. T. Onions’ *A Shakespeare Glossary* as a “comic character in the old morality plays, also called Iniquity,” 307. Samuel Johnson, in a note on Hamlet (III.iv.98 (271,9) vice of kings!) a low mimick of kings) writes that “the vice is the fool of a farce; from whom the modern *punch* is descended.”⁶ Many sixteenth-and seventeenth century comments (thus of fairly late date)

¹ Cushman, 70.

² See H.Craig, *English Religious Drama*, 380.

³ Vatter, 100.

⁴ Griswold, *City Comedy and Revenge Tragedy*, 42.

⁵ Thomas Elyot, *Dictionary*, 1538, (Menson, England, 1970).

⁶ This was questioned by Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, ii, 251. The etymology of the name *The Vice* is uncertain for some scholars, asking whether the Vice owes his name to the mask (*vis, visage*) or the Latin *vitium*. F. H. Marres, who argued that originally the Vice was not a dramatic figure at all, 24, prefers the former suggestion as

on the Vice offer similar evidence.¹ I return to this issue below, but here, suffice it to say that, while it is true that the terms ‘vice’ and ‘fool’ have been used interchangeably in the latter part of the sixteenth century in England, to this argument, it is also true that the Vice came to be remembered as Iniquity and that he developed into a Renaissance villain. Prince Hal, for example, calls Falstaff “that reverend vice, that grey iniquity” [...] “That villainous abominable misleader of youth.”² In short, the Vice is a mixture of jollity and cruelty – ‘knave and fool’ – this will also require notice in the next chapter.

The Vice may represent manifold errors but also generalised or particular vice and a more or less fully developed moral fault. The Vice usually personified some bad quality incident to human nature; because of this the Vice is given the name of Pride, Hypocrisy, Lust, Folly or any other evil propensity.³ He is the abstract term personified. Since the Vice acts on stage under these various names and nowhere refers to himself as ‘the Vice’ (neither is he addressed by this name in the play), L. W. Cushman conjectured that the term ‘the Vice’ was invented by the actors.⁴ This, I believe, is a persuasive argument.

The Vice is a transgression of some moral code and he is redefined according to the negative term he represents. We see that frequently his actions prove his nature, yet there are examples where the name of a particular Vice does not refer to the allegorical essence of his character. The Vice arose from the role envisaged for him for a particular setting, and his creation owes a great deal to the literary imagination of particular playwrights and their audience’s expectations. Moreover, the Vice is of the dramatists’ contriving. Still, he owes an enormous debt to the skills of the actors, who would not only play the part but also deliver improvised lines, gestures and actions. In addition, the Vice arose with fondness to allegory, from which a long allegorical tradition in English drama developed.

The Vice figure is chiefly existent in the interludes, which developed from the morality plays. Initially, they coexisted with the medieval forms of drama, but later, they substituted them. This change resulted from social, rather than literary reasons, given that the subject matter of the

the etymology of the Vice’s title. I, however, believe that ‘the Vice’ is taken to refer to the Latin *vitium*. This argument I intend to substantiate in the following chapter.

¹ See Phillip Stubbes, *Anatomy of Abuses* (1583): “For who will call him a wiseman, that plaieth the part of a foole and a vice?”; George Puttenham, *Art of English Poesie* (1589): “Carols and rounds and such light or lascivious poems, which are commonly more commodiously uttered by those buffoons or Vices in playes than by any other person,” Randle Cotgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611), gives the following definition for French *Mime*: “A vice, foole, ieaster, scoffer, dauncer, in a Play.” This can be found online: <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/cotgrave/632small.html>. Cf. also Tattle in Ben Johnson’s *The Staple of News*: “There was no Play without a fool and a Devil in’t,” II. Int. 5-20.

² King Henry IV, Part I (Act II, iv. 447; 456, p. 81) *The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. A. R. Humphreys (London and New York, 1985). The second line actually refers to Satan, but it may safely apply to the Vice, too.

³ Joseph Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, 135.

⁴ Cushman, 66-68.

interludes showed interest in other fields, and was therefore no longer only exclusively religious. One may even speak of secularisation in this case.

As shown, the early long plays were performed in the open air. The shorter plays, which consisted of barely 1,000 lines, such as *Mankind*, *Hickscorner* and *Youth*, were acted by travelling troupes of four or five actors. As strolling actors, they would perform the plays in different places, mostly for “town and country middle-audiences.”¹ The plays became longer after about 1500,² which resulted in group enlargement to even seven or eight actors. At that time, the term “interlude” replaced the terms “moral play” and “morality,” but it came to be used for every kind of drama, of which the origin of this term is still in dispute. The interludes cover different topics, and their aim is often explained in the title page: they were supposed to edify and entertain. The third type of plays were performed indoors – in a Tudor hall. Plays from humanist circles like *Nature*, *Fulgens and Lucrece*, *Magnificence*, *The Four Elements*, *King Johan* were performed in such a place, but indeed, many plays were written for an indoor performance that covered humanist or Reformation themes, as well as diverse social and secular subjects. There would be an acting space, a stall, also known as platea. The place was relatively small and encouraged acting close to the audience. The actors would enter either from the audience or through doors or curtains.³

As indicated earlier, various sources for the comic aspect of the Vice figure had little to do with the early moralities (and who knows how much of his comicality has been drawn from life), but the material for his role as tempter was chiefly provided by Biblical and theatrical sources. Putting it all together, the Vice has many ancestors. To quote F. P. Wilson:

[...] the Vice has more ancestors than can be counted on the fingers of one hand. He is descended from the domestic fool; from the devils and the vices in earlier moralities, characters like Tutivillus and his underlings in *Mankind*; from characters like Mirth, the king’s messenger in *The Pride of Life*; from servant boys like Pikeharness in the Wakefield ‘Killing of Abel’ and Colle in the Croxton Play of the Sacrament, from the comic characters in the folk play - the ancestors of the Morris fool, the clown of the Sword Play; from the medieval sermon, not merely from its ‘characters’ of the seven deadly sins and their representatives in contemporary life but from its jests and satirical bent; from the plotting servants of Terence and Plautus; from the creative zest of the actors speaking more than was set down for them.⁴

¹ The welding of characters into the single Vice figure also resulted because of technical problems. See Cushman, 61, Spivack, 140-47; Bevington *From “Mankind” to Marlowe*, 122-23; 137; Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred in English Drama*, 79; Happé’s introduction to his edition of the *Tudor Interludes*, 11. Playwrights had a limited number of actors at their disposal (varying from four to ten actors), and dramatists sold their works for four or sixpence to acting companies unknown to them. *Revels of History of Drama in English*, 136. This limitation also called for doubling (the role-division is normally to be found in the title-page). At first appearance we see the Vice as a leader of minor vices, usually two or three in number. Later on, he becomes the chief part. To that I shall return in the next chapter.

² Such long plays included *Like Will to Like*, *All for Money*, *The Tide Tarrieth no Man*, *Common Conditions*.

³ *Revels of History of Drama in English*, 136.

⁴ Wilson, 62.

Supplementary to this the Chester Antichrist and Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* should also be added, for I am fairly certain that if one would join together particular passages from this magnificent satire one may end up creating another Vice figure. Truly, the Vice has no absolutely defined character. He is variable and is arguably the most protean figure. While this shall be discussed elsewhere, for the present we will concentrate our attention upon his allegorical nature, general characteristics and the man-Vice-relationship.

1.3. The Vice as a Tempter: Spyrtyualyte! what the deuyll may that be?

In this section, I shall deal with the Vice figure, but I do not propose to make an exhaustive study but rather to clarify the principal characteristics and dramatic functions of the Vice in general.¹ Overlapping elements of the vices in medieval, intermediate morality and what D. Bevington has defined as “hybrid” make it difficult to distinguish between these types of drama, so I shall refer to such sixteenth-century plays as ‘interludes.’ Although it might appear that I am digressing from the supernatural, examination of the vice is necessary and relevant to subsequent matters for several reasons, as shall become obvious. As far as the figure under scrutiny is concerned, a lack of designation for “the Vice” among the dramatis personae does not mean that a Vice figure does not appear in the play. There is no reason we should not call characters vices if they are named as such either in a stage-direction or if they are recognisable as such in the text. The term ‘the Vice’ used here, thus, is used in its ordinary sense (taken to refer to the Latin *vitium*), with awareness that there is a school of thought that argues differently.

In the last chapter we have seen that the Vice is grounded in the early moralities² and that the limited size of the company encouraged the development of a central Vice.³ An important factor to be considered was also the translocation of the stage from the open to a confined space, i. e. from the paegants to the scaffold and finally to the Tudor hall, where most interludes were performed.

¹ Here I should also acknowledge general debts to the works on the Vice by L. W. Cushman, B. Spivack, P. Happé, H. S. Anderson, G. B. Levenson, R. Weimann, R. Pineas, R. Withington, W. Habicht, H. J. Hentschel, a.o. My method of analysis of the Vice figure was especially influenced by L. W. Cushman's study *The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature Before Shakespeare*.

² Some critics disagree on that point.

³ This fairly established view was doubted by Eckhardt: “Die in der Entwicklung der Moralitäten immer deutlicher hervortretende Sonderstellung des Vice gegenüber den übrigen Lastern hat nichts mit der Bühnentechnik zu schaffen, sondern beruht vielmehr auf die Rolle einer lustigen Person, in die der Vice allmählich hineinwuchs,” 109.

The Vice became an immensely popular figure after 1550. He dominated the stage between 1550 and 1580, being indispensable in both “popular” and boys’ plays (court drama performed by boys).¹

The theatrical designation ‘the Vice’ occurs for the first time in John Heywood’s *The Play of the Weather* (1519-28) and *The Play of Love* (1533-34), both more didactic social comedies than moralities. In them the Vice makes his appearance as an entertainer and not as a circumventive tempter or schemer, a representation that has unleashed a critical dispute over the ancestry of the figure.² The influence of Heywood’s ‘Vices’ upon subsequent figures identified by that name ‘the Vice’ is insignificant, however.³ As R. L. Ramsay pointed out: “Haywood stands a little on one side of the regular course of English dramatic development. A careful study of his characterisation would probably confirm the view already put forward⁴ that he drew rather from the French farce than directly from the moral plays.”⁵ Around 1538 John Bale defined his characters who represented moral evils in *Three Laws* as “six vices, or frutes of Infidelyte” in a stage direction after the end of the play. On the title-page of *Respublica*,⁶ Avarice is likewise

¹ For a list of these plays see Happé “‘The Vice’ and Popular Theatre,” 18.

² Yet it must be said that No-lover-not-loved ‘The Vyse’ displays some characteristics of the former intriguing vices. The cause of trouble was his lying, as Lover-loved justly accuses him (line 1364). He is also the only one who uses the word ‘devil’ in his vocabulary, which puts him on the side of evil. It can be said that he is both a fool and a deceiver. In getting involved in the discussions on the development and origins of the Vice figure and the corresponding triangle problem – Devil, Vice, Fool, one is in the first place greatly astonished by the discrepancy among the established scholarly research. We have seen that L.W. Cushman was of the opinion that the Vice is the summation of the Deadly Sins”, 63, 68. E.K. Chambers opposed his view; claiming that the Vice derives his character from a domestic fool or jester, see E.K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, 2: 203-4. Thus the Vice was originally not a dramatic character at all, but rather developed from the folk fool or stage clown and was imported into the later morality for the sake of providing comedy. See also Levenson, 71. In respect thereof, it should also be added that a congenial character also called the Vice is to be found “in records of some country festival entertainments.” Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 15. For evidence, see Mares, “Origins,” 24. Those who argue in favour of the fool, jester or clown are, for example: Enid Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (London, 1968 [1935]), 281, Francis Hugh Mares, “The Origin of the Figure Called the ‘Vice’ in Tudor Drama”, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 22. (1958): 11-19; Hentschel, 38, etc. On the discussion and critical approach see also Levenson, 71; Cox, *the Devil and the Sacred*, 77. On the Vice being the literary precedent of the Elizabethan stage-clown, see also Robinson’s chapter ‘The Vice’ in *The Play of the Weather*, 131-151. In discussing the influence of the folk-play fool upon the Vice, P. Happé has observed that further influences were also “the court-fools, natural and artificial [That the court fool was influential in the development of the Vice figure is also discussed by P. Happé in his introductory note in *Tudor Interludes*, ed. Peter Happé, Harmondsworth, 1972, 15], and we must not overlook the satirical comedy of the Feast of Fools (which also owed something to folk-survivals), nor the effect of stage clowns from Italy, and the organized companies of France like the Enfants-sens-souci and the Basochiens.” See Happé, “The Vice and the Folk-Drama,” 185. On the influence of the folk play upon the Vice see also Francis Hugh Mares, “The Origin of the Figure Called the ‘Vice’”; Hentschel 51-59. Certain common traits have also been detected in the witty page, parasite and roisterer from the Latin comedy that entered the English drama. See Withington, “The Ancestry of the Vice,” 528. On the classical influence in comedy of the English national drama see for example C. F. Tucker Brooke, *The Tudor Drama: A History of English National Drama to the Retirement of Shakespeare* (Conneticut and London, 1964), 147-187. I am of the opinion that Mak of the *Second Shephers’ Play* resembles the Vice only in some vague extent.

³ For a list of plays that contains the label ‘the Vice,’ see Mares, “Origin”, 12.

⁴ He is referring to Karl Young, “Influence of the French Farce upon the Plays of John Heywood,” *Mod. Phil.*, II. 97, June, 1894.

⁵ Ramsay, xc.

⁶ 1553, attributed to Nicolas Udall.

labelled as ‘Avarice, alias Policy, the vice of the play,’ a figure which in his presentation fits the above-discussed vices before 1553.¹ Proof is still needed, however, to demonstrate an unbroken tradition from these early vice personifications through to John Bale² and again to *Respublica*.

The Vice appears in different forms in most Tudor interludes, and it appears as if any attempt to generalise about this theatrical figure carries with it the counterargument – “Well, yes, but not always.” The Vice is an indigenous, motley character, an English theatrical invention.³ Though allegories and personifications were not unknown to the mystery and miracle plays, the Vice figures only in moralities and interludes. Played by the leading actor, he is man’s spiritual enemy and beyond doubt a highly complex, contradictory figure. Put simply, he could be both comic and serious; the Vice “who is absolutely comic or serious is rare.”⁴ Hickscorner names his chief traits: “falsehood, favell, and jollity.”⁵ While the virtues were static and sought to reach the conscience of the audience through their speech, the Vice acted as a sly intriguer and as the lively ludicrous buffoon evident in his strange appearance⁶ and his wooden dagger – the “dagger of lath” that Falstaff alluded to (*Henry IV*, I, II.iv. 134).⁷ The Vice was the true dynamic playwright, demonstrating ultimate virtuosity on stage: he was the chorus, the antagonist, the evil

¹ *Respublica*, line 237.

² See also Klaus Sperk, *Mittelalterliche Tradition und reformatorische Polemik in den Spielen John Bales*, Heidelberg, 1973, 80. These satellites are Idolatry and Sodomy, or the sodomites; Ambition and Covetousness, or the Pharisees; False Doctrine and Hypocrisy, or the Papists. See also Robert Fricker, *Das ältere englische Schauspiel: Von den geistlichen Autoren bis zu den „University Wits“*, Bd. 1, (Bern [u.a.], 1975), 150.

³ The word ‘character’ shall occur here and there as the analysis of the Vice progresses, yet it must be held in mind that it is not used here in our sense of that word. The Vice is not really a character or personality, but rather a composition of various elements.

⁴ Harry Sheldon Anderson, *The Vice: The Party Structure of Evil in the English Morality Play*, [Microfilm], Ann Arbor, (Mich.: University Microfilms Int., [ca. 1973]), 216.

⁵ *Hickscorner*, 139.

⁶ His “long side gowne” was at first in all probability his distinctive mark; later, it served as means of satiric statement. It must have had a symbolic meaning that would have made him conspicuous for the audience as evil. The subject is discussed in C. Spivack, “The Appearance of Evil.” This does not mean that he commonly made his appearance on stage in a long gown, however. Hentschel, 40. P. Happé has pointed out that, for example, “Flattery is ‘begaryt all with hues’ (*Thrie Estaitis*, 1.604); Curyosite in the Digby *Mary Magdalene* is dressed like a gallant. The costume of Fancy and Folly in *Magnyfycence* appears to be of court jesters”, etc. See P. Happé, “The Vice and the Folk-Drama”, *Folklore*, vol. 75, no. 3 (Autumn, 1964), 185. The long side gown was also worn by a Fool. Elements of the spectacular are also present: the stage direction of John Heywood’s *Play of Love* reads: “*Here the Vice cometh in running suddenly about the place among the audience with a high coppintank on his head full of squibs fired crying ‘Water water, fire fire, fire water, water, fire,’ till the fire in the squibs be spent*”. I reckon this is quite similar to the fiery entrance of Tutivillus in *Mankind*. See also Hentschel, 40. As D. Bevington has remarked, the feathers most likely suggest frivolity, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 94. On the dress of the Vice see also Francis Hugh Mares, “The Origin of the Figure Called “The Vice” in Tudor Drama” 15-18. Fricker suggest that the Vice was wearing “shreds and patches” before being costumed as a tempter, 170. Symond’s statement (120) that the Vice wore a visor is not witnessed in the texts proper. The vices in *King Darius* have fox tails, provided they refer literally to their costumes. Cushman has explained that the sentence “I gave him a blow with a foxtail” means “to get the better of one to make a fool of him,” 123 n 1.

⁷ The earliest reference to the dagger occurs in *Impatient Poverty* (line 1560). See Busby, 82. E. Eckhardt argues for *Jack Juggler*, 165. In its broadest sense, Pride in *Nature* says: “I have a dagger by my side,” 68. Whether his dagger is wooden, though, is hard to tell. Similarly, Imagination says to his companions Freewill and Hickscorner that “every man bear his dagger naked in his hand”, 140. Later on, Hickscorner is threatening Pity: “And with this dagger thou shalt have a clout,” 143. This may indicate that the dagger occurs as early as ca. 1513.

seducer, the corrupter, the comedian, the clownish buffoon and the satirical moralist of every play in which he appeared.

The Vice's motivation is, in the words of B. Spivack, implicit in his name and nature.¹ As Subtle Shift the Vice says in the romantic drama *Clyomon and Clamydes*: "And as it is my name, so it is my nature also,/ To play the shifting knave where soever I go," lines 213-14. The Vice is one hundred per cent villainous. The Vice ascertains that he is evil, hostile to Good, to Man and to God. Thus, he has a natural antipathy to good;² by definition he is the enemy of the virtues or values that prevail in any play in which he finds himself involved.³

The vice and virtue "cannot bide in ane place". Sensual Appetite says about Studious Desire: "I would he were hanged by the throat,/ For by the mass I love him not: We two can never agree."⁴ In *Wealth and Health*, the Vice Ill-Will also says:

Ill-Will – I am called that in every place –
Doth much mischief; this is a plain case:
Virtue I do utterly despise, 285.

The Vice is the Virtue's counterpart, and he is engaged in a moral battle for the hero's soul. Concerning humanity, the Vice is a "deceitful person"⁵ who "contrives in his thought, how man may be brought to naught." In "all this world he desires no more."⁶ Yet his scorn is also directed at one of his fellow evil figures as well.⁷ The vices are in general pretty quarrelsome, often quibbling about this and that and abusing each other. As Mind says in *Wisdom*: "Wer vycys be gederyde, euer ys sum mischance."⁸ The discordance among the vices themselves is also somewhat emphasized by Bodily Lust in *Nature* when he explains to Man that it would be impossible to keep all the vices together. As if to prove him right, Bodily Lust fights then with Wrath, while Envy shouts him encouragement. In broad terms, the representatives of evil are all immoral; Skelton's Folly, for example, makes his evil cohorts the butts of his jests.⁹ About the

¹ Spivack, 129.

² Anderson, *The Vice*, 214.

³ Spivack, 165.

⁴ *The Four Elements*, 16.

⁵ *King Darius*, 45.

⁶ *Impatient Poverty*, lines 621-623.

⁷ Anderson, 219. The vices fight among themselves in *Mankind*, *Perseverance*, *Hickscorner* and *The Three Estates*. In Wapull's *The Tide Tarrieth no Man* the stage direction reads: "And fighteth to prolong the time, while Wantonnesse maketh her ready."

⁸ *Wisdom*, line 765.

⁹ Also Levenson, 66. In fact, the Vice presumptuously disrespects everybody, no matter if it is an evil or a pious figure. We see this as a part of comic element already in *Mankind*, where Titivillus desires to borrow a penny from New-Guise and Naught, but the two play him for a fool saying they do not have one even though they had just collected it from the audience. Similarly, Sensuality is willing to lead Pride to Man, but only on condition that Pride pays him "twenty pound," 71. While the vices make themselves known to one another, they also offend each other. The Vice often uses the word "tush" to silence or admonish his comrade, victim or contender.

vices in the (for me inaccessible) fragment *The Cruel Debtor* (c. 1565), R. H. Blackburn says the following:

[...] the first fragment begins with a plot initiated by the Vices, a common opening gambit in morality plays. Rigor and Flattery, assuring each other that it is no deceit to deceive the deceitful Simulation, plan to stage a fight so that when Simulation tries to separate them, they will have an excuse to crack his head. It turns out just as they planned, except that Simulation sees through their devices and swears revenge on their “false subtle smylyng hartes”¹

Also, in *Hickscorner*, dagger fighting among the three haughty characters, Imagination, Free Will (the two are not vices, but they behave as if they were) and Hick Scornor (the Vice) - the “men without any mercy/That delighteth all in mischief and tyranny” - escalates after a clear provocation:

FREE WILL. Nay, three knaves in a lease is good at nale!
But thou lubber Imagination,
That cuckold, thy father, where is he become?
At Newgate doth he lie still in jail?

IMAGINATION. Avaunt, whoreson, thou shalt bear me a stripe!
Sayst thou that my mother was a whore? (419-424)

In this regard, the Vice also often appears as the leader of group of other vices. We have already seen that in *Mankind*, where Mischief is the master of New Guise, Nowadays and Naught; the same occurs in Skelton’s *Magnyfycence* and in *Thrie Estaitis*. Also, in *Respublica*, the Vice, Avarice, is the leader of the “three gallants,” Insolence, Oppression and Adulation. The Vice Infidelity is “the recognized chieftain of “the six vices”” in John Bale’s *Three Laws*.² The reason for this is that, according to B. Spivack, the vices acknowledge the Vice, who would be the first of all and the root of all evil³ and who, once ensconced in the human heart, made way for the other vices, as their chief – this Vice is the *radix malorum*.⁴ One moral evil, the root so to speak, makes a path for the next. Sensuality leads Man to Pride, Bodily Lust, Worldly Affection and the rest of the Seven Deadly Sins. Sloth then introduces Man to Covetise. In *Magnyfycence*, Crafty Conveyance assembles his crew around Magnificence.⁵ Also, in following Fancy, he is led into Folly. Ill-Will cannot go without Shrewd Wit, (*Wealth and Health*). Temerity causes haste,

¹ See Ruth H Blackburn, *Biblical Drama under the Tudors*, 129.

² Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 80. He beats Ambition and Avarice for not paying him due reverence (line 982).

³ Even though this should have been reserved for the devil, as we have seen earlier. This is also an example of how the devil remained in the background.

⁴ Spivack, 142. In *The Longer Thou Livest*, Incontinence calls Idleness the parent of all vice (line 607).

⁵ *Magnyfycence*, lines 1371-1373.

which invites Precipitation and leads to Inconsideration. Also in *All for Money*: “If money bring pleasure, pleasure bring forth sin, / And sin brings damnation unless God’s grace we win.”¹

In the intermediate and late interludes the contest for leadership precipitates a quarrel and brawl among the vices, with one of them finally acknowledged by the others as supreme in the hierarchy of evil.² Covetousness is the chief among Temerity, Inconsideration and Precipitation in W. Wager’s *Enough is as Good as a Feast*. At one moment they flatter him with “noble prince Covetise, the king, emperor, yea the god of all vice,” line 590. While they salute him with due reverence, he treats them with disdain. He acts as a tyrant who berates his servants even where there is so little reason to do so. The lesser vices are no better, for in asides they call him a fool.³ Covetousness, the Vice, later fights with Temerity and Precipitation with his dagger. He seeks for acceptance from the other vices and he constantly repeats that he shall be even with them. The plotting of the vices is usually accompanied with ludicrous quarrels.⁴ On account of this, it is interesting to observe how the Vice finds his place in both the drama and in his interaction with other protagonists.

The entrance plays an important part for the Vice. It should not surprise us that his self-introductory speech is accompanied with buffoonery and self-mockery because during his entrance the Vice establishes himself as a comic figure.⁵ Courtly Abusion, for instance, makes

¹ *All for Money*, lines 92-94.

² The vices carry out what Courtly Abusion advises Magnificence: “And yf you se ony thyng agaynst your mynde,/Then some occacyon or quarrell ye must fynde,/ And frowne it and face it, as thouge ye woulde fyght” (line 1601). Cf. Infidelitas: “Anger me not to moch; for if thu do, I fight.” *Three Laws*, line 1808; Iniquity in *King Darius*, who wants to pick a quarrel as soon as he encounters Importunity and Partiality. Similarly, without any apparent cause Ill-Report acts sulkily upon Voluptas and Sensualitas in *Susanna* (lines 190-220). In *The Trial of Treasure*, Inclination the Vice fights with Lust and Sturdiness during their accidental meeting, 212. Shortly afterwards, the two say they are at Inclination’s commandment. In *Tide Tarrieth No Man*, Courage wants to assert his supremacy by force, so that the three vices Hurting Help, Painted Profit and Feigned Furtherance are compelled to say: “There is no remedy but we must be content,/ Therefore I am content to be thine inferior,/And I will from henceforth take thee for superior,” line 184. In the same play it becomes apparent that such a fight also serves other dramatic purposes, as a stage direction informs us: *And fighteth to prolong the time while Wantoness maketh her ready* (line 1118). There is also a leadership contest between the vices in *The Conflict of Conscience*. This might stem from the notion of the devil’s property of sowing discord everywhere. Words and blows were also exchanged in the Mystery plays, as for instance between Cain and the boy and Judas and the soldiers in *Wakefield*. In *The Conversion of St. Paul*, a few blows are exchanged between a servant and a hostler.

³ Sedition’s accomplices also dishonour him (*King Johan*). The accomplices of Averice are also not to be trusted. The minor vices very often banter with the chief vice. The chief vice, on the other hand, is usually a supercilious oaf.

⁴ But also with due courtesy, as the plotting of Sensuality and Pride in *Nature* illustrates. Thereby they assume a certain distance from his victim, so that they may talk privily of him.

⁵ The vices in *Mankind* enter with the words “Make room, sirs, for we have been long,” pointing out that they are barging their way through the crowds. This is strikingly reminiscent of the York devil, who, as previously discussed, entered with words “Make rome belyve, and late me gang!” Accordingly, it would have the same effect; this time, however, making it clear that the vices are among the audience. Cf. the entrance of Sensual Appetyte in *Interlude of the Four Elements* (line 1517): “Make rome, syrs, and let us be mery/ With huffo galand, synge Tyrell on the bery” (line 407); also at the first entrance of Merry Report or Wrath in *The Longer Thou Livest*, Flattery, the Vice-fool in Lindsay’s *Three Estates*, enters saying “Mak room, sirs, ho! that I may rin!” Ambidexter in *Cambyses* enters in a similar vain, etc. According to Southern, Pride also comes from the crowd, 72. But, and this is an important aspect, the entrance of the Vice is not always comical. At times, he voices his indignation at his reception, like Pride on his

his appearance with the following unrhymed line: “Huffa huffa taunderum taunderum tayne huffa huffa,”¹ Sedition announces his coming offstage with loud clamour in *King Johan*: “Alarum! Alarum! Tro ro ro ro ro, tro ro ro ro ro, tro ro ro ro ro! Thomp, thomp, thomp! Downe, downe, downe! To go, to go, to go”! *Here entreth Infidelitie the vice*: “With heigh down down and downe a down a.”² In addition, the Vice’s first entrance is accompanied with merry jests that raise laughter and enable him to win over the hearts of the spectators.³ As a matter of fact, people become fond of him very easily. Take, for example, the introductory speech of Avarice, the Vice in *Respublica*:

Avarice: Now Godigood everychone, both great and small,
From highest to lowest, Godigood to you all!
Godigood – what should I say? – even or morrow?
If I mark how the day goeth God give me sorrow!
But Godigood each one, twenty and twenty score,
Of that ye most long for what would ye have more?
Ye must pardon my wits, for I tell you plain
I have a hive of humble bees swarming in my brain

As a rule, the Vice then announces his name and declares his strategy, thereby usually interrupting a discussion of the representatives of good and being so annoyingly in the way. In Skelton’s *Magnyfycence* for instance, Fancy boldly interrupts Magnificence and Felicity, and Folly interrupts Magnificence and speaks of his name and lineage⁴ after being asked by Felicity and Magnificence to do so.

FOLLY. What, heigho! care away!
My name is Folly! Am I not gay?⁵

first entrance in *Nature*: “A gentleman comes in at the doors,/ That all his days hath worn gilt spurs,/ And none of these knaves not cutted whores/ Bids him welcome to house!”, 66. Or Merry Report.

¹ *Magnyfycence*, 746.

² Wager’s *Mary Magdalene*. Cf. the line in the song uttered by the Plow boys in the Reversby Play: “Sing heigh down, down, with a derry down a!” Chambers, *Folk Play*, 106.

³ Quite unlike the devils, who normally enter crying and roaring. Note the entrance of Solace in *The Three Estates*, who enters running; the first thing he does on stage is address the audience and expresses the desire to sing. Liberty in *Wealth and Health* enters with a song and Ill Will *with some jest*. Hentschel has observed that the nonsense turned out to be the integral part of the Vice’s introductory monologue in the second half of the sixteenth century, 59. This sort of entrance is similar to the character appearances in the *sotties*.

⁴ People were interested in the nature of the true nobility. That is also why the Vice is frequently being asked about his lineage. Pride in *Nature* also talks about his ancestry, but points to his clothes too, just as the mysteries devils did. The vice boasts of an ancient lineage (King Darius). Ill-Report asks, “Am I not a iolly fellow, it is seene by my progeny,/ That my aunceyent flocke is of great antiquitie,/ How olde it is none of you can tell,/ Seuen yeares elder at the least then is the Deuill of Hell”. Cf. Erasmus’ Folly in his *The Praise of Folly*: “You have my name, gentlemen [...] But since it is not known to very many from what stock I have sprung, I shall now attempt, with the Muse’s kind of help, to set this forth,” 11.

The interruption is also present in *Wether*, where Merry Report interrupts Jupiter. The Vice Politic Persuasion boldly interrupts Gautier and Fedence (*Patient Grisell*, lines 80-85). Rather unconventionally, Common Condition asks for permission to interrupt the dispute between Sedmond and Clarisia (*Common Conditions*, 127).

⁵ This line is repeated by Flattery in *The Three Estates*. The gallant in the Digby *Mary Magdalene*, who is “Pryde, callyd Corioste” has a similarly jolly entrance (lines 492-498).

Is here any man that will say nay
That renneth in this rout?
Ah, sir, God give you good eve! line 526.

One of the important characteristics of the role of the Vice is deceit.¹ He is the true virtuoso in exhibiting a whole variety of forms of vicious deceit wherein he may dissolve his victim's allegiance to virtue and bind him to evil. His deceit is manifested in speaking of outright falsehood, the misapplication of truth and the assumption of disguise.²

At first, the Vice creeps into man's heart and unites himself with his victim in the bond of friendship, which has the result that he is employed as Mankind's servant:

Manhood. Now hark, fellow, I pray thee tell me thy name .

Folly. I-wys, I hight both Folly and Shame.

Manhood. Ah, ah! thou art he that Conscience did blame,
I pray thee, Folly, go hence, and follow not me.

Folly. Yes, good sir, let me your servant be, *The World and the Child*, 181.

Still, that is a far cry from saying that Man has the Vice in his pocket, because the Vice is not loyal. As Iniquity, the Vice of the play *Nice Wanton* informs us, "I will be your servant and your master too," line 424. Change of name is thereby his common stratagem – thereby he is "a wolf cled in a wether's skin,"³ "for under Honnie the prouerbe Saith poison maye lurke."⁴ This is necessary, for as Pride explains in Wager's *Mary Magdalene*: "In our tragedie we may not vse our owne names,/For that would turne to al our rebukes and shames."

Reminiscent of the Demon's proposal of new names in his Prologue to N-Town, Satan in *Lusty Juventus* eventually puts this idea into practice. Here, the vice is clothed as virtue; Satan names Hypocrisy 'Friendship.' This procedure is repeated in numerous interludes: Pride introduces himself to Man as Worship in *Nature*; In Skelton's *Magnyfycence* Folly introduces himself to Magnificence under the name of Largesse. Courtly Abusion changes his name to Lusty Pleasure., "Crafty Conveyance says: Sure Surveyance I named me," Counterfeit Countenance changes his name into Good Demeanance. In *Enough is as Good as a Feast*,

¹ Spivack, 157. In some works like *Hickscorner*, there is no need for any tempters because the play begins with humanity already 'rampant in sin'. See Potter, 41. In fact, the two rascals Freewill and Imagination call out for the vice Hickscorner. In the anonymous Biblical play *Godly Queen Hester* (1527) the dramatic appearance of the vices Pride, Adulation and Ambition is reduced to a single episode, where they complain about counselor Aman for absorbing their characteristics, so that nothing is left for them. Since the only thing left is to "make merye" until they die, the vices decide to do so.

² Rainer Pineas, "The English Morality Play as a Weapon of Religious Controversy", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 2, no. 2, Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring, 1962), 164.

³ *A Satire of the Three Estates*, line 2465.

⁴ *Patient Grisill*, line 898.

Covetous appeals to comradeship and pretends to have been acquainted with the Worldly Man before, introducing himself and Precipitation under false names.¹ Hereby the Vice takes the role of a disguised hypocrite, and such aliases prove effective for they often manage to delude not only man but the representatives of virtue as well.² The Vice can never delude Jesus; however, Jesus detects and dismantles the Vice at once:

Infidelity: Lo, syr here he calleth me Infidelitie,
And you know that I am called Legal Justificates,³ *Mary Magdalene*²

The Vice introduces a new ingredient in deception. In *Nature*, Sensuality weeps crocodile tears for finding Man in the state of virtue, until the latter invites him back into his company because he has pity on him.⁴ To draw attention to himself, Covetous, the Vice in W. Wager's *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, begins to weep, howl and make great lamentations (as the stage direction says) in front of the Worldly Man: "O sir, O good sir, O, O, O, my heart will break – O, O, for sorrow God wot, I cannot speak," lines 699-700.⁵ He is overly emotional and squeamish because he "loves" the Worldly Man, as he hypocritically declares; wherefore he cannot abide to be discarded and wants Worldly Man to take pity on him.⁶ Even more, he says he had rather die than hear his friend maligned. Afterwards, Mankind jocularly converses with the adulator and sugar-mouthed Vice⁷ even though the Vice's friendship is "not worth a groat" as he only pretends to be a friend. Sensual Appetite's slip of the tongue reveals the "allegiance":

Hu. I am content so for to do,
If that ye will no fro me go,

¹ In *Nature*, Superbia pretends to be "wurshyp", Ira "manhode", Invidia "dysdayn", Gula "good gelyshyp," Acedia "ease," Luxuria "lust." Assumed names are also to be found in *Mundus et Infans*, *Respublica*, *Ane Satyre of Thrie Estaitis* and *The longer thou livest, the more foole thou art*. In *The Longer Thou Livest*, it is vital for the vices to assume aliases only after Moros has reached manhood. In *Impatient Poverty*, Pride tries to delude Conscience by introducing himself as Charity, Misrule changes his name to Mirth, etc. The later Catholic vices Perverse Doctrine and Ignorance change their names to Sound Doctrine and Simplicity (*New Custom*), etc.

² Not every vice is successful in this attempt, however. In *Magnyfycence*, Fancy's first attempt to delude Magnificence is to no avail. Cf. the vices' first unsuccessfull attempt at seduction in *Mankind*.

³ Similarly, in the Protestant play *Three Laws*, Evangelium, the Word of God, sees through the Vice's deceit: "Thu aperest by thy frutes to be Infidelyte" (line 1398). Also England in John Bale's *King Johan* cannot be beguiled by Treason, the same goes for People in *Respublica*.

⁴ This hypocritical display of sorrow is already present in the narration of No-lover-nor-loved in Heywood's *Play of Love*: "When thou laughedest, dissimuling a weeping heart, /Then I with weeping eyes played even the like part" (line 653). I also consider Courage's weeping for the loss of Greediness in *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* as pretence.

⁵ Cf. the weeping of the Vyce in *Horestes*: "O oo oo, you care not for me; nay, sone I haue don, I warrant ye" (line 746).

⁶ Also Canral Concupiscence hypocritically reassures Mary Magdalene that Iniquity loves her: "I dare say thus much, that he is your friende,/For he loueth you with his whole heart and mynde" (*Mary Magdalene*²).

⁷ Cf. The vice Adulation's speeches in *Respublica*, or the blandishments of Courtly Abusion (*Magnyfycence* lines 1519- 1543). The Fool like Moros constitutes an exception, and maybe in general delinquent types and reprobates of the prodigal son dramas. Nice Wanton Iniquity throws insults at Ismael and Dalilah. Also the Vice Merry Report is as bold as brass. He is cheeky to both the suitors and the spectators.

But keep me company still.
Sen. Company, quotha? Then that I shall point-device,
 And also do you good and true service,
 And thereto I plight my troth!
 And if that I ever forsake you,
 I pray God the devil take you!
Hu. Marry! I thank you for that oath,
Sen. A mischief on it! My tongue, lo!
 Will trip sometime, whatsoever I do;
 But ye wot that I mean well, *The Four Elements*, 19.

The Vice's friendship "consisteth in adulation."¹ He is a false hypocrite who feigns meekness and innocence. He must use such arts, as Pride in *Godly Queen Hester* explains: "Outwardly kind, in his heart a fiend – A knave of two parts"; or as Dissymulacyon says: "Though we playe the knavys we must shew a good pretence";² or alternatively as Courage states to Greed: "For whatever thou think, yet say as they do,/ So shalt thou have their favours evermore."³ Such hypocrisy is most severely condemned by the character B in *Fulgens and Lucrez*, when he says:

Yea! But as for the perish where I abide
 Such flattery is abhorred as deadly sin,
 And specially liars be set aside
 As soon as they may with the fault be spied:
 For every man that favoureth and loveth virtue
 Will such manner of folk utterly eschew, lines 169-174.

But, still, can you blame him? The Vice's duty is to do what his nature demands; his function is to tempt Man to sin. It is safe to say he is the counsellor to sin.⁴ Commonly he operates as follows: the Vice suggests that heaven is far away and unimportant for the moment. As Pride says to Youth: "And I swere by the rode/It is tyme inoughe to be good/Whan that ye be olde."⁵ Then, to Mankind he makes what is evil to appear as good, so that gradually Mankind through the deceit of the Vice repudiates what is formerly being described and established by the good figures as proper moral norm.⁶ So the Vice is a seducer – he first destroys the influence of the allegorical representatives of good (often by means of interruption, ridicule, slander, abuse or at times fetters).⁷ This is often achieved by preoccupying mankind's mind through continual attendance, so that mankind is "ruled after his counsell." In W. Wager's *Enough Is as Good as a*

¹ *Trial of Treasure*, line 232. Quite in contrast to the idea of friendship in the sixteenth century.

² *King John*, line 688.

³ *Tide Tarrieth No Man*, line 320.

⁴ Withington, "Development of the "Vice",," 167.

⁵ *Youth*, lines 636-38. Cf. Lucifer in *Wisdom*: "All thyng hat dew tymes/ Prayer, fastynge, labour, all thes. / Wan tyme ys not kept, þat dede ys amys, / Þe more pleynerly to yowr informacyon" (lines 401-404). In *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, Courage's doctrine is even that the soul dies with the body (line 515-520).

⁶ Anderson, 263.

⁷ In *The Satire of the Three Estates*, the vices go so far as to push Good Counsel from the stage and put Verity in the stocks.

Feast, the renunciation from Enough, the play's representative of virtue, occurs stepwise: taking Covetous and Precipitation for Policy and Ready Wit, the Worldly Man is too hasty in his decision to embrace the two as his friends. In order to silence Enough, the two vices quote Solomon and Cicero, proving their argument against the proverb "Enough is as good as a feast." Ultimately they succeed in blinding Worldly Man with worldly lust. Somewhat sulkily then, Enough leaves the Worldly Man alone with his new friends.

Man is the victim of the Vice. In *Nature*, the vices' task is to cause Man to break all his connections to Reason.¹ Pride flatters Man, telling him how he admires his wit and understanding (in several cases, it must be noted, through their flattery the vices inflate man's self-esteem to such a degree, that man turns up into an insufferable boaster). Then, the Vice goes on to make taunting remarks about Man's will to associate with Reason:

I wis ye are but anidiot
I pray you, sir, make not me a sot;
I am no trifler!
I have been in honour heretoforne,
Ye allow the counsel of a carl born,
Before mine I have it in scorn –
It is a thing I cannot bear (75).²

In *The World and the Child*, Folly's success is most cognizable when compared to that of his opponent, Conscience. Conscience's teaching is instructive in as much as it is tedious and therefore no match for the lively, frivolous and noisome appearance of Folly, whose diction is, as a rule, the closest to everyday speech and who on his very first coming out makes an impression on both Manhood and the audience:

FOLYE. What, hey now, care awaye!
My name is Folye! Am I not gaye?
Is here ony man that wyll say naye!
That renneth in this route!
A, syr, God gyue you good eue! Lines 522-526.

The static and the dynamic figure are juxtaposed, and it is clear who the more attractive one is to the receiver's perception. Even though Folly is "full of false flattering," 186, the effort of Conscience to expose the Seven Deadly Sins in their true light is quickly forgotten by Manhood,

¹ Drama critics are at odds as to who is the principal vice in Medwall's *Nature*. While L. W. Cushman argued that it is Sensuality, 60, Spivack held that "In *Nature* Man is seduced by Pride, the other vices following on the trail he blazes; and it is Pride's role that is magnified to the neglect of theirs. The homiletic point behind his dramatic eminence is explicit in the verbal jest addressed to him by Sensuality: "Ye be radix viciorum. Rote of all vertew'", 144. But then again, it is Pride who says to Sensuality: "For he [Sensuality] is chief ruler when Reason is away," 99.

² In *Nature*, Mundus discredits Innocency: "As long as ye be ruled by Innocency: To follow such counsel it is but folly [...] he is taken but for a drivell", 63. Sensuality joins him in his slander.

who simply finds Folly more interesting.¹ Folly is fun to be with. Manhood finds his stories of parties, taverns, alcohol, women and stews alluring, and life enters the play with the Vice. The frailty of mankind is emphasised: Manhood “mistereth in every game / Some deal to cherish Folly: / For Folly is fellow with the world,” 181, and nothing prevents Manhood from going off with the Vice to lead a life of debauchery in London taverns and stews.

I have already touched upon the vices’ animosity towards the virtues. The vices have a low opinion of the virtues’ “Good thoughts” and they regard their speeches as prattle² and tend to drive them away “with their folly” (*King Darius*). Thereby a battle of words is not omitted. They often allege reasons against the virtues’ arguments, as for example in Medwall’s *Nature*, yet their argument can escalate into a wrestling match and even a knockabout farce, as between Lust and Just in *The Trial of Treasure*.

What makes it easier for the Vice in his attempts to pervert the soul and harden the heart is that very often the representatives of good encounter a man (or rather youth) who is oblivious to spiritual matters even before the Vice’s first entrance, for “youth is not stable, but evermore changeable.”³ In the play of the same name, Youth is utterly corrupted from the beginning.⁴ He does not understand God’s ways and appears completely ignorant while discussing Heaven. When Charity, the virtue of the play, admonishes Youth to abandon vice that he may see angels and the face of God, the latter remarks,

YOUTH. What, sirs! above the sky?
I had need of a ladder to climb so high.
But what and the ladder slip?
Then I am deceived yet.
And if I fall, I catch a queck;
I amy fortune to break my neck,
And that joint is ill to set.
Nay, nay, not so, *Youth*, lines 96-103.⁵

¹ In *Youth*, Youth suffers from the same boredom: “What, me thynke ye be clerkyshe,/For ye speake good gibbryshe” (lines 112-13). Cf. Wordly Man’s aside in *Enough is as Good as a Feast*: “This same one [Heavenly Man] is one of our jolly talkers,/ That prattleth so much of heaven and hell” (line 128).

² The Vice is bored stiff with virtue’s indoctrination, like Mischief in *Mankind* or Sensuality in Medwall’s *Nature*: “Well spoken and wisely! Now have ye all done?” (55). Cf. also Sensual Appetite in *The Four Elements*: “Hast thou done thy babbling?” (15).

³ *Youth*, 543.

⁴ Likewise, Lusty Juventus admits from the start that “For all things in the world I love merry company” (62). This idea is carried on in the character Moros.

⁵ Cf. the little anecdote about Henry VIII’s jester Will Summers: “Upon a time, being very sick and weak, by reason of a Fever that had long troubled him, a neighbour coming to give him some wholesome ghostly counsel, bad him be of good comfort, and told him, that if he were taken out of his vain transitory world, he should be immediately taken up, and carried into Paradise, who answered him that he was glad of that with all his heart: for if the way to Paradise were any part of it up hill, he was never able to travel thither on foot, his legs were so weak and feeble”, *A Pleasant History of the Life and Death of Will Summers: How He Came First to be Known at Court, and By What Means He Got to be King Henry the Eighth’s Jester* ([Mikrofilm-Ausg.], London: printed for T. Vere and J. Wright, 1676. R [London] 1794), 6.

Also, he does not know anything about Jesus, asking Charity “What hath God bought for me?” or saying about Jesus that “I wyll geve hym a quarte of wyne,/The nexte tyme I hym meete.”¹ Man is easily duped when the Vice dastardly incites him to disobedience by way of questioning his intelligence “thou were a starke foole/To leave myrthe and folowe their scole.”² This method may be well observed in the Devil in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, who mocks Eve: “The man’s an utter fool who’d let slip that kind of fruit,” 7. Thereby the vices often use the opportunity to point out their own importance, along the lines of “Ye cannot live without me.”

Once he has successfully carried out an attempted seduction, the Vice proceeds to cozen and lead Mankind “by the hand” toward immoderate pleasure, so that the Vice becomes the author of mankind’s misfortune. His suggestions cause man’s fall. In *Nature*, Pride boasts how he deals with men, first tempting them to riches, then to vanity and the credit of a great name upon earth, and finally leading men into a state of obdurate pride in which they damn themselves. The Vice perverts and blinds Mankind and entices him to immoral life, which is manifested from the most harmless “dancing, singing, / Toys, trifles, laughing, jesting”³ and promises to procure gay company, to the more serious social evil: vile language, rioting, fornication, excessive drinking, thievery and beggary.

The Vice defiles “with his flattery and evil company.”⁴ In *Mankind*, the vices promise to Mankind to furnish him with women and new clothes. They lead him to an inn, where he intends to pay the bills for ale, bread and wine from the money he will steal from the church. Sensual Appetite proposes “pastimes and pleasures” that include “dancing, lauging, or pleasant song,” 18, going to a tavern and enjoyment of “proper wenches,” 22. In *Youth*, Riot leads Youth to a tavern to “drink divers wine” and to “have a wench to kiss,” bestowing on him lusty women such as Lady Lechery.⁵ Sensuality brings Man to a tavern and to “the smorterst place” or “stewes” in *Nature*. In a tavern and drinking together, Sensuality wipes his nose, and then narrates how he

¹ *Youth*, lines 699-700. Interestingly enough, while the representative of man is ignorant and oblivious, the Vice only pretends to misunderstand spiritual matters. During a conversation with Evangelium in John Bale’s *Three Laws*, Infidelity, through ‘logic’ gives to Scriptural passages utterly different meanings, mostly revolving around sexual innuendo.

² *Youth*, lines 644-5. Cf. the vices mocking Mankind for being engaged in work and deriding his piety or the vices convincing Humanity that “foolish losophy” has driven him mad, Ignorance saying to Humanity: “I have great marvel,/ That ever thou wilt follow the counsel/ Of yonder two knaves” (*The Four Elements*, 38) and Sensual Appetite adds: “Then if ye have any wit or brain,/ Let us go to the tavern again,” 39, or the vices Incontinence, Wrath and Idleness laughing at Moros for reading a book (granted, he is reading it upside down), or Hypocrisy chiding Lusty Juventus for wanting to hear a preaching. Bodily Lust and Gluttony are shocked to see how thin Man has become since his dwelling with Reason. Later on, Gluttony asks Man about Reason: “Why would you favour him as ye did like a madman?” 107. Infidelity mocks the belief in Christ and the Holy Scripture: “Body of God, are you so madde him to beleue,/These things are written to make folks adrayde”; or cynically: “wise enough in dede, to folowe their foolishe schoole” (*Mary Magdalene*²).

³ *The Four Elements*, 41.

⁴ *King Darius*, 71.

⁵ In a similar fashion, Hyporcisy takes Lusty Juventus to have breakfast in the kitchen, where Lusty Juventus has a fling with a wanton named Abominable Living.

enjoyed the company of Kate and Margery (Margery has even mastered beguiling Pride). Later on, Man even smites Reason “so on the head,/ That I have great marvel but he be now dead,” 80. In general, this Vice has brought “many a man to a wretched end,” 50. Although not a tempter, Hickscorner suggests stealing and whoring. Folly, too, makes fools out of men. He leads idle men to the stews and teaches them theft and bribery, and he inflames women to lust.¹ Fancy, too, “makyst men madde,” line 1301,² while Courtly Abusion proposes new fashion and “a fayre maystresse,” line 1550. Ultimately, Magnificence embraces pleasure and liberty and forsakes reason. In the fragmentary play *Albion, Knight* the two vices Injury and Division want to incite Albion to mirth and prodigality. Since Moros “looketh for mates of another kind” and “Wholly he is given to folly and vice”, he turns into a tyrant who “oppresseth, bribeth, defraudeth, and stealeth,” line 1778.³ In *Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, Covetousness the Vice lures, if the Worldly Man would but accept him as his master, the latter would provide all the earthly riches imaginable. As it happens, the Vice prevails upon him to such extent, that for money and increase of his riches Worldly Man would do everything; even kill his own father.⁴ At the end of the day, Covetousness is then employed as Worldly Man’s counsellor and spoils him utterly.

Covetousness becomes a more and more prominent threat for man, in all probability due to the new approach towards money during the Early Modern Period. “Beware, I entreat you, lest the cursed hunger after gold [...] creep over that spirit of yours”, are words of admonishment Philip Sidney speaks to the English.⁵ Sybaritism is condemned. Avarice and squandering are most serious matters, as represented by the dramatists. It is thus hardly surprising that the interludes dramatised attitude towards material wealth that highlighted motifs related to waste and the abuse of money associated with the Vice. This problem was touched upon in *The Castle of Perseverance*, when Covetous becomes the chief adversary of man (he even has his own scaffold), especially in his old age when his whole heart is set on covetise - the most serious vice.⁶ Even in his *Psychomachia* Prudentius realised that Luxuria and Avaritia are “precisely

¹ *Magnifycence*, lines 1220-1233; 1296. He is therefore not only a clownish buffoon, as Anderson has argued. See Anderson *The Vice* 216.

² Together, these two also cause Magnificence to lose all wealth: Magn. “Surely my Welthe with them was ouerthrow” (line 2450).

³ W. Wager’s *The Longer Thou Livest*.

⁴ Cf. Prest-for-Pleasure in *All for Money*: “It is a hard thing that I would not do for money/ I would cut my father’s throat if I might get money thereby” (line 259).

⁵ As quoted in Meissner, 393.

⁶ Although one would expect that this is usually a trait associated to pride, in *Sermo de memoria sanctorum* (in *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints*), Ælfric explained why covetousness is the chief sin: “Se þridda leather is auaritia . þæt is seo yfele gitsung . and seo is wyrtruma ælcere wohnyss . Heo macað reaflic . and unrihte domas . stala and leasunga . and forsworenyssa . heo is helle gelic . forðan þe hi habbað butu unafylledlice grædignysse þæt hi fulle ne beoð næfre (lines 280-285, 356) (in translation: the third sin is *Avaritia*, that is, evil Covetousness, and it is *the root of all wickedness* (emphasis mine); it causeth rapine, and unrighteous judgements, thefts, and leasings, and perjuries. It is like unto hell, because they both have insatiable greediness, so that they can never be full”). “Seo

these two vices which man can least resist”.¹ Social evils that emerge through Covetousness find their special criticism in interludes which belong to the period 1564-76, like W. Wager’s *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, George Wapull’s *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* and Thomas Lupton’s *All for Money*.

The Vice preaches reverence to “things terrestrial,” which is yet another matter that brings about man’s alienation from God, for as Christianity explains in *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*:

A Christian ought not unto riches to yield,
For it is a thing but fallible and vain.
Riches is no perpetual shield,
But the shield of faith shall ever remain, lines 1495-1499.

Thus, the Vice urges man to foolishly spend his money until he brings him into poverty.² The Vice incites to dice and card playing, other amusements and “many sportes mo.”³ Quite unlike the devil, who withdraws after completing the temptation, the Vice, being man’s boon fellow and stranger to all moderation, takes an active part in the immoral mode of life; in frivolity and pleasure. Vice’s movements help also to localise sin: for instance, he may come from the stewes or from out of prison.

The Vice is a manipulator. He excuses his mischief or sin in general by using the terms “merriment” and “sports.”⁴ “Tush, man, in good fellowship let us be merry,” says Lust in *The Trial of Treasure*. These and such other words are so established that man falls easily for them. As a matter of fact, Infidelity speaks best for the other vices when he promotes the following:

eahteoðe leahter is superbia gehaten . þæt is on ænglisc modignyss gecweden . seo is ord and ende ælcere synne . seo geworhte englas to atelicum deoflum . and ðone man macað eac gif he modigað to swyðe þæs deofles geferan ðe feol ær ðurh hí (lines 306-311, 358) (The eighth sin is called *Superbia*, that is called Pride, in English, which is the beginning and end of every sin; it made angels into horrible devils, and will make the man also, if he prideth himself too much, the companion of the devil, who first fell thereby).

¹ Katzenellenbogen, 3. The rich are sharply criticised for their oppression of the poor by the Bishop in *The Pride of Life*, too.

² In *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, Courage encourages the Courtier to borrow money so that he may spend it on costly attires. Following his counsel, the Courtier has mortgaged his lands and has consequently become “a subject to every knave” (line 1000). The Vice also despises the poor. The poor and the folk alike are victims of the vices’ exploitations. Arguably, the Vice’s financial exploitation was adopted from the parasite.

³ Similarly, in *Impatient Poverty*, Envy is employed as Prosperity’s servant as soon as he mentions that he is in possession “of gold three hundreth pound” (line 565). Subsequently, Misrule, a minor vice, promises to bring Prosperity “to clash, cards, and dice./ And to proper trulls that be wanton and nice” (line 627). Eventually, Prosperity loses two thousand pound to Colehazard with the aid of Misrule. Wood has pointed out that dicing “was an integral part of the amusement and the life of the medieval underworld”, “The Comic Elements”, 204.

⁴ As early as *Mankind* Mercy says to the vices: “ze betray many men”, whereupon New Guise replies: “Betray! nay, nay, ser, nay, nay! We make them both fresh and gay” (line 117). When England accuses Sedition for using ungodly words, the Vice argues that he only came “hyther to be merye” (*King Johan*, 47). In *Nature*, Mundus minimises the seriousness of folly as sin. Wantonness reassures the King that lechery is not a sin but merely “a pleasant sport” (*Three Estates*, line 186). “Sporte” means entertainment. In Skelton’s *Magnyfycence*, Liberty advocates “fre Lyberte./ To sporte at your pleasure, to ryn, and to ryde” (line 77) but is silenced by the argument that Liberty must go with Measure, otherwise “It were no virtue it were a thyng vnblst” (line 134).

Followe my counsell, and put care away,
 Take here your pleasure and consolation,
 And make you mery in this worlde while you may.
 Of one hell I would not have you twayne to make:
 Be sure of heauen while you dwell here,
 Refresh your self, and al pleasure do you take,
 Plucke up a lusty heart, and be of good chere, *Mary Magdalene*².

The Vice's festivity and proposals of merriment and joy in life are his tricks; however, his true intention is hidden under false terms that in the end proves to be specious,¹ for it is none other than abominable living that leads to desperation, as Nichol Newfangle's taunting remarks towards his two victims who are about to be hanged because of trust him illustrate: "To keep within a string, is it not a gay thing?/ Do all you hold your peace?/ Why then, good gentle boy, how likest thou this play?" line 1174. Hence although Myscheff, the central Vice figure in *Mankind*, tries to reassure Mercy that he only "cumme hedyr to make yow game," line 69, we know that he is not telling the truth, line 299. In the manner of Titivillus, after contriving the scheme of causing Magnificence's downfall, Cloaked Collusion exclaims: "By Cockys body, here begynneth the game!"² In *All for Money*, pleasure is explicitly called sin's father.³ In *The Pride of Life*, the king is admonished to leave "thy likyng (pleasure) / Whych bringith the soul great bal (injury)"⁴ and the Bishop bemoans that "Play is nou vileni."⁵ The vices also often rename the main character namely as a sign of his deterioration.⁶ This is also emphasised by the change of his dress. It is no coincidence that Idleness puts Ignorancy's coat on Wit in *Wit and Science* and blackens his face, symbolically transforming him into a fool. Whoever is following the Vice is ruled by folly.⁷ Here, we again encounter the notion that alienation from God is an act of folly.⁸ As God says in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, to pluck the apple after he has forbidden Adam and Eve to do it was an act of folly, 10. "More than a fooll," Lydgate preaches in his poem "The Order of Fools," "Is he that neuer wyll forsake his synne," 19.⁹ As Folly in *The Castle of*

¹ See also J. A. B. Somerset's introductory note to his *Four Tudor Interludes*, 3.

² *Magnyfycence*, 682.

³ *All for Money*, line 223.

⁴ *The Pride of Life*, lines 57-58.

⁵ *Ibid*, line 337.

⁶ Cf. the degradation from Prosperity to Foolish Poverty in *Impatient Poverty*. This is particularly the case with morals which give a biographical strain to the main protagonist.

⁷ Cf. the stage direction in *The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom: Here shall Wantonness sing this song to the tune of 'Attend thee, go play thee'; and having sung him asleep upon her lap, let him snort; then let her set a fool's bauble on his head, and colling (blacking) his face*. In a comical scene, the vices cut down Mankind's side gown as a symbol of his deterioration in *Mankind*. On the significance of costume in interludes see T. W. Craik, *The Tudor Interlude: Stage, Costume, and Acting* (Leicester, 1964); also Southern, 66. The blackening of face is a common feature in the Mummings' Play. On the significance of the blackened face in the sword-dance and morris-dance, see Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, I, 199.

⁸ Sebastian Brant may be regarded as the first to interpret the idea of a fool in a spiritual sense, equating the fool with an erring human with all his mistakes and sins. See Könneker, *Wesen und Wandlung der Narrenidee*, 2.

⁹ *The Minor Poemas of John Lydgate*, 450.

Perseverance tells us: *Sapientia penes Domini* (Wisdom belongs with God). Once Mankind is endowed with sin, it leads to other sins as well, which in due course “makyth Mankynde to ben a foole.”¹

Sometimes, the seduction is taken to other extremes. As early as *Mankind* the vices urge Mankind to dedicate himself to fornication, gluttony and murder with robbery, and we have already seen that eventually they put him up to despair and suicide. In *Nice Wanton*, for example, Iniquity has lead Ismael to commit felony, burglary and murder. “His naughty company and play at dice/Did me first to stealing entice/He was with me at robberies,” lines 400-2. The outcome is also less amusing, I presume, because abominable living contrary to Godly determination leads to desperation. The Vice is thus the causer of man’s woeful state. Folly reduces Manhood to a prisoner. Magnificence is brought to ruin because the one who “dyned with Delyte, with Pouerte he must sup,” line 1965. Still, there is more to it than that. The Vice turns men away from God; he “causes them the wisdom of God to despise” (Infidelity in *Mary Magdalene*)². This is his function, performed because he himself is godless:

Infidelity God? Tushe, when was God to any man sene,
I had not been now aliue, if any God had bene.
Homo homini Deus
Man is God to man this matter is playne
And beleue you that none other God doth raigne (*Mary Magdalene*)²

The ending is in most cases profitable for the hero where the virtues carry the day, because God always has mercy upon even the worst of sinners when repentance is sincere, but there are also situations where the main protagonist is spiritually defeated and cannot be saved.³ Those who are not able to refrain from sin are punished by God and fall into the clutches of the devil. As T. W. Craik has pointed out, “from the middle of the century we find plays in which the unrepentant evildoer is overtaken in his wickedness and damned.”⁴ Here, the protagonist’s end serves as a lesson to others. He demonstrates how, in the words of Thomas More, “vngracious liuyng brought him to an vnhappy ending.”⁵ Hence we see how in Ulpian Fulwell’s *Like Will to Like*, Nichol Newfangle the Vice brings Cuthbert Cutpurse and Pierce Pickpurse to the gallows

¹ *Castle of Perseverance*, line 1033.

² The Vice is maybe against all expectations insulting Jesus in Wager’s *Mary Magdalene*: “He is a false harlot you may beleue me,” “neuer regard his words,” “Haie is good ynough for hym thereon to feede./Or for any such foolish asse,” etc.

³ This is especially the case with Protestant prodigal son plays, where the prodigal and the virtual son are virtually juxtaposed.

⁴ T. W. Craik, “The Tudor Interlude and Later Elizabethan Drama”, in *Elizabethan Theatre*, ed. John Russell Brown & Bernard Harris, (London, 1966), 49.

⁵ *Richard III*, 53.

and leads Tom Tossopot and Ralph Roister to poverty. Also, thanks to Iniquity, Delilah is dead of the pox and Ismael strung up in chains (*Nice Wanton*).

“Evil company destroyeth man,”¹ there is no denying, so the Vice abandons man and lets him down in his last hours, a notion already touched upon in *Everyman*, where the vices refuse to accompany Everyman on his last journey.² In *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, Wordly Man is about to die, and all that the Vice can think of is to fool around:

Covetous.
 Master Flebishiten, should I say, Master Physician, I pray
 You look in his bum [...]
 Jesu mercy! lo how busy Master Physician is.
 Here you sir, is it not best you look on his piss?
 Physician.
 Good fellow be content, I pray thee heartily;
 Thou art disposed to jest methink verily.
 Covetous [*aside*].
 Good fellow? Good man hoball! I will make you
 change your note, lines 1336-1354.

Man’s fate leaves the Vice absolutely callous; he is totally insensitive to the damage he is causing, utterly in the spirit of Merry Report’s “I am so indifferent,” line 154.³ What is more, the Vice also laughs man to scorn after causing his downfall.

One cannot rationalise such improper behaviour, as the Vice is not logical. Being that he is inhuman, he is unable to feel. On top of it all, the Vice is an inconsistent figure - his mood alternates between sad and gay. As Skelton’s *Cloaked Collusion* informs the audience: “I can dissemble, I can both laugh and groan.” A very good example is delivered by Envy in *Impatient Poverty*, who starts to weep in front of Conscience, ostensibly sad because they must part. However, as soon as Conscience leaves the stage he turns to address the audience directly with the following words: “Is he gone? Then have at laughing. / Ah, sir, is not this a jolly game/ That Conscience doth not know my name,” line 510. Ambidexter while speaking to the audience pretends to bemoan the loss of Smirdis:

If I should have had a thousand pound, I could not forbear weeping.
 Now Jesus have his blessed soul in keeping!
 Ah good lord to think on him, how it doth me grieve!

¹ *Impatient Poverty*, 923.

² Cf. the World in the *Castle of Perseverance*: “[...] I, þe Werld, am of þis entayle, / In hys most nede I schal hym falye” (line 2697). The Vice, as a wordling, acts in similar vain.

³ The indifference of the Vice, apart from his allegorical nature which does not permit true emotions, might have some similarity with the Mummers’ Play, too. Arthur in the *Kepsford* play, for example, says: “I don’t care a peg for thee,” (Tiddy, 250). This character trait is carried on in the parasite Carisophus: “He is a foole that for his profit will not take payne:/Though it be ioyned with other mens hurt, I care not at all,/For profit I wyll accuse any man, hap what shall” (line 374). He further says about Damon: “But Carisophus hath geuen him suche a mightie checke,/As I thinke in the ende wyll breake his necke:/What care I for that.”

I cannot forbear weeping, ye may me believe [*Weep*.
 O my heart! how my pulses do beat:
 With sorrowful lamentations I am in such a heat.
 Ah my heart! how for him it doth sorrow !
 Nay, I have done in faith now, and God give you good morrow!
 Ha, ha, weep! nay, laugh, with both hands to play;
 The king through his cruelty hath made him away, *Cambyeses*, 218.

Or the Vice Common Conditions, who lets Clarisia know he feels aggrieved he must part with her, only to turn to the audience with the following words after she has departed:

What, is she gone? haue I bin houling al this while, *and* know not wherefore?
 Naie, and she be gone so sone, by her leaue, ile lament no more.
 Ah, sira, to see the dissimulation of a craftie counterfeite knaue,
 That by flatterie can bryng to passe the thing he would haue!
 Wept, *quod* you? I haue wept in deede, to put you out of doubt,
 Euen as muche as will driue halfe a dousen Milles about.
 But I must laugh to thinke on my Pirats, filching knaues
Common Conditions, lines 1033-1039.

Moreover, as will be shown later, the Vice's behaviour also oscillates between his victim and his audience. The Vice hates and loves, but, as B. Spivack has shown, his "hate" is "only a word for the natural war between vice and virtue, and his "love is the imposture that conceals his aggression, and for this antinomy his "hate" is another anthropomorphism."¹ The emotion connoted by the word is not part of his dramatic equipment.² Namely, any human feeling is strange to him. He pretends to have love and sympathy. Sin, for example, admits he cannot genuinely love his son Damnation (*All for Money*). Typical of his insensitivity, he further comments at Damnation's departure: "Now farewell most sour son; to be sorry I cannot choose;/Your going grieues me so much that the snot drops out of my nose!"³ The same goes, I believe, for the Vice's hatred, for as H. S. Anderson has remarked:

In fact, the Vice almost never states that he is Mankind's enemy, or that his intention is to destroy Mankind's soul and have him end up in Hell. His motives are not (nor does he express them) those of the archetypal enemy of Man. Rather, he is driven by a motivation that is strangely akin to Mankind's own: he is the agent whereby Mankind's own inclinations are freed and given at least temporary play. Thus from his role of antagonist to Mankind he illustrates not the essence of his own nature, nor even critically the nature of evil, but in fact, the operation of evil. In this sense then he is a pseudo-antagonist to Mankind, for Mankind is his own enemy.⁴

¹ Spivack, 165.

² Ibid, 166.

³ *All for Money*, 315.

⁴ Anderson, 252.

Unlike the devil, who is “the commen adversarye / An enemy to Man”¹ and whose motive to assault mankind comes from his envy and hatred, the Vice, although he is the causer of man’s doom, lacks any such ‘true’ motivation.²

The career of the Vice ends either with disappearing before the conversion of man, or with banishment, accusation, imprisonment, torture, being sentenced to death³ or at times, when he is removed on the devil’s back, a grotesque departure. He also leaves the stage sulkily:

RIOT. I am sure thou wilt not forsake me;
Nor I will not forsake thee.

YOUTH. I forsake you also
And will not have with you to do.

RIOT And I forsake thee utterly.
Fie on thee caitiff, fie!
Once a promise thou did me make
That thou would me never forsake,
But now I see it is hard
For to trust the wretched world.
Farewell, masters everyone! *Youth*, lines 751-61.

To save his own hide, he is ready to betray his own mates:

FLATTERY: My lords, for God’s sake, let not hang me,
.....
To win my meat at pleuch nor harrows,
But I shall help to hang my marrows,
Baith Falset and Deceit! *Thrie Estaitis*, lines 2223-28.⁴

Yet the Vice has a rather comic approach to punishment or even death. Granted, he sometimes seeks to escape punishment, like Avarice in *Respublica* or the Vice Courage who feigns being mistaken for someone else with the purpose of escaping his sentence:

Lo sir, I thought you did me mistake!
I know right well the man whom you mean.
To fetch him hither good speed I will make.
I warrant you I will shortly be here again
Tide Tarrieth No Man, line 1695.⁵

¹ Bale’s *Temptation of Our Lord*, lines 58-59.

² Nevertheless, it is clear, as Equity in *King Darius* says, that the vices “bring all to hell/ That consent to your counsel,” 58. The aim of the vices to “leade men to hell” is also mentioned on a number of occasions in John Bale’s plays.

³ The vices, even though allegorical characters, are sometimes executed like mortal human beings. Haphazard wants to escape hanging; he *presses to go forth, but is forced to stay* (*Appius and Virginia*, 152). Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit are brought to prison in *Wealth and Health*, etc.

⁴ Cf. Avarice’s evasive maneuver in front of Nemesis in *Respublica* (line 1951) and the following mutual accusations between him and the other vices. Adulation is pardoned. Avarice is literally extirpated or rooted out.

⁵ Basic approaches of this motif turn up again in the late Vice Common Conditions, who by means of the virtuosity of his verbal skills manages to avoid trouble.

Nevertheless, such episodes were adapted for comical purposes. Hence the Vice is, in effect, quite or nearly as indifferent to his own fate as to that of others. As Idleness says:

I have been at St. Quintin's where I was twice kill'd;
I have been at Musselborough at the Scottish field;
I have been in the land of green ginger and many a-where,
Where I have been shot through both the buttocks by an
harquebusier

The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom, lines 488-89.

In other words, the Vice is ubiquitous - as Nichol Newfangle the Vice says that he “was, and is, and ever shall be.”¹ Covetice alludes to the same matter when he says “Thocht for a while I mon from you depart, /I wot my spreit sall remain in your heart.”² Or Ill-Will: “Lock us up, and keep us as fast as ye can,/ Yet Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit shall be with many.”³ The Prologue of the Messenger in *Lusty Juventus* emphasises that “Vice may be [...] mortified and so surpressed/That it shall not break forth, yet the root will remain,” 16. Haphazard confidently says that “Who companies with me will desire me again.”⁴ Thus being of such condition, even if he loses the battle at a certain place, it is not a problem for him to shift elsewhere.

1.4. How to Defeat the Vice

The Vice must be thrown out of favour so that man may escape infernal pain. The central figure of the older plays, be he Mankind, Everyman, Man, Humanum Genus – the typical man – is taught how to reach salvation. These early moralities were written by clerics. A monk leaves all worldliness behind, overcomes all sinful desires, achieves virtues and reaches heaven.⁵

Granted, there are venial sins. But the sins most of the protagonist commit during the play under the instigation of the Vice are not to be categorised as the folly Erasmus deemed “so acceptable to the heavenly powers that forgiveness of its errors is assured.”⁶ Great villainy is done to man by the Vice in that he might be brought to distress, decay and end in sorrow and misery with his soul damned perpetually. The sins can be so grave that they lead to everlasting damnation if certain precautions are not taken. To say “I have done foolishly because I acted out

¹ Cf. the speech of Iniquity the Vice in *The Trial of Treasure* where he “remembers since Noe’s ship was made”: “I can remember, I am so old,/ Since Paradise gates were watched by night” [...] “Among the great gods I appeared in sight”, 211. Near the end of the play, he promises that “I will rebel, yea, and rebel again,/ And though a thousand times you shouldest me restrain,” 244. Cf. the speech of Idleness in *Wit and Wisdom*, lines 682-692.

² *Thrie Estaitis*, line 1745.

³ *Wealth and Health*, 306.

⁴ *Appius and Virginia*, 136.

⁵ Katzenhellenbogen, 22.

⁶ *Praise of Folly*, 117.

of ignorance” and to say “I am pardonable by the excuse of folly”¹ is evidently not sufficient. This is therefore not such a light thing as L. W. Cushman has estimated. The matter is far weightier in that the soul is at stake. Man suffers serious deterioration under the influence of the Vice.

His mischief, however, can be amended and voided by turning to Jesus Christ. Jesus says to Mary Magdalene that “Þe fowle wedys and wycys I reynd vp be þe rote.”² In these plays, Jesus Christ is central and indispensable for salvation. Additional remedies are also added, following different accentuation.

The usual counsel given to men in plays coloured with Catholic theology on how to eschew the company of “these rioters”³ and to get rid of their “vicious counsel insolent”⁴ is “to be sorry of your sin, and do penance while ye live.”⁵ Thus faith, confession, contrition and repentance allow for grace, so that the representative of humankind may develop into a character pleasing in the sight of God.

For Magnyfycence it is crucial to never depart from measure; as Liberty reasons, “Myschefe wyll mayster vs yf Measure vs forsake,”⁶ and in *Mankind and The World and the Child* “Mesure ys tresure.”⁷ So, where measure is treasure, in “youth is pleasure.” Since reason governs the will, as Erasmus puts it,⁸ Reason urges Man to beg for God’s grace. In *Nature*, Reason’s recommendation to Man to become a Child of Salvation is more in line with Greek ethical theory than with strictly pastoral theory.⁹

But then, basic principles of Christian ethics altered during the course of time, owing to the Reformation and its aftermath. In post-Reformation interludes, man is saved by faith only. The Holy Scripture rather than measure ought to be Juventus’ guide. Knowledge prays that Juventus possess spiritual guidance, which is faith, and subtlety enough to defame the devil. This he can achieve by living his life according to God’s pleasure. “The reward of the heavenly inheritance/ Is given us through faith, for Christ’s deservings,” line 228, Knowledge says. If Catholics were deceived by false preachers, Juventus ought not to commit the same mistake. “To God’s word you must only incline;/All other doctrine clean set apart.”

¹ *Praise of Folly*, 118.

² Digby *Mary Magdalen*, line 1083.

³ *Impatient Poverty*, line 704.

⁴ *Three Estates*, line 515.

⁵ *Impatient Poverty*, line 409.

⁶ *Magnyfycence*, line 154.

⁷ *Mankind*, line 237. This also echoes the poems “On Moderation” and “Measure is Treasure”, where Lyddgate writes: “An olde proverbe, mesour is tresoure” or “Iche thyng is prayded if it in measure be”. See *A Selection from the Minor Poems of Dan John Lydgate*, ed. J. O. (Halliwell-Phillips, 1840), 81-84.

⁸ Erasmus, “A Diatribe or Sermon Concerning Free Will”, in *Erasmus-Luther: Discourse on Free Will*, ed. and trans. Ernst F. Winter (New York, 1997), 15, 22. Henceforth referred to as *Erasmus-Luther*.

⁹ John Gannon, “Nature: The Morality Play in Transition,” 3.

In *The Mirror for Magistrates*, one reads that “Forgeunes cummeth through repentaunce.”¹ One who follows his own lusts and imagination secures everlasting damnation. Genuine faith and repentance are also emphasized in Wager’s *Mary Magdalene*, where Christ says:

If they repent, and turne from their euill way,
The kyngdom of heauen is at hand, therefore repent,
Amende your lyues, and the Gospell beleue
[...]
If thou canst in the Sonne of God beleue,
And for thy former lyfe be sory and repent
All thy sinnes and offences I do forgeue.

Dr. Faustus, as we shall see, will fall short on this.

1.5. The Vice’s Relation to the Audience: How like you this, my masters?

The Vice has a close relationship with the audience. In this he dissents from other protagonists like no other, wherefore he holds an exceptional position in the drama. In his own inimitable way, he stands between two different spheres, between the world of acting and the reality world of the theatre goer – between the play world and the real world. As noted earlier and as touched upon while discussing *Mankind*, the Vice directly communicates with the audience. I have already pointed out at the beginning of this discussion that he comes on stage, announces his name and what he is, enriching his speech with many inconsistencies, nonsenses and other absurdities, and all this followed by other foolish arguments, energy, noise and disorder. This is comical and it could expect good reception from the audience at the very outset, and this not only from the plain folk among them. The sympathy factor just runs very high with the Vice. He is authentic, dramatically immensely powerful and for over thirty years he was the star of the drama. People simply liked him.

As has already been discussed, the Vice endeavours to blind the central character through his deceit and hypocrisy. Thereby, the contrast is established between the blind protagonist and the seeing audience. The Vice intrigues and makes promises to the hero on stage, but he colludes with the audience, quite in the manner of Cloaked Collusion in *Magnyfycence*, who “flattered them with fables fayre before theyr face,/And tolde all the Myschyef I coulde behynde theyr backe,” line 717. This scheming and “talking behind man’s back” of the vices is theatrically

¹ Tragedy 14, line 4, 192.

visualised in an aside.¹ For instance, Folly earnestly announces his plans to the audience in a sardonic aside,:

Ah, ah, sirs, let the cat wink,
 For all ye wot not what I think,
 I shall draw him such a draught of drink,
 That Conscience he shall away cast.

Lo, sirs, this Folly teacheth aye:
 For where Conscience commeth with his cunning,
 Yet Folly full featly shall make him blind.
 Folly before, and Shame behind.
 Lo, sirs, thus fareth the world alway.
The World and the Child, 182-84.

Politic Persuasion, too, informs the audience:

So though I simulate externally loue to pretend,
 My loue shall turne to mischief, I warrant you in the end
 (*Patient Grisill*, 899-900).

The Vice lays claim to the audience's friendship. As Avarice the Vice says to the audience in *Respublica*:

But now what my name is and what is my purpose,
 Taking you all for friends I fear not to disclose
 My very true unchristian name is Avarice [...]²

The Vice is the only one to be within the play as well as outside its action. We have already seen that he often joins the dramatic action from the audience. After introducing himself with a long speech, the Vice reveals his intentions in an exchange with other vices; like, for instance, in *Nature*, where Pride says to Sensuality: "Sir! I shall tell thee how I am in/ To thy master's service; I will first begin /To set his heart on a merry pin [...]," 71, or in *Magnyfycence*, where Folly reveals his methods to Crafty Conveyance:

FOLLY. Sir, of my manner I shall tell you the plain.

¹ Also in his colloquy with other vices. Infidelity, for example, is flattering Mary, but then he says to his friends Pride of Life, Cupiditie and Carnall Concupiscence: "Know you not a wenche called Mary Magdalene?" (*Mary Magdalene*²)

² *Respublica*, lines 11-13. The Vice also associates with the standing spectators, who were commonly of lower status. For textual evidence, see Walker, *The Politics of Performance*, 54-59. It seems, however, that the royal or noble party among the audience (patrons included), is excluded from such identification. Walker, 57. They also seem to only 'rub shoulders' with the least dignified members of the audience. In *Mankind*, Nought encourages "all þe yemandry þat ys here," (line 333) to sing a bawdy song together with the vices; thus, as Weimann has remarked, appealing to those "standing, not necessarily to the seated "sourens," *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, 114.

First I lay before them my bauble,
 And teach them how they should sit idle,
 To pick their fingers all the day long;
 So in their ear I sing them a song
 And make them so long to muse
 That some of them runneth straight to the Stews.
 To theft and bribery I make some fall,
 And pick a lock and climb a wall
 And where I spy a nisot gay,
 That will sit idle all the day,
 And cannot set herself to work,
 I kindle in her such a lither spark
 That rubbed she must be on the gall.

Or he reveals his intentions to the audience and takes them into complicity, like Idleness:

My name is Idleness, as I told you before
 And my mother, Ignorance, sen me hither.
 I pray thee, sirrah! what more?
 Marry, my masters! she sent me the counterfeit
 crank for to play;
 And to lead Wit, Severity's son, out of the way! [...]
 I will turn my name from Idleness to Honest Recreation;
 And then I will bring him [Wit] to be Mistress Wantoness's man;
 And affaith! then he is in for a bird, get out how he can!
Wit and Wisdom, lines 105-114.

Ambidexter also takes pride in his cunning: “How like ye now, my masters? [...]”¹ Marry, sir, I told him a notable lie [...] Thereby you may perceive I use to play with each hand” (*Cambyses*).² In doing so, the Vice's additional asides raise the spectators' interest and curiosity. He directly addresses speeches to the audience, and in cases where he talks about his intentions he always tells the truth, because they are verified in the action proper. Also, in order to ensure they are not misunderstood by the spectators, the vices portray themselves, describe their nature and their speciality in deceiving man. Thus, when Greed says to Courage, “Why thou knowest my quality is such/ That by contrary talk I use no man to blame” (*Tide Tarrieth No Man* 310), he also indirectly demonstrates his knavery to the playgoers. That is to say, the Vice brings the audience in to the action. At times he also comments upon the action of the play, as well as plays the prognosticator. He also introduces other characters on stage or comments on them *ad*

¹ That the Vice calls his audience “my masters” is also his deceit. Shrewd Wit alludes to this when he is asked to contrive a clever deceitful plan: “This will I do first of all: Flatter and lie, and evermore call/ Them by good master still” (*Wealth and Health*, 289).

² Cf. Hypocrisy in *Lusty Juventus*, who reveals his strategy to the audience (489-530). Also, as soon as Albion and Justice depart, Injury, whom the two take for Manhood, turns to the audience and honestly describes himself and his intentions (*Albion, Knight*): “Now, here beginneth a game, i-wis;/ For Manhood they ween my name is./ But trust me, sirs, if I should not lie,/ My name is called Injury.” Injury further explains why he needs to hide his name, what his true intentions are, etc. In *Wealth and Health*, Ill-Will follows the same procedure (285). As soon as Lamphedon and Clarisia depart, the Vice turns to the audience and explains why he had to hide his true name and goes on to explain his intentions, concluding: “But in the ende marke, how the craftie knaues part I will plaie” (*Common Conditions*, line 518-516).

spectatores – and when he does so, he usually speaks ill of or ridicules them to the audience. It must not be left out that he functions to carry on the plot and that he takes on the task of amusing the audience. This concept of marry-making, however, will be explained in a later chapter.

The Vice's uncommon dramatic functions can be found in John Heywood's *The Play of the Wether*, where Merry Report summarises the plot for the benefit of the audience at the end of the play, thus displaying a clown-fool convention.¹ In the same manner, in the farcical Plautine comedy *Jack Juggler*, Jack Juggler the Vice timely informs his audience about the background of the involvement. Here, the audience is distanced from the plot without any serious involvement. In the later interludes, the Vice rather appears as an expositor, whose comments are made up of inspired combinations of indoctrination, satire and social criticism.

We have already seen that in matters of dramatic attractiveness, the Vice outperforms the calm and static virtues, who seek to triumph peacefully. Quite unlike them, the Vice was “the moving evil genius of the play.”² All in all, as I. Johnston has remarked, “the Vice figure would commonly establish a close rapport with the audience (sometimes, it seems, running around among the members of the audience), letting them in on his plans, insulting them, making jokes at their expense, scaring them, inviting them to visit his dwelling place, and generally making sure their attentions were engaged during the performance.”³

The setting in which an interlude was played encouraged such close contacts between the Vice and the spectators.⁴ A Tudor hall certainly provided a perfect environment for such interactions. Here it ought to be remembered that these sixteenth century plays, unlike the Corpus Christi Cycles, *The Castle of Perseverance* and the Digby plays began to be performed indoors - in places such as banquet halls of noblemen or common rooms of the universities.⁵ These halls required no scenery but an acting place or *platea* which was referred to as ‘the place.’⁶ For this reason, the plays, as it is pointed out in the introductory note to *English Morality Plays and Moral Interludes*, “tended to prevent the development of a sharp distinction between the world of the play and the real world of the audience. The morality drama breaches that

¹ 284 n 293 in Robinson's edition. Similarly, the Vice Infidelity also summarises the plot, i. e. his achievements, at the end of Act IV.

² Karl Young “French Farce” 25.

³ <http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/eng366/lectures/lecture1b.htm>. On running of the Vice, see Happé “The Vice and the Popular Theatre” 22.

⁴ On the matter, see Craik *The Tudor Interlude* 4-26. Also Richard Southern's “The Technique of Play Presentation” in *The Revels History of Drama in English*, vol. II, pp. 69-94 and *The Staging of Plays before Shakespeare* by the same author.

⁵ Lindsay's *The Satire of the Three Estates* is an exception.

⁶ Wilson, 48.

imaginary like with verve and freedom. The spectators are regularly absorbed into the plays, exhorted by the virtues, mockingly tempted by the vices [...]”¹

The Vice’s common characteristic is self-glorification;² he just oozes vanity. Having high opinion of his importance, he often makes an empty boast about mighty deeds. The Vice is also repeatedly engaged in ridiculous boasting and struts before the audience. He also boasts about things others would be ashamed of. Thus Sensual Appetite assures Ignorance that he has slain all his servants except those who managed to escape. He later adds on that, in fact, all of them managed to escape.³ In the manner of Titivillus’ self-applause, the Vice also habitually applauds himself over successful villainy.⁴ He is a braggart; a swaggerer. In *The Trial of Treasure*, Lust and Sturdiness braggingly challenge Hercules and Goliath, wherefore they earn Inclination’s deriding mocks, who calls them “bragging knaves,” 215. Cloaked Collusion boasts that it was he who caused trouble in England: “From that lord to that lord I rode and I ran,/And flattered them with fables fair before their face/And told all the mischief I could behind their back/And made as I had knowen nothing of the case.” In Skelton’s *Magnificence*, Folly says:

Nay, it is I that fools can make:
For be he kaiser or be he king,
To fellowship with Folly I can him bring.⁵

The Vice talks pretty big, especially when it comes to threatening the representative of virtue. Envy threatens Peace in *Impatient Poverty*: “Let me come to that bragger! / I shall thrust him through the arse with my dagger!” “Hence, you knave, or els thou shalt lick my fist!” The vices in *King Darius* continuously threaten the virtues: “get thee quickly away,/ Or with my dagger I will thee slay” [...] “Thou whoreson knave, get thee away/ Or I will deceive thee with my subtlety,” etc. But even though Iniquity says “In me there is no fear,”⁶ it is fairly obvious that the Vice is but a coward when it comes down to it; in fact, he is “the veryest cowardly villaine that

¹ *English Morality Plays and Moral Interludes*, xi.

² St. John the Evangelist warns against such behaviour: “All they that praiseth themself do sin” (*Saint John the Evangelist*, 367).

³ *The Four Elements*, 37. Similarly, Common Conditions brags how he has mastered to defeat “fortie water souldiours” single-handedly (line 802). It is clear, however, that he just made up this story in order to intimidate his adversaries – the mariners. The combatants in the Mummings’ play also brag before they fight.

⁴ Cf. Crafty Conveyance and Cloaked Collusion in *Magnyfycence*: “Ha, ha, ha! [...] By my trothe, we haue ryfled hym metely well”. Clo. Col. “Ye, but thenke me thereof euey dele” (2160-2172). Courage speaks of his accomplishments as beguiler: “In faith, this sport is trimsy done/ That I can a gentleman fray” (*Tide Tarrieth no Man*, line 1042). Cf. Common Conditions: “Ha, ha, ha, this geare faules out excellent well in deede” (line 395).

⁵ This motif is carried on in Seditio’s comic apotheosis (*King Johan* 2592). Cf. also the bragging of the minor vices, Lust and Sturdiness, in *The Trial of Treasure*. Even Merry Report demands reverence from the audience.

⁶ *King Darius*, 60.

ever was borne.”¹ This is especially cognisable at the end of the play when the Vice fears he will receive punishment from the virtues. The vices then flee before Divine Correction, as in *Thrie Estaitis*: they do the same in *Respublica*.

The Vice’s cowardice is manifested in other situations as well. Freewill threatens Contemplation with physical violence but is hesitant because there is no one to support him. Thus, he is only brave when he is not alone:

Hence, whoreson! Tarry no lenger here,
For, by Saint Pintle the apostle, I swear
That I will drive you both home!
And yet I was never wont to fight alone.
Alas, that I had not one to bold me!
Then you should see me play the man shamefully.
Alas, it would do me good to fight!
Hickscorner, 760-66.

Or, in similar fashion, says Wrath in *Nature*:

Nay, I fear no man that beareth a head;
Yet had I liver that I were dead
Than that should be proved, 109.

The Vice boasts that he is a “great trauelir” (*Wit and Wisdom*, 34). He lists countries (often places which do not exist at all or place names that are alliterated, such as heaven, hell, etc.) he has visited, a device often used to hyperbolically emphasise his power and braveness, which turns out to be a walloping lie.² Merry Report’s (the Vice in John Heywood’s *The Play of the Weather*) use of an amazingly alluring alliteration shall serve our purpose here:

Regarde ye nothyng myne authoryte?
No ‘Welcome home!’ nor ‘Where have ye be?’
How be yt, yf ye axyd, I coulde not well tell,
But suer I thynke a thousande myle from hell.
And on my fayth, I thynke, in my conscyens,
I have ben from hevyn as farre as heven is hens:
At Lovyn, at London, and in Lombardy,
At Baldock, at Berfolde, and in Barbary,
At Canturbery, at Coventre, at Colchester,
At Wansworth, and Welbeck, at Westchester,

¹ *Clyomon and Clamydes*, 537. Later on, Iniquity stultifies himself by saying: “Who is that I see here? He hath now put me to great fear” (68). Seing the virtues coming in superior numbers, he eventually desides to flee: “When so many come. I must away run” (70). In *Magnyfycence*, Cloacked Collusion admits that he is a coward (line 770). In *Wealth and Health* Ill-Will is “afeard” to appear before Shrewd Wit: “lest that I be taken by the beard” (286). In *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, Courage says: “I busked myself as though fight I would/ And took me to my legs as fast as I could” (272). In *Susanna*, Ill-Report says he fears Iochim, and so the stage direction reads: *Ioachim entereth, and the Vice runneth out* (line 594). Infidelity is afraid of Christ: *Here entreth Christ Jesus*. Infidelity: “Benedicite, arte thou come with a vengeance?” (*Mary Magdalene*)²

² The catalogues are grotesque, unmethodical, absurd and at times furnished with half-mythological motifs. See Habicht, 98. Such a long catalogue and other digressions amused the audience, but they also allowed the actors to change their costumes. For further examples and the influence of Baclay’s *Ship of Fools* and others on these, see Habicht, 97-100.

At Fullam, at Faleborne, and at Fenlow,
 At Wallyngford, at Wakefield, and at Walthamstow,
 At Tawnton, at Typtre, and at Totnam,
 At Glouceter, at Gylford, and at Gotham,
 At Hartforde, at Harwyche, at Harrow-on-the-Hyll,
 At Sydbery, Suthampton, at Shoters Hyll,
 At Walsyngham, at Wyttam, and at Werwycke,
 At Boston, at Brystow, and at Berwycke,
 At Gravelyn, at Gravesend, and at Glastynbery,
 Ynge Gygiang Iayberd, the paryshe of Butsbery
 The devyll hymselfe, wythout more leasure,
 Coulede not have gone halfe thus muche, I am sure. (192-213)

While Merry Raport eventually lists locations that do exist in Britain, the account of Hick Scornor appears more imaginative and twisted:

HICK SCORNER. Sir, I have been in many a country,
 As in France, Ireland and in Spain,
 Portingale, Seville, also in Almain,
 Friesland, Flanders and in Bourgogne,
 Calabre, Pouille and Arragogne,
 Brittany, Biscay and also Gascogne,
 Naples, Greece and in mids of Scotland,
 At Cape Saint Vincent and in the new found island.
 I have been in Gene and in Cowe,
 Also in the land of rumbelow,
 Three mile out of hell,
 At Rhodes, Constnatine and in Babyland,
 In Cornwall and in Northumberland
 Where men see the rushes in gruel.
 Yea, sir, in Chaldee, Tartare and Inde,
 And in the land of women, that few men doth find,
 In all these countries have I be,¹ line308-25.

The Vice finds joy in superficial, self-indulgent activities. His actions are overly unethical, and his arguments are entirely fallacious. In other words, he demonstrates just how the world should not be. He defends drinking, he often visits the tavern together with man or he narrates how he has just come from the stews.

The Vice is very often a crooked dice player. He is often avaricious, greedy of money, and as such he shocks with his outrageous materialism. Sometimes, the Vice narrates that he has just come from Newgate, the medieval prison in the northwest of London.² For instance, Riot, would

¹ R. Weimann points to a similarity between these travelogues of a trip to fanciful lands and the topsy-turvydom of the Mummings' Play. See Weimann, "Rede-Konventionen des Vice," 132. The catalogues are primarily to be found in the speeches of the Quack-Doctor. Headman: Where didst thee travel then, Doctor? Doctor. Italy, Pitaly, France and Spain now I'm back to old England again, 218. Or "Hokum, Pokum, France and Spain/ Nine times round the world and back again," 243, or Williams: "I have travld to London garmenay Scotland and spain by all my rich fortune safe returned to England again," 151. Cf. the Doctor in the Ampleforth Play: "I've travelled at the way from Itti Titti where there's neither town nor city, wooden chimes, leather bells, black pudding [...]", Chambers, *Folk Play*, 148. Chambers, however, does not think that there is a resemblance between the Vice's and the Doctor's travels, *Folk Play*, 165.

² He also comes from the stewes, or from Marshalsea, a prison in Southwark, or other prisons as listed in *Enough is as Good as a Feast* (lines 360-368).

have also hanged at Tyburn,¹ he says, but he has managed to escape because “the rope brake/And so I fell to the ground,/And ran away, safe and sound.”² Relating to this, G. B. Levenson has convincingly argued that, as a result of secularisation of evil in the later interludes, taverns, brothels and Newgate prison replaced hell as the image of the underworld.³ The social types of men have Vice characteristics, and vice versa. The Vice is also found in the English courtly life, as the court was the spiritual and political centre and as such offered infinite possibilities for various intrigues and acts of treachery.

Some vices fear death and poverty; they are in denial, wherefore, in order to escape the truth, they distract themselves with either going “to sleep, or else to some play,” 215.⁴ In order to keep up the moral point, they also warn against themselves through their self-irony. Courage says: “I am as honest a man as any in your sleeve [...] Therefore sir, think not that I do lie.”⁵ Idleness says: “Nay, take me with a lie and cut the brain out of my buttock.”⁶ Politic Persuasion’s comment expresses self-irony with the same intention: “I am plaine Dunstable I may say to you,/ I am as homlie as the good wife that for loue kist her Cow.”⁷ The double-dealer Subtle Shift, who “for advantage, will deceive his owne brother,”⁸ boldly remarks: “A true servant you may see will deceive his master never,” 913. Or Common Condition, who says: “Beleue me, getleman; if I lye, hang me like a thief, 494; “By my honestie,” 681, etc. Being familiar with the Vice’s nature, we know that such statements are unconvincing, i. e. the audience knows that the Vice lies like a trooper. We have already seen this deceptive exercise in the temptation of Eve by the York Satanas and in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, where the Serpent says to Eve: “I’m not lying to you, Eve,” 7.

Sometimes, the Vice appears as a truth-speaker in the later interludes.⁹ He becomes a mouthpiece for moralising. Sin, for example, says in *All for Money*: “It is better be poor and after

¹ A place in London where criminals were executed.

² *Youth*, lines 258-60.

³ Levenson, *That Reverend Vice*, 93. To this, it can be added that the tavern was commonly depicted as the devil’s kitchen.

⁴ Also, the vice Eugenio in *Saint John the Evangelist*, who after being instructed by Irisdition about the devil and hell, immediately seeks to change the subject: “In faith, that is a knavish way to talk. Now awhile of some mirth let us talk,/ For I forsake such passage,” 355.

⁵ *Tide Tarrieth No Man*, lines 1668; 1672.

⁶ *Wit and Wisdom*, 405.

⁷ *Patient Grisill*, 154.

⁸ *Clyomon and Clamydes*, 716.

⁹ This truth-telling is different from that of a fool, who allows himself the liberty of open criticism under the excuse of being a fool whom no one is taking seriously. The Vice is also similar to the fool inasmuch as he also often declares himself crazy, like Nichol Newfangle, or the vices in *Albion Knight*. The Vice is also accused of being a fool by the Taverner in *The Four Elements*: “I trow you be mad” (29). Counterfeit Countenance accuses Fancy with the following words: “fonnysshe Fantasy, thou arte frantyke,” 649. In *Wealth and Health*, Shrewd Wit says to Ill-Will: “Thou whoreson! art thou mad?” (286). Common Conditions the Vice makes a silly remark when he says about himself: “Were not he mad would hang hymself, to shewe three Tinkers sport?” (202). Idleness: “Ha! By the mass! I could have told you, even now, what a short-brained villain am I. I am as wise as my mother’s sow!” (152-154).

in heaven to dwell. / Than to be rich on the earth ad after live in hell”¹ or Damnation: “To such as in sin have all their felicity/ And dies without repentance, I shall be annexed;/ But the repentant sinner that obtains God’s mercy/ Shall enjoy the heavens, far separate from me.”² In Wager’s *Mary Magdalene*, the Vice admits that faith is the root of all goodness.³ In *The Conflict of Conscience*, we also encounter the vice Hypocrisy uttering moral truths.⁴ Even more, this new feature of the Vice as a truth-telling expositor leaves plenty of space for enlightenment and satirical social criticism.⁵

The allegorical abstract nature of the Vice is often emphasised in his dealings with the audience. It carries the didactic meaning of pointing out the bad, odd and deviant in global life, as well as the omnipresence of sin in general. Thereby, the dramatists often had England, that “Hole Royalme,” in mind. Hence, Folly’s answer that he has “fellows mo,/ For in every country, where I go, / some man his thrift hath lost,”⁶ only to be more specific and to admit that “in England have I dwelled yore/ And all mine ancestors me before./ But, sir, in London is my chief dwelling”;⁷ hence Pity’s laments over evil times in England: “Worse was it never,”⁸ etc. Evil Counsel also reports how he has dwelled in Rochester, Coventry, London, Cornwall, Kent, Westminster, St. Catherine’s and in Uthrift’s Rent.⁹ Sin in *All for Money* says “I have been since I was here in many a nation.”

This shows that the great travel accounts of the Vice in some plays differ from the marvellous journeys related by the Doctor of the folk-play, inasmuch as it has a didactic purpose. Hence the Vice does not only embody human frailty, but he also satirises the society. The same can be said about the Sensual Appetite in *Four Elements*, who is singing, dancing, etc., but thereby also eyeing the audience. He says he shall also “please well this audience,” 41. In doing so, however, the audience also follows sensual appetite, i. e. sin.

The Vice’s boldness is on a much higher level than the boldness of the Mummers’ clown or fool. For example, the Clown apologises in case he offends anyone, saying he is “bold and scold” only because it is Plough Monday.¹⁰ The Vice can do without that. An apology for being

¹ *All for Money*, lines 445-46.

² *Ibid*, lines 302-305.

³ See also R. Pineas, *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama*, 27. In fact, in Bale’s *Three Laws* already, the Catholic Vice serves as Bale’s mouthpiece when he illogically speaks against the Pope (lines 1511-1520).

⁴ In a similar manner, as R. Pineas has shown, in Protestant polemical plays the Catholic Vice “admits that a man can be justified only by faith” (Wager’s *Mary Magdalene* ll. 21-24, 34) and that the “Carholic Sedwyson of *King Johan* admits that pardons are worthless” (line 989). See Pineas, *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama*, 15.

⁵ About this newly-created position of the Vice figure see Hentschel, 129-37.

⁶ *The World and the Child*, 179.

⁷ *Ibid*, 180.

⁸ *Hickscorner*, 145.

⁹ *St. John the Evangelist*, 360.

¹⁰ Clayworth, Nottinghamshire, A Plough Monday Play, 241.

abusive seems beneath him, and he is under no obligation whatsoever to justify such actions to the audience. Still, while the Vice's boldness differs from the one expressed by the Plough Monday Clown, it is quite similar to the fooling of the Morris Dance fool, whose type of fooling was "always directed against somebody, and was nearly always inclined to be abusive,"¹ as R. J. E. Tiddy has remarked.

The Vice's reason for being abusive is different, though. He sees his audience as an assembly of sinners and treats them very often in such a manner, so that the relationship he establishes with the audience is on the same level with that to the theatrical antisocial rascals. This certainly produces a different dramatic effect. In such situations, for his bold diatribes, the Vice could certainly expect moral resistance from his audience. Such reaction probably provoked Iniquity, the Vice in *King Darius*, to make a response with "A whoreson, knaves, have you thus me mocked"? (44).

As early as *Mankind*, the moody secondary vices rudely demand their way through the audience. New Guise says: "Make space, for cokkys body sakynde, make space!" line 612, or Nought: "Avante, knawys, lett me go by!" line 636, and New-Guise again: "Out of my wey, sers, for drede of fyghtyng," line 696. Hypocrisy says to the spectators: "Shake hands before we do depart; you shall see me no more./ And though Hypocrisy go away, of hyporites here is good store."² Sometimes, he even threatens the audience to keep quiet with his wooden dagger, as in *Sir Thomas More*, lines 195-198. In *King Darius*, Iniquity also threatens his audience with beatings. While launching into a tirade, Ill-Report clearly distinguishes between the pious Susanna who rejects all the Seven Deadly Sins and the women among the audience who indulge in them:

But here you wiues [...]
 that you Maydes full well doe know, sloth with his drowsy heart
 Is able to do much with you, when you are layde in bed,
 For you had rather serue the Deuill, or what he will deuyse,
 Then leaue your bed in winter morne, when holy frostes aryse³

Also the Vyce in *Horestes*:

I wyll seke a new master, yf I can him finde;
 Yet I am in good comfort, for this well I knowe,
 That the most parte of wemen to me be full kynde [...]
 For as playnely Socrates declareth vnto vs,
 Wemen for the most part are borne malitious, line 1081-1093.

¹ Tiddy, 79.

² *The Conflict of Conscience*, 1676.

³ Cf. Folly's remark on women among the audience: "Yea, this place is not without a shrew" (*The World and the Child*, 180).

As humans we are all imperfect and prone to fall because of the original sin. Human frailty is an inevitable fate of which the Vice is aware.¹ Therefore, as a world's exponent, the Vice is also aware of his importance and necessity in the world.

Money is my name, all over is my fame,
I dwell with every degree.
Though great be their living, yet can they do nothing
Without the presence of me
All for Money, lines 113-116.

Conscious of his importance and inevitability of his presence, he believes he possesses the right to treat humans like his subjects. Sin, the Vice says, “[...] In my sight everyone is but a slave.”² Then he turns to the audience and continues: “What, off with your caps sirs! It becomes you to stand bare.”³ Moreover, in the eyes of the Vice, humans are worthless and corrupt. For instance, the Vice Sin considers the audience materialistic and money driven. While talking about his grandfather Money, he turns to the audience and says:

You may see my grandsire is a man of renown;
It were meet when I named him that you all kneeled down.
Nay, make it not so strange, for the best of you all
Do love him so well you will come at his call, lines 1026-1030.

In such occurrences, the Vice assumes the role of a tyrant who treats his “slaves” with scorn and disdain. Humanity is not worthy of his attention, and it is not of his concern what fate may befall them. The same Vice, Sin, illustrates these traits when he openly says that he does not care about the audience, “Will none of you speak to comfort my heart? I would have sworn that you had been more mannerly;/ To match my son [Damnation] with such I pass not a fly” (1330-1332).⁴

The Vice desires to dominate over humanity, and he wants to establish himself as their evil ruler. In front of his audience, he behaves like a ruling tyrant of the earth. In doing so, he also does not refrain from explicitly saying what he thinks of them. He brings with him the idea that humanity is evil and corrupt, and that, as such, they are worthless subjects of sin.

¹ In this case I leave to the reader's judgements whether the Vice is right or not.

² This concept may have evolved from John 8:34, where it is written that “everyone who sins is a slave to sin.”

³ *All or Money*, line 335.

⁴ *Ibid*, lines 1330-1332.

1.6. The Vice as the Fun-Maker and the Comic Villainy

Parts of the Vice's major functions are comedy and entertainment. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that he comprises different kinds of comedy, from facetious jests to merry conceits. The Vice is the comic relief in many plays. R. J. E. Tiddy's research has already shown that the "ruffler" and the "mischief-maker" generally appealed to the popular taste of that time,¹ and since the Vice figure successfully played both of these parts, we may safely assume that the audience found his comedy highly appealing as well. Thereby, a plausible danger has arisen; under normal circumstances it was expected for a Vice figure to deliver different and more serious messages to the audience. The roles were meant to be clearly distributed.

As early as 1389, a certain guild document about the Pater Noster play at York states unambiguously that "all manner of vices and sins were held up to scorn, and the virtues were held up to praise."² In other words, the Virtue is to be praised, whereas the Vice figure is to be scorned. With the Vice showing up as a comical figure, however, it appears as if this formula was rather difficult to maintain, unless it could be proved and designed in a way that his comedy can result in scorn. The desired concept for the Vice would have been to be funny on stage, but at the same time, the audience should not find him likeable, which is indeed a difficult undertaking. Yet, it would go along the lines of "that's not the way to do it," and it would end up with what Harrington pointed out, that comedy made "vice scorned, and not embraced."³ The outcome would be that it was expected for comedy to be used in the service of morality only, and permissible on stage only under these criteria. In this regard H. Reinhold has further pointed out that

So hatte ein so bedeutender und einflußreicher Theoretiker der Renaissance wie Julius Cäsar Scaliger in seiner Poetik gefordert, daß auch die Komödie ein moralisches Ziel zu verfolgen habe, und kein Geringerer als der Dichter Philip Sidney hatte sich in England dieser Meinung angeschlossen. In den Augen dieser Zeitgenossen erschien die Komödie als Kunstwerk nur dadurch gerechtfertigt, daß man sie zu einem moralischen Instrument erhob, und dieser Standpunkt blieb nicht ohne Einfluß auf das Schaffen einer Reihe zeitgenössischer Dramatiker.⁴

In order to support Reinhold's argument, one may use G. Walker's observation that

Like all literature, and indeed all works of art in the medieval and early modern periods, plays were ideally intended to carry a didactic, improving function. But this general desideratum took on added potency in the wake of the Act for the Advancement of True Religion of 1543, which declared it

¹ Tiddy, *Mummers' Play*, 108-111.

² Wilson, *The English Drama* 4. Also Karl Young, "Records of the York Play of the Pater Noster," *Speculum*, VII (1932), 540-45, as quoted in Levenson, *That Reverend Vice*, 60.

³ Bradbrook, M. C., *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy* (London 1979 [1955]), 29.

⁴ Reinhold, 83.

lawful to 'sette forth songes, plaies and enterludes' only if they were 'for the rebuking and reproaching of vices and setting fourth of vertue.'¹

Plays should have a didactic function; it is made clear that the Vice must be "rebuked" and "reproached," and his comedy, when utilised, should be subordinated to these standards. As the quotation already suggests, similar moral messages occur in other Elizabethan literature. It could be additionally noted that this is similar to what is explained in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, where it is said that this book "might be as a myrrour for al men [...] to shewe [...] the due rewarde of all kinde of vices."² Following this line of argument, we may say that the interludes also served as a mirror. The Vice served as a mirror, and his comedy was his moral instrument. Hence the Vice is not purely a comic figure; there is also a serious aspect not to be ignored. Indeed, a close scrutiny of the Vice's humour will show that his buffoonery is "almost never stupid,"³ but rather slyly humorous. It is for the biggest part instructive and moralising. We may therefore speak of a blending of foolishness and astuteness.

It is not difficult to discern didactic purpose in the situations where the Vice comes out as as a ribald person. This is especially the case in the early moralities, but it also reoccurs in the later interludes. Language and behaviour that are obscene and dirty might amuse and provoke laughter, but at the same time they expose what is perverted, primitive, unsophisticated and not desired. As P. Happé says, "the comic episodes in the moralities often signified moral depravity [...]."⁴ The Vice is funny, but he is morally deprived. For example, he speaks "foul words." Being supremely foul-mouthed, he indulges in obscene and impious language such as swearing, cursing or scolding. His language partly provides humour, but it also provides a bad example for Mankind to imitate the same, which in turn, serves the homiletic function of emphasising his corrupt nature.⁵

The Vice teases and ridicules, but often to the extent where his humour becomes shocking and appalling.⁶ In his *Anatomie of Abuses*, which was printed in 1595, Philip Stubbs says, "You must go to the playhouse if you will learne to play the Vice, to sweare, teare, and blaspheme both Heaven and Earth."⁷ While the audience viewed obscenity as merriment and entertainment, obscenity also reflected the Vice's alienation from God. Religious oaths are common speech of the Vice. He blasphemes the name of God, if not worse than the mystery devil: "No, by the mass!

¹ Walker *The Politics of Performance* 20, quoting A Luders, *et. al.*, eds., *Statutes of the Realm* (II vols., London, 1810-28), III, p. 894.

² *The Mirror for Magistrates*, 68.

³ Withington, "Development of the Vice", 163.

⁴ *Tudor Interludes*, 12.

⁵ See also Spivack, 113-123; Pineas, 162.

⁶ The hero, who represents us, is also engaged in similar humour, but in most cases not before being corrupted by the vices.

⁷ As quoted in Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes*, 135.

God's body! God's wounds! God's blood! By Gis! By God's arse! Gog's nails! By God's Mother!"¹ His vocabulary is full of oaths and expletives. Sensuality even swears by Jesus, and remarks on England's comment that God is her spouse and God cannot be honest since he has so many wives.²

The reason behind vices' oaths is probably best explained by Constancy in *King Darius*:

Matthew also doth say, /
Cursed be they alway /
That swear by anything, /
By hell or heaven i-wis /
Because in the power it is /
Of that heavenly king. /
At all thou shalt not swear /
By thy head nor yet thy ear /
But of God stand in fear.³

As this passage illustrates, oaths are signs of corruptness. They are not only parts of the Vice's vocabulary employed to merely amuse the audience, but they also stand for alienation from God. Furthermore, he also misinterprets Biblical passages and parodies the Christian Divine Liturgy, amusing the crowd with his blasphemies, mockeries and witticisms. Still, as R. Pineas has argued, "the Vice's satire is often of such a nature that he condemns himself in the process of condemning the clergy [...]."⁴ The following passage is a good example of such behaviour:

Sensuality: God be with you, with all my heart,
Ill Report: "And with you to, with all my fart
Susanna, 265.⁵

In a similar manner, the Vice also parodies and ridicules the good, as he often burlesques the high moral tone of the virtue's lines.⁶ However, at the same time he always appears as unlearned

¹ Cf. the Catholic Vices of the Protestant interludes: "Saint Dunstan! By Saint Ann! By the mass! For God's arse. Saint Uncumber be with us, and the blessing of Saint Anthony!"

² *King Johan*, 111.

³ *King Darius*, 75.

⁴ Pineas, 160.

⁵ The passage also shows that the Vice shares the childish scatological humour with the mystery devils to a certain extent, for whereas the devils occasionally withdraw farting after being beaten in argument or hoofed out of heaven; the Vice invites the others to kiss his behind. We already find such coarseness in the speech of the Bad Angel: "Goode syre, cum blowe myn hol behynde" (*Castle of Perseverance*, line 1276). Cf. Merry Report in *Wether*: "As lefe ye kyste myne ars as blow my hole soo," line 255; also 1064; Infidelitas in Bale's *Three Laws*: "Your mouth shall kiss my docke,/ Your tonge shall it unlocke," 216; Sedition in *King John*: "I wyll not awaye for that same wedred wytche; She shall rather kysse wher as it doth not ytche," 95. It is interesting to note that the vices in *Mankind* and John Bale's *Sedition* are outstanding in their ribaldry.

⁶ Anderson, 215.

and primitive when compared to the virtues' sophisticated manner of speaking.¹ His Latin would be a good example. Sometimes, the Vice tries to speak Latin, whereby he misspeaks and uses false grammar that is beyond conjecture.² The play *Mankind* is already full of such examples. Likewise, in trying to prove to his brother Folly that he has still retained some Latin from school, Fancy says: “*Est snaii snago* with a shrewde face *uilis imago*.”³ What was meant to be Latin, the drunken Ignorance, whom the Worldly Man mistakes for Devotion, utters as complete nonsense instead:

Magistrorum clericum inkepe miorum
Totus perus altus, yongus et oldus
Multus knavoribus et quoque fasorum
Pickpursus omnius agentus shavus et polus
Enough, lines 1264-1268.

The humorous dog-Latin exposes ignorance. In a way, the Vice warns against himself by demonstrating to the audience what it is like to be vulgar and uneducated. Similarly, the vices in *The Trial of Treasure* warn against themselves inasmuch as they admit that they are illiterate. The Vice has never learned anything at school. In *The Four Elements*, Sensual Appetite despises science, and this motif is carried on in the later interludes where the vices are portrayed as truants who can but barely remember the Latin they learned at school.⁴ Also, Courage informs the other three vices that he is their teacher: “I am a schoolmaster for you three most fit,/ Who indued you with courage, instead of great wit.”⁵ However, it is obvious that the Vice can only teach sinning. Iniquity also says this to Pug in Johnson’s *The Devil is an Ass*: “I will teach thee to cheat, child, to cog, lie, and swagger, / And ever and anon to be drawing forth thy dagger,” lines 48-49. Apparently, mankind cannot learn much from the Vice.

The illustrated examples show how humour is used in a nice way in order to warn against a variety of evil. The Vice’s humour reveals that he mocks God, the church and everything that is good. It also teaches the absurdity of a vulgar, uneducated life without God. In order to bring this point across, the Vice warns against himself even more explicitly in the later interludes. Thus far

¹ Coarse language is also used by the tyrants. For example, in *Mary Magdalene*, the Emperor calls all those who dare to disobey him “harlettys,” 127. Seized with pride, the King is also boastful and uses insulting language to his wife and the bishop in *The Pride of Life*. Cain and Mac also belong to this group.

² On this so-called dog Latin see Robert Weimann, “Rede-Konventionen des Vice von *Mankind* bis *Hamlet*”, *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (1967), 117-51. The use of French by Mischief in *Mankind* or Seditious in *King Johan* also serves a comic purpose. In order to avoid answering what has happened to Wealth and Liberty, Ill-Will pretends to be a foreigner: “Qury cisis quest is un malt ombre;/ Me is un Splyanardo compoco parlavere” (*Wealth and Health*, 303).

³ *Magnyfycence*, line 1155.

⁴ Infidelity also speaks against studying in general: “Do you think that it is not more than madnesse,/ The lusty and pleasant life of mans youth,/ Miserably to passe away in study and faunesse?” *Mary Magdalene*².

⁵ *Tide Tarrieth No Man*, 173.

we have seen that the mystery devil often served as the cleric's mouthpiece and that he illogically warned his audience against hell. This recurs in the devil's speech in *The Disobedient Child*:

[...] often tymes a fall they receyued,
When through my Polycye their feete dyd slide.
Wherfore (my dere children) I warne ye all,
Take hede, take hede of my temptation.

In *Trial of Treasure*, *Tide Tarrieth no Man* and Thomas Lupton's *All for Money*, the Vice figure does the same. In *A Satire of the Three Estates*, we see Deceit's last-dying speech combined with hanging jests and moralising at the same time: "Look what it is to be ill-deedy," line 2360. Furthermore, Idleness, dressed as a beggar, points at himself: "This is the world! To see how fortune changeth! This shall be his luck which like me runneth and rangeth."¹ Or Infidelity:

Infidelitie, no beware of me Infidelitie,
Like as faith is the roote of all goodnesse,
So am I the head of all iniquitie,
The well and spryng of all wickednesse.
*Mary Magdalene*².

The Vice has a talent to use humour in order to deceive. His endless nonsense enables him to both win over the mankind figure and defeat the representative of Virtue. His opening topsy-turvy worldplay does not only serve an extradramatic-function, i. e. sheer clowning that serves to amuse the audience, but it also serves him as an effective method against his counterpart, since by putting "all out of rule with words," he manages to drive Virtue away.²

The purpose of this humour is two-fold and it is used in many different situations. "Thus, like the formal Vice, Iniquity, I moralize two meanings in one word,"³ says Shakespeare's Richard Gloucester in awe and admiration of the Vice figure;⁴ and indeed, the Vice uses this stylistic device in a brilliant way. The pun on words is a "sport" for the Vice, yet at the same time it discloses dangerous deception – it demonstrates his hypocritical acting as being harmless.⁵ He only pretends to be naïve and innocent, and he is certainly not stupid, because unlike the folksy devil, the Vice is never duped by man. As a matter of fact, man is very often too naïve for the

¹ *Wit and Wisdom*, 573.

² Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, 140.

³ *Richard III*, III, i, lines 82-83.

⁴ On the Vice and Richard III, see Spivack *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*; Wolfgang Clemen, *Kommentar zu Shakespeares Richard III: Interpretation eines Dramas* (Göttingen, 1969), 175. On the other hand, I believe that Thomas More's portrayal of Richard III did not serve as a model for the Vice.

⁵ Also Cushman, 102; Hentschel, 80.

Vice, who never misses a trick. Quite unlike the other vices or the audience, man never detects the pun, let alone that he offers a replica. Neither does man suspect the Vice of his knavery, who often expresses his maliciousness in a side-remark:

FOLLY [*aside*] I make God auowe ye wyll none other men haue.
MAGNIFICENCE. What sayst thou?
FOLLY. Mary, I pray God your mastershyp to saue.
Magnyfycence, line 1828.

Avarice: Well, I will take some pain, but this to you be known,
I will do it not for your sake, but for mine own.
Respublica: How say ye that, Policy?
Avarice: This to you be known,
I will do all for your sake, and not for mine own, *Respublica*.

If you will be ruled by our counsel.
Iniquity: You are two as drunken knaves [...]
Partiality: Why, Iniquity, what dost thou say?
Iniquity: I said, ye were two honest men [...]
King Darius, 51.

Or in *The Trial of Treasure*:

Lust. Ye have heard of the combat between me and Just?
Inc. Yea, marry, I heard say that you lay in the dust.
Lust. What say ye?
Inc. Neither one word nor other, ye may me trust

Inc. As trusty as is a quick eel by the tail! [*Aside*]
What, Lady Treasure, welcome without fail! 233

Inc. [*Aside*]. Then honesty and profit you may bid good night.
Lust. What say'st thou?
Inc. I say he will shortly appear in sight. 234

Lust. My lady is amorous, and full of favour.
Inc. [*aside*] I may say to you she hath an ill-favoured savour.
Lust. What sayest thou?
Inc. I say she is loving and of gentle behaviour. 237

Hypocrisy: Farewell three false knaves as between this and London.
Tyranny: What sayest thou?
Hypocrisy: As honest men as the three Kings of Colon!
The Conflict of Conscience, lines 953- 955.

Wantonness. To have many suitors my loth doth befall,
But yet methink I like you best of all.
Idleness (*aside*). Yea, she might have had many men of knavery and stealth!
Wantonness. What sayst thou?
Idleness. Marry! You might have had many men of bravery and wealth
The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom, lines 183-187.

Idleness (*aside*). Yea, and that will be a ready carriage to the rope.
Wantonness. What sayst thou?
Idleness. That will be a speedy marriage, I hope, lines 191-194.

Politicke: I beseech God send you with her, as manye hornes as a Bucke,
That your tongue, her nose, and my tayle: may be ioined together.

Gautier. What is that?
 Politicke: God graunt that in loue you maye continewe together
Patient Grisill, 208-211.

Politicke: And if your companie will be glad,
 And if I can euer an olde blankit fynd,
 I hoap for my parte to be hansomly clad.
 Reason: What sayst thou.
 Politicke: I saie after diner abanquit shalbe assynd,
 Notable faire in your Hall shalbe had.

Condi[tions.] Commaunde me euen what you list, and Ile doe what I please.
 Lamph[edon]. What saiest thou?
 Condi[tions.] I saie commaunde: me what you list, and Ile doe what you please
Common Conditions, 380.

The Vice uses a single word in a double sense, but he has also expanded his repertoire to use perversion, false misunderstanding and nonsense. Slip of the tongue as an art of humour is also newly introduced. In *Magnyfycence*, Sensuality makes a slip of the tongue when he calls Sloth by his true name in front of Man. Therefore, Sloth immediately reprimands him for doing so, saying that he is now Ease but that he may safely “call me what ye will” when they are among themselves. Also, Sensuality makes a slip when he says: “I have a great mynd to be a lecherous man – A wengonce take yt – I wold saye a relygyous man”¹ Or Ill-Will in *Wealth and Health*:

God thank you, masters, all three!
 Ye shall find us poor, but true we cannot be –
 My tongue stumbles, I cry you mercy! –
 We will be true, I should say, 290.

[...] by my means both Avarice and Tyranny crept in,
 Who in short space will make men run the way to desolation –
 What did I say? My tongue did trip. I should say “consolation”!
Conflict of Conscience, lines 735-737.

Parts of the Vice’s comedy are malicious sneers and aimed satirical innuendos. Similar to Backbiter, the Vice also delights in the misfortunes of others. We may also say that, just like the devil, the Vice’s chiefly delight is in man’s calamity. His laughter is that of *Schadenfreude*: “Hold me, or els for laughynge I must burste,” [...] “Is not this a sport?” line 1694. The vices in John Bale’s *Three Laws* also laugh at other people’s pain:

[We] laughe full merelye,
 To se ych cumpanye,
 Ronne headlonges to the deuyll, lines 1005-1007.

Ye, burn hym wele, fryer, and lete hym no longer rayne.
 Laye on grene fagots to put hym to the more payne.

¹ *King John*, 305.

By the messe, I laugh to se how thys gere doth wurke, lines 1745-1747.

Also, admonished to compose himself and keep a sad countenance instead, the Vice replies he cannot help doing it:

Iniquity: Ha, ha! Ha, ha! *King Darius*, 55.
 Inclination: We-he-he-he-he-he-he, *Trial of Treasure*, 224.
 Enter Inclination, laughing, 232.
 Hypocrisy: Ha ha ha! Marry, now the game begins! *Conflict of Conscience*, 732.
 Here cometh Envy running in laughing, *Impatient Poverty*, 409.
 Infidelity: Ha, ha, ha, laugh quod he, laugh I must in dede
 I neuer saw a bolder harlot in my life, *Mary Magdalene*².

The Vice laughs at other people's misfortune, but he also uses jokes to taunt or insult. There are diverse subjects of his mockery and taunts, and women are no exception. Misogyny was an important and effective part of entertainment at that time. For this reason, the Vice's pranks do not lack a misogynous tone. In fact, the Vice's comments literally drip with sexual double entendres, sarcasms against women and contempt for them.¹ As early as *The Castle of Perseverance*, the Bad Angel complains about women talking too much. The Vice Politic Persuasion makes no bones about his contempt and cynicism for women.² Infidelity says the following about women: "Women haue no soules, this saying is not newe,/ Men shall be damned, but not women which do fall."³

The Vice opposes marriage. In *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, the Vice brings discordance to each marriage. Also, New Guise says to Mankind:

I xall tell yow of a maryage:
 I wolde yowr mowth and hys ars þat þis made
 Wer maryede junctly together, *Mankind*, lines 345-47.

Or, again, Politic Persuasion:

Some men are married, and would be vnweddid againe,
 And some men neuer fall to theiuinge [...]
 Baw waws is no weddinge, the prouerbe doth tell,
 Mary quoth you? I hard many a one saye,
 That the first daye for weddinge all other doth excell,

¹ The Vice is a lecher, yet he is not as lusty as verbally bawdy. There are exceptions, as this is obviously not the case with the Vyce in *Horestes* (872-887) and the Vice Subtle Shift, who often pride themselves with sexual adventures *Clyomon and Clamydes*, 112; 139-143; in *Saint John the Evangelist*, the vices Actio, Eugenio and Evil Counsel turn men into cuckolds by stealing away their wives. Infidelity the Vice wants to kiss *Mary Magdalene*: "I pray you hartily that I may be so bold/ To have a kisse or two before you doe depart," *Mary Magdalene*². On the role of the Vice as a wooer, see Happé, "Vice and the Folk-Drama," 190.

² *Patient Grisill*, lines 371-381; 395-415; 418-432; 440-448.

³ *Mary Magdalene*².

For after they haue had no one merrie daie, lines 182-186.

Riot says to Youth that he should never marry because “The devil said he had liever burn all his life/Than once for to take a wife.”¹ Infidelity also “detesteth matrymonye.”² Sediton’s mockery of England’s weeping is certainly twofold, for he also says that women weep without a cause: “Yt is as great pyte to se a woman wepe/ As yt is to se a sely dodman crepe,/ Or, as ye wold say, a sely goose go barefote.”³

The Vice accuses women of infidelity and promiscuity. Solace says that his mother is called

“Bonny Bess/
That dweltt between the Bows /
Of twelve year auld she learned to swyve; /
Thankit be the great god alive,/
She made me fathers four or five.”⁴

The Vice often depicts women as sexual objects. While talking about food, the Taverner wants to offer Humanity a stewed hen that can be obtained at the stews. The Vice plays along in this game, making sexual insinuations and innuendos at the expense of women.⁵ The motif is repeated in *Magnyfycence*, where the vices call the half street a “store of rawe mutton” and the women “freshe mete.” Iniquity says: “Like as a small blast bloweth a feather away/ So a faire word truly changeth a maidens mynd.”⁶ After making a rather taunting remark about women, the Vice Courage turns to the women among the audience: “How say you, good wives, is it not so?”⁷

¹ *Youth*, 365.

² *Three Laws*, line 1390.

³ *King John*, 175.

⁴ *Three Estates*, 125. Roughly speaking, women are presented as being naturally unfaithful. Cf. Merry Report’s bawdy double entendres and innuendos, insinuating he has actually been in bed with a widow, *Wether*, lines 139-150. Even Merry Report’s own wife, as he narrates, threatens him to find “a new myller,” line 752. His speeches are in general sexually suggestive, (See Robinson’s note 264 n 46 in his edition of the play) for example his conversation with the Water Miller and Wind Miller, as well as his treatment of the Gentlewoman. Cf. Courage’s introductory speech in *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*, 20-24. Cf. *Magnyfycence* (lines 1571-1576); also *Saint John the Evangelist* (356). The theme of a cheating wife is also spoken of in Heywood’s *The Pardoner and the Friar*. For the parallel in the French farce see Karl Young, “The Influence of French Farce upon the Plays of John Heywood: A Criticism of Wilhelm Swoboda”, *Modern Philology*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Jun., 1904), 97-124. In addition, women contribute to comicality in episodes of female mastery. We have seen it in Noah’s Ark play. The slaughteres are also beaten by wives in the tenth Chester play. Cf. the scene where Chastity encounters the common people in *Three Estates*. Here, the Tailor’s and Soutar’s wives beat up their husbands. See also the churlish character Strife in *Tom Taylor and His Wife*; Careaway’s description of his mistress in *Jack Juggler*. Ambidexter also alludes to such “shrows.” Also the Vyce in *Horestes* (1101-1121). Common Conditions scoffs at women too (133-146; 501). Politic Persuasion accuses women for talking too much, *Patient Grisill*, lines 440-448. He also speaks of his shrewd wife: [...] I haue such a shrewe to my wife,/ I speake vnfaynedlye, I swere by God’s mother,/ I am halfe werye of this present life,/To be rid I would giue the Deuill one halfe to fetch the other,” lines 188-193. Basically, women are charged for the same reasons in the *sotties*. On the satire of women in the *sotties* and the farce see Heather, Arden *Fool’s Plays*, 79-84.

⁵ *The Four Elements*, 20.

⁶ *Mary Madalene*².

⁷ *Tide Tarrieth No Man*, 651.

He is thus audaciously asking confirmation of his theory that wives are shrews and men but henpecked husbands.

The playwrights recognised the potential of the Vice as a perspicuous admonisher against himself as being very didactically effective and eventually decided to expend this role. Instead of chiefly pointing at himself, he could also point to the current evils of the world. For this purpose, the dramatist wanted the Vice to chiefly use satire and assume the role of a critic, satirist and moralist in order to bring his points across. That was not risky, because as an evil figure who reveals other evils, he could easily get away with “insolence” of this kind, and as a less strictly defined figure, he offered plenty of room for experimental playground. The outcome was that the Vice employed different forms of satire and also used diverse humour on stage in order to expose other evils apart from himself, as for instance fashion, the society, laws, politics, corruption in the church, etc.

The mystery devil introduced clothing motif and fashion satire. This is resumed and carried on by the Vice figure in the interludes. The Vice satirises clothes and fashion by being extravagantly costumed. Thereby he exposes its true nature and implies that clothing is used as a symbol of the world’s deceitful temptation to folly, sin and sartorial indulgence.¹ Nichol Newfangle, for instance, satirizes new fashion. He has learned to make gowns in hell, as he says, which in turn leads to the assumption that fashionable clothes are connected with sin:

I made a iourney into hell,
 Where I was bound prentice before my nativitie
 To Lucifer himself, such was mine agilitie.
 All kinde of sciences he taught unto me,
 That to the maintenance of pride might best agree.
 I learned to make gowns with long sleeves and winges;
 I learned to make ruffs like calves chitterlings,
 Caps, hats, cotes, and all kinde of apparails,
 And especially breeches as big as good barrels.
 Shoos, boots, buskins, with many prity toyes;
 All kinde of garments for men, women, and boyes.

The idea of employing satire, wit and irony is also carried on in such plays where the Vice associates with types the audience dissociates itself from – knaves, thieves, etc. It is not just that ill-manners, obscenity and similar unpleasant behaviour were often understood as the Vice’s solidarity with the lower class, but, in mocking and treating them hostilely, the Vice shows to the audience just how ridiculous their way of living is. Indecent lifestyle, bad environment,

¹ Habicht, 44. In *The Castle of Perseverance*, Folly intends to dress Humanum Genus in “clothys newe,” 564. Ignorancy is dressed as a fool, with a coat and cap fitted with ass’ ears and a face “as black as the devil,” *Wit and Science*, 829. On sartorial satire of the vices, see also Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred*, 61-68. On the significance of the Vice’s long gown as a satirical statement, see Hentschel, 41. The long gown was not the Vice’s regular clothing. Evidence for the long gown is only found in the middle of the century.

impoverished spiritual life - it may be said that in such cases society as a whole is the satiric object of the Vice.

The Vice is often sarcastic. In this regard, he is gifted beyond all other dramatic evil characters before Shakespeare. More recent scholarship has already discussed his satire; therefore, for the present purpose, there is no need to repeat in great detail of what has already been written. Suffice it to say, that the play *Wisdom* introduces political satire and Folly in *The World and the Child*, and the vices in Skelton's *Magnyfycence* express court satire.¹ The Vice also judges the law harshly. He parodies the law, the court and its procedures, pointing out to the all pervasive nature of injustice.²

Of particular interest is the Vice's engagement in incessant satire against the church. Every so often he connects the church with sexual immorality, and priests are quite often satirised for their lasciviousness. In Lindsay's *Satire of the Three Estates*, the vices frequently comment on how monks are engaged in sexual adventures. The Roman Court is "the lemand lamp of lechery."³ In *Nature*, Sensuality calls the stew a "religious place,"⁴ and Folly says that he has found fellows in "freres," "abbeys and into nunneries also."⁵ The clergy is equally accused of greed, ignorance and sloth.⁶ Envy asks Sensuality where Covetise is. To this, Sensuality replies:

He dwelt within a priest, as I heard say;
For he loveth well
Men of the church, and they him also, 119.

In *Magnyfycence*, Counterfeit Countenance accuses friars, nuns, canons and monks for being great counterfeiters.⁷ The listed examples unequivocally illustrate the dramatists' concern for ecclesiastical reform,⁸ but over time the subtle experiment turned out highly profitable for religious disputes of a different kind. The direct descendant of the Vice of the early moralities, the Catholic Vice, was often used in Reformation interludes as an instrument for discrediting the

¹ Skelton's personal satire also alluded to the political figure Cardinal Wolsey.

² The Bad Angel is brought before the "judge." Satan's parody of tribunal that occurs in *Mary Magdalen* is carried on in the court parody of *Mankind*. Satan punishes the Bad Angel for letting Mary Magdalene escape. (725-747). The mock-trial is also apparent in *Processus Satanae* (c. 1570-5).

³ *Satire of the Three Estates*, 184.

⁴ *Nature*, 92.

⁵ *The World and the Child*, 181.

⁶ Cf. Barclay's *Ship of Fools*, where clerics are accused of the same sins, 22.

⁷ *Magnyfycence*, lines 487-493.

⁸ The vices in Sir David Lindsay's *A Satire of Three Estates* accuse the Roman Court of sexual abuses. The lechery of priests is criticised. Flattery wishes to disguise himself as a friar, primarily because "good wives will never let freiris want," line 619. Together with the other vices he is also engaged in a mock ceremony. Their anti-clerical satire further includes reform of the nunneries, the misusing of priests, etc.

Roman Catholic Church,¹ or vice versa, as in the Marian *Respublica*. As regards the Vice's humour about Catholicism, Ambitio says:

the Pope for whoredom hath in Rome and Viterby
Of golde and sylver a wonderfull substaunce yearlye.
Tush, they be in Englande that moch rather wolde to dwell
Whores in their dioceses than the readers of Christes Gospell.²

Later on, the comic satire would be entirely used for a narrower audience, namely the Protestants. Sin also alludes to one priest as being lecherous: "Thou hast been a Doctor at the ducking of women." The Vice further exposes the Priest, Sir Lowrence, to ridicule, proving he has not studied the Gospel at all.³ Iniquity, likewise, says about friars: "Lyke obstinate friers I temper my looke,/ Which had one eie on a wench, and an other on a boke."⁴ The Vice speaks against relics and worshiping of saints since Lutherans regarded them as superstitious. The burlesque is manifested in Sedition's foolishness of relicks.⁵ While giving absolution to Clergy – the vice gives him a feather of St. Michael's wing or a maggot of Moses with a fart of St. Fandigo, etc.⁶

It can be concluded that language is the Vice's powerful tool. It accentuates his role of entertainer or betimes as a court jester, but it can also stand for moral devaluation, satiric allusion and social criticism. In other words, the Vice is humorous and dangerous at the same time. This, in turn, illustrates how didactics and humour are absolutely compatible.

As discussed earlier, comedy was employed to expose exemplary folly.⁷ It has been shown that the Vice uses malicious comedy intended to expose himself, as well as to delude and eventually harm characters on stage. His folly is to be condemned, just as it is said in *Impatient Poverty* that the interlude serves as a "mirror vice to exclude."⁸ However, in this regard, it would be unjust to deny any existence of humour for humour's sake, because there are parts of the Vice's humour which serve as sheer amusement. Signs of rising demand for entertainment, merriment and joy in life were already expressed in the eariler moralities and interludes, yet they were quickly silenced by a moral admonishment. For instance, virtues usually speak against mirth. Nature

¹ In his Protestantization of the morality play, John Bale, the first Reformer who used the drama as a propaganda vehicle of the Reformation, simply turned the morality Vices into Catholics and the Virtues into Protestants. See Rainer Pineas, *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama*, (The Hague, 1972), 5-6. Cf. Flattery's catalogue of relics which he mockingly calls "a wonder," *Satire of Three Estates*, lines 1470-1500.

² *Three Laws*, lines 1210-1214. Cf. the narratives of Hypocrisy and Pseudodoxy in *Three Laws*, lines 1432-1474.

³ *All for Money*, line 1181.

⁴ *Mary Magdalene*².

⁵ *King Johan*, lines 1210-1230.

⁶ Similarly, Infidelity gives a blessing "with a wyng of the Holy Ghost," (*Three Laws*, line 1684). Cf. Flattery's catalogue of relics which he mockingly calls "a wonder," *Three Estates*, lines 1470-1500.

⁷ Also Habicht, 149.

⁸ *Impatient Poverty*, line 1067.

admits that it is not utterly wrong to indulge in sensual appetite at times,¹ but moves on to explain and admonish Humanity that he should not centre his whole delight around it. Similarly, Just, the virtue in *The Trial of Treasure*, instructs his counterpart Lust that

It is better in the house of mourning to be
Than in the house of laughter, where folly hath residence,
For lightness with wisdom cannot agree
Though many have pleasure in foolish phantasy,
Yet much better is the life of one that is just, 208.

Even though Liberty pleads for more joy in life in Skelton's *Magnyfycence*,² he must nonetheless submit to the rule of Measure.³ In addition, Crafty Conveyance demands from the audience: "What howe! be ye mery [...]," line 1347. Yet the author clearly warns against such folly at liberty for "as sone as you [Folly] come in Magnyfycencs syght, / All Measure and good rule is gone quyte."⁴ Therefore, joy without measure is condemned. Still, it seems that a change of the conception of the meaning of "folly" occurred gradually. The definition of the word "folly" was expanded, meaning that it could also refer to the harmless "mirth and sport." At first, the use of such a type of comedy demanded justification. The necessity for this kind of comedy is very well explained by the Messenger in *The Interlude of the Four Elements*:

[...] because some folk be little disposed
To sadness, but more to mirth and sport,
This philosophical work is mixed
With merry conceits, to give men comfort,
And occasion to cause them to resort
To hear this matter, whereto if they take heed,
Some learning to them thereof may proceed.
The Four Elements, 7.

Some dramatists saw a certain sense in the notion that, while delighting in humour, the spectator might also catch a moral lesson or two. Thus, it follows that it was not always wrong to enjoy mirth. The evidence is incontestable, and we may safely conclude that we are reaching a period where "folly" is tolerated. In Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrez*, B says that the play is "made for the same intent and purpose, / To do every man both mirth and pleasure," 156. The Prologue in *Jack Juggler* is equally supportive of "mirth and joy." The play has no real intention of moral indoctrination and obscenity is equally minimised – the anonymous author merely

¹ *The Four Elements*, 45.

² He must nonetheless submit to the rule of Measure.

³ Skelton, *Magnyfycence*, lines 205-211.

⁴ *Magnyfycence*, line 1316.

makes use of “honest mirth.”¹ This concept may be explained in the words of Erasmus, who equated folly with madness but also distinguished madness from madnes, “for certainly all madness is not calamitous.”² This means that the Vice’s comedy was not only created to instruct, but also to bring to the others sheer pleasure, laughter and cheer.

In accordance to the results presented above, we may conclude that the Vice is also a source of amusement. The Vice’s comic qualities are, as O. M. Busby has remarked, horse-play, (chiefly consisting of blows), violent abuse, oaths, and coarse jests, which are often indecent.³ Verbal wit is one of his chief “weapons.” Playing with words is one of his characteristic properties. Much of his humour derives from word play. He entertains his audience with acoustic catchy words, using aphorisms, slang, idioms, riming couplets and memorable proverbs. As G. B. Levenson has observed, the Vice is fond of puns, malapropisms, double-entendres and verbal distortions, mimesis and wordplay in which the Vice alters the statements of either himself or another character, playing on the sound, word and image for a humorous effect.⁴ The Vice mistakes or pretends to mistake a word, quite often giving it a wanton meaning. His physical humour affords much gesture and movement. The figure brought new mimetic qualities into the drama⁵ such as visible gestures when the Vice grimaces at the virtues,⁶ or primitive knockabout comedy - scuffles and other acts of slapstick violence, which are of the same tradition as those to be seen in classic cartoons.

Ben Johnson’s Puc states, “Is it not excellent, chief? How nimble he is!” in reference to the Vice.⁷ Playing his part certainly demanded nimbleness of both speech and body.⁸ Shift, while trying to pull his leg out of the mire, slips *on the Stage backwards*, 118, whereby he loses one boot. Then he plays dumb as he believes he has actually lost his leg. Other examples are provided by the stage directions: Enter Greedy-gut running, and catch a fall;⁹ Enter Solace, the third Cortier, running;¹⁰ “Let me clap thee in the back,”¹¹ etc.

¹ See Pfister, 52. On further examples where the interludes are described as merry and pleasant, see G. Walker, 21.

² *The Praise of Folly*, 51.

³ Busby, 49.

⁴ Levenson, 83.

⁵ On the Vice’s virtuosity on stage, see Peter Happé, “The Vice and the Popular Theatre”, 1547-80,” in *Poetry and Drama 1570-1700*, ed. Antony Coleman and Antony Hammond (London and New York, 1981), 13-31.

⁶ In *Impatient Poverty*, the vices grimace fearsomely at Peace and force him backwards: “And here they face Peace out of place,” see also Southern, *Staging of Plays before Shakespeare*, 353. Also in *Trial of Treasure: Gape, and the Vice gape*.

⁷ *The Devil is an Ass*, line 54.

⁸ Wilson, 65.

⁹ *Trial of Treasure*, 224.

¹⁰ *Three Estates*, 101.

¹¹ *Tide Tarrieth no Man*.

The Vice is “on intimate terms with his audience and cracks jokes with individual members of it.”¹ In Merbury’s *Wit and Wisdom*, Idleness the Vice makes the following jolly entrance:

Ah! sirrah! my masters! how fare you at this blessed day?
 What, I ween all this company are come to see a play!
 What lookest thee, good fellow? didst see ne’er a man before?
 Here is a gazing! 87-90²

In *Nature*, Pride cannot find the way to the stews, and so he asks the audience: “Sirs! I say, / Can any man here tell me the way?”³ Since no one would naturally reply, Pride choses one individual and cheekly begins to pick at him: “Ye know the way, parde! Of old; I pray thee tell me which way I shall hold.”⁴ Fancy tries to find “so semely a snowte” among the audience.⁵ Merry Report, the Vice, appears to be supremely sportive – especially in his dealings with women among the audience. The Vice Ambidexter frequently draws individuals into the action, and generally builds rapport with the spectators. Nichol Newfangle is also up to nonsense. As a gag, Ambidexter speaks to his confederate, “Cosin cutpurse,” who is ostensibly among the audience picking their pockets, thus hinting there is an actual thief among them.⁶ Nichol Newfangle also moves the spectators to laughter by making jokes at the expense of the auditor, whom he calls “Joan with the long snout.”⁷ The Vice is also funny while commenting upon characters on stage who are not necessarily the audience’s self, turning them into butts for his saucy jests:

Sin: He is more meet your son than your husband to be.
 Mother C. Yea, but the younger he is, the better he is for me.
 Sin: Yea, but you are the worse for him the elder you are
All for Money, lines 1281 – 1283.

How would her husband do when he should kiss her?
 Her nose and her chin meets almost together, line 1300.

When the taverner says that his favourite meal is in fact a drink, the Vice boldly remarks that one could easily see this by his red face.⁸

¹ Mares, 14.

² The opening monologues of the Vice also serve to provoke amusement.

³ *Nature*, 102.

⁴ This would arguably be less amusing to this very individual than to the rest of the audience.

⁵ *Magnyfycence*, line 995.

⁶ Also Southern, 517. Cousin Cutpurse is also the “friend” (if the Vice can ever be a friend to anyone, see only the fate he brings upon the same-named character in *Like Will to Like*) of the Vyce in *Horestes*, lines 671-679, of Haphazard and Courage in *The Tide Tarrieth No Man*. It is a conventional gag.

⁷ *Like Will to Like*, 227.

⁸ *The Four Elements*, 29.

It is beyond doubt that for the most part the Vice wants people to like him;¹ therefore, he often tumbles, dances or sings. Imagination in *Hickscorner* says, “Lo, now my heart is glad and merry/For joy now let us sing ‘derry, derry’.”² Elsewhere, Free Will announces: “And now will I dance and make rial cheer,” or:

Now will I sing and lustily spring!
But when my fetters on my legs did ring,
I was not glad, perdie;
But now hey trolly lolly!³

Nichol Newfangle, the Vice, can even play gittern: *Nichol Newfangle must have a gittern or some other instrument (if it may be): but if he have not they must dance about the place all three, and sing this song that followeth – which must be done also although they have an instrument;*⁴ similarly, Folly is also playing on an instrument in *Magnyfycence*.

It was expected from the actor who played the Vice role to be versatile and to freely improvise.⁵ The role afforded considerable acting abilities, and it could only be performed by a single actor. Therefore, as P. Happé remarks, “[...] the Vice’s role grew to be the part given to the leading actor in the company, and, as many of the doubling schemes show, the Vice’s part was not doubled, or, if it was, the other parts were usually very short, such as the Prologue.”⁶ The stage directions give plenty of hints of virtuosity. We may only speculate what an admirably good comedian and improvisator the Vice must have been to perform such a demanding task: *Here the Vice shall turn proclamation to some contrary sense every time All-for-Money hath read it.*⁷

The Vice is a true jabberer and a motormouth, who always has a story to tell no matter if it utterly misses the point or not.⁸ As Courtly Abusion says: “I coude holde you with suche talke

¹ The antagonist of the Mummings’ play, the Turkish Knight, has the same endeavours: “Open your doors and let me in/ For your favour I am sure to win./ Whether I rise or whether I fall/ I do my best to please you all” (the Weston-Sub-Edge, Gloucestershire version in Tiddy, 163).

² *Hickscorner*, 359-60.

³ Cf. Infidelity in *Three Laws*: “Now shall I be able to lyve here peaceablye,/And make frowlyke chere, with ‘hey how, fryska jolye!’” (line 1754).

⁴ *Like Will to Like*, 175.

⁵ For examples, see Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 54.

⁶ Happé, *English Drama before Shakespeare*, 137.

⁷ *All for Money*, line 907. On the matter see also Somerset, “Fair is foul and foul is Fair,” 72. Further examples are to be found in *Wealth and Health*, where it is expected from Ill Will to enter “with some jest,” or Moros, who should read the book “as fondely as you can devise.” See also Walker, 25.

⁸ Those are often accounts of previous off-stage actions, linked with some sort of mischief, scurrility, adultery or crime. The story may also serve as a device of deceit – Fancy tells the story of how he brought the letter from Pontoise only to convince Magnificence that Largesse goes with princes, *Magnyfycence*, lines 332-376. Folly’s stories, on the other hand, are complete nonsenses which serve to amuse both the King and the audience, lines 1804-42.

hens tyll to morrowe.”¹ In the same manner, the Vice giggles, acts silly and says things just for laughs. In doing so, he literally winds everybody up - from the audience to himself, utterly adhering himself to the popular taste in humour.

Here it ought to be remarked that the comedy of the interludes is not wholly the comedy of evil, because its purpose is not just to horrify or to cloy the audience, or to serve as means of seduction. Such comedy has the function of sole amusement – “to make pastime,” and as such does not apply *mutatis mutandis* to the dramatic context of the respective play. There is ample evidence of the type of humour that produces sheer delight rather being in service of entertainment than of moral instruction,² a pure comic interpolation. There is good reason to believe that many playgoers came to see the performance mainly because they delighted in the Vice’s buffoonery. Thomas Heywood criticised that in saying that audience members of this kind would be “devised onely for the vulgar, who are better delighted with that which pleaseth the eye, that contenteth the eare,”³ and in the play *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, the Prologue says that “Yet now and then we will dally merrily./ So we shall please them that of mirth be desirous,” 83-84. Therefore, we may acknowledge that the success of a play heavily depended on the Vice’s performing skills, and that this specific kind of comedy in which he comprised emerged from the necessity to entertain the audience.

In the face of this, if the Vice did not keep the audience laughing with his infectious humour and if it were not for his allurements as a funny figure that disguises his true nature, his invitation to the audience to side with him would not necessarily make sense. He would have been too cognisable to make such a request.

Later, the main comic part would belong solely to the character Vice, whose enacting is for the most part comic or absurd. Here we witness a considerable enlargement of the Vice-comedy. In later interludes, the homiletic function is rather ignored and we see the Vice primarily fooling around and talking nonsense. However, room for such development was given by the Vice’s altered surroundings – characters which are no longer allegorical - and the overall nature of the plays.⁴

¹ *Magnyfycence*, line 1588.

² Cf. only the Vice recounting his journeys discussed above, the nonsense even in the early interludes which is of supremely playful nature, etc. *Respublica*, for example, is full of jokes which only offer delight and do not further the action.

³ *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood*, vol. 4 (London, 1874) as quoted in Mehl 21 n 20. Admittedly, they would probably not only delight in watching the Vice playing a buffoon, but also, at least subconsciously, take delight in his roguish activities.

⁴ Also Eckhardt, 110.

1.7. The Vice, the Clowns and the Fool

The clowns appear in *Cambyses*, *Apius and Virginia*, *Horestes* and *Like Will to Like*, and they are involved in minor comic incidents. The distinguished relationship from that of Vice-man makes one wonder whether the clowns are to be placed outside the range of ordinary human beings. Namely, in the encounter of the Vice with the clown, the Vice never acts the traditional role of seducer; he rather acts differently in these scenes, being involved in an utterly extraneous subplot full of farcical atmosphere. In *A New Tragicall Comedie of Apius and Virginia* (1575), Haphazard the Vice tries to arbitrate between the two opposing parties, Mansipula and Mansipulus, who are engaged in a quarrel full of invectives:

MANSIPULA. What, drake-nosed drivell, begin
you to front?
I'll fry you in a faggot-stick, by Cock, Goodman lout.
You boaster, you bragger, you brawling knave,
I'll pay thee thy forty-pence, thou brawling slave.
My lady's great business belike it at end,
When you, Goodman dawcock, lust for to wend.
You cod's-head, you crack-rope, you chattering pie,
Have with ye, have at ye, your manhood to try. [*Beat and hustle him*].¹

Haphazard gets roped into the dispute himself, however, and, in an inevitable fight, is compelled to match with Mansipulus.² In Thomas Preston's *A Lamentable Tragedie/Mixed full of pleasant Mirth/The Life of Cambises, King of Percia*,³ Ambidexter the Vice is engaged in a knock-about horseplay with the three ruffians, Huff, Ruff and Snuff. According to the stage-direction, Ambidexter appears on stage *with an old capcase on his head, an old pail about his hips for harness, a scummer and a potlid by his side, and a rake on his shoulder*.⁴ The three soldiers, seeing the Vice in such funny armour, begin to make fun of him. This gives reason to the Vice to *let them swinge them about* and, after a short pause, to *fight again*. On this, the three draw their swords in order to kill the Vice. Seeing this, Ambidexter immediately proposes reconciliation: "Shake hands with me, I shake hands with thee." During another argument

¹ Quotation is based on Hazlitt's edition that does not contain line-numbering for the plays. See *A Select Collection of Old English Plays*, originally publ. by Robert Dodsley in the year 1744. Now first chronologically arranged, revised and enlarged, with the notes of all the commentators and new notes by W. Carew Hazlitt., (London, 1874).

² Cf. *Hickscorner*, where Hickscorner tries to allay the quarrel that has arisen between Imagination and Freewill but eventually gets the short straw.

³ On the development of the subplot in English tragedy before Shakespeare, see Günter Reichert, *Die Entwicklung und die Funktion der Nebenhandlung in der Tragödie vor Shakespeare* (Tübingen, 1966).

⁴ Hentschel characterises Ambidexter's appearance as an evident and theatrically effective rejection of war. See Hentschel, 75-77. Levenson has pointed out to the similarity Ambidexter shares with the braggart soldier of the Roman comedy – Miles Gloriosus. See Levenson, *That Reverend Vice*, 111.

between Huff, Ruff, Snuff and Ambidexter over who is going to spend the night with Mistress Meretrix, the courtesan, the latter flees because of fear.

Ambidexter also associates with two country yokels, Hob and Lob, who are on their way to market. Hob and Lob are leading a discussion on the king's cruelty, how "his brother he did kill;/And also a goodly young lad's heart-blood he did spill," when Ambidexter appears pretending to support their views in a parasite-like manner, only to immediately afterwards accuse them bluntly of treason.¹ Seized with fear, the two comic characters try to bribe him with pear-pies and a vat goose chill. Then, becoming hysterical, Hob and Lob begin to quarrel among themselves over who provoked this situation by making a derogatory statement about the king. Urged by Ambidexter, their quarrel escalates into a fray, up to the very moment the approaching wife of Hob, Marian-may-be-good, interferes, and *all to beat the VICE, he run away*. What happens then is that Marian-may-be-good then belabours the Vice with her broom after taking him to task. In John Pikerlyng's *Horestes* (1567), the Vice feels that Rusticus has flouted him, calling him "lyttell hourchet,"² and so the stage direction reads – *Fight*. The Vice then sets on Rusticus and Hodge against each other. Eventually he *thwacke them both and run out*.³

The episodes where the Vice is beaten, thus the farcical presentation of rufianism, served for the amusement of the audience, showing that this type of humour was "the most vital work which the English drama at the commencement of the Renaissance had to offer."⁴ In *Cambises*, the stage-direction reads: *She gets him down and he her down; thus one on the top of another make pastime*. This proves, as O. M. Busby has shown, that this fighting "was regarded as a regular source of diversion [...]."⁵

We see that these earlier clowns are either servants or the "rustic." The two low-comedy characters, Mansipulus and Mansipula, are servants, whereas Hob and Lob are the "country patches," who speak with a Mummerset accent. As B. A. Videbaek points out:

These two have many of the characteristics of the stage rustic. They speak dialect, they admit their own stupidity, they show no diligence in the use of language, they come off badly when they leave their

¹ The parasite Carisophus does the same with Damon in *Damon and Pithias*.

² Was the role of the Vice also played by an actor short in stature? In this play, Rusticus says to the Vice: "And be cause you weare lyttell and of stature but smaull," 73. Cf. Sin in *All for Money*: "And although I be young, yet am I well grown/ No child of six year old is so big in all this town," 244. Similarly, as the Doctor in the Mummer's Play: "I'm as big as any man in this town under my size." Cf. *Enough is as Good as a Feast*: "Or else you may say I were a foolish elf," 428. Also Hypocrisy in *The Conflict of Conscience*: "For I am but little and you two are blind," 795.

³ Till Eulenspiegel acts similarly in the story about the thieves and the beehive, where he makes them tear each other's hair out. Cf. the tale where Till Eulenspiegel wants to buy milk from the country-women, and how it was he who caused the women to started fighting with each other.

⁴ Tucker Brooke, 147.

⁵ Busby, 66.

tiny sphere of market and produce, and they are far from valiant; Hob's wife is a better fighter than both of them put together.¹

The examples provided illustrate how the Vice and clowns start brawling as soon as they meet. As a matter of fact, the Vice himself can be considered here a stage clown.² But is this observation general enough to be applicable to all vice figures? Certain critics tended to lean towards this idea. G. B. Levenson maintains that "the Vice is, in fact, an embodiment of the clown, the jester, the buffoon, and the trickster—all forms of the fool in his various manifestations." Without question, the Vice comprises all these elements in certain ways; still, whether he is but a jittery, joyous, cheerful clown or fool is subject to discussion. In this question I hold to a different point of view, as I believe that this is context dependent, as well as that there is an important barrier between the Vice and the fool in general. I discuss this point at issue in the next chapter. We could ascertain, however, that the clown would gradually usurp the Vice's position. It is difficult to illustrate the process of development of the Vice into clown, though. It appears that in comedy, the Vice became the Clown of the later drama.³

The Vice appears together with the lower class characters. The rustics (the word "clown" has often been etymologically related to the Latin *colonus* - "farmer, peasant")⁴, as spokespersons of the people, are virtually able to instinctively see through the true colours of the disguised Vice.⁵ This is of interest, because it illustrates a difference between the Vice-Clown and the Vice-man relationship and because it also offers a clear distinction between the Vice and the Clown. The complete transformation from a Vice to a clown is not yet apparent in the plays discussed in this section.

¹ Bente A Videbæk, *The Stage Clown in Shakespeare's Theatre* (London, 1996), 196.

² *Ibid*, 196. Several scholars point out that the Vice degenerated into a merry-maker in the later interludes; or, what is more, developed into a professional comedian. Busby, 51. What underlines the argument is that the word "vice" was often used as a synonym for fool in the sixteenth century, i.e., the term vice and fool have been used interchangeably in sixteenth century England. Nichol Newfangle, for example, proves to be just such a case, and it has been argued that Merry Report and Hardy-Dardy in *Godly Queen Hester* are not vices in the ordinary sense of the term, but they rather serve the dramatic function of a stage fool. Thus V. K. Robinson, the editor of John Heywood's *The Play of the Weather*, points out that "Merry Report, although labelled the vice, is one of the important early English stage fools, resembling some of those found in Shakespeare's plays seventy years later." See *A Critical Edition of 'The Play of the Weather' by John Heywood*, ed. Vicki Knudsen Robinson (New York & London, 1987), 131. David Bevington is of the same opinion. See Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics*, 68.

In addition, R. L. Ramsay points out in the introduction to his edition of John Skelton's play *Magnyfycence*, that Fancy and Folly are professional court fools. Ramsay, xlv. This view is supported by O. M. Busby, who also points out to the character Mirth, or Solas in *Pride of Life*, as strongly suggesting the court-jester. Busby, 12. Moros is in the same way a hybrid of a Vice and a fool.

³ The question of the clown's literary ancestry is irrelevant to the present study. Therefore, it is not going to be discussed here. The treatment of the Vice and the Clown on a comparative basis is to be found in Busby's work *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama*. On the transformation from the allegorical minor vices to clowns, see Eckhardt, 201.

⁴ Eckhardt, 306.

⁵ See also Habicht, 104. In Skelton's *Magnyfycence* already, we see that Fancy had problems with the rustic crowd while on his way from France to England.

The question concerning the Vice and the fool is a debatable point. Are the Vice and the fool the same? If one affirms, the other will deny. In many respects, what is true for the fool is also true for the Vice. But, in discussing the Vice, I would like to point out that he is neither the theatrical fool nor the Court entertainer. Certainly, the foolishness which the Vice propagates is in many respects equivalent to the one enforced by the court jester. We have seen that the Vice is close to the spectators and that his jokes at the audience's expense are rather coarse. Such freedom of speech is surely reminiscent of the court-jester. In addition, it is said about Henry VIII's court fool, Will Summers, that "he might be imagined to be a mixture of two metals, or a compound of fool and knave."¹ Still, unlike the Court jester as Will Summers, the Vice is the epitome of evil, and Will Summers' "knavery" is on the whole incomparable to the Vice's evilness. As I see it, the comicality derived from these aforementioned various sources only cover particular aspects of his character, and it often served, as we have seen, an additional function beyond sheer entertainment, namely that of seducing his victims, protagonists and spectators alike. Again, John Heywood's Vices are here exceptional.

The Vice was further influenced by the folk play fool or clown, who, as Chambers has noted, is different in quality from the Court Fool of the stage.² Whether the Vice originated in these folk figures is a different matter.³ Or may we even be allowed to say that there was rather some give and take between the Vice and the folk play fool? The Fool shares many characteristics with the Vice. To sum up, the Fool was the leader and agonist of this jovial company. He was always the presenter, i. e. he was the one who introduced the play and the other characters. Such was the Vice in some plays as well. Furthermore, just as the Vice, the Fool is impolite:

¹ *A Pleasant History of the Life and Death of Will Summers*, 3.

² Chambers, *Folk Play*, 194.

³ I have already referred to scholars supporting such a claim. There was also a character called the Vice taking part in country festivals. Regretably, there is not one description of what he was actually doing there. What we know is that in an Oxfordshire may-game the Whitsun lord was "attended by 'the vices that played the fools'". See David Wiles, *The Early Plays of Robin Hood* (1981), 5. This Vice, D. Wiles concludes, in his *Shakespeare's Clown*, 4, "had to be something of a specialist," because he was "paid a fee for his services: sixpence was normal, but five shillings was paid to the Vice in a Surrey may-game in 1611," quoting from J. C. Cox, *The Churchwardens' Accounts* (1913), 291. In Chamber's *Medieval Stage*, we see that at Bungay Kelsaye, a 'vyce' was paid 'for his pastime before the plaie, and after the plaie', II, 343. There were 'vices' too at Chelmsford, and 'fools,' by which is meant the same thing, according to Chambers I, 141. Hoods were required as part of the costume for 'fools,' 'disards' or 'vices' in the court revels of 1551-2, together with 'longe' coats of various gay colours; Kempe, Loseley MSS, 35, 47, 85. In the churchwardens' accounts (1562-1563) it further stands a payment "Unto Willm. Hewet for makinge the vices coote," and an inventory of garments made in February 1564 includes 'ij vyces coates, and ij scalpes, ij daggers (j dagger wanted) II, 346). A vice seems to have been introduced into one or two of the later miracle-plays. Cf. Representations, s. vv. Bungay, Chelmsford, Chambers II. 205. For further examples from the records of the Revel's Office, see Mares "Origin of the Vice," 24. Mares has also shown that the Vice was a relative of the Lord of Misrule (Sessions Record of Much Wenlock, 1652), but this was already touched on in Chambers' *Medieval Stage*, I: "A 1652 account of the Brosely dance with six sword-bearers, a "leader or lord of misrule" and a "vice" (cf.ch. cxxv) called the 'lord's son' is quoted. 4 n 197; The Lord of Misrule had his fool 'John Smith' in a 'vice's coote' and a 'dissard's hooode' [...], 406.

Fool

Is there anything at your advance?

Sergeant

Yes, my advance is to see a fool dance,
Either dance, sing or play
Or I will shortly mardi away.

Fool

One day I tried to stop a pig,
And what a lark we had. Sir
The pig says "Umple" and away he went,
Right through my stunning legs, Sir.

Sergeant

Do you call that singing?

Fool

Yes, plenty good enough for a man like you are.¹

In the Christmas Play from Blennerhasset, the fool even threatens with beatings, 2 and in the "Plouboys or modes dancers" at Revesby (1779) he fights.³ But, he is also "merrily disposed." He can dance, sing, caper and "run about the room," and he sometimes refers to himself as being mad, just as the Vice. The fool character, Pickle Herring, would also be in close contact with the audience, since the performance was presented in an open place. Herring also calls his audience "my masters," just like the Vice. There is also some other identical dialogue between the fool and the Vice, to which has already been referred to in my footnotes: The Clown of the Ampleforth Play says: "I've come for to tell you that I am the Clown,/ And, pray you, how do you like me?¹⁴⁰ This echoes the buffoonery of Folly in the World and the Child. Also, the clown's uttering, "If that isn't true it's a lie," echoes the Vice's "And I will either help or stand still." The Fool of the Reversby Play is abusive: "'Drive out all these proud rogues," "make

¹ A.Helm & E.C.Cawte, *Six Mummers' Acts*, Leicestershire, The Guizer Press, 1967, 37-43. In the Plough Monday Play from Clipsham, Tom-fool even goes so far as to saucily ask the Lady: "Do you wish me to offend you?" continuing with "Get out of my sight you saucy old vagabond," Mary G.Cherry, *The Plough-Monday-Play in Rutland*, Rutland Magazine and County Historical Record, 1904, vol.1, no.6, 195-199. Tommy also calls the Lady "old faggit." The Fool insults Saint George, too: "Thou proud saucy coxcomb, begone!" in W. Walker's *Peace Egg Chapbook*. The fool also threatens to leave in case other characters start to sing.

² Sue Mycock, A Cumbrian Mummung Play, or Serendipity Strikes Again, *English Dance & Song*, 1990, vol.52, no.4, 2-3.

³ M.J.Preston & P. Smith, "A petygree of the Plouboys or modes dancers songs", Sheffield, National Centre for English Cultural Tradition, 1999. He also fights against St. George in some variants. He wants to nail a dog's tail and his nose together, [Anon.], "The Mummers' Act; or, Morris Dancers' Annual Play of St. George", Sheffield, J.Pearce & Son, [1840]. Cf. Mummung [Thenford, 1854]: *The Fool then plays the hurdy-gurdy, and knocks them [the characters] all down; and the whole concludes with a general scuffle on the floor*. Anne Elizabeth Baker, *Glossary of Northamptonshire Words and Phrases* : vol. 2, (London, John Russell Smith, 1854), 429-432.

room,” 114 [...] “Come forth, you whores and gluttons all!” 115. He is a braggart too, just like the Vice, as the nonsense spoken by the Fool in the Bassingham Play shows: “I slew Ten men with a Seed of Mustard,/ Ten thousand with and old Crush’d Toad”, 94.¹

The Vice has many touches of the humour of the Folk Play Clown (Fool). Similar passages and rustic foolery are found in the folk play. The fool is equally fond of the topsy-turvy platter; still, it must also be borne in mind that much of the rhyming is not original from the medieval times or the 16th century, and that it has suffered degeneration. Again, at this point it is worth remembering the point already made, that what is ignored hereby is the Vice’s evilness, and that the comicality, assuming it to be derived from these folk figures (but also keeping in mind what has been noted earlier that the borrowing may have been the other way round), does not cover the Vice’s complete nature. Granted, the Vice and the fool were regarded as synonyms, yet this foolishness, as argued earlier, need not only stand for clownish buffoonery. Hence call him fool or call him Vice, this figure remained equally remembered as Iniquity, as the embodiment of evil. Take the evilness and didactic purpose out, and the equation of the Vice with the fool or jester is complete. Yet this rarely happens in the interludes, as the Vice usually retains his evil nature. Thus the conclusion made by R. J. E. Tiddy, that “the main purpose of Tittivillus (in Mankind) was clearly this – to provide endless scope for fooling” and similar arguments that bespeak only the merry side of the character cannot be accepted.² The Fool in the Lincolnshire Plough Play invites the spectators “to see our pleasant sport,”³ but as we have seen, the word “sport” has an entirely different meaning for the Vice.

1.8. The Vice and the Devil: The Vice: A Personified Abstraction or a Spirit?

We have seen that even though the devil reaches his maximum in regards to his career as a tempting dramatic figure and the art of his deceit thus far, the finesse and brilliancy in the field was maybe contrary to expectations left to another figure – the Vice. As Sin, the Vice in *All for Money*, says: “None with fine qualities with me can compare,” 332. Still, it cannot be denied that the devil served as inspiration concerning temptation technique. In other words, in respect to deceit, the devil furnished the model for the Vice. In *Wisdom*, Lucifer incites man to “be in þe worlde,” all under colour of living a life of merriment to abandon studies and virtue and “lede a comun lyff,” to inn, “ryches” and “clothyng fyne” and to “take a wyff” – unmistakably the very same objects utilised by the later Vice in order to induce temptation. Lucifer slanders the

¹ For further examples see Happé’s article “The Vice and the Folk Drama.”

² Tiddy, *Mummer’s Play*, 114.

³ Chambers, *Folk Play*, 105.

allegorical representation of Good, 488, and so does the Vice. He declares his intentions and future actions (introducing Mind, Will and Understanding to the Deadly Sins) to the audience – which is also the stock-in-trade of the later Vice. The devil, like the Vice, wins “many a soule to hell” by colours and cunning, 548.

Thus far it has also been shown that Satan unfolds his villainy to the audience, and that at times the devil – mainly those of the Wakefield Master – introduces political and social satire. Furthermore, it has already been pointed out that the motif of an angel who is the devil in disguise served as a model for the Vice appearing under the cloak of virtue, thus also pretending to be something that he is not. The connection between the Vice and the devil is also vividly shown in the figure Titivillus in *Mankind*, to which we have already referred.

In the sections above I have decided not to go deep into a methodological scrutiny of the very character and nature of this certainly highly theatrically attractive figure, since the Vice does not entirely serve our purpose because he is an allegorical figure, a personified evil (and whatnot) and not a supernatural entity. Even so, why did I decide to incorporate the Vice into this study? I have already pointed out that the Seven Deadly Sins were often linked to the devil and understood as spirits. Drawing upon this theory, the idea at hand is whether the Vice oscillates between a personified abstraction and a spirit. Hereby I rest on the notion that the Vice is, as already pointed out, among other things, an embodiment of the Seven Deadly Sins, and he is staged together with the devil. It is to be noted that I shall propose this hypothesis only in cases where the Vice is staged together with the devil.

Even though the devil is absent from the plays, a certain continuity of the demonic is nevertheless discernible, or passed on to another dramatic figure, i. e. the Vice, who is an embodiment of evil. In plays where the devil and the Vice appear together, the Vice bridges the borderline between the transcendental and the real sphere. I am conscious that there is no explicit notion in the interludes that specific vices come in the form of *Lasterteufel* (Vice Demons). They are not bestialised demons, but humanised figures. Nonetheless some fiendish activity is at work here in the truest sense of the word, as the devil associates with the Vice in *Like Will to Like*, *Virtuous and Godly Susanna* and *All for Money*.

The Vice proper is sometimes made the son of the devil, like Hypocrisy in *Lusty Juventus*, Avarice in *Respublica*, Infidelity in Lewis Wager’s *Life and Repentance of Mary Magdalene* and Ill Reporte in *Virtuous and Godly Susanna*. In Francis Merbury’s *The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom*, Idleness, the Vice, informs the audience that he plays “the purveyor here in earth for the devil,” 703. Further, Hypocrisy refers to himself as an “imp of Satan” in Nathaniel Woodes’ *The*

Conflict of Conscience, line 1572.¹ In fact, Satan expressly refers to the Vice when he utters: “For none will be enamoured of my shape, I do know; I will therefore mine imps send out from hell, their shapes to show,” line 110. In Lindsay’s *The Satire of the Three Estates*, it appears that Deceit was the brother of Satan, line 2443. In John Bale’s *King John*, Dissimulation comes from the devil, line 779. The vices in his *Three Lawes* are equally the devil’s agents.

The devil and the vices share the same goals – to destroy mankind and bring them down to hell. In Ulpian Fulwell’s *Like Will to Like*, Nichol Newfangle, the Vice, has been an apprentice of his godfather Lucifer and utters a nonsense that he has dwelled with him in hell before he was even born.² As soon as his “pranticehood” has been completed, though, he was permitted to make his appearance on earth. Lucifer commissions Nichol Newfangle to implant pride in men’s hearts, so as to cause them to re-enact Lucifer’s sin and to bring together evil-doers of similar nature, that is to say, to always adjoin like to like:

From virtue procure men to set their minds aside,
And wholly employ it to all sin and pride.
Let thy new-fangled fashions bear such a sway,
That a rascal be so proud as he that best may, 110.³

Further, since Satan believes that “so ougly is my face” to seduce Susanna, that wight that exists in the old Babylon, he calls on his “crafty chylde,” Ill Report, to take over the seduction in Thomas Garter’s *Virtuous and Godly Susanna*.⁴ In *Lusty Juventus*, too, the devil says that he will infect the youth through the enticement of his son Hypocrisy. This is one instance which shows that particular vices do not spring about from within, but that they are devilish creations that first need to be embedded into the mind.

In my mind, in such situations, the vices are imputations of Satan. In these situations, Mankind fraternizes with personifications which do not belong to him but to the devil.⁵ The Vice, as such, has no supernatural powers, of course, but he is linked to the devil, and thus to the supernatural, in another way. Not only is he typologically linked to the devil and even entirely part of the devil’s party, but he is actually a very evil thought that comes from the devil and

¹ Cushman, 62. In John Bale’s *Three Laws*, Infidelity conjures Idolatry and Sodomy “vyllen knaves,/ The devyls owne kychyn slaves,” 384. Infidelity himself is referred to by *Naturae Lex* with devilish epithets, like “wycked fynde” and “cruel enemye.”

² I doubt that the individual name given to the Vice gives utterance to his humanisation.

³ All citations are from *Four Tudor Interludes*, ed. J.A.B. Somerset (London, 1974).

⁴ References to this play are taken from Thomas Garter, *The Most Virtuous & Godly Susanna: 1578*, reprint prepared by B. Ifor Evans and W. W. Greg (Oxford UP, 1937).

⁵ “[...] denn die Schrift zeigt klar, daß der Teufel den Menschen böse Gedanken eingibt und der Gottlosen Sinne verblendet,” *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken – Von Anfechtungen*, in: *Tischreden von Dr. Martin Luther I-VI*, Meyers Volksbücher, Lupzig und Wien [no date]. Hereafter *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*. Such a tie between the devil and the Vice has not been taken into consideration by L. W. Cushman. Hence his clear distinction between the devil and the Vice, 63.

poisons man's mind. He is the personified instigation of the devil; he is the very seed of evil sowed by Satan in the heart of man. Here, as an agent of Satan, I believe, the Vice operates as an evil spirit – as a vice demon. As such, the Vice literally fulfils his oath addressed to man: “I beshrew your heart.” For instance, Infidelity says that he “sticks so much in Jewes harts/ That his [Jesus] doctrine and wonders they wyl not beleue,” and that he “all mens hartes doe occupie, of byshops, phariseys, elders and kyngs.” He further says:

Infidelity is my name, you know in dede,
Properly I am called the Serpents sede,
Loke in whole heart my father Sathan doth me sow
There must all iniquitie and vice needes growe

What is more, this Vice says that once he has entered, he becomes rooted within the heart, ultimately filling people with all wickedness.¹ Everything points to Mary Magdalene being possessed by Infidelity, the embodiment of the Seven Deadly Sins, for Jesus is clearly casting out this “demon”:

Avoide out of this woman thou Infidelitie,
With the VII devils which haue hir possessed,
I banish you hence by the power of my diuinitie
Infidelitie runneth away...

The Vice is here exorcised like a true devil. Generally, the Vice's operation is the reversal of Jesus' doing on earth.² Jesus “heale the sicke persons” whereas the Vice's victims become sick after being possessed by him. Jesus says “that sonne can do nothyng of hym selfe duely,/ But that he seeth the father doing alway still” and that “whatsoever the father doth, the sonne doth the same” and so the Vice does evil by “the power of the great deuill.”

Just as with the Seven Deadly Sins, so is the Vice connected to the supernatural in the examples illustrated above insofar as he is dispatched by the devil to seduce humanity. Hereby, the Vice is either to be viewed upon as an evil spirit, a vice-demon or as an evil thought inserted into man's mind or ensconced in man's heart by the devil, thus, again, as with the Seven Deadly Sins, externalising on stage the devil's operation as an internal tempter.

¹ Kelly explains that “Lutherans continued to exorcize the possessed until the later part of the sixteenth century, when they began to discard it as “superstitious.” The Calvinists, meanwhile, had done away with exorcism from the beginning [...]”, *Satan a Biography*, 304.

² An inversion of a sermon has already been apparent in the speeches of Avarice in *The Castle of Perseverance*, lines 843-855 and in those of the vices in *Mankind*, lines 702-725.

1.9. “Move over, Lucifer”: The “Snottynose Sathanas” and the Vice

The Vice does not always get on well with the devil. The discrepancy between the Vice and the devil might have had its forerunner in the *Cornish Ordinalia*, where the sharp-tongued devil Tulfric replies to Beelzebub’s politeness with the following words:

BEELZEBUB. [...] Tulfric, kindly begin for us the tail of a ditty.

TULFRIC. Yah! You can just kiss my tail instead, since it sticks out far enough astern of me, for sure, CO, 240.

Another influence could have been the seemingly inoffensive dispute Satan has with the Bad Angel, whom we have already detected as influential in the conception of the Vice-figure. Here, the Bad Angel gets a scolding from his master:

SATAN. [...] How, how, *spiritus malign* – þou wottyst what I mene?
Cum owt, I sey! Heryst nat what I seye?

BAD ANGYLL. Syrrys, I obey your covnsell in eche degree;
Stryttwaye þethyr woll I passe!
Speke soft, speke soft, I trotte hyr to tene!
I prey þe pertly, make no more noyse!¹

Later on, the Bad Angel does something which can be considered very audacious. He says to Satan: “As flat as fox, I falle before your face!” 730.² The motif of defiance of a minor evil figure towards authoritative chief devils is repeated and expounded in the Vice. Such annoyance but still relatively courteous disobedience cannot be found again in the Vice figure, however. That is to say, the Vice outperforms the Bad Angel in rebellion and defiance. The Vice mocks the devil in four extant plays: *Lusty Juventus*, *Virtuous and Goodly Susanna*, *Like Will to Like* and *All for Money*.³

To make plain, Ill Report addresses Satan with the following words: “I thinke thee mad to be,” line 58, “Why you shitten slaue, you crookte nose knaue,” line 61, “Farewell with a pestilence, I would thou hadst kist my tayle,” line 99, and so on.⁴

¹ Digby *Mary Magdalen*, lines 434-439.

² W. Bomke has pointed out that the fox was often equated with the devil in sermons. Like a fox that feigns death to get at its prey, so is the Bad Angel’s humility in front of Satan a pretence that hides his true dangerousness, 71 n 176. This motif especially has an analogy in *Virtuous and Goodly Susanna*.

³ On the Vice’s mockery of the devil see also Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred in English Drama*, 104-6.

⁴ The devil would have his whole body covered in either a hairy pelt or leather skins, or he would be in feathers. The animalistic image of the devil as contained in the mysteries would thus be carried on in the interludes, however, it seems that there were some grotesque liberties taken, where the devil would have been so deformed and

This may have different interpretations. Since such a relationship occurs in Protestant plays, it might be apt to invoke Martin Luther, because he taught that we should dismiss the devil with scorn and disdain; therefore, it is possible that the Vice serves as an exemplum here, too.¹ Luther stressed that man must not fear the devil thanks to God's universality. He justified this through the First Commandment.²

Apart from that, much stress has been laid upon youth education in the interludes of the second part of the sixteenth century, when comedy and domestic plays began to develop. The playwrights were very much concerned that their youth find the right path, as the Prologue of the Messenger in the Protestant morality *Lusty Juventus*, for instance, demonstrates.³ There are several representatives of youth that need guidance. *Lusty Juventus* represents the follies and weaknesses of youth.⁴ Good Councill states that Youth's common practices are pride, envy and abominable oaths, line 998. Apparently, both *Lusty Juventus* and *Youth* need schooling. In the manner of the anonymous play *Nice Wanton*, Thomas Ingelend's *The Disobedient Child* (1560) or W. Wager's *The Longer Thou Livest, the More Foole Thou Art* (ca. 1559), the need for parental control over children and the wish for a transformation like, let us say, that of Shakespeare's Henry V from a riotous youth to a truly Christian, becomes easy to discern.

It is not only to "train the youth and teach them God's law." That the parents ought to be paid reverent respect appears to deserve special emphasis, too, and even for that purpose, I would argue that the devil comes in the foreground. Indecent father-son relationship meets with criticism in *Like Will to Like*, for example, for while Lucifer is at pains to please his son, the former behaves like a spoiled teen who rejects values and directions his father has embraced, being cold, distant, impatient, intolerant and impolite, acting as someone who can hardly stand to

incognisable as such, that his name "Lucifer" needed to be written on his back and his chest. He would further be rugged like a bear, as this comparison is often drawn. See Craik, *The Tudor Interlude*, 50-51. R. Fricker remarks that the fletched and hairy-like-a-bear Satan was also marked by a prominent nose, 170; the one we have already encountered in the New-Castle play *Noah's Ark*. E. N. S. Thompson remarks that "the Devil discards his black skin, animal's head, tail, horns, and claws, and assumes a more human grotesqueness, a fiery red face and Bardolphian nose," 396. As illustrated above, the Vice often alludes to the devil's crooked nose. Therefore, somewhat curiously, the Vice berates the representative of virtue, Knowledge of Synne, with the following words: "You bottell nosed knaue, get you out of place,/Auoyde stinking horeson, a poison take thee,/ Hence, or by God I will lay thee on the face,/ Take heede that hereafter I doo you not see," *Mary Magdalene*². Is the Vice here self-ironic? Could it be that he wore an artificial nose himself? The term "snotty" could refer to his arrogance, even his pride.

¹ "Wenn man aber nu den Teufel kendet, so kann man leichtlich zu ihm sagen, ihn zu beschämen: ‚Leck mich im U--.‘ Oder: ‚Schmeiß ins Hemde und häng's an Hals',“ *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 48.

² Harmanus Obendiek, *Der Teufel bei Martin Luther: Eine theologische Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1931).

³ Thomas More warned that childhood must be maintained by men's authority. Elder's counsel is needed before evil upbringing may lead the youth to fall to mischief and riot, 11. In *The Ship of Fools*, it stands that wanton youths needs a wise master who would get them to assuage their folly, too, 46. It is further said that a father who is too slack in this affair and lets his son indulge in his misgovernance without teaching him manners, is to be equally judged as a fool, 52. Under these rules, then, it is safe to call Satan, in the situations where he is the indulgent father, a fool. The situation resembles to some vague extent the dialogue between the Fool and his presumptuous son Pickle Herring in the Reversby Play, Chambers, *Folk Play*, 104-120.

⁴ Satan and Juventus never meet in the play.

have his father around him. The unexpectedly spineless Lucifer, on the other hand, makes himself an object of taunts, creating his pitiful appearance as an extremely incompetent and indulgent parent, who allows himself to be constantly made ridiculous by the know-it-all Nichol Newfangle, the Vice. To clarify, Nichol Newfangle is constantly cracking jokes about Lucifer's nose, calling him "bottle-nosed knave."¹ He does not even think of kneeling before such an ill visage. He asks Lucifer to dance a little (the so-called jig)² before he goes home to hell (which he eventually does). He can do without the devil's blessing, just as he does not give a damn whether Lucifer is going to be present or not because he is going to do his "diligence" in any event. When Lucifer insists that Nichol Newfangle at least kneels before him and repeats words of veneration after him before he leaves the stage, the latter replies, "What shall I say, bottle-nosed godfather, canst thou tell?" What follows then is the Vice's amusing perverted imitation of Lucifer's formula of salutation, which deserves to be quoted in full:

Luc. All hail, oh noble prince of Hell –
N. New. All my dame's cow's tails fell down in the well
Luc. I will exalt thee above the clouds –
N. New. I will salt thee and hang thee in the shrouds
Luc. Thou art the enhancer of my renown –
N. New. Thou art Hance, the hangman of Callice town.
Luc. To thee be honour alone –
N. New. To thee shall come our hobbling Joan, lines 206-213.³

Nichol Newfangle then talks behind Lucifer's back, calling him "whoreson Devil," claiming he was actually farting during this ritual in such a way that he was sore afraid his "buttocks made buttons of the new fashion."

In these plays, I should say, the devil and the Vice are also the chief media for comedy. That given, another possibility for such occurrence could be the increase of buffoonery; the need for farcical entertainment that would stimulate the "natural inclination of the English taste to broad humour and rough-and-tumble buffoonery on the stage".⁴ In a way, it was a concession granted to the taste of the audience. The religious element was no longer dominant, wherefore, as one of the reasons, a more and more subordinate place was given to the devil. In those times, the theatre was no longer in the service of the Church but was focused more on public entertainment. That this must have been a successful gag is proved by the nearly analogical passages in the

¹ A Clown also calls the King "snotty nose" in the Ampleforth Play. See Chambers, *Folk Play*, 136.

² On the jig, see for instance R. Weimann, *Shakespeare and Popular Theatre*, 24; 185-187. Also, Charles Read Baskervill, *The Elizabethan Jig and Related Song Drama* (New York, 1965 [1929]).

³ Cf. the perversion of words by Ill-Report, who ought to repeat the words uttered by Bayly during the trial of Susanna. Also Idleness and Search in Francis Merbury's *Wit and Wisdom*, 495-535.

⁴ See Arnold Wynne, *The Growth of English Drama*, 1880. E. Eckhard has made a point that a similar relationship has already been established between the parasite Matthew Marrygreek and Ralph Roister Doister and between Jack Juggler and Jenkin Careaway, 189.

Mummers' play. The Vice says to the devil "Without my helpe thou syttest lyke a Whelpe" and so does Jack Finney say to the Doctor: "No more cass'nt thee without help," 177. The mere phrase spoken by the Vice, "bottle-nosed knave," is paralleled in a broad sense in what the Turkish Knight says to St. George: "You, you black-looking English dog, will you before me stand?" 164. It may also recall the words of the Doctor spoken to Jack Finney: "What's that, you saucy young beggar?" 177. In addition, the Vice mocks the devil, and so does Jack Finney mock the doctor in his backchat:

John Finney. Hold him yourself then.
 Doctor. What's that, you saucy young rascal?
 John Finney. Oh, I hold him sir.
 Doctor. Give him a bucket of ashes and a fuskett for his supper and well rrrrom down with the bissum stick.
 John Finney. Do it yourself, sir.
 Doctor. What's that, you saucy young rascal?
 John Finney. Oh, I do it, sir.
 [...]
 Doctor. What's throw it down there for?
 John Finney. Ah, for thee to pick it up agen, sir.
 Doctor. What's that, you saucy young rascal?
 John Finney. Oh, for me to pick it up agen, sir, 165.

Likewise, in preferring the Vice over the devil, the commercial aspect should by no means be ignored. It was not mere religious deterioration that mattered, I consider, but, in all likelihood, the financial profit that allowed the Vice to dominate over the devil. This appealed to the audience, and it brought money. Nevertheless, such chicanery on the part of the Vice does not only serve the purpose of comedy, but there is also a lesson to be learned. Apart from what has been said about this matter above, P. Happé says:

Such inconsistencies are part of the traditions of Devils and Vices upon the stage, and they have the effect of differentiating these characters from human beings. This has comic possibilities as well as a moral advantage, in that it illustrates the irreducible nonsense of sin: sin is the greatest folly of all.¹

In addition, the bold Vice maltreats his master because this is what the nature of evil brings about, he is indifferent towards everybody. As Hypocrisy says to Tyranny and Avarice: "For neither of you both a pin do I care."²

The Vice could even carry this chicanery to the extremes. Samuel Harsnett speaks of the nimble Vice who "would skip up like a jack-on-apes into the devil's neck and ride the devil a course, and belabour him with his wooden dagger, whereat the people would laugh to see the devil so vice-haunted" in *A declaration of egregious popish impostures* (1603), an account so

¹ Happé, *Tudor Interludes*, 31.

² *The Conflict of Conscience*, 536.

categorically dismissed by L. W. Cushman as being applicable to the Vice in general.¹ To bring out the point, Harsnett actually referred thereby to “old church plays,” which Cushman does not see as necessarily referring to a morality or interlude. That applies to John Gee as well, who, while talking about the same incident in *The Foot of the Snare* (1624), alluded to an “interlude in a Country-Towne:”

It was wont, when an Interlude was to bee acted in a Country-Towne, the first question that an Hobanaile spectator made, before hee would pay his penny to goe in, was, whether there bee a Divell and a Foole in the play? And if the Foole get upon the Divels backe, and beate him with his Cox-xombe til he roare, the play is comleat.²

Similar allusions to physical assaults can be found in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, where the Clown is singing:

Like to the old Vice,
Your need to sustain;
Who, with dagger of lath,
In his rage and his wrath,
Cries, ah, ha! to the devil, Act IV, scene ii.

The passage reveals assault on the devil of some kind, and the lines that follow: “Like a mad lad/ Pare thy nails dad,” suggest the Vice is threatening the devil to trim his nails with the wooden dagger. In no extant interlude does the Vice pare the devil’s nails, however, and in no extant interlude does the Vice fight the devil in any manner. Unfortunately, there is no extant interlude where the Vice fights the devil like Mr. Punch, for instance, (*Punch and Judy*), who even kills the devil with his stick, exclaiming: “Huzza! Huzza! The Devil’s dead!”³ Still, a fight scene between the devil and the Vice was apparently familiar to the Elizabethan audience.

We do know, however, that the Vice was carried on the devil’s back. We have seen this in *Wisdom*, where Lucifer departs to hell with “a shrewde boy” and “goth hys wey cryenge,” and in

¹ Cushman, 69. The aforementioned passage is also quoted from the same page.

² See the footnote on Hentschel, 23 n 45.

³ Punch: a (glove) puppet; puppet performance. Mr. Punch is usually portrayed with a large, curved belly and a large, hooked nose, hooked chin, a hunched back, and a wicked grin. The distinctive rasping voice is produced by a mouth device called a “swazzle.” He uses a big stick to beat everyone with. Mr. Punch throws his baby out of the window, he fights Judy and other characters (particularly figures of authority), and he even fights the devil, but “the Devil, once an essential character to the play, is now rarely seen, the Crocodile having taken his place.” Noone knows when he first appeared on the puppet stage. He is supposed to have arrived in England in the mid 17th century. *Punch and Judy* is a derivative from the Italian *Harlequinade*. In addition, Mr. Punch we know today is a puppet version of Pulcinella of the *Commedia dell’arte*. See www.punchandjudy.com/who.htm. No wonder Mr. Punch is considered derivative of the Vice. They are similar in character. The traditional show contained violence and biting social satire, and street entertainment. Like the Vice, he was a satirist and social critic. In addition, like with the Vice figure, the dialogue in *Punch and Judy* is full of puns and wordplay, often based on his supposed misunderstanding of another character’s dialogue. Like the Vice, Mr. Punch rejects marriage, law and order, and even religion. Yet, unlike the Vice, he was clearly the spokesperson of the people.

the Mummer's play, where the Devil gets the dead Turkish knight on his back and goes out with him. Nevertheless, in this regard, it should be noted that the motif does not recur anywhere else in the extant interludes apart from *Like Will to Like*.¹

So, what is wrong with the devil? He is out of all recognition. Not only is he the object of the Vice's mockery, but he is also presented as entirely out of use. To point out, in *Like Will to Like*, Nichol Newfangle reproves Lucifer for giving him commands which are outdated. He knows best how to bring moral and spiritual ruin upon his victim. In *Lusty Juventus*, too, the devil is forced to leave the engineering of a plot to Hypocrisy because he does not really know the world's ways. This concept has caused W. Habicht to discard the possibility that the Vice appears as the devil's subaltern. Rather, he maintains, the Vice is the devil's peer; he is even superior to the devil.² The following occurrences may even substantiate this assumption: in *Lusty Juventus*, Hypocrisy provides a long list of services he had performed for Satan, and his satiric tirade even makes him the world's exponent: "As long as I am in the world/You have some treasure and substance." The passage suggests that the devil depends on the Vice; without him the world cannot come under the devil's influence. The same relationship between the Vice and the devil is established in *All for Money* and *Virtuous and Goodly Susanna*:

Ill Report.
 Gogges woundes who would be vsed after such a sorte.
 Without my helpe thou syttest lyke a Whelpe,
 And knowest not what to doe,
 and yet lyke a slaue thou callest me slaue, and
 crooked villayne to,
 Deuill.
 O Sonne, O Boy, O Lord, O Chylde,
 Thou art my ground on thee I doe buylde,
 Be not displeased I prey thee with all my harte,
 And looke what thou gettest thou shalt haue thy parte,
 If thou canst compasse Susanna to ouerthrow,
 Thou shalt haue my blessing wheresoeuer I go, 101-10.

The relation between Satan and his friend Sin in *All for Money* is similar. Here, we are shown that Pleasure is Sin's father. Satan enters "as deformedly dressed as may be,"³ and rejoices that

¹ The motif is nevertheless recurrent. In *The Castle of Perseverance*, the Bad Angel carries the Soul on his back to Belial's scaffold (this stage direction does not occur in Eccles' edition, but in Schell and Shuchter's, line 3145). Moros exits on Confusion's back and is carried to the devil. Satan puts the Worldly Man upon his back and exits (*Enough is as Good as a Feast*). Sedition wishes to be carried by Usurped Power in *King Johan*. This motif is repeated in Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and we face a reversal of convention in Johnson's *The Devil is an Ass*, where the devil rides the Vice Iniquity: "The Devil was wont to carry away the evil; / But now the evil out-carries the Devil" (V, scene VII, lines 75-76). In Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, Benvolio makes a cynical remark that the Pope has been 'vpon the deuils backe late enough', B.IV.i.1218. Also, it is possible, as it is explained in a note in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, Part I, that a "Devil-beating may have occurred, e.g., at the end of Fulwell's *Like Will to Like*" 133-4 n 64.

² Habicht, 49.

³ *All for Money*, 347.

he is able to increase his kingdom through the work of Sin and his son, Man's Damnation. That is to say, money and pleasure lead to hell only through sin and damnation. Sin is conscious of this, wherefore he imposes superiority upon Satan. Satan then implores Sin to take the pains for him.

Again, we see Satan as inferior and dependent. In addition, modern scholarship has interpreted the afore-discussed "Vice carried on the devil's back" motif in different ways, quite often as proof of the devil's inferiority to the Vice.¹ With that in mind, what lessons are there to draw from these examples? Is the devil subject to the Vice?

If J. D. Cox had consulted W. Habicht's work, he probably would have opposed the view of W. Habicht. Cox argues that the devil is superior, and that it is the Vice who "derives his authority and power from the devil."² In some interludes, it is indeed clear that the devil is the initiator of the action and the Vice his henchman. Hence, Iniquity in *King Darius* admits that he does not have the authority to command the devil "what he hath to do," 77. Ill Report, the Vice, too, carries out the devil's plans and can expect severe punishment from the devil for his failure. Says the devil:

Well Ill Reporte thou villayne boy, thy bones I meane to gnaw,
Because of that I gaue thee charge, I am no whit in aw
Why stand I heare and suffer him, all this whyle to take rest,
His soule, his bones, his flesh and all by me shall be possest.
And what there is in Hell to harme, or punish him withal,
Or what I may deuyle anew, his flesh shall feele it all, *Susanna*, lines 1392-97.

Here, the devil dominates the Vice; his power should not be underestimated. Returning to the "Vice carried on the devil's back" motif: the Devil, entering with a "Ho, ho, ho!" carries Nichol Newfangle away with him on his back. While this leaves the impression that they go off amicably together, it is obvious that the devil is leading the Vice to eternal damnation. Mirth in Ben Johnson's *The Staple of News* says of the devil that

He would
carry away the Vice on his back, *quick to Hell*, in every
Play where he came, and reform Abuses (*italics mine*)

There is also no reason to believe that, because the devil relatively rarely occurs in the interludes, that the clergy and laity alike ceased to believe in his existence. I have already

¹ Luther once compared the soul to a horse, saying either God or the Devil rode it, and the horse had no choice but to obey whoever was in the saddle. F. H. Mares believes this motif to be borrowed from the mummings' play, 19, but this, as we have seen is not true.

² Cox, *The Devil and the Sacred in English Drama*, 102-4.

referred to the devil's linkage to the World, the Flesh and the Vice, and, if chosen to proceed in such manner, other aspects could be safely included as well, however vague and improbable they may appear. For example, reason as being inspired by the devil, terrestrial enjoyments, or music, since "Catholic asceticism denounced all instrumental music as the Devil's work. Even some Protestant sects [...] condemned music during religious services as a Satanic artifice to lure men's thoughts away from God."¹ Also, the devil was considered the originator of dance and the creator of comedy.² There is also no reason to believe that he may not have his hand in the play just because he is not seen by the eye, however strange this may sound. For example, although it is Folly who seduces man, Conscience casts the blame to the fiend (who is neither staged nor subject of the play), saying that man "faileth in folly / Through temptation of the fiend."³ Even though not present on stage, the devil is at least mentioned in the plays, not least is he part of the Vice's vocabulary and of the corrupted man.⁴ Regardless, it must be added that the closing scenes of many interludes tell the story of the fate of the person in question, and it is clear where the damned would go and whose hands would await him there, namely

Down to the dungeon where the devil dwelleth,
 Lucifer, that loathly lord, that is in bale blisses.
 There is woe upon woe, as Christ us telleth;
 All that may disease and nothing please, ever restless.
 There is frost, there is fire,
 Hope is lost and her desire;
 There care hath no recover;
 Without pity there is pain;
 To cry for mercy it is in vain,
 For grace is gone forever, *Saint John the Evangelist*, 355.

The two opposed views expressed by Habicht and Cox are both substantiated with good examples, wherefore they make it difficult to give a definite conclusion over who owns whom in this Vice-devil discrepancy. This obviously depended on the preference of individual dramatists. Indeed, the Vice-devil relationship also raises the issue over who has greater "craft" between the two. This is a difficult question that I cannot answer. In *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, for instance, the concluding speech of Covetousness the Vice is frighteningly serious. He admits he is the root of all wickedness and sin, and that he is restless in his aim to plot man's downfall. On the one hand, he uncloaks himself as the devil's employee when he says: "I never rest to teach

¹ See Rudwin, *Devil in Legend and Literature*, 255.

² *Ibid.* 258.

³ *The World and the Child*, 185.

⁴ Some devilish activities are still performed by dramatic characters, such as Pardoner's devil's ceremony of divorce between a cobbler and his wife in Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (referred to in Matthew McDiarmid's note on line 1498 in his edition of the play) or the mock-conjuration of the devil in *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (1553).

and instruct men to evil/Till I bring them both body and soul to the devil,” lines 1420-21. On the other, his next lines put him in the position of the devil’s peer: “The devil and I, thou shalt see, will not leave/Till we have made the greatest part to us to cleave,” lines 1424-5.

I would say that this also varies from case to case. When we hear that the devil was belaboured by the Vice with his wooden dagger, does that motif mean that the devil is plagued by vices in the manner of Mephistopheles, for whom, as we shall have occasion to see, hell is always a reality, be he in hell or wherever else, as he carries it with him constantly? It should be remembered that Belial is continuously plagued by furies and hell-pain, but he is nevertheless “next vnto Lucyfer in magestye” and a mighty ruler (*Conversion of St. Paul*). Or does this Vice-devil relationship amplify that man is far more vicious than the devil, as Satan in *Enough is as Good as a Feast* complains about in line 1433? Or is it simply both?

In order to decide this matter, we would have to study the origin of malice. Is the devil the father of all sins, or was he deceived by the vice? On the one hand, the devil is made responsible for misfortunes, even in plays where he is not staged at all, as for instance in *The World and the Child*, where Conscience says that our gratest enemy is “the devil and his covent,” 171. Good Councill does not blame the Vice for making mischief; rather, he blames the devil, telling Juventus that it was the devil that deceived him, “which is the author of lies,” 965. In *King Johan*, the Interpretour explains how King John would have maintained true faith and religion in England, but “Satan the Devyll which that tyme was at large, / Had so great a swaye that he coulde it not discharge,” line 1091.

In *Wisdom*, Lucifer introduces himself as “he that synne beganne!” line 332. On the other hand, when Conscience warns Manhood in *The World and the Child*, “beware of pride, and you do well / For pride Lucifer fell into hell,” 173, and when Ambitio in *Three Laws* says, “Lucifer I made So hyghly to wade, /To God he wolde be equall,” lines 1032-1033, it is extraordinarily difficult to see Satan as the originator of sin. On the other hand, it is also possible that this reversal of status results simply from the farce, where such occurances (‘the world turne topsidowne’) are common.

1.10. Conclusions: The Devil and the Vice

We can draw the following conclusions from what has been already said: we cannot say that the theatrical devil does not suit the times. Granted, the devil does not linger amidst mankind on stage whereas the Vice does. But even so, the devil can be the invisible partaker in the ruin of mankind to a certain degree. Moreover, the devil operates through the medium of other evil

characters, the Bad Angel, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Vice, etc. However, their handiwork is different.

Man consents to sin due to his own will. The devil and the Vice have influence over free-will inasmuch as they bring a suggestion to man to embark upon sin. Both put on a false mask of good, but they are evil inside. Both are enemies to the Faith, both are eager to do harm; both pollute the soul and use false persuasions. Both make use of sweet words in order to dissemble, yet the Vice also obtains man's soul by humour, which the devil does not. It is scarcely fitting for the devil to act as such, as he (at least the chief devils), on the whole, speak more learnedly than the Vice. Put differently, both have true flair for tempting humans, with the Vice employing comedy for that purpose. Thus, even though humour is fairly often utilized for the purpose of sheer amusement, whereas it may not always be in other situations, it has been shown, in plenty, that humour is compatible with evilness. By these means, man is unaware of the Vice's evil.

The Vice is in league with the devil, and this not only in plays where he is identified with the Roman Catholic Church. They both hunt the same prey, they both gloat about their potential victims, rejoice at evil and are prone to grim comedy. Lust for worldly pleasures arises through the temptation of both the devil and the Vice. This lust brings forth sin, and sin brings forth death and eternal damnation. The devil delights in such sins, and hence, the outcome of their operations is eternal punishment in hell, wherefore we may safely say that both work for the devil's gain.

All in all, in spite of the Vice's defiance, jocular treatment and abusive taunts, I should say that normally the devil bears authority. The Vice is at the right hand of the devil and the devil empowers the Vice to operate on earth. On the one hand, the devil must suffer the Vice and is, at least in some plays, anything else but tyrannous. On the other hand, the Vice, although he does evil for the devil, is repaid with evil, the devil simply spares none.

The devil has ancient hatred towards humanity, whereas the Vice is operated from all emotions as such. Neither does the Vice depart in shame after failing to corrupt mankind, whereas Satan does. Nevertheless, the Vice has surely been given human attributes. The Vice is also many aspects combined in one. The devil, on the contrary, can only appear in bodily form, and he may also transform himself into various shapes and forms.¹ Both serve the didactic purpose of partially holding up a mirror to society and prodding the audience to start thinking about themselves and the world they live in. Both the devil (of the mystery and the early morality plays) and the Vice share their plots with the audience. The Vice, however, outshines all the other evil characters, in regards to the proximity of the audience.

¹ *Malleus*, Part II, Qn 1. chap 3, 104

We know that the power of the devil is stronger than any human power.¹ There is no power that can be compared to him, who was created so that he fears none.² The devil is therefore more powerful than man; he has greater knowledge and cunning.³ Compared to the Vice, even though they are not giving each other blows on stage, the devil's power is superior, as the damage done to Adam and Eve had further reaching consequences, since Adam and Eve's corruption brought about death: "[...] for he incited the first man to sin, from whose sin it has been handed down to the whole human race to have an inclination towards all sin."⁴ This being so, it should be understood that the devil has more power than the Vice. Yet, as it has been shown, this argument will not always hold in the plays proper, in all probability inserted to please the audience.⁵

Furthermore, the description of the Vice is not discursive. Among other things, it shows how man can deceive himself without supernatural aid. However, it has also been shown how the Vice is directly linked to the supernatural.

1.11. Marginal Supernatural Entities

As much as death is certain, the very ambiguity of the nature of the theatrical Death⁶ makes it difficult to tell whether Death was thought of as an allegorical personification or a concrete figure. Further, provided that Death is not an abstraction,⁷ another question arises whether he is a supernatural villain or not. Although he is, as a rule, very mysterious and peculiar, Death is as seemingly evil as he appears to be malevolent to humans, and even though this may have no bearing on his goodness because God can also use evil characters for his service and glory, at least this much is certain: the evidence is incontestable that Death is in the service of God. Death is God's messenger and executioner in *Death of Herod*,⁸ *Pride of Life*, *Castle of Perseverance* and *Everyman*. Here, he is an agent of divine punishment who comes to everyone, irrespective of class, age or gender.

¹ Job. XI.

² *Malleus Maleficarum*, Part I, Question 3, 23.

³ Ibid. Part I, Question 8, 55.

⁴ Ibid. Part I, Question 7, 49.

⁵ Other similarities between the devil and the Vice have already been discussed in their appropriate places.

⁶ There are unfortunately no indications in the texts how Death might have looked like; thus it is not certain whether he had skeletal appearance or not. The skeleton has been accepted as the symbol of death since the beginning of the fifteenth century. In *Roxana*, a play discussed below, the Ghost of Moleon describes death as 'pale,' 'wanne,' 'rawboned' and 'terrible,' I, i, 32. We do know, however, that bow and arrows replace the perhaps conventional scythe with which he separates soul from body. Cf. the N-Town play "The Slaughter of the Innocents and the Death of Herod": "3a, be grete myghty okys with my dent I spylle the play" (line 186); also *Lochrine*: "Black ugly death, with visage pale and wan,/Presents himself before my dazzled eyes,/And with his dart prepared is to strike", I, i.

⁷ H. J. Diller has a different opinion. He sees Death as an allegorical figure, "Von den Misterien –und Mirakelspielen zu den Moralitäten," 57.

⁸ The N-Town mystery play, 20, "The Slaughter of the Innocents and the Death of Herod."

Death makes rather brief appearances in the plays: in the first English morality, a fragmentary play known as *The Pride of Life* (ca. 1400), the King of Life challenges Death. Death appears in person and struggles with the King of Life, whereby it deals him a deep death-wound, thereby resembling the motif of the Dance of Death. In another morality play, *Everyman*, Death seeks to strike with dart and send to hell all those on earth who have departed from God through their sins. While on his journey through earth, or let us say, fifteenth century England, Death encounters Everyman – a man who has only loved goods and riches his whole life. It is the will of God that humanity shall be obedient to Death. This being inevitable, Death has come to fetch Everyman away. Everyman is dead against it, and tries to escape by using all sorts of dodges; even trying to bribe Death with money. Death, in turn, is willing to caution and rectify Everyman, and proposes to him to rather betake himself on pilgrimage, so that his “counting-book” may be filled with good deeds and his reckoning clean and purified in order to avoid coming before God soon short handed. Death reminds Everyman that life has not been given to him by God, but only lent.

R. L. Ramsay writes the following about Death’s ambiguity: “Death himself bears a somewhat ambiguous relation to these two realms [this and the next world]. From one point of view he is sent by God and is simply one of his agents, “Goddys masangere,” as he is often called. On the other hand, he is a friend of the fiends in so far as he hands over to them their eagerly expended prey.”¹ Furthermore, in the N-Town Death of Herod, the stage direction reads: *Hic, dum buccinant, Mors interficiat Herodem et duos milites subito, et Diabolus recipiat eos* [Here while they are drinking, Death slays Herod and the two soldiers as well and the Devil receives them]. The question is at hand whether Death is evil and even “of the devil’s party.”

If we look outside of the moralities, we find Death as indeed being presented as Satan’s own offspring,² as in John Milton’s “Paradise Lost.” In Milton’s poem, Sin sprang from Satan’s head while he still was an angel, Satan unnaturally impregnated Sin and she gave birth to Death. Death, in turn, raped his own mother Sin, producing hellhounds that torment Sin. Death is thus Satan’s grandson, according to Milton, also inasmuch connected to the devil as Satan brought Death into the world. In addition, T. Spencer’s research has shown that Death was often described in Elizabethan poetry with various adjectives that carry the very negative associations.³ Similarly, in the Elizabethan play *The Lamentable Tragedy of Locrine*, Death is described as our

¹ R. L. Ramsay’s introduction to *Magnyfycence* clxxvi; also Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy*, 49. In the anonymous tragedy *Soliman and Perseda*, Death, which forms the chorus together with Love and Fortune, comes from the everlasting night, I, i, 26, perhaps similarly to Thanatos coming from out of the underworld. Death is also about to fetch its Car of Death from hell in V, v, 35.

² It is said in The Hebrews 2:14 that the devil holds the power of death. Death is also one of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse in Rev. 6:8.

³ Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy*, 70.

common enemy. In this play, Brutus perceives Death as a ‘foe’ against whom all struggles are in vain. Corineus concedes that Death is terrible, but he urges Brutus not to fear it.

It could be said that Death was feared in the Middle Ages, of course, and the same holds true for the Elizabethan England. However, are these hints reliable to the degree which allows us to make the general remark that Death is a supernatural villain? For reasons already set out, it follows from this brief discussion that I cannot reformulate his status and convey that Death is a supernatural villain; rather, I may be allowed to say that he could be contingently supernatural at the most, submitting that Death’s nature is susceptible to other interpretations.

Attention has previously been called to the point that there is frequently a mixture of allegory and the supernatural. This issue shall be discussed again in my analysis of the *Fury*. As to the present matter, it ought to be noted that in this connection a coalesce of an allegory and a witch exists. John Bale introduces Idololatria in his play *Three Laws*, a witch that is in possession of magical powers.¹ Sodomismus explains to Infidelitas that “she can by sayenge her *Ave Marye*,/And by other charmes of sorcerye,/Ease men of toth ake by and bye,/Yea, and fatche the devyll from hell, lines 413-16. Sodomismus further promotes Idololatria as using magical powers entirely for good purposes, all of which she performs without the help of the Holy Ghost, line 423. This is not true, for witchcraft and magic are condemned, and a witch is always evil. Just like “Clodius, Euclides, Sardinapalus and Hercules” (no comparison to the devil is made),² Idololatria is a shape shifter too, who bewilders Infidelity for being able to transform herself “into a womannys lyckenes,” line 437.

There are common characteristics of a typical witch that we all know: a wrinkled old woman with an evil look, with plenty of pimples on her face and warts on her nose. She normally wears pointed hats and purple or black clothes and rides a broom stick through the air. It is difficult to say whether the same image of a witch existed in the past. A common idea of the outward appearance of a witch certainly existed during John Bale’s time, for the stage direction self-evidently reads: “Lete Idolatry be decked lyke an olde wytche.” However, from this point of view it is difficult to tell how this theatrical witch exactly looked like.

G. B. Russell has pointed out that the English witches differed from the continental ones:

[...] they did not fly, meet for orgies, dance and feast, or practice sexual perversions. Most significantly, they did not sign a pact with the Devil or worship him. Rather, English witches, like African sorcerers, caused disease and fits, harmed livestock, hurt infants and small children, and kept familiars.³

¹ The stage direction reads: “Lete Idolatry be decked lyke an olde wytche.”

² Bale derived this list of men who put on women’s clothes from Joannes Ravisius Textor, *Officina*, Paris, 1520, fol. 133. See Blatt, lines 70-1; 244-5, as quoted in a note in Peter Happé’s edition *The Complete Plays of John Bale*, vol. 2, lines 433-5 n 163.

³ See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans* (London, 1981), 92.

It is thrilling to observe how the English belief in witches, as presented by Russell, is concordant with John Bale's depiction of *Idoloatria*. *Idoloatria* is associated with agrarian magic, for she says she "can make corne and cattle,/That they shall never thryve," lines 448-9, and she can bewitch young children, lines 427-32.¹ By and large, the semi-witch that we meet in Bale's play is relatively harmless and attests to the observation that the witch craze had not yet reached its peak. *Idoloatria* is not even a witch in the concrete sense; rather, she is an allegorical figure insinuating a witch. Similar combinations exist, such as mythological beings with allegories apparent in *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570 approx.), where Tediuousness is a giant to be slain by Wit,² and in *Marriage of Wit and Wisdom*, where Irksomeness enters like a remorseless monster and beats Wit up with his club,³ or even in *Idleness*, who sings Wit to sleep and then transforms him into Ignorance.

The two romantic narrative plays *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes* (c. 1570) and *Common Conditions* (c. 1576) contain monsters. The ogre Cardolus is introduced in *Common Conditions*, lines 1293-1350 and the valiant knight, Sir Clamydes, must defeat the flying serpent of the Forest of Marvels, "who taketh no remorse of womenkind, but doth devoure all such as are a stray."⁴ However, the Vice only relates that the knight has slain the flying serpent.⁵ For such heroes, and apparently only for them, supernatural villains are no match. Although I do not wish to argue that the motif of chivalric knights slaying monsters was directly influenced by ancient Greek heroes, it should be said that similar heroism occurs in Seneca's *Hercules Furens*. The drawn parallel to Seneca is apt in this case, as we are going to discuss Seneca in the following chapter since he influenced many Renaissance playwrights. Thus, in *Hercules Furens*, Juno and Amphitryon report that the noble demi-God Hercules ("Hercles" – as it is spelled in the Elizabethan translations) has mastered to overcome all kinds of monsters and creatures. He has slain Hydra and the "skaled serpents," dragons,⁶ the "Lerna monsters numerous,"⁷ "Tytans" and "wyld bestes." Hercules defeats all monsters the jealous Juno sends to him with ease, thus he is

¹ Concerning witches, Johannes Praetorius (1630-1680) says "daß sie Macht haben [...] das Korn auf dem Felde zu verrdrucken oder zu verwüsten/schädliche und unerhörte Kranckheiten über Menschen und Vieh zu bringen [...]" See Johannes Praetorius: *Blockes=Berges Verrichtung* (Leipzig, 1668), 97.

² Tediuousness makes his appearance with *a visor over his head*, carrying a club. His sinister appearance and his aggressiveness are reminiscent of Beelzebub in the *Mummers' Play*. Wit is slain by Tediuousness, only to be later revived by *Honest Recreation*.

³ Concerning costumes, David Bevington points out that giants and ogres "could be rendered simply with the help of a visor, such as Irksomeness in *Marriage of Wit and Wisdom* who enters "like a monstor" [...] having a visor for his head which is carried in upon a sword after his defeat." Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 93.

⁴ *Clyomon and Clamydes*, 514.

⁵ These monsters were described by Sir Philip Sidney and Stephen Gosson as "hideous," with "fire and smoke," and "terrible monster of brown paper." See Patricia Russell, "Romantic Narrative Plays: 1570-1590." in *Elizabethan Theatre*, ed. John Russell Brown & Bernard Harris (London, 1966), 107.

⁶ *Hercules Furens*, 15.

⁷ *Ibid*, 16.

referred to as God on earth. No “cruel bestes” can harm him. He has defeated Ditis, the “lorde of death,” “Centaures,” “Lapithes” and “infernal sprites” in hell; he has managed to lead Cerberus, that “dogge the watchefull keeper of the kingdome darke”¹ away from hell; he has defeated Achelous, who is capable of shifting himself to every kind of shape,² etc. Mention is also made of various monsters, goblins and grisly ghosts in *Hercules Œtæus*.

Such a hero differs from the representatives of man of the moralities and interludes in many respects. We have seen that an ordinary person cannot overcome the devil. The devil is defeated by divine intervention; man can stand against the devil as a believer in Jesus Christ. The hero, however, defeats supernatural villains physically – with a sword in a single combat. He does not fight devils, but rather faces monstrous creatures of a different kind, creatures which belong to a different world, either to the legendary-mythological or to the world of romance. The creatures are of many forms and sizes; they are visible and bodily. They are parts of the hero’s quest as his enemies, and the hero was expected to defeat them. They are not defeated by penance, repentance and the Grace of God, but by physical strength and powerful combat skills. This does not mean that such supernatural villains are always overcome. It is Cerberus Nessus who deceives Hercules, since he has managed to delude Hercules’ wife with his subtle charms: “Yet it is not your Wifes misdeede that brought you to this plight [...] This treason Nessus did contrive [...] with the Centaures bloud your shyrt was sore embrewde,” 242. That is to say, with his poisonous blood, Nessus stained his shirt and gave it to Hercules’ second wife, “assuring her it has the power to kindle Cupid’s fire.”³ Ultimately, it is the venomous blood of Nessus which kills Hercules. There are also other supernatural beings against which even great heroes are powerless. These are ghosts and furies.

¹ *Hercules Furens*, 34.

² *Hercules Œtæus*, 211.

³ Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding (Penguin Books, 2002 [11567]) line 159, 271.

III The Fury and the Ghost

1. The Ghost and the Furies in Early English Tragedies

Veniet et vobis furor: On you, as well, a madness is to come (Seneca: Agamemnon, line 1012)

“Before the time of Marlowe and Shakespeare the forces that determined the development of the serious drama in England were practically twofold: one native, emanating from the moralities and miracle plays; the other classic, and found in the tragedies long ascribed to Seneca.”¹ Jasper Heywood translated Lucius Annaeus Seneca’s *Troas*, *Thyestes* and *Hercules Furens* into English verse between 1558 and 1561. Together with other Elizabethan translations of Seneca’s plays by John Studley, Thomas Newton, Thomas Nuce, and others, they were collected by Thomas Newton and published as *Seneca His Tenne Tragedies* (1581).² From that moment forth, the nature of his plays began to be more seriously explored in Tudor England. Seneca had been adapted to England’s Christian-humanistic cultural awareness³ and the successive appearance of Seneca translations proved to be very influential on the Elizabethan tragedies. The classic tradition set up the conventions of blank verse, of five acts, of moralising and introspection, rhetoric and stichomythia, as well as of ghosts, the furies and the supernatural.⁴ In other words, the ghosts and the furies found entrance to English drama through Seneca.⁵

¹ *Two Tragedies of Seneca, Medea and The Daughters of Troy, rendered into English Verse, with an Introduction by Ella Isabel Harris* (Boston and New York, 1898) x.

² References to Seneca are to *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies translated into English*, ed. Thomas Newton; 1, (London [a.o.], 1927 [1581]). Alexander Nevyle or Neville translated *Ædipus* in 1563, Thomas Nuce *Ostavia* in 1566 and John Studley *Agamemnon* and *Medea* in 1566. Studley also translated *Hippolytus* and *Hercules Oetaeus*. Thomas Newton translated *Thebais* (or *Phoenissae*). See John W. Cunliffe, *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy* (Connecticut, 1965 [1893]), 3. Also Raimund Borgmeier, „Die englische Literatur“, *Der Einfluß Senecas auf das europäische Drama*, Hg. Eckard Lefèvre (Darmstadt, 1978) 289. Also, the tragedy wrongly ascribed to Seneca, *Octavia*, about which John Sandsbury said, “which the unlearned world bids us ascribe to Seneca,” is going to be treated in this study because it was attributed to him in the Renaissance. This study is not concerned with the question whether Seneca’s plays were intended for stage-performance or not, however. On this issue consider, for example, Otto Zwierlein, *Die Rezitationsdramen Senecas* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1966), who argues that the plays were unperformable, but intended to be “read.” There are adherents to such theory, of course, but there are also scholars who argue that Seneca may have composed his plays with performance in mind. If this is so, then another problem arises as to whether Seneca had in mind the public or private stage.

³ Meissner, 196.

⁴ Lucas, 104.

⁵ On the ghost, see also Symonds’ *Shakespeare’s Predecessors*; Cunliffe’s *The Influence of Seneca*, 44. To this notion, I add the Fury. Certainly, some popular elements of the English ghost-lore contributed to the fashioning of the theatrical ghost, as well as *The Mirror for Magistrates*, but the chief influence, I believe, lies in Seneca. Leafing through Andrew Joynes’ *Medieval Ghost Stories*, for instance, I could not spot many similarities between these ghosts and the tragical ones under consideration here.

The English tragedy was not popular before 1580. Before Queen Elizabeth's ascension to the throne, Seneca's plays were performed at schools, and "original tragedies in Latin were produced at the universities."¹ Early Elizabethan tragedy is Senecan tragedy.² The early imitations of Seneca, *Gorboduc*, *Gismond of Salerne* and the *Misfortunes of Arthur* are "the earliest and the most faithful English copies of the Latin model."³ Seneca appealed to the Tudor writers. Through him, they could touch upon issues of their own times.⁴ The earliest English tragedy is *The Tragedy of Gorboduc* by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, both members of Parliament. The play was performed before Queen Elizabeth at Whitehall, January 18, 1562. There are two editions of the play: the first (1565) is called the *Tragedy of Gorboduc* whereas the second (c. 1570) carries the title the *Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex*.⁵ Although its theme was from British history, derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth, the play carried political intentions. In 1566, the Gray's Inn produced *Jocasta*. Other plays followed, such as G. Gascoigne's *Supposes*, *Gismond of Salerne* among others, which shall be discussed in a later chapter.

The humanist movement had rediscovered ancient texts, and the question was in what manner they were to be presented to the Elizabethans. The questions of evil and the role of the supernatural in particular, are of chief interest to this study. Obviously, the question of evil was discussed differently in Antiquity. Not only did evil start with coming out of Pandora's jar, but the gods, and their relationships to humans, played a specific part in it. The immortal but imperfect gods play a great part in all of the human affairs. They look down from the Mount Olympus, interact in the lives of humans and interfere in their destinies. People pray to the gods of Olympus and show devotion to them, holding diverse rituals in order to please them, but they also live in fear of them.

The gods, as patron gods, help humans out: Hera protects Achilles, Aphrodite protects Aeneas and Apollo, invisible, supports Hector. The gods Poseidon and Apollo help King Laomedon of Troy to build huge walls around the city. Aphrodite protects Paris during his hand to hand combat with Menelaus. The goddess of youth, Hebe, bestows youth upon the old Ioläus for one day. At times, the gods also give the gift of prophecy to certain mortals, such as Tiresias, Amphiaraus, Helenus, Calchas or Casandra. The gods also side with humans. The most prominent example of this is found in the Trojan War. During the Trojan War, the Olympian

¹ *A Literary History of England*, 460.

² *Ibid*, 460. John W. Cunliffe indicated the English authors' borrowings of Senecan passages in his *The Influence of Seneca on English Tragedy*. On the matter, one might also wish to consult Rudolf Fischer, *Zur Kunstentwicklung der englischen Tragödie von ihren ersten Anfängen bis zu Shakespeare* (Trübner, 1893); Symonds *Shakespeare's Predecessors*, Julius Leopold Klein, *Geschichte des Dramas* (Leipzig, 1865).

³ *Two Tragedies of Seneca, Medea and The Daughters of Troy* xvi.

⁴ A fuller explanation is offered in Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 102.

⁵ *Ibid*, 461.

gods and goddesses Zeus, Ares, Apollo and Aphrodite side with the Trojans, whereas Hera, Athena, Hermes, Poseidon and Hephaestus side with the Greeks.

This is not to say that the gods are always kind, however. They do not always show pity and are not always merciful, since some crimes are unforgivable. In Greek mythology, the goddess Leto severely punishes Niobe for her offence against the gods by slaying all of her children. In *Seven against Thebes*, Zeus kills Capaneus with a thunderbolt and so punishes him for his arrogance. In the *Iliad*, Artemis punishes Agamemnon for his offence. Apollo punishes the Greeks and fires arrows of plague upon them for disrespecting his priest Chryses. The gods also send plague against humans in order to punish them. For example, they put a terrible plague on Thebes because they want to revenge the death of Laius.

The gods sometimes send signs and sometimes they speak to mortals in dreams or omens. In Greek mythology, Aphrodite sends dreams, Zeus sends a false dream to Agamemnon, the ghost of Prius visits Pelias in his dreams and the god Dionysus appears in Theseus' dreams. However, the gods often reveal themselves to humans. Sometimes, they appear in their divine form. In the Judgement of Paris episode, the god Hermes and the goddesses Hera, Aphrodite and Athena appear before Paris. Athena also appears before Odysseus. However, they also have special abilities; they sometimes change their shape or appear on earth in disguise: Zeus transforms himself into a white bull, Iris turns into the likeness of Priam's daughter Laodice, Athena disguises herself as a herald, or as Laodokos, son of Antenor, and so on.

The gods can cause interior tensions which give rise to right or wrong movements. For example, the goddess Hera kindles courage and confidence in Ancaeus, one of the Argonauts. Zeus puts courage into the hearts of the Trojans. Hera also makes Medea fall in love with Jason, and later casts fear and despair into Medea's heart. Iris makes Helen's heart long for her home and former husband Menelaus. Aphrodite, in turn, changes how Helen feels and causes her to kiss Paris. Zeus instils fear into the soul of Ajax the Great.¹

The Elizabethans partly comprehended the classics in their English translations.² The ancient concepts of theodicy listed above³ had to suffer certain reinterpretations in the hands of Elizabethan translators, as they translated "into the spirit and language of their own creed."⁴ For the present study, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* shall serve as an example. The Elizabethan translator, Arthur Golding, admonishes the reader to understand the classics in their proper sense. Since so

¹ Schwab, 273.

² Arthur Golding translated Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in 1567, the first complete *Aeneid* in English (1573) is the version by Thomas Phaer (?1510–60) and Thomas Twyne (1543–1613), and so on.

³ Basically, the old Rome similarly depended on the gods. See Agathe Thornton, *The Living Universe: Gods and Men in Virgil's Aeneid* (Dunedin, 1977), 5.

⁴ Madeleine Forey's introduction to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, xii.

many misconceptions have come about, Golding feels the necessity to “bring again the darkened truth to light,” since it is possible, as he argues, to revise and bring them to a Christian context. He directs the reader’s attention to the right approach to read and understand of Ovid’s work. He summarises the morals of the twelve books with a Christian mindset, thereby interpreting Ovid’s narrative poems as fables of heathens who were unaware of the true God.

Golding replaces “gods” with God¹ because they are “creatures” and “feigned gods.” The heathens mistook them for such since they were unaware of the true God. The ancient gods are ambivalent and imperfect. They share similar faults with mortals; therefore, they do not deserve a deity status.² Golding continues to criticise pagan worship, saying how virtues and vices were assigned to gods. “And look how every man was bent to goodness or to ill,/He did surmise his foolish gods inclining to his will.” Furthermore, he accuses the heathens of falsifying the Holy Scripture, for their integral parts of the classical underworld, Phlegeton, Styx and the Elysian fields, are counterfeits of the Christian heaven and hell.³ Furthermore, he describes the “oracles and soothsayers’ prophecies” as superstitious nonsense.

Apparently, the classical reception in the Elizabethan period was different in many respects. We have seen that the moralities pleased and instructed at the same time. The Elizabethans found certain moral lessons that classical literature provided in agreement with the sense of the Holy Scripture. They “combined the useful with the pleasant,”⁴ to borrow Horace’s expression. Thus, the fables teach the same as the morality plays – that one should not “further or allure to vice” but direct his “mind by reason to the way of virtue.”⁵ People should learn how dangerous it is to grant access to vice because such ‘lewd affections’ would alter them considerably:

For as there is no creature more divine than man as long
As reason hath the sovereignty and standeth firm and strong,
So is there none more beastly, vile and devilish than is he
If reason, giving over, by affection mated be.⁶

That given, the question arises of how, in the world of Elizabethan tragedies, the playwrights would make ancient view consistent with the Christian mindset. If we would try to reinterpret classical doctrines in Christian terms for the Elizabethan world, as for instance some Elizabethan translators and playwrights apparently attempted to do,⁷ we would reach a result that certain

¹ *Metamorph.* viii. 793.

² Preface to the Reader, 43-50.

³ Epistle of 1567, l. 532-535.

⁴ Horace, *Ars Poetica* [340].

⁵ Epistle of 1567, lines 561-572.

⁶ *Ibid.*, lines 564-568.

⁷ For example, Seneca’s Elizabethan translator explains the chain of events in *Oedipus* as a “dreadfull Example of Gods horrible vengeance for sinne,” 190. In discussing Ovid’s moral intentions in his *Metamorphoses*, Arthur

similarities can indeed be drawn. An important development to be considered here is that we no longer have the motif of God's mercy in the foreground, as in the moralities and interludes discussed, but rather of God's heavy wrath – “the wrath of God on man for sin” – and the principle of God's just vengeance. Why this is so is arguably best explained by the Fury Alecta in Matthew Gwinne's tragedy *Nero*:

Our Father's right hand is good, his left bad. Praise him if good, tolerate him if bad. For both the good and the bad are under Gods' special protection. Jupiter tolerates no scheming against the good, for he defends him who is like himself. Nor does he aid us against the bad, for revenge belongs to Jove, not to mankind. It is a rare rebellion that is fortunate, loyal, and decent. Betrayal, confused by great perils, disperses hither and thither in panic, and becomes manifest. Thus the traitor, hastening to betray, betrays himself.

To point out, God is just and God righteously punishes men's injustice “with infernall abhyme.” Alexander Barclay instructs us that God gives us time and space in this world to stop sinning and leave our vice so as to follow the way of grace. “But if we styll continue in one case,” Barclay proceeds, “And haue done no good to pay hym at our day/ In hell prison he iustly shall vs lay.”¹ God “warns us oft before to leave our folly,” Golding admonishes, “but at length his vengeance striketh sore.”² Thus, God pardons in mercy and punishes in justice.³

There is a select circle of influential factors in the tragedies, given that humanity is under sway of gods, the ‘inconstant change of fickle’ Fortune and Fates. We ought to imagine that there is a destined order of things⁴ and fixed laws of heaven, and whoever tries to violate or alter them shall feel the wrath of the vengeful gods.⁵ There is, of course, a tight kinship among the gods, and ‘the pain of one affects them all.’⁶ It appears that every evil which oppresses mortals occurs by divine will and judgement. This could be due to divine vengeance, and the gods' righteousness. Deliberate murder, pride, ambition,⁷ usurpation,⁸ crime against marriage⁹ – these sins turn the laws of nature upside-down, wherefore they are to be condemned and punished. That is to say, together with the gods of heaven, the “avenging Jupiter”¹⁰ will let no crime go

Golding illuminates in his Epistle of 1567 that Ovid wished to show “the praise of virtues and the shame of vices, with due rewards of either of the same,” lines 65-66.

¹ *Ship of Fools*, 136.

² Golding Epistle of 1567, lines 127-128.

³ *Malaficarum*, I, Qn. 13, 72.

⁴ *Solymanidae*, II, i.

⁵ In Greek mythology, Antigone disobeys the law of the ruler Creon, but fulfils the laws of the gods. No mortal can transgress the laws of the gods, she says to Creon, without falling prey to their wrath.

⁶ *Meleager*, II.

⁷ Cf. the side note in Gascoigne's *Jocasta*: “Ambition doth destroye al,” 272.

⁸ Villains are, therefore, those who rebel against their king, for as William Baldwin says in *The Mirror for Magistrates*: “Whosever rebelleth agaynst any ruler either good or bad, rebelleth agaynst God” – this was at once the motto of Tudor political drama, too. See Meissner, 594 n 91.

⁹ Juno is the protectress of marriage.

¹⁰ *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, II, i, 243.

unpunished.¹ In addition, the Second Chorus in *Meleager* informs us that those who scorn the gods always come to a tragic end. In addition, it appears that one thing follows another. Sin is hereditary; wherefore, clearly, mankind must atone for the sins of its ancestors. Thereby the protagonists cannot strive against gods and destiny, for they are fated to be destroyed.² The almightiness of the law is being demonstrated here, and for all the reasons listed above, the protagonists suffer a tragic end.

The gods above govern everything.³ No crime can be concealed from the all-knowing gods, and so the ignoble protagonists are punished for their former wrongs by the heavenly wrath. But also, a gloomy power is in operation, working independently from mankind's guilt. For instance, guilty are all those who do wrong of their own will. Such ones are always doomed in the plays. Thereby, however, it should be remarked that the guiltless are also often slain. Such notions resulted from Seneca's following of the Stoic view of *Fatum* and *Fortuna* as well as from the notion of the affect as the cause of all evil.

Moreover, no assured fortune is granted to man. Humans are bound to the laws of destiny. Thereby, the inconsistency of fortune is always emphasised – the so-called “fickle fortune.” Fortune can take away power, and it is *Fortuna* that causes life to come at a braking point. However, in most of the plays, *Fortuna* is in the service of God, and only punishes those who are burdened with guilt.⁴ That is to say, in such situations, God gives fortune, wherefore we may say that man is an instrument in the hands of Fortune. Also, the mortals do not know which course the Fates shall take:

No man understands the movements of Fortune and the hidden courses of Fate. Although a man is wise, although he discerns many things, he may commit an error. Furthermore, the great gods of heavens rule all things, and human effort cannot withstand them (*Sol.* IV).

In the texts, who has control over what is often blurred, however. The confusion is well illustrated in *Solymanidae*, where Selim is engaged in a debate with his mother Rhode:

RHOD. Leave all the Fates' outcome to me [...]
 SEL. The gods govern future things.
 RHOD. But mortals govern present ones.
 SEL. Destiny, the mistress of things, brings everything to predetermined endings, and human reason is ignorant of their hidden paths.
 RHOD. Yet it behooves those who undertake great enterprises to prevail (II.i.)

¹ *Solymanidae*, III.

² Cf. Gascoigne's *Jocasta*: “Experience proves, and daily is it seene,/In vaine (too vaine) man strives against the heavens, 248; ‘Every man must beare with quiet minde/ The fate that heavens have erst to him assignde’, 333; likewise, Seneca's *Oedipus* can blame non other for his harms but ‘secrete spight of foredecreed fate,’ 322.

³ Golding, *Epistle of 1567*, line 452.

⁴ Meissner, 332.

All in all, however, we may say that the supreme father, Jupiter, directs fates with his powerful hand.¹ He governs “the indomitable and unalterable laws of Fate” and “turns human ills to good ends (Epilogue in *Solymanidae*).

Altogether, the gods, the Fates, Fortune, the ghost, the Fury and the mortal man, all ‘enjoy’ equal laws. The gods, the Fates and Fortune are the architects of the destiny of humankind. As regards to the ghost, however, there is one difference worthy of note. The gods know the truth beforehand.² The Furies, as goddesses, are in possession of such powers as well. The ghost speaks what is fated too, yet on some matters he keeps silent. Because of this, man often cannot learn his fate from the ghost.

As we shall see, the supernatural machinery has a great impact on humanity in the tragedies. Thereby, man is only partially responsible for the course of events on stage, but of this he is not fully aware, as he is often oblivious of the supernatural intervention. The present study is only concerned with the supernatural intervention caused by its evil side, manifested by the two supernatural villains – the Fury and the ghost.

1.1. The Fury

In *Ferrex and Porrex*, or *The Tragedie of Gorboduc* (1561-2) by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, and which happens to be the first Elizabethan tragedy on the Senecan model, the three Furies in Greek mythology, Alecto, Megera and Cisiphone, make their appearance in the dumb-show that precedes Act IV. According to Hesiod,³ the Furies were fertilized by the blood spilled from Uranus, who had been castrated by his son Cronus: “From the blood that flowed from the genitals [of Ouranos the Sky] three Erinyes were born first in the earth, Teisephone, Megaira and Alekto with them [...]”⁴ In Hesiod, thus, the three Erinyes are daughters of the Earth. Aeschylus alternatively calls them the daughters of night.⁵ In Seneca’s *Hercules Furens*, they are begotten by “the haughty moone.”⁶ Interpreting this as having the same meaning as being the daughter of

¹ *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, II, ii, 340. In some plays, however, even gods cannot change the Fate and are bound to the laws of destiny. Death is equally subordinate to the fates in *Soliman and Perseda*.

² Cf. for example *Jocasta*: “Gods [...] know the truth of every secrete thing,” III, I, 287.

³ *Theogony*, 185.

⁴ Bacchylides, Fragment 52 (from Tzetzes on Hesiod’s *Theogony*) (trans. Campbell, Vol. Greek Lyric IV) (Greek lyric C5th B.C.). <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Erinyes.html>.

⁵ *Eum.* 321.

⁶ *Hercules Furens*, 11.

the night, this is then also stressed in Virgil's *Aeneid* and finds itself again in *Gorboduc* – where the Chorus says: “the dreadful Furies, daughters of the night,” 279.¹

Erinyes, Eumenides (when they are kind) and Furies are one and the same.² The three Furies, Alecto, Megaera and Tisiphone, are the three “Stygian sisters.”³ A definite number of the Erinyes or their particular names were not known before the Greek tragedians. Euripides speaks of the Furies as three in number.⁴ This is also the case in Virgil's *Aeneid*. In Seneca's *Hercules Furens*, Juno says: “[...] ye Furies, sisters three throwne quite out of my wit.”⁵ This rule is not always consistent – the Furies also appear in great number in Seneca's plays.⁶ The conjured furies are apparently also “hateful hurt,” “fierce impyety,” “error” and “fury.”⁷

The Elizabethans were not familiar with Greek drama;⁸ thus it is puzzling which source could have served as inspiration since, as regards the names of the Furies, Seneca could not have influenced Norton and Sackville because Megaera and Tisiphone appear in his plays, but not Alecto.⁹ Where did Norton and Sackville obtain their source of information then? The three Erinyes, Alecto, Megaera and Tisiphone, also appear in Orph. *Hymn.* 68; Tzetz. *ad Lycoph.* 406; Virg. *Aen.* xii. 845, yet Alecto was most likely adapted from Virgil's *Aeneid*, a work all too well known to Elizabethan playwrights.¹⁰

It is said that Alecto castigates moral crimes, Megaera causes jealousy and envy, and causes people to commit crimes (marital infidelity in particular), and Tisiphone is the avenger of murder.¹¹ Their functions are slightly modified in *Nero*:

¹ Cf. Ovid, IV, 560: “the daughters of the night, the cruel Furies [...]” The Furies are Pluto's daughters in Virgil, but then again, also addressed by Juno as ‘the daughters of Night,’ VII 319-344. Cf. *The Tragedy of Caesar's Revenge*: “you night borne Sisters to whose haire are ty'd/ In Admantine Chaines both Gods and Men,” I, i, 27-30.

² Cf. *Caesar's Revenge*: “Which of those hell-borne sterne *Eumenides*: / Inflam'd thy minde with such ambitious fire”, I, iii, 315. Medusa is wrongly identified as a Fury in Gascoigne's *Jocasta*, II, I, 269.

³ Marlowe also calls them ‘Fatal Sisters,’ *Tamb.* II, II, iv, 99.

⁴ *Trojan Women* 457; *Orestes* 408, 1650. See Robert J Edgeworth, “Vergil's Furies”, *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 76, no. 3 (Jul., 1983), 365.

⁵ *Hercules Furens*, 12. Cf. the second Chorus: *God graunt thou maist of Hell subdue the rightes/ And unrevoked webs of Systers three*, 26. Also Ovid: “One of the Furies three/ With poisoned snakes and hellish brands hath rather blasted thee” (X, 345).

⁶ Consider only the speech delivered by Medea: “Whom seeke *this ruffling rowt* of Feendes with gargell Visage dight? [...] Or whom with cruell scorching brande and Stygian faggot fell./ With mischief great to cloy, entendes *this army black of hell?* (*italics mine*) (*Medea*, V. 96). Cf. *Thyestes*: “flocke of furies”, 57. Hieronimo also refers to troops of Furies and tormenting hags in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, III, xiii, 108. Cf. *Meleager*: “Where goes this troop of Furies, sent from Hell?” IV. 1170. Cf. Shakespeare's *Richard III*: “a legion of foul fiendes” (I, iv, 58). Also *Roxana*: “And all the troupes of furies waite on thee”, V, iv, line 1674.

⁷ *Hercules Furens*, 12. Cf. Ovid: “The furious fiend Tisiphone [...] at her going out/ Fear, Terror, Grief and Pensiveness for company she took/ And also Madness with her slight and ghastly staring look” (IV, 600).

⁸ See Cunliffe *Influence of Seneca* 11; G. Highet, *The Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1949) 120; Borgmeier, 287.

⁹ Megaera and Tisiphone occur in *Hercules Oetaeus*, 228. Megaera is mentioned in *Medea*, V. 96. H. Schmidt has already suggested that other models apart from Seneca must have exerted influence upon *Gorboduc*. See H Schmidt, “Seneca's Influence Upon “Gorboduc””, *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Feb., 1887), 28-35.

¹⁰ VII. chap 18, 415: “Alecto toruam faciem et furialia membra exuit [...]”.

¹¹ Tisiphone is the guardian of the gates of Tartarus in Virgil's *Aeneid*, VI, lines 553-578.

Menacing Alecto tirelessly harries wanton Ambition, Megaera oppresses Hatred, Tisiphone piles killing upon killing, exacting her price. The Furies drive the mad to distraction.

In William Fulbecke's alternative epilogue to the play *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, Alecto is even elevated to a supreme fury.¹ In some variants, Tisiphone is regarded as the eldest of the three Furies. She is the chief Fury in the *Aeneid*.

The directions for the dumb-show in *Gorboduc*, written by Thomas Sackville, run as follows:

First the Music of Hautboys began to play during which there came forth from under the Stage, as though out of Hell three furies Alecto, Megera and Cisiphone and in black garments sprinkled with blood and flames. Their bodies girt with snakes, their heads spread with Serpents instead of hair, the one bearing in her hand a Snake, the other a whip, & the third a burning Firebrand: each driving before them a king and a Queen, which moved by Furies unnaturally had slain their own Children. The names of kings & Queens were these. Tantalus, Medea Athamas, Ino, Cambises, Althea. After that the Furies and these had passed about the Stage thrice, they departed and then the Music ceased: hereby was signified the unnatural murders to follow, that is to say. Porrex slain by his own Mother. And king Gorboduc and Queen Viden, killed by their own Subjects.

The stage direction in *Gorboduc*, quoted above, reveals how the Furies were brought on stage. They are fearful to behold.² The serpents twined in their hair are redolent of Gorgons.³ Their black garments are reminiscent of Cassandra's description of Furies in Seneca's *Agamemnon*: "A garment blacke theyr gnawed guts doth gyred in mourning guyse."⁴ This is also present in Aeschylus' portrayal of the Erinyes in a passage of his *Eumenides*, where they are described by the priestess as "wingless – black, foul utterly" and they are also similar to Orestes' portrayal of the furies in *Choephoroi*, who sees them "like Gorgon shapes/Black-robed, with tangled tentacles entwined/Of frequent snakes."⁵ The Furies in *Hercules Furens* are described as having "flaming lockes" and "furious hands" out of which vipers fling.⁶ Sticking to the convention, the Furies in *Gorboduc* are also furnished with snakes. Furies holding in their hands a snake and a blazing torch are images Seneca possibly borrowed from the imagination of another tragedian, Euripides,

¹ *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, 341. She is also mentioned in passing by Humber in *Lochrine*: "Hath fell Alecto, with invenomed blasts,/ Breathed forth poison in these tender plains?" *Lochrine* IV, ii.

² Cf. their description in *Agamemnon*: "The squally sisters doe approach, and deale their bloody strokes,/ Their vvsages so pale doe burne, with fury flaming eyes: A garment blacke their gnawed guts doth gyred in mourning guyse, 129. Cf. *Octavia*: "That drofell dyre that furious slut Erin,/ With hanging hayre aboute her hellish hed,/ And gyrt with snakes with deadly step went in", I, iv, 157; also 188: "The grisly, dreadfull drab Eryn."

³ They are described as such in Virgil, *Aeneid* 12. 848 ff; *Georgics* 4. 471; Propertius, *Elegies* 3. 5; Seneca, *Hercules Furens*: "fearce Tisyphone with head and ugly heare/ With serpentes set", 41. In *Medea* too, but not in the translation. The already quoted passage in *Octavia*, I, iv, 157. Cf. William Fulbecke's *Lochrine*: "[...] th' enchanted snakes, / Which wrap themselves about the furies' necks" (*Misfortunes of Arthur*, 340).

⁴ *Agamemnon*, 129. Cf. *Aeneid*: "[...] Tisiphone sits, wrapped in a bloodstained robe", VI, lines 553-578.

⁵ Initially, the Erinyes did not have any outward appearance. Aeschylus was the first one to give outward shape to the Erinyes. Gorgon and Harpy served him as models for his conception of Erinyes. On Aeschylus' furies see Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge UP, 1991 [1922]) 223-239; also Whitmore, *Supernatural in Tragedy*, 41.

⁶ *Hercules Furens*, 11.

whose Furies bear snakes and burning firebrands in their hands.¹ The fact that the Furies are besprinkled with blood indicates that it was the shed blood that brought them to effect. The blood calls for vengeance, that is; the blood poisons the earth and thereby poisons the “murdered fed by earth.”²

Since these Erinyes (Ερινύες), or Furies, as they are called in Roman mythology, appear from beneath the earth³ from the “deepest den,” they are not “mere phantoms of a deranged mind,” to adapt the term from one critic, but supernatural entities. C. E. Whitmore has pointed out that the single divinity that appears in Seneca is the goddess Juno that speaks the prologue in his *Hercules Furens*.⁴ This would not be true, because the Furies are also regarded as the goddesses of vengeance. We know that the Furies are goddesses according to Aeschylus. In Seneca’s *Hercules Furens*, Juno calls them “debateful goddesse,”⁵ and Medea calls them *sceleris ultrices deae* too (elsewhere, *ultrices deas*). Elizabethan translators did not like to grant a deity status to the Furies, however. Instead, they preferred to associate the Furies with devils. Arthur Golding replaces Ovid’s “Eumenides” with “hellhounds three,”⁶ and Seneca’s translator John Studley calls them “hellish haggges,” “hideous devilish Feendes,” 55 and “rufflying rowt of Feendes with gargell Visage dight”, 96.⁷ Their status is restored in subsequent Elizabethan tragedies, however. Here, they are again perceived as goddesses of the underworld.

¹ Furies as torch-bearers appear in *Hercules Furens*. Lycus says: “But one my pompe and princely might/ May ratify once joynd to me with *regall torche ful bright*,/ And chambers Megara” 19 (*italics mine*); Hercules: “[...] some dredfull thing threatening doth rage about/ Erynnis bringing flames: with stripes she soundes now shaken/ And burned brandes in funeralles, loe yet more neare and neare/ Throwes in my face”, 40. Also *Thyestes*, 57; *Eumenides*, 1005. See also Seneca *Medea*, 958: “Whither hastes that headlong horde of Furiæ? Whom seek they? Against whom are they preparing their flaming blows? Whom does the hellish host threaten with its bloody brands? A huge snake hisses, whirled with the writhing lash. Whom does Megaera seek with her deadly torch?” See <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Erinyes.html>. In *Hercules Oetaeus* it stands: “What yerking noyse is this we heare, what hagge here we fownde/ That beares aboute her writhen lockes these ugly adders wound,/ And one her yrksome temples twayne her blackysh fines do wagge./ Why chase ye mee with burning brandes Magera filthy hagge?/ Alcides can but vengeance aske, and that I will him get,” 228. [...] Lo heare stood ougly Tisiphon with sterne and ghastly face./ And did demaunde with steaming eies the manner of the case./ O spare thy strypes Megera spare, and with thy brandes away,/ Th’ offence I did was ment in love [...]”, 228. *Medea*: “Bring in your scratting pawes a burning brand of deadly fyre,” 55. Cf. *Octavia*, II, 152.

² Harrison, 219.

³ Cf. *Ædipus*: “From dreadfull darke infernall dampes some Fury must be sent,” 207; the Chorus in the anonymous *Solymanidae* (1582): “Has the earth burst open, and is the dark house of Dis releasing the Furies?”, I. In *Medea*, V, 96 and *The Spanish Tragedy* they abide in the deepest hell (I, I, 64). In *Jocasta*, the Chorus says that Mars raises the Furies from the ‘depth of hell,’ 282. In Sackville’s *Induction (Mirror for Magistrates)* they dwell in the infernal lake, line 108, 302. Bajazeth in Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine the Great*, Part I, places the Furies near the black Cocytus’ lake, V, I, 217. In *The Battle of Alcazar* they are in ‘Auernus crags’, I, i, 52. H. W. Stoll points out that they live in Erebus.

⁴ Whitmore, *Supernatural in Tragedy*, 98.

⁵ *Hercules Furens*, 11.

⁶ *Metamorph.* viii. 625.

⁷ Cf. *Hercules Œtaeus*, where J. S. translates *Eumenides* as the “fiendes infernal,” 228. This is echoed in *Lochrine*, III,i. too: “For to awake out of the infernal shade/Those ugly devils of black Erebus,/That might torment the damned traitor’s soul!”

M. V. Braginton points out that there are four gods in Seneca's tragedies, "three who appear on the stage and one whose will is carried out off stage. There are no gods appearing during the action proper of the play."¹ Furthermore, she determines Seneca's Stygian Fury as a goddess.² The Furies are called divine in Orphic Hymn 68. Thus, in relation to Elizabethan tragedies, the Furies in *Gorboduc* could be viewed as netherworld goddesses, but they need not.³ They could also be vengeful souls of murdered women, because an Erinys, J. A. Harrison tells us, "primarily is the Ker⁴ of a human being unrighteously slain [...] it is the outraged soul of the dead man crying for vengeance."⁵ The furies could also be human ghosts that live beneath the earth, i.e. in hell, that take vengeance upon mortals mostly when family rights are trampled upon.⁶ Such conceivability appears to have attracted the notion of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, who in his play *Alaham* (published in 1633) lets the prologue ghost of one of the kings of Ormus narrate how former tyrants are transformed into Furies in the underworld:

Here tyrants that corrupt authoritie,
Councell'd out of the feares of wickednesse,
Cunning in mischiefe, prowde in crueltie,
Are furies made, to plague the weaker ghosts, 159.

In most of the tragedies discussed, however, a clear distinction is drawn between the Fury and the ghost, which allows us to treat the Furies as non-human entities. The Furies produce madness and force it upon humans as avenging spirits. A typical example of such an occurrence can be found in Seneca's *Hercules Furens*, where Juno makes her stepson Hercules' apotheosis responsible for her hatred towards him. The goddess fears that Hercules shall be immortalised as Jove's illegitimate son and as such expose and immortalise her disgrace as a cheated wife. Even though Hercules is at times arrogant and highly disrespectful towards Juno, it is clear from what is being said in Act III that Hercules is innocent⁷ and that, in the main, Juno's accusations against him are unfounded. And still, Hercules' struggle has no reasonable chance. This is mainly so because Hercules must suffer for the sins of Jove. Juno intends to destroy Hercules by causing

¹ Mary V. Braginton, *The Supernatural in Seneca's Tragedies* (Menasha, Wisconsin, 1933), 35.

² *Ibid.*, 34.

³ They were certainly not viewed as such by the Elizabethan audience. In his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (also the first translation into English, 1565) for example, Arthur Golding admonishes the reader that ancient gods are not to be mistaken for deities, but are to be viewed as allegories. See Meissner, *England im Zeitalter von Humanismus*, 36. In *Hercules Œtaeus*, J. S. translates *opposui deis* as "grysely divells", II, 225.

⁴ For further information about "ker," see for instance Stoll, 173.

⁵ See Harrison, *Prologomena in the Study of Greek Religion*, 214.

⁶ *Il.* xxi, 412. ix, 521. *Od.* xi, 279. See also Heinrich Wilhelm Stoll, *Handbuch der Religion und Mythologie der Griechen und Römer* (Wiesbaden, 2003 [1896]), 174.

⁷ In this regard, certain critics accuse Hercules of committing the sins of pride and blind ambition, as well as of covetousness of glory, but even here, it is said that the Furies punish the proud: "Hebt auch Hochmuth menschlichen Wahns sich zum Himmel, brechen wir ihn." See Stoll, 177.

“his mynd in madnes” to “stirre up”¹ - she will cause Hercules to commit a crime while being “mad of mind.” This she accomplishes with the aid of the Furies; gods can do such things. In mythology, the jealous Juno sends a Fury to Io, the innocent nymph Jove lusted after, to drive her mad like a gadfly and cause her to restlessly wander through the world. The same fate befalls Hercules in Seneca’s play. Juno is the one who gives the command, and the Furies are those who carry out the order. Madness is sent unto Hercules, which makes him say “thoughts that ought not to be spoake”² and which leads to mental aberration, hallucinations and furious rage. It is the Furies who take possession of him and drive him mad.³ Several examples that testify such powers can be listed. For example, this is how Erasmus understands them. He makes mention of the Furies and explains that madness is sent to people by

the revenging Furies [...] secretly from hell, with their snaky locks unbound, they put into the hearts of mortal men lust for war, or insatiable thirst for wealth, shameful and illicit love, parricide, incest, sacrilege, or any other bane of the sort, or when they hound the guilty and stricken souls with fiends or with torch-bearing goblins, *Praise of Folly*, 51.

Angry quarrel also appertains to the Furies, according to Erasmus.⁴ In Seneca’s *Troas*, great mischief, murder and misery had befallen Troy, committed under wrath that could only have been caused by a fur, 7. In *Agamemnon*, Euribates explains that the Furies, those “hatefull hellish Hagges,” are causers of man’s rage, 139. A Fury has also incensed Claudius to murder Octavia’s mother, II, 157 etc.

Granted, sometimes the Fury must “extract” madness from a ghost. In *Thyestes*, for instance, madness is brought to the house of Tantalus, instigated and forced by the Fury, as means for further punishment for Tantalus’ ghost. Chiefly, however, it is the Furies which are causers of particular emotional states, quite similar to the previously encountered demonic possession. This is what these supernatural entities, devils and furies, appear to have in common - the power to control the human mind to the extent that it may lead to utter change of behaviour. They are aerial, they cannot be seen, wherefore their attack as such is also not demonstrated on stage. Hercules’ sudden attack of madness would thus mean that he is being affected, tormented and finally altered by the Furies – they reside in him, able to control his mind and his actions, ultimately making him inhuman or like a wild animal, as he slays his innocent wife and children,

¹ *Hercules Furens*, 10.

² *Ibid*, 40.

³ Unlike R. Soellner, who obviously sees Hercules’ madness without supernatural intervention. See Rolf Soellner, “The Madness of Hercules and the Elizabethans,” *Comparative Literature*, vol. 10, no. 4 (Autumn, 1958), 309-324.

⁴ *Praise of Folly*, 55.

for it must be accentuated that Hercules committed these atrocities unwittingly.¹ The Furies exert control over humans; their negative intentions cause the frenzy of human's state of mind. The case of Hercules shows that it is a temporary madness that overcomes him, brought about by the Furies. Therefore, Hercules' responsibility for the atrocity is being taken away by the Furies.

The Fury can lodge within man's chest. In *Hercules Œtæus*, Deianira says that "furious fiendes [...] within this breast doe dwell."² This is paralleled again in the anonymous mock-heroic interlude *Thersites*: "The goddess of battle her fury on me hath cast."³ In the Elizabethan tragedy *Gismond of Salerne*, Magæra, coming out of the deepest hell, throws snakes into the hearts of Gismond and her father, King Tancred, in order to sow discordance in their house,⁴ to make them wrathful and to eventually cause them to kill each other.⁵ We have already treated upon this topic in our discussion about demonic possession. Passions invade the will, since they are brought about by the invisible power of the Furies. Humans are powerless during such occurrences and cannot withstand such attacks.

Strange as it may seem, there are situations where dramatic protagonists wilfully ask to be "possessed." They require help from the furies in order to "fill the mind" and "fire the soul" with passions, which is apparently necessary to accomplish an evil deed. Thereby the protagonists become unbridled and ungovernable; hereby we witness a transfer of moral responsibility. The difference is their free will; it is almost like the Furies need permission to possess a human body, which is atypical and unlike a demonic possession. Characters, such as Medea, simply want to be possessed, so as to commit a greater evil. Apparently, particular atrocities ask for greater madness, wherefore certain protagonists invoke the Furies. In addressing themselves, the Senecan figures invoke Furies in order to fill them with a level of emotion that would enable them to cause harm to their victims.⁶ Medea, for instance, enchants the furies with the following words altered by the translator John Studley, so that "burning heate of boyling breast in flames" may begin to rage:

¹ Ajax is similarly driven by madness in some versions. Cf. Orestes, who mistakes his sister for his mother, or Athamas and Agave, who imagined their children to be wild beasts, and so butchered them. See Taillepied, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 21; Lavater, *Of Ghosts and Spirits*, 13.

² *Hercules Œtæus*, 203.

³ *Thersites in Six Anonymous Plays: First Series* (c. 1510-1537), ed. John S. Farmer (London, 1905), 205.

⁴ This is a snake of hate and wrath, an instrument of death. There is a revised version of *Tancred and Gismond* (1593). It is a play written by Robert Wilmot and others, published 1591 but written sometime between 1566 and 1568. The tragedy is grounded on Boccaccio's "Sigismonda." See Robert Wilmot, *The Tragedy of Tancred and Gismond*, ed. John S. Farmer, *The Tudor Facsimile Texts*. Here, the Fury Magæra is dancing 'a hellish rounde' with her two sisters Alecto and Tysiphone.

⁵ *Gismond of Salerne* IV. lines 37-39. This is adapted from Virgil's *Aeneid*, where Alecto throws a serpent into Amata's bosom, VII. 346. In Ovid, the 'furious fiend,' Tisiphone, throws snakes at Athamas and Ino. Eventually, the snakes 'did crawl about their breasts,' 613. Somewhat similarly, before act III in *Caesar's Revenge*, Discord wishes that a Fury may kindle the Stygian brand in Brutus's breast.

⁶ This procedure is like a reversal of exorcism where the fiends are invoked to leave the afflicted person.

Come out, come out, yee hellish haggas, revenge this deede so dyre,
 Bring in your scratting pawes a burning brand of deadly fyre.
 Rise up yee hiddeous divelish Feendes [...], 55¹

Atreus utters the following words in *Thyestes*:

Depart thou hence all piety, if in this house as yet
 Thou ever wert: and now let all the flocke of furies dyre,
 And full of strife Erinnis come, and double brands of fyre
 Megæra shaking: for not yet enough with fury great
 And rage doth burne my boyling brest: it ought to be replete,
 With monster more, 63.

In Senecan manner, the Renaissance figures do this as well, as shown by Gorlois' ghost, 264, for example, but also by Guenevera:

Come, spiteful fiends, come, heaps of furies fell,
 Not one by one, but all at once! my breast
 Raves not enough: it likes me to be fill'd
 With greater monsters yet, 266.

In like case, Humber says:

Come, fierce Erinnis, horrible with snakes;
 Come, ugly Furies, armed with your whips;
 You threefold judges of black Tartarus,
 And all the army of you hellish fiends,
 With new found torments rack proud Locrine's bones! (III, vi).

Atossa wishes to darken her senses, wherefore she calls the Furies:

Come come you Furies, come you damned flocke
 Of scrichowle hags, and all you howling troopes

 Of spirits and fayries shake your fyrie brands

 Ore my accursed head, so let me burne
Roxana, II. iii. lines 545-548²

¹ Even though I have labelled these occurrences as a reversal of exorcism, the rituals must have reminded Elizabethans of witchcraft or similar devilish activities. Studley, thus, links Medea's conjurations and sorcery to the devil. Elsewhere, he calls her sorcery "divelish charme," 67. In a similar manner, the translator J. S. calls Nutrix's art of magic "witchcraft" in *Hercules Cæteus*. In *Locrine*, too, Medea's conjurations are described as devilish charms (prologue in act V). Golding says Hecate should be understood as synonym for "witches, conjurors and necromancers," Preface to the Reader, line 73.

² Although, comparing herself to Medea in Act V, Atossa says that all the atrocities she did were done out of her own accord and without any supernatural assistance, it is highly probable that she said so because she was oblivious to the Fury-like Suspicion playing his part throughout the play.

Human protagonists often need the Furies as instruments so that vengeance may be brought about; nevertheless, there are also situations where both the human protagonist and the retaliatory ghost need help of the Furies in order to bring vengeance upon their enemies.

Medea needs the Furies in order to exact vengeance upon Jason. Caesar invokes the Furies¹ for the same reason:

You greesly daughters of the cheerles night,
Whose hearts, nor praier nor pittie, ere could lend,
Leaue the black dungeon of your *Chaos* deepe:
Come and with flaming brandles into the world,
Reuenge, and death, bringe seated in your eyes:
And plauege these villaynes for their trecheries.
Caesar's Revenge, III.vi. lines 1714-1719

Similarly, it is said in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*:

Ye Furies that can mask invisible,
Dive to the bottom of Avernus' pool
And in your hands bring hellish poison up
And squeeze it in the cup of Tamburlaine
Tamburlaine, I, IV.iv. lines 17-20.²

The same is true for the retaliatory ghost – for this purpose he also needs the Furies. For example, in William Alabaster's *Roxana*, Moleon's ghost needs the aid of Suspicion to facilitate destruction of those he abhors.³

The diverse invocations bear fruit, since with those, the Furies obviously achieve something. On the whole, the protagonists are either aware or unaware of being taken in the hold of the Furies. But what does this precisely mean? Just as Cupid can “pearce the heart” with “hys Darte of Loue”⁴ and so make Dido fall in love with Aeneas in William Gager's *Dido*, so do the frantic Furies possess the wits. For instance, Ovid's Medea realises she is falling in love with Jason. She struggles in vain against this “rage,” which is love in reality, but reason is powerless against it – “wits are futile against the heat.” She says that some god has bewitched her senses and chained her will.⁵ With the same logic that the one who is in love is “filled with the god Cupid,” so is the one overcome with madness seized by the Furies.⁶ With the aid of the Furies, rage is brought to high extremes. We may say, therefore, that the Furies are bringers of infernal madness. Characters are often admonished to refrain from anger, but in the light of what has just been said,

¹ On the invocation of furies in classical and Elizabethan tragedy, see Clemen, *Tragödie vor Shakespeare*, 216-19.

² In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV.610 the Furies also bring poison with them. Their snakes are also poisonous.

³ Alabaster's *Roxana*, I, ii, 42.

⁴ Lavater, II, viii, 135.

⁵ Ovid, *The Metamorphoses*, trans. and ed. Horace Gregory (New York, 2001 [1958]), 187.

⁶ Cf. *Caesar's Revenge*: “furies instigate mens mindes,/ And puth their armes to finnish bloody deedes,” III, v, line 1585.

it is questionable whether it is in the protagonists' power at all to restrain from anger, or master the same, or whether in such situations the untamed Fury is present, inspiring beastly rage to him.

The Furies deliver madness, the reason for this being mostly vengeance and punishment. Their doings, however, can even be more explosive and have more severe repercussions. Not only do the Furies take over humans and cause them to deliver certain emotions, but they also “come into the world and make it hell.”¹ The Furies are able to “spread delirium” through the world² and to “stab fear into the hearts of anguished mortals.”³ They only hearken impatiently when Nemesis is going to give them “green light” to plague the world.⁴ Once let loose upon humans, they are “ramping and raging,” and they are “inflicting vengeance.”⁵ They can also bring forth plagues so as to expiate an evil deed. In many plays, it is the Fury which causes discordance and subsequent disaster in the play proper. What Marlowe's Tamburlaine boasts with when saying he “holds the Fates bound fast in iron chaines,”⁶ we should rather ascribe to the Furies in a certain sense, since they appear to have control over the events in the body of the play. The argument of the play in Seneca's *Troas* appears to make the Furies responsible for the destruction of Troy: “Thou fury fel that from the deepest den / Couldst cause this wrath of hell to Troy to light [...]”⁷ In *Maleager*, Magaera says, “I shall throw everything into confusion” and “I shall go, overturning everything.”⁸

1.2. The Fury and the Dumb-Show

Considered merciless, the Furies in *Gorboduc* almost certainly guide the aforementioned kings and queens⁹ to their destruction, where they are going to punish them in the underworld.¹⁰ In an allegorical-emblematic manner, the Furies pantomimically pre-interpret the content of the

¹ *Caesar's Revenge*, V, i, line 2149.

² *Aeneid*, X. 39.

³ *Ibid*, XII. 850.

⁴ *Tamb.* II, III.iv. 60. The Furies also thirst for slaughter in *Caesar's Revenge*, V, v, line 2534.

⁵ *Battle of Alcazar*, I, i, 52-53.

⁶ *Tamb.* I, I, ii, 174.

⁷ *Troas*, 7.

⁸ In this play, however, the Fury is rather introduced as a formal device and the supernatural machinery is flat, maybe superfluous and not really elaborated or cognisable in the play proper.

⁹ C. E. Whitmore has already pointed out that they are ghosts, 211.

¹⁰ Hercules indicates such a place of torment in hell when he says: “The furies places dire/ And dungeon depe of sprites in hell and place of tormentry/ To gyilty ghostes and banishment yf any yet do lye” (*Hercules Furens*, 48). The place of punishment is Tartarus. There, as reported by Sibyl in the *Aeneid*, the Furies lash the damned, VI, lines 553-578. More will be said of Tarturus in a later chapter.

teaching of the proximate scene.¹ This dumb-show is designed for the purpose to symbolically presage the dawn of the sinning family of King Gorboduc, his sons Ferrex and Porrex - the descendants of Brute discussed in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Porrex has slain his brother Ferrex in Act III in order to "feed his greedy will" and take possession of his lands. Porrex has shed his brother's blood; therefore, the mother of the two, Queen Videna, who favoured Ferrex and loved him more dearly than herself, swears revenge on Porrex, that "hateful wretch," "heinous Traitor" and "Traitor to kin and kind, to Sire and me." The curse of the parent upon the child is very powerful, and eventually, Porrex does not escape his mother's "just revenge," because she stabs her knife in him while he sleeps and "gives him the mortal wound." We learn of this cold-blooded murder only through the report of Marcella.² We have seen that the dumb-show in *Gorboduc* is a short piece of silent action performed between the acts; thus, the Furies are not strictly part of the play itself. We have also seen that the function of a dumb-show is to pictorially symbolise the events which will ensue, its purpose having already been explicitly explained in the text quoted above.³ The function of the Chorus in *Gorboduc* is to comment the already performed dumb-show. And still, what is highly interesting is that what was actually performed in the dumb-show is not in accordance with what the Chorus says in the end of the scene and how it clarifies the symbolic meaning of it. Here, the conceivability of the Furies finds further comprehensiveness. Namely, according to the Chorus that consists of the "four ancient and sage men of Brittain," the mighty God Jove had sent forth "with speed the dreadful Furies" in order to revenge Ferrex's death and to "make the mother kill her only son," 281-2. Upon this, the question arises as to what extent the Furies are relevant to the play when the Chorus speaks in such a manner at the end of the act: are the Furies doing double service, or are we simply witnesses of the inconsistency of Sackville's treatment of the Furies? Keeping in mind that the Furies also had the effect of driving their victims insane,⁴ as discussed, this could be what the Chorus means by saying that this is how the Furies made "the mother kill her only

¹ Wolfgang Clemen, *Die Tragödie vor Shakespeare: Ihre Entwicklung im Spiegel der dramatischen Rede* (Heidelberg, 1955), 51.

² The early academic tragedies are almost entirely speech-dramas. It is difficult to determine whether Marcella actually saw the ghost of Porrex when she says: "And straight, pale death pressing within his face,/The flying ghost his mortal corpse forsook," lines 225-6. If this is so, then, drawing upon C. Clark's classification, the ghost of Porrex would be a subjective one.

³ Tucker Brooke, 193. It has been argued that the allegorical dumb-show introduced by the two lawyer-playwrights is similar to the Italian *intermedii* or *entremets*. F. S. Boas, for example, does not exclude the possibility that they have their origin in "allegorical tableaux associated with city pageants and court masks." See Boas, 33. On the dumb-show, see B. R. Pearn, "Dumb-Show in Elizabethan Drama", *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 11, no. 44 (Oct., 1935), 385-405; Dieter Mehl, *Die Pantomime im Drama der Shakespearezeit* (Heidelberg, 1964).

⁴ In supplement of what has been discussed in the previous chapter, M. R. Lefkowitz points out that the Erinyes have mental powers, claiming "to drive their victims mad, with a song "maddening their brain, carrying away sense, destroying the mind." See Mary R. Lefkowitz, *Women in Greek Myth*, Baltimore (Maryland, 1986), 122. Maybe Queen Videna became mad because of the direct influence of the Furies, who drove her mad.

son,” namely in functioning as external powers. “[...] sie verblenden auch selbst den Sinn des Menschen und führen ihn zur Uebelthat und stürzen ihn dadurch ins Unglück,” says H. W. Stoll.¹ Furthermore, the fact that the Furies do not appear in person to anyone either on or off stage needs not mean that they are inactive, since they are “aerial and unseen by human kind, and swiftly coursing, rapid as the mind,” Orphic Hymn, 68.² Perhaps they are not so extraneous to the action of the play proper after all,³ perhaps their task is not only to wander around the stage as part of the dumb show and go off the stage before the actual scene begins. This is only to hypothetically allude to the possibility. Were it not for the Chorus, nobody would have been conscious of their part as avengers within the action in the body of the play itself. Besides, Gorboduc is made solely responsible for unleashing a chain of events with tragic consequences. He could have prevented the tragedy, had he but “taken the good advice of his chancellors, shunned flatterers and, after the death of his sons, settled the succession definitely and with order of law.”⁴ Following this line of reasoning, no supernatural force or a curse resting upon the family is responsible for the fatality and tragic complications. The king consciously making the wrong decision of dividing the kingdom between his two sons during his lifetime is the cause.⁵ Thus, on the other hand, it is also probable that the Chorus speaks metaphorically, using the Furies only as a figure of speech – as a mode of expression, or, say, rhetorical device. This would almost mean that their content is negligible and that what the Chorus says is irrelevant to what is going on in the play. In this case, the Furies would be but personifications of abstract ideas.⁶

The Furies turn up again in the first dumb-show in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, by Thomas Hughes. Here, they appear together with Arthurian figures. The significance of these three nameless Furies is explained as follows:

By the first fury with the snake and cup was signified the banquet of Uther Pendragon, and afterward his death, which ensued by the poisoned cup. The second fury, with her firebrand and Cupid, represented Uther’s unlawful heat and love conceived at the banquet, which never ceased in his

¹ Stoll, *Handbuch der Religion und Mythologie*, 175.

² That the Furies can turn invisible is also confirmed in Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, I: “Ye Furies that can mask invisible [...]” IV, iv, 17.

³ Classical dramas, as discussed, provide such examples.

⁴ See Greg Walker, *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge UP, 1998), 202.

⁵ Also asserted by Borgmeier, 298.

⁶ J. E. Harrison has shown that the Erinyes became personified in Homer and post-Homeric times; that they were also used as sheer embodiments of vengeance. See Harrison, 215-17. The dramatic significance of the Chorus in the structure of *Gorboduc* would afford further elaboration. How reliable is it in its function of clarifying the meaning of the scene? The chorus in *Gorboduc* is an inheritance from the classic stage. See Schmidt, 63. Albert Weiner has remarked that “frequently choruses misunderstand what is happening in the tragedy while the audience understands, and frequently choruses make comments on the action which seem positively stupid or inappropriate.” See Albert Weiner, “The Function of the Tragic Greek Chorus,” *Theatre Journal*, vol. 32, no. 2 (May, 1980), 206. Richmond Lattimore has said that choruses in Euripides often say things which “have nothing to do with what is going on in the play.” See David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, (Chicago, 1959), III, vii; as quoted in Weiner, 206. On the tragic chorus in general, see Chapter XVIII of Aristotle’s *Poetics*.

posterity. By the third, with her whip and Pegasus, was prefigured the cruelty and ambition which thence ensued and continued to th' effecting of this tragedy.

This dumb-show is entirely symbolical, where the furies are pointing to the guilt of Uther Pendragon, thus adverting to the prequel of the drama in a pictorial way.¹ The second dumb-show speaks of the furies in a different vein; namely, they are conceived as allegories: "The Irishman signified Revenge and Fury, which Mordred conceived after his foil on the shores, whereunto Mordred headlong yieldeth himself," 279.

The diverse dumb-shows reveal uncertainties and discontinuities about the Furies' statuses. The dramatists were not always willing to "breathe life" into the Furies; rather, at times they were synthesising them with particular abstract concepts.

1.3. The Fury of Revenge

The Furies bring vengeance. Ancient tragedians primarily considered the Furies as the avengers of bloodguiltiness, and in *Gorboduc* they must be viewed in this context because they drive before them Tantalus, Medea, Athamas, Ino, Cambises and Althea, all kings and queens who have abnormally slain their children.² Up until now, we have encountered allegorical agents of Punishment such as Adversity and Poverty in Skelton's *Magnyfycence*.³ Here, the Furies, even though they come out of hell, are conceived as instruments of gods' punishment. Such conceivability is already recognizable in *Gismond of Salerne*. Says Magæra in a monologue prefixed to Act IV:

Furies must aide, when men will cease to know
Their Goddes: and Hell shall send reuenging paine
To those, whome Shame from sinne can not restraine
Gismond of Salerne, IV, lines 42-44.

The Fury, thus, punishes crime against gods. In William Gager's *Meleager*, the Fury Magæra delivers a soliloquy in the first scene, where she promises to take revenge on the proud Oeneus and his household⁴ because of neglecting the rites of Diana. In one instance, it is also said in *Antonius Bassianus Caracalla* that the Furies are "born to punish the impious" and to "fashion their penalty."⁵ From this, it appears that retributive punishment is acceptable, and since

¹ Mehl, *Die Pantomime im Drama der Shakespearezeit*, 48.

² In Ovid (*Met.* Iv. 481ff.) Tisiphone uses snakes, poison and a torch to drive Ino and Athamas mad. See also Braginton, 43.

³ Ramsay, xxx.

⁴ William Gager's *Meleager*, Act I.

⁵ *Antonius Bassianus Caracalla* V, v, line 1550.

punishment is justice for the unjust, it follows that the Fury is the minister of justice.¹ Magæra, Tisiphone and Electo are entirely in the service of justice in Matthew Gwinne's *Nero* where they make their appearance together with Nemesis – the avenger of crime and advocator of justice.² In this play, they are goddesses who do not let anything unavenged. As it is explained in the prologue delivered by Nemesis, “Menacing Alecto tirelessly harries wanton Ambition, Megaera oppresses Hatred, Tisiphone piles killing upon killing, exacting her price.”³ The Furies are therefore no uncompromising, wild beasts who kill at will. Magæra of the same play, in presenting the contrast between the Furies and humankind, emphasises their righteousness over human bestiality: “Men are the Furies, we the Kindly Ones [...] they are unjust, we honest; they torture the undeserving, we punish the deserving; they do so avidly, we with sorrow.” Even in the controversial cases of Orestes and Alcmæon, who killed their mothers to avenge their fathers respectively and were both haunted by the Furies and driven to madness, the Furies function as agents of divine wrath as well, since patricide and matricide were viewed upon as sins against the gods.⁴

The idea of the Furies as being strictly in the service of justice is not consistent, however. For instance, in *Gorboduc*, the Chorus exculpates Queen Videna for murdering her son:

Blood asketh blood, and death must death requite;
Jove, by his just and everlasting doom,
Justly hath ever so requited it.

Other protagonists do not see an example of divine retribution in the death of Porrex. Rather, the mother's act is judged upon as a heinous deed which asks for revenge. Marcella cries: “O mother, thou to murder thus thy child/Even Jove with Justice must with lightening flames/From heaven send down some strange revenge on thee,” lines 245-47. And indeed, in Act V, Scene I, there is already a report of the death of the king and queen at the hands of their subjects in revolt. If Queen Videna has received just punishment for her deed, which proved to be the case, how can the Chorus speak of the Furies as ministers of justice? Thus, the Furies are used more as apparitions or abstractions, or, even more, personified curses that take vengeance upon mortals, whosoever commits transgression of shedding blood. In this case, the Furies are rather monstrously angry, uncontrolled, impartial and indifferent, similar to the insatiate Discord in

¹ *Octavia*, I. iv, 152.

² Cf. *The Battle of Alcazar*, II.i, lines 321-326. They are also described as appearing together in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. Here, Nemesis is called Rhamnusia, and she is mounted on a lion's back, II, III, iv, lines 54-61. Nemesis is also called Queen of Revenge in *Caesar's Revenge* V, iii, line 2383 and ‘high mistress of reuenge’ in *The Battle of Alcazar*, I, i, 49.

³ In a note to the play *Antonius Bassianus Caracalla*, it is explained that Tisiphone stands for “Avenger”, Alecto for “Unresting” and Megaera for “Jealous,” 176 n 1.

⁴ <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Erinyes5.html>.

Caesar's Revenge, which suggests that they are raving arbitrarily and avidly. It appears as if they can be invoked or dispatched by anybody who asks for vengeance, irrespective of whether the cause is just or not.¹

The Furies are also bringers of ill-favoured omens. They bring the Stygian marriage torches, thus signifying a doomed marriage.² Caracalla wishes to marry his own mother. This is an incestuous, monstrous act which recalls the ghost of his brother Geta, who arises from the underworld to look upon this marriage. The ghost has brought Furies with him, the “bridesmaids for this wedding,” as he cynically remarks, “bearing torches black with the fire of Phlegethom,” in order to pollute their marriage bed.³ The Furies also fulfil the curses cast upon the guilty – these are family curses in great majority, levelled against those who have committed patricide, matricide, filicide or some other transgression. Oedipus wishes “th’ infernall sprites of hell/ To breathe such poysned hate into their [his sons Pollynices and Eteocles] brestes’/ As eche with other fall to bloody warres.”⁴

In Seneca, the Furies, apart from Magæra in *Thyestes*, do not say anything. As regards the English tragedies, a monologue is granted to Magæra in *Gismond of Salerne* and *Meleager*, and we find a chorus constituted of Furies in *Nero*.⁵ This chorus, unlike the others, is a knowing one: “Do we not know what is to happen, being goddesses? Do we not interpret what has been done, being ministers of justice? Do we leave anything unavenged, past or future?”⁶ In general, the Fury knows what is yet to come. Says Magæra in Act I in William Gager’s *Meleager*:

This house is presently to fall by mutual woundings: a nephew will kill his wicked uncles, a sister will kill a nephew, a mother her son, a better sister than mother, but still an evil sister. Now these crimes are at hand, now at hand are menaces, murder, madness.⁷

Certain antique texts attribute other faculties to the Furies, of which we need not dilate since they are not found again in the plays under consideration.⁸ Several characteristics of the Furies

¹ Even Discord describes them as bestial: “The Furies that for slaughter only thirst” (*Caesar's Revenge*, V. v. line 2534). Nemesis describes them as malevolent in *Nero*, Act IV.

² For examples in classical literature, see <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Erinyes6.html>. This idea is carried on in the ghost characters like Seneca’s Agrippina or Gager’s Ghost of Sychæus in *Dido*, III, i: “[...] I [...] have made my sad way [...] bearing before me in my left hand a gloomy torch for the new bridal-chamber of Elisa, once my wife.” Again, Agrippina in Gwinne’s *Nero*: “I am present, and as a bridesmaid I bear these wedding-torches,” IV, i.

³ Cf. Roxana, IV, i, lines 1068-1170: “Saturne shall give the bryde/ Tisiphone be brydemayde, and the devill preist / Thy marriage vowe shall be confirm’d with teares.” The Furies were also present at Medea’s wedding; see Seneca’s *Medea*, 55. Also, when it is said in the texts that the Furies ‘make the beds,’ it refers to an omen yet to come.

⁴ *Jocasta*, 250. Creon then ascribes the fall of the two to Oedipus’ prayers, V, i, 313.

⁵ The Furies also form the chorus in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*.

⁶ *Nero*, I, ii.

⁷ <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/gager/plays/meleager/act1eng.html>.

⁸ For example, the Fury turns itself into an owl in the *Aeneid*; it saps Turnus’ strength so that when he attempts to hurl a huge boulder at Aeneas, it falls short of its target.

are firmly determined, since they reoccur in different plays; however, there are also occasional instances surrounding them which do not permit absolute conclusion. These instances mainly include their presence – their invisibility and their allegorisation – which raises the question if the Furies are truly present or not. While the Furies are explicitly made visible in *Nero*,¹ there are situations where their presence is less certain. The play *Nero* delivers a rare situation where the Furies are seen by a protagonist when he is awake. Occasionally, however, sightings of Furies are blurred, and critics often interpret them as sheer hallucinations. This would imply that in such a case the protagonist sees things which are not there. It appears that Deianira, for example, has a vision of the Furies,² (even Hercules and Medea, too) and even Meleager in the eponymous play. Nevertheless, such a clear differentiation between reality and illusion cannot simply be drawn. As we shall have occasion to see, similar difficulties concern the ghosts, and an approach to unravel this problem shall be undertaken in a later chapter.

Equally problematic is the actual evilness of the Furies since they are sometimes portrayed as gloomy and brutal hellish monsters, and sometimes as ministers of justice, conceived as “retributive forces,” “sent by the gods to punish man’s sins.”³ Their typical definition advocates their non-evilness, “Die Furien (Erinnyen) waren nicht böse. Sie hatten eine lebenswichtige Aufgabe zu erfüllen, nämlich bei gewalttätigen menschlichen Verstößen die Täter zu jagen [...]”⁴ but their doings in the plays do not always verify it.

1.4. The Ghost, a Departed Spirit: “I Shall Come, but as a Shade” (*Nero*)

The ghost protagonist is the (damned) soul of the departed, a dead person, usually murdered (i.e. “untimely slain”).⁵ Elizabethans, as people before them, believed in the appearance of ghosts, although the Reformers dogmatically labelled them as devils.⁶ Protestants claimed that

¹ The Furies terrify a boy in *Nero* Act III, scene V, whereupon, in horror at this sight, he flees like a hunted deer: “But alas, what terror disturbs my happy breast? Am I deceived? Or do I see shades, if these are indeed shades, raging? Do I shudder at their sight? Minerva, drive these evil things from us!” (*Exit, terrified.*). The Furies are also visible to Athamas and Ino in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, IV, 601.

² Seneca’s *Hercules Cæteus*, 228.

³ Ohlander, *Dramatic Suspence in Euripides’ and Seneca’s Medea*, 270.

⁴ Richard Buxton, *Das große Buch der griechischen Mythologie*, aus dem Englischen von Thomas Betram (Stuttgart, 2005), 87.

⁵ On the pre-Shakespearean ghost, see also F. W Moorman, “The Pre-Shakespearean Ghost”, *The Modern Language Review*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Jan., 1906), 85-95; Hans Ankenbrand, *Die Figur des Geistes im Drama der englischen Renaissance* (Leipzig, 1906); Gisela Dahinten, *Die Geisterszene in der Tragödie vor Shakespeare: zur Seneca-Nachfolge im englischen und lateinischen Drama des Elisabethanismus* (Göttingen, 1958). Though thoroughly perceptive, in neither of these studies is the evilness of the ghost discussed, a subject of overriding concern in this study. All quotations from the English translations of the Neo-Latin plays are, if not otherwise stated, at <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk>.

⁶ Clark made a distinction here, claiming that the more educated and scholarly people took the ghosts to be devils, whereas the rest believed them to be the spirits of the deceased, *Shakespeare and the Supernatural*, 68.

the ghosts were evil, “sent by the Devil in an effort to entrap men’s allegiance.”¹ The theatrical ghosts of the early tragedies, however, are what they purport to be. They are not devils assuming a role, but the ghosts of dead men. Therefore, the ghost is genuine.²

The ghost is disembodied, ethereal in form and looks like a human being, just as in life.³ He is a soul separated from the body. L. W. Rogers pointed out that ghosts:

[...] are *people*, living now in bodies of astral matter instead of physical matter, and they are precisely the same sort of people they were before they lost physical bodies – neither better nor worse. They are all actuated by the same motives and emotions that move living people. Indeed, they *are* living people, but are no longer living in physical bodies.⁴

Concerning the question as to how the ghost might have been presented on stage, it should be said that there is no information to my knowledge disclosing how he was costumed. We may envisage some features from analogy, however. From the plays I have examined, I could gather the following adjectives: the ghost is an eerie, “griesful” (*Octavia*), “baleful” (*Meleager II*) and “dreadful” (*The Spanish Tragedy*, I, i, 56) apparition, and it is “fearful to behold” (*Lochrine*, III, vi). At times he is viewed upon as looking “pale,”⁵ ugly⁶ and in all likelihood, deformed in some way.⁷ In his long essay *An Apology for Actors* (1612), Thomas Heywood relates to a now lost play, *The History of Friar Francis* (belonging to the eighties), where “a woman who insatiately doting on a young gentleman [...] mischievously and secretly murdered her husband, whose ghost haunted her; and, at divers times, in her most solitary and private contemplations, *in most horrid and fanciful shapes*, appeared and stood before her” (*italics mine*).⁸ In Ovid’s

¹ Thomas, 708. Concerning the discussion on the nature and origin of the spirit of King Hamlet, see the works listed in Greenblatt’s *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 308 n 46.

² In Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, Part I, Ortygius rather unintentionally helps to clearly separate the ghost from the devil when he wonders: “What god, or fiend, or spirit of the earth” *Tamburlaine* could be. II, vi, 15. In addition, unlike the earlier encountered attempts made by Arthur Golding to correlate the Furies with devils, he translates Ovid’s “*umbræ*,” thus “shades” or “ghosts,” as “souls.” 488 n 643. His intention was clearly not to link ghosts with devils.

³ In Virgil’s *Aeneid*, they are ‘incorporeal’; ‘forms with no substance,’ VI, 292, ‘bloodless’ VI, 401.

⁴ Rogers, *Ghosts in Shakespeare*, 63.

⁵ *Gismond of Salerne*, V. 277; *Caracalla* IV. iv, 1195., *Dido*: “Thus I crave to join the wan shades”, V. ii Cf. *Aeneid*: “[...] the pale spectre of Adrastus”, VI, line 480.

⁶ Humber’s description in *Lochrine*, III, vi.

⁷ The ghost of Guinevere’s mother is quite misshapen in the alliterative poem *Awntyrs of Arthure*. Also Whitmore, *Supernatural in Tragedy*, 205f. Medea describes the spirit of her brother as “mishapt”, “with scatered members,” V, 96. The ghost of Laius is portrayed as “Uncomly drest in wretched plight with fylth all overgrowne: / All perst with wounds [...] with bloud quight overflown”, *Ædipus*, III, i, 212. Cf. the ghost of Deiphobus in the *Aeneid*: “his whole body / A mass of wounds, most horribly mangled about the face - / The face and both the hands, head mutilated with ears / Torn off, and the nose lopped – a barbarous disfigurement” VI, 495-499. Cf. *Perfides Hetruscus*, I. v, lines 40-43; III, ii, line2; 26; *Unnatural Combat*, V, ii. The ghost of Edward, the Prince of Wales, is covered all in blood, too (Shakespeare’s *Richard III*, I, iv, lines 53-54).

⁸ It is not clear from the textual evidence if the actor was wearing white robes. The induction to *A Warning for Fair Women* (1599) offers a mocking remark on the ghost and possibly a hint to his costume: the revenge tragedy tells us “of a filthie whining ghost, / Lapt in some fowle sheet, of a leather pelch, / Comes screaming like a pigge halfe stickt, / And cries *Vindicta*, revenge, revenge.” As quoted in Griswold, *Renaissance Revivals*, 55. G. Dahinten points to Philip Henslowe’s entrances on ghosts as a proof that there was a standard costume, i.e. robe for them, 42 n 9.

Metamorphoses, the ghosts are without flesh, blood or bones, there [hell] wander to and fro [...] and some abide the smarts and torments for their wickedness and other ill deserts.”¹ They are designed to be spooky, as dreadful to look upon. Some ghosts raise cries for revenge for blood: “Revenge! Revenge for blood”! Vindicta! Vindicta!² Also, the actor was probably expected to let out a hideous groan, possibly a yell of rage.³

Seneca’s ghosts are Tantalus (*Thyestes*), Thyestes (*Agamemnon*), Agrippina (*Octavia*), Achilles and Hector (*Troas*) and Laius (*Thebais* and *Oedipus*). The ghosts in Renaissance Latin drama in England (the Neo-Latin plays) are Mariemma in William Goldingham’s *Herodes*, Moleon in William Alabaster’s *Roxana* (ca. 1595), Selymus in the anonymous *Solymanidae* (1582), Sychaeus in William Gager’s *Dido* (1583) and diverse ghosts appearing successively in Matthew Gwinne’s *Nero* (printed 1603), i. e. a ghost of a person who has been murdered in a previous act opens the following: Valeria Messalina and Silius (Act I), Claudius (Act II), Britannicus (Act III), Agripinna (Act IV) and Octavia (Act V). The ghosts also appear in *The Lamentable Tragedie of Locrine* (ca. 1591).

Treatises touching on the subject of ghosts are *Daemonologie* by King James I, Lewes Lavater’s *Of ghostes and spirites walking by nyght* (translated into English by R. H. in 1572), the Capuchin Father Noel Taillepied’s *A treatise of ghosts; being the Psychologie, or Treatise upon apparitions and spirits .. [Traite de l'Apparition des Esprits; 1588]*, Pierre Le Loyer’s *A treatise of specters or straunge sights, visions and apparitions appearing sensibly vnto men...*, [*Discours et Histoire des Spectres; 1586*] and Reginald Scot’s *The discoverie of witchcraft*.

There are plays that open with the appearance of the ghost. The appearance of a prologue-ghost was influenced by Seneca.⁴ The ghost as a dramatic device is included for the sake of sensationalism, and, from what has been shown above as regards his presence, he certainly enticed fear and apprehension among the Elizabethan audience. The ghost creates tension and fear and a gloomy, cold and fearful setting, captivating the interest of the spectators instantaneously. The ghost is never the principal character in a play. In his early stage, as a matter of fact, he does not take an active part in the action of the play at all. He is extraneous to the plot itself and he does not mix with other characters on stage in the strict sense of the word. Rather, most commonly, he appears at the beginning of the play, functioning “metatheatrically as

¹ *Metamorphoses* IV, 555.

² In a note to the Arden Shakespeare’s *Richard III* (174 n 54), it is said that Shakespeare’s ghosts are at times described as having squeaky voices, as for instance in *Caesar* II. ii, 24 and *Hamlet* I. i, 116.

³ The ghost enters with thunder and lightning in *Locrine*, V, iv.; *Woodstock* V.i.; *Perfidus Hetruscus* V, vi. See also Dahinten, 41.

⁴ As to a brief mentioning of the prologue-ghost, the prologue-ghost is fully discussed in Dahinten’s *Die Geisterszene in der Tragödie vor Shakespeare*, wherefore a detailed consideration of the prologue-ghost has been omitted.

a prologue.”¹ He is, thus, chiefly audience-oriented; there is no direct linkage as such between the ghost scene and the main plot.² When I say ‘as such,’ I mean that the ghost’s influence can nonetheless hang over the entire play. This issue will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

When the wraith delivers the prologue, he addresses the audience. As a rule, such a prologue-ghost arises from the underworld to instruct the audience. Hereby the ghost introduces himself. This self-introduction provides information on who the ghost was in his lifetime and where he comes from now. Sometimes they also relate their relation to the play. Furthermore, some ghosts also describe their former glory.

The ghost elucidates past events, as well. This exposition of the past can contain an account of evil deeds committed by the evil spirit while still alive, the marvellous journey to the underworld, or simply an account of his past history, or the past events that occurred before the action of the play, which lead up to the opening of the play. Being indignant over the way he had been treated while still alive, the ghost also recounts his recent fall, i.e. he tells of his murder.³ He delivers an expository speech. He provides the exposition of and furnishes particulars about the plot and the subject matter so as to give a rundown and so awake the spectator’s interest.⁴ The ghost can explain the starting point of the play, describe locality, introduce principal characters on stage or make a transition into the next scene. It follows that the ghost illuminates the past, the present and the future. The shade reveals the past and foretells the future; that is to say, what the ghost says shall be fulfilled. The ghost has prophetic powers, thus. Some ghosts

¹ Monette, *Horror and Haunting in Early Modern Revenge Tragedy*, chap. II.

² Clemen, *Kommentar zu Shakespeares Richard III*, 300.

³ To pass outside drama for a moment, the so-called “ghostly complaints” were well known to the Elizabethan audience through the non-dramatic contemporary *Mirror for Magistrates*, where ghosts return to earth in order to report on their downfall. Dahinten, 12. The ghost of each wretched historical person is permitted “to bewail unto me [Baldwin] his grievous chances, heavy destinies and woefull misfortunes.” The reader ought to imagine here that these historical persons creep out of their graves, deformed according to the respective way they were slain or otherwise brought to decay, in order to narrate in the manner ‘such was my life.’ In addition, concerning medieval ghosts, H. Baker has shown that they appear in Lydgate’s *Fall of Princes* and Lyndsay’s *Tragedie of the late Cardinal*. See Howard Baker, “Ghosts and Guides: Kyd’s “Spanish Tragedy” and the Medieval Tragedy”, *Modern Philology*, vol. 33, no. 1 (Aug., 1935), 27-35. Concerning the dramatic ghosts in the interludes, in the end of Thomas Lupton’s *All for Money* (1576), two ghosts rise from hell to relate on their evil lives and punishments. (D. Bevington points out that the two “come from Hell through a regular entrance way rather than appearing from under the stage.” See Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 55). One of them is the damned soul of Judas, who enters the stage “in black, painted with flames of fire and with a fearful vizard.” The other is the ghost of the rich man Dives, who, as it is reported in the Gospel of Luke (16:19; 16:31), did not allow the beggar Lazarus to even eat what fell from the table of the rich man. Even the dogs did Lazarus more good - they came and licked his sores. Therewith, Lazarus died soon after. Both Judas and Dives died without repentance, wherefore they, as damned souls, suffer endless damnation in hell. Their function is clearly to admonish the audience to take them as an example as to how one should not behave and lead his life on earth. While there is still time, they must cast away their pride and also the love for money. Even more, they must repent while still alive; otherwise it will be too late. For Judas and Dives it was too late, because “There is no help in hell, for then God’s mercy is hid,” line 1439. Then, once in hell, Godly Admonition continues, “there is no hope, although you cry and groan,” line 1443. There is one interesting point in relation to Judas. His remark that damnation follows him wherever he goes will be treated in detail later, when we discuss Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*. Cf. also the similar point made by Damon in *Damon and Pithias*: “And in their owne conscience, a continuall Hell they prooue,” line 309.

⁴ On the difference between a presenter and chorus, see Dahinten 23 n 83.

declare their desire for revenge, furnishing their speeches with curses and omens,¹ and move on to explain why their cause for revenge is just.

1.5. The Ghost's Place of Abode: The Description of the Geography of Hell

It is a common “course of things,” that “the souls of the godly abide in heauē, & the souls of the wicked in hell.”² This is not so with the ghost under discussion. The ghost comes from the “other regions,” but we cannot say that he comes out of heaven or hell. For example, notwithstanding that the spirit of Gorlois is, as it is explained in the original argument, the most wronged in this play, his residence is ‘hell.’ Perhaps this is nothing out of the ordinary, given that descent into hell is destined for everyone in the tragedies. Death brings down the souls into the realm of the underworld. Dependent on what they were like when they lived in the world, some ghosts are evil, and some are spirits of fair men. There are some that are neither utterly good nor utterly bad. Aeneas encounters the ghosts of those who are neither punished in Tartarus nor blessed in Elysian Fields: infants, those who were unjustly condemned, those who died of love, warriors and suicides.³ This is followed by Thomas Sackville in his “The Induction” to the *Mirror for Magistrates*:

Here pewled the babes, and here the maydes vnwed
With folded handes theyr sory chaunce bewailed,
Here wept the gyltles slayne, and louers dead
That slewe them selues when nothing el auayled
Sackville's Iduction, *Mirror for Magistrates*, lines 512-15; 316

Normally in this context, hell is not to be understood as Christian hell but as the murky paganesque underworld. The confusion arises because the term “hell” for the pagan Dis or Tartarus or Underworld⁴ was not only provided by the Elizabethan translators of Seneca but is also to be found in the anonymous moral play *Thersites* (c. 1537), for instance, where one may

¹ What effect a curse may bring about is well illustrated in Theseus' words when he utters: “My cursinges blacke shall light on thee there where revenging hande/ with weapon can not worke the harme,” Seneca's *Hippolytus*, III, 170. The ghost's curse has its source in the curse of Magaera in Seneca's *Thyestes*. On the matter, see Dahinten 48.

² Lavater II. chap. vi, 124.

³ Jasper Griffin's note to C. Day Lewis' translation of the *Aeneid*, 423 n 426. Note that Cato, for example, in the end of Act II in *Caesar's Revenge*, stabs himself and so dies honourably.

⁴ Thus, what is *emergere undis et fer auxilium tuae natae invocanti, genitor, aut Stygios sinus tellure rupta pande, quo praeceps ferar* is translated as “O auncient Syre, step forth from *Limbo* lake, / Thy daughters heavy troublous cares to slake: / Or your twyगतated *hellysh* porche unfolde [...]” (*Octavia*, 151, *italics mine*).

find the devils and Cerberus at once.¹ This is also apparent in Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, where the devils are in the classical Tartarus.²

The classical underworld is modified and developed to suit the Elizabethan age. Concerning delineations of the afterworld, we witness an amalgamation of Christian and ancient perceptions.³ The two worlds are fused, yet we cannot say that the Christian hell is furnished with classical allusions and underworld imagery, but rather that the Christian hell is being substituted for the pagan underworld. The Elizabethans, thus, put the underworld on a level with hell, wherefore the inhabitants of Tartarus are all of a sudden "yrksome shades and hellish sprits"⁴ and "infernal fiendes."⁵ Following that line of reasoning, under such circumstances, Pluto, together with the Furies, ghosts a.o., would also be easily labelled as devils. Yet, this appears not to be the case. Furies are restored as goddesses of vengeance, and Mercury is equally no longer a devil.⁶ Besides, a person who has not been murdered long ago, from the Elizabethans' point of view, the ghost of a sixteenth century dead man or of the mythical history of Britain, finds himself in the classical underworld. E. Prosser has observed that not one of these ghosts "comes from Purgatory; not one from Heaven; not one from the Christian Hell."⁷ They come from the underworld.

The description of this 'hell' is different from the earlier versions discussed in this study. This hell is the reality to the world of the plays;⁸ just like hell in the mysteries and moralities, it is not an illusion, a dream-journey or a metaphor. It is underneath the ground. We learn of the underworld by passing references within the plays and the ghost's descriptive narratives. In Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, for instance, written between 1585 and 1587,⁹ the ghost of Don Andrea recalls his descent into the underworld. In giving a description of the underworld, however, it must be said that occasionally the mythology of the dramatists is slightly confused.

¹ Sometimes it is said that hell's inhabitants are also gorgons, of which Lavater writes that they are 'rauening spirites,' chap. I, 6.

² Bajazeth sees the damned fiends and calls upon Pluto at the same time, *Tamb.* I, IV, ii, lines 27-29. Note, however, that Hades also appears in the New Testament.

³ Also Clemen, *Richard III*, 108.

⁴ *Octavia*, 190.

⁵ *HÆ*, 226.

⁶ For a clear contrast, cf. Mercury who appears as the messenger of Belial and Mercurius in Gager's *Dido*, III, vi. Mercury is the Roman god of trade, profit and commerce – a perfect example of how the gods of Greece and Rome were degraded to the position of demons. Yet Mercury was also considered a psychopomp.

⁷ Prosser, *Hamlet and Revenge*, 256.

⁸ This holds true for *Tamburlaine*, too, I believe, as it appears that Hades is at times independent and at times an integral part of Christian hell. The strongest indicators in support of this argument would be the stanzas uttered by Tamburlaine: "Hell and Elysium swarm with ghost of men / That I have sent from sundry foughten fields/ To spread my fame through hell and up to heaven", *Tamb.* I, V, i, lines 465-467. Moreover, there is the tree Zoacum, a tree of hell in the Koran. A confusion of Erebus and Orcus appears to occur in *Solymannidae*: "You will not be alone in seeing the dark pools of Erebus and the waters of Orcus."

⁹ Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. Philip Edwards (London, 1969). All references are to this edition.

The ancient underworld is also known as Tartarus, Erebus or Orcus.¹ The underworld is normally portrayed as a hideous hole without shape of endless depth, 205 and an ugly mouth.² The Elizabethans often describe it as ‘darke dungeon.’ Sometimes, it is said in the plays that there is a dark and eternal Chaos – Chaos being perceived as part of the underworld.

Lake Avernus is considered to be the gateway into the underworld.³ Don Andrea’s soul descended to these gates when he was slain in battle during the war between Spain and Portugal. The underworld itself is a place of endless darkness where ‘phantoms without number’ dwell.⁴ In this gloomy netherworld, the Roman god Pluto, that “god of Hel so gristly blacke,” that “Hellick Tyrant,”⁵ holds his throne⁶ together with his wife Proserpine, the ‘Quene of helles.’⁷ The Romans believed that the underworld was made up of four disjoined areas: Tartarus, Elysium, the Asphodel Meadows and Erebus. Tartarus is a place of eternal, condign punishment, a ‘darksome dungeon,’ designed for the evil spirits of the dead. Its place is at the deepest point in the earth.⁸ According to Virgil, it is surrounded by the fiery river Phlegethon. Out of Tartarus “can be heard the sounds of groaning and brutal lashing, / Sounds of chains being dragged along.” Aeneas hears ‘agonized sounds’ from within this place.⁹ Tartarus contains horrible sights and manifold torments. Here, the greater punishment is due to greater blame. Also, one receives particular torment for the particular sin. Don Andrea unmistakably identifies Tartarus with “the deepest hell,” when he describes it as a place

¹ For a description of the underworld in Homer, see for example Stoll, *Handbuch der Religion und Mythologie der Griechen und Römer*, 19f. It appears as if the Styx is equated with the underworld in some plays due to poetic language. Stygia is also known as Hell. In *Meleager*, for instance, Althaea says: “[...] you, ruler of the Styx, snatch this sinner to the nethermost caverns of Tartarus [...]”; III.

² A bottomless abyss in *Lochrine*. Cf. Sackville’s *Induction to the Compliant of Buckingham* in the *Mirror for Magistrates* line 205. To such entrance of hell is also referred to in Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, Part I: “And with their cannons mouth’d like Orcus’ gulf,” III, i, line 65.

³ A lake near Naples. It is also within a crater of a volcano in the region of Campagna in Italy north of Naples. For the ancient Romans, this was the entrance to the underworld. Described by Sackville as a black, horrible lothly lake, 209. The ‘foul-breathing’ Avernus is mentioned in the *Aeneid*, VI, 98-123; 127; 201. It is also called The Birdless Place. Cf. also *Tamb* I, I, ii, line 160. In Ovid, Orpheus descends to Hades through the gates of Taenarus, X. 13.

⁴ Cf. *Virgil*, *Aeneid*, 6. 705, trans. Day-Lewis. On the darkness as a standard feature of hell, see Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy*, 86.

⁵ *Hippolytus*, IV, 178.

⁶ Sackville’s *Induction to the Compliant of Buckingham* in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, line 302; lines 505-511; 316. Noticeably Satan is left out of this matter; it is Pluto who is the Great Lord of hell in his stead. Pluto is also referred to as ‘Jupiter of the Underworld’ in *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla* and ‘the god of the Styx’ in *Dido*. Sometimes, his alternate name is also simply Dis or Ditis.

⁷ In some plays, mention is made of Hecate as well. Hecate is another goddess of the underworld, the goddess of sorcery, witchcraft and darkness. She is sometimes portrayed with three heads. She is also sometimes called ‘Triform Hecate’ or ‘threefold shapen Heccate’ in the texts. Medea invokes and describes Hecate in Seneca’s *Medea*, 87.

⁸ And the ocean, too, according to Hesiod, *Theogony*, 721-819. Tartarus was also considered an iron dungeon for Titans. They were punished by Jove and hurled down into the bottomless pit, *Aeneid*, VI, lines 579-605.

⁹ *Aeneid*, VI, lines 553-578.

Where usurers are chok'd with melting gold,
 And wantons are embrac'd with ugly snakes,
 And murderers groan with never-ending wounds,
 And perjur'd wights scalded in boiling lead
Spanish Tragedy, I. i, lines 66-70.

The four great sinners and arch criminals, Ixion, Sisyphus, Tityus and Tantalus, are to be found here, making an example of continual and everlasting penance. Ixion is eternally whirled on a fiery wheel.¹ Sisyphus is restlessly and “with endlessse paine” rolling a huge rock up a steep hill, but before he can reach the top of the hill, the rock always rolls back down to the bottom and he must start anew over and over again.² Water is coming to Tantalus’ chin, yet he is never able to drink from it because whenever he bends down to get a drink, the water recedes before he can get any. Also, an apple is hanging before his mouth, yet he is never able to eat it. Whenever he reaches for the fruit, the branches raise it from his grasp. A threatening stone also towers over his head.³ Vultures daily eat the forever-regenerating liver of the giant Tityus because of assaulting the goddess Latona.

The forty-nine daughters of Danaus, the Danaides, are in Tartarus as well, because they all killed their husbands (sons of Aegyptus) on their wedding nights (only one did not commit this act). They are condemned to everlastingly fill a pitcher full of holes with water; thus they are condemned to ‘labour lost in vayne.’⁴ The Elizabethan playwrights placed most of their ghosts in Tartarus among Seneca’s Thyestes, Agrippina and the aforementioned Tantalus. Here one may find the ghosts of Moleon, Sychaeus,⁵ the Ottoman Emperor Selymus,⁶ the Foreign Prince Gismond was married to,⁷ the wicked Caesars Commodus and Severus,⁸ Claudius⁹ and Humber, the king of the Huns. They are all condemned to eternal suffering.¹⁰

¹ Zeus invited Ixion to Olympus and introduced him at the banquet of the gods. Instead of being thankful, Ixion started lusting after Hera wherefore Hera complained to Zeus. Zeus, in order to put Ixion to the test, conceived a cloud in the shape of Hera. Ixion raped that cloud, and so he was bound by Zeus to a fiery wheel, condemned to be whirled for all eternity. In the translation of Ovid, Ixion attempted to rape ‘Juno.’

² Sisyphus was believed to be the founder of Corinth. He was sly and clever. He suffers eternal punishment for having revealed the secrets of Zeus.

³ Tantalus was the son of Zeus. He was also invited by Zeus to Olympus to join Zeus’ table. Tantalus, however, brought the divine food to his earthly friends, and he also revealed the secrets of the gods. He further killed his son Pelops and served him as food to the gods in order to test their omniscience.

⁴ Seneca’s *Medea*, 87.

⁵ William Gager’s *Dido*, III, i.

⁶ Anon., *Solymanidae*, I, i. The ghost says he has been sent from Styx. Since he has murdered his own father, Bayezid, and his two brothers, we could assume that his dwelling place is Tartarus.

⁷ *Gismond of Salerne*, IV, i, lines 28-29.

⁸ *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla* IV, v, 1213.

⁹ *Nero*, II, i.

¹⁰ According to what is said in *Hercules Œtaeus*, 251, Hercules is in Tartarus as well. Then, near the end of the play, the voice of Hercules advises Alcmena to stop mourning since his virtue opened the path to the stars and heavens, reaching everlasting life, 255. Everything that was mortal in him, taken from his mother Alcmena died in the fire, yet the immortal substance of him is set in heaven.

The path of Taenarus (in some variants a cavern entrance into the underworld) leads to Elysium (or the Elysian Fields, or the Happy Fields). Contrary to Tartarus, this place is ‘the abodes of the Blessed’ – a section of the underworld where the souls of the guiltless and virtuous reside. The Asphodel Meadows is a place where most of the souls are, souls of people who were neither good nor bad during their lifetime. All residents drink from Lethe, the river of forgetfulness, in order to forget their former lives before they enter the Fields. Erebus is considered to be a place where the dead souls had to pass through right after dying. Through Erebus, the shades pass into Hades.¹ Notwithstanding, Seneca’s translators also add the Limbo, the so-called ‘edge of hell.’² Limbo is a place where virtuous pagans dwell (Dante, for example, finds Aeneas there).³ Catholics viewed upon Limbo as a place reserved for virtuous pagans and unbaptised babies. It is inasmuch regarded as hell that those who are in there are deprived of the presence of God.⁴

The five subterranean ‘filthy stinking Lakes,’⁵ which are flowing through and enring the underworld, were called Acheron (“Woe”),⁶ Cocytus (“Wailing”),⁷ Lethe (“Forgetfulness”),⁸ Phlegethon or Pyriphlegethon (“Fiery”),⁹ and Styx (“Abhorrence”).¹⁰ The lakes have strange powers. Thousands of souls creep from out of these lakes. The souls also have to be ferried by ‘the grisly,’ ‘churlish’ boatman, Charon, across the rivers Acheron, Cocytus and Styx.¹¹ Charon takes the departed souls on a ferry boat to the land of the dead spirits. In some variants, it is only Acheron, that ‘horrible lothly lake,’¹² which needs to be passed in order to enter the underworld

¹ Also *Tamb*, I, IV. i, line 44.

² *Ædipus*, III, i. 209: “[...] there is that dyre and dreadfull gate / That leades to lothsome Lymbo Lake”. G. Dahinten pointed to Elizabethan translators of Virgil’s *Aeneid* (Phaer, 1558) and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (1567) using the same convention of the Limbo Lake, 53. Limbo Lake also replaces Styx in the tenth book of *Metamorphoses*, 13.

³ Cf. *Aeneid*, VI, 478.

⁴ John Calvin viewed upon this as a fable. The ones in limbo also do not suffer any pain. On Lavater arguing against Limbo as being fabulous, see II.Ch.ii.103; II.Ch.xiii.159.

⁵ These would be rivers actually; still, they are often converted into lakes in the plays.

⁶ Described as a boiling, ‘loathsome pool’ in *The Spanish Tragedy*, IV, v, 42; IV, iv, 215.

⁷ Cocytus – a river of wailing [Cocitas in *Hercules Ætaeus*, 255]. Those who would drink from this lake would become conscious of life and what they have actually lost for the rest of their future.

⁸ Lethe – a river of forgetfulness. Those who would drink from this lake would forget everything about their former life. Lethe is also contained in John Milton’s description of hell in *Paradise Lost*, as well as the “four infernal rivers,” which he adopted from the classical underworld. Hydras, Chimeras, Medusa, Tantalus etc. also find their place there. This welding together of Christian and pagan elements is continued into the 17th century, thus, and shows to have a long tradition in literature.

⁹ Phlegethon flows into the depths of Tartarus. Its ‘quenchles’ flames are used in order to torment souls. Cf. *Aeneid*, VI, 265. Phlegethon is mentioned in the *Spanish Tragedy* and viewed upon as reality by the characters, III, i, 50. Cf. *Lochrine*, III, vi.

¹⁰ Styx – the principal river. It is said in *Solymmanidae* that “the gods of the Underworld grant nobody his baleful wish unless he first vows something to the pools of the Styx.” This occurs in Act II. In fact, the gods themselves ‘theyr solemne othes do take’ on the river of Styx.

¹¹ Charon is described in the *Aeneid* as being white-bearded and with fiery eyes, dressed in a long dirty cloak, VI, 300.

¹² Sackville’s *Induction to the Compliant of Buckingham* in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, line 209.

proper. There are “shaking ghosts with ever-howling groans” that hover about Charon, waiting to be conveyed across the river.¹ Charon takes across all those who have been buried, whereas those souls that were not properly buried Charon does not permit to be transported on his ferry. That is why the ghost of Don Andrea had to wait at the gates of the underworld for three days: because he could not gain permission until Don Horatio, the Knight Marshal’s son, had performed the rites of Andrea’s burial (I. i, lines 20-26).² Also, Charon must receive an “Obolos” as payment – a coin which the family usually places in the mouth of the dead so as to ensure their safe passage to the underworld. Without the Obolos, Charon would not grant passage, and the soul would be doomed to perpetually wander in the world of the living.³

On the other side of the river Styx is the last resting place for the souls, a place guarded by the monstrous three-headed watch-dog, Cerberus. Cerberus is in iron chains and bids the souls entrance into the underworld, but he also prevents those who have once crossed the river Styx to ever escape again. That is to say, this is a river of no return (*Aeneid*, VI, line 426). Cerberus also prevents the living from entering.⁴

Pluto is ‘the lord of the court of darkness;’ nevertheless, the dead are also judged and sentenced by the three judges of the underworld – Minos, Aeacus and Rhadamanth.⁵ This ‘powerfull Synod’ has to decide whether the soul would be delivered to Tartarus, Elysium or the Asphodel Meadows. The Gnosian fair judge Minos delivers judgements with a whirling urn (the ‘fatal Vrne’ that knows the truth). It is said in Statius, *Thebaid* 4. 520, that “the Gortynian judge [Minos] shakes them [the ghosts of the dead] in his inexorable urn, demanding the truth with threats, and constrains them to speak out their whole lives’ story and at last confess their extorted gains.”⁶

Allegories or allegorical figures are not excluded from the underworld. Creon is a witness of Tiresias’ rites during his attempt to invoke the ghost of Laius from the underworld. Thereby, he

¹ *Tamb*, I, V. i, lines 244-245.

² For the same reason Charon does not allow the ghost of Britannicus to cross the river Styx in *Nero*, III, i. Unless someone buries the corpse, the spirit must remain by the shores for a hundred years. That is why Caesar assumes that, now that he is dead, the ghost of Pompey is wandering by the Stygian banks, *Caesar’s Revenge* II, iii, line 803. He intends to give him proper burial, however.

³ Oddly enough, in *The First Part of Hieronimo*, Charon does not demand anything: “Indeed ‘tis such a time, the truth to tell, / I never want a fare to pass to hell” (xii. 27).

⁴ Sometimes mention is made of other hell- hounds in the texts.

⁵ Ruler of Tartarus in the *Aeneid*. Cf. also the alternative prologue of the ghost of Gorlois by William Fulbecke, 340. The three judges, “Minos, Æac and Rhadamant” are also mentioned in *Gismond of Salerne*, IV, i, 32. In *Grim the Collier*, Pluto addresses them (they appear as characters in the play) in the following order: “Grim *Minos*, *Æacus*, and *Rhadamant*, / Lords of *Cocitus*, *Styx*, and *Phlegiton*”, I, i. In the same play, it is the Furies that bring the ghost in front of this ‘infernal synod.’

⁶ As quoted in <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Rhadamanthys.html>.

sees Age, Need, Fear, Death and Fire in there.¹ Also, Aeneas, guided by the Sybil, sees similar allegories within the gates of the underworld:

See! At the very porch and entrance way to Orcus
Grief and ever-haunting Anxiety make their bed:
Here dwell pallid Diseases, here morose Old Age,
With Fear, ill-prompting Hunger, and squalid Indigence,
Shapes horrible to look at, Death and Agony;
Sleep, too, which is the cousin of Death; and Guilty Joys,
And there, against the threshold, War, the bringer of Death:
Here are the iron cells of the Furies, and lunatic strife
Aeneid, VI, 274-81

This is imbedded in Sackville's *Induction* as well. The poet meets Sorrow, and together they visit the underworld where they see personified evils such as Remorse, Dread and Revenge, Misery, Heavy Sleep, War, Old age, etc.² Here it is worth observing that the concept of allegory and allegoric figures makes it exceedingly difficult to spot the supernatural being. Thus far we have seen that somewhat similar names were given to the Furies in classical literature, noticeably in Ovid and *Hercules Furens*.³ Thomas Kyd's dramatic figure named "Revenge," who forms the chorus with and is the guider of Don Andrea's ghost, is in certain respects reminiscent of and may even well be a Fury.⁴ In addition, in the *Aeneid*, Aeneas sacrifices a black-fleeced lamb to Night, the mother of the Furies. It has further been shown that the Vice is also in hell.⁵ The examples show that the linkage of personified evils with hell have a long tradition and that they are naturally related. Even though there is no reason to believe that the original idea of the occurrence of the Vice in hell has been borrowed from classical literature, some faculties of the underworld figures became interwoven with the Vice of the "hybrid morality." The Vice in Pickering's *Horestes* comes to mind here, who embodies Revenge. Revenge could therefore be classified as an allegory with Fury-like attributes. The dramatists sought to merge the Fury and allegory, and such welding reoccurs in other plays: Revenge and Fury are both allegories in the second Dumb-Show of *Misfortunes of Arthur*. In Alabaster's *Roxana*, we also encounter

¹ *Ædipus*, III, i, 211. In the original text, it is Madness, Horror, Grief, Disease, Old Age and Pestilence he sees, immediately after the sight of the Furies.

² Likewise, the ghost of Britannicus encounters "Care, Grief, Horror, and tardy Shame", "Disease, father of Death, and his brother Sleep" in Gwinne's *Nero*, III.i.

³ They do not mark the only example where allegorical names are actually given to supernatural entities. For instance, an angel named 'The Youth' appears to Gennadius, See TAILLEPIED, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 2. In the *Aeneid*, IV, 174. Rumour appears as a monster. This conception reoccurs in the end of Act III in Gager's *Dido*, where Rumour is spoken of as being a horrid monster. In the end of *Grim the Collier*, Pluto sends a plague upon the earth in transforming the ghost of Malbecco into Jealousy. On the Roman deification of abstractions, see Stoll, 268f.

⁴ T. S. Eliot, for instance, also remarked "Ghost and Revenge replace the Tantalus and the Fury of the *Thyestes*". See his introduction to *The Tenne Tragedies*, xxiv.

⁵ In John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, for instance, Satan encounters Sin and Death in the utmost bounds of hell. We are told that he was, in all probability, influenced by Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*; but then again, why also not by the moralities?

Suspicion in hell. Similarly, Discord leaves the underworld, passes Avernus and reaches the earth at the end of Act I in *Caesar's Revenge*, lines 630-632. The Furies' powers are also attributed to Discord:

And in the world came I, being Discord hight,
Discord the daughter of the gresly night.
To make the world a hell of plagues and woes
I. iv, lines 632-635¹

Although it appears that these figures are rather abstractions than supernatural beings, this must remain an open question.² Again, we witness text passages that offer mixed interpretations. In Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, we see Revenge which serves as a guide for the ghost of Don Andrea in what H. Baker labelled as a "marvelous journey," i.e. they journey through the underworld.³ Based on what has been discussed and debated earlier, one might verily think that Revenge is a Fury, although I cannot argue that this is assuredly the case. Yet I do believe that Thomas Kyd was at least mindful of the Furies while he conceived this character. Similar to the Furies in *Nero*, Revenge is all-knowing and like the Furies, Revenge is capable of creating havoc on earth. The ghost rousing Revenge from his sleep is to some degree reminiscent of the ghost of Clytemnestra's waking of the Furies in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, although there is undoubtedly no direct connection.⁴ Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* 4 (1584) appears to give his Furies such abstract names:

Three furies fell, which turne the worlde to ruthe,
Both Envie, Strife, and Slaunder, heare appeare,
In dungeon darke they longe inclosed truthe,
But Time at lengthe, did loose his daughter deare,
And setts alofte, that sacred ladie brighte,
Whoe things longe hidd, reveales, and bringes to lighte.

Thoughe strife make fier, thoughe Envie eate hir harte,
The innocent though Slaunder rente, and spoile:
Yet Time will comme, and take this ladies parte,
And breake her bandes, and bring her foes to foile.
Dispaire not then, thoughe truthe be hidden ofte,
Bycause at length, shee shall bee sett alofte.

¹ Compare the speech of Megaera in *Meleager*: "My heart seethes with hatred [...] I shall throw everything into confusion" and the one of Discord: "O how it ioyes my discord thirsting thoughts, / To see them waight [...]."

² These are also known as 'abstract Daimones.' See <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Erinyes6.html>.

³ See Howard Baker, "Ghosts and Guides: Kyd's "Spanish Tragedy." Baker has pointed out that the ghost and a guide appeared together in medieval metrical tragedies. Cf. Dido: "I have lived out my appointed span, and now my shade will journey beneath the earth," V, ii.

⁴ Somewhat similarly, Justice 'sleepeth' in *Jocasta* (written in a note in a margin), V, v, 333.

Although in classical literature some Furies carried the names of allegorical expressions, one is left with the impression that precisely the reverse is the case in Elizabethan plays – that allegories are endowed with Furies' attributes; however, this cannot be maintained with absolute assurance. As the given examples illustrate, the dramatists' intentions for the Fury-allegory relationship is not always clear. Whatever the intention for their statues might have been, the truth is that both reside in the underworld.

In the underworld, the ghost's 'perturbation of memory' remains.¹ Apparently, the ghosts have not drunk from the streams of the River Lethe² because the ghost remembers his enemy only all too well and is at deadly enmity with him. It is quite out of the question that the ghost can ever reconcile with the one who is guilty of his murder.³ The first beginnings of such a notion are already to be found in classical literature: the ghost of Deiphobus, who appears in the underworld to Aeneas, begs the gods for revenge against the Greeks.⁴ This should lead us to ask of the nature of some particular Elizabethan ghosts. Here, ghosts like Don Andrea provoke curiosity. It is certainly remarkable that he lived in a Christian time and place, yet he is not a pagan ghost from the pagan underworld but a Christian sixteenth-century ghost imported into the pagan underworld and thus also from it. As such, the ghost is aside from the setting; he belongs elsewhere although he conforms to the time of the play. To add to the trouble, the ghost of the recent dead (noticeably not a centuries-old one) complies with the pagan law of the underworld (it should be noted that Pluto is "a king as absolute as Jove," *Tamb.* II, IV, iii, line 33⁵) rather

¹ Agrippa "Of Spectres" (ca. 1593); as quoted in Robert H. West, "King Hamlet's Ambiguous Ghost", *PMLA*, vol. 70, no. 5 (Dec., 1955), 1107-1117.

² In fact, even though the ghost of Britannicus has drunk from the River Lethe, he says that he 'will not erase the memory of my murder and of your crime,' *Nero*, III, i.

³ We already see this character trait in the ghost of Dido in the *Aeneid*, who in spite of Aeneas' genuine apologies, cannot be softened, as her emotions changed from affection to aversion. She remains 'wild-eyed' and 'passionate-hearted.' Ultimately, she 'flung away, hating him still, and vanished', VI, lines 450-474. Brutus speaks of 'appeaseles rage' that can only 'be slacked with blood', V. v, line 2506. In some plays, the humans are trying to placate the irate ghost by means of various rites and prayers (*Caracalla*, *Meleager* IV.i.), but to no avail, as this can only be achieved with their blood, since "blood atones for the blood impiously shed" (*Caracalla*, IV. iv, line 1187). I cannot tell whether this is not to say that the ghost is a blood-drinker. Presumably the allusions that occur in *Caracalla* are not to be taken literally: "May all Tartarus rise up, so that with the Styx abandoned, Geta alone might drink this hostile blood" (IV. iv, line 1200). Broadly similar *Caesar's Revenge* makes allusions to Furies and ghosts as blood drinkers, V.i, line 2302. First, it is said that the earth drinks the blood of a slain man. Then, it is said in III.v, line 1578: "If it be true that furies quench-les thirst,/Is pleas'd with quaffing of ambitious blood". Cf. also V.v, line 2537. Brutus says to the ghost of Caesar, "[...] glut thy thirsting throte,/ With pleasing blood of *Caesars* guilty heart" in V.i, line 2317. But then again, Achilles seems to have drunk the blood of Polyxana in Seneca, and in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, the Furies are "drunken with blood," too. Cf. also Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers*, 575. In the *Odyssey*, the very like occurrence is to be found, where shades drink blood in Hades. The ghost of the blind prophet Tiresias, for example, needs to drink blood (of a sacrificed black ram) before he becomes able to speak (XI). The sacrifice of a black sheep and an ox is also needed to conjure up the ghost of Laius in *Ædipus*, 210. The priest also pours blood on the altars. This would mean that the ghosts drink blood in a manner, as Reginald Scot puts it, "as sponges soak up water." III. chap. iii, 354. Cf. on the sacrifice of a ram also Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, VII, line 321; 402.

⁴ *Aeneid*, VI, lines 528-552.

⁵ Pluto is also being referred to by Marlowe as the "Black Jove", *Tamb.* II, V, i, line 98.

than to the Christian ethics. This is certainly a novelty of great interest. The ghost sojourns with classical underworld figures, and it is a spirit from the pagan “hell.” Are we really then to say that Don Andrea is a Catholic ghost that demands revenge? What is more, the underworld is also the home of the Ottomans, and the ‘Arthurian’ Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall. Once they are dead, they are all submitted to the laws of the classical underworld. For such ghosts, no certain theological explanation can be given, and it would be lost labour to invoke Tallepiéd and Lavater or some other to determine its being. It is a literary ghost, chiefly having Seneca as its model. It is bound to the laws of the heathens, albeit it is a spirit of other later times. Such a concept has of course no ground in the Bible.

The ghosts cannot return just as they please, only when they are permitted or compelled by the infernal authorities to do so. They must take their cases to the law of the underworld. Normally, the ghost desires to return to earth in order to punish its killer. The ensuing murder, thus, which is a repayment of debt,¹ is justified in front of the court as an act of revenge. In this regard, we may already say that such a ghost is, as a rule, a revenge ghost; that is to say, some wrong has been done to it during its lifetime wherefore it seeks personal revenge (the subject of revenge ghosts shall be discussed in detail below). In order to exercise revenge, the ghost either needs permission from the chiefs of the underworld – Pluto and Proserpine, as is the case in Fulbecke’s version of the *Misfortunes of Arthur* and in *The Spanish Tragedy*,² or the ghost’s case is discussed by the co-chiefs of the underworld. Presumably, what the Roman poet Gaius Valerius Flaccus described in *Argonautica* 3.380 could have been used as a model for the plays:

When they [the ghosts of the murdered] are come to the throne of Awful Jove [Hades] and have set forth all the sorrowful story of their dreadful end, the gate of death is opened for them and they may return a second time [to the earth as vengeful ghosts]; one of the Sisters [Erinyes] is given them as a companion, and they range together [...] each involved in penalties the guilty souls of his own foes; they rack them with various terrors after their deserving [...]³

This “ritual” appears in the plays in many variants, as either the complete procedure or parts of it are re-enacted. Some aspects are cut down or omitted, and some differences are added. Thus, we see Achilles’ sprite rising from hell in order to call for vengeance and demand sacrifice of Polyxena in Seneca’s *Troas*. This is not the case with Gorlois of William Fulbecke’s version, where it is clearly emphasised that he lives in the Elysian Fields. In this Fulbecke’s prologue, a court of Furies exists, and the ghost of Gorlois must appear before this ‘synod of the damned

¹ Revenge is not the sole means of punishment for the murderer. Another possibility could be exile, as the case of Oedipus for example shows us. On the effect exile can have on the aggrieved party see *Jocasta*, II. i, line 265-266.

² In “The Argonauts,” the ghost of Sthenelus, the son of Actor, is able to appear beside his tomb only because Proserpine has allowed it.

³ Valerius Flaccus, *Argonautica*. Translated by Mozley, J H. Loeb. Classical Library Volume 286 (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, 1928). Quoted in <http://www.theoi.com/Khthonios/Erinyes2.html>.

sprites' under the instigation of Proserpine. Even though the ghost is not out for vengeance, it is not given the peace of the Elysian Fields since the court has decided that he must leave the underworld and make Britain "the mark of his revenge." Also, Proserpine sends Don Andrea from the underworld to witness the death of Balthazar, the man who slew him in battle. Thus, the ghost is able to revisit this world as a revenant, but the ghost's return apparently needs approval from the forces of the underworld. In one instance, the ghost of Polydorus informs the audience that he has "won this boon from the powers below" (Euripides' *Hecuba*). It is likewise Pluto who authorises Moleon's revenge and orders Death and Suspicion to be at his service.¹ Also, the just Minos has decided that the guiltless Roxana must die.²

Furthermore, the underworld brings revenge and blood to the earth.³ Therefore, it is the underworld, or hell, that sends "reuenging paine to those, whome Shame from sinne can not restraine."⁴ In Greek mythology, the blind prophet Tiresias says to Creon that he commits a crime when he withholds from the underworld what it deserves. Hell craves her right; however, resting on the following lines uttered by Revenge in Anthoine Copley's *A Fig For Fortune* (1596):

Heaven is the Arbitrer, and wils it so,
I and the Furies are the instruments
To act that justice in all tragicke woe

It appears that such undertakings, even though brought about by the underworld powers, have to have divine approval.⁵ Thrasimachus's speech could relate to this context to some extent:

If there be gods in heaven, as sure there be,
If there be fiends in hell, as needs there must,
They will revenge this thy notorious wrong,
And power their plagues upon thy cursed head.
Lochrine, V. i.

Assuming peaceable relations between the gods of the two worlds, I suggest that the world below punishes wickedness; but still, in order to do so, heavenly authority is required. In light of what has been said above, God(s) permit(s) ghosts (and Furies) to appear on earth in order to

¹ *Roxana*, I, i, lines 25-27.

² *Ibid*, IV, i, line 1155.

³ Cf. *Caesar's Revenge*: "And straight Reuenge from *Stygian* bands let loose," V, ii, line 2354.

⁴ *Gismond of Salerne*, IV, i, lines 1-2; lines 43-44.

⁵ Even though in the same poem it is heavily argued against Revenge (there are accusations that taking revenge equals usurpation of God's power, see Prosser, *Hamlet and Revenge*, 31), this is not the case with the plays that concern us here. As a matter of fact, the three lines just quoted adjust perfectly well to the philosophy of the plays under discussion. They are instruments of gods power, and since they execute God's will, their act of vengeance is not wrong.

fulfil His command. That is to say, the ghost, and even the revenge ghost, executes the wrath of God or the gods respectively.

For the ghosts, the underworld can be entered and exited. They are sent up to the living world through ravined earth,¹ and they are sent back into the world for different purposes.² L. W. Rogers has observed that “there is always a reason for their appearance.”³ Some ghosts remain on earth when their bodies have been improperly buried, or not buried at all, wherefore they seek proper burial.⁴ Some ghosts remain on earth because they desire to be revenged. There could be a number of reasons, and they can manifest themselves everywhere. Still, in the examples that follow, the ghost returns to the place familiar to him in life.⁵

Before moving on, mention should be made of one important criterion that has been established concerning Tartarus. To be precise, on one occasion Sibyl informs Aeneas that “no righteous soul may tread that threshold of the damned,” i. e. Tartarus. Consequently, Tartarus’ ghosts must be evil. Still, these ghosts are not tempters. The ghosts in the directly aforementioned play *Alaham* return to earth in order to tempt humanity with every sin, 159. This is not the case with the ghosts we are concerned with here. For one thing, these ghosts, although evil, are no tempters, and for another thing, it must be pointed out that due to (perhaps slavish) imitation of Seneca, some dramatists misrepresented particular ghosts in placing them in Tartarus. Here I am particularly thinking of the ghost of Sychaeus, who, although innocent, pops out of Tartarus, *Dido*, III, i.

1.6. The Ghost Summoning

The chapter that follows concentrates on the intervention of apparitions of the dead in the affairs of the living. We are first concerned with the returning evil spirit. These ghosts committed some crimes in their lifetime; therefore, they are tortured for their own evils in the underworld.⁶ Noticeably, pain is justly inflicted upon them by divine judgement as punishment for their evil

¹ Normally, there are two gates of sleep designed as feasible exits from the underworld. This led some critics to believe that the whole experience of the underworld is just a dream.

² In the end, the earth swallows them again, I presume.

³ Rogers, *Ghosts in Shakespeare*, 88.

⁴ Cf. the ghost of Polydorus in Euripides’ *Hecuba*. On stories concerning the ghost’s reappearance on earth due to improper burial, see Taillepiéd, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, chap. XII, 76; chap. XIII, 79.; Lavater, II. Chap I, 99. Pliny the younger also mentions a spirit that demands proper burial. As already mentioned, it was an impious thing for pagans not to give proper burial. Dido, for example, curses Aeneas before her death and wishes him to remain unburied, V, ii. Estrild, whom Gwendoline and Ate accuse of being the author of all mischance, is not granted a proper burial, *Lochrine*, V, iv.

⁵ Seneca’s ghosts appear in the semi-darkness before dawn. See Braginton, *Supernatural in Seneca’s Tragedies*, 97. The ghost of Geta appears before his brother Calacalla at night in *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*.

⁶ Cf. *Roxana*, IV, i, line 1016.

deeds.¹ In order to increase their pain, however, some ghosts are also under constraint to return to the world of the living. Put differently, these ghosts do not appear after death at their own will.

The ghost of Tantalus (*Tantali umbra*) in Seneca's *Thyestes* is aroused from Tartarus and forced by the Fury to bring downfall upon his house and descendants. The greatest desire of the ghost of Tantalus is to escape from the upper world; nevertheless, forced by the Fury,² Tantalus becomes the Fury's instrument for punishment; the ghost assumes the Fury's role, eventually disturbing his house with "dire discord"³ and distributing his rage upon those he does not wish to harm. Thus, Tantalus is doomed, and as such his sins must come back to earth and fill up the House of Tantalus.⁴ It appears that this ghost has the power to inflict himself upon his descendants like a plague, and ultimately his sin is about to be repeated; that is to say, the ghost of Tantalus has the power to inspire his house to even greater sins – to sow hatred between his two nephews, Thiestes and Arteus.

In the same way, in Seneca's *Agamemnon*, Euribates (inserted by the translator) blames the ghost of Thyestes (*Thyestis umbra*) for "moving" his son Aegistus "to bloude" and for being the direct causer of misery: "Coulde cruell Ditis graunt to thee thy pasporte backe agayne? / To worke this woe upon the world, and make such rigour rayne?"⁵ The ghost of Thyestes is indeed brought up from Tartarus to the House of Pelops (and shudders at its sight). He hates both worlds; like the ghost of his grandfather Tantalus, Thyestes wishes to return to Hades, but this wish is not granted to him. The ghost is an evil spirit. He admits that his crimes surmount those of all the others by far (he is only outreached by his own brother Atreus) because, while alive, Thyestes ate his own three children served to him by his brother. Even more, defiled by the fickle Fortune, he committed incest with his own daughter, who gave birth to Aegistus. Now the ghost of Thyestes is to inflict the others with desire to kill. It is as if the populace is breathing the poison of the ghost – as if the air is filled with his plague.⁶

Seneca's ghosts are compelled either by the Fury or by the order of the underworld to return to the earth that they abhor. Part of their suffering and torment include witnessing the doom of

¹ Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 112.

² In Jasper Heywood's translation it is Magæra; she is not called by name in the original.

³ *Thyestes*, 56.

⁴ Perhaps Tantalus is needed here as unleasher of the Furies. The goading lines uttered by Megæra, 'Go forth thou detestable sprite / And vex the Goddess of wretched house with rage of furies might', 55, 'let fury blind enflame their myndes and wrathful will', p.56 allude to such a possibility. If this is not the case, it at least points to the powers the two supernatural entities have in common.

⁵ *Agamemnon*, 139.

⁶ The phrase is borrowed from the *Misfortunes of Arthur*, 264. In *Roxana* and in the *Spanish Tragedy*, the reverse is the case. Here, the ghost needs the help of Fury-like allegories (*Roxana*) or, perhaps, allegory-like Furies (*Spanish Tragedy*) in order to fill the house with some calamity. What these agents can bring about is what Atossa calls 'loathsome vapour from accursed hell,' II, iii, line 539. Merely the motif of seeking aid from a higher instance is reminiscent of the ghost and the Fury as well as Suspicion having in his power to turn events at will. Unlike the Fury, however, Suspicio is a tempter in II, ii.

their own progeny.¹ In Act II, Scene vi, the ghost of Don Andrea fears exactly this, as he is forced to witness the murder of his dear friend Horatio. He asks, “Brought’st thou me hither to increase my pain?” However, Revenge advises him to be more patient, reassuring him that he will have his revenge and witness the fall of his enemy – Balthazar.

The ghost’s intervention is the cause of the doom of the living. This is how supernatural machinery works. The catastrophe is inevitable since everything has already been preordained by the law executed by supernatural numenaries – Furies or ghosts respectively. In *Thyestes*, the ghost of Tantalus casts his influence over the house of Pelops. He is a semi- propagator of evil. The same power is attributed to the ghost of Laius in *Ædipus*. He threatens thus:

But I thee, thee, that Scepter holdst, thy Father will pursue,
And wreacke my selfe on thee and thyne with plagues and
Vengeance due.
All restles rage of spite and paine I will upon thee blow,
And all the furies foule of hell uppon thee I will throw.
I wil subvert thy Houses cleane, for this thy lothsome lust:
I wil do this thou wretch: And thee, and thyne consume to
Dust, 212.

This is the course of fate – a causal link of injustice and demanded atonement. In the main, Tantalus and Thyestes are enunciators of a law to which they themselves are subordinated.² Even though the ghost is unseen by the protagonists, “we are conscious throughout of the ever-presence of his restless, inexorable spirit hovering [...] over the whole action, and leading the assassins relentlessly to final doom and retribution.”³ What usually follows is death of all the main figures. That is, in an invisible manner, the spirit either willingly or unwillingly brings justice, which is approved by a higher, heavenly instance, upon the human characters. Even though ghosts like Tantalus do not wish to harm their family, they must do so since they are bound by law which desires it so. The punishment brought forth by the ghost is just either because it reaches malefactors or because it is provoked to punish the ghost himself for being evil during his lifetime. This conceivability is carried on in the Elizabethan play *Solymanidae*, where the ghost of Selymus is patterned after Seneca’s ghosts of Tantalus and Thyestes with a slight difference so that his effect on the play remains dubious. He has been sent from the underworld, “bearing sad misfortunes to my family,” I, i. Apart from this brief remark the motif is not elaborated. We are only told that the ghost knows that God shall oppress his descendants

¹ Dahinten, 46.

² Ibid, 30. The ghosts are bound by law. The ghost of Althea’s mother would reveal certain things to her daughter, yet she cannot do so since the hidden Fates do not permit it, *Meleager*, II, lines 609-611. The Fates, thus, forbid certain things to be known to us.

³ Clark, 126.

and his house, and he can foretell future events, i.e. he knows in what manner the tragedy shall run its course: “Planning great crime by dire deceptions, a savage stepmother will overthrow my princes, and, violent in her victory, will drag down the Emperor’s son, taking advantage of the gullible man’s silly fears.” This actually happens in the play, and the ghost acknowledges his guilt in these affairs; he is conscious that by these means the gods are avenging the crimes committed by Selymus whilst still alive, that his sins are about to be repeated.¹ Again, in Lord Brooke’s *Alaham*, the ghost of one of the old kings of Ormus is *sent* to “teare downe my posteritie [...] That have their sinnes’ inheritance from me”² (*emphasis mine*).

The ghost can also be brought forth by incantation. In the *Aeneid*, Mercury can summon ghosts with his magic wand.³ Orpheus is also able to conjure up the ghost of his wife.⁴ In our tragedies, there are instances where the ghost is conjured by a sorcerer. Apart from the ghost of Laius, who is being conjured from hell by the blind priest Tiresias, the ghost is only conjured in the play *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*.⁵ In this play, the two sorcerers perform “sacred rites” in order to recall the two shades Commodus and Severus. Their invocations are vividly described at the end of Act IV. The necromantic ritual and the formulae are also described by Rufus as follows:

Proceed, let the prayers begin. But you first scatter noxious boughs and dark juices and herbs which the foam of the Tartarean hound infected when he saw the heavens. (Sorcerers scatter flowers). May the sailor on the burning river, whom the shades called by my song weary, allow whatever shades I summon to return unlawfully on his boat when he has landed his boat with burdenless burden on our shore. And may Dis, who presides over grave penalties of criminals, at least cease to complain that the punishment of the shades who have returned to me is delayed for too long. It is enough punishment for the shades to have seen a bright day with its light to which they have been unaccustomed. Come, let Phlegethon hear these wicked prayers; no god will dare to ignore this song, IV, v, lines 1217-1231.

¹ Even though the villainess Rhode speaks highly of Selymus (II, i) and mention is made of a certain Mustapha, who managed to incite Selim against his father (IV), he nonetheless seized the realm by murder. Selymus overcame his own father, and the text explains that “If an impious son should attack his father, the gods fight on the father’s behalf, for this is a deadly crime, forbidden by the laws of nature,” Act III.

² *Alaham*, 160.

³ *Aeneid*, IV, line 242.

⁴ The Chorus invokes the ghost of Dareios in Aeschylus’ *Persians*. In Seneca’s *Medea*, Medea invokes the shades of the four great criminals, 87. (Cf. Medea in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*: “I call up dead men from their graves,” VII. 275. In *Hercules Cetaeus*, Nessus is a teacher of witchcraft, and Nutrix tells Deianira that she is able to invoke the spirits of hell by charms: “Hell gloumy gates I have breast oape, where grisly ghosts all husht / Have stood and aunswering at my charme the goblins grim have scoulde,” 210. In *Caesar’s Revenge*, Brutus shows he is aware of such possibility when he asks Caesar’s ghost whether he is a fiend “rays’d from the deepe by inchanters bloody call,” V, i, line 2286.

⁵ This is not to say that such cases are not uncommon to contemporary or near-contemporary literature, however. See, for example, the medieval tale of *The Gast of Gy*. From the Biblical perspective, Father Taillepie made a point that “The Almighty God has expressly prohibited us from seeking communication with the dead, and forbids us to evoke the departed, asking them questions and receiving answers, which is necromancy,” *A Treatise on Ghosts*, 64. The biblical passages are Deuteronomy, 18: 10-12 and Isaias, 8: 19-20. See also Lavater’s *Of Ghosts and Spirits*: “magical artes, & such like, [...] are vtterly forbidden,” 46.

The above quoted passage reveals that such rites or “songs,” however powerful and effective they are, since they bound the shades to earth for a certain amount of time, are not permissible or pleasing to the gods of the underworld.

1.7. The Ghost and Hallucinations

This chapter is concerned with the way a spirit moves on. The ghost is invisible to humans, but there are instances where he manifests himself before the sight of the living. Some ghosts return to appear to men. Still, it must be said that the ghost only appears visibly to whom it pleases. The spectral visitation would therefore be limited to a private event. For example, while organising his friend Andrea a funeral, we learn from the play *The First Part of Hieronimo* that Horacio is able to see the ghost of Andrea whereas the others present are not able to discern him; they could not “behold such sights,” to use Macbeth’s phrase.

Many scholars have emphasised that the ghost can be objective and subjective.¹ The objective ghost is the one who is actually present and apparent to people, while the subjective is a fragment of the viewer’s imagination and can only be seen by the guilty party. I do not entirely support this contention and believe that the statement would need to be rectified. In my judgement, the subjective ghost does not necessarily mean that the ghost is illusory, as the following will show.

The ghost can appear to a friend while he is awoken. Don Andrea has a strong desire to be with his friend and acts just in accordance to the definition that a ghost “appears to those with whom it is closely bound up, as a cloudy figure.”² Certainly, Andrea is not hallucinatory but real to Horacio. Likewise, in Seneca’s *Hercules Œtæus*, Alcmena hears the voice of her dead son Hercules, who reveals to her the death of Euristeus (Eurystheus), his persecutor.³

The ghost may appear to both the awoken and the sleeping. To the sleeping, it appears in dreams. According to the occult view-point, “the thing we call sleep” is “the temporary withdrawal of the ego from the physical body,” and “when one falls asleep the consciousness leaves the physical body” and “the astral body is then its habitation [...] “hence the living and the so-called dead may then be together.”⁴

¹ Clark, 78.

² *The Ancient Wisdom*, 56, as quoted in Rogers, *Ghosts in Shakespeare*, 44.

³ *Hercules Œtæus*, 256.

⁴ Rogers, *The Ghosts in Shakespeare*, 50. Thomas Nashe, on the contrary, argues that dreams are but images we project in our minds, *The Terror of the Night*, 153. Nashe also takes issue with dreams interpreted as portents in antique texts, 158.

Concerning the ghost's appearance in dreams, we shall speak of friendly visitations first.¹ Such ghosts normally appear before a human being not only to reveal future events but also to give a warning, usually announcing impending doom. Therefore, we may call such dreams friendly dreams. Here, a premonition warns the protagonist beforehand since the ghost assumes the role of a bringer of portents and forewarnings.² The ghost is "a general warning of disturbed times to come."³ Seneca's "sad and heavy" Hector is a ghost that warns of an impending calamity and suggests how it may be averted.⁴ The sprite of Hector appears unto his wife Andromacha in her sleep by dream, whereby he issues a warning that the life of their baby Astyanax is in danger, wherefore the child must be concealed.⁵ The ghost says she must convey the son to some secret place. After waking up, Andromacha still believes she is seeing Hector and moves to embrace him, yet the spirit slips through her arms and vanishes.⁶ Seneca's ghostly dream visitor is a recurrent motif in the tragedies. Aeneas recalls the following in W. Gager's *Dido*:

How often has the sorrowful shade of my father presented itself to my eyes when sleep has relaxed my limbs and sweet slumber has overcome my exhausted body! How often has my father's baleful image come into my bedchamber, urging swift flight, IV, ii.

In the anonymous historical drama *Thomas of Woodstock*, the ghost of Edward the Black Prince wishes to awake his brother Thomas of Woodstock in order to warn him of the threat of Richard II murdering him and so possibly save his life:

Thomas of Woodstock, wake! Thy brother calls thee,
Thou royal issue of King Edward's loins,
Thou art beset with murder, rise and fly!
If here thou stay, death comes and thou must die
Thomas of Woodstock, V, i, lines 61-65.

¹ On the basis of this observation it follows that such ghosts are not malignant, otherwise we could hardly speak of a friendly visit. We may say that the friendly ghost was also Seneca-oriented. See the Ghost of Hector below. However, as Lewes Lavater reported, there are also accounts of the church fathers where mention is made of friendly ghosts. St. Augustine, for example, 'reciteth in many places of his bookes, that some after they were dead, haue warned many their frendes of diuers matters, and haue disclosed vnto them secrete things, which were to come, and haue shewed sicke folkes good remedies for their diseases, and haue done many lik things,' Chap. xvi, 76.

² Aeneas sees the disfigured Hector in a dream. The sprite has no desire to answer Aeneas' questions but warns that the enemies are at the gates and that Troy cannot be saved, instructing Aeneas how he may save himself and the Trojans. Awake, Aeneas must conclude that "now what I saw in my dream came true," the *Aeneid*, II, 309.

³ *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. Michael Dobson and Stanley Wells (Oxford UP; New York, 2001), 164.

⁴ In Seneca's *Agamemnon*, Cassandra encounters the shades of her family members Priam, Hector, Troilus and Deiphobus in the underworld. Similarly, she does not see Hector's former "pomp" but rather his mangled limbs, realising he suffers 'greevous harmes,' 128-129.

⁵ The same kind of thing happens in Virgil's *Aeneid*, where the ghost of the unburied Sychaeus appears to his wife Dido in a dream in order to expose his murderer Pygmalion and to warn her of danger. He "urged her swiftly to fly the country, / And told her where she could find in the earth an old treasure, / a secret hoard of gold and silver to help her on her way." This occurs in Book I, 352-58.

⁶ In the Elizabethan translation, the spirit disappears before she could embrace him, 29.

The ghost of the Black Prince fails, wherefore his father, the ghost of Edward III, provides another ghostly warning:

Sleepest thou so soundly and pale death so nigh?
 Thomas of Woodstock, wake, my son, and fly!
 Thy wrongs have roused thy royal father's ghost
 And from his quiet grave King Edward's come
 To guard thy innocent life, V.i lines, 77-80.

In light of this, the two ghosts appear to Woodstock as righteous powers which are more “God’s holy angels” that guard “a just man’s life”¹ than devils. Unfortunately, Thomas tricks himself into believing that the ghostly appearances are but “fearful visions,” and loses his life as a result.² Similarly, in *Maleager*, the apparition of Althaea’s dead mother visits her in a dream in order to issue a warning. What Althaea interprets as a genuine encounter with the dead, her husband Oeneus explains as fantasy as he tries to rationalise the dream. Still, the ghost accurately forecasts the future. She prophesises the following: “What dire catastrophe will soon torment you, daughter, your twin brothers who were formerly my sons, your husband, and you, Meleager! Horrible slaughter, dire ruin is at hand.” This actually comes to pass in the play: Meleager stabs his two uncles Plexippus and Toxeus with his dagger.³ Later on, in Act V, even Oeneus must acknowledge it: “Now I have received a deep wound, now in my misery I am truly stricken. This is the evil my mother-in-law’s ghost lamented.” Since everything happened exactly as the ghost of Althaea’s mother foretold, we may safely assume that the ghost is real. Her description of what is to occur is accurate; thus the ghost is the messenger of an ill-favoured omen.

Some scholars have argued that an encounter with a spirit may well have been just a dream, yet the evidence was very meagre, as it is more than likely that an airy phantom shows itself in a dream in order to deliver prophecies. The spirits can see into the future and the provisions of these prophecies come to pass. This impression is heightened by the fact that everything is proceeding as the dreams have foreseen. Thus, the spirit’s prophecy foretells destiny precisely. The ghost is a mysterious figure, however, and its presence is not always easy to verify. Therefore, sceptical criticism is not unjustified. In fact, it could be argued that one is left with the impression that the ghost sighting is treated ambiguously on occasion. This is especially the case

¹ *Thomas of Woodstock*, V, i, 132.

² Similarly, in a dream, Calphurnia sees Caesar “Torne, Wounded, Maymed, Blod-slaughtered, Slaine.” Caesar regards the dream as folly and deluding vision (*Caesar’s Revenge* III, vi.). Calphurnia says that the prophetic dream is an ominous sign coming from Jove. Caesar ignores it and pays the price for his ignorance with his life.

³ He says he has done this deed unwillingly; therefore, we may ask whether the Fury bore a helping hand.

with protagonists who claim to see ghosts but are “disordered in their wits”¹ in one way or another, i.e. overemotional, melancholy, passion-filled, distressed or overburden with some sorrow and suffering. Fancies which appear as real to them could also be due to nightmares or some other troublesome dreams.² What follows is that a sceptical protagonist would treat the incident as an ordinary matter, venturing upon a rational explanation. Ultimately, the affected person would be accused of suffering from delusions and of seeing things which are purely imaginary.

To sceptics, this kind of mental condition is perhaps the best argument against the existence of ghosts. A mere claim to have sighted ghosts by an agonised individual understandably opens the road for scepticism. On the assumption that an individual is more prone to fancies under such circumstances, critics incline to contend that the ghost only exists in the imagination of men.

This is a tenuous argument when adapted in the line of clear evidence that a ghost is an affiliate of the *dramatis personae*. In such cases, the existence of ghosts as such cannot be in dispute since they are established in the texts. Rather, their precisely determined manifestation in the text is a matter of controversy. This is an issue which demands serious consideration. Although the ghost is a reality to the protagonists, it is questionable whether it truly appears in occurrences where the protagonist merely says that he/she sees or hears the ghost without any support of the stage direction whatsoever that could support their presence. Such ghosts could rest upon delusion; they are mute – it is only the protagonist who seems to actually see them or hear them talking. It ought to be emphasised that the lack of textual support makes such ghost-sightings more uncertain; therefore, it might distinguish them from those encountered earlier. A typical, debatable example is Seneca’s *Thebais*, where the blind Oedipus claims to hear his father’s ghost, King Laius. Oedipus shouts to Antigone:

I thee desire, behold, behold, I heare
 My Fathers ghost to bidde me come apace, and not to feare.
 O Father myne I come, I come, now father cease thy rage :
 I know (alas) how I abus’d my Fathers hoary age [...]
 And loe, dost thou not plainly see, how he my panting Ghost
 With raking pawes doth hale and pull, which grieves my conscience
 most?
 Dost thou not see how he my face bescratcheth tyrant wyse?
 Tell mee (my Daughter) hast thou seene Ghostes in such griesly guyse?
 102.

On the contrary, Antigone does not see or hear anything; neither does the text say that the ghost is present. Because of this, it is legitimate to ask whether Oedipus hallucinates. In order to

¹ Taillepie, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 16.

² *Ibid.*, 16. Father Taillepie has treated of this matter at some length.

find an answer to this question, one would need to know what Seneca's dramatic intent was. Seneca emphasises madness on many occasions. His focus is on emotions, human psyche, inner spiritual conflict and furor. This needed to be objectified.¹ He might have employed the images of ghosts and furies as an effective addition to his dramatic representation of madness and mad fantasy.

In her mental anguish and painful inner conflict in which she sways to and fro between motherly love and sheer insanity, Seneca's Medea sees Megaera with a horde of furies. She says that the Furies have her in their power now. Before she is about to commit a monstrous act and kill her child, Medea sees the ghost of her brother, Absyrtus, who seeks revenge. Medea murdered her brother,² and "that brother enters in the form of a ghost to compel her to the murder of her first son."³ Again, one is confronted with the question whether the ghost is real or whether Medea's madness causes hallucinations. There are different points of view. J. L. Klein, for instance, calls it a "Wahnsinns-Vision,"⁴ but there are others, who emphasise the fact that Medea is in league with Hecate, and loses control because her madness arises from and is inspired by the Furies. In this regard, the stage direction is not of great assistance. Linda McJannet points out that "Stage directions are virtually nonexistent in classical drama [...] Renaissance editions of Roman dramatists such as Plautus and Seneca also lack explicit directions for action or gesture."⁵ Before the line, *Quonam ista tendit turba Furiarum impotens?* Is uttered by Medea, the translator Bruno W. Häuptli invents a stage direction, or, as he says, "complements" it (ergänzt) with *Die Furien erscheinen, mit ihnen der Schatten des ermordeten Absyrtus, alle mit blutroten Fackeln aus der Tiefe aufsteigend.*⁶ While Ella Isabel Harris leaves them out completely, Häuptli encloses the Furies and the ghost of Medea's brother, Absyrtus, in the *dramatis personae*, calling them *personae mutae* – silent characters in the play. In other words, he grants them a character status.

Thus, the ghost and the Fury could have interfered in Medea's inward struggle. Such interpretation is possible since we have seen that the Furies can inspire madness, and they can vex the mind; so can the ghost. Here, however, it is beside the point whether they can do this; rather, the question is if they do this in those scenes. S. Ohlander comments that Seneca "paints a picture of a Medea as maenad possessed, wild, distraught, infused with the power of Hecate

¹ *Two Tragedies of Seneca, Medea and The Daughters of Troy*, xv.

² In another version, Absyrtus is ambushed and killed by Jason. This bloody deed was witnessed by the goddesses of revenge, Schwab, 88.

³ Ohlander, 284.

⁴ Klein, *Geschichte des Dramas*, 377.

⁵ Linda McJannet, *The Voice of Elizabethan Stage Directions. The Evolution of a Theatrical Code* (London, 1999), 9.

⁶ Seneca, *Medea*, Lateinisch/Deutsch. trans. and ed. Bruno W. Häuptli (Philipp Reclam jun. Stuttgart, 2003), 87, line 958.

[...].”¹ He expresses himself as if he questions the origin of Medea’s *ira* when making the observation that she “addresses her wrath in the second person,” and “her anger seems to take on a life and will of its own, not subject to her authority.”² Ohlander additionally asks whether Medea has a chance of dissuading herself,³ continuing to emphasise that her “motive for the infanticides [...] stems from wilful revenge”⁴ (Medea is guilty; her “personal responsibility for her horrible crimes”⁵ is not lessened, although the “arousal of emotion”⁶ may have been caused by the Furies). However, concerning the critical point, it seems that he has the impression that “Now she is seen as instrument, if not victim, of her brother and the Erinys”⁷ and is compelled to question whether Medea is conquered by internal or external forces.⁸ He concludes that Medea is “under a strong compulsion to act according to the dictates of the Furies and her brother, be they imagined or real,” and his last remark brings the same uncertainty back: “Were these spirits embodied in a stage production by live actors, Seneca’s audience would not see them as mere hallucinations beheld only by herself and thus indicative of her inflamed madness alone, so much as actual spirits emerging from the bowels of hell.”⁹ Whether real or not, Medea is “to a great extent compelled to her horrible act by the outside forces over which she has little authority, as well as by inner ones which no longer wish to submit, like a drug addict who can no more manage her habit, yet who began thinking she had everything under control.”¹⁰ Medea could be viewed as being made an instrument by the Furies and the ghost, who would have a great impact on her. Under the circumstances, Medea would have acted out of necessity – but only in part because, Ohlander draws a conclusion by citing Block, “will and necessity merge into each other and therefrom stems the act.”¹¹

The English dramatists borrowed this “part” from Seneca. In like manner, in *Meleager*, Althaea in her frantic madness purports to have seen the ireful sprites of her slain brothers.

Where goes this troop of Furies, sent from Hell? Whose ghost is this with a stab-wound in his side? It’s brother Toxeus, do you see? Or do I alone see him? And look, here comes the furious specter of Plexippus. What do my brothers want? What do you want? Hey, you seek punishment? I shall grant it. You ghosts may go to the Netherworld in confidence. Go away, brothers, what are you seeking? I say I shall give it. Stop, I beg. I have fallen to my knees. I shall give it. Leave me to myself, this hand will suffice, and this log (IV.i).

¹ Ohlander, 273.

² Ibid, 277.

³ Ohlander, 277.

⁴ Ibid, 281.

⁵ Ibid, 270.

⁶ Victoria Tietze Larson, *The Role of Description in Senecan Tragedy* (Frankfurt am Mein, a.o., 1994), 96.

⁷ In Greek mythology, Athena guides the hand of Perseus. Poseidon helps Pelops to win over Hippodamia.

⁸ Ohlander, 282.

⁹ Ibid, 285-286.

¹⁰ Ibid, 286.

¹¹ Achim Block, “Medea-Dramen der Weltliteratur.” Diss. (Göttingen, 1957), 126. As quoted in Ohlander, 286.

Again, it is only her testimony we can rely on. The ghosts could have appeared, though it is also possible that Althaea creates the ghosts out of madness. In Ovid, Althea “feels double force and is compelled to yield to both.” She is “unable for to wield her doubtfull passions.”¹ The text does not say that the ghosts force her to take revenge; she decides to honour her brother’s ghosts with blood instead. Althaea purports seeing ghosts, yet she is not certain: “One while my brothers’ corpses seem to press before my face/With lively image of their deaths; another while my mind doth yield to pity, and the name of mother doth me blind.”² She then understands herself as being an instrument of revenge for her brothers’ ghosts, believing that the murder is her duty so that her son’s death may placate them. Like Medea, Ovid’s Althea implores her brothers’ ghosts to “unable her hands.”³ Eventually, she kills her son. Before this is done, great pain is inflicted on Meleager as well. In his pain, which is madness, he begins to “hallucinate”:

But behold, what’s this sound of whips? The avenging goddesses are here, come from deepest Tartarus. And a greater marvel: see, Plexippus and Toxeus are kindling torches, and are goading on the very Furies to hatred, teaching them heavy punishments. They are urging amazing ones, calling them too slow. Do ghosts nurse grudges even in death? Do my uncles still live to my destruction? Do they still resist me? Oh my hand, too light! Megaera, why pursue me with your savage torch? Alas, spare me at length, hold your Stygian hand, allow them to come to blows with me, so that I may twice send them to Tartarus’ caverns. Let the sword be drawn, bare hands will suffice. Let one of them appear among your throng, let both appear. You flee in your cowardice. I shall follow.

Deluded, Oeneus in his madness also “fancies” seeing Furies:

But what’s this? A crowd of Furies departs Erebus. Tisiphone thrusts her torches in my face, nearer and nearer, whirling her stakes in a circle, and thrusts her smooth snakes, drawn from her tresses, deep within my bosom, scattering her vipers. But the earth quakes, the palace roof creaks, and suddenly the house goes dizzily a-dancing:

The lack of textual evidence does not permit a definite statement that ghosts and Furies emerge in the passages quoted above. In other words, in situations like these, nobody can state with absolute certainty that the ghost and the Fury are literally present. Even in a world where ghosts are reality and supernatural entities have the skill to actually induce the same madness, hallucinations are permissible. The genuineness of the sightings appear to have troubled Elizabethan translators, as their uncertainty over how to treat the matter is most obvious in their translations. As if he wanted to emphasise hallucination, Arthur Golding offers the following translation although it is clear from the original that Juno really sets a Fury against Io:

¹ *Metamorph.* viii, 617.

² *Metamorph.* viii, 658.

³ *Metamorph.* viii, 638.

Determined for to wreak her wrath upon her husband's love.
 Forthwith she cast before her eyes right strange and ugly sights,
 Compelling her *to think* she saw some fiends or wicked sprites
 (*emphasis mine*).¹

Thereby, the possibility of madness is often taken into consideration. Lewes Lavater indicates that “Madde men which haue vtterly loste the vse of reason, or are vexed by Gods permission [...] doo maruellous thinges, talke of many visions and diuers other matters. Theyr sight deceieueth them, in somuche as they mistake one man for an other [...]”² In a similar way, Father Taillepied points out that “Those who are out of their wits [...] often make the most astounding disclosures and describe strange visions together with other curious accidents, which happen to them. They suffer, too, from frantic hallucinations [...]”³ As a reminder, in his madness, Hercules slays his innocent wife and children, taking them for something they are not. Likewise, Athamas and Agave killed their children because they imagined them to be wild beasts.⁴ Due to “the revelatory power of psychic disturbance,”⁵ to use S. Greenblatt’s term, similar misapprehensions may have occurred in the examples above.

Similar incidents are modelled closely after Seneca. For example, the motif is recurrent in Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*. The Bad Angel equates contrition, prayer, and repentance with “illusions, fruits of lunacy.” Mention is made of “senses deceived, and in “his last impassioned soliloquy of agony and despair,”⁶ Dr. Faustus looks to the sky with his face upwards and sees visions of Christ and a wrathful God. In addition, we find similar problems with Shakespearean ghost sightings. In a note of the Variorum Shakespeare edition of *Macbeth*, H. H. Furness assuredly remarks that “It is markworthy that the ghost of Banquo is seen by no one but Macbeth, differing in this respect from that of Hamlet’s father. Moreover, Banquo’s ghost is silent, indicating that it is a hallucination, not an apparition.”⁷ Furnes goes on to conclude that

The ghost is a thing existing only in the diseased imagination of Macbeth: a *subjective* ghost; and no more objective than the air-drawn dagger; the difference being that Macbeth is there so well in his senses as to be aware of the unreality, while he is here completely hallucinated. All this is evident in that the ghost is seen by none of the guests.⁸

¹ *Metamorph.* i, 905-908. Golding replaces Ovid’s “Erinnyn” with “some fiends and wicked sprites.”

² Lavater I.Ch.ii. p.13.

³ Taillepied, chap. iii, 21.

⁴ *Ibid*, chap. iii, 21.

⁵ Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 187.

⁶ James Broughton, *The History of English Dramatic Poetry*, 3 vols (1831) III, 127, contained in Jump, 30.

⁷ Horace Howard Furness, ed. *Macbeth*. A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare (Philadelphia: J.B. Lipincott & Co. 1873) vol. 2, 171.

⁸ *Ibid*, 172.

It would turn out that the ghost haunting is as imaginary as “the air-drawn dagger” – “A dagger of the mind, a false creation / Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain.”¹ However, as indicated earlier, the presence of a “subjective ghost” does not prove that it is unreal. Therefore, the quoted passage uses inconclusive norms to define a fantastical ghost. Clearly, the ghost often makes his presence difficult to prove. The uncertainty involved around the question whether the ghost is real or fantastical might have been made on purpose – in order to provoke discussion. Although there are reasonable indicators, matters concerning the ghost’s appearance in such situations are of equivocal nature. The ghost can be real, or an illusion, a part of human imagination. Thus, S. Greenblatt concludes that “we have [...] two starkly conflicting possibilities: either the apparition is something real in the universe of the play – the spirit of the murdered Banquo comes to haunt the man who has ordered his assassination – or it is the hallucinatory production of Macbeth’s inward terror.”²

In the examples provided in this chapter, the ghosts could be mere reflections of thoughts - illusions or imaginations, but they need not. Just because everyone cannot see what the protagonist sees need not mean that the ghost is imaginary. The subjective ghost need not be “a figment of the imaginative faculty,”³ and the ghosts’ irrefutable existence in this genre can always be used in an argument against the claims that their appearances are mere hallucinations. However, we are not given any definitive hints in directions or text whether or not the ghost makes an entry; therefore, since the ghosts are not visualised but described as part of a conflict in the protagonist’s mind, we cannot know whether external forces are actively taking part in the inward struggle of the inflicted protagonist. Taking this into consideration, a genuine ghost sighting can neither be approved nor denied. The examples gathered in this chapter can substantiate neither theory; therefore, any theorising must be confined to speculations. It follows that one would question as to whether the visitations are truly those of the actual ghost or fragments of our own minds. It could be that the protagonists are being affected by their imagination, yet the question was not meant to be resolved, as the very uncertainty of whether the sightings are true or illusions is what makes the ghosts interesting and mysterious. Thus, it leaves us with questions and it evokes debates, and this is probably exactly what the authors were hoping for.

“Mad delirium” is not the only example where ghost sightings have been treated as hallucination. As the example of Macbeth has already indicated, sense of guilt marks another

¹ II, I, 38-39. All quotations from the text of *Macbeth* are from Barbara Rojahn-Deyk, ed. *William Shakespeare Macbeth* (Philipp Reclam jun. Stuttgart, 2002).

² Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 190.

³ Taillefield, chap. 16, 113.

instance which potentially provokes ghost sightings. There are situations where a ghost allegedly appears to its murderer. Thereby, the ghost is only seen by the guilty party. Again, this brings forth the question whether in such cases the ghost is to be viewed upon as a real appearance or rather as a product of the guilty mind's imagination. Alaham wonders, thus,

What change is this, that now I feel within?
Is it disease that works this fall of spirits?
Or works this fall of spirits my disease?
Fulke Greville's *Alaham*.

In such occurrences, the ghost could be regarded as a sheer fraud, as the product of the protagonist's fear or imagination. The ghost could also be interpreted as the personification of man's guilty conscience,¹ as standing for reviviscence of the memory of the guilty past – “A guilty conscience, urged with the thought/ Of former evils” – as Lorenzo says in *The Spanish Tragedy*, thus linking guilt and punishment. Accordingly, rather than genuine ghostly visitations, the dreams would be interpreted as a “prick of the sinful conscience,” to borrow Hall's phrase.² While it is hard to discern the ghosts' proper deployment in such occurrences, similar situations exist where we can assuredly say that the spirits ascend from the underworld to haunt, terrify and punish the evil-doers and the guilty. The ghost often haunts the person who murdered it in a dream, causing discomfort and wracking havoc on the guilty protagonist,³

[It] strikes such a terror to my wounded conscience,
That sleep I, wake I, or whatso'er I do,
Methinks their ghosts comes gaping for revenge,
Whom I have slain in reaching for a crow
Tragedy of Richard III, line 1881.

That is to say, man's infliction is not brought on by imagination; rather, man is in such situations not hallucinating, but rather sensitive to spirits. He is haunted by the past, the tormenting dreams trouble his mind because the ghost seizes the dream as its instrument of terror.⁴

Of course, the image of a slain man terrifies the individual to whom it appears before his eyes. The ghost's presence is normally a spectacle of terror for the murderer.⁵ At the same time, the

¹ Thomas, 714.

² Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble Families of Lancastre and Yorke* (1548), in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, ed. Geoffrey Bullough, 8. vols., London, 1975, as quoted in Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 178.

³ In Laws IX, 865d, Plato tells how the souls of “slain men often pursue their murderers to do them hurt.” See Battenhouse, “The Ghost in “Hamlet”: A Catholic ‘Lynchpin’?” 187. Also contained in Lavater, 80.

⁴ Death and sleep have often been linked together in the sixteenth century. Spencer, *Death and Elizabethan Tragedy*, 90.

⁵ However, there are also occurrences where the living is not frightened by the sight of the apparition, as for instance Humber in *Lochrine*. Brutus is also undismayed at the sight of a spirit in Plutarch's *Life of Brutus*. Perhaps this goes

ghost's presence naturally provokes curiosity. As S. Greenblatt has observed, "the impulse is not to flee from and not even simply to ward off the weird apparition, but rather to approach and find out what it is and what it wants."¹ Brutus, after spotting Caesar's ghost, is seized with fear, but the first line he utters is, "Stay what so ere thou art [...]."² Then, the ghost has indeed a message to communicate.³ It prophesies the upcoming doom of its object of hatred,⁴ or, through its mere presence, the ghost reminds the guilty one of his vile deeds; it gives him a fright and causes the person to feel guilty. Notably, in such situations it cannot be said that the ghost is evil; rather, it personifies the evil deed and guilt.⁵ That is why the ghost of Geta appears to its brother and murderer Caracalla in *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*. In this play, the ghost functions as the reminder of crimes, and it assumes the role of a prosecutor. The ghost is, at the same time, the reminder. Reoccurring memory is caused by the sight of the ghost, which "wounds the soule." Similarly, seeing the ghost of Caesar, Brutus acknowledges his guilt and knows he deserves to die. In this regard, it must be said that, in some cases, the ghost does not converse with humans on stage.⁶ In addition, the ghost does not teach anything concerning the afterlife, as this instruction is only reserved for the audience.⁷

along with Father Taillepied's observation that "those who are naturally brave and confident are not so easily frightened by ghosts," *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 25. Compare the reaction at the sight of the ghost in Seneca's *Oedipus*: "No sooner sayd, but straight away, his dreadfull Ghost was gone,/ And fast by thousands after him, th'other Sprights in hyde:/ Than Cold and trembling feare began through all my bones to glyde," 213. Moor provides a similar threat in *The Battle of Alcazar*, V, i, lines 1420-1426.

¹ Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 108.

² *Caesar's Revenge* V, i, line 2283.

³ Thomas, 712. After this, it commonly fades from sight. In later plays, the ghost, as C. Clark has remarked, "cannot speak unless spoken to." This was a very important point in Elizabethan ghost-lore. Not only were apparitions silent until addressed, but it needed an educated man to make them talk." See Clark, *Shakespeare and the Supernatural*, 65. In later plays, the ghost also expects the living character to carry out its wishes, to fulfil its behest by taking revenge.

⁴ *Octavia* III, *Lochrine*, III, ii., *Caracalla* IV.i.; *Caesar's Revenge*, V.i., *Nero*, IV.i.

⁵ Dahinten, 64. H. W. Stoll also points out that "[...] die Erinyen [treten] als strafende und verderbende Wesen auf, die den Sünder [...] heimsuchen [...] durch die Qualen des Gewissens." Stoll, 176.

⁶ In *The First Part of Hieronimo*, the ghost of Andrea desires to thank his friend Horatio for preparing a funeral for him, but Revenge forbids him from speaking, fearing he might blab hell's secrets, I, xi, lines 9-16. Such conception might have been an elaboration of what was previously derived from the description in classical literature of the ghosts of the underworld as being silent. This is different with Gorlois in Fulbecke's prologue, however, who returned to earth in order to, among other things, disclose 'the fates and hidden secrets' of the underworld, 340.

⁷ The ghost is fairly reticent and it gives the briefest of explanations. This it does either pointedly, or because it is not allowed to, or because there is much in the Fates concealed in it. There is an all-knowing ghost, as for instance the ghost of Albanact, and the unilluminated one, as for example Don Andrea. The one who knows but does not wish to tell is the ghost of Geta, that appears to his brother Caracalla and predicts that he shall die in a short time; still, it is silent about the author of his brother's death. Also, the ghost of Severus discloses to his son that he shall surely die and it announces punishments that await him, but as regards the details, it says that he "will learn the rest in the realm of Tartarus" (*Caracalla*, IV, v, line 1260). The brief and inconcise information even serves as means of punishment on earth as it leaves the wrongdoer in incertitude and thus heavily overburdens the psyche. Says Caracalla, "Shall I, while yet alive, bear what no one dead endures? It is a graver penalty for me to think of the punishment which the gates of the infernal realm hold," IV, v, line 1270. This is different with the ghost of Caesar. It knows already how Brutus is going to die and it spares no effort to disclose this to him: "Thy life to thee a torture shall become [...] Thine owne right hand shall worke my wish'd reueng", *Caesar's Revenge*, V, i, line 2314.

It follows that the ghost can appear before the murderer, or it can disturb the sleeping in a dream.¹ It can tell what the reason for its presence is, or it can remain silent, causing great uncertainty and mysteriousness. Furthermore, the ghost has different means of terrorizing its victim. There are silent phantoms in blurred, mysterious visions – dreams in which the ghost presents an ominous, threatening spectacle in a manner of a dumb-show, what Roxana calls “a silent vision of the night.”² Dreadful visions do “afright the sleeper.”³ The helpless ghost of Octavia’s sister, Britannicus, visits Octavia in her dreams over and over again.⁴ In the same play, *Octavia*, Poppea (Nero’s wife) sees her husband’s mother Agrippina in a dream holding, and at times waving, a bloody firebrand while staring ghastly at her. While following Agrippina, the earth opens and the two plunge into it. Poppea encounters her first husband there, “Rufe Chrispyne” (Rufrius Crispinus), and their first son (Crispinus’ namesake, who was murdered by Nero). Crispinus rushes to embrace Poppea and exchange kisses after which, all of a sudden, Nero rushes in and pierces him through his throat with a sword. What is to be made of this is not shown in the play. Awaken with fear, Poppea tries to unravel the meaning of her dream, marvelling what the cause of her husband’s “griesly sprigt” threats is and what meaning the spilt blood could carry.

In *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, the subject of Empress Julia’s dream is a fearful vision of her son (and husband at the same time), Caracalla, being pursued by his victim – the ghost of his brother Geta.⁵ Awake and seized with fear, Julia is not certain whether this has truly been a dream. Even though Macrinus inclines to believe everything was merely an empty image (later he would no longer be a sceptic), Julia is assured of the dream as being a portent in the end.

However, there are situations where humans receive a ghost’s appearance for a more obvious reason. In *Meleager*, for example, Nutrix admonished Althaea to refrain from murdering her son Meleager. In case she does so, “the ferocious ghost of your dead son will be present everywhere, and when night has fallen on the day his savage shade will come, armed with torches, and will hound you with Furies.” This occurs in Act IV. That is to say, she knows that the ghost shall use the dream to persecute and terrify.

Although often effective, the presence of the ghost is marked with several limitations. Normally, the ghost can complain or make threats, but it cannot eventually intervene and so prevent crimes. This is beyond the range of its intervention. In *Dido*, the ghost of Sychaeus, even

¹ The ghost also appears near or at the moment of death. This was also the conclusion of Francis Bacon in his *Advancement of Learning*. Quoted in Stewart, *Supernatural in Shakespeare*, 39.

² III, i, 786.

³ *Caesar’s Revenge*, III, i, line 1159.

⁴ *Octavia*, 150 The translator T. N. apparently explains this case as some disordered imagination: “How oft (alas) doth Fancie fondly fayne [...]” 150.

⁵ *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, IV, iii, lines 1103-1127.

though indignant, appears only to have the power to threaten.¹ The ghost of the Black Prince also laments: “Oh, I am nought but air! Had I the vigour of my former strength,” he would have certainly saved his brother Thomas of Woodstock from peril. In *Antonius Bassianus Caracalla*, Julia prays her deceased husband Severus may intervene and so prevent the enmity between their two sons Caracalla and Geta.² In case such powers are denied to him (which appears to really be the case), as Julia ponders, he may call gods for aid.³ Unlike the aforesaid ghosts, however, in the case of Claudius’ ghost it appears that it is rather unwilling to help, since its daughter Octavia calls on her father’s sprite to “step forth from Limbo lake” and rescue her, but to no avail.⁴ This is different in *Lochrine* (IV, ii), where the ghost of Albanact interferes in human affairs perfectly well by hindering the clown Strumbo from giving some food to his enemy Humber.⁵

[Let him make as though he would give him some,
and as he putteth out his hand, enter the ghost of
Albanact, and strike him on the hand: and so
Strumbo runs out, Humber following him. Exit.]

This ghost is jointly responsible for murder since eventually, entirely ghost-ridden, Humber casts himself into the river and kills himself. The same can be said of Brutus, who, pursued by Caesar’s ghost, stabs himself.

1.8. The Revenge Ghost

The Elizabethan revenge ghost is a fusion of Seneca’s ghost and a Fury. Jasper Heywood must have comprehended the potential of a few lines offered in Seneca’s plays. Basic prerequisites were found in those remnants, and they were to be put together and dramatised. The character needed to be fashioned after the following principles: Seneca writes of anger as an emotion that is “wholly violent and has its being in an onrush of resentment, raging with a most

¹ Also Dahinten, 17 n 97. Cf. Claudius’ ghost in *Nero*, II, i.: “Oh, poisoner, stay your evil hand. I am returning as Caesar. I shall prevent this evil. I shall turn and confront you face to face. But the Fates forbid my returning.”

² This is actually achieved by the ghost of Caesar, since it manages to reconcile Anthony and Octavian; quite a contrast to the ghost of Tantalus that sets ‘mortal hatred between his two nephews Thiestes, and Atreus’, Seneca’s *Thyestes*, 54.

³ I, i, lines 40-50.

⁴ I, iv, 151. To recapitulate somewhat briefly, Claudius married Messalina and got with her two children – Octavia and Britannicus. Eventually he got rid of Messalina and married Agrippina (daughter of his brother Germanicus) instead, who brought her son Nero with her. Also, since Agrippina wanted to have Octavia as a bride for her son Nero, Claudius broke off the engagement between Octavia and Silanus, wherefore Silanus committed suicide. That given, it is indeed surprising that Octavia expects the ghost of someone who has done her so much harm during his lifetime to help her.

⁵ Cf. Father Taillieped: “[...] some Spirits have the power to clutch persons by the dress or by the arm, nay, even to deal blows and tug men by the air,” *A Treatise of Ghosts*, chap. 15, 101.

inhuman lust for weapons, blood, and punishment, giving no thought to itself if only it can hurt another, hurling itself upon the very point of the dagger, and eager for revenge though it may drag down the avenger along with it.”¹ I am inclined to think that the prototype of a revenge ghost would have been modelled after this definition; filled with emotions such as fanatic obsession, the unquenchable, inhuman urge to punish, with its mind set only on revenge and nothing else, this is what would mark this type of ghost. The ghost is blinded by anger, and it performs the very same anger in its speech. “Die Wut ist das unbändige Verlangen nach Rache für ein Unrecht oder, wie Poseidonios sagt, das unbändige Verlangen, denjenigen zu strafen, von dem du dich zu Unrecht verletzt glaubst. Wut ist eine Erregung der Seele, gerichtet auf die Schädigung dessen, der entweder geschadet hat oder schaden wollte.”² The revenge ghost exhibits exactly this defining characteristic on account of being seized by anger which is, according to one of Seneca’s definitions, the “ungovernable desire for revenge” and “the desire of exacting punishment.” “That anger [...] is born of injury,”³ to modify Seneca’s expression. The same anger is found in the revenge ghost; therefore, we may say that the ghost’s anger is stirred by injury. Anger as such was treated as unnatural, and it was very likely because of this reason ascribed to the supernatural. Unlike Medea or Hercules, the revenge ghost is always in a state of rage. Revenge is its single aim and it does not know how to pardon. This is quite in accordance with the classical belief that the ghost only finds its rest after revenge for its murder has been achieved.⁴ Humber recognises the reason for the ghost’s appearance:

HUMBER.
 So nought will satisfy your wandering ghost
 But dire revenge, nothing but Humber’s fall,
 Because he conquered you in Albany
Lochrine, III, vi.

Caesar’s ghost reveals to Brutus the reason for its appearance:

Brutus to daie my blood shalbe reuenged,
 And for my wrong and vnderued death,
 Thy life to thee a torture shall become
Caesar’s Revenge, V, i, lines 2305-2307.

In later plays such as *Hamlet* and *Antonio’s Revenge*,⁵ the ghost does not possess the power to exact punishment, but it does “desire [...] what [it] cannot attain.”¹ Being unable to intervene as

¹ http://www.stoics.com/seneca_essays_book_1.html#ANGER1.

² Lactantius, *De ira dei* 17,13. Included in Wildberger’s translation of Seneca’s *De ira* as 2.3.b.

³ *De ira*, 3.1. The emphasis that the ghost wishes revenge often lies in his attendant – the Fury, or *Enter the ghost of Andrea, and with him Revenge*.

⁴ Bowers 129 n 39. Golding admits that “murder crieth aye for vengeance [...]” Epistle of 1567, l.260.

⁵ Eleanor Prosser pointed out that only these two ghosts, King Hamlet and Andrugio appear to a protagonist in order to command blood revenge, *Hamlet and Revenge*, Appendix A, 258.

punisher, the ghost seeks help from a human in order to achieve vengeance.² This concept is already cognisant in *Caesar's Revenge*, where the ghost of Caesar seeks help, wherefore it desires assistance from Anthony and Octavian and “execute its just revenge,” as well as in *The Spanish Tragedy*, where Revenge inducts the ghost of Don Andrea to watch how Bel-Imperia shall revenge his death by murdering Don Balthazar.³

The ghost is sent back to earth; it returns after death to its house or its homeland and is attached to the place until revenge has been taken. This hints to the conventional idea that “the ghost is condemned to walk the earth until its death is avenged.”⁴ Still, it is a subject of debate whether the ghost’s private revenge is ethically acceptable. It appears that there is a certain ambiguity in the treatment of revenge.

On the one hand, Seneca writes that man’s nature does not crave vengeance. Therefore, “anger does not accord with human nature, because anger craves vengeance.”⁵ Similar positions are found in Ovid: Althaea reasons that if she revenged her brothers, it would be a sin.⁶ She kills her son in order to please the ghosts of her brothers, as she says, and her act is condemned as a “cursed crime.” The same hand she asked the ghosts to assist is now a “mother’s guilty hand.”⁷ Eventually, Althaea kills herself.

On the other hand, there are instances where vengeance is treated differently. In Seneca’s plays, a “foule misdeade” often craves just vengeance.⁸ Seneca appears to consent to such measures when he writes, “Extreme punishment let him appoint only to extreme crime, so that no man will lose his life unless it is to the benefit even of the loser to lose it.”⁹ This philosophy is scattered throughout the Elizabethan tragedies as well, since the protagonists frequently emphasise that an unavenged wrong cannot be tolerated: “Death must be expiated by death, killing by killing, madness by madness, crime must be repaid by crime.”¹⁰

The Elizabethan ghosts are often innocent. Critics agree that Thomas Hughes chose the most horrible of Seneca’s tragedies, *Thyestes*, as his first model. The ghost of Gorlois, the Duke of

¹ *De ira*, 3.2.

² In a way, such a ghost takes over the function of the Fury, as it is now the one that prompts other living protagonists, i. e. the avengers, to take revenge on his behalf.

³ Don Andrea was the lover of Bel-imperia, Lorenzo’s sister.

⁴ Clark, 126.

⁵ *De ira*, 6.4.

⁶ *Metamorph.* viii, 661.

⁷ *Ibid.*, viii, 687.

⁸ *Ædipus*, 206. For example, Oedipus wishes to take vengeance on himself for the wrongs he did to his father in *Thebais*, 105. He had unwittingly killed his own father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, wherefore he blinded himself in anguish. Thereby he fulfilled the oracle of Apollo, *Ædipus*, 218. In the *True Tragedy of Richard III*, Truth informs Poetry that “blood spilt, craves due revenge,” line 52. In *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, Julia encourages her dead son Geta, an innocent who has ‘fallen by wickedness,’ to arise and demand vengeance, convinced his “shade” is going to frighten his murderer Calacalla (II, iv, lines 542-546).

⁹ *De Ira*, 6.3.

¹⁰ *Meleager*, IV, i.

Cornwall, who comes up from hell to recite the first scene is, it was argued, merely the *Tantali umbra* of *Thyestes* in another guise, and lines 22–28 are translated literally from this source.¹ Yet unlike his literary ancestor, Gorlois is innocent - he is the ghost of an unrighteously slain man. Uther Pendragon, King Arthur's father, had wronged Gorlois in honour, queen and realm, eventually depriving him of life. Therefore, this ghost is bitter and retaliatory.

Several aspects could speak against his vengeance. He appears to be entirely driven by passion;² a self-righteous and ruthless ghost who seeks death because of personal revenge. However, Gorlois' private revenge is not condemned, but rather approved by the gods. They witness it all and they do not punish the ghost for taking revenge; rather, the revenge ghost is still a potent agent, as the gods have already destined the wrongdoer's end for him. For the reason given in the phrase, "guiltless blood asks for revenge," Gorlois' passion is equally not condemned. While some critics interpret his passion as devilish, it appears that it is righteous indignation: these raging passions are none other but "furies of a howling ghost which must be appeased" by blood. In the end, Gorlois becomes what he wanted, balance is achieved and restored, and so he intends to leave Britain in peace in the future.³ Gorlois' deed, therefore, goes without blame.

The revenge ghost sees itself as being in the right when avenging its death, and this demand appears to be legal. The ghost retaliates through the laws of both the underworld and heaven. It punishes man as he deserves because it is the ghost's targets who are malefactors since their crimes arouse the ghost's wrath. It follows that the ghost is the victim in this case.⁴ Accordingly, man is the wrongdoer, often a true monster, not the ghost, and man is the one who is to be blamed and who has to reckon on repercussions (chaos and horror). The ghost of the murdered is not condemned for its act of vengeance; therefore, it cannot be labelled a vicious figure, a supernatural villain.⁵ Moreover, it can be argued that the ghosts conform to the so-called

¹ In *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy*, J. W. Cunliffe has shown plenty parallel passages Hughes cribbed from Seneca. *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was performed before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich on February 8, 1587/1588.

² As he says, he is going to have his revenge on Uther's progeny, these "cursed imps, ill-born and worse consum'd, they "shall render just revenge for parents' crimes," 265. Thomas Hughes had the authority of Geoffrey of Monmouth for his Gorlois (William Fulbeche wrote an alternative induction and epilogue for this ghost). While passion is evaluated as something evil in Seneca, in *Caesar's Revenge*, compassion and pity are judged as feminine.

³ The same goes for the ghost of Moleon. After witnessing the doom of his enemies, he says that now his soul shall sleep in rest, *Roxana*, V, iv, line 1500.

⁴ The ghost of Gorlois is the most wronged character, he is without blame and his cause for revenge is just. The same can be said of the ghost of Moleon in Alabaster's *Roxana*, who has been bereft of his life and kingdom by the hands of his nephew Oromasdes, who, what is even worse, also stained his daughter's honour, *Roxana*, I, ii, 97.

⁵ This act of vengeance is all the more pardonable if one compares it with Caesar's situation in *Caesar's Revenge*. At first, in *Caesar's Revenge*, vengeance is sought for 'the tyrant,' i.e. Caesar's blood-leading life. Caesar has sacrificed millions of souls to Pluto and now the ghosts demand Caesar's life by the hand of Cassius, III, I, line 1160. Cassius himself has vowed this to the soul of Pompey. Caesar is murdered by the conspirators, and thereby, it seems as if Heavens stand unmoved by this murder because Caesar, the tyrant, did Rome wrong in many respects.

“revenge of honour;”¹ they act in accord with classical ethics. Their desire for revenge “represents a pagan demand for natural justice”.²

Although mercy is essential to Christian ethics where “vengeance is a matter for God”³ and virtuous persons do not act ethically in showing their anger, revenge is ethically defensible in the Elizabethan tragedies since it follows the concepts of Antiquity. Here, guiltless blood cries for revenge, as Chilo informs us in *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, “God does not allow the just man to endure injustice.”⁴ Apparently, the ghost does not take justice into its own hands without divine approval. The ancient doctrine was “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,”⁵ an old concept, possibly sacred honour, followed by the dramatic ghost regardless of the fact that the Elizabethans considered the thought of revenge as evil – as something that would go against their religious and moral values.⁶ Since revenge was deemed correct in Antiquity, it is alright for the ghost to insist on the unchristian way of blood revenge. The ghost of Achilles says: “I come my right to crave.”⁷ Similar words are uttered by the ghost of Gorlois: “Thus cursed imps [...] / Shall render just revenge for parents’ crimes, / And penance do, t’ assuage my swelling wrath.”⁸ Revenge is linked to justice; justice can only be achieved through the law, and so the ghost’s vengeance is regulated by divine law.

In light of this, the ghosts’ punishments for crimes other than murder find their approval as well, in spite of the fact that they appear less reasonable to modern readers. In Seneca’s *Hippolytus*, adultery is condemned as ‘filthy and monstrous.’ Women do not show respect to the departed husband when they remarry after the husband’s death, as if they are forswearing them, wherefore their ghosts are obviously righteously indignant. Sacred rights of marriage must be respected, and, according to Dido, it happens that remarriage is thought of as a sin. A celibate life would have been considered as more apt, II, vi. For the same reason, Gismond is accused by

The murderers have ‘justly returned the guiltless blood on the author’s head’ III, vi, line 1737. Anthony is of another opinion. Also, Discord admits that through this murder, Brutus has set Rome free, but then he moves on to explain that this murder cannot pass without revenge. Indeed, Anthony and Octavian seek revenge against those who caused Caesar’s overthrow, and Caesar’s ghost, too, speaks of just revenge, in this case IV, iii, line 2017. This is a rightful cause. Brutus acknowledges his guilt, his mind is greatly troubled by the committed act, he is haunted by the ghost of Caesar, and takes his own life in the end. Death demands death, this is what ‘iustly heauens haue wrought/ murder on the murderers head is brought’ and so Caesar can finally rest in peace in the Elysian Fields.

¹ The term is borrowed from Sister Mary Bonaventure Mroz, *Divine Vengeance: A Study in the Philosophical Backgrounds of the Revenge Motif as it Appears in Shakespeare’s Chronicle History Plays*, Washington, D. C., 1941.

² Battenhouse, “The Ghost in “Hamlet”: A Catholic “Linchpin”?” 190.

³ Simon Trussler’s introduction to *The Spanish Tragedy* xv.

⁴ *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*, II, v, 589.

⁵ A Biblical passage, also known as *lex talionis*. Cf. Deuteronomy 19:21; Exodus 21:22; Leviticus 24:19-20; Matthew 5:38-40. See Fiona McHardy, *Revenge in Athenian Culture*, London, 2008, 10.

⁶ Ample examples of revenge being condemned by Elizabethan moralists can be found in the first chapter of E. Prosser’s *Hamlet and Revenge*. There is no need to recount them all here.

⁷ *Troas*, II, i, 17.

⁸ *Misfortunes of Arthur*, 265.

the forces of the underworld as having thrown away “chastnesse of life, to her immortal shame.”¹ Once this is violated, revenge follows speedily; thus the “greuëd ghost” of Gismond’s husband (no actual appearance) demands revenge for Gismond’s unchastity.²

Even though disputed by some critics, I believe that taken honour served as a motive for the ghost of Andrea to seek revenge. Don Andrea was slain on the field, yet even though he was killed in battle, he was foully slain. In *The First Part of Hieronimo*, in his hand-to-hand fight with the Portuguese Balthazar, Don Andrea would have probably defeated him if it were not for Balthazar’s men who interfered and murdered him. Andrea also excels in the combat against Balthazar in *The Spanish Tragedy*, until Balthazar’s henchmen pierce the belly of Andrea’s horse without chivalry and Balthazar kills him. Andrea’s honour is offended by this cowardly act; that is to say, Balthazar dishonourably kills Andrea. The play *The Spanish Tragedy* makes a slight indication that Andrea has thereby been betrayed, too. Bel-Imperia equally evaluates this situation as an act of cowardice;³ it was an untimely, undeserved death for the poor but honourable Ambassador of Spain, Don Andrea.⁴

Sometimes, the ghost draws moral precepts and it imposes its morality upon the audience, as if it expects from the Elizabethan audience to sympathise with its desire for vengeance. The ghost persuades the audience that its vindictiveness is just. Since it advocates bloody revenge,

¹ *Gismond of Salerne*, IV, i, lines 22-23.

² *Ibid*, IV, I, line 28. Lochrine, too, was married to fair Gwendoline, daughter of Corineius, whom he was supposed to love and cherish as his wife. After the Huns are defeated by Lochrine, however, Lochrine meets Estrild, Humber’s concubine. Lochrine falls in love with Estrild and expresses a desire to marry her, forsaking his wife Gwendoline, which again causes heavy discontent on the side of Corineius. In doing so Lochrine breaks the oath given to his dying father Brutus (hence disrespecting Brutus’ last behest that he should cherish his wife) and offends Corineius. Thus, his lechery is a great injury. To secure his love, he murders Corineius, divorces Gwendoline and sends her brother Thrasimachus into exile. This provokes Gwendoline’s wrath, which results in revenge. The Ghost of Corineius cries for revenge on these matters, too, as his appearance in Act IV and Gwendoline’s words inform us, “My father’s ghost still haunts me for revenge, / Crying, Revenge my overhastened death/ My brother’s exile and mine own divorce.”

³ *The Spanish Tragedy*, I, iv, 73. In *Lochrine*, too, Albanact, the youngest of Brutus’s sons, is ‘the perfect pattern of all chivalry’. During the clash between the Britains and the Scythians, he faces the intruder Humber the Scythian and fights him up to the point in which Humber’s soldiers rush in. Then he receives a wound somehow caused by Humber’s treachery (a report on how Albanact died is given by Thrasimachus in III, i). Realising there is no way out, he eventually kills himself. Thus, Albanact is cowardly wounded and defeated by the King of the Huns, Humber, wherefore Albanact commits suicide. This is a ‘wrongful injury’ that must be avenged. The ghost of Albanact, as a typical revenge ghost, can only be pacified by revenge. Albanact’s peers share this opinion. While Corineius concludes that the best way to show love to his lost friend is to seek revenge, Lochrine swears Humber shall be sacrificed at Albanact’s tomb ‘in satisfaction’ of all the wrongs he did to him during his lifetime, III, iv. Humber must die for ‘murdering valliant Albanact.’ It can be argued that Albanact’s death was merely the chance of war, as Lochrine himself justifies the death of Humber in front of Estrild, but this is not the case, as Humber’s guilt is too often emphasised in the play. (Humber acts as a villain. He is an intruder, puffed up with vanity, he presumptuously believes he leads Fortune tied in a chain of gold, II, i., scorns gods, etc.) Eventually the blood-revenge for Albanact motivates the revenge. Also Bowers, 103. The story of Lochrine is narrated in Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, 75.

⁴ In *Caesar’s Revenge*, Pompey is also ‘foully’ murdered in II, i (Cornelia stabs herself because of this in II, ii.). Caesar, although his rival, believes Pompey’s death was undeserved, and so he advises his murderers to go before Radamant and plead their causes, II, iii, line 800.

the ghost morally and theologically explains the necessity for its wrongdoer's death. Albanact's ghost makes the following moral observation:

Lo, here the gift of fell ambition,
Of usurpation and of treachery!
Lo, here the harms that wait upon all those
That do intrude themselves in other's lands,
Which are not under their dominion, IV, ii.

The ghost's moral indignations are not always as comprehensible as in the case with evils of ambition and usurpation mentioned above. At times, the ghost appears obstinate, inasmuch that it is convinced that its course of action is just to a degree that it leaves little space for the audience's moral criticism. As a result, the ghost subjectively labels characters as "villains." Although morally shocking spheres were different at that time; some of the ghost's perceptions remain dubious. For instance, Suspicion reasons with Moleon that his daughter Roxana is innocent and that she was constrained to give herself to Oromasdes, who managed to win her over by deceit. Roxana married Oromasdes and eventually bore him a son and a daughter. The ghost is still unmovable and inexorable, as it sees in Roxana a strumpet who is lying with a married man. This conveys the impression that the ghost of Moleon pursues revenge for an invalid reason.¹ Similarly, the ghost of Gorlois blames his wife Igerne for adultery even though she was ravished. To recall, in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, Arthur is the son of Uther Pendragon² and Ygerne, wife of Uther's vassal (Gorlois) the Duke of Tintagel. Uther falls in love with Ygerne during a great Christmas celebration at Carduel. Eventually, Merlin casts a spell that causes Ygerne to believe that Uther is her husband.³ Through this deception, Arthur is conceived in the castle of Tintagel.⁴ The duke is killed the same night:

¹ Moleon seeks revenge because he has been deprived of "kingdome, crowne, and eke of dearest life", I, 19, but, above all, he seeks revenge because his own daughter Roxana married his murderer. See also Dahinten, 72. From the angle of Roxana's innocence, Moleon is unjust, but then again, the moral law he advocates finds approval in the underworld.

² Uther Pendragon is also Arthur's father in Geoffrey of Monmouth. An early Welsh poem mentions "Uthr Pendragon." However, there is no proof that he was a real person. *Uthr* means "terrible" in Welsh. The connection with Arthur could perhaps be a mistake since the poetic phrase "Arthur the terrible" might have been misconstrued as "Arthur son of Uthr." On this discussion see also Norris J. Lacy, *The Arthurian Encyclopedia* (New York, 1986) 67.

³ Up to this point we have something new introduced into the story – namely, supernatural power. Malory enters the world of magic through the presence of Merlin.

⁴ Here it is interesting to see how Malory presents these characters. Uther has this urge to fulfil his sexual desires whereas Ygerne cannot be easily taken over. The question is whether this act is a case of rape since Ygerne clearly refused to have sexual intercourse with Uther before. Apparently, this act has been taken for granted and was not morally criticised. Whatever the case, the fact is that Arthur is not a husband's son. Therefore, one may assume that Arthur is not a legitimate child. One should also keep in mind that both Uther and Ygerne are rather flat characters who serve only one purpose – namely to introduce Arthur. In other words, Arthur has to be conceived.

So after the deth of the duke kyng Uther lay with Igrayne, more than thee houres after his deth, and begat on her that nyght Arthur; and or day cam, Merlyn cam to the kyng and bad hym make hym redy, and so he kist lady Igrayne and departed in all hast.¹

Uther marries the widowed Igraine, having impregnated her with Arthur. Still, from the ghost's point of view, she has stained herself with infamy. The ghost renders the revenge for "lawless lust" necessary and he seeks retaliation for infidelity.

In *Dido*, the ghost of Sychaeus is indignant that his wife Dido wishes to marry Aeneas, that a stranger should now occupy his place:

Where should I go? Where should I take my tears? Dido, if now Sychaeus has completely left your mind, if now you are undertaking a second marriage, has Libya produced no princes whom you might love? Will you, a fortunate woman, marry this wretch, a pious woman marry a traitor? A queen marry a fugitive? A Tyrian woman marry a Trojan?²

Aeneas' departure is not his fault because he must obey the Fates. He does not seek Italy of his own desire and we know that he leaves Dido against his will since Jupiter's greater command compels him to do so; he must forsake her because he must obey divine command; still, for the ghost of Sychaeus, Aeneas is a traitor. He is also a traitor in the eyes of Dido, who, in her rage, swears that she shall haunt him as a ghost.³

1.9. Conclusions: The Fury, the Ghost and the Devil

English drama borrowed the ghost and the Fury from Senecan tragedies. The Fury and the ghost have many things in common. Both the Fury and the ghost appear from the underworld and restlessly chase man. Both are sent to earth by Pluto.⁴ Unlike the devil, the two, due to their classical lineage,⁵ ascend from the classical underworld. The ghost and the Fury are both ministers of justice⁶ and both terrible spirits that pursue revenge. We may say that they are God's executioners. They are not corporeal and belong to the unseen, ethereal world. Both have passionate behaviour in common. Both are virtually indomitable, and they both torture the soul. Both are truly seen by the wake and the sleeping, and both make "men afrayde." Both the ghost

¹ Sir Thomas Malory, *Complete Works* (Oxford Up, 1971), 5.

² Sychaeus forgave Dido in the *Aeneid*, VI, line 474.

³ *Dido*, IV, ii.

⁴ Taking the shape of a man, the devil Belphagor comes into the world as he is sent by Pluto in *Grim the Collier*. Together with another devil named Akercock, Belphagor arrives in London, terming himself Castiliano and Akercock Robin Goodfellow.

⁵ Some elements of the theatrical ghost are also found in the popular ghost-lore of the time.

⁶ Satan, as has already been set forth, is described as a minister of God's wrath in Calvin (*The Institute of Christian Religion*, II, iv, 3).

and the Fury appear with a burning torch in one hand.¹ They are both written as prologue-speakers.² It has also been noticed that both the ghost and the Fury can be just “vain imaginations.” Furthermore, the “burning fury that rageth in the soul,” of which such mention is so often made of in the plays, can absolutely be metaphorically understood. Such images are often used for the sake of hyperbole and cannot be used in a literal way.³

The Fury and the ghost often appear side by side.⁴ They seem to rule each other. In some tragedies, the ghost is lead and brought up by the Fury to the world. The Fury then spurs the ghost on to commit evil. The ghost unwillingly fulfils the wish of the Fury in *Thyestes*. Again, it is threatened by the Fury in *Thyestes*, but also pursued in *Medea*. In other plays, the ghost returns to haunt its wrongdoer with the Furies. These may then be viewed upon as its personal furies. As if when a hunter is unleashing his hunting dogs, so does a ghost dispatch the furies: “Seize on him, furies, take him unto torment!”⁵ In some situations, therefore, the Furies vex the ghosts, and in others they serve as a helping hand.

The Furies can be summoned by magic incantations. The ghost, too, may gain access into the upper world by means of necromancy, as shown in classical literature and in *Antoninus Bassianus Caracalla*. The ghost hovers locally, near his tomb or generally wonders about the earth, yet both the Fury and the ghost hover either over the events on stage or over the head of their victims. This means that they are authors of mischance which befall the characters on stage. They are equally similar in foretelling the horrors and disasters which shall happen in the play itself. Both the ghost and the Fury can see into the future. Notwithstanding, it is only the ghost that comes unto man to declare an important information, foretell him something or give warnings of things to come. The Fury and the ghost are also similar inasmuch that they evidently have great power over living characters. Man is vexed with Furies and the spirits. The damned ghost can be vexed by both the furies and other ghosts.⁶ Indeed, in certain plays, even a reinterpretation of the ghost into a Fury takes place, which is understandable when one consults the aforementioned examples. Altogether, it can be concluded that there is a great similitude between the Fury and the ghost.

¹ *Octavia*, I, iv, 150; *Dido*, III, i; *Herodes*, I, i, lines 1-4; *Caracalla*, IV,iii, line 1110.

² The Fury-like creatures as Furor in *Richardus Tertius III*, Vastitas in Legge's *Solymitana Clades*; perhaps even Ate (Ruin) in *Locrine*.

³ Abundant evidence of this can be gained in the texts proper. It would be superfluous to quote all the passages here. This is the so-called “‘humane fury’ which can degrade man into beasts.” Quoted in Battlehouse, “The Ghost in ‘Hamlet’: A Catholic Linchpin?” 46 n 175.

⁴ In *Grim the Collier*, the Ghost of Molecco is *guarded with Furies*, as the stage direction devises.

⁵ *Richard III*, I, iv, line 57.

⁶ Cf *Nero*, II, i. where the ghost of Claudius complains how a ‘band of senators and equestrians are flaying his back with whips’.

Man can be possessed by the devils, and so can the Fury possess him. The Fury can inspire madness, but many ghosts do not cause harm in this way. Certainly, there are ghosts that are capable of inducing discord and of inspiring madness,¹ but there are other ghosts that act otherwise, given that such craft is no longer granted to them. In such occurrences, man suffers the spirit in no such manner. This ghost is not directly the source of madness, but its presence is horrid to the human sight and it can cause man's mind to wander back to the time he committed some misdeed and so provoke reoccurring memories of a guilty past and distress in life in general, as the one guilty of bloodshed can become panic-stricken and insane with fright.² The ghost is an impersonification of the revenging Nemesis. It stands for the law of talionic justice, that is to say, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Normally in such situations a wicked man is the ghost's choice victim. Thus, it should be said that the ghost besets the malefactor differently, wherefore its work is different from the work of the Fury. In addition, the Fury can instil the thought of revenge upon a human,³ while the ghost can only goad a human to do so.

The ghost is not the devil, to say the least, and it resembles the devil only to some vague extent, wherefore only some certain, rough parallels may be drawn. Both the ghost and the devil are flitting, a notion of interest to which shall be returned while discussing Mephistophiles. Both the devil and the ghost appear in dreams. But unlike the devil, the ghost and the Fury, who appear in dreams, are sometimes dismissed as being real and rather imaginary, products of hallucinations, over-excitement or troubled consciences. Put differently, they could be mere mental projections and they could both be understood as personified pangs of guilty conscience. The real ones can show themselves to the sleeping and to those who are awake. Unlike the devil, who is only able to conjecture,⁴ the ghost can actually foretell future events. The devil is a former angel, the ghost a veritable once-living person, a soul of man. Yet, unlike that of the devil, the ghost's spirit is not devilish as its ambition is not to subvert the entire human race,⁵ since it is not an 'emie to mankind' and only adversative against particular humans, namely against those who did it wrong during its lifetime. It is not a butcher of innocents and neither does it frighten the simple folk; rather, man's injustice provokes the ghost's wrath and vengeful reaction. In this regard, it will also be noted that, "when a manifest crime remains unpunished,

¹ Seneca's Tantalus and Thyestes, Gorlois.

² The devil, as we shall shortly have occasion to see, 'forces man into desperation' for other reasons.

³ Whitmore, 212.

⁴ Cf. Lavater II, chap. viii, 136, where he explains that the devil cannot predict things to come.

⁵ Cf. Lavater, II, chap. viii, 137: Satan "layeth hys baits day and night to intrappe men."

God is the more offended.”¹ That given, its motivations for attack would certainly gain him more sympathy than the devil, who destroys mankind because of jealousy and envy.

Throughout the texts, it can be observed that characters are urged to refrain from passion. The ghost’s passion could be an indicative devilish element, but then again, it should be questioned whether being dispassionate is always a solely valid criterion for being good, especially since particular ghosts that passionately seek revenge cannot be classified as evil. Like the devil (and indeed like the grinning skeletons of the Dance of Death that are leading away everyone from Pope to peasant), the ghost rejoices in the death of humans. This is not a trait borrowed from the devil, however.² In Seneca’s *Agamemnon*, the ghost of Dardanus, the progenitor of the Trojan royal line, rejoices at the death of Agamemnon.³ Similarly, the ghost of Moleon, with “thirsty eyes glugged with revenge,” rejoices while listening to how his hated daughter Roxana is tortured by Atossa:

This bloody liquor’s pleasaunter to me
Than Bachus’ well, or Jupiters sweet wine
IV, i, line 1148.

The ghost of Gorlois too, rejoices over his revenge at the very end of the play, noticing with satisfaction that “not one hath ‘scaped revenge,”⁴ and so do the ghosts in *Lochrine* after witnessing the deaths of their respective enemies. Albanact’s ghost exclaims: “Humber is dead! joy heavens! leap earth! dance trees!”⁵ and Corineius’s ghost utters while seeing Lochrine’s downfall: “Now, Corineius, stay and see revenge, / And feed thy soul with Lochrine’s overthrow.”⁶ Nevertheless, Albanact is not a damned ghost, bound in Tartarus. His ghost can blithely and freely move to the Elysian Fields. Thomas Kyd’s ghost of Don Andrea also delights at the carnage he has witnessed and gloats over the notion that Lorenzo, Balthazar, Serberine, and Pendringano shall be horribly tormented in hell.⁷ This is sheer bloodthirstiness, and as S. Monette has remarked, “there is no Christian rhetoric of forgiveness here,” chap. 2. Seneca assesses taking “pleasure in the punishment of anyone” as an “inhuman ferocity.” A “wise man” would abhor such despicable behaviour. But then again, the ghost’s victims are often those for

¹ *Malleus Maleficarum*, II. qn. I, chap. 9. This is, of course, by no means to say that it pleases God to witness revenge.

² The ghost’s reason to rejoice is another too. Again, it is only happy to see doomed those who did it wrong during its lifetime.

³ This is not clearly recognizable in John Studley’s translation, as he merely writes, “The Troyan Prynce his royall robes tryumphant putteth on,” 129.

⁴ *Misfortunes of Arthur*, 337.

⁵ *Lochrine*, IV, ii.

⁶ *Ibid*, V, iv.

⁷ *The Spanish Tragedy*, IV, v, lines 30-44.

which Seneca finds murder to be a legitimate means of punishment. It must be said that Andrea is not ‘glutted with harmless blood,’ to borrow Hieronimo’s phrase. Neither does it suffer torments in hell. Rather, it is Andrea who measures fitting punishments for the wrongdoers. This is yet another similarity with the Furies, who often function as preparers of punishment for those who deserved the worst penalties.

Elizabethan translators have introduced Christian elements into Seneca’s plays. The term ‘fiend’ is often yoked with both the devil and the Fury. Both the devil and the Fury are ‘haling’ sinners ‘headlong to the lowest hell’¹ and are utilised as guides to the destruction in hell. Since Furies were equated with devils on a number of occasions, as noticed above, it was of no matter for Marlowe whether he employs the name ‘Fury’ or ‘devil’ when he writes that

The devils there, in chains of quenchless flame,
Shall lead his soul through Orcus’ burning gulf
From pain to pain whose change shall never end.
*Tamb. II, II.iii.24-26.*²

What is more, grave punishment awaits the sinners in the underworld, and even for that purpose, the Furies are similar to the devils as they both assume the role of torturers in hell.³ Therefore, forasmuch as the Fury is at times referred to as a fiend, the ghost can be misinterpreted as an instrument of the devil, but this is not the way the dramatists wished to handle the matter. In addition, the initial cause of the disasters is to be sought within the man himself. But as in other cases, the question is whether man is really able to govern himself by reason when the Fury is at work. Moreover, one of the questions in the following chapters is whether man is able to govern himself when the following devil is at work.

¹ *Tamb. II, IV, iii, 42.*

² The Furies are also fairly devilish in his *Dr. Faustus*. They are unconventionally furnished with fiery forks, weapons normally ascribed to the devils. With these, they are ‘tossing damned souls’, B, V, ii, lines 2020-2021.

³ The Furies are whipping the accursed ones (reference is made to ‘iron whips’, *Battle of Alcazar*, IV, i, line 1232 and ‘whips of steel’, *Spanish Tragedy*, I, I, line 65, and burning them with their torches. Concerning the living, they attack the face with torches and the heart with snakes. The black devils that have found their place in the underworld torment with ‘fireforks,’ razors and fleshhooks, *Lochrine*, IV, iv. Interestingly enough, the Furies are mentioned in *The Conversion of Saint Paul* as persecutors of devils in hell, line 474. This may also be the reason why Benvolio in *Dr. Faustus* says, ‘The Diuel’s dead, the Furies now may laugh,’ B, IV, iii, line 1421, trusting he is going to be tormented in hell by the Furies.

IV Mephistopheles

1. Exit the Ghost, Enter the Devil

As pointed out, the devil rarely appears in the interludes. In its essential spirit, the Tudor Drama was secular¹ and gradual secularization which would see the peak in Elizabethan period brought with it the disappearance of God and the devil as subject matter in the twenty extant interludes from 1495 until 1535.² In its stead, a drama of a very different type emerged. It was a drama of experiment, where the supernatural played no direct part. Apart from the devil of the moralities and interludes discussed above, merely the farcical play, *The Four PP* (c. 1520-22), attributed to John Heywood, is of interest for the present study. The play deals with a debate between a Palmer (pilgrim), a Pardoner³, a 'Potheary' and a Pedlar. There is a lying contest where the best liar shall "most prevail." As the Peddler observes, they can all "lie as well as can the falsest devil in Hell." In parodying the Harrowing of Hell, the pardoner gives a vivid account on how he travelled to purgatory, and then to hell in order to rescue the soul of his female friend Margery Corson, to whose deathbed he had most unfortunately come too late. In describing the devil, he makes a clownish remark when he says: "This devil and I were of old acquaintance, /For oft in the play of Corpus Christi/He hath played the devil at Coventry."⁴ As he says:

This devil and I walked arm in arm
So far, till he had brought me thither,
Where all the devils of hell together
Stood in array in such apparel
As for that day there meetly fell.
Their horns well-gilt, their claws full clean,
Their tails well-kempt, and, as I ween,
With sothery butter their bodies anointed;
I never saw devils so well appointed.
The master-devil sat in his jacket,
And all the souls were playing at racket.
None other rackets they had in hand,
Save every soul a good firebrand,
Wherewith they played so prettily
That Lucifer laughed merrily,
And all the residue of the fiends

¹ See Frederick S. Boas, *An Introduction to Tudor Drama* (Oxford UP, 1966 [1933]), 2.

² Mark C Pilkinton, *The Antagonists of English Drama, 1370-1576* (Bristol, 1974), 48.

³ Pardoners were granted a licence from the Church to sell "indulgences."

⁴ *The Four PP*, line 832. The numbering is confirmed by those used in *Five Pre-Shakespearean Comedies [Early Tudor Period]*, ed. Frederick S. Boas (London, 1996).

In hell, the Pardoner had an interview with Lucifer. Having found the woman in hell's kitchen, he "interviews Lucifer and asks if he may take away Margery Corson":

Now, by our honour, said Lucifer,
No devil in hell shall withhold her;
And if thou wouldest have twenty mo,
Wert not for justice, they should go.
For all we devils within this den
Have more to-do with two women
Than with all the charge we have beside;
Wherefore, if thou our friend will be tried,
Apply thy pardons to women so
That unto us there come no mo.

Lucifer is most pleased to let her go. "Now, by our honour," says Lucifer, "No devil in Hell shall withhold her!"¹ Lucifer agrees, but only on the condition that the Pardoner shall, as A. P. Rossiter puts it, "apply his pardoning activities to ensure that no more women come here; for two women are more trouble than all hell together."² Although the pardoner brings hell and Lucifer into his story, the appearance of the supernatural is minimised, confined within a brief monologue. The plot of the play is only conversation, and Lucifer does not make his appearance on stage.

As M. C. Pilkinton points out, "between the break with Rome (1547), the development of apparently secular drama stops, and the drama becomes an instrument of Protestant polemic."³ The polarisation between Protestants and Catholics enforced new features and new definitions of the devil. Protestants and Catholics alike used Satan as an instrument for their war propaganda. The Pope was denounced as the Antichrist by Protestant pastors, whereas there were reports on behalf of the Catholics that demons were praising Protestant beliefs during exorcism.⁴ Slander of that kind and dispraise during the religious war occurred on a daily basis.

The morality play was deliberately used as religious propaganda. As G. Wickham points out:

As a vehicle for the discussion of so highly charged a polemical issue as the Reformation, the Morality Play in both its religious and secular forms was ideal: not only did it possess a didactic focal centre and

¹ *The Four PP*, 934.

² Rossiter, *English Drama*, 120. Such a brief satirical episode is already present in the deceitful Chester ale-wife, the "Mulier," who is not only invited to abide with Satan where she is going to suffer endless bale (Ch, XVII, lines 325-336) but also remains in Hell to marry Secundus Demon (Ch, XVII, 329). Cf. Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*, where he talks about men who delight in telling "monstrous lies and strange wonders": "They never get enough of such stories, so long as prodigies are recounted, involving banshees, goblins, devils, or the like. The farther these are from the truth, the more they tickle the ears of our friends with pleasing sensations. These wonders serve very well to lighten tedious hours, but they also provide a way to make money, particularly for priests and pardoners," 55.

³ Pilkinton, 49. The Reformation decisively contributed to the demise of Mystery and Miracle plays.

⁴ Russell, *Biographie des Teufels*, 165.

invite controversy in its form, but its very popularity could be reckoned to secure a wide hearing for religious and political viewpoints debated within it.¹

If one is to speak of political devils in this case, then the playwrights operated by pursuing their own religious and political objectives that were common during this time. For instance, a typical pro-Catholic interlude is the anonymous *Respublica*. On the other hand, a dramatist hostile toward the Papists was John Bale, who, with the support of Thomas Cromwell, the Lord Chancellor, transformed the moral interlude into a weapon of religious propaganda. He equated the Pope with the Antichrist and stigmatised the Roman Catholic clergy as Satan's agents.² Accordingly, Satan is associated with the Pope in Bale's *The Temptation of Our Lord* (1538), where he appears as a religious hermit.³

The identification with the devil is repeated in John Bale's *King Johan*. The representatives of Catholicism are corrupted with pestilent doctrine.⁴ Catholics are spiritually blinded and only accept the Pope as the highest authority with a complete neglect of the Gospels and utter disobedience of the word of God. Even though appointed by God, thus being "a mynyster immediate undre God,"⁵ King Johan is forsaken by his lawyers and clergy, and he encounters "Commynnalte" poor and blind, as well as widow England in a most desperate condition. The Pope (Pope Innocent III) is "the Devyls vicar,"⁶ the "beaste and slauterman of the devyll,"⁷ a genuine Antichrist who is substituted for God and is venerated by the vices. The Vice Sedition is a "detestable thiefe" and "Antichristes welp" who "plays the knave" in this play and is linked to the Pope and Catholicism.⁸

In a later interlude, *The Conflict of Conscience*, Satan says that the Pope is his son, whom he calls "my darling dear,/My eldest Boy, in whom I do delight."⁹ Similarly, Satan is established as a Catholic in *Lusty Juventus*.¹⁰ He laments the collapse of false notion, complains that young people no longer adhere to his laws and the traditions of men but insist on living according to the

¹ See Glynne Wickham, *Shakespeare's Dramatic Heritage: Collected Studies in Medieval, Tudor and Shakespearean Drama* (New York, 1969), 35.

² *English Moral Interludes*, ed. Glynne Wickham, 128. Bale translated Kirchmayer's *Pammachius* into English as well, which contained an attack on the Pope as the Antichrist. See Wynne, 79.

³ Satan requires no comment in this play since he has already been thoroughly analysed by H. Vatter. See Vatter, 108-16.

⁴ *King Johan*, line 1459.

⁵ *Ibid*, line 2356.

⁶ *Ibid*, line 1256.

⁷ *Ibid*, line 2413.

⁸ Similarly the Vice Iniquity is also a descendant of the Pope (*King Darius*).

⁹ *The Conflict of Conscience*, lines 84-85. These lines uttered by Satan are a parody of Matthew 3:17: "And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." See Pineas *Tudor and Early Stuart Anti-Catholic Drama* 31.

¹⁰ In the anonymous pro-Reformation interlude *New Custom* (c. 1570), Perverse Doctrine and Ignorance accuse New Custom of coming "newly from the devil of hell," 164.

truth of the Scriptures. Catholicism is of the devil; both Satan and the Vice Hypocrisy embody the alleged corruptness of the Catholic Church.

Generally speaking, the Reformation did not change the concept of Satan, yet it did introduce the philosophy of humanity's fight against the devil. Martin Luther had a keen awareness of the devil's reality and activity, and the Lutheran's devil was ghostlier; was even more austere, dangerous, powerful and effective. The devil is no longer the Catholic ineffective comic devil whom you may easily overpower.¹ According to Lutheran demonology, the inward struggle with evil deserved special accentuation.² Furthermore, Martin Luther understood that behind each of the devil's undertakings lie the active and restrictive power of the will of God. That is to say, the devil cannot do anything without the will of God.³ That being said, the "reuptake" of the devil as a dramatic figure in the second half of the sixteenth century is explained by Martin Luther's strong belief in devils, and Luther's impact on English playwrights such as John Bale, but also the intensified persecution of witches on the continent and the concept of the "Historia von D. Johann Fausten," which, at least as PF's translation, served as source for Christopher Marlowe and his conception of Mephostophiles.

1.1. The Spirit Mephostophiles in the Prose Works

The status of Mephostophiles has been an open question for scholars.⁴ Reflections by some of today's most notable literary critics on this literary character brought several suggestions. To name but a few, J. Goebel has seen Hermes Trismegistos in Mephostophiles since the former had been, among other things, regarded by Christian writers as a demon that appears under the name of Ophiel and Mephist-ophiel (Megistophiel). Mephostophiles is also very often associated with *spiritus familiaris*. C. Kiesewetter has argued that Mephostophiles is one of the seven Maskim. He also gets into detail to what extent Mephostophiles is the externalization of evil within Faust's self – the objectification of the transcendental subject of Faustus. The basis for W. Empson's argument is that Mephostophiles is a Middle Spirit, a pacifist angel.⁵ In her review of Empson's *Faustus and the Censor*, R. Gill evaluates this hypothesis with the following words quoted from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard."⁶ As

¹ See Mahal, *Mephistos Metamorphosen*, 138.

² Roskoff, 382.

³ Obendiek, 43-5.

⁴ I thank Professor Frank Baron for some comments on this issue.

⁵ See especially chapter 4. of Empson's *Faustus and the Censor*, 98-120.

⁶ "Faustus and the Censor: The English Faust-Book and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus by William Empson, John Henry Jones", author of review: Roma Gill, *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, vol. 40, no. 160 (Nov., 1989), 551-552.

shown, a considerable number of analogies have already been determined, yet I do not feel confident of the rightness of these interpretations. To me, neither of these suggestions provides conclusive proof.

Many attempts have also been made to solve the etymological origin of the character under scrutiny.¹ I prefer the explanation that the name “Mephostophiles” is derived from Greek, composed of *me*, a negative prefix (=not), + *phos* (=light)+ *philos* (=loving),² “not-the-light-loving.”

It has also been pointed out that the name “MephiStophiles” “appears for the first time in the 1527 *Praxis Magia Faustiana*, printed in Passau, alongside the pseudo-Hebrew text,”³ but this is misleading.⁴ The name occurs for the first time in the GFB as “Mephostophiles” and F. Baron has convincingly postulated that the inventor of the name was in all probability Spies himself.⁵

For the present study of Christopher Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*, Mephostophiles is of course going to be in the foreground.⁶ But I found it convenient to also consider beforehand the character as he appears in the two Faust-books, the anonymous 1587 German *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* and its English translation by the unknown P. F. Gent, so that by this means of textual analysis we may understand Mephostophiles as Christopher Marlowe conceived him,

¹ Manifold significations of the name were offered. On the efforts made to solve the etymology of the name “Mephostophiles,” one may refer to Wilhelm Heinrich Roscher, *Ephialtes*, 93-107. Julius Goebel, “The Etymology of Mephistopheles,” 153. On etymology, see further Günther Mahal, “Mephisto-Splitter”, – in: „Faust - Untersuchungen zu einem zeitlosen Thema“, *ars una* (Neuried 1998), 391-408. On attempts at etymology see also references in *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, hrsg. von Hanns Bächtold-Stäubli unter Mitw. von Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer. Mit einem Vorw. von Christoph Daxelmüller, Bd. 6 (Berlin [u.a.], 1987 [1935]), 175. An interesting interpretation is the linkage to the Hebrew ‘mephitz’(destroyer) and “tophel” (liar). See John Bakeless, *The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe*, Watport (Connecticut, 1970), 286. Another is blindness to God’s light, Me-photo carrying the meaning of “lie”; thus “Me-phostophiles” meaning “the friend of lies.” Another prominent explanation was ‘Mefastophiles’ – no friend to Faust. See Scheible’s *Kloster*, xi.349-350, etc. Ulrich W. Sahn’s homepage offers a very good survey by Yehuda T. Radday on scholars dealing with the origin of the name. Thereby Radday himself offers an interesting explanation where the name is derived from. See his article “Mephistopheles – A Biblical Hebrew Name?” at: <http://usahm.info/Portraits/Mefisto/Radday-1.htm>.

² I am grateful for the help and advice offered by Prof. Frank Baron here. He directed my attention to this explanation. Supporters of this interpretation are Kiesewetter, 163 (“der das Licht nicht Liebende”); Fussel and Kreutzer, 188; Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 61 (‘he who is not a lover of light’); Baron, *Faustus on Trial*, 125; Ernst Zitelmann, *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift*, XIV, 1926, 65. (Me+to+phos+philes – ‘The light is not a friend’), Eliza Marian Butler, *The Myth and the Magus* (Cambridge UP, 1993 [1948]), 132 (‘no friend to light’; she has also suggested other names), Empson, *Faustus and the Censor*, 203 (Me+to+phos+philes (= light is not a friend [of him]), Jones (ed.) *The English Faust Book*, 20 (no friend to light). This is rejected by Goebel, 149; Ward, 118, Radday. It was H. Düntzer who came up with this idea (mè-photô-phîles = der das Licht nicht Liebende). See Heinrich Düntzer, *Goethes Faust: Erster und Zweyter Theil*, zum erstenmal vollständig erläutert. Zwei Theile (Leipzig, 1850) 23. Lavater also says that ‘euery one that doth euill, hateth the light’, III, chap. i,177.

³ See Johann Georg Faust, *Praxis Magia Faustiana*, (Passau, reprint Scheible 1849, ARW “Moonchild-Edition” 4, Munich 1976, 1977), facsimile made available at <http://www.multikulti.ru/files/file00000505.pdf>. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Georg_Faust [accessed Jan. 18, 2009].

⁴ The date and publication of this and other magic-books was, as Goebel has pointed out, “purposely given incorrectly by the publishers, who desired to escape detection, and at the same time wished to have their productions appear old and rare,” 150.

⁵ Baron, *Faustus on Trial*, 125. The name Mephostophiles does not occur anywhere before the Faust legend.

⁶ All citations are from W.W. Greg, *Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus, 1604-1616: Parallel Texts* (Oxford, 1950).

together with all the variations and similarities he shares with his predecessors – the quasi Proto-Mephostophiles, to borrow G. Mahal’s phrase.

The first German edition of the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, often referred to as *Faustbuch*, was published by Johann Spies at Frankfurt in 1587,¹ some time after he had received the manuscript from “a good friend at Speyer.” The “History of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus” is a translation, or rather adaptation, as Palmer & More have described it,² of the anonymous German ‘warning literature,’ Faust Book of 1587, translated by a certain P. F. (Gent).³ As J. Bakeless pointed out, “[...] the German *Faustbuch* [...] became the source of the English Faust Book, which in turn became the source of Marlowe’s play.”⁴ The date in which Christopher Marlowe wrote his *Dr. Faustus* must be conjectured. Some critics say that Marlowe wrote *Dr. Faustus* in 1588 or 1589. Robert Greene’s play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* was assumedly performed as early as 1589, and it has often been suggested that this play was influenced by Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*. Some critics have argued that Marlowe’s play must have been written in 1592 or later, since the EFB, which did not appear in print before 1592,⁵ served as the direct source for Marlowe. Some critics have suggested that Marlowe wrote it shortly before his death in 1593.⁶ It has also been argued that Marlowe had a collaborator. The earliest edition was published in 1604,⁷ known as the A text. The B text was published in 1616, and the text was edited and censored. The two texts are different: among other things, the A text is considerably shorter and it omits several supernatural scenes.⁸ In addition, today most critics agree that the A text appears to be closer to the original.

A serious tone was given to the play *Dr. Faustus*. The nature of the play created space for spectacular stage-effects.⁹ It is narrated in an account of a performance of the play at the Fortune Theatre in Golding Lane, London, published in 1620, that, somewhat reminiscent of the mystery devils concerning their costumes, noise and disorder, “There indeede a man may behold shagge-hayr’d Deuills runne roaring ouer the Stage with Squibs in their mouths, while Drummers make Thunder in the Tying-house, and the twelue-penny Hirelings make artificiall Lightning in their

¹ The pagination of the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* refers to the Hans Henning’s edition, *Historia von D. Johann Fausten: Neudruck des Faust Buches von 1587*, Halle 1963. Referred to hereafter as GFB.

² P. M Palmer and R. P. More, *The Sources of the Faust Tradition*, New York, 1966 [1936], 132.

³ The line numbers are to John Henry Jones’ edition of *The English Faust Book*. This work will later be referred to as EFB. Unless otherwise indicated, quotations from the English Faustus Book which are in accordance with the German Faust Book are going to be used.

⁴ John Bakeless, *The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe*, Vol.1., Connecticut, 1970, 275f. On the more recent discussion, see for example Michael Keefer’s 1604 edition, lv-lx.

⁵ See Bakeless, 275.

⁶ It is testified in the diary of the theatre-manager Philip Hanslowe that the play was performed in 1594. Gill, xvii. The play was a great success.

⁷ See Roma Gill’s edition, xvi.

⁸ Also Jump, 18.

⁹ Jump, 11.

Heauens.”¹ The most prominent story surrounding the phenomenal realism of the devils is given by E. K. Chambers, where the spectators “were overcome by the horrifying conviction that ‘there was one divell too many amongst them’.”² Yet the inclusion of devils in the play had other objectives apart from those of desire for sensationalism. The devils present the wrong key to the fulfilment of human aspirations. Rather than opposing the static mankind figure of the moralities, they face the individualism of the doctor. Although Marlowe’s character design of Dr. Faustus is a “rude sketch,”³ the play marked a big step towards individualisation of a central character and the humanisation of evil. Marlowe’s Faustus is different from the source, as the play depicts Dr. Faustus as a man of science and a humanist, a philosopher, Renaissance magician, who desires to break free from the restrictive situation.

The reader should be aware that the spelling “Mephostophiles” is not only reserved for the figure that occurs in the GFB and EFB. Christopher Marlowe named his character “Mephastophilis.”⁴ I have decided to standardize the form “Mephostophiles” for Marlowe’s figure, with awareness that the A and the B text name him differently.⁵

1.2. Nature and Self-Statement

During the conjuration ceremony, Mephostophiles⁶ appears to Faustus in the GFB and the EFB as a (mighty in the EFB) dragon,⁷ a fiery shooting star that changes gradually into a ball of fire and then into a fiery man⁸ and finally into a grey friar. In order to hold him down or even to tame him, it is necessary to articulate a slogan. Conjuration is again necessary elsewhere to keep Mephostophiles obedient.⁹

¹ John Melton, *Astrologaster* (1620) 31. in Jump 12.

² Chambers *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (1923) iii 424, in Jump 12.

³ William Hazlitt *Lectures on the Age of Elizabeth* (1820), in Jump, 27.

⁴ Bevington and Rasmussen obviously did not see any special meaning behind the changed spelling. *Dr. Faustus*, Bevington Rasmussen (ed.) xi.

⁵ Marlowe changes his name from Mephostophiles to Mephostophilis (B text) and Mephastophilis (A text), elsewhere he is also called Mephastophilus and Mephosto.

⁶ In GFB, the spirit’s identity as Mephostophiles is revealed only in Chapter 4. In the play Faustus calls for Mephostophiles by name (*Orientis princeps, Belzebub inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos ut appareat et surgat Mephostophilis!*), and it seems plausible enough to me that he could only have learned the name from the magicians, as W. Emspon has remarked, 57.

⁷ The devil appears in the shape of a dragon in the Apocalypse. Under this Biblical influence the early father literature depicted the devil as such, too.

⁸ In folklore some purgatorial ghosts were seen as being under fire. There are a rather fiery spirit and a spirit of a Franciscan friar in Philip Melanchton’s *An Examen of those who are to be appointed to the Ministry of the Gospel*. Father Taillepied also speaks of a ghost ‘enveloped in flames’, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, Ch. XIII, p. 78. and elsewhere: “It is true that it has been recorded that a ghost will appear in a flame of fire, very ghastly [...], Ch. XV., p. 100.

⁹ Chap. 3, 128.

Throughout the GFB and the EFB, Mephostophiles is either commanded or conjured anew into Faustus' chamber. He appears at set times such as twelve o'clock, early in the morning, at 4 o'clock in the evening,¹ and around vespers. Marlowe's Faustus expects him to appear at midnight.² In the GFB and the EFB, after his appearance the spirit resides in Faustus' house, in the guise of a friar with a little bell in his hand,³ invisible to any other but Faustus.⁴ He is conjured in Faustus' study room, which remained locked at all hours.⁵

In the prose works, Mephostophiles discloses his identity to Faustus as that of a spirit, and a flying spirit that is governing (all) under heaven.⁶ This passage P. F. replaces with "I am a flying spirit, yea, so swift as thought can think, to do whatsoever."⁷ In Chapter 19 of the GFB Mephostophiles says he is an ancient spirit "experienced in the celestial motion."⁸ He is a spirit that hovers in the air beneath Heaven where he can see and mark what God has predestined, and unlike mortals, he and the other spirits are able to plumb the mysteries of God.⁹

It is fairly obvious that Mephostophiles is a spirit. Still, to what extent is a spirit distinguishable from a devil? At one point, Mephostophiles says that "In diesem tunden Lufft

¹ In Faustus Höllenzwang Mephistophiel is one of the seven grand dukes of hell who stands under planet Jupiter. His regent is Zadkiel. He makes his appearance on Wednesday morning at one, six and ten o'clock and at ten and twelve o'clock in the evening. He also appears on Monday morning at three, six and ten o'clock and at ten and twelve o'clock in the evening. His form is first that of a fiery bear - the other and fairer appearance is that of a little man with a black cape and a bald head. See Kiesewetter, 158. In Marlowe, there are spirits of elements, including fire, air and water - Valdes and Cornelius refer to Paracelsian elemental daemons. See Gill, xxx. The existence of such devils is ridiculed in the works of R. Scot and King James I.

² According to Father Taillepied, ghosts appear most frequently around midnight. Ch. XV, 97.

³ Compare *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 70. According to Kiesewetter, this must not necessarily be linked to Protestant jibe at Catholics, since there were ghostly friars reported on both sides, 191. On the significance of the bell and its linkage to Kobold see Kiesewetter 191. On the other hand, S. W. Cutting believed that "Luther's anecdote (*Tischreden*, Erl.ed. 60, 28) of the Devil who - "a monk would be" - and who really became one under the condition imposed by the brethren that he adopt their garb and ring a little bell (schelle, glöcklin) whenever he approached, is, along with the Protestant Anonymous' identification of the Catholic Monk with the Devil himself, the occasion of the Gray Monk's appearance in the chap-book. This view also explains Faust's desire to marry, and the Monk-Devil's rabid objection to it, far more acceptably than the current consideration that marriage is ordained of God hence hateful to the Devil." See Starr Willard Cutting, "Historia D. Johannis Fausti des Zauberers nach der Wolfenbutteler handschrift nebst dem nachweis eines teils ihrer quellen by Gustav Milchsack", *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Feb., 1898), 60. By inserting the names of St. Francis and St. Anthony, PF. is literally forcing such presumption upon us.

⁴ Is the spirit visible to Wagner as well? We know, for instance, that Mephostophiles also shows himself unto the Horse-courser in the A text.

⁵ Also in Höllenzwang, Chap. 9. Omitted in EFB.

⁶ GFB, chap. 11. Varro speaks of aerial spirits that live "between the circle of the moon and the top of the clouds" in his (now lost) *theologia naturalis*. See Thornton, 23. St. Jerome said that the evil spirits are not in heaven, but in the air above us, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, chap. 16, 110. Compare Ephesians 2:2: "[...] the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient." Father Tallipied makes another remark worth of note in this case. He pointed out that in front of necromancers demons feign to be spirits, 129.

⁷ EFB, chap. 10, 412.

⁸ Jones' translation, 787 n 204.

⁹ <http://lettersfromthedustbowl.com/Fbk2.html>. This is quite a derogatory remark about human nature. P.F. translates this passage as "we spirits that fly and fleet in all elements," EFB, chap. 18, 786.

wohnen wir Geister und Teuffel, unnd sind in diesen tundeln Lufft verstoffen.”¹ It seems as though he emphasises a difference when he makes a separation between a spirit and a devil.

This has led to several interpretations, the most prominent being that Mephostophiles is not a devil but rather a spirit, a Kobold, a *spiritus familiaris* or some other creature. W. H. Roscher, for instance, has argued that Mephistopheles had originally been a *spiritus familiaris*, a Germanic *Hausgeist* or *Kobold*.² The conclusion is not unfounded, given that Mephostophiles claims to be a *spiritus familiaris* in Georg Rudolff Widmann’s *Warhafftige Historie*, printed in Hamburg in 1599.³ In addition, there is one passage of interest in Marlowe’s A-version, adopted from EFB, chap. 29, where the term is introduced by Carolus the Fifth (Charles V, King of Spain), who has heard the rumour that Faustus is accompanied by a “familiar spirit.”⁴

As mentioned above, Mephostophiles has also been considered a Kobold. Leafing through the abstract on Kobold in *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, one may indeed spot several characteristics that Mephostophiles shares with a Germanic Kobold. For example, a Kobold can be invoked by naming the Three Holy Names. Furthermore, it is possible by means of incantation to transform a Kobold into a servile spirit.⁵ One of their properties is to be a poltergeist. Kobolds can be on friendly terms with humans, yet they are never utterly harmless.⁶ Kobolds, which may appear as dragons, go under diverse names, one of them being “Mönch,” thus “friar”: “Der K. sieht aus wie ein Mönch [...] Er hat aber auch eine scheußliche Gestalt.”⁷ They are also Wald- and Feldgeister descended. A legend has it that Kobolds fell together with Lucifer and his angels. Not all of them reached hell; some fell on earth as well.⁸ A Kobold also circumvents marriage, can turn into everything and is peevish and untrustworthy. He is wiser

¹ GFB, chap. 21.

² Wilhelm Heinrich Roscher, *Ephialtes: Eine pathologisch-mythologische Abhandlung über die Alpträume und Alpdämonen des klassischen Altertums* (Leipzig: G. Teubner, 1900). Concerning this matter, see also Kiesewetter, 191.

³ See Georg Rudolf Widmann, *Fausts Leben* [in der Bearbeitung von Ch. Nicolaus Pfitzer], hrsg. von Adelbert von Keller (Hildesheim & New York, 1976 [Tübingen, 1880]). Hereafter ‘Widmann’. See also Jones’ introduction in *Faustus and the Censor*, 33.

⁴ A, I, x, 1044. On another occasion (the Wagner/Clown scene (A, iv) Wagner says to the Clown: “Ile turne al the lice about thee/ into familiars, and they shal teare thee in peeces” (A, 385). Initially, I thought that the passages introducing the familiar were Thomas Nashe’s insertions, who is supposed to have worked as a collaborator on *Dr. Faustus* (especially contributing the comic scenes), given that he dealt with familiars in *The Terrors of the Night*, 149, until I noticed that the term occurs in the EFB. On the *spiritus familiaris* see Wier’s *De Praestigiis Demonum* I, 22; on the familiar spirit named Orthon see Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. VII, chap. xl; Taillepied *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 36. Socrates too, had his own familiar spirit or a demon, according to Lactantius, Xenophon and other authors. On the matter, see also Lavater, 90. On the familiars, see also Reginald Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, III, v-vii; xxi, 374.

⁵ *Aberglaube V*, 31.

⁶ On such creatures see also Lavater, 75.

⁷ *Aberglaube V*, 37.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

than humans.¹ It seems likely that certain qualities from the Kobold tradition transferred to the figure of Mephostophiles. For this reason, I would neither rule out the possibility of Mephostophiles' being a *spiritus familiaris* in his original form² or at least in some anecdotes, nor the possibility of his sharing some characteristics of a ghost.

There is one similarity Mephostophiles shares with the Catholic purgatorial spirit. Namely, Mephostophiles understands that he, unlike Lucifer and his closest peers, will suffer damnation only until the Judgement Day.³ He maintains that he can hope for salvation, "For if the damned could share our hopes of salvation (we spirits expect this constantly) they would rejoice and sigh longingly for the time to come."⁴ Such assertions might have been remnants of or a survival of the Catholic belief in ghosts, the notion being, as already shown, that these apparitions are "souls of those trapped in Purgatory, unable to rest until they had expiated their sins."⁵ This would not be unusual, bearing in mind that the compiler drew upon non-Lutheran sources as well. One could expand on this notion. As I will show, the ghost or spirit invocations, rituals, taming of ghosts and such like described in Stäubli's *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* (1927-1942) are strikingly similar to the rites described in the anonymous *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*:

Die beste Zeit für ein G.-b. ist die Nacht. Die Zauberhandlung beginnt mit dem Ziehen des Zauberkreises, in dessen Mitte der Zauberer tritt, um vor dem Geist gesichert zu sein. Beim Ziehen des Zauberkreises hat man auf Tag (besonders muß man sich vor dem Dreizehnten hüten), Stunde und Jahreszeit zu achten. Es sind drei Kreise von neun Fuß Durchmesser in einem Abstand von einer Handbreite anzulegen. In den mittleren Kreis wird der Name des Engels geschrieben, welcher der Stunde der Beschwörung vorsteht, ferner das Siegel dieses Engels, der Name des Engels des betreffenden Tages, das Zeichen, das um diese Zeit herrscht usw. Außerhalb des Kreises sollen vier Pentagramme nach den vier Himmelsrichtungen angebracht werden. In den äußeren Kreis kommen die Namen der an dem Tag herrschenden Luftgeister, in dem inneren Kreis aber soll Alpha und Omega stehen und zwar nach Osten und Westen, und schließlich wird davon ein Kreuz in die Mitte des

¹ Father Taillepied refers to Georgius Agricola's account of *Kobolds* in his *De Re Metallica*, where they are, quite the contrary, generally described as cheerful and jolly, *A Treatise on Ghosts*, Ch. XIII., 81.

² J. H. Jones argues that Lucifuge Rofocale became the basic prototype for the Mephostophiles of the Faust-book. See William Empson, *Faustus and the Censor: the English Faust-book and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus*, recovered and edited with an introduction and postscript by John Henry Jones (Oxford, 1987) 12. He also suspects Mephostophiles to be a brainchild of "pseudo-Wagner." See John Henry Jones' introductory note to his excellent edition of the *English Faust Book: A Critical Edition Based on the Text of 1592* (Cambridge UP, 1994), 7.

³ Chap, xviii.

⁴ Jones' translation, 668-70 n 202. The devil in Caesarius (Dial. V) wishes for a return to heaven, too.

⁵ Thomas, 701. The spirits in Purgatory would not suffer endlessly but to the very point their sins are cleansed. Nonetheless, Mephostophiles is not a damned soul. It is more likely Luther's reflection on Origen that comes to light here: "Origenes hat die Gewalt des Teufels nicht gnugsam verstanden, da er in den Gedanken gewesen ist, daß am Jüngsten Tage die Teufel von der ewigen Verdammnis sollten erlöset werden," *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 81. In his "Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Nyght" (translated by a certain R. H. in 1572), which is a very important groundwork of Protestant demonology, Lavater argues at length against souls coming out of Purgatory (103-6) and for spirits "parted from the body" as not being able to return again after death in order to abide on earth, II, chap. v, 118. He also says that there is nothing in the Scripture disclosing anything about Purgatory or *Limbus puerorum*, II, chap. xi, 148. The non-existence of Purgatory is especially discussed in his thirteenth chapter. For further reactions of Elizabethan England to this notion compare Battenhouse "The Ghost in 'Hamlet': A Catholic 'Linchpin'?" 70 n 187 and Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*.

Kreises gezogen [...] Der Magier [...] läßt die magische Glocke ertönen, fällt auf die Knie und beginnt zu beten. Dann spricht er die Beschwörungsformeln, die mit den kirchlichen Benediktionen und Exorzismen größte Ähnlichkeit haben können. Hebräische, griechische, lateinische Worte [...] spielen dabei eine große Rolle. Nach längerem Zögern erscheint schließlich der Geist, der zuerst durch allerlei Spuk den Zauberer zu erschrecken versucht und beantwortet gehorsam alle Fragen.¹

Mephostophiles, then, seems to have certain traits in common with spirits. Moreover, we have seen that the similarity of Mephostophiles to a spirit is based upon textual evidence that suggests Mephostophiles is a spirit. But, what is a spirit? In my view, the deciding factor is that Mephostophiles, although he does not always admit to being such, is an *evil* spirit. Concerning the spirits that vex men, and we presume he is talking about Mephostophiles as well, Faustus gives the following information:

[...] the spirits are by God forbidden the light, their dwelling is in darkness, and the clearer the sun shineth, the further the spirits have their abiding from it; but in the night when it is dark, they have their familiarity and abiding near unto us men [...] even so the rays of the sun piercing upwards into the firmament, the spirits abandon the place and so come near us on earth in the darkness, filling our heads with heavy dreams and fond fantasies, with shrieking and crying in many deformed shapes: as sometimes when men go forth without light, there falleth to them a fear, that their hair standeth on end; so many start in their sleep thinking there is a spirit by him, gropeth or feeleth for him, going round about the house in his sleep, and many suchlike fantasies: and all this is for because that in the night the spirits are more familiarly by us than we are desirous of their company, and so they carry us, blinding us and plaguing us more than we are able to perceive.” (EFB, Chap. 26, 1787-1803)²

Are we then to be persuaded that Mephostophiles is unequivocally a spirit and all other things save a devil? Rather, it would make it more credible to say that the term “spirit” is taken in a figurative sense, which is to say whether mention is made of a spirit or a devil, it comes to the same thing - the two are synonymous.³

G. Mahal, for instance, steadfastly maintains that Mephostophiles is a devil: “[...] und obgleich der Mephostophiles der “*Historia*” meist von einer treuherzig-harmlosen Ehrlichkeit ist, wird durch den Hinweis auf sein Lügewesen doch eine *qualitas diabolica* ins Spiel gebracht, die sich mit der Hausgeist-Hypothese nicht in Einklang bringen lässt.”⁴ I assent to G. Mahal’s view that Mephostophiles is a devil when it comes down to it, yet I incline to another argument based

¹ *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, hrsg. von Hanns Bächtold-Stäubli unter Mitw. von Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer. Mit einem Vorw. von Christoph Daxelmüller, Bd. 3 (Berlin und Leipzig 1987 [1931]), 524.

² Here the passage *Daher denn folgt, daß die Geister, dieweil sie den anblick der Sonnen, welcher in die höhe vffgestiegen, nit erdulden noch leiden können*, which reveals that the spirits cannot endure the light (see also Jones 1794 n 227), was left untranslated. The indication as such would be in line with researchers who argue in favour of the notation “Mephostophiles” as being the correct spelling form, composed of Me+to+phos+philes (= light is not a friend [of him]).

³ Gustav Milchsack pointed out to five designations the author of the German *Historia* gave to Mephostophiles: the Devil, spirit, Mephostophiles, servant, friar. See Gustav Milchsack, *Historia D. Johannis Fausti des Zauberers nach der Wolfenbütteler Handschrift nebst dem Nachweis eines Teils ihrer Quellen* (Wolfenbüttel, 1892), CCCIIL.

⁴ Mahal, *Mephistos Metamorphosen*, 226.

on the Protestant belief that Kobolds and poltergeists are devilish spectres.¹ In his revision of G. R. Widmann's Faust book, the Nuremberg physician J. N. Pfitzer explained that spirits and devils are the same:

Ja nicht allein die Heilige Schrifft, sondern auch allerley Geschlechter der Philosophen, die Academici, Peripatetici, Stoici, und Araber stimmen hierinn, daß Geister und Teufel seyen, überein: Also, daß wer es in Zweifel ziehen wolte (gleichwie die Epicurische Atheisten thun) der müste gantz ungereimt die Principia Matephysica verneinen, ja daß ein GOtt sey laugnen, welches doch vom Aristotele ist bewiesen worden, samt der Bewegung der Himmlischen Körper, die er den Geistern und Intelligentiis, oder verständigen Kräfte, zugibt. Denn diß Wort Geist, verstehet sich beydes von Engeln und von den Dæmones habe: jedoch verstehen billich die Christen das Wort der Dæmonum stets für unsaubere böse Geister.²

Interestingly enough, Kobold is often put on a level with the devil, and J. N. Pfitzer puts us on the right track with his argument that *spiritus familiares* and service spirits are not good spirits or angels but rather evil spirits and devils, the more so as they are not sent from God.³ The Bible contains such terms. Acts 5:16 or 8:7, to mention only a few, speak of "evil (unclean) spirits." Ever since Martin Luther, the view had been that spirits are either angels or devils. Martin Luther constantly refers to the devil as a 'spirit.'⁴ Also, with the aid of primary sources on demonology, B. Könneker has demonstrated that there is no difference between a devil and a spirit. She points out that in demonological writings at that time the term "Spirit" was commonly used to refer to Satan's army of demons that is operative everywhere in the world. Könneker further explains that contemporaneous demonological belief held that such a spirit is an entity of a dematerialised corporeal substance, not dependent on the limits of time and place, wherefore he is capable of deeds denied to humans, as a result of their natural finiteness.⁵ Accordingly, some

¹ *Aberglaube V*, 45.

² Widmann, 110.

³ Widmann, 131. Concerning this and additional convincing arguments, see p. 131-135. See also Milichius: "Clemens. LIB. 2. Recog. Dieses gedicht hat noch auff den heutigen tag platz bey den Schwartzkünstlern welche dise seelen SPIRITUS FAMILIARES nennen / Es wird aber am selbigen ort genugsam widerlegt vom Niceta / Haben sie nuh Seelen oder Geyster bey sich/ so seinds ohne zweivel böse Geyster," Chap, VI.

⁴ To name but a few examples: Ein gewaltiger verschlagener Geist ist er 7.; Er muß ein boshafter, giftiger, dürstiger Geist sein 12; Matthäus sagt klar (k. 4, v. 1): „Jesus sei vom Geist in die Wüste gefuhrt, daß er vom Teufel versucht würde“; Dem bösen Geist widerstehen, wenn er unser Gewissen ängstet der Sünden halben 14.; der neidische, giftige Geist 14.; darum trolle dich, du Schandgeist! Der Teufel ist ein Geist und Stifter der Vermessenheit 38; ein Lügengeist 60. Also Milichius about the devil: "Denn erstlich ist er ein Geyst/ und hat nichts Elementisch und irrdisch an im/ da durch sein natürliche und subtile geschwindigkeit verhindert werde", Chap. XXV, I. But here it must be said that St. Augustine and the early fathers also referred to the devils as spirits – the *aereae potestates*.

⁵ Könneker 180f. See also my own findings in the previous footnote. In addition, compare Milichius: "Zum ersten / hat er [der Teufel] die Substanz und das wesen/ welches zu solchen dingen geschickt ist / Denn er ist ein Geyst / und kan sich in einem Augenblick von einem ort zum anderen schwingen/ so ist er auch listig / behend / erfahren / unnd unsichtbar / unnd regiert in den lüften," Chap. VI, I. The devil is seen as a spirit on a number of occasions in *Malleus Maleficarum* too. Cf. also Lavater: "Sathan by nature is a spirit [...]", II.Ch.ix.p.141.; "[...] the Diuell (which is a Spirit, and therefore without any body) [...]", III, chap. x, 213.; "the diuell is a spirit, he hath not boanes & fleshe, but he only taketh on him a shape for a time", III, chap. xi, 215, etc.

characteristics of a Kobold,¹ spirit, *spiritus familiaris* and even midday ghost coalesced in the figure Mephostophiles, but the ultimate transformation was brought about through the influence of rigorous Lutheranism that denied extending such apparitions any existence other than that of devils. Since the *Historia* was written from a Lutheran point of view,² the easiest way to shake off any doubt in the devilish nature of Faustus' spirit was for Protestants to maintain categorically that Mephostophiles is a devil.

An easier way to refute Mephostophiles' utterances and still argue for his not being a devil is to simply maintain that he is lying. J. N. Pfitzer insists that Mephostophiles is a liar.³ He explains that Mephostophiles lies when he discloses to Faustus that in reality he is a flying spirit that lives with other spirits below heaven. When saying that he is forced to be subject to Lucifer and that the spirits would have remained friendly to humankind were it not for the baneful poison that soaked through and affected them after his fall,⁴ the spirit is lying and only feigning friendliness, and is exploiting Faustus for his own ends. That Mephostophiles sees himself in a position different from Lucifer's concerning redemption is unfounded because he turned away from God all the same, Pfitzer claims, whereupon God justly cast him into the bottomless pit.⁵

Damnation refers to eternal suffering in hell; Satan and his followers suffer damnation for their evil acts. Damnation as such can stand for both as a synonym for the final judgement and as eternal separation from God. Pfitzer maintains categorically that Mephostophiles' hope for salvation is only pretence.⁶ He explains that the deprivation of all heavenly joy and nature after the fall ultimately prevents Mephostophiles from commenting on heavenly matters. Not only does he simply not recall, but it is also God's wish that a spirit should be unable to promulgate and unveil God's splendour.⁷ Mephostophiles, therefore, is eternally separated from God.⁸

As previously mentioned, such views are comprehensible in that Protestant teaching discards any possibility of ghosts, poltergeists, or Kobolds being non-devils. Mephostophiles, too, must be a devil. The author of the *Historia*, an orthodox Lutheran,⁹ certainly did not wish to take Mephostophiles out of this context. In Marlowe's play, I believe, it is out of the question that

¹ Still, it is also probable that the Kobold derived some characteristics from Mephostophiles rather than influencing him.

² *Historia von D. Johann Fausten. Neudruck des Faustbuches von 1587*, hrsg. u. eingeleitet von Hans Henning, (Halle, 1963) LIII.

³ Widmann, 164-67.

⁴ W, chap. XVI.

⁵ Ibid, 177.

⁶ Ibid, 205-207.

⁷ W, chap. XIX.

⁸ Marlowe's Faustus reinforces the notion of eternal damnation secured for the devils by telling Mephostophilis: "[...] scorne those ioyes thou neuer shalt possesse" (A, iii, 331; B, I, iii, 311).

⁹ Baron, *Fastus on Trial*, 145.

Mephostophiles could be anything but a devil. In fact, in describing him as an “infernal spirit” Faustus gets to the point.¹ Faustus, thus, conjures a devil.²

Nonetheless, one aspect as regards Mephostophiles’ nature requires emphasis. Namely, the operative word here is a devil, because even though Mephostophiles is frequently referred to as “the Devil” in the GFB (it is indeed not always easy for the reader of the narrative to distinguish between the spirit and the devil proper), it is clear that he is only a devil.³ In GFB, Mephostophiles discusses the whys and wherefores of his refusal to grant Faustus’ demands. He simply does not have the lordship; he has to yield to superior force – which belongs to the God of Hell – “dem höllischen Gott,” 10.⁴ He shall transmit Faustus’ desires to “his prince,” it is written in the EFB, “for it is not in my power to fulfil without his leave,” 95. He is a servant of the hellish prince of Orient – an emissary spirit.⁵ In Postilla,⁶ Marin Luther distinguishes between devils, saying that one is wiser and stronger than an other, wherefore it is probable that Mephostophiles does not possess the magical properties and talents his master has.⁷ P.F., however, makes Mephostophiles a prince: “I am a prince but servant to Lucifer: and all the circuit from septentrio to the meridian, I rule under him” (EFB, Chap.5, 217-18).⁸ Marlowe’s Mephostophiles is of some elevated position, too, since Faustus applauds himself for managing

¹ When Faustus invokes Mephostophiles, the stage direction reads: *Enter a Deuill*. The consecutive stage directions: *Ent. Meph. & other devils* and *Exeunt Spirits with the knights* serve a double purpose as they show that Mephostophiles is a devil and that a spirit and a devil do not differ. Even if the stage directions were not Marlowe’s but later insertions, the textual evidence would show that Mephostophiles is a devil. In the B text, the clown points to Mephostophiles as one of Faustus’ devils too. B, IV, vi, 1631.

² Other reasons in support of this argument shall be discussed below. Mephostophiles is also clearly a devil in the later version of the *Ballad on the life and deathe of Doctor FFaustus, the great Cunngerer*: ‘The Devil in Fryars weeds appeared to me, / And streight to my Request he did agree.’ This is contained in Appendix B in William Rose’s edition of *History of the Damnable Life and Desearved Death of John Faustus 1592*. It is also to be found in Ward’s edition, lxxxii-lxxxiv. As regards the Ballad of Doctor Faustus, the *Stationer’s Register* contains an entry for 28 Feb. 1588/9, relating to the licensing of a *Ballad on the life and deathe of Doctor FFaustus, the great Cunngerer*. See *Marlowe’s Tragical History of Doctor Faustus and Greene’s Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Adolphus William Ward, I. This ballad could be earlier in date than Marlowe’s Faustus. It is lost and not to be confused with the one in the Roxburghe Collection dating 1675. See T. M. Parrott, “Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe, F. S. Boas”, *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 48, no. 6 (June, 1933), 396-400. See also Alfred E Richards, “Some Faustus Notes”, *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 22, no. 2 (Feb., 1907), 40.

³ Also B. Taylor, *Notes to Faust*.

⁴ There is a change in P. F.’s translation, as he substitutes the God of Hell for “his [Mephostophiles’] prince.”

⁵ “So hab ich gegenwertigem gesandtem Geist, der sich Mephostophiles nennet, ein Diener deß hellischen Printzern in Orient” (GFB, chap. 6). See also Jones, 250f n 193.

⁶ *Kirchen Postilla: das ist: Auslegung der Episteln und Evangelien an Sontagen und fürnemesten Festen*, Martinus Luther (Wittenberg, 1563).

⁷ P.F. describes his powers in detail in Chap. 17. In GFB, Mephostophiles can produce thunderstorms, just as Luther believed that “Winde wären nichts anders als denn gute oder böse Geister,” *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 93. Cf. *Demonology*: “He [the devil] can raise winds and thunderstorms”, II, chap. v, 45. In Marlowe, spirits can “dry the sea and fetch the treasure of all forraine wrackes” (B, 164-165). In becoming a magician, Faustus also expects to be able to “raise the winde, or rend the cloudes” like the devil (A, i, 89). This reminds one also of Prospero’s storm at the beginning of *The Tempest*.

⁸ As J. H. Jones remarks in a footnote: “By making Mephostophiles a prince, PF raises the status of both protagonists; Faustus is now too puffed up in his conceit to withdraw [...] Scot [...] drawing on Psellus’ *de operatione daemonum*, says that spirits ‘of that sort of company called *Principatus* [are] of all other the most easy to be conjured’”, 217 n 192.

to command “great Mephostophiles.”¹ Elsewhere, Mephostophiles is disclosed as Lucifer’s minister.

The following attributes provide additional information that speak for Mephostophiles’ contrast to his master(s): firstly, if what he avouches is true, Mephostophiles is not a mind reader.² He asks Faustus why he is sad and worried,³ wherefore he appears oblivious to what is going on and why Faustus is aggrieved - quite unlike Lucifer, who can see Faustus’ thoughts.

Secondly, Mephostophiles never denies the existence of God; but he has very limited knowledge of heaven. He knows the ranks and orders of the heavenly hierarchy from hearsay. Everything that he knows about heaven is what he has heard from Lucifer, as it were (*und weiß ich soviel von ihm*). Therefore, I am induced to believe that Mephostophiles has never been in heaven. At best he may have encountered the third angelic rank of the throne, since these “keep our devilish rank in check,”⁴ but from his account, in my judgement, it would follow that Mephostophiles does not belong to the banished angels. Still, he had sinned against God; his sin being apparently so heinous that he can never be blessed by God’s grace.⁵

But, why must Mephostophiles be a former angel? If the transformation into a devil - the concept of this word being ambiguous anyhow - were preordained for the fallen angels only, then Faustus would not have expectations to become a spirit. Apparently this ability affords something that can be learned. As B. Könneker points out: “Faust begehrt auch hier nichts anderes als ein *Leibhaftiger Teuffel*, oder ein *Glied darvon* zu werden, er will sich einreihen in die Schar der Dämonen, und dieses Begehren wird ihm vom Teufel erfüllt [...]”⁶ We learn

¹ A, iii, 277.

² Even in chap. 48, it is not the spirit but his master, who sees that Faustus is “bethinking himself of the words of the good old man.” Johann Nicolaus Pfitzer looks at this with scepticism, arguing in his annotated insertion to chap. XII that the devil knows the hearts and thoughts of the godless, because he is the one who implements such thoughts: “Wie sollte den dem Geist unbewust gewesen seyn, daß D. Faustus gleichsam ein Mißtrauen zu ihm setzen wolte, weilen er ihm ohne Zweiffel diesen Gedanken selbst eingegeben hatte [...]”, 141. In addition, Luther held the view that the devil does not know the thoughts of pious men in whose hearts Christ lives: “Ob aber dargegen dem Teuffel der Frommen und Glaubigen Gedancken offenbar und bewust seyen, hierauf erheilet Herr Lutherus diese Antwort: Der Glaubigen Gottseligen Gedancken weiß er nicht, bis sie darmit heraus fahren, denn Christus ist ihme zu klug: wie er nun nicht hat wissen können, was Christus is seinem Herten gedacht hat hier und dar, sonderlich bey seiner Versuchung; also kann er auch nicht wissen der Gottseligen Gedancken, als in welcher Herten Christus wohnet,” Widmann, 248. Milichius flatly asserts that the devil does not know the thoughts of men, chap. XII, VI. King James I asserts that “The thought none knowes but G O D.”

³ EFB, chap. 19, 845-47.

⁴ *The English Faust Book* 415-31 n 197. Hartmann Schedel’s *Weltchronik* (1493) served as a direct source for this report on the angelic hierarchy. The source is in *Historia von D. Johann Fausten. Text des Druckes von 1587, Kritische Ausgabe*, hrsg. v. Stephan Füssel und Hans Joachim Kreuzer (Stuttgart, 1996), 223.

⁵ Chap. 17; omitted in EFB.

⁶ Könneker, 182. Luther equates the devil with a despaired, godless, unrepentant evil *person*, who has a sore conscience and leads an aggravating life – “here” he says, “you may see the devil incarnate.” Apart from that, the Gentiles, for example, believed that ‘the soules of men became Daemones, that is, good or euill angels,’ see Lavater, *Of Ghosts and Spirits Walking By Night*, 2. Lavater, on the other hand, categorically dismisses that men can become devils, II, chap.xviii, 173. Still, I believe that Mephostophiles was not formerly a man, but he was not a fallen angel either.

differently from Marlowe's Mephostophiles, who says that he is one of the reprobate spirits that "fell with Lucifer,/ Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,/ And are for euer damnd with Lucifer."¹ Further, he once "saw the face of God,/ And tasted the eternal ioyes of heauen."²

1.3 Mephostophiles' Character

Mephostophiles is a most complex character. There is no question that for a 'typical' devil he has highly unconventional and contradictory features, wherefore reference should be made to several issues that have led certain interpreters not to characterise him as wicked. The fashioning of the character certainly incorporates sources used by the anonymous author of the *Faustbuch*,³ and even here we do not know what was borrowed and what the author's invention was. It is also debatable whether the inconsistencies in the spirit's character and nature might derive from the compilation quality of the *Historia*, which was argued by certain scholars to be extremely mixed, with nebulosities and contradictions, since the *Historia*, although no longer viewed as a chapbook,⁴ still consists of anecdotes strung together.⁵

What we can say with certainty is that we are dealing with a peerless devilish figure, his equal not being encountered in this study. The purpose is to determine whether ostensibly positive properties detected by some literary critics are anything but new qualities of a devil. Many, but admittedly not all, can be dismissed by invoking Martin Luther's *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*. That is to say, many properties of Mephostophiles turn up in the conception of the devil in Martin Luther's table conversations. I shall allude to such parallels in footnotes.⁶ Others appear to present a softer side of his nature, related to the aforementioned transference of attributes from Kobold and similar beings. Let us also remember the good-naturedness of the devil in Caesarius

¹ A, iii, 315-17; B, 296-98.

² A, iii, 322-3. Thus, there is good reason to suppose that Marlowe's Mephostophiles was an angel once. Also, quite contrary to God's angels, who are, as Calvin puts it, "intermediate messengers" that manifest God's will to men, so does Mephostophiles act not as God's, but as Lucifer's intermediate messenger who manifests his will to men.

³ For the sources see Gustav Milchsack, *Historia D. Johannis Fausti des Zauberers nach der Wolfenbütteler Handschrift nebst dem Nachweis eines Teils ihrer Quellen* (Wolfenbüttel, 1892); the already mentioned *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, hrsg. v. Stephan Füssel und Hans Joachim Kreuzer; Stephan Füssel, "Die literarischen Quellen der *Historia* von D. Johann Fausten", in: *Das Faustbuch von 1587. Provokation und Wirkung*, hrsg. Richard Auernheimer and Frank Baron (München, 1991), 15-39.

⁴ Mahal, *Habgott Faust*, 41.

⁵ Many scholars express the opposite view. Georg Milchsack argues that the *Historia* is constructed under a consistent plan. The opinion that the author of the *Historia* must have been a deep-read, but dilettantish litterateur has been denied by M. E. Müller: "Im unterschied zu den protestantischen Exempelsammlungen des 16. und 17. Jhs. [...] "besitzen wir" im Faust-Buch keineswegs "eine Aneinanderreihung von Geschichten"', 600.

⁶ The same applies to Milichius' *Zauberteufel*. Here I must say that Gustav Milchsack's comparison of the *Historia* with Milichius, as contained in his *Wolfenbüttler Handschrift*, reached me after the completion of my analysis of Mephostophiles.

of Heisterbach.¹ Still, in my opinion, the definition of goodness requires special attention. If a beneficent genius is at work in Mephostophiles' dealings with Faustus, it does not coincide with God's definition of goodness. Mephostophiles can be affable to Faustus as often as he likes, but it must not be forgotten that Faustus is godless, no longer a Christian; and that the devil is the enemy of all Christendom. Goethe's Mephisto's self-definition, "Ein Teil von jener Kraft,/Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft" is hardly applicable to Mephostophiles of the German *Historia*.²

What speaks in his favour? Mephostophiles is an academic, many hundreds of years old, and he is Faustus' teacher; he is the intellectual superior of the two. It appears that Faustus can learn a lot from him, which is in itself nothing bad. Mephostophiles is familiar with secular affairs and astronomy (in fact the spirit is the best *astrologus*)³ and he is of considerable assistance to Faustus becoming a good calendar-maker, *astronomus* and *astrologus*. He is teaching him the course of the sun, moon and stars, so that everything he contrives and writes wins the highest praise among all the *mathematici* of that day.⁴ Through his art of prophesying⁵ and his advice Mephostophiles is helping Faustus to always write correct horoscopes. Moreover, by the aid of Mephostophiles, Faustus becomes "excellent in the black art" (EFB, Chap. 29, 1849).⁶ Thus, he helps him to become famous and respected.

¹ V, 36; libr. Mir. III, 53; Dial. X, 11.

² This is also why to my mind the author did not mean Faustus to be pitied by readers. He is a conjurer, a black magician, who as such deserves severest punishment. Cf. only how the introduction to GFB, "Vorred an den Christlichen Leser" speaks of the matter, or how Milichius is passing judgement on conjurers, Chap. XXX: "In summa / die Zauberey und schwartze kunst wird von Gott gehasset und verboten/ von allen verständigen veracht/ und von den glaubigen gemitten. Unnd welche damit umbgehen/ die seind nit würdig/ daß sie Menschen heysen/ ich schweige/ daß sie in die Gemeynschafft Christi gehoeren sollten." Erasmus, in arguing against evaluation of every heretic as being a witch, says that "this injunction applied only to sorcerers, enchanters, and magicians, whom the Hebrews in their tongue call *Mekaschephim*, which we translate as *malefici* or "witches" (*Praise of Folly*, 113). To understand this passage aright: sorcerers work by and through the devil, *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 129. We are never allowed to seek answers by magic, as it is forbidden by God. Cf. Lavater: "Magitians, iugglers, inchanters, and Necromanciers, are no other than seruants of the Diuel," II, chap. xvii, 170.

³ Mephostophiles is a knowledgeable connoisseur in the Bible too; still, he is deprived of the Scriptures (GFB, chap. 16). He is also the master of a thousand magical arts (a "Tausendkünstler"). In spite of the content of what Mephostophiles has to say concerning astronomy being condemned as utter nonsense by literary critics, the fact that through his knowledge Faustus gains recognition enables him to be considered master of this art.

⁴ EFB, chap. 17, 753. The astrology-chapters H. HÄUSER associates with the acquisitions of Doctor of Medicine Nikolaus Winckler. See Helmut Häuser, *Gibt es eine gemeinsame Quelle zum Faustbuch von 1587 und zu Goethes Faust? Eine Studie über die Schriften des Arztes Dr. Nikolaus Winckler (um 1529 – 1613)* (Wiesbaden, 1973). Cf. Elucidarius' account. In a note to *Malleus Maleficarum*, Part I, Question 5, it is explained that the word "Mathematician" always means an astrologer, a diviner, a wizard, 34.

⁵ According to Martin Luther, through his servants the devil is able to at times indicate and guess right what shall happen in the future. See *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 6,12. Milichius says that the devil cannot predict the future, Chap. XXV, quite unlike St. Augustine, who considered demons capable prognosticators, *Civitas dei*, Chap. 3 and Chap. 5.

⁶ This is recurrent in Marlowe's play. Faustus disputes with Mephostophiles about astrology. On the explanation of this disputation see Greg, 336 and his introduction 53-54; Barnet's edition 35 n 26, Keefer's edition of the A-version, 35-62 n 41.; Gill's edition, 74-77, Brockbank, 46-48; Francis Johnson, "Marlowe's Astronomy and Renaissance Scepticism," *English Literary History* 13, 1946. The point is that what the spirit discloses to Faustus is commonplace. But nevertheless, it is said in the A-version that Faustus answers every question regarding astrology

What could also speak in favour of Mephostophiles is that it appears as if he is not at Faustus' disposal of his own accord, as if his desire were not to ruin a human being. Reluctance to serve Faustus is already recognisable when Mephostophiles first meets Faustus: "Faustus commanded that the next morning at twelve of the clock he [Mephostophiles] should appear to him at his house, but the devil would in no wise grant [...]" After Mephostophiles refused to obey, Faustus "began again to conjure him in the name of Belzebub that he should fulfil his request: whereupon the spirit agreed" (Chap. 2, 121). Here, Mephostophiles is anything but importunate.

Furthermore, Mephostophiles (almost) always accompanies Faustus. He is constantly at his side.¹ Changed to a winged horse (like a dromedary), he conducts and conveys Faustus during his third journey through quite a number of kingdoms and principalities.² In so doing he also assumes the role of a tourist guide: "Diese und viel andere Inseln mehr, so ihme der Geist Mephostophiles all erzehlte, und gewiesen, hat er außgespehet und gesehen" (Chap. 27).³ Forty-seven miles up, Mephostophiles instructs Faustus⁴ as to the names of various lands and realms, and he also protects Faustus:

Then looked I up to the heavens, and behold, they went so swift that I thought they would have sprung in thousands. Likewise it was so clear and so hot that I could not gaze into it, it so dimmed my sight:

with 'such learned skill,/ As they [his friends and companions] admire and wondred at his wit," Chor, 2, 939-940. The fact that Mephostophiles is disputing astronomy shows that it is not a heavenly matter.

¹ One has to admit that most of the *Historia* concerns Faustus' adventures wherein Mephostophiles is not present at all. See also G. Mahal: "Den breitesten Teil der "Historia" bilden Fausts Abenteuer, die er glichsam als trainierter Teufelsgeselle, jedoch ohne Anwesenheit seines Mephostophiles vollbringt oder erlebt." See Günther Mahal, *Halbgott Faust: Provokation und Selbstverständlichkeit (1507-1980)* (Tübingen, 2006), 70 n 122. He is constantly at Faustus' side in Marlowe's play, however.

² This is also adopted by Marlowe, A, I, vii, 821-839/B, III, I, 803-822. In Marlowe, however, it is not Mephostophiles who assumes the shape of a steed; rather, he procures a flying steed to deliver Bruno back to Germany.

³ Marlowe's Mephostophiles is also a tourist guide. A, I, vi, 849-861/B, III, I, 831-847. Moreover, within eight days he has shown him heaven, earth and hell, B.III.i.870-871. But then again, it is conceivable that Mephostophiles has shown him a wrong hell. The question is what it was that Faustus has seen with Mephostophiles when he is later so frightened at the sight of hell with all its horrors disclosed by the Bad Angel, as if he has never seen it before.

⁴ Cf. *Malleus Maleficarum*: "And what of those Magicians whom we generally call Necromancers, who are often carried through the air by devils for long distances? And sometimes they even persuade others to go with them on a horse, which is not really a horse but a devil in that form," Part II, Qn. 1. Ch. 3, p. 105. Pfitzer, quoting St. Augustine, argues that it is possible that with God's permission an evil spirit can fly and carry the body of a living man with him. Thereby only the body comes into question, not the soul: "Wenn nun der Teuffel, dieser Meinung nach, die Seel aus dem Leibe wegnimmt, so muß der Leib entweder lebendig oder tod seyn. Lebendig kan er nicht seyn, weil die Seele nicht darinnen ist, welche dem Leib das Leben mittheilet, und ohne welche der Leib nicht lebet; tod kan er aber unterdessen auch nicht seyn, denn sonst würde folgen, daß die todten Leiber durch des Teuffels Gewalt, und wenn er die Seel wiederbringet, köndten von den Todten auferwecket, und wieder lebendig gemachet werden, welches doch GOtt einig und allein thun kan, es ist sein Werck, die Todten lebendig machen und auferwecken, welches dem Teuffel unmöglich ist: darum kan diese Meinung auch nicht stehen", 258. Hence the devil transports Faustus bodily through the air. It should be noted that people, witches in particular, can also be transported in imagination, as it is maintained in *Malleus Maleficarum*, Part II, Qn. 1. Ch. 3.

and had not Mephostophiles¹ covered me as it were with a shadowing cloud I had been burnt with the extreme heat thereof [...] (EFB, Chap. 23, 1152-155).²

Again, this appears as if it is nothing bad. Furthermore, Mephostophiles supplies Faustus and his *famulo* Christoph Wagner with wine that he steals from the cellars of people like the Duke of Saxony, the Duke of Bavaria or the Bishop of Salzburg. Mephostophiles also supplies Faustus with delicate dishes and pricey clothes stolen from royal households. He steals “from before the Pope the fairest piece of plate or drinking goblet, and a flagon of wine” and brings it to Faustus.³ He procures fruits and, invisible, attends on Faustus’ guests with “all things that their hearts could desire.”⁴ This incident is also dramatised in Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*. In the B-Text there are also servile devils who prepare dishes for Faustus and his comrades.⁵

It can also be positively evaluated that Mephostophiles is not always a liar. Even though the speciality of the “theologian” Mephostophiles is limited to demonology, angelology and cosmogony, concerning the first two fields he advocates the opinions of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas,⁶ according to which he is a truth-teller. He is also indoctrinating Faustus by delivering true sermons. As F. Baron points out: “Even Faustus’s enemy, Mephostophiles, takes pleasure in doing just that. At times these speeches of the devil are deliberately and unmistakably deceptive. But on other occasions the devil takes over the function of the narrator by pointing out where Faustus failed and how he lost his chance to be saved.”⁷ Moreover, as W. Empson has observed, Mephostophiles “plainly gives Faust a good deal or warning.”⁸ Although at first

¹ My servant in GFB, Chap. 25 – *mein Diener*.

² In Marlowe, the devils attend Faustus and protect him against the ambushed soldiers B, IV, iii, 1485-1488, just as Cornelius promised to Faustus: “So shall the spirits of euery element,/ Be alwaies seruiceable to vs three:/ Like Lyons shall they guard vs when we please”, A,i.

³ EFB, chap. 22.

⁴ EFB, Chap. 40, 2188. Here it can already be revealed that notably nothing is achieved through honest drudgery. On stealing see also Milichius, Chap. V, 5; Chap. XIX; Cf. “Also kan auch der Teuffel im Winter Obs unnd andere zeitige frucht den Zaubernern zůbringen / welches er auß India oder Aphrica holet / denn in denselbigen Landen trifft sich der Sommer und Winter nicht mit undsern Landen”, Chap. XIX. Cf. Jacob von Leichtenberg: Ware Entdeckung, in: *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, hrsg. Füßel und Kreutzer, 263. Augustin Lercheimer reminds one that Christ resisted temptation in the desert: “Wollte lieber / vnnd hette lieber sollen hungers sterben / dann vom Teuffel mich speisen vnd trencken lassen. Dessen vns der Herr Christus ein fuerbild vnd lehr gegeben hat / da jm der Sathan rihet daß er auß Steinen Brodt machete: vnd er jhm antwortete / der Mensch leben nicht allein vom Brot / sondern /etc.” In Füßel and Kreutzer, 289.

⁵ B, V, i, 1775-1777.

⁶ Dieter Breuer, “Mephisto als Theologe”, in: *Elf Reden über das Böse. Meiserwerke der Weltliteratur Bd. VI*, Helmut Siepman und Kaspar Spinner (Hg.) (Bonn, 1992), 58.

⁷ See Baron, *Faustus on Trial*, 148. He is made as such for pedagogical-didactic purposes, no less than the mystery devil or the Vice figure we have encountered in this study.

⁸ Empson, 108. Mephostophiles’ truth-telling is not always linked to deceptions, as when he, at a crucial moment, falsifies the Lutheran-protestant doctrine of salvation by visualising God’s wrath and animosity towards sinners, transforming his commentary into a lie and locking up any opportunity for Faustus to think of and put trust in God. There are also examples where Mephostophiles confidently and freely tells the truth because he knows that the godless fail to grasp it. Mt. 13:19: “When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.” Such honesty and truth-telling might be explained by A. Fuchs: “If he thought that one would listen to him, he would keep

reluctant, Mephostophiles lectures Faustus about hell and asserts he is telling the truth (*Denn es ist war, wie ich dir versprich*, p. 41). He also gives Faustus a good answer concerning Paradise:

It is Paradise that lieth so far in the East, the garden that God Himself hath planted with all manners of pleasure, and the fiery stream that thou seest, is the walls or defence of the garden, but that clear light that thou seest so far off, is the angel that hath the custody thereof with a fiery sword [...], EFB, Chap. 23, 1730-34.

In addition, Mephostophiles vows that if he were Faustus he would reverse course and live a life agreeable to God, chap.17. In fact, he admits with a sigh that he would change places with Faustus, “for yet I would so humble myself that I would win the favour of God.”¹ This line of thought is continued in Marlowe’s play, when, poetically arranged in the most brilliant way, we face a melancholic spirit lamenting over his loss of heavenly bliss.² In this sense Mephostophiles himself becomes a tragic figure.

The spirit can further be chummy and larksome, arousing humour through his supernatural powers and assisting Faustus in his pranks, as when he poses as Mohammed in front of the Ottoman Sultan and makes love to his wives in the harem.³ He enables Faustus to become invisible in order to play practical jokes on the Pope. In the B-version of Marlowe’s play, the two disguise themselves as cardinals in order to rescue Bruno from the Pope.⁴ Here as well, it is Mephostophiles who makes Faustus invisible, but he does so in a mock ceremony that is reminiscent of the devil, the Vice, the invoked Furies and other underworld figures. Also, through his help Faustus magically places a pair of hart’s horns upon the head of a knight, for the sole purpose of making fun of him.⁵ At the spirit’s instance Faustus digs for buried treasure. He finds only coal, however, but as soon as he brings it home he finds it has been turned into gold

silent” (*translation mine*). See Albert Fuchs, “Mephistopheles: Wesen, Charakterzüge, Intelligenz. Seine geheime Tragödie. Das Problem seiner Rettung”, in: Werner Keller (Hg.): Aufsätze zu Goethes „Faust I [eins] (Darmstadt, 1974), 356. This would go along with the moral expressed in Aesop’s fable, The Boy Who Cried Wolf, “Even when liars tell the truth, they are never believed,” or the lines of “He that will not be counselled, cannot be helped,” or perhaps more aptly the famous line uttered in Ingelend’s *Disobedient Child*: “None is so deaf as who will not hear.” Mephostophiles says this at a certain moment: “You have let it all go in one ear and straight out of the other” (Jones’ translation, App. 2, 46, excluded from EFB). On devils who tell the truth in general, Lavater has written that they do so for their own ends: “He speaketh truth, that he may scatter abroad lyes, and roote them in mens hearts,” II, chap. xviii, 172. His chapter is entirely devoted to why the devil at times tells the truth, and it concludes with the remark that we should never believe the devil, for it is ‘not lawful exactly to learne sounde and holsome doctrine of diuels, but out of the holy Scriptures,’ 174.

¹ EFB, Chap. 16, 741. Astarotte, the devil in Luigi Pulci’s *Il Morgante Maggiore* (1482) expresses the same wish. For this and other similarities see *Christopher Marlowe: The Plays and their Sources*, 179.

² A, iii, 320-327/B, I, iii, 300-307.

³ In Marlowe, Mephostophiles only informs the audience that he is flying back to the ‘great Turkes Court’ after he has been summoned from Constantinople by Robin, B, III, iii, 1178-1180.

⁴ Bruno, the rival Pope.

⁵ EFB, chap. 30. F. Baron examines this incident in great detail in his *Faustus on Trial* 102f.

and silver.¹ As Faustus explains to the duke of Anholt: “gracious Lord, I have a swift spirit, the which can in the twinkling of an eye fulfil my desire in anything.”²

These passages arguably show Mephostophiles at his best, and still they are comparatively few and anything but convincing. Of course, it is expected Mephostophiles would be a most humble servant, subservient and obedient, and the spirit is indeed fairly serviceable.³ Since in the meantime (*dieweil* in GFB) Lucifer “hath his kingdom under heaven,” spirits like Mephostophiles are to go “unto men to serve them at their pleasure.”⁴ Mephostophiles is Faustus’ servile spirit and he is in Faustus’ service whenever he desires to converse with him. Still, as I shall demonstrate, Mephostophiles is doing Faustus no service because the numerous favours Faustus receives from his spirit are all unfavourable to God. Moreover, Mephostophiles deceives Faustus about the real balance of power all the way through. He is the actual *tuorneur* – the master of vision⁵ and the master-manipulator. I have deliberately marked off the brighter side of the spirit’s character in order to show that appearances are often deceiving. The time has come to show how the Mephistophelian within him is manifested in his intrigue.⁶

I interpret the early observed servility as the spirit’s aim to obtain Faustus’ confidence. For the same reason, I believe, Mephostophiles bids fair to be concerned about Faustus’ well-being, comforting him in his grief.⁷ He cannot empathize with him in his melancholy; he simply must make the endeavour to employ such words as will steal away the heart of Dr. Faustus. In my opinion his obstinacy to appear before and serve Faustus is also just pretence. We have seen in the conjuration scene that the devil is only pretending “to be none too keen to join the dance” (Jones’ translation). Seeing that Faustus wants to set aside conjuration, “the devil made him such music of all sorts, as if the nymphs themselves had been in place: whereat Faustus was revived [...] and began again to conjure the spirit,” EFB, Chap. 2, 95-8. Furthermore, on the face of it the

¹ On the echo of this story in Milichius’ *Zauberteufel* see Cutting, 62. Milichius condemns such an undertaking as idolatry, chap. XXXVI. Cf. also Luther’s *Tischreden*, 8: “Darauf sprachen sie vom Bergwerk, wo der Satan viele Leute durch sein Zauberwerk äffe und betöre, daß sie einen großen Haufen Erz und Silber sehen, und doch ist nichts da”. Buried treasures were often linked to ghosts in ghost-lore.

² EFB, chap. 40, 2161.

³ This rather outlandish trait of a servant devil is also found in Jacques de Vitry, where the devil protects a woman. See *Exempla. a. d. serm. comm.* 67. as quoted in Schmidt, *Teufels-und Damenonenglaube in Cæsarius*, 27. The relevant passage can be found in *Die Exempla aus den Seromes feriales et communes des Jakob von Vitry*, hrsg. von Joseph Greven (Heidelberg, 1914), 42.

⁴ Chap. 3, 150.

⁵ See also Rüdiger Safranski, “Wie böse ist Mephisto?”, 6. Because of this, the origin of his name Heinr. Lewy suggested to W. H. Roscher, *mēphatēh tāphēl*, meaning “tempter to folly,” would not be so out of place as Roscher put it. Roscher argued that such meaning would not coincide with Mephostophiles’ nature, whom he strictly, but as I argue, unfoundedly, regarded as *spiritus servus* or *spiritus familiaris*. See Roscher, 100.

⁶ By saying “Mephistophelian” I take the liberty to use the adjective in the pejorative sense, meaning “devilish”, “cunning”, “insidious”, “base”, “deceitful”, “cynical misanthropic” as commonly used in lexicons and as listed (only to afterwards challenge this word usage) by G. Mahal in his article “Mephisto-Splitter”, in: *Faust-Blätter* N. F. 6, 1969, 241.

⁷ Chap. 22; EFB, Chap.19, 843-9.

pact with the devil looks very promising. Mephostophiles clears the way for Faustus to nobility, where Faustus is able to prove himself and be accepted. Still he is on the margins of society because he is deprived of marriage and has declared himself an enemy to all mankind.¹

Mephostophiles is certainly not a good friend; Faustus buys Mephostophiles' service and friendship with his soul. Granted, at times Marlowe's Mephostophiles addresses him with 'my Faustus' and he in turn with epithets as 'my good Mephostophilis,' 'sweete Mephosto,' 'gentle *Mephostophilis*,' 'sweet friend,' etc. but their "friendship" leads to betrayal and Faustus' eternal torment. Besides, Faustus is often at variance with Mephostophiles, especially in those moments when he hears something from the spirit he does not like - answers which stimulate his melancholic state: "'Leave me in peace,' said Dr Faustus. 'Then give me some peace from your questioning,' retorted the spirit."² In the final chapter, Faustus even calls him "my deadly enemy."³ The outcome of such friendship is well known: "Muste also der boß Mensch in Sünden sterben und verderben/ wie dann der Teufel allen seinen Dienern letztlich solchen Lohn gibt/und sie also abfertigt."⁴

Besides, in a playfully devilish manner, as a true rogue, Mephostophiles in *Historia* teases Faustus with a song: "Wilt not agree? For thee no plea. If there be no plea, thou must come with me. Thou wost it not when we hold thee. Yet come thou must with me, nor helpeth any plea: an insolent heart hath damned thee."⁵ The entire omission of chapter 65 in EFB, contained in GFB, renders an important attribute void. Here, Mephostophiles mocks the afflicted Faustus with "a prolonged barrage of proverbs."⁶ It is also said in the following translation from Jones: "Surely the devil must have laughed to himself and turned his backside, thinking: Come now, I shall cool your ardour and make such a monkey of you that I'll gain your soul as well as your body, and you'll still think it fair dealing."⁷

Mephostophiles deceives with hollow and fleeting enjoyments and his purpose is to seduce and to gain Faustus' soul. After all, he is first and foremost a servant of Lucifer.⁸ In Marlowe,

¹ Williams und Schwarz, 122.

² Jones' translation of GFB, 745f n 203. Similarly, in Marlowe's play Faustus squabbles with Mephostophiles. A, I, vi, 703-705/B, II, ii, 644-645.

³ EFB, chap. 63, 2898. Similarly in Marlowe: "O thou bewitching fiend, 'twas thy temptation/ hath robbed me of eternal happiness."

⁴ GFB, Chap. 51.

⁵ Translation adapted from <http://lettersfromthedustbowl.com/Fbk1.html>.

⁶ Jones' comment in his edition of *The English Faust Book*, 17.

⁷ EFB, 85 n 188.

⁸ No man can serve to masters, quoth Mephostophiles, but an additional minor point worth noting is that apparently a *spirit* can, for he is serving both Faustus and his master Lucifer. But, concerning servility see Augustin Lercheimer: Ein Christlich Bedenken vnnd Erinnerung von Zauberey: "Zu solchen geschefften lassen sich die boesen Geister brauchen/ leisten solche dienste / nicht den Zaubern vnd Zauberrinnen zu gefallen vnd vmbsonst: sondern daß sie sie dadurch / wann sich gelegenheit begibt / hie in zeitlich vnnd dort in ewig verderben stürzen", in: *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, hrsg. Füssel und Kreutzer, 260.

Mephostophiles is equally eager for Faustus' soul.¹ And then again, in an aside: "O what will not I do to obtaine his soule?"² In EFB, he and his ilk are trying to use all kinds of deceit and furtiveness in order to cause mankind to discard faith. He knows very well what effect the forthcoming disputations will have on Faustus; for this reason he turns a great book containing all manner of sorcery and *nigromantia* over to Faustus, chap. 11. It is the book that pricks Faustus' curiosity: "Vbergibt jhme sein Geist bald ein grosses Buch [...] Bald sticht jn der Fürwitz."³ During the *disputatio* then Mephostophiles breeds melancholy and the calamity he produces is reflected in his effect on Faustus' mental state. As D. Breuer has argued in a different context, the spirit's theology can be determined as Augustinian or Lutheran; on the surface it is only recognisable as twisted and devilish.⁴ The spirit features prevarication; half-truths which can be more deceiving than a lie.⁵ "Too late, too late," the spirit uses every opportunity to fix these words in Dr. Faustus.⁶ Marlowe's Mephostophiles does the same: "Thinke thou on hell Faustus, for thou art damnd."⁷ And then, again: "I Faustus, now thou hast no hope of heaven,/ Therefore despaire, thinke only vpon hell;/ For that must be thy mansion, there to dwell."⁸

In this regard, M. E. Müller justly appraises Mephostophiles as a well-schooled psychologist who aptly and strategically applies the contemporary state of research to intensify Faustus' melancholic disposition and stir it in the opposite direction.⁹ The various kinds of *disputatio* on hell and the fall of Lucifer exchanged between Faustus and Mephostophiles add to Faustus' despair and deep depression, leaving behind hellish dolorousness and gloom.¹⁰ The spirit's

¹ A, I, v, 485-587/B, II, I, 433-435.

² A, I, v, 514; B, II, i, 461.

³ Also Haile, *Reconstruction of the Faust Book*, 185-86. This passage is extended in the A-version. Mephostophilis gives Faustus a book of magic, so that he might procure powers from it (p. 196). Faustus begs for three additional books that would teach him conjuring, astronomy and botany. Mephostophiles reassures him that all these matters are contained in the book he has just given him. See also Greg's note 555-6 n 333. Later on, Lucifer himself hands to Faustus a book in which he may learn how to change shape.

⁴ Breuer, 69.

⁵ See also Reinhold Schneider, *Im Schatten Mephistos. Drei Essays* (Stuttgart, 1949), 5. "Endlich ist das auch ein Stücke von dieses Bösewichts Listen und Tücken, daß er uns nur ein Stück von Christo, nicht den ganzen Christum furhält [...]" *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 32.

⁶ Here it is interesting to observe the similarities Mephostophiles shares with the allegorical figure Despair as occurred in Skelton's *Magnyfycence* and Wappul's *Tide Tarrieth No Man*.

⁷ A, vi, 700/B, II, ii, 642.

⁸ B, V, ii, 1983-1985.

⁹ Maria E Müller, Berlin, *Der andere Faust: Melancholie und Individualität in der Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte, 60:4 (1986: Dez.), 593. Thomas Nashe, for example, says about the devil that he is 'an ancient malcontent' who 'seeketh to make anyone desperate like himself,' *The Terrors of the Night*, 147. Cf. also the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion issued by the Anglican Church in 1563 that contains the basic summary of belief of the Church of England: "[...] for curious and carnal persons, lacking the spirit of Christ [...] the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchedness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation," 17. As contained in Kastan's edition of *Dr. Faustus*, 244.

¹⁰ Müller 581. H. C. Haile believes that Mephostophiles "demands a three-day deferment before he answers for fear of the effect his reply will have on Faust," *Reconstruction of the Faust Book* 183. In Marlowe, it is rather Mephostophiles who is in agony after recapitulating the fall of Lucifer.

descriptions of Lucifer's glory in heaven and his fall dismay Faustus to the highest degree. The evil spirit blinds Faustus with words: "[...] thy great sins [...] are so odious and detestable in the sight of God that it is too late for thee, for the wrath of God resteth upon thee," EFB, chap. 16. Because the sins are so great, Mephostophiles insists that Faustus belongs to him.¹

It is Mephostophiles' task to prevent Faustus from repenting. The "evil spirit" entertains Faustus with all kinds of merry illusions, music² and various apparitions like dogs, hunters, lions and dragons, and the like, chap. 6. Still, it is clear that he is entertaining him only to keep him from repentance. With his gestures and metamorphoses, he gives Faustus great pleasure and assures him this is nothing compared to his services in other fields where Faust may see in him greater value and knowledge, including everything he demands, if he would but hand over the contract. He helps Faustus become successful with women and lead a life of debauchery, providing him with women as sexual objects, "be she alive or dead."³ Mephostophiles even presents the spirit of Helen of Greece to Faustus, who becomes his concubine and bedfellow.⁴ Thus, whenever Faustus grows disappointed at the insufficiency of Mephostophiles' answers, the spirit makes sure that *Gier nach gemeiner Sinneslust* compensates *Forschbegier*.⁵

In GFB and EFB, Mephostophiles can create (only) illusions.⁶ Thereby he is not the only devil who is deluding Faustus. Beelzebub, too, for example, is blinding Faustus, monkeyshining with

¹ He says: "For thou art mine and thou belongest into our society"; "thou must and shalt be partaker of our torments" (EFB, Chap. 15; 588; 644). "Wenn dich der Teufel plagt", says Luther, "und dir fürhält, du seiest ein Sünder, Ja, sage, ich kann's nicht leugnen. ‚Darum bist du mein!‘ Noch lange nicht, denn Gottes Gnade ist viel größer denn meine, ja aller Welt Sünde!" *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 12; also 14. Cf. also: "Fröhlichkeit kommt von Gott, Traurigkeit aber kömmt vom Teufel," *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 96. On Luther's devil as the 'detractor' who instigates us to despair see Barth 137.

² Also Carus 424.

³ EFB, chap. 9, 396. Using Martin Luther's theory, these women are not real but devils. The spirit is only deluding Faustus, thinking he is experiencing sexual adventures, whereas in reality there is nothing: "der Teufel macht ihnen die Geplärr für die Augen und betreuget sie, daß die Leute meinen, sie schlafen bei einer rechten Frauen, und ist doch nichts. Desgleichen geschieht's auch, wenn's ein Mann ist. Denn der Teufel ist kräftig bei den Kindern des Unglaubens, wie St. Paulus sagt," *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 80. It is also explained in *Malleus Maleficarum* that devils cannot bestow life on anybody, Pt. I. Qn.3, 22.

⁴ EFB, chap. 55.

⁵ Cutting, 62. Faustus violates the Sixth Commandment. Luther condemns fornication with the following words: "[...] ein gottfürchtig Mensch lebt züchtig und keusch, meidet allerlei Unzucht, fürchtet sich für Gottes Zorn und ewiger Strafe, der die Hurer, Ehebrecher [...] richten wird", Ebr. 13 [...] und Paulus zum Ephesiern am 5. (B. 5) sagt: , Kein Hurer, Unreiner [...] hat Erbe am Reich Gottes' [...] Dieses Teufelskind aber thut strads das Widerspiel [...]. See „Vom Teufel und seinen Werken“, in: Tischreden IV, 5.

⁶ Cf. Milichius: "Die ersten scheinen / als seien es wunderwerck / seind aber in der warheit nichts anders / den ein verblendung / damit die leut betrogen warden / daß sie meynen / sie sehen dise oder jene gestalt / und hoeren diß oder jenes gedoen/ so sie doch nichts hoeren und sehen / Und ist ein eitel betrüg unnd spiegelfechten., chap. XII, I. Milichius explains that the devil cannot raise the dead, chap. XII, V. As he proceeds, there are two kinds of spookings. That Faustus has the ability to transform himself is probably understood as another jugglery. At least Milichius, quoting St. Augustine, rejects such possibility, Chap. XVII. He also denies the possibility of flying; thus, that Faustus can raise himself up in the air is challenged, would be declared as another deception. Milichius, as already discussed, says that it is possible with the devil to carry witches in the air though, chap. XXI.

him, making him believe he is carrying him to hell.¹ Again, what Mephostophilis teaches is of little purpose and Faustus does not really display sensational aptitudes; most of his powers appear as if they were a mere sleight of hand or manipulative magic.² In addition, Faustus is up to no good – he performs magic out of ambition, complaisance and malice and also for amusement.³ Besides, astrology was rejected as superstition. Necromancy, astrology and astronomy are condemned as practices of witches in *Malleus Maleficarum*.⁴ For Luther, contrary to Melanchton, astrology was not a science. He looked upon it with scepticism.⁵ As I. Ludolph points out:

Entscheidend für Luthers Ablehnung der Astrologie waren [...] theologische Gründe. Zwar hatte die Bibel Luther darauf hingewiesen, daß himmlische Erscheinungen Zeichen für zukünftiges Geschehen seien. Die Bibel aber *verbot* alle Sterndeuterei. Jer 10,2 steht: „Ihr sollt... euch nicht fürchten vor den Zeichen des Himmels, wie die Heiden sich fürchten“. Darauf nahm Luther in seiner Vorrede zu Lichtenbergers Weissagung Bezug. Auch Jes 47, 13f. Und 5 Mose 18,10 werden die Astrologen abgelehnt. Weil in der Bibel deutlich genug vor Sterndeuterei gewarnt wird, sollen nach Luther rechte Christen gar nicht solchen Weissagungen fragen (WA 23,11,16f.)⁶

To sum up, on behalf of the devil, Mephostophiles' promises to procure art, dexterousness, honour, eminence, wealth, all sorts of limited blitheness, concupiscence and pastime to Faustus clears the way to eternal damnation. He is not really doing Faustus a favour, but is rather contaminating him. All of this is, as also Marlowe's Faustus in the end admits, 'vaine pleasure,' not to be compared to the everlasting loss of joy and felicity in heaven.

Looking further at the other side of the coin - the manner Mephostohiles unveils his second face - the spirit understandably enough exhibits satanic qualities, because

¹ Here I would not rule out the possibility that the devil is blinding Faustus' external and internal senses, by altering the air. According to Widmann, "Erstlich durch Veränderung der Luft, durch deren Behüllffe die Augen ein Ding seiner Gestalt nach sehen und begreifen, ihnen benebels allerhand Bilder und Bildungen darinnen machen, die ihnen der Satan in der Luft vorstellet, welches etwan auch sonsten pflaget zugeschehen bey Nachtszeit in dicker Finstere und bey neblicher Luft, wenn die Augen ohne das etwas trübe, blöd und dunkel seynd: und dieweil der Teuffel dieses weiß, daß er auch natürlicher Weise geschehen kan, als gebrauchet er sich auch der Luft darzu, die Augen der Menschen zu verblenden und zu bezaubern," p. 216f. Also in King James' *Demonology* it is pointed out that the devil can "illude the senses" in "making them beleue that they saw and harde such thinges as were nothing so indeed", III, chap. v, 68.

² Also in Marlowe, taking into consideration the powers Mephostophiles possesses, Faustus has not learnt much from his spirit.

³ See also Könniker, 30 n 173. His performance of magic is somewhat similar to that attributed to a conjurer named Sedechias, as spoken of in Lavater, II, chap. xvii, 168.

⁴ Pt.1, Qn.2, 16. Astrology and astronomy were regarded as the same.

⁵ On Luther and astrology see Ingetraut Ludolphy, "Luther und die Astrologie," in: *'Astrologi hallucinat'i: Stars and the End of the World in Luther's Time*, ed. Paola Zambelli (Berlin and New York, 1986), 101-107. On the other hand, P. Meissner points out that Luther saw in astrology just a work of demonic powers, 282. Widmann also condemns astrologers since they do not acquire their science from God. For Milichius, even though he does not directly condemn or demonise astrology, it is out of place to ask of such things.

⁶ Ludolph, 105.

It is a common proverb in Germany, that although a conjurer have all things in commandment, the day will come that he shall not be worth a penny: so is it like to fall out with Doctor Faustus in promising the devil so largely: and as the devil is the author of lies, even so he led Faustus his mind in practicing of things to deceive the people and blinding them, wherein he took his whole delight, thereby to bring himself to riches, EFB, chap. 33.

The passage quoted above reminds us that the devil is the author of lies, and so it will be noticed that Mephostophiles' lies are documented in several text passages. He preaches "in opposition to Luther."¹ He talks only of the wrathful, never of the merciful God. He gives Faustus a godless, unchristian account and report on "how and after what sort God made the world and all the creatures in them."² He is lying that it is too late for Faustus to repent. He withdraws from Faustus the information that the good old man mocked him and so defeated him.³ In the penultimate chapter of EFB Mephostophiles lies to Faustus that he is not going to suffer eternal damnation – "This and suchlike comfort he gave him, but he told him false and against the saying of the Holy Scriptures," EFB, chap. 62. Mephostophiles is also lying about the validity of the contract and he is not a reliable contractual partner.

Furthermore, Faustus trades his soul for twenty-four years of the devil's powers, but this passage of time is still devilishly controlled by Mephostophiles.⁴ The contrast between what is granted and what is requested moves the pact from the reasonable to the farcical.⁵ For instance, Mephostophiles voices his objection to answering particular questions. He can satisfy craving for mundane recognition and riches,⁶ but he cannot do so for the pursuit of divine knowledge. Hence Faustus is not able to obtain answers from Mephostophiles concerning Godly matters.⁷ Later on, he is even restrained from ask about such things: "Faustus being on such an high hill, thought to look over all the world and beyond, for he meant to see Paradise, but he durst not commune with his spirit thereof [...]"⁸ The spirit is not willing to disclose to any man information concerning the dwelling place (the real foundation) of devils, or to provide information on the government and power of hell, because the damned shall after death come to know them for himself.⁹ As

¹ See Baron, *Faustus on Trial*, 125.

² In EFB he "only" threatens to tear Faustus in thousand pieces for asking such a question (chap. 19, 861-65).

³ Compare *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 37-40.

⁴ Müller, 604.

⁵ Williams und Schwarz, 128.

⁶ "Wahr ist's, der Teufel gibt auch; aber siehe dich wohl für und mache ein starken Unterschied zwischen dem rechten Geber, der alles gibt, was wir sind und haben, dazu seinen eingeborenen Sohn, und zwischen dem Meuchelmörder, der denen, so ihm dienen und ihn anbeten, gibt eine kleine kurze Zeit, doch also, daß sie nachmals ewiglich müssen darben," *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 12.

⁷ "[...] Desgleichen kann der Teufel nicht sehen, was die Heiligen, was der Heilige Geist und Christus thun und gedenken", *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 61.

⁸ EFB, chap. 23, 1722. "Wollte er auch endlich das Paradeiß sehen können, dann er hatt seinen Geist nit darumb angesprochen, noch ansprechen dörrffen," GFB, chap. 27.

⁹ See also Ronald Weitzman's review on "*Schnittke: Historia von D. Johann Fausten* by Jurgen Freier, Arno Raunig, Hanna Schwarz, Eberhard Lorenz, Eberhard Buchner, Hamburg State Opera Chorus, Philharmonic State

H.G. Haile points out: “The disputations took a turn to which Mephisto objected repeatedly and more grimly, finally refusing altogether to give audience to “sollichen fragen vnnd Disputationibus”.¹

Breaking initial promises, Mephostophiles tells Faustus that he is not obliged to answer questions: “And thou shalt know that if thou ask me more of such things another time thou shalt get no audience from me, for I am not obligated to tell thee such things. Therefore leave me in peace with further such probings and *disputations*.”² This incident is omitted in the English Faust Book, “But know this, that I council thee to let me be unmolested hereafter with such disputations, or else I will vex thee every limb to thy small contentment.”³ Later it becomes more difficult for Faustus to obtain answers from his spirit because he hates to answer questions: “[...] even though he completely refused to do so, yet this time he was willing to obey, but for the last time” (GFB, Chap. 17, *translation mine*).⁴

Although he does not live up to his expectations, Mephostophiles also uses other means to secure Faustus’ obeisance. He often uses fear and terror and brings home the message that he is not someone to be trifled with. He is irascible and in the grip of sudden anger whenever he evaluates true reasons behind Faustus’ questions as threats that may breach of the covenant. The evil spirit admonishes Faustus to think about the covenant when he expresses desire to marry because marriage is a sacrament.⁵ He opposes matrimony since it is the work of God, and he benefits from all that derives from adultery and fornication. He commands Faustus to cease insisting if he does not wish to be torn to pieces by him and his comrades, only to immediately afterwards polemicise calmly against matrimony, urging “sweet” Faustus to realise that only inquietude, antipathy, anger and strife follow from matrimony. But then, seeing Faustus would not abandon such thoughts,

Suddenly upon these words came such a whirlwind about the place that Faustus thought the whole house would come down. All the doors in the house flew off the hooks; after all this, his house was full of smoke and the floor covered over with ashes: which when Doctor Faustus perceived, he would have gone up the stairs: and flying up, he was taken and thrown into the hall [...] that he was not able to stir

Orchestra, Gerd Albrecht, Schnittke”, *Tempo*, New Ser., no. 198 (Oct., 1996), 54. Oddly enough, he is going to give an account on these matters later on.

¹ Haile *Reconstruction of the Faust Book* 182.

² Also EFB Chap. 19: “My Faustus, thou knowest that I was never against thy commandments as yet, but ready to serve and resolve thy questions. Although I am not bound unto thee in such respects as concern the hurt of our kingdom, yet was I always willing to answer thee [...]”

³ See also Jones, 698f n 203.

⁴ “The spirit was altogether against it, but yet once more he would abide him”, EFB, chap. 16, 719.

⁵ This has also often been interpreted as a devilish comment on Catholic clamour for the practice of celibacy. “Aber der Teufel hat alles verkehret, die Ehe verboten durch seine Statthalter, den Endechrist zu Rom [...]”, *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 7.

hand nor foot. Then round about him ran a monstrous circle of fire, never standing still, that Faustus fried as he lay and thought there to have been burned (EFB, Chap. 9, 376-384)¹

The devil appears to Faustus in his true shape, which is so terrifying that Faustus is utterly frightened. In another episode, the devils change into all kinds of vermin and begin to plague Faustus.² Also, when Faustus asks his spirit about the secrets of hell - “what pains the damned were in, and how they were tormented, and whether the damned souls might get again the favour of God and so be released out of their torments or not”³ - sheer anger overcomes Mephostophiles, and he shows his true colours:

My Faustus, thou mayst well leave to question any more of such matters for they will but disquiet thy mind. I pray thee what meanest thou? Thinkest thou through these thy fantasies to escape us? No, for if thou shouldst climb up to heaven, there to hide thyself, yet would I thrust thee down again; for thou art mine and thou belongest unto our sorcery,” chap. 15, 583-588.

Again, apprehending Faustus might repent through the influence of the old man Mephostophiles steps in and deals violently with him: “Continuing in these cogitations, suddenly his spirit appeared unto him clapping him upon the head, and wrung it as though he would have pulled his head from his shoulders [...]”⁴ He secures Faustus’ obedience by saying his sins are too great to be forgiven, and compels him to draw another contract written in his blood. This Mephostophiles connects with the implicit threat to tear him in pieces here and now; thus, he forces the issue by frightening him into obedience. The dissuader’s tactic is sure to whip up fears

¹ Concerning raging of a poltergeist, compare *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 37. Luther equates the poltergeist with the devil. This episode is also somewhat reminiscent of a quality of a mid-day ghost (*Mittagsgespent*), the daemonium meridianum that produces “pestilence that stalks in the darkness” and “plague that destroys at midday” (Psalm 91: 6). The mid-day ghost does no harm in the shadows or during sunshine, but in the light that lies between the two. The ghost rolls like a ball, causing harm between ten o’clock in the morning and three o’clock in the afternoon. See Dietrich Grau, *Das Mittagsgespent (daemonium meridianum): Untersuchungen über seine Herkunft, Verbreitung und seine Erforschung in der europäischen Volkskunde* (Bonn 1966), 11. It is nevertheless more doubtful than certain that the mid-day ghost could have served as influence for the conceivability of Mephostophiles.

² Goethe’s Mephistopheles is for example a master of vermin. Demons are depicted as vermin in Caesarius. As such they primarily function as plaguing spirits (Dial. II, 32, III, 8, IV, 86, XI, 3 9 libr. Mirac. I, 19. II, 3 2). By now it has become fairly obvious that Caesarius of Heisterbach served as a source for the conception of the devils in the *Historia*. Interestingly enough, a similar occurrence is provided by Taillepiep in his discussion on sufferings of the melancholic or otherwise deceased: “Sick persons, too, are frequently thus deceived, for they envisage and excogiate the most hideous and horrible fragments and fancies, inasmuch in their weakness they obtain an imperfect and distorted mental conception of all kinds of quite common objects which are in the bed-chamber, and they imagine that their bed is surrounded by wolves and lions or packs of fierce dogs, and they do not cease to clamour and call for help until someone comes and dissipates these hallucinations by feigning to chase them away,” *A Treatise of Ghosts*, 19. Some critics do actually claim that these which Faustus sees are totally unreal and shere products of his imagination.

³ Chap. 15, 580-3.

⁴ EFB, Chap. 48, 2493-5.

in Faustus.¹ These threats make so fearful an impression on him, that he fears the devil more than he fears God.

In the end, it is not explicitly stated that Mephostophiles served as the executioner, although Faustus says to Wagner that his spirit shall fetch him away.² Then again, the spirit says that “the devil would fetch him.”³ Be that as it may, Mephostophiles’ time “is out” with the death of Faustus.⁴ At the end, Faustus is dead – ex Diaboli pactione.

The relation between Dr. Faustus and Mephostophiles raises the question whether temptation or free will has greater weight. The balance of this power is shifting. Although Faustus accuses Mephostophiles that he cajoled, wheedled and talked him into it,⁵ it is obvious that Faustus becomes an ideal victim to Mephostophiles’ persuasiveness virtually on account of his tendency. Mephostophiles is a devil and thus acts according to his nature; however, it is Faustus who goes after him. He is the one Ephesians 2:1-2 talk about, “you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.” Granted, by augmenting Faustus’ desires, Mephostophiles lent him a hand:

Why should we not help thee forwards? For so soon as we saw thy heart, how thou didst despise thou degree taken in divinity and didst study to search and know the secrets of our kingdom, even then did we enter into thee, giving thee divers foul and filthy cogitations, pricking thee forward in thine intent and persuading thee that thou couldst never attain to thy desire until thou hadst the help of some devil: and when thou wast delighted with this, then took we root in thee, and so firmly that thou gavest thyself unto us, both body and soul [...] (EFG, Chap. 14, 552-9; GFB, Chap. 15).

Still, it was only possible for the devil to intervene when he saw that magic aroused interest in Faustus. Clever as he is, Mephostophiles was able to detect what Faustus is most prone to. In other words, if Faustus had not turned away from God, he would have never become the slave of the devil.⁶ In this case; Faustus can be compared to Esau from the play *Jacob and Esau*:

¹ “[...] den der arge, listige Geist ist so geschickt, daß er einem die Wehre nimmt und ihm unversehens ein solch Schrecken einjagt, daß er nicht weiß, wo aus [...]”, *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 15. For Luther, faith involves suffering. Also “Was er nu dem Leibe thut, das hat er dem Sohn Gottes auch gethan, den hat er gekreuziget und zu Tode gemartert. Aber wenn er nicht die Seel’ gewonnen hat, da stehet’s wohl,” *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 70.

² EFB, chap. 57, 2712. Faustus is killed by the devil(s) in a most brutal manner. Supremely violent devils are also to be found in Caesarius, especially the usurer in Dial. XI, 41, who suffers an abominable end reminiscent of Faustus’. Concerning violence, Schmidt has shown that devils seize humans in two ways – by means of deceit and by means of violence, 80.

³ EFB, chap. 62, 2813. In the chapter excluded from EFB, Chap. 65, Mephostophiles admits that the devil is God’s ape, a murderer and a liar (Jones’ translation, App. 2, 37), just as Jesus described him.

⁴ EFB, chap. 57, 2703.

⁵ GFB, chap. 25.

⁶ This is the reason why Mephostophiles can do no harm to the soul of the Old Man. He is firm in faith. As Lavater wrote, “the Devil hath no power ouer the Soules of the godly.” Mephostophiles can cause him physical harm, however. Still, as he admits, it is of little purpose. Ignorance of and abhorrence for the Word of God go nicely with the devil because where there is no “helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”

Esau hath ben nought ever since he was borne.
 And whereof commeth this, of Education?
 Nay it is of his owne yll inclination.

Neither are Faustus' parents being accused of evil upbringing. Faustus is someone who lacks strength of faith, who is wallowing in pride and despair, someone who is afflicted with doubts and fear. He is insecure, labile and inwardly torn. He is tormented with doubt, straying from the right path even though he knows the right way and wishes to follow it.¹ Faustus is an apostate. Praying must be taken seriously, with genuine devotion and trust in God, "For without the herte the tonge labourereth in vayne."² If Faustus had possessed such religious confidence, he could have defied the devil, saying: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).³ Marlowe's Faustus says instead: "When *Mephistophilus* shall stand by me, / What God can hurt thee *Faustus*?" Faustus abstained from prayer, however, and so it is not God's fault that all the good things extinguished in him: he deliberately chased away the Holy Ghost. Hence the original guilt lies solely upon Dr. Faustus.⁴ In fact, the stress of his personal responsibility is multipresent in the *Historia*. Faustus can only lay the blame at his door.

Even Mephistophiles reckons this up for him: "[...] the which thou (Faustus) canst not deny" (EFB, Chap. 14, 560). In addition, he says to Faustus:

Him [God] I say, being thy maker, hast thou denied and defied, yea wickedly thou hast applied that excellent gift of thine understanding and given thy soul to the devil: therefore give none the blame but thine own self-will, thy proud and aspiring mind, which hath brought thee into the wrath of God and utter damnation, EFB, Chap. 16, 734-38.

This is also apparent in Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. Faustus blames Mephistophiles for depriving him of heavenly joys, to which the spirit replies: "Twas thine owne seeking Faustus, thanke thy selfe."⁵ Besides, Faustus' repentance is that of Cain and Judas. His heart is hardened and he cannot repent. Protestant forgiveness theology says the offer of forgiveness is always

(Ephes. 6:17), man cannot resist the devil. See Widmann, 202. Luther also said that in godless hearts "ruget und wonet er [Satan] als eyn starcker tyrann [...]", 15, 458, 25 (1524). Quoted here from Hans-Martin Barth, *Der Teufel und Jesus Christus in der Theologie Martin Luthers* (Göttingen, 1967), 18.

¹ Köneker, 198.

² *Ship of Fools*, 137.

³ Widmann, 248-9. In *The Longer Thou Livest* Moros suffers the same punishment because "such fools in their hearts do say/ That there is no God, neither heaven nor hell" and is accordingly stricken with God's vengeance, lines 1775-1791.

⁴ As Williams and Schwarz point out: "In diesem Kontext wird klar, dass Fausts schwerste Sünde nicht in der (katholischen) Absage an Gott und die Taufe zu suchen ist, sondern in seiner Unfähigkeit zu beten, wirklich Reue zu empfinden und sich Gottes vergebener Liebe anzuvertrauen," 138. In *Tide Tarrieth No Man*, for example, Wastefulness, unlike Faustus, receives grace because he truly believes: "O Lord, deliever me from thrall,/ And pardon me, a sinner most vile and unjust. Faithful: That is very well said, if so thou do think," line 1619.

⁵ B, II, i, 573. Cf. the ballad: "Woe to myself, the cause of all my ill."

open; but, Faustus' repentance is insincere and insufficient.¹ Even more, as F. Baron points out: "Faustus's growing concern about salvation, his doubts, and his despair are logical consequences of his deviation from the path of Christian values."² His damnation is therefore inescapable and unpreventable.³

The same can be said about Marlowe's Faustus. Lewes Lavater wrote that those who sin of their own accord have no need to be deceived by the devil.⁴ Already in the beginning of the play the chorus informs us that Faustus has "swolne with cunning of a selfe conceit" after excelling in all matters of theology (A, 21). It can be said that Faustus is already an impersonation of vices when the devil encounters him. Before Mephostophiles' entrance, Faustus had decided to learn to practice magic and to pray and sacrifice to the devils. Even while Mephostophiles is absent, Faustus exclaims: "Ile liue in speculation of this Art/Till *Mephastophilis* returne againe." And, besides, no one forced Faustus to foreswear God. Granted, he is 'won over' by the tempting magical book, by the magicians, by the Bad Angel,⁵ Helen, Lucifer or by Mephostophiles. But all they have to offer is not of crucial matter, as Faustus admits, it is his "owne fantasie" that deceives him the most.⁶ In other words, Faustus is not converted by any foreign influences; he is proud, egotistic, wanton and lascivious "from his own corrupted nature." Even his own body refuses, but he signs the contract out of his own will. Again, initially nobody forced Faustus to dismiss divinity, cast the Bible aside and so abjure the Faith.

¹ Compare the despairing speeches Faustus delivers in EFB, chap. 13.

² Baron, *Faustus on Trial*, 109.

³ Also Könniker 211. In fact, already in the first chapter it has been concluded that "at the day of judgement there is no hope of his redemption," EFB, chap. 1, 66.

⁴ Lavater III, chap. ii, 184.

⁵ The Bad Angel in Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* does not stray from the concept of the morality Bad Angel discussed in the present study. The Bad Angel argues against the existence of God, v, 456. What is more, he is Faustus' evil councillor, urging him towards black magic and tempting him with the conceivability of becoming God on earth. It seems as if the Bad Angel greatly affects Faustus. His confident line 'I but Faustus neuer shall repent' is only shortly afterwards repeated by Faustus himself: 'I am resolu'd *Faustus* shal nere repent.' The Bad Angel whispers in his ear: "Faustus, thou art damn'd" A, I, vi, 650. Then he tells him it is too late to repent. In case he does so, he threatens him that the devils will tear him to pieces. While I believe that the Bad Angel is conceived as a true devil in Marlowe, it must be said that the existence of the two angels accompanying man is denied in Scot and King James I. Scot, siding with Calvin (1. Cal. lib. instit, I, cap. 14.7), denies this, claiming there is no reason in nature, nor authority in Scripture, that God assigns to every man a good and a bad angel. III.x.p.363. Also King James I *Demonology* III, chap. ii, 60. Pico della Mirandola refers to Empedocles, who "teaches us that there is in our souls a dual nature; the one bears us upwards toward the heavenly regions; by the other we are dragged downward toward regions infernal." Empedokles, frgm. 17, 35 and 115 (Diels/Kranz), quoted in the Reclam edition of *De hominis dignitate*, 82 n 37.

⁶ A, i, 136.

1.4. Doctor Faustus' Hell

The depiction of hell in the German *Historia* is of specific interest, especially when we compare it to the classical underworld discussed earlier. While it has been argued that the Christian hell was replaced by the pagan underworld in the tragedies, now one finds Christian hell but notwithstanding fused with particular classical elements. Hell is darkness; it is but a “filthy, sulphurish, fiery, stinking mist or fog.”¹ Still, Mephostophiles and the other devils do not know what substance hell is made of. As Mephostophiles further explains: “we devils know not how God hath [...] laid the foundation of our hell, nor whereof it is: but [...] we know that hell hath neither bottom nor end.”² Hell is the place where all the devils dwell. Concerning the topography of hell, Mephostophiles further explains that hell is “under the earth and above the earth, even to the heavens,”³ divided into following kingdoms: *Lacus mortis/ Stagnum ignis / Terra tenebrosa / Tartarus / Terra oblivionis. / Gehenna. / Herebus / Barathrum / Styx / Acheron*. The reigning devils are also called *Phlegeton*. A similar concept of hell is retained in Christopher Marlowe’s play. It is also furnished with classical imagery such as the rivers Styx, Acheron and Phlegeton.⁴ In one instance, Lucifer calls hell ‘infernal Dis,’ and during the conjuration scene Faustus vows to the gods of Acheron. Interestingly enough, one can again observe that the Furies inhabit the Christian hell.⁵

The devils rule hell. In the GFB, hell is organised as a kingdom divided into rulers, regents and servants (in the EFB there are only rulers and servants). The spirits call *Lucifer* their oriental prince,⁶ not all of the legion of devils, as P.F. translates. There is also sovereignty in *meridie*, *septentrione* (*septentio* in EFB) and *occidente*. All in all, four regiments form the royal regiment: “Lucifer in the orient, Beelzebub in *septentrio*, Belial in *meridie*, Astaroth in *occidente*.”⁷ Interestingly enough, while still a beautiful archangel, Lucifer was called Raphael.⁸ He is bound in chains in hell until Judgement Day.

¹ EFB, chap. 11, 451.

² Ibid, 454-6

³ Chap. 12, 464.

⁴ A, I, vii, 863-864/, .III, I, 849-850. Cf. also B, III, I, 871.

⁵ B, V, ii, 1895.

⁶ EFB, chap. 12, 471-3; GFB, chap. 13. He is also called Lucifer, the King of the Orient, in *The Wagner Book*, see William Rose’s edition of EFB, 223.

⁷ This might have influenced Marlowe’s Mephostophiles to call on the infernal forces as “You Princely Legions of infernal Rule” in B, III, iii. The source for the description of hell in the GFB was Elucidarius and for the deceiving spirits Jacobus de Theramo’s *Consolatio peccatorum, seu Processus Belial* from the year 1484, on which consult the edition by Füssel and Kreutzer.

⁸ GFB, 22. Cf. Jones, *Faust Book*, 103; on Lucifer; GFB, 24.

In Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, Lucifer is the chief lord and regent of perpetual night. Once he was an angel of unblemished beauty,¹ but now he is the prince of the East,² who tempts humanity in order to increase his kingdom.³ He also tempts because "misery loves company" –he wants people to fall into the same damnation. Lucifer is not incarcerated in hell but appears on earth together with Beelzebub and Mephostophiles in order to teach Faustus obedience,⁴ to frighten and admonish Faustus to cease thinking of God and to stop talking of him in general in their presence as it causes them great offence.⁵ Also, at Lucifer's command, the Seven Deadly Sins appear to entertain Faustus.⁶

Lucifer promises to show Faustus hell,⁷ and a description of hell's torments is offered by the Bad Angel.⁸ As a matter of fact, hell with its hell mouth is shown on stage in the B text, as the stage direction reads: *Hell is discovered*. Mention is made of "the jaws of hell that are open to receive Faustus" – an allusion to hell's mouth – in all probability similarly designed to the ones used in the Mystery plays.⁹

The notion of hell is expanded upon in Marlowe and to some extent innovated, as it is added that it is not only located below the earth, but it can very well exist on earth. With regard to hell, Marlowe's Mephostophiles speaks of a dualist picture of the world - the world will be separated into two parts – into heaven and hell.¹⁰ At the end of the world, everything except heaven shall be hell. Hell is also within fire, air, earth and water. As in the EFB, it is in a broad sense underneath the heavens – in the lower regions. It is not confined to one single place and it has no

¹ The description of Lucifer in some passages also provides a homoerotic touch, on which see Cox *The Devil and the Sacred*, 110-118.

² During the invocation, however, it would seem that it is Beelzebub who is referred to as the Prince of the East. This is misleading, as R. Gill has shown, due to a misplaced comma. 17-18 *n* 65. It is Lucifer who is the *Orientis princeps*, as confirmed in the EFB. The problematic classification of demons observed in the mystery plays appears nonetheless to be repeated here to a certain extent. Faustus, for instance, says that there is 'no chiefe but only Beelzebub,' whereas Mephostophiles says that all demons must perform what Lucifer commands. Indeed, throughout the text, we see that it is Lucifer who is clearly in command. Mephostophiles also seems to have replaced Demogorgon as a member of the infernal trinity.

³ "First the Deuill, vsed as instrumentes in them, though al tending to one end: To wit. the enlargening of Sathans tyrannie, and crossing of the propagation of the Kingdome of CHRIST," *Demonology*, II, iii, 35.

⁴ Immediately upon his first entrance, Lucifer shows up as a defamer of God.

⁵ A, vi, 714-723/B, B, II, ii, 655-664.

⁶ Again, we witness a bond between the devil and the seven deadly sins. Lk.11:26: "Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first." This passage is used in "Vorred an den Christlichen Leser," the preface to the GFB, in order to describe Lucifer's nature.

⁷ Cf. B, IV, ii, 1258.

⁸ B, V, ii, 2018-2029.

⁹ The inclusion of a hell mouth in the play as theatrical property is confirmed in Hanslowe's *Diary*: 'The Admiral's Men included a 'Hell mought' in their inventory of props (Henslowe's *Diary*, 319),' Bevington and Rasmussen, 282 *n* 120.2. On a detailed stage presentation of hell in the play see their *Introduction*, 46.

¹⁰ He probably speaks of the Last Judgement here. Christ's final judgement shall bring perpetual damnation to the wicked and everlasting bliss to the righteous. On the day of The Last Judgement the "devils will be condemned to eternal torture" and "the world will be consumed," *Malleus Maleficarum*, II, Qn.1, chap .13, 141. For this reason, at the day of judgement, there is no redemption for the devils. On the Last Judgement see Rev. 20:11-14; Matt. 12:36; Perhaps also 1 Cor 6:3.

end, and while it is certainly true that it is material, Marlowe's Mephostophiles, unlike his source, emphasises that hell is also carried within oneself.¹ He gives a "metaphysical conception"² of hell in his most famous assertion: "Why this is hell, nor am I out of it."³ In the Mystery plays, we have seen that God says to Satan that he will be locked in the lodgings of hell forever and never have life outside hell again.⁴ We have also seen that the Church tradition paradoxically insists that the devil is at the same time chained in hell and roaming about the earth. Here, the concept is the same, and yet different. Marlowe emphasises that hell is a mental state. Mephostophiles is therefore always in hell, no matter where he goes, and hell is always with him.

Mephostophiles' insights into hell have utter validity. His mere presence is a very obvious one and it testifies that hell truly does exist. However, although Dr. Faustus "rejects God without denying"⁵ and "adheres to the Devil,"⁶ he does not believe that hell exists. He relies on his own convictions rather than on the devil's testimony. For him, hell is but a fable, and even if Mephostophiles is now in hell, he understands that it must be mere walking, disputing, sleeping, eating, etc. That "hell is here" is not a bad thing for Faustus since he can now achieve all his goals and fully realise his ambitions. The devils are damned for all time, and they are tortured in hell. Faustus fails to comprehend what it means to be damned. The word damnation is foreign to him. Faustus equally errs in believing that dead souls do not endure torments- all poorly thought-out arguments in front of the one who has first-hand knowledge and experience.⁷ As a matter of fact, he does not seem to believe that he has a soul in the first place.⁸ His assertion, "My *ghost* be with the old-philosophers" is in contrast to Mephostophiles' remark that he is an "unhappy *spirit*" (*emphasis mine*). Dr. Faustus further identifies hell with Elysium.⁹ We may say that he expects to find himself in a place Kyd's Don Andrea appeared after his death – in the classical

¹ On hell as a state of the spirit, hell as separation from God and the *poena damni* (pain of loss), see Cole, 205. Kocher has shown that such a concept of hell is not at all un-Christian in his *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of his Thought, Learning, and Character*, 116-118. Critics also call such a hell to be a hell of 'being and consciousness.' In my discussion of the mystery devils, I have noted earlier that the devils, according to St. Thomas, are constantly tormented in a spiritual way by Hellfire. See *Comm. Sent.* 2.6.1.3.

² Bakeless, 296.

³ A similar passage to some extent occurs in Alabaster's *Roxana*, where the ghost of Moleon utters the following while talking about his land Bactria: "I see to much; better returne to hell / For this is hell, and if ought, worse then hell" (I, i, lines 15-16). Also "Hid'st a worse hell within thee" (I, iv, 204). Also in Lavater: "for Hell doth not always betoken a place of tormente, but also generally the state that soules are in after this lyfe," 117.

⁴ N-Town, I, lines 315-316.

⁵ John Addington Symonds in Jump, 35.

⁶ William Wagner, *Ibid.*, 34.

⁷ On which see Lavater, I, xvi, 72. Cf. EFB, chap. 9.: "Doctor Faustus [...] believed not that there was God, hell or devil: he thought that body and soul died together [...]"

⁸ A, iii, 306; B, I, iii, 287. Also Barker, 26.

⁹ Also Keefer's edition 60 n 55.

underworld – as a ghost in the Elysian Fields philosophising with ancient philosophers – which is a fatal error.

With Faustus' disbelief and incomprehension of what he hears from Mephostophiles, Marlowe wanted to lay stress on Faustus' folly. Faustus' convictions are not without reason, however. The source provided a basis for Faustus' ignorance, yet Marlowe could look at the theatrical tradition in order to expatiate on it. The idea of Renaissance figures such as Don Andrea who find themselves after death in the classical underworld and that originated in the early Elizabethan tragedies might have contributed to Dr. Faustus' folly of not believing in the Christian hell. Faustus desires to be a spirit. Pico della Mirandola speaks of man's capability of transforming himself, pointing to the metamorphoses "so celebrated among the Hebrews and among the Pythagoreans," and indicating that "even the esoteric theology of the Hebrews at times transforms the holy Enoch into that angel of divinity [...]."¹ Therefore, we may return to the previous observation that Faustus does not realise what he has done by signing the pact.

Mephostophiles is a devil Faustus enters into a pact with. The pact is the source of Dr. Faustus' decay in the GFB. The demonic pact was understood as serious offence that had been, as S. Clark writes, "parasitic on baptism."² Sorcery was considered the severest of all sins, not even to be compared to vices. It was the gross violation of the First Commandment,³ and we have already discussed the importance the First Commandment had for Martin Luther. The reason for making the pact is Faustus' pride, the forbidden *curiositas*. As H. J. Schings remarks, Faustus' apostasy comes from his vain and insolent curiosity [*Fürwitz, Freiheit und Leichtfertigkeit*]⁴; the "cause of his defection was naught but his proud conceit, presumption, arrogance and despair in God" [vndnd ist dieser Abfall nichts anders/ dann sein stoltzer Hochmuth/ Verzweifflung/ Verwegung vnd Vermessenheit].⁵ He has consigned his soul to the devil on purpose, in full command of his mental faculties and free will. Faustus, in return, must become an enemy to all who worship Christ; he must renounce his Christian faith and, also, no matter how often he might wish to turn back, he must resist the 'temptation.'⁶ Many scholars

¹ Pico della Mirandola in a note to the Reclam edition, the editor and translator, Gerd von der Gönna, further lists Genesis 5:24; Ecclesiasticus ch. 44:16; 49:16; Hebr. 11:5.

² Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997) 83. As quoted in Williams und Schwarz, 111.

³ Thus it is said in *Malleus Maleficarum*, Pt. I, Qn. xvii, for instance (such accounts being of great number in this work) that the crimes of witches even exceed the sins and the fall of bad angels, 82. Also Barbara Könneker, "Faust-Konzeption und Teufelspakt im Volksbuch von 1587," in: Festschrift Gottfried Weber. Zu seinem 70. Geburtstag überreicht von Frankfurter Kollegen und Schülern (Bad Homburg, 1967), 165.

⁴ Chap. 2; Jones' translation 73f n 188.

⁵ Chap. 5; Jones' translation 221f n 192. See also Hans-Jürgen Schings, "Fausts acedia". In: Christiane Caemmerer u.a. (Hg.): *Das Berliner Modell der Mittleren Deutschen Literatur. Beiträge zur Tagung Kloster Zinna 29.9.-1.10.1997* (= Chloe. Beihefte zum Daphnis, Bd. 33) (Amsterdam, Atlanta 2000), 405.

⁶ Also Weitzman, 54.

share the view that Faustus has become a male witch in effect and damned beyond redemption right after the point he sells his soul to the devil.¹ Therefore, the spirit's claim that Faustus is damned right from the outset, even before the realisation of the pact (chap. 3), would not be misleading after all. If the contract were an innocent matter, divine intervention manifested in the refusal of flowing blood and the warning letters inscribed in his arm would not have occurred. On the other hand, it is difficult to believe that salvation is not open to Faustus if he truly repents. Even if it meant that, under such circumstances, it would be supremely difficult for the ungodly Faustus "to be able" to repent,² salvation, I believe, is always possible for Faustus.

There is controversy concerning up to which point salvation is possible for Marlowe's Faustus. Mephostophiles claims that Faustus is damned from the moment he has given his soul to Lucifer in written form. In reality, however, his soul is "not lost until the final moment. In theological terms he is not damned until he dies; deliverance is always possible if he will repent and call for mercy [...]"³ The Good Angel points out that Faustus can end the contract without harm. If the pact had been valid, thus, there would not have been any necessity for Mephostophiles to distract and delude Faustus after the pact had been signed.⁴ Lucifer lies when he says that Christ, being just, cannot save Faustus' soul. God is just *and* merciful. But the transgressor Faustus never has faith in God, as despair and pride always take over. He is the one who denied God's grace and mercy.⁵ Every contemplation of God invokes the devils' immediate appearance, trying to prevent the cause, and every time Faustus begs pardon from them instead of God.⁶ That is the reason why in the text God is so much removed, playing a relatively inferior role, applying to what we could call "entgottlichte Welt." There have been plenty of warnings by the agents of God, such as the Good Angel, the Old Man, the congealed blood, the 'homo fuge'

¹ On this equation see Gerhild Scholz Williams und Alexander Schwarz, *Existentielle Vergeblichkeit: Verträge in der Mélusine, in Eulenspiegel und im Dr. Faustus* (Berlin 2003), 109-44. Marlowe's Faustus, like a witch, promises to kill children and offer them to the devils.

² Luther says, "Das Gott zörnet und strafet, ist wahr, aber die Halsstarrigen und Unbußfertigen. Freundlich aber und gütig ist er denen, die ihr Elend fühlen und sein Gnad begehren. Sein Gnad aber ist tausendmal größer denn unser Sünde." *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken*, 15. "Die Gottlosen aber, so göttliche Lehre verfolgen und erkannte Wahrheit als Teufelslügen lästern, der leider ist viel sind, die sind geistlich vom Teufel besessen, die werden seiner nicht los, sondern bleiben (das schrecklich ist zu hören) seine Gefangene," *Vom Teufel und seinen Werken* 16. Milichius also says that „Darnach straffet Gott die Zauberey mit dem ewigen todt“, chap. II, 19. Cf. also the apocryphal Acts of John 36: "Likewise also thou [...] sorcerer [...] ye shall come at last, as your works do lead you, unto unquenchable fire, and utter darkness, and the pit of punishment, and eternal threatenings."

³ Susan Snyder, "Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* as an Inverted Saint's Life," *Studies in Philology* 63: 514-523, reprinted in Kastan's edition of *Doctor Faustus*, 314. But then again, if this truly were followed in the B text, the Good Angel would not have forsaken Faustus one hour before the time of his death arrived.

⁴ Also Brooks, 285.

⁵ Also John C. McCloskey "The Theme of Despair in Marlowe's Faustus, 110.

⁶ God gives him the opportunity to demonstrate his faith and repentance by allowing (suffering) the devils to appear to him (the Old Man has also demonstrated how to remain steadfast in faith), but Faustus always fails to do so. Unlike Job, he does not patiently endure any plague brought about by the devils.

which appears on his arm whilst Faustus cuts it in order to sign the devilish pact with blood,¹ and even by Mephostophiles. Reversibly, Faustus only shows prayer, contrition and repentance towards the devil.² I would not agree with W. W. Greg's suggestion in his "Damnation of Faustus," that redemption became impossible for Faustus after committing the sin of demoniality (intercourse with a succubus) in kissing Helen.³ To Faustus, Helen is the means to his salvation, which he achieves through kissing her, but in reality it leads him to yet further damnation.⁴ I believe it is in this connexion that, witnessing Faustus embracing Helen, the Old Man realises that Faustus is doomed.

As illustrated, there is a set of beliefs concerning the damnation of Dr. Faustus. There are several critical opinions differing from my own. In addition, brought to relation with Calvin's theology, the question is also whether Faustus is unwilling or unable to repent. The Calvinists believed that men are predestined by God to salvation or perdition. According to some scholars, Faustus cannot repent because he is not one of the elect. As has often been pointed out, the notion in the A text, "If Faustus can repent" is contrasted to the "If Faustus will repent" (*emphasis mine*) in the B text. I believe, however, that Faustus can choose freely to either stand or fall.

Furthermore, some scholars have argued that at the end of the play, Faustus asks God for forgiveness at last and wishes to repent. He is denied by the very same God, however, and perpetual burning is secured. On these grounds, several scholars have suggested that Marlowe's theology is different, that his God is the God of power, not of love, a wrathful God who is not able to forgive Faustus. I believe, however, that Faustus cannot be delivered from the devils because he is never strong and constant in faith. He sees Christ's redeeming blood streaming in the sky, but despair prevents him from genuine repentance. He also merely sees the wrathful God

¹ Here I cannot agree with Davidson, who says that the God of Marlowe offers no 'outward revelation,' 522. Faustus probably received more revelations than any other theatrical mortal encountered in this study.

² The devil is no god, see Calvin I, chap .xiv, iii.

³ The *incubi* and the *succubi* are discussed at length in Nicolas Kiessling's article, "Doctor Faustus and the Sin of Demoniality," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 15, no. 2. See Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring, 1975), 205-211, with a list of authors who voiced agreement and disagreement with Greg's argument. Kiessling argues against Greg, showing that the union with these demon spirits was a venial, and not a mortal sin.

⁴ The spirit that is summoned is Helen of Troy, who has been abducted by Paris. The question is what kind of spirit is Helen of Troy? She is extraordinarily beautiful, even more than Jupiter. She is also light and brightness. Faustus loves her, but this is apparently love of a different kind, as he also perceives her as a source of immortality. Hence the theme of immortality is being introduced in this episode, where Helen makes her appearance almost like a demi-goddess. Faustus believes she can extract his soul from his body. But then again, Helen of Troy is also regarded as the causer of misery, and it becomes evident that Faustus' infatuation with Helena is yet another step toward his downfall. He does not wish to repent, and again he denies Christianity. Helen has brought destruction to Troy, and so does this Helen, standing for vain illusion, symbolise Faustus' destruction. Faustus' last wish is not to call on God, but to kiss Helen and so embrace damnation. Greg argued that Marlowe's Helen is a succubus. Also Kirschbaum, "Dr Faustus: A Reconsideration," 91, *Godshalk*, 186. Helen is also traditionally a part of sorcerers. She was a companion of Simon Magus, and she is connected with wisdom. The Gnostics believed that the true unknown and good god was concealed in Helen, the Ennoia (Wisdom). Still, I believe that Marlowe's God is not the jealous God of Gnosticism, nor is Mephostophiles a Gnostic agent, who brings secret knowledge to Faustus.

frowning at him throughout. In addition, he dies in his sins, as his last words are not “Christ” but “Ah Mephostophilis.”¹ In my view, Divine justice, which is always righteous, is not compromised.

1.5. Christopher Marlowe’s Mephostophiles

Christopher Marlowe’s Mephostophiles² is mainly indebted to the *English Faust Book*, whereof we have spoken much in the previous chapter.³ Mephostophiles of the chapbooks is the progenitor of Marlowe’s figure. He is the archetype upon which Mephostophiles is patterned. Marlowe certainly held the model of the proto-Mephostophiles before him, but he did not simply dramatise the character. He borrowed much from the proto-Mephostophiles of the EFB, but some divergences are nonetheless present where Marlowe devised some new features and added his own poetic embellishment. This is a richness which adds to his complexity. In addition, some of the new characteristics introduced are results of “adicyones” and alterations – characteristics which might not have been Marlowe’s intention at all. In this regard, I mainly think of his powers to transform the clowns into animals, which speaks against devilish powers limited to creating illusions only. Still, it should be pointed out that he does this in a low-comedy scene. The initial intention might have been completely different, but we have to deal with the texts as they have remained to us, given that *Dr. Faustus* is not the text in its original form.

Mephostophiles would not be very visually striking. At first he has a hideous shape, but his repulsive form is soon replaced by that of a Franciscan friar. Mephostophiles is therefore human in appearance.⁴ On this criterion, he is a devil we already know since Lucifer also appeared in a human form - as a “prowde galonte” in *Wisdom*. He enters “with thunder and lightning”⁵ and appears to Faustus at midnight,⁶ but other protagonists are perfectly oblivious to his presence.

¹ Certain scholars have expressed the view that Faustus, in issuing these words, faces death with a sigh of relief.

² Marlowe’s play offers a change of the name from Mephostophiles to Mephostophilis (A-Text) and Mephostophilis (B-Text). The change of the vowel from “o” to “a” brings to mind Hagemann’s hypothesis – mè-Fausto-phíles = no friend to Faust, a pun thus. See A. Hagemann, in: Programm des Gymnasiums zu Gaudenz 1872, 1-12, as quoted in Mahal „Mephisto-Splitter“ 252 n 27. Also the already quoted Hebrew mephatteh taphel = enticer to folly. He is also called Mephisto and Mephostophilus, but he is also referred to as a familiar. Note, however, that a familiar and a devil are one and the same, on which see *Malleus Maleficarum*, II.Qn.1.Ch.xi.p.137: II.Qn.1.Ch.xiv.p.145; Scot *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, III.v., where he speaks of a “familiar divell.” Also King James’ *Demonology* does not distinguish between a devil and a familiar spirit.

³ Marlowe probably never knew Zauberteufel, although he reached him indirectly as a source through GFB. Also Bakeless, 288. And this also indirectly through EFB, because Marlowe did not consult the German *Historia*.

⁴ He is dressed in a long robe. His head contains small horns in some modern adaptations.

⁵ This indicates that he, as a devil, can produce thunder and lightning. It was believed that witches, for instance, learned from the devil how to control “the rain, the hail, the wind and lightning,” as well as how to stir tempests.

⁶ I, ii, 28.

Mephostophiles is variously referred to as “Mephistophilis” and “the devil.” Even though it may appear that Mephostophiles is unlike the devil in certain aspects, he is in all essentials a devil.¹ Marlowe does not stray from this concept. Mephostophiles is not Faustus’ evil self or a visualisation of his mental conflict; rather, he is a typical devil in most respects. Like a typical devil, Mephostophiles is a swift spirit, he can become invisible at will and is a shape shifter. He cannot raise the dead to life; he only “arranges fantasms” and deceives the senses.² He is Lucifer’s pawn, a servant and minister, and he is a member of the hellish trinity, making his appearance together with Lucifer and Beelzebub.³ Together with other devils, he flies in hope to get people’s souls.⁴ His task is to attract attention away from God, but, more importantly, his mission’s responsibility is to seduce and eventually defeat, i.e. - to make sure that Dr. Faustus does not escape his grasp so that he is doomed at the end. Likewise, he does not exercise anything in God’s name but in “the devils name.”

Mephostophiles is a highly fascinating character – a devious devil of vast intellectual ability who is also skilled in magic. The nuances and elaborations of these faculties introduce a new devil to the English stage, they indicate an essential step in the advanced “evolution” of the theatrical devil, and they make Mephostophiles particularly interesting and unique in the history of pre-Shakespearean theatrical devils.

1.6. Mephostophiles’ Faculites and his Dealings with Faustus

Mephostophiles is summoned by Faustus to the woods outside Wittenberg. In a sinister and threatening atmosphere,⁵ Faustus stands in a magical circle marked with various signs and

¹ As discussed, he is not a ghost. Such a notion is ridiculed in the Rome scene (when the invisible Faustus plays pranks upon the Pope, one of the cardinals suggests that this might be a ghost roused from Purgatory). Mephostophiles feigns concern seeing the Pope and the friars carrying ‘Bell, Booke, and Candle,’ thus pointing to Catholic superstition, a notion that would have certainly pleased the Protestant audience. Moreover, he remains unmoved by their supremely ineffective “exoricm” (a parodic mixture of a ritual of excommunication and exorcism, as Ward has observed, quoted in Keefer’s edition, 81-82 n 59). As a reward, together with Faustus, he beats the friars up before they disappear from the setting). Cf. also King James’ *Demonology*: “[...] the Deuill mockes the Papistes”, chap. v, 22.

² *Compendium Maleficarum* Bk. I. chap. IV. 9. Faustus’ tricks would be dismissed as miracles and deemed as “some prestidigital contrivance.”

³ “It is probable that the devil favours the number three more than any other, because it represents an effective denial of the Holy Trinity”, *Malleus Maleficarum*, II. Qn 1.chap.16, 150.

⁴ It is written in *Malleus Maleficarum*: “For in devils there are three things to be considered – their nature, their duty and their sin; and by nature they belong to the empyrean of heaven, through sin to the lower hell, but by reason of the duty assigned to them [...] as ministers of punishment to the wicked and trial to the good, their place is in the clouds of the air. For they do not dwell here with us on earth lest they should plague us too much, but in the air and around the fiery sphere [...]”, II. Qn.1.chap.15,147. Mephostophiles’ place is, therefore, the air, in situations when the role as a tempter is assigned to him. On the devil in the air, as discussed, see Ephesians 2:2.

⁵ I assume he entered “a bushy grove”; it is Spisser Waldt in the EFB.

words.¹ In the A-text, Faustus simply comes on stage to conjure, informing the audience in a soliloquy that night has fallen and that he shall begin his diabolic ritual. The B-text has it that Lucifer and four devils appear on stage in the conjuring scene. Hence, there appear to be, according to the stage direction, a total of five devils: Lucifer and four devils.² The devils are invisible to Faustus; they ensconce themselves, according to W. W. Greg, in all likelihood on the upper-stage.³ It appears that the devils in the B-text are already there before Faustus even makes his speech.⁴ One of them is almost certainly Mephostophiles.

Mephostophiles is charged by Faustus in the name of Beelzebub and Demogorgon to appear before him; accordingly, in order to arise, it is evident that Mephostophiles needs permission from these his two “superiors.”⁵ Faustus’ lengthy Latin speech of invocation appears meaningless;⁶ it seems at the first glimpse, Marlowe shows magic has no force over Mephostophiles, for although Faustus is convinced that it is he who by virtue of his magic spells

¹ J. B. Russell has observed that “the author deliberately mixes magic and witchcraft, the traditional signs and symbols of hermetic magic with the witchlike invocation of an evil spirit.” See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World* (Ithaca and London, 1986), 60f. According to Widmann, by avowing a good Christian word and holy names, it was believed that it was possible to carry out supernatural things. To paraphrase Widmann, Faustus apparently thinks that such names and words would be so powerful as to frighten devils and ghosts to such an extent that they may be compelled to appear before humans, 101. Such avowal for that kind of purpose, Widmann continues, is in this case highly damned and irresponsible. Faustus misunderstands the power and effectiveness of the Gospels, you have to have the Gospels in your heart in the first place. On conjuration and condemnation of usage of Holy Names for such godless purposes see also Milichius, chap. VII.

² B.I.ii.226. They might appear from out of the rivened earth, (i.e. the trap in the floor) as Mephostophiles does in the famous illustration on the title-page of the 1616 quarto. Here, he looks indeed like the devils as depicted in woodcuts contained in *Compendium Maleficarum* by Francesco Maria Gnazzo. On the problem of stage performance of the incantation episode, see Glynne Wickham, “Exeunt to the Cave”: Notes on the Staging of Marlowe’s Plays”, *The Tulane Drama Review.*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Marlowe Issue (Summer, 1964), 188f. Sylvan Barnet also suggested a trapdoor in his article ‘Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* on the Stage’, 201 in his edition of *Dr. Faustus*.

³ On alternative solutions to this staging problem, see Brockbank, 36.

⁴ This is nothing out of ordinary, given that the devils are constantly preying on man’s soul, “for the divel goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”, 2. Tim.2.8.9, as quoted by Scot III.xi,365.

⁵ Demogorgon does not appear in the EFB. The name of Demogorgon is also uttered by Lochrine: “Alas, too soon, by Demogorgon’s knife, / The martial Brutus is bereft of life.” Demogorgon is also mentioned in Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, Part I: “Villain, I tell thee, were that Tamburlaine / As monstrous as Gorgon, prince of Hell [...]”, IV.i.18. About him, R. Gill writes in her edition of *Dr. Faustus*, that ‘Ancient mythology recognized Demogorgon as one of the most terrible primeval gods, whose very name brought death and disaster,’ 17-18 n 63. The English word “Dragon,” which appears in the middle of Faustus’ Latin invocation (B-text), has been interpreted as an inaccurate stage direction until L. Kirschbaum, in my view, justly argued that the creature that is seen in the illustration on the title-page of the 1616 quarto, which reflects the stage performance, is Mephostophiles in the shape of a dragon. See Leo Kirschbaum, “Mephistophilis and the Lost ‘Dragon’” *The Review of English Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 71 (Jul., 1942), 313. One entry in Henslowe’s *Diary* reads: “One city of Rome [...] one dragon for Faustus,” indicating that the dragon was a stage property. On the matter, see also Gill’s edition, xxvii; Bakeless 297. R. Scot speaks of Lucifer being called ‘dragon’ “because of his excellent knowledge, III.ix.361, elsewhere that he is “called dragon, for his pride and force,” III.xx.373.

⁶ One is left with the same impression in GFB, where the devil apes Faustus and mocks him for his attempts to conjure a devil, 8. P. F. inserts the name Mephostophilis in this place already. In GFB, it is but a devil. In this context Lavater also stresses that such rites have no power, “Magike of it self is of no force. Heathnish superstition no doubt it is, that wordes vttered by Magitians, after their peculiar manner, or figures drawne, should haue such a secret and hidden operation’, II.vii.129. The idea of Mephostophiles appearing as a dragon is borrowed from the EFB. In a passage that does not exist in the German *Historia*, P.F. makes Mephostophiles appear as a “fierce dragon, flying and spitting fire round about the house,” showing Lucifer reverence and changing “himself to the form of a friar” (EFB, chap. 19, 937-40).

is the master, Mephostophiles explains that it is not the magic tricks but Faustus' spiritual condition which brought him forth. The incantation issue is treated ambiguously in the play, for although Mephostophiles stresses that he came of "his own accord,"¹ it is obvious that even Robin, a highly incompetent charmer, can force Mephostophiles to come from Constantinople² by means of the formulas contained in one of Faustus' books.³

Unlike a typical devil, who always lies, Mephostophiles sometimes shows up as a truth-teller.⁴ Just as in the source, so does Marlowe's Mephostophiles speak the truth on several occasions, as if he tries to warn Faustus from signing a pact with Lucifer. As regards getting involved with the devil, he does not say explicitly, "do not do it," but he still raises plenty of warnings. He conspicuously appears in his own likeness – as a ghastly devil. Looks can be deceiving, as we have seen with the devil and the Vice figure earlier, but here it is Faustus who wishes to be deceived and it is Faustus who tells him he should change his shape into a more pleasing one. Furthermore, Mephostophiles tells Faustus that he is not at all pliant and obedient because of Faustus' magical spells. They have no control over him, thus hinting that Faustus can never truly be in "commaund of great *Mephastophilis*." He says he only obeys his master Lucifer and can only perform what his master permits, and he also says that his chief aim is not to serve Faustus but to obtain his soul. It is thus plainly revealed that he wants Faustus's soul. In respect thereof he does not say that man's soul is 'a vaine trifle' so as to obtain it easier, he says that it is 'glorious' and an important object for hell instead,⁵ indirectly advising Faustus that he ought to treasure it more and not give it away so foolishly, as it is too valuable to be traded. His following lines illustrate another warning note:

¹ Similarly, the Chester Antichrist also exclaims that he performs false signs and miracles "through his owne accorde." He is, nevertheless, a devil's servant, and the same can be said about Mephostophiles. Mephostophiles appears to Faustus in his own proper devilish form, with smoke, thunder and explosions. Such an entrance must have been very spectacular, and his appearance was certainly frightening to the audience. He obeys when Faustus tells him to re-enter in a more pleasant shape, as a Franciscan friar, and critics agree that this very first characteristic trait of Mephostophiles, the obeisance, causes Faustus to believe that he has power of and can control Mephostophiles, which is wrong and deceiving. The entrance of the devil in the guise of a Franciscan friar is mainly understood as anti-Catholic propaganda.

² A.I.ix.1010-1020/B.III.iii.1154-1157.

³ The first to point to this inconsistency was Tucker Brooke in his *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, Oxford, 1910, 141. On this problem see also further Vatter, 123; Empson, 152.

⁴ Even though this does not fit to the notion that there is no truth in him (Jn. 8:44), yet we must not give ear to the devil. The devil is not to be heard. For the purpose of knowing the truth, God has sent us other teachers. See Lavater III.chap.vii,197. Also: "[...] we should in no wise trust the diuell, albeit he tell the truth," II.chap.xviii,174. Relevant to this subject is what Robert H. West has written in his article "The Impatient Magic of Dr. Faustus," who pointed out that treatises of witchcraft do insist that in order to maximise their sins the devil reveals himself and his aims to his victims before he signs them. I contend that, dramatically speaking, Mephostophiles' appearance is also similar to that of the dramatic ghost: like the ghost, he is conjured from hell, he openly introduces himself, relates where he comes from, tells why he is on earth now, gives a vivid description of hell and describes his former glory.

⁵ How important a human soul is is also illustrated in the fact that Lucifer appears in person to Faustus in order to obtain it.

Nor will we come, unlesse he use such meanes
 Whereby he is in danger to be damnd:
 Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
 Is stoutly to abjure the Trinitie,
 And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.

Mephostophiles openly tells what has brought him forth: Faustus' conjuration was the immediate but not the ultimate cause.¹ The outcome is the same - the devil will be after you whether one summons the devil by means of enchantment or whether one renounces Christ. Mephostophiles did not come because he was 'obedient to Faustus' will' and commanded to do so but because Faustus forswore Jesus. So now that he is here indeed, Faustus is in grave danger to be damned. The argument against the philosophy issued in the above quoted passage is to do the opposite – to stoutly forswear the devil and pray devoutly to God. Mephostophiles' references to God also blatantly infer that God truly exists. Not only does Mephostophiles show Faustus that a human soul is of immense importance, but his entire brief account on the fall of Lucifer is an obvious indication that ought to serve as a warning to Faustus: Lucifer fell from heaven because of "aspiring pride and insolence."² Faustus' sin parallels that of the Archfiend. The proud and insolent Faustus does not read into these hints at all. He has already gained an impression of Lucifer, and this is not shaken by Mephostophiles' account. Again, Mephostophiles, having personal experience in the matter, urges Faustus with a passionate outburst to forgo necromantic pursuits: "O Faustus, leave these frivolous demaunds, / Which stike a terror to my fainting soule." Faustus is deaf to this warning. Quite the contrary, he exclaims: "Had I as many soules as there be starres, /Ide give them al for *Mephastophilis*."

Mephostophiles warns Faustus of the horrors of hell. He warns him that eventually he will learn for himself what the true meaning of "pains of hell" is. Despite the fact that Mephostophiles testifies from personal experience, the incredulous Faustus does neither relinquish his initial thoughts nor does he fall under the influence of these words. He remains mistrustful, and he does not think that there is anything to what the spirit says about the dangers of hell.³ In addition, Mephostophiles says that the dance of devils means nothing, thus hinting that everything is but an illusion. The show is only there for the sake of delighting Faustus. Faustus, again, takes small notice of such words. Furthermore, before tearing the Old Man into pieces, Mephostophiles, giving Faustus a hint, admits that physical harm and body are of little

¹ On this "doctrine of voluntary ascent," see Kocher, 159.

² Satan is taken to have said "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high" (Isa. 14:14). On the *libido dominandi* see Cox "Devils and Power in Marlowe and Shakespeare," 49.

³ Following the source: "[...] he thought the devil was not so black as they use to paint him, nor hell so hot as the people say, etc.," EFB. chap. 4.

worth; Faustus, however, gives no ear to this and only fears physical pain and returns to obedience whenever the devils threaten to dismember him.¹

In conclusion, Mephostophiles openly reveals the following: he tells why he has presented himself, Faustus has no power over him, he is not his servant but only Lucifer's, he discloses the true nature of hell, his disposition reveals the true consequence of loss, he tells what the devilish dances stand for and he says he can only create illusions.² These are words one does not necessarily expect to hear from a devil, as they urge the pursuit of that which is right. The devil's truth-telling can have sundry meanings. Rather than showing that Mephostophiles is conjured (i.e. compelled) to answer truthfully, the theatrical function of these words spoken on the stage is a lesson addressed to the audience, and it is a lesson to be learnt well. Apart from that, in freely issuing these warnings, he probably wishes "to make himselfe so to be trusted in these little things, that he may haue the better commoditie thereafter, to deceiue [him] in the end with a tricke once for all,"³ or he trusts in Faustus' misreading due to his false reasoning, who, ironically, does not give him credit where he tells the truth, but ignores or disproves his words and perverts their meaning to suit him. It shows a man who is wilfully blind, who does not wish to see Mephostophiles' true face, who does not wish for the grace of God, whose 'pride has abused his understanding,'⁴ who is not ruled by reason, but by passion, whose only gods are his own appetite and the devil and who is not able to see correctly because he has expelled the Holy Ghost. It is godlessness which has impaired his frame of mind. The concept Faustus has envisaged in his mind prevents him from seeing reality; therefore, he does not effectually check the bees before tasting the honey. With reference to this, I am excluding the possibility that Faustus is manipulative and has serious interpretative problems because Mephostophiles was able to bewitch or creep inside Faustus, and thus take control over him.

The self deception has led to several reversals. Faustus does not only reject withstanding the devil; conversely, he is the one who seeks after and runs to him. Also, as already mentioned, unlike the morality devil and the Vice, there is no need for Mephostophiles to be in disguise. He uncloaks himself as a devil to Faustus from the outset; it is Faustus who urges Mephostophiles to re-enter in a more pleasant shape. We have seen that Eve misinterprets the devil for an angel. Faustus has an overly misleading picture of his spirit, and he misinterprets Mephostophiles for a

¹ Lavater, quoting Mt.10: "Feare not saythe Chryst, those whiche slay the body, but cannot kyll the soule, but rather stande in awe of him, who can cast both bodie and soule into hell fire. The Deuil would like it wel, if we would alwayes stand in feare of him," III.chap.v, 191.

² But he sometimes also seeks to change the subject instantly. He is fairly quick to perceive the peril when the disputations become too serious, and so he speedily seeks to trivialise the provided truthful information by either changing the subject instantly, where he is falsely promising or tempting, or by offering distractions.

³ King James I, *Demonology*, 21.

⁴ EFB, chap.13, 507.

friend, a heroic being and glorious as a challenger of divine order. We have also seen that the serpent promised Eve the same knowledge that God possesses; it promised that she shall be like gods. It promised worship, honour and great gain and that all things shall be in her and Adam's power. Faustus is of no need for such a "primal" tempter. He is already blinded and perverted and desires all these things of his own accord wherefore he turns to the devil instead of the other way around. Furthermore, it is Faustus himself who over-hastily suggests the contract and who proposes foolish terms in it. It is also Faustus himself who asks for another pact sealed in his blood in order to reconfirm his loyalty to Lucifer. It is Faustus who vows unto the devil and it is the parade of the Seven Deadly Sins in their proper shapes that delights him. The devil is unnecessary as a "primal" tempting agent because Faustus is simply already corrupt and tainted with sins.

Surely, there is something mysterious, intricate and unpredictable in Mephostophiles. Still, all in all, he does not have contradictory character traits – these, I argue, are but "divers arts and temptations of the devil."¹ If it appears as if Mephostophiles tries to dissuade Faustus from making a pact with the devil, it is he who beguiles and tempts him into signing the contract by issuing lies and making false promises, thereby exclaiming, "O what will not I do to obtaine his soule?"² He "threatens" to go back to hell if Faustus does not yield,³ and he fetches a chafer of coals in order to melt Faustus' blood and thus cause it to flow again, so that Faustus may bequeath his soul to Lucifer.⁴

Faustus must provide a "solemn vow of fidelity" to Lucifer by offering a "written petition."⁵ This bargain with the devil already indicates several inconsistencies in the source: in the EFB, Faustus wilfully and in "perfect memory" gives his soul and body to the devil, confirming it with a pact written in his own blood. Truly, at first, in chapter 3, Faustus demands from his spirit the following:

1. That the spirit should serve him and be obedient unto him in all things that he asked of him from that hour until the hour of his death.
2. Further, any thing that he desired of him he should bring it to him.

¹ St. Peter's words in the *Acts of Peter*, as quoted by Brockbank, 10.

² We have seen earlier that the devil is tireless in his efforts to defile man's soul.

³ In the A-text he says: "If thou deny it, I *wil* backe to hel," whereas in the B-text he says, "If thou deny it, I *must* backe to hel" A.v.477/B.II.i.425 (*emphasis mine*). He hides the true reason for his forced departure from Faustus. In reality, he must go back to hell whenever he fails in tempting humans: "And when anie of them are not occupied in that [tempting], re-terne they must to their prison in hel. King James I *Demonology* I.chap.vi, 24.

⁴ Now it is him who is pleading for Faustus' 'manly fortitude.' He is using the same Faustus' rhetoric of "manly fortitude" to instigate Faustus to 'manfully' sign the contract. While I hold the view that Mephostophiles serves a typical devil's purpose, some critics wonder about his motive in gaining Faustus' soul, especially because his personal interest in Faustus' soul appears to be stressed in the A-text.

⁵ Quite identical to the description of a typical witches' pact with the devil as described in *Compendium Maleficarum*, bk.I, chap. vi.

3. Also, that in all Faustus his demands or interrogations the spirit should tell him nothing but that which is true.

However, the new conditions, which may be due to the lack of a unified plot, are modified:

1. That he might be a spirit in shape and quality
2. That Mephostophiles should be his servant and at his commandment
3. That Mephostophiles should bring him any thing, and do for him whatsoever.
4. That at all times he should be in his house, invisible to all men, except only to himself, and at his commandment to show himself.
5. Lastly, that Mephostophiles should at all times appear at his command, in what form or shape soever he would.

This inconsistency is also apparent in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. Initially, sheer studiousness and drive for knowledge come to the fore.¹ Yet, Dr. Faustus changes his goals very early - he decides to turn to magic for the sake of fulfilling his lust for fame, wealth and power. We see him with lesser ambitions when he calls on the devil. Faustus demands twenty-four years of life "in al voluptousnesse" with Mephostophiles' constant attendance. Thereby, he should attend to all demands, slay his enemies, aid his friends, "and always be obedient to my wil," A, 335-341. Ultimately, there is a change (interestingly there is also no clause obliging Mephostophiles to give answers to every question imaginable) in what follows:

First, that Faustus may be a spirit in forme and substance.²
Secondly, that Mephostophilis shall be his seruant, and at his command.
Thirdly, that Mephostophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever.
Fourthly, that he shall be in his chamber or house inuisible.
Lastly, that hee shall appeare to the said Iohn Faustus at all times, in what forme or shape soeuer he please, A.I.v.541-549; B.II.i.488-495.

Faustus is cheated into signing this contract. If he expected the items would fulfil his original patriotic and altruistic wishes, he is cheated all the more. He does not obtain infinite power and knowledge; neither does he carry out anything he planned before forfeiting his soul.³ It is indeed a 'foolish bargain,' signed by Faustus out of folly and ignorance,⁴ as he "exchanges his immortal soul for showy, short-term benefits."⁵ He signs over his soul to the devil to keep Mephostophiles

¹ Baron, *Faustus. Geschichte, Sage, Dichtung* (München 1982), 99f. "P.F. makes Faustus' desire to know the 'secrets of hell' his motivation for the pact," says J. H. Jones in the note to his edition of the English Faust Book. It is said in chapter 24 that eight years after the contract has been made Faustus was for the biggest part of the time engaged in inquiry, study, questioning and *disputations*. Marlowe's Faustus' aspiration for cognisance has also often been interpreted as his martyrdom for Renaissance values.

² Faustus wishes to become a spirit (a devil), to become immortal, in order to control the elements and in order to gain power over the world. See also Clifford Davidson, "Doctor Faustus of Wittenberg", *Studies in Philology*, vol. 59, no. 3 (Jul., 1962), 516.

³ Also Brooks "The Unity of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*", 284.

⁴ See L. T. Fitz, "'More Than Thou Hast Wit to Ask': Marlowe's Faustus as Numskull," *Folklore*, vol. 88, no. 2 (1977), 218.

⁵ *Ibid*, 218.

for twenty-four years in return, and yet he received less than he bargained for.¹ The gains are limited and only present until the contract expires. Almost immediately after the contract has been signed, Mephostophiles violates the third clause, since Faustus recognises that Mephostophiles' powers are limited,² as he cannot fetch him a real wife. Faustus is also certainly not made a spirit, despite what the Bad Angel says.³ Mephostophiles also violates the second clause, since 'Mephostophiles 'serves' Faustus not "in good faith in response to a bargain but because he is "vigilant to 'obtain his soul,' that is, to dominate him by pretending to serve him."⁴ Through the disputations on astrology, he realises that Mephostophiles' knowledge is limited as well as unable to 'resolve him of all ambiguities.' Faustus cannot replace the studies he has rejected as elementary with total knowledge, as absolute knowledge belongs to God. He rather replaces them with devilish illusions, practical jokes and childish tricks. Apart from that, Faustus cannot ask whatever he wants to know. Thus, Marlowe's Mephostophiles does not wish to answer Faustus' question as to who made this world. Everything that could speak against hell, he does not wish to reveal, even though he has told Faustus to ask whatever he wants.⁵ Then again, he has wickedly sworn not to God, but to hell and Lucifer that he shall fulfil all Faustus' conditions.

The turn away from initial ideas occurs because Faustus is too much in "loue with the worlde." Faustus sells his soul to the devil because he desires power and control: he wants to rule the world, to ransack India for gold, to wall Germany in brass and to expel all foreign enemies. His preferences change, however, and what he gains, he misuses for his own benefit. Perhaps one could argue that he cannot create anything for the benefit of humankind because the devil cannot create anything positive, but still Faustus commands Mephostophiles to do several tasks for his own sake. It is the fulfilment of his sensual desires he is most interested in. Granted, many things which Faustus demands from Mephostophiles are carried out: by means of his 'commanding charmes,' he holds the sway over Belimote, Argiron and Asterote IV, ii, line 1349 and other devils.⁶ Ostensibly he also has the Furies at his command, B. IV, I, line 1210; the 'Germaine Coniurer's fame is spread throughout the earth. He is the 'fame of Wittenberge,/ The wonder of the world for Magick Art', B. IV, I, lines 190-92. He is the master of black magic, and

¹ Also Virginia Mary Meehan, *Christopher Marlowe Poet and Playwright*, The Hague & Paris, 1974, 76.

² Even before signing the pact he has told Faustus that he can only perform what Lucifer permits, and hell's powers are already limited.

³ After the contract has been signed, the Bad Angel treats Faustus as if he were a devil. He addresses him as a spirit, and assures him he is damned, which the devils certainly are, and like a devil, Faustus is made to believe that he cannot repent and that he cannot be saved. That Faustus is not really made a spirit is confirmed in the EFB, chapter 8, where it stands that he only thought himself to be a spirit.

⁴ John D Cox, "Devils and Power in Marlowe and Shakespeare", *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 23, Early Shakespeare Special Number (1993), 55.

⁵ A.I.v.560; B.II.i.506.

⁶ Astoreth, Anaball, Baal-Berith, and Belial also occur in the *Cornish Ordinalia*.

non other can be compared to him. He makes use of ‘necromantick spels’ in order to impress¹ and he is richly rewarded for his sportive tricks performed at courts. The Emperor also offers him the opportunity of commanding ‘the state of Germany’ in the B text. But still, Faustus is only a court conjurer, and the life he is leading is also a life of mental suffering and inward torture. This aside, the main point is not whether Mephostophiles fulfils everything that is requested in the clauses or not. The fact that he does not grant him every wish only contributes to the great deceit and aggravates the situation even more. Even if Mephostophiles did it (he cannot and will not live up to Faustus’ expectations), it is more important that he causes Faustus to believe that he has legal claim on his soul and that his soul is traded – this is the greatest cheat of all.²

The pact between Dr. Faustus and Mephostophiles also brings “some sympathy in wickedness” between them,

which gives rise to familiarity approaching friendship, and so to a gradual feeling of confidence; and this begets in the weaker party [in this case, Dr. Faustus] a certain presumptuousness and boldness in making requests from the stronger [Mephostophiles], and in the stronger some pleasure in fulfilling his federate’s requests. And so it comes that [he] confides in the devil, thinking that he can command him, and the devil pretends to acknowledge his power.³

With the aid of *Compendium Maleficarum*, this is how one is able to understand the friendship between Dr. Faustus and Mephostophiles. Mephostophiles is a page for a time (within the space of twenty-four years), and he is such a friend to Faustus that he offers him temporal pleasure and everlasting damnation. He shams friendliness – he can be jovial and friendly to Faustus, playing several jokes on the Pope together with Faustus, etc., feigning he is a servant.⁴ Then again, he promptly falls into rage and turns himself into a fierce and grim devil, forcing Faustus’ obedience. Mephostophiles is sardonic, and he has great pleasure in daunting Faustus and mocking him through his misery. There is every reason to believe that he does this out of malice, as a true devil. Mephostophiles is a false friend and a fake servant. Faustus, therefore, “frees” himself from God (Divinity, adieu!) in order to serve his own appetite, as well as the devil.

Mephostophiles heavily contributes to Faustus’ spiritual agony, letting him despair and wallow in melancholy, threatening him with physical punishment and even offering him a dagger

¹ He erects the castle in the air before the presence of the Duke of Vanholt and his Duchess. He is further able to charm his adversaries dumb. He also conjures the spirits of Alexander the Great and his Paramour (Thaïs) and Helen of Troy and he lets Mephostophiles fetch the grapes for the Duchess.

² Cf. also Mk. 8:36: “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?” In addition, unlike the cheated devil of the ransom theory, here it is Faustus who is cheated.

³ *Compendium Maleficarum*, bk. I. chap. vi, 17.

⁴ Their companionship is especially stressed in the A-text.

to commit suicide.¹ On the other hand, Mephostophiles alleviates and relieves him from it by distracting him with various shows and carnal pleasures. In other words, he plays with Faustus.

The idea of feigned friendship is even more accentuated in the B-text. Here, Mephostophiles does not exactly gloat over Faustus' soul,² but he is nonetheless present with Lucifer and Beelzebub (invisible to Faustus, probably situated on the balcony³ and watching with glee), expecting Faustus' end and not showing any feelings of concern or signs of pity or remorse that Faustus is going to dwell in a "gloomy night" eternally.⁴ Moreover, since he is present throughout the scene, he also beholds Faustus' final tremendous stress and grief when he despairs. Finally, the truly devilish nature comes to the surface when he utters, probably with a wicked grin, "What weep'st thou? 'tis too late, despaire, farewell,/ Fooles that will laugh on earth, most weepe in hell."⁵ Finally, he has also come to seize Faustus,⁶ and we may speculate as to whether he is among the devils who tear Faustus's body into pieces and drag his soul away to everlasting torment. In the end, however, it is fairly clear that he delights and triumphs over Faustus' damnation.⁷

Mephostophiles has "sweete words," but in practice he delivers up nothing but lies and fables. He lies that he shall be Faustus' slave and that he shall give him more than he has wit to ask for. He also lies he shall perform everything prescribed in the articles. He also falsely promises Faustus that he shall be as great as Lucifer himself.⁸ He lies when telling Faustus that he shall be able to raise spirits from the dead⁹ and do things even greater than these, and he lies that he shall procure courtesans for Faustus. In reality, these are but devils in the shape of women. He speaks against and disparages Heaven, as he lies to Faustus that men are made more excellent than the heavens. Above all, Mephostophiles lies about the validity of the contract. Granted, Faustus has signed the contract, but apparently the contract can be annulled if Faustus repents in time.¹⁰ After the contract has been signed, Mephostophiles insistently utters unblushingly heretical

¹ Just like Satan in the temptation of Jesus, he wishes to achieve death and vitiation.

² B, V, ii, lines 1900-1915.

³ Greg's edition 1894-1914 *n* 390.

⁴ This is certainly reminiscent of the devils appearing at the deathbed.

⁵ B.V.ii.1993-1994. Omitted in the A-text.

⁶ Perhaps Mephostophiles simply prevents him from burning the magical books.

⁷ Thereby Mephostophiles acts quite contrariwise to the angels, who rejoice in our salvation (Luke 15:10).

⁸ This is a somewhat perverted form of the Biblical devil who promises that Eve shall be like a goddess.

⁹ The devil cannot raise the dead out of their graves. See Lavater, II.chap.xvii,171.; King James *Demonology* II.chap.iii.,40f. On these alleged spirits being none other but devils or some vain visions, see Lavater II.chap.ix.,141f. V. Under no circumstances does the Protestant interpretation grant these apparitions the status of dead peoples' souls. This is not to say that this philosophy is to be employed in our previous discussion on the ghosts, however. As may be gathered to what Faustus says to the emperor, spirits can neither be raised by a conjurer such as Faustus nor by Mephostophiles, A.x.1081-1090. In the B-version, Mephostophiles is sent to fetch the spirits of Alexander the Great and his paramour B.IV.ii.1268-1273. But it is pretty certain that what he brings forth are only shadows, not beings of real substantial bodies. These spirits can only resemble the actual historical persons.

¹⁰ Also Anon. "Faust on Stage", 275, in Kastan's edition of *Dr. Faustus*.

philosophies, reassuring Faustus he has committed an irredeemable sin, and thus smothering all his hopes for salvation.

Mephostophiles' task is to deflect repentance by all means. Whether present on stage or not, he keeps a wary eye on Faustus the entire time,¹ insisting that a promise is a promise and that a bond is a bond.² Like the Biblical accuser, he, as a false accuser, watches that Faustus does not violate the bondage and so escape him even though he himself is not a reliable contractual partner. Whenever he senses "a conflict of interest" and danger that Faustus might waver, the exasperated spirit attacks more violently, demanding subjection to him either with threats or with distractions.

Mephostophiles is a false teacher. It is said that the devil "easilie spyes our affections, and so conformes himself thereto, to deceaue vs to the knowledge thereof."³ He could see what Faustus was most prone to – knowledge, fame and glory. Faustus is not a character of noble origin,⁴ but rather a man who searches for abnormal affairs, like extending the boundaries of existence. He has a strong desire for power and omnipotence, strives to master control over the world, to rule over nature or over the world in general. He is an odd mixture of a medieval and humanist scholar who does not believe in the teachings of Christianity, but oddly assumes that hell is in possession of all knowledge – that Mephostophiles is a living repository for all knowledge. Faustus puts his will into practice, but the supernatural powers he seeks are infernal ones. In signing the contract, knowledge is available to Faustus, but it is under the devil's restriction.

Dr. Faustus and Mephostophiles dispute about learned matters. Presumably they have discussed a large number of questions during the twenty four years; in the play they discuss only a few. Faustus contemplates the universe. He is interested in natural philosophy, but their disputes also concern mysteries of religion. In this analysis, it is assumed that Marlowe relied on Aristotle's logic while making up the disputations between Mephostophiles and Dr. Faustus, not least because in the first scene his Dr. Faustus refers to Aristotle's *Analytics* – the two treatises on logic. "Truth is born of argument" - the goal of a dispute is to discover the truth or to inspect its accuracy. The first applied method is "the instruction by question and answer," followed by the art or practice of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments. Mephostophiles' "thesis statement" is followed by Faustus' antithesis. Thereby, it can be observed that

¹ Cf. GFB, ch. 7: "Wer allein das Zeitlich betracht / Vnd auff das Ewig hat kein acht / Ergibt sich dem Teuffel Tag vnd Nacht / *Der hab auff seine Seel wol acht*" (*emphasis mine*).

² Also Brooks, "The Unity of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*" 289. Here, Mephostophiles is somewhat reminiscent of the OT devil-accuser and his function is similar to that of the devils as "prosecuting attorneys" in all the four Last Judgement plays, and also to the role of Satan as an external observer in the mysteries.

³ King James I, *Demonology*, 13.

⁴ The flatterer Mephostophiles also puffs up Faustus' vanity by using cajoling talk, calling him by name from the start. He therefore also tempts with vainglory.

Mephostophiles provides factual information, whereas Faustus takes the opposite viewpoint only for the sake of argument – which in turn proves to be illogical. Mephostophiles tells the truth and so demonstrates a superior logic. Faustus' rebuttal, however, is based on theses – speculations Mephostophiles can only laugh at. The dialectic leads to Dr. Faustus' catastrophic inference and utopian fallacy. In the end, whenever one would expect an obvious deduction, Faustus' corollary, and ultimately his logic, fails. For someone who pursues knowledge and truth, Faustus' conclusions are surprising, for his deductive flaws discredit him as a skilled philosopher. His judgments and intellectual capacities are not clouded by supernatural interference. His serious limitations as a logician result from his premature conclusions and his obstinacy to face the truth.

The devil is excellent in debate. Still, Mephostophiles, as a devil, is also a devilish disputant and therefore supremely untrustworthy. Occasionally he tells the truth, then makes use of his art of persuasion, and lies. However, even in his lies, some truth slips through. Mephostophiles mingles dishonesty with truth. In the following example, his intent is not to discover the truth, but to hide it from Faustus. The theme of the dialectic is heavenly matters. The deduction ought to result from the two premises; however, Mephostophiles uses sophistry in order to delude Faustus' understanding. Heaven was made for man, Mephostophiles reasons; therefore, man is more excellent than heaven. However, this was not humanist philosophy's goal. Mephostophiles simply twists Pico della Mirandola's claim that man is the most worthy of wonder and that he deserves all admiration, yet still, he is lower than the angels. Further, Mephostophiles speaks in absolutes by using insidious theories: Faustus is doomed - this results due to his signing of the contract.

There is no denial that Mephostophiles is a devil-philosopher, the one who "excels Faustus in debate." He is a cultivated character who has great rhetorical skill. He has intellectual power and he can work strange things by the use of evil charms. However, his moral philosophy is twisted. Mephostophiles is not a prophet – he is not an interpreter of the will of God, and he does not speak by divine inspiration. Rather, he tutors Dr. Faustus in the black arts. In addition, he provides "worldly riches," fame and glory, some supernatural powers¹ and knowledge of the universe's secrets. For example, in a chariot carried by yoked dragons, Mephostophiles takes Faustus on a cosmic journey so that he may explore the universe and "find secrets of astronomy."² In the Age of Discovery this is certainly interesting, since it enables Faustus to learn what the times could not; notwithstanding, certain theories Mephostophiles does not prove

¹ Faustus has received some powers from his spirit, in the main, however, he must have Mephostophiles' aid to help him in his "art". Therefore, he does not really attain mastery of these powers.

² They are also on a voyage around the world, which is completed on the eighth night. On the matter, see also John Gorecki, "A Marlovian Precedent for Satan's Astronomical Journey in *Paradise Lost* IX. 63-67", *Milton Quarterly* 17:2 (1983), 46.

sufficiently, and much of what he teaches him is not excellent but rather pointless or “forbidden knowledge,” studies which “heavenly powers do not permit” and which displease God. Secret knowledge is perhaps what Faustus’ time wanted to achieve, thus it is close to people’s minds, but in this case it is connected with demons, and therefore damnable – the fact that it is dragons, which belong to the netherworld, that carry him across the sky, indicates the origin of such power and its demonic quality.¹ This knowledge causes Faustus to fall into “sin of curiosity”; it is noticeably restrictive since Mephostophiles cannot provide secret heavenly knowledge. He is generally either very secretive, or he passes equivocal hints which leave Faustus with many uncertainties, but on this matter he refuses to answer questions because they could bring harm to the kingdom of hell. Therefore, by means of the spirit’s aid, Faustus cannot gain “total knowledge.”² Faustus wishes for more than human knowledge, wherefore he has sold his body and soul to the devil; but, in return, he has gained only a bit of knowledge.³ Mephostophiles desires to play with Faustus rather than provide higher knowledge. And, above all, Mephostophiles teaches him how to “reach” hell.

The predominant cause for Faustus being caught in a vicious circle is his self-deception. However, Mephostophiles is not an irrelevant bystander. He is a lesser tempter (a notion we have already examined while discussing the devil and the Vice), but still a tempter, and his seductions are of no marginal importance.⁴ Mephostophiles withdraws Faustus from God. As a tempter, he, as noted above, lies and makes vain promises, but he also provides alternative suggestions.⁵ Like Lucifer in *Wisdom* and the Vice, he invites him to follow earthly pleasures. Moreover, while the Vice urges man to think about earth, Mephostophiles urges Faustus to “think of the diuel.” Furthermore, similar to the Vice, Mephostophiles fetches the Seven Deadly Sins in the B-version. He equally deceives Faustus by letting a show of devils be performed so as to ‘delight his mind’ and bestow upon him earthly riches. The devils he has summoned offer Faustus crowns and rich apparels, but he is yet a bonds slave to the will of the devil. Everything is but for the sake of appearance. Mephostophiles distracts Faustus from contemplating matrimony by fetching illusionary women for him, who are actually devils. Thus, like Satan in St. Paul, he tempts him with sexual indulgence and encourages lustfulness. Mephostophiles, therefore, “procures sensual satisfaction in order to distract his mind from spiritual concern,”⁶ and he lures

¹ This is reminiscent of the flight of Medea in her flying dragon-chariot. Cf. Ovid, VII. 287-301; 309-314.

² Also Davidson, “Doctor Faustus of Wittenberg”, 516.

³ Also McCloskey, “The Theme of Despair in Marlowe’s *Faustus*,” 112.

⁴ In Marlowe, his role as a tempter is shared with other agents of destruction.

⁵ The bad Angels are “said to darken [the intellect] by means of their phantasms, and they cannot influence the intellect directly, but only indirectly, in so far as the intellect is bound to take such phantasms into consideration,” *Malleus Maleficarum*, II.Qn.1.chap.10., 133.

⁶ Kirschbaum, 86.

him by procuring magical shows. He brings about phantasms and shows which add to seduction and similar to the Vice he incites to “merriment and sports.” The pleasures provided for Faustus help him to discard despair and suicidal thoughts.¹ Elsewhere, the outward parade of the Seven Deadly Sins brought to pass by Mephostophiles is equally delightful to Faustus – all for the sake of drawing the attention away from God.

We have seen that Mephostophiles’ task is to prevent Faustus from repenting. He also achieves this by instilling despair and terror. Whenever Faustus wishes to think of repentance, there Mephostophiles appears, if not to intrude upon such contemplations and distract him with entertainment in a most cool, calm and collected manner, than to oppress and inflict pain and fear on him as a ferocious devil. He terrifies him with threats to tear him into pieces and at one instance Mephostophiles also offers him a dagger to add to his misery and despair, “in the hope that suicide will damn forever the soul the devil is in danger of losing.”² Here, it should be noted that the offering of the knife is Marlowe’s invention.³ Similarly, the invisible Mephostophiles and Lucifer hold Faustus’ hands and tongue, preventing him from repenting.⁴ Marlowe’s Mephostophiles grows irritated at the question of who made the world, and he utters the line, “Moue me not, for I will not tell thee.”⁵ He becomes angry when he sees that the words of the Old Man influence Faustus, wherefore he threatens Faustus with physical violence:

Me. Thou traytor Faustus, I arrest thy soule,
For disobedience to my soueraigne Lord,
Reuolt, or I’le in peace-meale teare thy flesh
(A.xiii.1333-1335; B.V.i.1847-1849).⁶

Faustus also explains to the scholars that he oftentimes wished to repent, but “the Diuel threatned to teare me in peeces if I nam’d God: to fetch me body and soule.”⁷

Mephostophiles might be sympathetic, especially because of the human in him that comes out. At one point he appears as being an afflicted and “unhappy spirit,” sad and of a gloomy disposition because of being separated from eternal bliss. This certainly makes him a tragic character and establishes an emotional effect between the stage and the audience. Together with Lucifer and the other devils, he suffers both physical torture in hell and spiritual suffering, which

¹ A.I.vi.651-654/B.II.ii.591-594.

² Snyder 322.

³ Somewhat similarly, when Despair recommends suicide to Magnyfycence in Skelton’s *Magnyfycence*, Mischief enters with rope and a knife.

⁴ A.xiv.1415-1422; B.V.ii.1950-1956.

⁵ A.vi.697/B.II.ii.639-640.

⁶ The devil inflicts physical harm (Lk. 13:16)

⁷ A.xiv.1431-1433; B.V.ii.1966-1968.

is “the principal torture” that “consists in the loss of heaven.”¹ The melancholic spirit laments over the loss of God’s grace and displays his affliction over having to suffer eternal spiritual torment:

Why this is hel, nor am I out of it:
Thinkst thou that I who saw the face of God,²
And tasted the eternal joyes of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hels,
In being depriv’d of everlasting blisse:
O *Faustus*, leave these frivolous demaunds,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soule.³

Mephostophiles’ emotional speech shows that he “care[s] to touch the *heart* of the spectator with his complaint.”⁴ He “feels grief,” and his “misfortune” and “sad words” “injure” the audience.⁵ Such language asks for appropriate disposition, and the spoken words need to be in accordance with the state of the presenter. The actor was certainly expected to express the sentiment convincingly, with a ‘gloomy face’ and a ‘piteous moan’ that would form the emotions within the spectators and compel them to feel sympathy for him, thus bringing them to “believe in his story.”⁶ “An emotional speaker always makes his audience feel with him, even when there is nothing in his arguments,” said Aristotle.⁷ This passage, “used under stress of emotion,” stirred the audience. Still, the audience effect achieved through Mephostophiles’ depression is to be compared to the effect the crocodile tears of the Vice have on the mankind figure. In this way, Mephostophiles manipulates the audience’s response towards him.

Mephostophiles is a transgressor, and his loss is Lucifer’s.⁸ The chief loss is heaven and everlasting debarment from the presence of God – a loss which was brought about as the result of his rebellion, wherefore he cannot expect extenuating circumstances. Just as Satan and Judas before him, Mephostophiles is equally in hopeless despair, trusting his sins are too heavy for God to forgive him. Like a devil, he is an unrepentant sinner, never rueful, never begging pardon for his offences.⁹ Instead, Mephostophiles is entirely in opposition to God and in the service of Lucifer. We have seen in the Gospel of John that the devil is a liar and a murderer from the

¹ See William Dinsmore Briggs, “Marlowe’s *Faustus*, 305-18, 548-70,” *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 38, no. 7 (Nov., 1923), 388.

² Cf. Mt. 18:10 “For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”

³ Roma Gill points out that the lines are translated from St John Chrysostom. See notes 79-80 n 67 of her edition of *Dr. Faustus*.

⁴ Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Ars Poetica. Die Dichtkunst. Lateinisch / Deutsch*, übers. u. mit einem Nachwort versehen von Eckart Schäfer (Stuttgart, 1984), p. 11 [90].

⁵ *Ibid.*, 11 [100].

⁶ Aristotle *Rhetoric* 3, 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 3, 7.

⁸ Perhaps he was seduced into rebelling by Lucifer.

⁹ According to some theologians, God could have no mercy on the devils, who were *ipso facto* incapable of repenting. See Gill, 97 n 71. The devils cannot will good, but can only do what is perverse and evil, says Luther in his *Discourse on Free Will*, 129. Cf. Calvin: “the devil [...] cannot do but evil”, II, iii, 5.

beginning. Mephostophiles is a liar, who, like a true devil, simply has the purpose to destroy. He can even be viewed upon as a murderer since he dispatches devils to torture and kill the Old Man.

Mephostophiles' characteristics are enmity toward God and man. The suggested explanation for his name, "light is not a friend to him," likewise explains his character. Christ's "woorde is a shining lanterne, whiche shineth in this darke worlde" and He "is the light of the worlde." God is light, the light of truth, and Mephostophiles can be viewed upon as a "spirit of darkness," as an opposer of this light.¹ With him, Faustus is moving toward darkness. Mephostophiles is an enemy of God, an obstructor who acts against God and who speaks ill of Heavens. "[...] meditating upon the Creator in His work, and the work in its Creator, we shall be resplendent with the light of the Cherubim," says Pico della Mirandola. Mephostophiles swamps every such attempt.² He acts upon humankind on behalf of Lucifer,³ his habitation is hell, he is a propagator of evil, he incites devil worshipping, he opposes matrimony, allures with music, encourages suicide attempts, he gives magic books and the shows he produces for Faustus are directly opposing divine visions. Moreover, he is an active partaker of defilement and destruction of man. To paraphrase Golding, man's soul is immortal, it is divine, it comes from heaven and was inspired by God.⁴ Together with Lucifer and Beelzebub, Mephostophiles gives chase to and struggles for Faustus' soul, and in the end he obtains it deceitfully through his machinations. Thus, Faustus' soul is being stolen from God. Mephostophiles is simply a preventer of salvation and a robber of souls, a malign spirit deployed by the devil who achieves his end in guile.

For the sake of sensationalism, the B-Text somewhat exaggerates in what power it grants to the spirit. It is not quite clear in Marlowe's play whether Mephostophiles can merely create illusions. For example, Mephostophiles apparently transforms the three clowns into a dog and an

¹ Cf. Isa 8:19,20; 1 Thessal. 5:4-5: "But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness." Col. 1:13: "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves." Or 2 Cor. 6:14-16: "What fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?" Also 1 Jn.1.5-7: "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all^l sin."

² Pico additionally speaks of a "noonday *light* which inflames the Seraphim toward their goal and equally illuminates the Cherubim. This is the promised land toward which our ancient father Abraham was ever advancing; this the region where, as the teachings of the Cabalists and the Moors tell us, there is no place for *unclean spirits*" (*emphasis mine*). Mephostophiles might very well be such an "unclean spirit," deprived of this light.

³ Of course, one may also argue that he acts as executioner of God's wrath, viewed upon as such by Calvin, King James I, etc. Mephostophiles is, of course, a creature of God, and he can be understood as God's instrument of punishment, left in the air to tempt men, or as a tester of faith.

⁴ Epistle of 1567, lines 432-433.

ape.¹ He is obviously also the one who transforms a pair of horns onto the insulting knight's head.² Dr. Faustus cannot produce such charms. For such purposes, he needs the aid of his spirit. Even more, Faustus appears to be more dominated in the B-text, as if his mind is corrupted by Mephostophiles' craftiness. Faustus accuses Mephostophiles for having tempted him and having caused him to lose eternal happiness. The spirit does not deny it; on the contrary, he is happy because of it. It turns out that it was Mephostophiles who directed Faustus to read the selected partial quotations from the Bible at the beginning of the play, thus causing him to dismiss Christianity and so block his passage to heaven.³

It has been questioned by many scholars whether Faustus' senses are "deceiv'd" because of the influence of Mephostophiles. Does Mephostophiles darken Faustus' senses and delude his perceptions? We have seen that the devil, "being a spirite," can "rauish their thoughtes, and dull their senses."⁴ He may delude the "sense of feeling and seeing."⁵ The devil can "make men or women to loue or hate other, which may be verie possible to the Deuill to effectuat, seing he being a subtile spirite, knowes well inough how to perswade the corrupted affection of them whom God will permit him so to deale with."⁶ In addition, during the course of this study, we have seen that the devil can implant pride in men's hearts and that evil thoughts that come from the devil can poison man's mind. We have also seen that in his debate with Erasmus, Luther maintained that man has no free will and is rather a prisoner "and bondslave either to the will of God, or to the will of Satan."⁷ In the discussion about the devil and the Vice, I have also pointed out that the devil can implant sins or some evil thoughts into man's mind. It appears that Dr. Faustus grants such devilish powers to Mephostophiles as well, expecting him to implement sloth and idleness into the cardinals, and, like Titivillus, to make them fall asleep.⁸ This being considered, the question is at hand whether the notion that Mephostophiles has possessed Faustus voiced in the Faust Book and in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* is to be taken "literally or metaphorically."⁹ In the prose works, Mephostophiles answers the question whether he has possessed Faustus in the affirmative. We have seen that in the GFB he says to Faustus that he has possessed him. In fact, all of chapter 15 in the GFB and chapter 14 in the EFB speak of such conceivability. The B-text hints to such a possibility as well; still, I believe that, in regards to this

¹ In the A-version he also sets fireworks at the backs of the clowns. As a matter of fact, he very often uses fireworks as weapons.

² It is Benvolio in the B text, A, x, 1130; B, IV, ii, 1360.

³ B. V.ii.1985-1992.

⁴ King James I *Demonology* II.chap v., 46.

⁵ Ibid, II, chap.vi, 50.

⁶ Ibid, II, chap.v, 44.

⁷ Ibid, 113.

⁸ B. III, i, 923-924.

⁹ Brockbank 56.

contention, Mephostophiles cannot be relied on. In regards of possession, it is far from certain that the devil thereby tells the truth. It will be noted that the demonic possession as such is not observable in the texts; therefore, what Mephostophiles says is not to be literally interpreted. If that were the case, which I do not believe, the B-text would have taken Faustus' responsibility "away from him at the last moment," robbing him "also of his individuality and tragic stature."¹ Faustus is not a demoniac. If that truly were the case, Faustus would not be guilty of any sin. Therefore, possession is to be understood in the figurative sense.

Nevertheless, it is true that – somehow - Mephostophiles has "blinded the mind of the unbeliever," as said in St. Paul (2 Cor 4:4). I propose that Mephostophiles did not enter Faustus' body, nor did he literally enter his mind so that he, as a spirit, may move and direct it. This is not verified in the texts. He is not the invading force; rather, he is "troubling outwardly" - Mephostophiles is a devil who has "entered by subtlety into the mind" of Faustus "to deceive" him, provoking him "to absurd and unlawful affections."² As Scot puts it, he "flatteringly insinuates himself into our hearts, to satisfie, please, and serve our humours, enticing us to prosecute our own appetites and pleasures."³ The demonic influence is achieved by wicked counsels, encouragements, suggestions, persuasions, delusions, seductions and such like. I lean towards the view that Mephostophiles is tempting, not possessing Faustus as an evil spirit, and when it comes to temptation, the choice is always ours. Faustus had that choice, he had free will and his fall was not inevitable.

It is also certainly true that Mephostophiles has great power over Faustus. "Denn der Teufel ist kräftig bei den Kindern des Unglaubens, wie St. Paulus sagt," says Luther, and he also said that in godless hearts "ruget und wonet er [Satan] als eyn starcker tyrann." I have mentioned that man can only resist the devil as a believer in Jesus Christ. He can only resist the devil through faith. Without God, he cannot stand against the invasions and assaults of the devils.⁴ "Scripture forearm us against the adversary,"⁵ says Calvin, but Faustus has said "Divinity, adieu." This is why Mephostophiles' deceits have far reaching repercussions and why Faustus markedly deteriorates and fails.⁶ Faustus, being godless and having no Holy Spirit in him, is easily ensnared and troubled by the devil, "Because where the Deuill findes greatest ignorance and barbaritie, there assayles he grosseliest."⁷ That is to say, Mephostophiles has great power over

¹ Gill xxxvi.

² Scot III, chap. iii, 355.

³ Scot III, chap. xi, 364. Scot speaks of the devil in general in this part, but this is also to be comprehended in Mephostophiles.

⁴ Cf. Scot, III.xi,365.

⁵ 1.Cal.lib.instit.I.cap.14.13.

⁶ Calvin did not believe that believers can be defeated by the devil.

⁷ King James I, *Demonology*, III, chap.iii, 63.

Faustus because Faustus is of “infirm and weake faith,” and, as such, he makes room for the devil.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG DER DISSERTATION

Bis in die Neuzeit ist das Übernatürliche in der Geschichte des englischen Dramas ein selbstverständlicher Teil. Es erscheint als eine selbstständig wirkende Kraft, die einen integralen Bestandteil des Lebensgefühls ausmachte und als solche auch Gegenstand der Darstellung auf der Bühne war.

Die Arbeit analysiert die Entstehung und Entwicklung des übernatürlichen Bösewichts im englischen Drama von dessen Anfängen bis zur Frühen Neuzeit. Dabei gilt ihr besonderes Interesse der Interaktion zwischen den historisch sich verändernden Manifestationen des Übernatürlichen und dem Menschen als dramatischem Protagonisten und Zuschauer als Teilnehmer des dramatischen Geschehens. In diesen Zusammenhang werden auch einbezogen die Vice-Figur als metaphysischer Dämon, die Furiengestalten im englischen Drama und Züge der Figur des Mephistopheles, wie er in den Prosatexten und Marlowes Drama erscheint.

Die Arbeit beginnt mit einer Darstellung der allgemeinen Natur des Bösen und des Antagonismus zwischen dem Menschen und dem Erzfeind. Die Vorstellung des Teufels ist so alt wie die Bibel selbst. Die Arbeit handelt vom Teufelsbild des Alten Testaments, dessen neutestamentlichen Einschränkungen und der erneuten Einschränkung durch das Teufelsbild des Caesarius von Heisterbach. In diesem so verengten Umfeld bewegt sich das mittelalterliche Drama. Dem Teufel werden furchterregende Züge verliehen und diese Vorstellung des angsterzeugenden Teufels wird über Jahrhunderte weitergeführt. Sie prägt im Wesentlichen das mittelalterliche Denken. Die Menschen ihrerseits versuchen auf ganz unterschiedliche Weisen mit dem Teufel umzugehen, woraus sich wichtige Motive ergeben, die in den älteren englischen Dramen immer wiederkehren und eine neue Interpretation der Texte ermöglichen.

Die Darstellung verfolgt die Rolle des metaphysischen bösen Geistes und externen Versuchers und beschreibt die unterschiedlichen Weisen seiner Vergegenwärtigung als Allegorie oder Geist, als Halluzination oder auch als realer Teufel und bestimmt auf diese Weise die Definition des bösen Protagonisten neu. Anhand der Moralitäten und Interudien wird gezeigt, dass auch die Vice-Figur zu den übernatürlichen Bösewichten zählt.

Neue übernatürliche Antagonisten, wie Furie und Rachegeist, treten im englischen Drama auf durch den Einfluss Senecas in den lateinischen Universitätsdramen und den Rachetragödien. Die Arbeit handelt davon, dass die Rolle von Furien und Rachegeistern im Drama unklar und doppeldeutig bleibt und nicht sicher als böse zu klassifizieren ist. Darin wird auch sichtbar, wie

diese beiden Arten von Figuren zusammen mit dem Vice einen großen Einfluss auf Christopher Marlowes Ausgestaltung des Mephistopheles ausübten. Gleichviel vertritt die Arbeit die These, dass Mephistopheles hauptsächlich ein Teufel bleibt. Im Widerspruch zu Behauptungen, dass er kein Teufel sei, zeigt die Arbeit, dass mit dieser Figur dem englischen Publikum ein völlig neuer Teufel vorgestellt wurde.

DISSERTATION SUMMARY

Until modern times, the supernatural played a natural part in the history of drama in England. It appeared as an independently-acting force, which constituted an integral component of life awareness. It was portrayed on stage in this very same way.

The present study analyses the emergence and development of the supernatural villain in English Drama from the beginnings until the Early Modern Times. Special interest thereby lies in the interaction between the historically altering manifestations of the supernatural and human as both the protagonist and spectator as a participant in the dramatic action that occurred on stage. In this regard, the Vice-figure is included as a metaphysical demon, as well as the Furies and features of Mephistopheles as appeared in the prose works and Marlowe's play.

The present study begins with the analysis of the nature of evil in general and antagonism between the human and the fiend. The concept of the devil is as old as the Bible itself. Therefore, my study deals with the view of the devil in the Torah, its limitation in the New Testament and even further limitation and additional restriction due to the image of the devil in the works of Caesarius von Heisterbach. This is where the medieval theatrical environment is centred as well. The devil was given horrific traits; the image of a fearsome devil has been carried for centuries and shaped the medieval thinking considerably. In turn, humanity tried to cope with the devil in different ways. Due to these circumstances, a great variety of motifs developed that kept reoccurring in the earlier English drama and made a new approach to the texts possible.

This study analyses the role of the metaphysical spirit and external tempter and describes its different forms of realisations, such as allegory or ghost, hallucination or a real devil and thereby determines a new definition of the evil protagonist. With the aid of moralities and interludes, it is further shown that the Vice-figure numbers among the supernatural villains.

New supernatural antagonists, the fury and revenge ghost, appeared in the English dramatic genres such as Latin university-plays and revenge tragedies due to the influence of Seneca. The study points to the obscurity and ambiguity of the role of the Furies and revenge ghosts, observing that they cannot be classified as evil with absolute certainty. It also becomes apparent that, together with the Vice, the two kinds of figures exercised great influence on the design of Christopher Marlowe's Mephistopheles. Notwithstanding, the present study represents the thesis that Mephistopheles is mainly a devil. Contrary to claims that he is not a devil, this study shows that, with the figure of Mephistopheles, an entirely new devil was introduced to the English audience.

Schlagwörter:

Deutsch: Teufel, Laster, Die Vice-Figur, Mephistopheles, Englisches Drama, Geist, Mysterienspiel, Moralitäten, Interludien, Tragödie vor Shakespeare

Englisch: Devil, the Vice, Mephistopheles, English Drama, Ghost, Mysteries and miracle plays, Moralities, Interludes, Tragedy before Shakespeare