Calvinism, Subjectivity and Early Modern Drama

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Abstract

This thesis examines the connections between Calvinism and early modern subjectivity as expressed in the drama produced during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. By looking at a range of theological, medical, popular, legal and polemical writings, the thesis aims to provide a new historical and theoretical reading of Calvinist subjectivity that both develops and departs from previous scholarship in the field.

Chapter one examines the critical question of 'authority' in early modern Europe. I trace the various classical and medieval antecedents that reinscribed Christ with political authority during the period, and show how the Reformers' conception of conscience arises out of this movement. In chapter two, I offer a parallel reading of Reformed semiotics in relation to the individual's response to two specific *loci* of power, the Church and the stage. Chapter three brings the first two chapters together by outlining the development of Calvinist doctrine in early modern England. Chapter four offers a theoretical reading of the early modern 'unconscious' in relation to the construction of England as a Protestant nation state against the threat of Catholicism.

In the next four chapters, I show how the stage provided the arena for the exploration of Calvinist subjectivities through readings of four early modern plays. Chapter five deals with Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and in particular the Calvinist conception of Christ interrogated throughout the play. Chapter six looks at *The Revenger's Tragedy* in relation to the question of masculine lineage and the Name-of-the-(Calvinist)-Father. Finally, in chapters seven and eight, I examine two of William Shakespeare's plays, *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. In the first, I demonstrate how the play's concern with witchcraft brings about a parody of providential discourse that is crucial to an understanding of Macbeth's subjectivity. And in the second, I excavate the use of the biblical book of Revelation in *Antony and Cleopatra* in order to show how an understanding of the text's 'religious' concerns problematises more mainstream readings of the drama.

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Any errors are my own.

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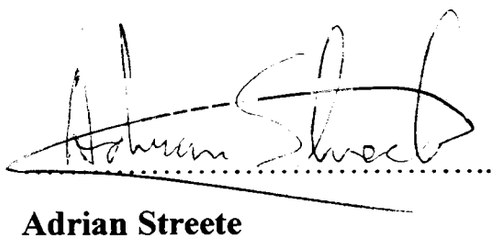
A version of chapter five has appeared as '*Consummatum est*': Calvinist Exegesis, Mimesis and *Doctor Faustus*' in *Literature and Theology*, Vol. 15, No. 2, June 2001, 140-158.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, is the result of my own work and has not been included in any other thesis.



Adrian Streete

Introduction

From the Subject of Protestantism to Calvinist Subjectivity

Christianity is a revealed religion. Nevertheless, some versions of Christianity reveal less to the human subject than others. One such version is Calvinism. In this thesis, I examine the connections between Calvinism and the experience of early modern subjectivity. The focus of my enquiry is on early modern drama. For it is in the plays produced during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I that the far-reaching effects of the Protestant Reformation and its doctrinal corollary, Calvinism, are perhaps most intensely explored. In a sense, there is nothing new in this project. The relationship between imaginative writing and Protestant religion has long been one of the most examined areas in early modern studies. However, in this thesis, I aim to show that, far from being an exhausted topic, there are many aspects of this relationship that are comparatively under explored as well as being under theorised, particularly in relation to the early modern experience of subjectivity. To this end, it is significant that the most recent revival of scholarship concerned with early modern religion and the subject has also gone hand in hand with a noticeable critical conservatism. In this introduction, I want to suggest that aspects of this theoretical development are acutely reactionary and have for too long gone unchallenged. But before examining the problems presented by this critical counter attack, it will first be necessary to consider the progress of scholarship

concerned with early modern imaginative writing, Protestantism and subjectivity.

Any account of this development needs to begin with Shakespearian scholarship. For it is in relation to the works of William Shakespeare that, for better or for worse, most early explorations of early modern religion have emanated. In a twentieth century context, this movement arose largely as a reaction against the religious scepticism of the influential critic A. C. Bradley. As Bradley wrote in *Shakespearean Tragedy*: 'The Elizabethan drama was almost wholly secular; and while Shakespeare was writing he practically confined his view to the world of non-theological observation and thought'. Bradley concludes: Shakespeare 'looked at this "secular" world...and he painted it...with entire fidelity, without the wish to enforce an opinion of his own'.[1] The overriding creative genius who stands outwith the ideological bias of his time is able to fashion a work of art that reflects his own ideological equipoise. Therefore, when encountering a Shakespearian text, the reader will not be contaminated by extraneous matters such as religion, but will, instead, encounter the 'true' Shakespeare. As Terence Hawkes puts it, for Bradley 'the text functions as a reasonably straightforward pathway to that mind, and...there exists a perfect expressive "fit" between the text and its author's mental processes.'[2] Because Shakespeare's religious beliefs have no impact on the creative process and because early modern society was 'secular', Bradley is able to dismiss the question of religion out of hand.[3]

In the 1920s and 30s, G. Wilson Knight led the reaction against Bradley's anti-religious approach to Shakespearian criticism. In a series of books and essays, Knight argued in language that is more often poetical than critical that

many of Shakespeare's plays were compatible with an identifiable Christian outlook. For example, in an essay entitled 'Tolstoy's Attack on Shakespeare', Knight sets out to defend Shakespeare from the Russian novelist's charge that Shakespeare has 'no religious centre, background, or framework for his art.'[4] For Knight, Tolstoy has misunderstood not only the form but also the function of Shakespeare's writing. As he explains: 'Whilst Shakespeare's plays are allowed to stand insouciantly regardless of all ultimate questions, then we can safely continue to deny any necessary religious content to the great dramatic poetry'.[5] But if, by inference, the critic asks the correct questions of the plays, 'then the case for the religious message and purpose of the drama becomes unanswerable.'[6] By discovering this interpretative/exegetical key, the critic or reader is taken on a redemptive (and strictly chronological) journey through the Shakespearian *oeuvre* where, Knight promises, 'we shall be directed to the birth and resurrection dramas of the Final Plays; recognizing therein true myths of immortality caught from the penetralium of mystery by one of the few greatest writers of the world.'[7] It is interesting to note that, even though they stand at opposite ends of the critical spectrum, both Knight and Bradley advance a spiritual model of interpretation whereby what Roland Barthes calls 'the "message" of the Author God'[8] is, without impediment, disseminated to the reader. What divides both critics is the precise nature of the 'message'.

In the years that followed, scholars interested in early modern religion were more inclined to accept Knight's assertion that Shakespeare's texts did contain an identifiable religious element. But as in the works of their critical leader, the writings of these scholars were undermined by a rather vague conception of what sixteenth and seventeenth century religion actually meant in practice. In the

work of the 'School of Knight', as Roland Frye pointed out, 'rarely – indeed, almost never – do we find evidence cited from the sixteenth century to buttress the assertions'.[9] It is also relatively rare to find references in these writers to Protestantism, let alone to Calvinism as the official religion of early modern England. To put it crudely, for the 'School of Knight' religion meant 'Christianity' and Christianity stood for a broadly conceived humanism that had little if nothing to do with doctrinal distinctions. This humanism was concerned in the main with the teleological fate of mankind. According to the humanist critic, Shakespearian tragedy offers an expression of existential 'wholeness'. As Jonathan Dollimore explains: 'tragic death restores transcendent unity of the subject and to man, not despite but because of the fact that now it ceases to be conditional upon a redemptive identification with the absolute. Man gathers that unity into himself'.[10] So while Shakespeare was, broadly conceived, a 'Christian writer', that Christianity was not as important as the transcendent humanism expressed in his plays. To take one example, as Derek Traversi argues in relation to *King Lear*, this 'final tragedy is consistently related to universal issues.'[11] More than this, 'Shakespeare's great series of plays is a synthesis of the experience of the *individual*; as such, it is supreme.'[12]

When Roland Frye's *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine* was published in 1963, he was attempting to correct what he saw as the vague abstractionism of the 'School of Knight's' approach to matters 'Christian' in Shakespeare's plays. The importance of Frye's study has sometimes been underestimated and his knowledge of early modern religious writing is nothing short of daunting. Alongside Lily B. Campbell in *Divine Poetry and Drama in Sixteenth Century England*, Frye was one of the first scholars to recognise that the so-called

religious 'background' to early modern literature was in fact more central and particular than had hitherto been supposed. He also provided an outline of Protestant doctrine and offered an interpretation of how it might connect with the literature of the period. In the same way that texts such as E. M. W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* and C. S. Lewis' *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature*[13] had broadened the scope of intellectual enquiry for many scholars and enabled them to foreground the religious 'background' of early modern literature, so the books of Campbell and Frye represent an avowedly historicist turn in the study of Shakespeare and early modern religion.[14] As Frye pointed out:

> The role of theology in Shakespeare's age may be misunderstood or distorted, but its importance can scarcely be overestimated. Theology was everywhere discussed, and the level of theological literacy among educated people was considerably higher than in our own time. Approximately half of the books published in England between the inception of printing and the parliamentary revolution bore explicitly religious titles, and religious ideas figured prominently or pervasively in many if not most of the others.[15]

This is a reading of early modern religion and culture that, broadly speaking, still holds true today. However, like Campbell, Frye's critical position is rooted in a humanist conservatism towards the *function* of literature. It is for this reason that, without any apparent awareness of contradiction, Frye can explain at scholarly length the outlines of Protestant religion as understood in Shakespeare's day, while at the same time assert that 'literature, when judged by competent theological opinion, should be secular as regards theology and universal as regards ethics.'[16] As he somewhat strangely concludes: 'The sixteenth-century Protestant views reconstructed here are of considerable importance for appraising the essentially secular character of Shakespeare's drama.'[17] For Frye, Shakespeare's culture is resolutely Protestant yet the

ideological tentacles of that culture do not extend to the fundamentally 'secular' outlook of Shakespeare's transcendent plays.

From Individual to Subject

In 1985, John Drakakis argued: 'The nature of the relationship between drama and society has usually been treated eclectically by Shakespeare scholars, alternating between empirical and idealistic approaches to the problem.'[18] But with the advent of critical theory in the late 1960s and early 1970s, scholars began to re-examine the ideological assumptions behind older approaches to the question of early modern imaginative writing and religion. As Debora Shuger points out:

> Before the late 1970s...a vast amount of scholarship was devoted to the religious backgrounds of English Renaissance literature; the main reason religion has dropped out of Renaissance scholarship is that people got tired of articles on eucharistic imagery in *The Faerie Queene*, etc. Even this early research, however, usually conceived of religion as a circumscribed category unrelated to the constructions of gender, subjectivity, sexuality, power, nationalism, and so forth.[19]

While Shuger tends here and elsewhere to exaggerate the extent to which the study of religion 'dropped out of Renaissance scholarship', her second point stands. Too often, religion was seen, at best, as being of marginal importance to the politics of early modern culture and writing; at worst, it was viewed as essentially unconnected to either. But with the publication of seminal monographs such as Alan Sinfield's *Literature in Protestant England 1560-1660*, Catherine Belsey's *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* and Jonathan Dollimore's *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, the

complexity of early modern Protestantism began to be systematically explored and theorised. These books shared two features which, when, taken together, amounted to a radical overhaul of previous scholarship. First, they heralded a broad shift from the study of Protestantism to the study of Calvinism, its doctrinal manifestation.[20] Secondly, Shakespeare began to be seen as one of many writers operating in the period, and not as the lens through which all interpretation had to pass. Similarly, while the texts of important theologians like John Calvin himself and Richard Hooker were examined in relation to the literature of the period, the work of scholars like Sinfield, Belsey and Dollimore also brought to the fore the complexity of Calvinism and the ideological differences of some of its practitioners in early modern England: for example, William Perkins, Henry Smith, Godfrey Goodman and George Hakewill.[21] In short, these scholars systematically undermined the received notion of what Calvinism stood for. As Sinfield argued, 'The determination to create a more immediate relationship between humanity and God...paradoxically placed a vast and uncertain gulf between them.'[22] What writers like Sinfield demonstrated was that Protestantism in general, and Calvinism in particular, is contradictory and diverse both in doctrine and in practice. In order to understand early modern Calvinism it is necessary to be aware that it is not, and never was, an ideological and doctrinal monolith.

An important methodological feature shared by each of these scholars was their commitment to the critical practice of cultural materialism.[23] Drawing upon the work of theorists such as Louis Althusser, Pierre Macherey, Raymond Williams and Michel Foucault, the work of these scholars led to a radical questioning both of earlier critical practices and, more importantly, the politics

of early modern culture. Among their primary concerns, the place and function of the human individual was fundamentally re-examined. And to put it simply, the 'individual' of humanist scholarship made way for the subject of post-structuralist theory. At the beginning of *The Subject of Tragedy*, Catherine Belsey provides an outline of the critical position that she and others were contesting:

> The human subject, the self, is the central figure in the drama which is liberal humanism, the consensual orthodoxy of the west...And yet the subject conventionally has no history, perhaps because liberal humanism depends on the belief that in its essence the subject does not change.[24]

By arguing that the subject was not a free standing, unchanging essence, but, in fact, a production of specific historical, cultural and political forces, she established that 'the unified subject of liberal humanism' – the subject presupposed by critics from Bradley to Frye – 'is a product of the second half of the seventeenth century.'[25] By demonstrating how 'Subjectivity is discursively produced and is constrained by a range of subject-positions defined by the discourses in which the concrete individual participates',[26] Belsey also provided a history of the (early modern) subject. There is no doubting the importance or timeliness of works such as Belsey's. However, the history of the subject that she outlined has proved as controversial as it has proved influential. Controversial because in recent years, scholars have come to see that the 'history of the subject' proposed by Belsey and Dollimore - along with Francis Barker in his book *The Tremulous Private Body* - is itself often partial and selective, especially in relation to its construction of the medieval heritage of early modern culture and the bearings that this construction has on its conception of the subject.

Mediating the Medieval

In an important essay entitled 'A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists', the medievalist David Aers takes to task what he calls 'radical critics writing about early-modern England and the history of the subject' for their often partial readings of the medieval intellectual tradition.[27] According to Aers, these scholars' constructions of the medieval period both simplify that period and, by inference, delimit crucial medieval antecedents that inform and often contextualise early modern subjectivities. Put simply, the problem is the refusal by many early modern critics to engage with identifiable medieval subjectivities. Indeed this refusal is commonly explained, according to Aers, by an 'alleged fact, namely, that in medieval culture individual identity simply did not involve individual self-consciousness since that polity did not produce or need to produce such individuated subjects.'[28] This thesis serves an avowedly oppositional purpose. The Middle Ages, Aers goes on to note, is in effect turned into 'a homogenous and mythical field which is defined in terms of the scholars' needs for a figure against which "Renaissance" concerns with inwardness and the fashioning of identities can be defined as new.'[29] What Aers' article seeks to demonstrate is that, contrary to the work of Belsey, Dollimore, Sinfield and Barker, the subject did not emerge in the West at some vaguely defined point between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In this context, it is worth noting an important scholarly debate amongst medievalists that dates from the 1970s and early 1980s that is very similar to the

work of the cultural materialists to the extent that it is concerned with the emergence of medieval subjectivity. It is also, as far as I have been able to find, a debate that early modern scholars have overlooked. To take one noticeable example, in his book *The Discovery of the Individual 1050-1200*, Colin Morris argues that, in opposition to the common thesis that sees the 'individual' emerging during 'the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth century', the 'discovery of the individual was one of the most important cultural developments in the years between 1050 and 1200.'[30] By examining the various influences of medieval psychological theory, confession, autobiography, portraiture, theories of love and friendship and developments in theology, Morris presents a compelling case for the medieval subject. In contrast, Caroline Bynum has modified Morris' thesis somewhat. She demonstrates that 'it is possible to delineate the period even more precisely when "discovery of self" is coupled with and understood in the context of "discovery of [a] model for behaviour" and "discovery of consciously chosen community."'[31] As Bynum interestingly concludes:

> The individualism historians usually find in the later Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation is not only in continuity with the twelfth-century discovery of self; it is also...in contrast with the twelfth century equilibrium between interior and exterior, self and community.[32]

What Bynum and Morris make clear is that the history of the subject cannot be periodised as neatly as some early modern critics have supposed. This is not a retreat into some essentialist conception of the self where historical difference is subsumed by the overriding humanity of the individual. As the medievalist Lee Paterson writes in his book *Negotiating the Past*: 'Whatever individualism we seek to sustain must, to be sure, insist upon its historicity: the idea of the individual arises at certain historical moments and becomes submerged at

others'.[33] Rather, what I intend both in this introduction and in this thesis is a cultural, theoretical and historical broadening out of Belsey's original argument that 'Subjectivity is discursively produced and is constrained by a range of subject-positions defined by the discourses in which the concrete individual participates'.

The Order of Periods?

The question of 'periodisation' is crucial to all the debates that I am outlining in this introduction and any account of the shift from late medieval heterodoxy to early modern Reformation will inevitably have to confront this issue. As Heiko Oberman has astutely observed, in the fifteenth century 'The road to Reformation of Church, university, and society at large did not yet seem to require a break with the past.'[34] But this is precisely how the movement from medieval to early modern has long been categorised: as marking an epochal shift between two clearly definable periods. A particularly influential example of this model is theorised by Michel Foucault in *The Order of Things*, a text that provides the theoretical foundation of much cultural materialist analysis.[35] In his preface, Foucault argues that the

> fundamental codes of a culture – those governing its language, its schemes of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices – establish for every man...the empirical orders with which he will be dealing.[36]

Because these 'practices' inevitably change over time, Foucault identifies the 'codes' of a given culture with what he calls an '*episteme*'. As he argues: 'what I am trying to bring to light is the epistemological field, the *episteme* in which knowledge... manifests a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but

rather that of its conditions of possibility'.[37] In other words, the Foucaultian *episteme* embodies the distinct signifying practices of a given period in history.

Recently, however, this method of periodisation has been re-evaluated. Scholars have come to recognise that, even though it was not necessarily Foucault's intention, his epistemic approach can lead to the homogenisation of certain important historical phenomena which, in their very existence, resist easy categorisation. It is undoubtedly the case, as Hugh Grady had written, that periods are 'basic to all attempts at a systematic reconstruction of the past, and no history can be written without some explicit or implicit commitment to them.'[38] But it is equally true that the history of ideas, especially in the period(s) under examination, relies on a dialectical tension between opposing positions that has no regard for the niceties of epochal distinction. In Grady's words, '"periods" have no "objective" status.'[39] Or as Timothy Reiss has said of the frequently proclaimed epistemic break between medieval and early modern: 'No such rupture occurred' and 'profound change grew from within firm continuities.'[40] For these reasons, it is Fredric Jameson who has provided a model that allows for the necessary distinctions to be made between 'periods' but which also retains the element of dialectical tension so crucial to the early modern ideas that I will be examining in this thesis. As he notes in *The Political Unconscious*:

> The triumphant moment in which a new systematic dominant gains ascendancy is therefore only the diachronic manifestation of a constant struggle for the perpetuation and reproduction of its dominance, a struggle which must continue throughout its life course, accompanied at all moments by the systematic or structural antagonism of those older or newer modes of production that resist assimilation or seek deliverance from it. The task of cultural and social analysis thus construed within this final horizon will then clearly be the rewriting of its materials in such a way that this perpetual cultural revolution can be apprehended and read as the

> deeper and more permanent constitutive structure in which the empirical textual objects know intelligibility.[41]

Jameson makes clear that the ongoing process of 'cultural revolution' is constitutive of the ways in which ideas achieve recognisable social signification. In the case of the Reformation, it gains its radical import from its continuing struggle with a medieval legacy which, in political and polemical terms, it must be seen to largely repudiate. Nevertheless, as I will show, as an ideological edifice, the discourse of the Reformation demonstrates its vulnerability to those ever-present 'older or newer modes of production that resist assimilation or seek deliverance from it.'

A commitment to a 'history of the subject' does not necessarily have to imply a concomitant devotion to 'history' as an ever-unfolding 'master narrative'. While I will be concerned in this thesis with cultural and intellectual continuities, I am also concerned with the ways in which 'old' discourses get re-appropriated, re-fashioned and, quite often, misrepresented within the context of radical social movements such as the Reformation.[42] To ignore the cultural and philosophical antecedents of the medieval period is, by inference, to presume that early modern thinkers did the same. Such a presumption would be dangerous. To this end, instead of celebrating continuity it might be somewhat more profitable to focus on discontinuity via another Foucaultian construct, the figure of the genealogist introduced in the essay 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.' Foucault notes, 'Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things'.[43] In other words, the practice of genealogy is also the practice of re-telling narratives when the boundaries of accepted 'knowledge' themselves have to be re-told. This is as true for the construction of an apposite critical

methodology as it is applicable to the early modern period's appropriation of medieval discourses.

More specifically, such a project must also mean forsaking any adherence to a crude periodisation of history where a certain century, say the twelfth or the sixteenth, is noted as a point in time during which the individual subject(ivity) holds a particular cultural dominance. In the words of Katherine Maus:

> "Subjectivity" is often treated casually as a unified or coherent concept when, in fact, it is a loose and varied collection of assumptions, intuitions, and practices that do not all logically entail one another and need not appear together at the same cultural moment. A well-developed rhetoric of inward truth, for instance, may exist in a society that never imagines that such inwardness might provide a basis for political rights.[44]

Subjectivity is, I suggest, an ever present given in all recorded human existence.[45] This is manifestly *not* the same as saying that subjectivity is unchanging throughout time or that it is an equally prominent feature at all times in intellectual discourse. At some points in time, humans develop culturally heightened, complex sets of discourses for examining the experience and perceived processes of subjectivity. At other points in time, varied cultural, political and intellectual circumstances mean that the development of these complex discourses is, momentarily, stunted. But subjectivity is, nonetheless, *always already there*. It must therefore be the purpose of an attentive criticism to develop discourses sensitive enough to excavate these subjectivities.

In order to demonstrate the feasibility of this proposition, I want to consider two examples from early and late medieval literature of what might be termed 'individuated subjects'. The first is taken from an early Anglo Saxon poem entitled "Soul and Body." In this text, the Soul berates the Body for its squalor and sinfulness. The Body cannot respond because its 'tongue is torn into ten

pieces for the hungry worm's pleasure'.[46] For this reason it must endure the chilling imprecations of the Soul:

> [Eardode] ic þe in innan. No ic þe of meahte,
> flæsce bifongen, ond me firenlustas
> þine geþrungon. Þæt me þuhte ful oft
> þæt wære þritig þusend wintra
> to þinum deaðdæge. Hwæt, ic uncres gedales bad
> earfoðlice. Nis nu se ende to god.
> Wære þu þe wiste wlonc ond wines sæd,
> þrymful þunedest, ond ic ofþyrsted wæs
> godes lichoman, gæstes drinces.
>
> (30-38)[47]

> I dwelt within you – I could not get out from you, being engrossed in flesh – and your wicked lusts oppressed me so that it often seemed to me that it would be thirty thousand years to your death-day. See! I reluctantly waited for our severance: now the outcome is none too good. You were extravagant with food and wine; full of your glory you flaunted yourself and I was thirsty for the body of God and spiritual drink.[48]

The internal voice of the Soul points up most forcefully a split within the subject that operates at least two different identifiable levels of signification. First, the self-speaking voice constructs its interlocutor through its absence; there is no reply from the Body. This only serves to highlight the ideological function of the narrative. In the context of Anglo Saxon oral poetry, those who listen to the poem are constructed as the silent Others, the Bodies who, if they act upon it, render the Soul's message into the signifying realm of the subject. Second, the poem reflects the ideological focus of Anglo Saxon society with its emphasis (one with clear pre-Christian roots) on the futility of this present life and the reward of the next. By emphasising a split in the subject between abject Body and admonitory Soul, the poet affects a parallel between the inner state of the subject and the ideological structure of the listeners' society.

My second example comes from *The Fire of Love* written by the mystic Richard Rolle in 1343. In the Prologue to this remarkable and beautiful text, Rolle explains to his readers the beginnings of his mystical journey. He says:

> I cannot tell you how surprised I was the first time I felt my heart begin to warm. It was real warmth too, not imaginary, and it felt as if it was actually on fire. I was astonished at the way the heat surged up, and how this new sensation brought great and unexpected comfort. I had to keep feeling my breast to make sure there was no physical reason for it! But once I had realized that it came entirely from within, that this love had no cause, material or sinful, but was the gift of my Maker, I was absolutely delighted and wanted my love to be even greater. And this longing was all the more urgent because of the delightful effect and the interior sweetness which this spiritual flame fed into my soul. Before the infusion of this comfort I had never thought that we exiles could possibly have known such warmth, so sweet was the devotion it kindled. It set my soul aglow as if a real fire was burning there.[49]

Rolle is describing an avowedly subjective experience. This is one of the reasons for a narrative that in places reads more like the omniscient narrator of a realist novel than a medieval mystic. The difference is that in Rolle's text, his subjectivity describes his own response and it validates, or rather stands as a template for, his readers in their quest towards mystical 'warmth' or to what Jean François Lyotard has termed the 'aesthetics of the sublime'. According to Lyotard, this is an indeterminate feeling that arises when sensory representation fails. As he notes: 'This failure of expression gives rise to a pain, a kind of cleavage within the subject between what can be conceived and what can be imagined or presented.'[50] To this end, it is noticeable that Rolle is not satisfied by his initial experience of 'warmth'. Almost immediately, he suffers 'longing', an encounter that could also be related to the Augustinian notion of *caritas*, the perpetually unfulfilled desire of the subject for the complete knowledge of God's love. He is left with a gap at his centre that should be filled with God, but is not. In many respects the fire stands for the deferred presence of the deity. So in the

same way that the reader of Rolle's text can never gain immediate access to the writer's subjectivity, so the mystic is always left desiring the ultimate subject, God.

What both of these examples serve to demonstrate is that the 'history of the subject' is rather more complex than conventional narratives might suppose. It is difficult to deny that both "Soul and Body" and *The Fire of Love* describe an identifiable subjective experience. Interestingly, both writers affect this feeling through the didactic or affective function of the narrative's language. Both texts aim, through the description of subjective experience, to inscribe a similar kind of experience in the listener/reader. To this end, it is noticeable that in her discussion of early modern subjectivity, Catherine Belsey chooses to emphasise the *formal* properties of early modern literary language in order to differentiate between the medieval and the early modern. As she asks:

> How is the impression of interiority produced? Above all by formal means of the soliloquy...In contrast to the alliterative verse of the fifteenth century, and the 'tumbling' fourteeners characteristic of the sixteenth century moralities, the more flexible and fluent iambic pentameter, to the degree that it does not rhyme and is not necessarily end stopped, disavows the materiality of the process of enunciation and simulates a voice expressing the self 'behind' the speech.[51]

While I would not want to disregard the role that the formal properties of language might play in the production of subjectivity, it is nonetheless the case that Belsey offers only a partial reading of the connection between discourse and subjectivity. Interestingly, in her discussion, she draws upon Antony Easthope's book *Poetry as Discourse*. While Easthope argues here that 'pentameter is able to promote representation of someone "really" speaking'[52] he also notes more generally and perhaps more usefully in this context that 'Subjectivity is integral to all discourse and there cannot be discourse apart from subjectivity.'[53] As I

note in later chapters, both medieval and early modern imaginative writers shared a fundamental awareness of a crucial didactic function of discourse, namely its ability to move the listener/reader at an affective level. So while it is possible to debate - and many rhetoricians and grammarians did - which forms of language best affected the desired response in the subject, this should be viewed in tandem with the almost universal view that discourse should be judged on its success at effecting a response in the subject, whatever that might be. In the first instance, subjectivity is the prerogative of individuals, but at the moment of its textual, that is to say historical iteration, it loses any claims that it might have held of existential autonomy. It might be true, as Friedrich Nietzsche observed, that 'all being is hard to demonstrate; it is hard to make it speak.'[54] But this does not mean that it is impossible, as both "Soul and Body" and *The Fire of Love* demonstrate. The dialectic of subject and society may well write the text, but in the context of a genealogy of the interior, the text writes subjectivity.

Emending Cultural Materialism

While I disagree with certain aspects of the cultural materialist approach to the early modern subject as outlined above, it is important to state that I do concur with this approach in relation to its *political* engagement with early modern culture. This engagement arises in relation to Louis Althusser's notion of subjective interpolation. According to Althusser, through a complex network of authorised discourses (Church, State, Judiciary), society regulates subjects (interpolation) by making them subject to the very discourses perpetuated by 'authority'.[55] For this reason, all aspects of social life operate relatively

autonomously but are also held together by the cohesive bond of ideology. As such the separation of realms of existence such as the religious and the political presupposed by idealist criticism is rejected. Nonetheless a series of recent books by American scholars has sought to discredit the political project of cultural materialism.[56] For example, in her book *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture*, Debora Shuger takes cultural materialism to task for what she sees as its problematic division of 'ideas' into subversive and orthodox. She argues: 'it is not always clear what precisely is subversive with respect to the dominant ideology, nor does orthodox ideology seem quite as monolithic and hegemonic as either Tillyard or his critics seems to have supposed.'[57] Shuger then goes on to point out:

> Religion is, first of all, not *simply* politics in disguise, a set of beliefs that represent and legitimate the social order by grounding it in the Absolute... Religious belief is "about" God and the soul as much as it is "about" the sociopolitical order.[58]

It is important to state at this point that my disagreement with Shuger concerns her critical reading of cultural materialism. Aside from this, she is one of the most interesting scholars of early modern religion to have emerged in recent years and I use her work at various stages in this thesis. However, if it is not to be seen as wilfully misrepresenting the cultural materialist position then Shuger's argument must arise from a misunderstanding of the basic tenets of that project.

First, the cultural materialist conception of the 'dominant ideology' is not nearly as monolithic as Shuger supposes. As Jonathan Dollimore argues (following the work of Pierre Macherey and Raymond Williams):

> Non-dominant elements [in a culture] interact with dominant forms, sometimes coexisting with, or being absorbed by or even destroyed by them, but also challenging, modifying or even displacing them. Culture is not by any stretch of the imagination – not even the literary imagination – a unity.[59]

Shuger is incorrect that cultural materialism posits the 'dominant culture' as an ideological given and then decides what is subversive or orthodox in relation to that culture. Instead, the constitution of culture is such that non-dominant discourses exist in a dialectical relationship with the dominant elements. What culture presents as 'dominant' is only ever conditionally the case – how otherwise would intellectual and political change come about? Secondly, by stating that 'Religious belief is "about" God and the soul as much as it is "about" the sociopolitical order', Shuger also posits a separation between God and the subject that recapitulates the deity as ontologically distinct from the appropriations and ideological manoeuvres of a given culture. From an explicitly Christian perspective, this makes sense. From an ideological perspective, it does not. To put it another way, Shuger attempts to yoke together a quasi-Althusserian conception of ideology with a Christian belief in God. As she admits at the beginning of another book: 'I am a Christian and an academic and I have no idea how to put these two together, how to formulate a language that would be both reverential and professional.'[60] It is not my intention to criticise Shuger's personal beliefs but it does seems to me that that a commitment to God as prime mover does not equate with a consistent theory of ideology in respect of early modern culture.

Calvinism, Subjectivity and Early Modern Drama

In order to bring together the somewhat disparate strands of this introduction, I want to turn finally to a text that offers an interesting commentary on both the shift from medieval to early modern as well as on the concern of this thesis with Calvinism and subjectivity. The text in question is Thomas à Kempis' classic late medieval tract *The Imitation of Christ* (c. 1414). Even after the Reformation, this book remained one of the most popular of European religious manuals. In early modern England, however, what was important was not so much the ubiquity of this doctrinally Catholic text but rather the slant that Protestant translators put on à Kempis' notion of imitation. For example, in Thomas Roger's 1580 translation of the text, he writes in the epistle: '*Who[ever] entreth into a due consideration of mans nature, shal easilie perceaue that most stranglie it is addicted vnto imitation.*'[61] It is interesting to note that Rogers presents imitation not in a positive light but as a strange addiction, an unfortunate human habit that needs to be fed. The suspicion that the ideology propagated by the text stands in opposition to the ideology of the culture utilising it is confirmed when Rogers writes: '*For albeit I say in al things our Sauiour Christ is always; yet I do not saie in al things: and though necessarilie to be followed; yet not as he was God.*'[62] Unlike the medieval subject, the early modern subject may only imitate Christ up to a certain point. What is the reason for this seeming contradiction in Roger's text? The short answer is: Calvinism.

Thomas à Kempis' medieval text is about the relationship between the individual subject and the politics of imitation/representation. Rogers' early modern translation of this text highlights an apparent gulf between medieval and early modern conceptions of imitation/representation. Indeed, this difference has been taken as read in so many critical studies of Calvinism and early modern

writing that it is commonly assumed that imitation/representation is of marginal importance in the construction of Calvinist subjectivity. Calvin makes man so aware of his distance from the deity that the only thing man can imitate is his own sinful nature. A further effect of this reading is that much recent literary scholarship has virtually ignored the central fact (both for Calvin and his followers) that Calvinism is a profoundly Christocentric religion. In this thesis I want to dispute this recent reading of Calvinism by reintroducing it as a version of Christianity firmly wedded to an epistemology of imitation and representation. In the first place, I will demonstrate that early modern subjectivity is a marker of a fundamental re-positioning of the individual in relation to God affected by Calvinism. So while Alan Sinfield is correct to assert that 'The protestant subject arises, not in the accomplishment of domination or negation, but in the *thwarting* of harmony, cogency, common sense'[63], I want to offer a reinterpretation of precisely how this subject came into being. In order to do this, in chapter one I examine the debates surrounding early modern authority and in particular the ways in which these debates contributed towards the Calvinist conception of subjectivity. In order to maintain a methodological coherence with this introduction, I set these debates in context by charting their classical and medieval antecedents. By re-examining the political and conceptual importance of Christ in the political development of the West, I outline the changing position of the subject in relation to external and internal authority. In particular, I trace the development of the idea of conscience, especially as it applied to the political project of the Reformers.

In chapter two I take forward the enquiries initiated in the previous chapter by looking at the Protestant conception of semiotics. If Linda Gregerson is

correct when she observes that 'The semiotic lineage from Plato to Augustine is fraught with much internal division',[64] then by tracing that lineage and by examining how both early modern humanists and Reformers wrestled with its divisions it is possible to delineate an identifiable Protestant conception of signs. By looking in particular at the semiotics of early modern clothing as they manifested themselves in both the ecclesiastical and dramatic arenas, I offer a practical example of what might be termed a Reformed semiotics. Because this debate was characterised by the question of from where authority ultimately emanated, the response of the individual subject to that authority became paramount. To this end, in chapter three I extend my examination of the Reformed conscience in relation to the development of casuistry. This investigation in contextualised by outlining the various ways in which Calvinism developed in post Reformation England. This ideological scene setting is particularly necessary in respect of chapter four which examines the ways in which early modern culture constructed itself as a nation under the banner of Protestantism. I argue in this chapter for the existence of the 'early modern unconscious' and connect this phenomenon with the gradual cultural and subjective internalisation of Calvinism during the period.

This internalisation is best expressed, I argue, in the drama of the early modern stage. Accordingly, the final four chapters are devoted to the subject of early modern drama and the way in which the human subject, male or female, is represented both to his or her self and to the audience. In chapter five I examine the connections between Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and sixteenth century Calvinist Christology. Focusing on the magician's response to various New Testament texts as well as his relationship to Mephistopheles, I argue that

by replicating Faustus' focus on his own achievement and to the existential reality to which he appeals, many critics have neglected to consider the way in which relationality is dealt with both in early modern Calvinism and in the play. Then in chapter six, I develop the work of the previous chapter by dealing with the Calvinist conception of the Father as it is manifested in theological and imaginative writings of the period. Through a reading of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* I propose that early modern culture is deeply underwritten by a traumatic hiatus between father and son, a hiatus that has far-reaching consequences for the experience of subjectivity.

The final two chapters of the thesis deal with two plays by William Shakespeare. In the first, I examine *Macbeth* in relation to contemporary Calvinist discourses of witchcraft. By reading the play through the lens of early modern inversion theory, it becomes possible to see how the play offers a kind of anti-time that parodies the legitimate time of providential history. It is this process that foregrounds Macbeth's subjectivity and which also allows an early modern audience to see that their entire ideological edifice was predicated upon the failure of representation as a *constitutive* necessity. Representation is also the key to the last chapter on *Antony and Cleopatra*. By focusing on a play not immediately concerned with matters religious, I aim to show how a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to early modern religion allows for previously ignored narratives to be reconstituted, narratives that moreover throw new light on the central themes of the play. By examining the status of the Egyptian race in early modern England, the use of the biblical book of Revelation in *Antony and Cleopatra* is shown to be more important than many scholars of the play have hitherto supposed.

Notes to Introduction

[1] A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearian Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* (London: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 17-18

[2] Terence Hawkes, *That Shakespeherian Rag: Essays on a Critical Process* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 32

[3] But not completely out of hand. Interestingly in his discussion of *Hamlet*, Bradley concedes that 'while *Hamlet* certainly cannot be called in the specific sense a 'religious drama', there is in it nevertheless both a freer use of popular religious ideas, and a more decided, though always imaginative, intimation of a supreme power', Bradley, *op. cit.* p. 141.

[4] G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy With Three New Essays* (London: Methuen, 1954), p. 295

[5] *Ibid.* p. 296

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.* pp. 296-297

[8] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh, 2nd edition (London and New York: Arnold, 1996), p. 116

[9] Roland Mushat Frye, *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 19

[10] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 157

[11] Derek Traversi, *An Approach to Shakespeare* (Doubleday: New York, 1956), p. 289

[12] *Ibid.* p. 291

[13] These texts are only intended to be broadly representative of the movement I am sketching. It is important to note that the historicist endeavours of the1950s and 1960s were not without their own precursors. In the field of Shakespeare studies, one important text is John Dover Wilson's 1911 *Life in Shakespeare's England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), an extremely useful book which anticipates the current vogue for anthologies by collecting contemporary extracts centered around themes such as Festival, Witchcraft, Travel, The Courtier and Disorders. Another similar text is the multi-volume *Shakespeare's England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916).

[14] The objections to Tillyard's, and to a lesser extent Lewis's, approach to early modern ideological assumptions are well known and I will not rehearse them here. See Dollimore *Radical Tragedy*, *op. cit.* pp. 89-90 and John Drakakis' 'Introduction' to *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) for readings of the suppositions behind the 'Elizabethan world picture', pp. 1-25.

[15] Frye, *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine*, p. 63

[16] *Ibid.* p. 8

[17] *Ibid.* pp. 107-108

[18] Drakakis, *op. cit.* p. 15. A good example of both of these practices in operation is provided by Peter Milward who argued in 1973:

In modern criticism...there is a prevalent – and no doubt, healthy – tendency to avoid discussing religious issues in literary matters, unless they are explicitly raised by a work of literature. Emphasis is rightly laid, by theologians no less than by literary critics, on the so-called 'autonomy' of literature; and consequently the religious background is often, wrongly, thought to be irrelevant to the literature of the time. But if literature is indeed the record of human thoughts and feelings, one cannot afford to overlook the connection between literature and religion, not only when it appears on the surface...but also when for some reason it goes underground.

Peter Milward, *Shakespeare's Religious Background* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1973), pp. 9-10

[19] Debora Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice and Subjectivity* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1994), p. 205

[20] This is not to imply that Calvinism/Protestantism was the only version of early modern religion. Studies of Catholicism/Recusancy, although not as numerous, also form an important part of the story, one that I return to in chapter four. For a concise overview of this topic, see Alison Shell's *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[21] The differences between the last two named are explored by Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy op. cit.* pp. 99-102 in relation to decay theory.

[22] Alan Sinfield, *Literature in Protestant England 1560-1660* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1983), p. 9

[23] For an excellent reading of the politics of cultural materialism, see Scott Wilson's *Cultural Materialism: Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), esp. pp. 3-52.

[24] Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985). ix

[25] *Ibid.* p. 33

[26] *Ibid.* p. 5

[27] David Aers, 'A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists; or, Reflections on Literary Critics Writing the "History of the Subject"', in *Culture and History 1350-1600. Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. David Aers (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), p. 186

[28] *Ibid.* p. 186

[29] *Ibid.* p. 192.

[30] Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual 1050-1200* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), p. 5, p. 158

[31] Caroline Walker Bynum, 'Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?', in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 108

[32] *Ibid.* p. 109

[33] Lee Patterson, *Negotiating the Past: The Historical Understanding of Medieval Literature* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), p. 74

[34] Heiko Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation* (T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1992), p. 17

[35] Both Belsey and Barker make explicit reference to and use of Foucault's text and its influence can also clearly be felt in Dollimore's book.

[36] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, (London: Routledge, 1994), xx

[37] *Ibid.* xxii

[38] Hugh Grady, 'Introduction' to *Shakespeare and Modernity*, ed. Hugh Grady (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 7

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] Timothy J. Reiss, *Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe: The Rise of Aesthetic Rationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 41

[41] Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 97

[42] I am following, to a certain extent, Lisa Jardine's argument in her essay 'Unpicking the tapestry'. She writes: 'The key to structural change is a radical shift in the social context. New stories arise when there is a new reality to be explained, when the social arrangements are so different that the old narrative no longer seems adequate.' Lisa Jardine, '"Unpicking the Tapestry": The Scholar of Women's History as Penelope Among Her Suitors', in *Reading Shakespeare Historically* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 132.

[43] Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), p. 81

[44] Katherine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 29

[45] This is somewhat contrary to the view of Harold Bloom who in his recent book *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (London: Fourth Estate, 1998) argues not only that 'Literary character before Shakespeare is relatively unchanging' (xvii) but that 'Shakespeare will go on explaining us, in part because he invented us' (xviii). It is not necessary to be a fully paid up member of the post-structuralist fraternity to see that in a historical, literary and ideological sense, these statements are at best unhelpful, at worst, wrong.

[46] "Soul and Body", in *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, trans. S. A. J. Bradley (London: J. M. Dent, 1995), p. 361

[47] "Soul and Body", in *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry: An Edition of Exeter Dean and Chapter MS 3501*, vol. 1, ed. Bernard J. Muir (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), p. 279

[48] *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, p. 360. For the sake of clarity, I have used S. A. J. Bradley's excellent translation of "Soul and Body".

[49] Richard Rolle, *The Fire of Love*, trans. Clifton Wolters (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 45. I have used this translation as the Latin text is, as far as I am aware, only available in manuscript.

[50] Jean François Lyotard, 'The Sublime and the Avant-Garde', in *The Lyotard Reader*, ed. Andrew Benjamin (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), p. 203

[51] Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy*, pp. 42-43

[52] Antony Easthope, *Poetry as Discourse* (London and New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 74

[53] Ibid. p. 31

[54] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), pp. 59-60

[55] See Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster, 2nd edn. (London: New Left Books, 1977), esp. pp. 123-173

[56] Aside from Shuger's work, see also Judy Kronenfeld's *King Lear and the Naked Truth: Rethinking the Language of Religion and Resistance* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998) for an example of this approach.

[57] Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 2-3

[58] *Ibid.* p. 6

[59] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Shakespeare, cultural materialism and the new historicism', in *Political Shakespeares: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 6

[60] Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible*, p. 1

[61] Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, trans. Thomas Rogers (London: Henry Denham, 1580) Short Title Catalogue (henceforth referred to as STC) 23973, p. 3

[62] *Ibid.* p. 6

[63] Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 174

[64] Linda Gregerson, *The Reformation of the Subject: Spenser, Milton and the Protestant Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 64

Chapter One

Authority and Early Modern Discourse

The first beginning of religion was only to keep men in awe...all men in Christianity ought to endeavour that the mouth of so dangerous a member may be stopped.[1]

Richard Baines still has much to answer for. On the 18th May 1593, the Privy Council issued a warrant for the arrest of the dramatist Christopher Marlowe at the home of Thomas Walshingham. Two days later Marlowe acknowledged the warrant and was bound to daily attendance.[2] Ten days after this, he was dead. It is not known precisely when the spy Baines wrote the document listing Marlowe's heterodox opinions but it seems reasonable to suppose that it was probably produced towards the end of the dramatist's life, or possibly not long after he died. Yet by beginning with what Jeffrey Masten has called the 'famous testimony of Richard Baines', I run the risk of potential overkill.[3] After all, Baines's accusations have been taken down and used in ideological evidence in such a disparate range of critical projects that it is admittedly difficult to see what any (re)visitation of such a well-known text might hope to achieve. This is particularly the case in relation to an area as distended and nebulous as early modern authority. Moreover, it is tempting to conclude that the methodological prominence which the deposition holds in a large number of studies actively threatens to make it a paradigm within or, worse yet, a supplement to the examination of early modern ideological

configurations.[4] But if the supplement is understood, as Jacques Derrida would have it, as both 'the *fullest measure* of presence' and simultaneously as 'an adjunct, a subaltern instance which *takes – (the) – place* [*tient lieu*]',[5] then within the roots of this potential conclusion lie both the refutation of its postulate and the seeds of a new mode of enquiry.

As an instance of the early modern subject 'before the law', the Baines text viewed as a Derridian supplement would not promise an unmediated commentary on the workings of early modern authority. For just at the point where those workings appear to be within grasp, Janus-like, Baines's Marlowe[6] returns the critical gaze, resisting the possibility of a transparent epistemological moment that would reveal the workings of a repressive state system. What is more, this supplementary recontextualisation negates the possibility that the following appropriation of the Baines text might somehow rise above the flux of critical, political and ideological partiality. For this reason, when I return to the Baines deposition, it will be less as a paradigm of the operations of early modern authority and more as an unstable text, a 'subaltern instance' reflexive of both early modern ideological configurations as well as my reading of them.

In order to do this, it will be useful to look first in some detail at the broad historical and philosophical background to early modern political thought. By doing so, it will be possible to understand the radicalism and influence of the writings of the major Reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin. This ideological scene setting will enable me to outline some of the ways in which authority operated and was debated in sixteenth and seventeenth century England. It will also contextualise much of what follows in later chapters and in particular this thesis's concern with subjectivity. An inevitable feature of such a

project will also be an examination of some recent critical methodologies and, arising from this, a new hypothesis conceiving the ways in which early modern authority might be critically theorised. For these reasons it might be useful at this stage to sketch broadly the direction that this hypothesis will take: that early modern writing concerned with the question of authority constructs what Jonathan Goldberg has called a 'socially sanctioned *double agency*'[7] or to put it another way, a subjective double bind before the law; that the subject's struggle for identity and/or a subject position involved both subjective identification *with* and internalisation *of* various overlapping structures of authority, what might be called the residual imperative of the *communitas*; that this process was always politically determinate in the broadest sense of the term;[8] finally, that total subjective identification was never completely attainable and that the corresponding axis of identification/lack was the dialectic upon which this subjectivity was predicated.

Regnum Dei, Regnum Mundus

Up until roughly the fifth century AD, the precise nature of the relationship between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Man was, theologically, somewhat underdeveloped.[9] To a certain extent this is hardly surprising. The early history of the Christian Church in the West is one of religious survival, consolidation and slow doctrinal development.[10] So while the writings of the early Church fathers such as Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom and Augustine of Hippo were resolutely political, this is 'politics' understood primarily in the pre and early medieval sense of *auctoritates*. What this meant in practice, as

B. B. Price observes, was an overriding concern 'that ideas be collected, organized in specific divisions and transmitted, than that the actual content of those ideas be analyzed.'[11] In short, the political focus of the early Church was on the order and stability that doctrinal and discursive clarity might provide. Nonetheless, if the history of the Christian Church demonstrates anything, it is that the exegetical imperative cannot be contained indefinitely. With the passing of the Creed of Nicea in 325 AD and the longer Nicene Creed in 381 AD, theologians began to solidify a burgeoning conceptual lexis that enabled them to develop their exegeses in a more systematic way. And although not all members of the Church accepted the reformulated Creed, ultimately the goal of unity outweighed doctrinal dissent.[12] For example, in *De Doctrina Christiana* (396 AD), Augustine signals the shift away from a delimiting sense of *auctoritates*: 'The teacher who reads out a text to listening students simply articulates what he recognises; but the teacher who teaches the alphabet has the intention of enabling others to read too.'[13] To borrow Augustine's metaphor, the Nicene Creed enabled theologians to 'read' with impunity. Inevitably, with the question of the self-proclaimed 'Alpha and Omega' answered within an accepted conceptual frame, attention turned to (and the solecism is unavoidable) political *auctoritates*.

Perhaps the most important doctrinal development that the Nicene Creed instituted was its affirmation of Christ's *homoousia*. This was an emphasis on the primacy of Christ's nature which, although one and undivided was concomitantly said to be human *and* divine. This apparent contradiction had given rise to no end of theological disputation, often culminating in accusations of heresy. In no small part, the Nicene Creed was formulated in order to put an

end to this wrangling. According to the words of the Creed, Christ is 'begotten not made, of one substance with the Father...and was made flesh of the Holy Spirit...and was crucified for us'.[14] This basic Christological principle appears in the work of almost every orthodox theologian in the Christian tradition. Indeed because of this, it is difficult to see how the Aristotelian law of non-contradiction that Jacques Derrida associates with Western metaphysics can be applied to this central theological and exegetical principle of the Christian Church, formulated as it was prior to the concerted introduction of Aristotle's work around the twelfth century.[15] The metaphysics of the early Church in relation to Christ *were* – to put it both anachronistically and crudely – contradictory. What is more, it is the archetypal figure of Christ that has underwritten – if not always at a conscious level – many subsequent explorations of subjectivity in the West, at least until the nineteenth century.[16] Central to this cultural paradigm has been Christ's avowedly split subjectivity. As Jonathan Dollimore has noted, 'the crisis of subjectivity was there at the inception of individualism in early Christianity, and has been as enabling as it has been disturbing (enabling because disturbing).'[17] This point notwithstanding, an area that is comparatively under-explored is the way in which, as the central figure of Christian identification, Christ's conceptually precarious subjectivity, His *homoousia*, has proved critical to the development of political *auctoritates*.

As Matthew makes clear in his Gospel, Christ was always human yet also divinely Other: 'he taught them as one hauing authority, and not as the Scribes'.[18] What Matthew hints at is the fact that Christ operates simultaneously within two realms of authority the divine and the secular: humans cannot and do not. Indeed, this realisation emphasises the potential problems that political

auctoritates predicated upon Christ's *homoousia* might conceivably present. Doctrinal coherence at a conceptual level is not always easily translated into material practice. Put simply, Christ's authority derives in the main from his duality. It is His *homoousia* that enabled him to transcend death and consequently save man. However, this duality cannot be imputed to anyone but Christ. The question then arises as to how, subjectively, conceptually and emotionally, man might identify with his saviour? Modern psychoanalytic criticism has emphasised the ways in which the desire for subjective identification with an Other is critical in the formation of human identity. It might therefore seem that the archetypal figure of Christian identification functions rather like Jacques Lacan's *object petit a*, the constantly sliding signifier that 'is most evanescent in its function of symbolising the central lack of desire'.[19] At the point where human identification seems possible, Christ's divine nature renders that identification, at best, partial.

Yet just as the Lacanian *object petit a* provides a point of entry into, or rather oscillation between the imaginary and symbolic realms, so the question arises as to Christ's precise position between the divine and human realms. If men desire identification with Christ and if that identification is only partial, then what is the position of Christ in relation to man within a political context?

The City of God

Although the idea of the earthly and the heavenly cities 'has origins as far back as Cicero',[20] the first systematic exposition of this topic, Augustine's *The City of God* (413-426 AD) was to prove the most influential in subsequent

political thinking. Augustine wrote this text against the backdrop of political and militaristic turmoil. Rome had fallen in 410 to the Visigoth king Alaric and the Huns were marauding through Christendom threatening the precarious political stability of various states. It is perhaps not surprising to find that *The City of God* is, in its primary focus, an eschatological, even apocalyptic text. The eschatological mindset is of necessity focussed upon division, violence and retribution and is predicated upon what Jean Baudrillard has called 'the bipartition of survival'.[21] Some will be saved; many will not. For this reason, it is also not hard to see why Reformed thinkers, with their similarly apocalyptic outlook and emphasis upon the cultural centrality of election and reprobation, drew so heavily upon Augustine. Eschatology is in many respects the midwife of predestinarianism.

According to Augustine, 'two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self'.[22] The earthly city affirms the self in all its cupidity while the heavenly city negates this subjective focus because it abrogates the self. The latter city is almost inevitably superior to the former, not only because it is divine but, interestingly, because it is free of contrariety: 'True peace shall be there, where no one shall suffer opposition either from himself or any other.'[23] In Augustine's schema, existence in the *civitas dei* is ontologically different from existence upon earth. Because the heavenly city is divine, all who exist there necessarily participate *in* the divine, safe from the dualities of earthly contradiction. However, this is not to posit a final split between the two realms. As it is writing 'about-the-end', eschatological discourse must, logically, always be condemned to write what might be called an open-ended-ending. In other

words, complete separation of the divine and human realms would necessarily negate all writing, even writing 'about-the-end'. For this reason, eschatological discourse is always condemned to be writing against writing because logically as the ultimate expression of an eschatological discourse, the end of the world would cancel out the need for eschatology itself.

Augustine avoids being drawn into this somewhat deconstructive realm of sliding signifiers by recapitulating Christ's authoritative centrality. As he writes in his *Enchiridion* (421 AD): 'when sins had made a wide rift between mankind and God, it was necessary that we should be reconciled to God...by means of a mediator who alone was without sin in his birth, life, and execution.'[24] Or as he puts it in *The City of God*: 'it was necessary for the mediator between God and us to have a temporal mortality and an eternal beatitude; to have correspondence with mortals by the first, and to transfer them to eternity by the second.'[25] The central thrust of the Nicene Creed is taken here to its most logical and eloquent conclusion. Because of Christ's split/undivided nature, human identification with Christ is seen to take place only in so far as it is humanly possible. What I mean by this is that Christ enables man to identify with His human nature but at the point where human identification with the divine nature no longer becomes possible then Christ slides into mediatory mode. Or as Slavoj Žizek puts it: 'There is no "direct" identification with (or approach to) the divine majesty: I identify myself with God only through identifying myself with the unique figure of God-the-Son abandoned by God.'[26] Thus the superiority of the heavenly city – to which the divine nature corresponds – is logically affirmed along with a human recognition of this structure and man's fallen state within it.

It is important to state that at this stage in the history of theological discourse, Augustine's mediatory model was an essentially dispassionate paradigm, corresponding as it did to a wider cultural view of 'Christ's humanity as largely impersonal.'[27] The more subjective or affective mode of identification associated with Christ in the early modern period was mainly as a result of doctrinal developments during the mid to late medieval period.[28] I will return to these issues in chapter five. For the moment it is enough to say that in appropriating Augustine's system as they did on the back of a complex and important medieval Christological heritage, early modern thinkers were, in effect, whether they realised it or not, conflating two modes of Christological identification. The first mode was stoical and removed and the second, affective and emotional. Indeed, as I will argue shortly, the augmentation of a political epistemology predicated upon a co-dependent dualism between *caelum* and *mundus* in the early modern period also informs an utterly new conception of subjectivity and subjective identification.

Returning briefly to Augustine, it is true to say, as Christopher Kirwan has, that by focussing almost exclusively upon the city of God, the saint 'left us no blueprint for human society upon earth'.[29] In many respects the reason for this omission was precisely because Augustine did not set out to provide such a blueprint in the first place. It is true that for Augustine, the state existed in order to provide a corrective to the sins of men. Nevertheless, because of the subsequent theological popularity of the text this political caveat almost does not matter. It was incumbent upon those thinkers who followed Augustine – when the apocalypse did not come – to develop the fairly obvious political inference of this system with regard to secular authority. An emperor or a king was merely a

secular ruler; the spiritual ruler, and by this most thinkers meant the Pope, was God's representative on earth. Therefore the secular should be subordinate to the spiritual. Indeed, one of the earliest Christians to state this position unequivocally was Pope Gelasius I who wrote in 494 AD to Emperor Anastasius that 'you should be subordinate rather than superior to the religious order'.[30] It would be no exaggeration to say that in theory, if not always in practice, this was to remain the dominant theological and political model in the West, at least until the twelfth century.

'The Philosopher': Aristotle

As I intimated earlier, the recovery of the Aristotelian corpus in the West around the twelfth century represented a paradigm shift in Western metaphysics.[31] The dominant Platonism of the Chartres school and the mystical neo-Platonism of thinkers like Pseudo-Dionysus and Meister Eckhart were radically challenged by the texts entering mainland Europe via the Arab philosophers Avicenna and Averroes, amongst others.[32] At a less abstract level, Aristotle's works offered what many thinkers came to see as an intrinsically new political model in opposition to the dominant Augustinian metaphysic. The Aristotelian challenge also arrived at a judicious moment in the political development of the West. As Gerhard Ebeling observes: 'it was no accident that this [introduction of Aristotle] coincided with the crowning achievement of the papacy in extending its influence over secular rulers'.[33] Interestingly, the high point of Aristotelianism reached in Thomas Aquinas's great synthesis of faith and reason also contributed to a reaffirmation of the existing political

hegemony.[34] The twelfth century was also noteworthy for witnessing a growing self-confidence and geographic expansionism amongst European rulers. One of the consequences of this shift was, as Marcia Colish notes, the 'redefining [of] Crusades as battles against heretics within Europe's borders', notably the Cathars and Albigensians.[35] Doctrinal disputation and its semantic bedfellow, heresy, became a political fact of life in mainland Europe in a way that had not always been the case in the past. In short, the period saw a shift away from the corporate abstract to the individual's relationship with the corporate: from the city of God to the city of man. Furthermore, the renewed study of Roman law in the major European Universities taken alongside the now flourishing Aristotelianism all had the combined effect, as Richard Southern points out, of 'making human justice and government an affair subject to human rules and dependent upon the efficacy of human agents.'[36] The locus of authority shifted decisively in the twelfth century – at a conceptual and political level – from the sacred to the secular.

In one of those newly discovered texts, the *Politics* (3rd c BC), Aristotle states:

> as all associations aim at some good, that association which is the most sovereign among them all and embraces all others will aim highest, i.e. at the most sovereign of all goods. This is the association which we call the state, the association which is 'political'.[37]

It is what society becomes, or is in the process of becoming, that signifies its worth for Aristotle, and each subject must play their part in achieving a good 'end' for the society of which they are a part. In the first place, man is motivated to do this by pragmatic political reality: 'essential is...the combination of the natural ruler and ruled, for the purpose of preservation...there is a common interest uniting master and slave.'[38] Moreover, as Aristotle notes, 'the state has a

natural priority over the household and over any individual among us. For the whole must be prior to the part.'[39] It is easy to see how this kind of view would have chimed well with the burgeoning nationalistic ambitions of the major European states during the mid to late medieval period. But perhaps the most radical proposition in Aristotle's *Politics* was the separation of the religious from the political in the state:

> It is clear then that the state is both natural to and prior to the individual. For if an individual is not fully self-sufficient after separation, he will stand in the same relationship to the whole as the parts in the other case do. Whatever is incapable of participating in the association which we call the state, a dumb animal for example, and equally whatever is perfectly self-sufficient and has no need to (e.g. a god), is not a part of the state at all.[40]

Essentially what Aristotle outlines here is an avowedly secular state. And although many moderate thinkers of the period were to interpret this model theologically, there were also those who were prepared to take Aristotle at face value. Indeed, it is hard not to see in the lines quoted above a direct catalyst for the political theories of secularist thinkers like Marsilius of Padua and William of Ockham.

In political terms, the travails of the medieval papacy provided the impetus for scholars to reconsider the whole question of secular and spiritual authority. At the start of the fourteenth century, Pope Boniface VIII asserted in a dispute with Philip IV of France that, as Bernard Reardon puts it,

> the temporal and spiritual 'swords' were alike committed to the church, the latter to be wielded by the clergy directly, the former, though delegated to the secular authorities, to be used on behalf of the church and under its direction.[41]

As a result of this dispute Boniface was captured by the French, an event that was to have far-reaching consequences for the institution he represented. From

1304 to 1378, the papacy was based not in Rome but in Avignon, a 'captivity' that virtually destroyed any lingering prestige the papacy might have held.

It was against this backdrop that Marsilius of Padua and William of Ockham formulated their ideas. Both men were part of an emerging group of thinkers that have come to be known as the *via moderni* who, in the context of contemporary political developments, were prepared to radically rethink the limits of secular authority in relation to the Church. First, in his seminal text, *The Defender of the Peace* (1324), Marsilius argues that 'plenitude of power does not belong to the Roman bishop or to any other'.[42] This was an uncompromising proposition, as was the suggestion that 'both Christ and the apostles wanted to be and were continuously subject in property and in person to the coercive jurisdiction of secular rulers'.[43] Essentially, Marsilius believed that the Church had misunderstood its own authoritative position in society by supposing, as it had done since the days of Gelasius, that it possessed coercive powers. As Marcia Colish points out, for Marsilius 'The role of the church is spiritual only, and if clerics trespass into temporal affairs, the emperor has the right to judge and punish them under the civil law with political sanctions, up to the pope himself.'[44] Ockham went even further than his Italian counterpart. He first formulated his theories in response to Pope John XXII's views on poverty and the ownership of material possessions.[45] Ockham's most startling insight was to suggest that even if society distinguished between two loci of power (the spiritual and the secular), that distinction did not necessarily call for two separate regulators. As he frequently insisted, 'no community is best ordered unless it is under one head upon whom the jurisdiction of all others depends.'[46] The spiritual ruler, in this case the Pope, is certainly responsible for administering

justice pertaining to the spiritual. However, 'Since it extends only to matters of faith, papal authority has no role in temporal politics and cannot use political means.'[47] For these reasons, Ockham concluded, the secular ruler was best placed to govern society. What this signalled as A. S. McGrade notes was 'the end of political Augustinianism and the hierocratically inspired descending thesis of government with its resulting program of moulding society from above.'[48] More fundamentally than this perhaps, the work of Ockham, Marsilius and later thinkers like John Wycliffe and John Huss planted the conceptual seeds of the Reformation.[49]

Mediating Luther

The name of Martin Luther has become synonymous with the Reformation itself. Yet as Bernard Reardon has noted, 'of all the reformers he is apt to strike us today as the most medieval, the most unmodern'.[50] Perhaps for this reason, it is in Luther's work that we are most likely to observe those processes that Frederic Jameson identified as necessary for 'cultural revolution'. Indeed, in relation to the question of authority, this development is perhaps less difficult to trace than in other aspects of Luther's thought, primarily because he was building upon the clearly defined and oppositional tradition of Marsilius and Ockham. It is also significant that the social climate of Western Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century made the question of secular and sacred authority an urgently *practical* one. Oberman explains:

> On the eve of the Reformation, an important change took place. Earlier, the appeal to old "common" law and custom over against the irresistible spreading of centrally administered territories, the precursors of our modern states, was a cry of distress...from those "below" to those

> "above"...However, where the appeal to the new divine law penetrates, the injustice experienced because of unbearable tax burdens, encroachment on the common pasture and, and further disenfranchisement of free men starts to spark off intensified reflection and action...We now hit upon a new awareness of all men being equal under the just will of God, which is seen as equally binding, embracing, and obligatory for the entire society.[51]

So while the question of authority was debated in terms that Marsilius and Ockham would probably have recognised, two important differences can be noted.

First, the new debates have a much more recognisably communal political impetus. There is a sense that the Reformers are responding to the practical needs of their people in a way that was not always the case with the high medieval scholastics. Seeing the Pope effectively neutered as an active political force for the foreseeable future, the Reformers turned their focus upon the misuse of power by secular rulers. Yet in many respects, by doing this, they became victims of their own success. Having fought against the supremacy of the Pope for so long by promoting the virtues of the secular ruler, there was also the danger that secular rule would become valorised regardless of the qualities he possessed or the actions that he undertook.[52] The second difference in the way in which authority was debated is perhaps the most important as well as the most under explored. The Reformers effectively reinscribed the figure of Christ as a political avatar through which the question of authority might be conceptualised. Following the important lead set by Desiderius Erasmus in his *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1503-4), the first generation of thinkers including Luther and Huldrych Zwingli (re)invigorated Christ at a political and at a secular level. By constructing Christ as they did, the early Reformers also politicised him in a way that developed an important strain of medieval Christology. As David Aers notes, the conventional paradigm in medieval studies that sees Christ

as a figure of emotionalised, eroticised and often-feminised identification and imitation obscures a radically politicised reading of the *imitatio Christi* associated with Lollard heterodoxy. As Aers writes, 'Such an imitation of Christ would encourage challenges to the authority and power of the church in many domains: legal, political, economic, military, and theological.'[53] This reading of the saviour as an actant in corporate politics personalised Him in a much more actively political way. In order, therefore, to understand Luther's reading of authority and the function of this new Christology within it, it will be necessary to return to the competing models of Augustine and Aristotle outlined earlier.

I have already argued that Aristotle gave Western political thought a different epistemological emphasis especially in relation to the prevailing Augustinian paradigm. As Quentin Skinner observes, 'Augustine had pictured political society as a divinely ordained order imposed on fallen man as a remedy for their sins. But Aristotle's *Politics* treats the polis as a purely human creation, designed to fulfil purely mundane ends.'[54] Skinner's emphasis upon the Augustinian political society as a *remedy* for sin is pivotal because in classic Christian theology, sin may only be redeemed through Christ. Because many late medieval and humanist thinkers had adopted a communal political model which sidestepped the fact that, as Aers puts it, 'representations of Christ hold political consequences',[55] the express danger was that Christ's sacrifice ceased to be the 'political' and religious centre of Christian life. The problem for Luther was that on the one hand he was an avowed Augustinian in most matters theological, but in respect of the question of authority he sided with the secularist political school that took their inspiration from Aristotle.[56]

This is one of the points that Luther was addressing when he wrote in his *Disputation Against Scholastic Theology* (1517) that 'the whole Aristotle is to theology as darkness is to light.'[57] What he was to call elsewhere the bondage of the will was, along with his re-formulated Christology, to become the *modus operandi* behind his exploration of secular authority in his *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit* (1523). Written ostensibly in response to the prohibition of his translation of the Bible, this work sets out to attack those secular rulers who 'have had the temerity to put themselves in God's place, [and] make themselves masters of consciences and belief'.[58] What Luther fears most is subjugation of men's consciences to the secular ruler. All this not only emphasises how far (for Luther) Marsilius and Ockham's insights had been perverted, it also draws attention to the Lutheran conception of the *spiritual* freedom of the conscience which was to become extremely influential for later thinkers.

In connection, therefore, with the problem outlined above, Luther observes:

> And so God has ordained the two governments, the spiritual [government] which fashions true Christians and just persons through the Holy Spirit under Christ, and the secular [*weltlich*] government which holds the Unchristian and wicked in check and forces them to keep the peace outwardly and be still, like it or not.[59]

It might seem from this that Luther both ignores his earlier strictures concerning conscience and also creates a spiritual elect distinct from the rest of society. Yet this is not quite the case as the following qualification shows:

> Without the spiritual government of Christ, no one can be made just in the sight of God by the secular government [alone]. However, Christ's spiritual government does not extend to everyone; on the contrary, Christians are at all times the fewest in number and live in the midst of the Unchristian. Conversely, where the secular government or law rules on its own, pure hypocrisy must prevail.[60]

Luther's concern is with the Christians; the fate of the 'Unchristians' is a secondary matter for him. This distinction is all the more important because it is

so slight. Perhaps more than most discourses, theology relies heavily on relatively acute lexical differentiation. Yet it is these seemingly minute differences upon which theological systems and subjective positionalities are determined. In *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit* Luther, somewhat surprisingly, appears to follow Aristotle. The Unchristian are, to quote Aristotle, 'incapable of participating in the association which we call the state'. Effectively, what Luther does here is to apply Aristotelianism to the reality of election and reprobation and yoke to it a political Augustinian dualism solely *at the level of the individual*. It was this insight that made Luther one of the most instrumental thinkers of the Reformation.

On two counts therefore, Robert Weimann seriously misinterprets Luther's political insight when he writes: 'Since the two kingdoms are radically distinct but also parallel manifestations of one heavenly design, the corresponding locations of authority, although different, overlap.'[61] Firstly, I have already shown how the *via moderni*, and in particular Ockham, signalled the end of political Augustinianism as a discourse and as a practice. Augustine and his 'political' theology were, of course, highly respected by the Reformers and cited widely, but at a micropolitical level, *not* as a macropolitical paradigm. Secondly, and leading on from this point, by re-imposing the old Augustinian hegemony which viewed the *civitas mundi* as a tiresome, sin-infested adjunct to the *civitas dei*, Weimann fails to see that Luther's concern was with the spiritual *within* the temporal, manifested at the level of private, internal discourse. By accepting God's overarching sovereignty and the secular ruler as God's guarantor upon earth, Luther's focus is rather with the *internal* imperatives of authority as completely separate from the outer imperatives (which in any case are associated

with the Unchristian). I will return shortly to the problems such a conception might well present, but for the moment it is enough to say that Luther's political focus is on the subjective experience(s) of going before the law.

The seeds of this far-reaching theology are to be found in the 1517 *Disputation* that I quoted from earlier. Luther writes elsewhere:

> 87. Since the law is good, the will, which is hostile to it, cannot be good.
> 88. And from this it is clear that everyone's natural will is iniquitous and bad.
> 89. Grace as a mediator is necessary to reconcile the law with the will.[62]

In Lutheran theology, grace is only ever received in the Augustinian manner by and through Christ, a fundamental asserted by revalidating Augustine's critical theory of Christ as a mediator between man and God: 'Christ is full of grace, life and salvation.'[63] It is for this reason that, while God in his sovereignty still holds sway over all things, this is in many respects a secondary feature of Luther's thought, especially his political thought. God's power for Luther is an ontological not an epistemological issue. So, bearing in mind the analogous/similitudinous position of the secular ruler and taking into account the subjective, spiritual position of Christ in relation to man, an interesting possibility arises: that the subject might actually be party to *two* potentially competing forms of identification. What is more, both of these forms of identification (one inward and spiritual, one outward and temporal) take place *within the temporal order*.

Like Christ's *homoousia*, the subject's internal and external relations with 'authority' necessarily split the Lutheran subject/ivity. I labour this point because it seems to me that this intellectual development, and its medieval antecedents at the start of the Reformation are seriously overlooked as a

cynosure for the explorations of subjectivity and the strange, often baffling workings-out of inwardness found in so many early modern texts. 'One simply cannot write the history of the subject in a culture where Christian beliefs and practices are pervasive without taking Christianity extremely seriously'[64] as David Aers has observed. This is a valuable point. To take early modern religion 'seriously' must also, as part of that project, mean paying close attention to the complexity and diversity of the medieval religious foundations I mentioned earlier. But one problem remains. If Luther's project creates within the subject, in Debora Shuger's formulation, ' a *private* and inward spiritual kingdom [divided] from the whole temporal order of society',[65] it surely also leaves that subject oscillating between the two types of authoritative 'institution'. In other words, with whom or with what does the subject ultimately identify: the signifier of inward, spiritual authority or of outward, secular power? If identification is central to the forming of subjectivity, so the signifier that the subject identifies with must, in some way, be reflected in the way that that subject/ivity operates. In order to clear up this problem, I want now to turn to the relationship between conscience and political resistance.

'The Sword and the Law'

Heiko Oberman has noted that 'Luther suffered through the conflict...between the conscience and Evangelical reliance on God.'[66] This personal affliction is perhaps mirrored in his somewhat agonised argument in relation to political resistance in *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit*. An intimation of this difficulty is found when Luther states that the secular ruler should believe that 'I

belong to the people and to the land; I ought to do what is advantageous for them.'[67] Yet perhaps more than most, Luther knew full well that this degree of magnanimity was not common amongst early modern rulers. He also recognised that if this position was developed to its logical conclusion, tyranny could hide under the mask of 'just', secular self-authorisation. Because of this possibility, and perhaps also because of the ideological imperatives of his people's precarious political position,[68] Luther was compelled to ask whether an unjust ruler might be lawfully opposed.

In *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit*, his answer to this question is, to say the least, unsatisfactory. He states that 'love of one's neighbour has no regard for self...so long as it is for the good of one's neighbour or the community.'[69] Luther would appear to be working towards a position where resistance is permissible if it is for the Aristotelian common good. Indeed as he had previously remarked:

> Although you yourself do not need your enemy to be punished, your weak neighbour does, and you are to help him enjoy peace and see to it that his enemies are kept in check. And that cannot be unless power and superiors are held in honour and awe.[70]

This sentence bypasses logical disputation and the final caveat negates all his previous observations on this matter. By failing to address directly the possibility that the enemy of the neighbour might well be their secular superior, Luther is able to deny (however illogically) that a secular ruler might be opposed. However, not only was this stance unsatisfactory and logically invidious, it was not to remain Luther's last word on the matter.

Writing in 1531 against the very real threat of a Catholic uprising against the various Protestant groupings throughout continental Europe, Luther stated in the *Warning to His Dear German People* that 'If the emperor should issue a call to arms against us on behalf of the pope...no one should lend himself to it or

obey the emperor in this event.'[71] Again, conscience is to the fore: 'how will your conscience bear the blasphemous fraud of purgatory, with which they [the Catholics] also treacherously duped and falsely frightened all the world'.[72] Finally, Luther's radicalism concerning the *spiritual* freedom of conscience is extended into his political *auctoritates*. He was writing during what were extremely difficult and unsure times both theologically and politically and resistance against an unlawful/ungodly ruler is not exactly mandated here. Nevertheless the important point is that the precedent for further debate on this topic had been set. Luther knew as much. This is perhaps the reason why he could not bring himself personally to validate what he had said:

> My ardent wish and plea is that peace be preserved and that neither side start a war or give cause for it. For I do not want my conscience burdened, nor do I want to be known before God or the world as having counselled or desired anyone to wage war or to offer resistance except those who are enjoined and authorised to do so [Romans 13].[73]

My purpose in quoting this passage is not to draw attention to Luther's inability to develop the consequences of what he was suggesting or to the maddeningly contradictory argument he once more employs, but rather to highlight two features of this objection central to the next stage of my discussion.

Firstly, Luther bases his objection upon his conscience, which, as I have shown, he considered to be spiritually free. Why therefore should he worry about *his* conscience 'before God'? The answer lies in realising that for Luther the spiritual freedom of conscience does not correspond to a Hegelian personal and moral counterbalance.[74] Rather, as Oberman points out, 'it [conscience] is always guided and is free only once God has freed and "captured" it.'[75] So although free from those loci of secular authority that the Reformers found so distasteful, the Lutheran conscience always remains *internally* subscribed. But

this was only the beginning of a new paradigm. As I pointed out earlier, Luther was frequently caught between conscience and the evangelical imperative. It is no mistake to find therefore that the career of perhaps the greatest Reformed evangelical, John Calvin, corresponded – not least in his own work – to a radical development of Lutheran conscience, inspired by evangelism, and debated in relation to authority.

The second and final point is to note that as the author of a (potentially) radical view of the subject's obligations before the law, Luther was not prepared to go that stage further and personally authorise that discourse. This text – or rather its message – as Barthes would have it, 'reads without the inscription of the Father'[76] and in a way that reconstructs a Lutheran subject position oscillating once more between two authors/authorities. In other words, the Lutheran subject is predicated upon a type of interiority that does not and cannot correspond to an autonomous self, but a self caught in a double bind, a dialectic of identification and loss. The desired identification with the authoritative figure is rendered impossible because to achieve this would require (in this case) the very act of radical social living that would render the authoritative figure absent once more. What I have outlined here is, as Linda Gregerson has observed, 'the formal and thematic cultivation of a subject-in-exile, a subject defined and produced by its loss of address to, and search for authorising ground.'[77] The effect of Calvinism was to make this subject even more diffuse.

In the last quotation from Luther above, it is interesting to note that his objection is supported by a specific biblical passage, Romans 13. This particular text, although always popular in Christian discussions of authority and law, was,

because of Luther's use of it, to prove highly significant for later thinkers. Accordingly this text, along with the Old Testament book of Daniel will provide the framework for the next part of the discussion in relation to John Calvin.

Conscience and the Bible

The key to understanding Calvin's conception of conscience lies in his doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He writes:

> For by a kind of mutual bond the Lord has joined together the certainty of his Word and of his Spirit so that the perfect religion of the Word may abide in our minds when the Spirit, who causes us to contemplate God's face, shines; and that we in turn may embrace the Spirit with no fear of being deceived when we recognise him in his own image, namely, in the Word. [78]

The Holy Spirit is '*recognized in his agreement with Scripture*'[79]and is also the entity that paves the way for the mediator between man and God: 'the Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ effectually unites us to himself.'[80] In an evolution of the Lutheran system, Calvin positions God just that bit further away from man. Indeed in Calvin's theology, *Deus* is as far away as he can be without being *absconditus*.

Scripture is used by Calvin as both the basis for secular governance and also as the starting point for the affective, subjective exploration of self. According to Robert Weimann, a problem arises because of this. He argues: 'Calvin paradoxically projected a Holy Spirit whose identity in bridging two radically different worlds, must be resolutely fixed; when all is said and done such fixture...is that of the meaning of Scripture itself.'[81] As with his discussion of Luther, it is the case that Weimann misreads the focal point of Calvin's thinking on this matter. The Reformer may have been confused (and

occasionally confusing) but he was certainly systematic and what Weimann fails to take into account is Calvin's development of the Lutheran notion of conscience.

Perhaps the best way of highlighting the problem is to examine a sentence from the text with which I began this chapter, the Baines deposition, which is rarely (if ever) commented upon: 'That all the apostles were fishermen and base fellows, neither of wit nor worth; that Paul only had wit, but he was a timorous fellow in bidding men to be subject to magistrates against his conscience.'[82] Ostensibly this is a highly heretical assertion. By claiming that Paul went 'against his conscience', it may seem that Baines's Marlowe effectively denies the *lex divinus* or, in the words of Saint Augustine, 'that the Scriptures were delivered to mankind by the Spirit of the one true God who can tell no lie.'[83] Yet there is another more intriguing possibility.

It will first be useful to look in some detail at the biblical text to which this accusation refers, namely Chapter 13 of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans:

> Let euery soule be subiect vnto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoeuer therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receiue to themselves condemnation. For magistrates are not to be feared for good works, but *for* euill. Wilt thou then be without feare of the power? doe well: so shalt thou have praise of the same; For he is the minister of God for thy wealth: but if thou doe euill, feare: for he beareth not the sword for nought: for he is the minister of God, to take vengeance on him that doeth euill. Wherefore we must be subiect, not because of wrath onely, but also for conscience sake.[84]

I have quoted the first five verses in full for, as Quentin Skinner has observed, due to the influence of Luther, Romans became 'the most cited of all texts on the foundations of political life throughout the age of the Reformation'.[85] Regardless of whether Baines or Marlowe made the accusation regarding Paul, the accuser knew he was on contentious, if well-worn ground. The reasons for this text's

popularity are complex but illuminating. As Christopher Hill writes, 'The Bible had been a political creation from the beginning'.[86] In a sense then, by re-emphasising its social primacy as Luther and Calvin did, and by ensuring its relative accessibility at all cultural levels, the Reformers re-claimed the divine *logos* from the admittedly abstract uses to which it had often been put by the high Scholastics. In short, throughout early modern Europe, the Bible was gradually re-politicised.

As a result of this shift, Romans, more than most biblical texts, provided a divinely sanctioned basis for reconstructing a Reformed polity for the Church.[87] The other factor that determined the new exegesis associated with Romans was the crucial influence of continental legal humanists such as Lorenzo Valla, Guillaume Bude and Andrea Alciato.[88] These scholars established a return to the writings of the ancients, and in particular to those texts of Roman law which had enjoyed such precedence at least since Justinian. These scholars all shared a commitment to examine these texts in their social and historical context. For example, in his discussion of the foundation of monarchy in *De l'Institution du Prince* (c. 1520), Bude notes that its origins 'would not have been based on legitimate domination but on unjust, unlawful seizure and usurpation.'[89] This was radical material that chimed with the ongoing debates on authority throughout Europe. Furthermore, in the intellectual imbroglio of the Reformation it was almost inevitable that the principles of these legal humanists would have some bearing on biblical exegesis. According to Debora Shuger, the effects of this appropriation were potentially drastic:

> The transformation of Roman law from a textual *auctoritas* to an instrument of theoretical analysis is as properly a Renaissance phenomenon as the recognition of the law's contingent contexts. And both are potentially forms of demythologisation.[90]

It is precisely this intellectual development that is reflected in the Baines reference to Romans, but in an unexpected way.

With its references to the disparity of biblical timelines and its emphasis upon contingent historical fact - this explains the otherwise spurious reference to the actual economic lowliness of biblical Palestinian fishermen - the Baines text appropriates the lessons of the humanist revisionists in a way that seems to pre-date David Friedrich Strauss's *Das Leben Jesu* (1835-6) and the Higher Critics by almost 250 years. But I want to return to the document's reference to conscience. Clearly this alludes to the passage in Romans that reads 'ye must need be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake'. Now while the emphasis of the Baines text sets Paul's personal conscience aside from those of other men, the inference is that men's consciences may be externally subjugated to the authority of magistrates. In his *Commentary on Romans*, it is thus fascinating to find Calvin, Marlowe's supposed nemesis in so much else, admitting as much initially, and then adding, in an illuminating caveat:

> we must voluntarily take upon ourselves the submission to which our conscience is bound by the Word of God...The whole of this discussion concerns civil government (*de civilibus praefecturis*). Those, therefore, who bear rule over men's consciences attempt to establish their blasphemous tyranny from this passage in vain. [91]

In sharp contrast to the biblical Paul's conception of an externally imposed authority, Calvin's voluntarism would seem to posit conscience as an active faculty of moral exertion. But as Marsilius of Padua, William of Ockham and Martin Luther understood only too well, to give conscience an active psychological role is to raise the possibility of active resistance led *from* the conscience.

As I pointed out earlier, the only way in which the 'Word of God' could be made apparent to men, according to the Reformers, was by and through the *lex divinus*. So, by denying that tyranny – which, after all, is a mode of authority – could be established over men's consciences, Calvin's argument leaves only two possible conclusions. The first is that although men's consciences may be subjugated to authority, the tyrannous implications of the biblical passage effectively refute the Bible as the basis of authoritative discourse. But this conclusion not only misrepresents the passage, is misunderstands Calvin's whole conception of authority. Therefore, the second and most likely conclusion is that tyranny exists *despite* the Bible and because of this, men's consciences are caught *between* the imperative to obey the Bible, and align with tyranny, or to follow their subjective consciences, thus denying the Bible but refuting the tyrant. Is this a circle that can be squared in practice?

Conscience and Civil Living

The centrality of conscience to both Scripture *and* the Holy Spirit is affirmed in two of Calvin's sermons on the *Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus* (1579). First he states that 'if we haue not a good conscience, our faith shall be taken away from vs, & we shall be made naked of the grace of the holy Ghost.'[92] Calvin is operating here from the other side of the argumentative dialectic noted at the beginning of the last section: a good conscience is necessary for the operation of the Spirit. He then goes on to note later that 'a good conscience is the meanes to keepe this treasure of the Gospel'.[93] Logically

to adhere to Scripture is to affirm the Holy Spirit and thus hold a good conscience. Nonetheless, Calvin had stated in the *Institutes*:

> For even though individual laws may not apply to the conscience, we are still held by God's general command, which commends to us the authority of magistrates. And Paul's discussion turns on this point: the magistrates, since they have been ordained by God, ought to be held in honour [Rom.13: 1). Meanwhile, he does not teach that the laws framed by them apply to the inward governing of the soul[94]

Bearing in mind what I have said about Calvinist interiority in relation to subjective identification, the only possible conclusion that can be drawn from Calvin's reading of conscience is that in a similar way to Luther, he was prepared to view it as logical and illogical, verifiable and contradictory.

This seems at this point the only satisfactory way of explaining Calvin's slippery argument. It would also appear to be the best way of accounting for the dichotomy between the apostle's conscience and those of all other men proposed by Baines's Marlowe. For if authority is to remain with the Bible, it must also remain with the disseminators of that text, in this case Paul. But because the overriding focus of Calvin's political theory was on the community of the faithful (and their covenant with God), his difficulty arose when attempting to account for the contingent actions of individuals operating within this framework. This explains his curious insistence earlier that his account of conscience (which can never be a corporate faculty) refers to *de civilibus praefecturis*. It is therefore necessary to turn to another commentary on *Romans*, one which was undoubtedly influenced by Calvin, but which had a far greater effect than any other Reformed commentary, and one that is the key to understanding the Baines reference to conscience: the marginal commentary in the Geneva Bible.

Next to the fifth verse of *Romans* in the margin of the Geneva Bible is written:

> Wee must obey the Magistrate, not onely for feare of punishment, but much more because that (although the Magistrate haue no power ouer the conscience of man, yet seeing hee is Gods minister) hee cannot be resisteth by any good conscience.[95]

Again a similar exegetical double truth would appear to be in evidence here. The statement that a magistrate cannot be opposed by 'any good conscience' seems to negate the assertion that the magistrate has 'no power over the conscience of men'. However, this would be to disregard the crucial supplementary marginal note that is attached to the final predicate of the biblical verse, 'but also for consciences sake'. This note states: '*So farre as lawfully we may: for if vnlawfull things be commanded vs, we must answere as Peter teacheth vs, It is better to obey God than man.*'[96] What this note does is to reclaim the Bible as *lex divinus* by making the *lex* exist in a contingent relation to the *divinus*. In other words, just as the humanists' historicisation of Roman law led to an awareness of its contingent contexts, so men's actions (be they contemporary or biblical) can, potentially at least, be seen to occur at a specific historical moment under contingent social conditions.

But this recognition came at a price. Just as the Geneva note quoted above exits as a supplement to the main marginal exegesis, so a new conception of conscience begins to emerge, in the Geneva Bible, in the Baines text and in early modern culture at large. This is a conception predicated upon the radical inferences of Calvin's exegesis. Put simply, the Reformers' need to encompass all forms of moral behaviour within the boundaries of the Bible led to the emergence of a decidedly supplementary conception of conscience in relation to authority. It relied, as I have shown, on the suspension of formal logic. By

reclaiming the unlawful within the divine text, this movement allowed for a conscience bound by scriptural and temporal *auctoritas* (the Pauline line). At the same time, this movement sanctioned the possibility, with biblical assent, of rebellion (the Petrine line).

All of this serves to demonstrate the difficulty of locating the parameters of orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the period. Because conscience, however it manifested itself, was only ever experienced as an interior reality, it can only itself be supplementary to any political theory constructed around it. Leaving aside the important fact outlined earlier that for Luther and Calvin, spiritual conscience could not in any way be contained, the supplement always declares, as Derrida puts it, that 'the sign is the supplement of the thing itself.'[97] In other words, even if the notion of containment is permitted in relation to the supplementary conscience, it will only ever be the containment of one side of this mental dialectic. This is not a perverse, a-historical or even post-modern retrojection but an actual mode of discourse and, indeed, existence in early modern society. For this reason, Shuger is surely correct when she states that what she calls participatory consciousness 'remains relatively indifferent to the law of non-contradiction itself' in the early modern period.[98] The 'new systematic dominant' of the Reformation could never completely efface the spectre of Augustine and a wholly different epistemological schema.

Resisting the King

There is some disparity in the early modern period between certain aspects of what John Calvin wrote and the uses to which his writings were actually put.[99]

This is especially the case in relation to the question of authority, a topic on which Calvin was decidedly ambivalent. As Quentin Skinner notes, while Calvin's theory of civil order remained consistent: 'Calvin is at all times a master of equivocation, and while his basic commitment is unquestionably to a theory of non-resistance, he does introduce a number of exceptions into his argument.'[100] Importantly, it was Calvin's equivocation on this matter that influenced an important group of writers known as the resistance theorists.[101] In order to explain the work of this group, I want to turn to the last page of the *Institutes*. In his final edition of the text (1559), Calvin took what could possibly be construed as a Petrine line in relation to resistance. Utilising Daniel's rebellion against King Darius, he asserted: 'Daniel denies that he has committed any offence against the king when he has not obeyed his impious edict [Dan.6:22-23, Vg.]. For the king had exceeded his limits...abrogat[ing] his power.'[102] It is interesting to note that in their various English editions of the *Institutes*, Edmund Bunney omits Calvin's addition and William Lawne calls the Daniel passage a 'caueat.'[103] Calvin's English translators seemed aware that this was dangerous material, what one commentator has designated as an 'orthodox Calvinist policy of disobedience in all things repugnant to the law of God, but passive acceptance of any persecution that such a stance might bring upon them.'[104] It was this policy that was picked up and developed by a number of the resistance theorists.

The most well known writers on resistance such as John Ponet, Christopher Goodman and John Knox all had one thing in common. All had fled England to escape persecution at the beginning of the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary I. And although their rhetoric is clouded to varying degrees by the misogynistic

assertion that no female should ever be monarch, their work nevertheless takes the efforts of the Reformers to its most radical conclusions. For example, in his *Treatise of Politike Power* (1556), John Ponet returns to the question of Daniel and Darius. As he asks: 'why did Daniel not folowe king Darius and his counsailles commaundement...but was content to be cast to the lyones?'[105] Ponet then goes on to utilise Daniel in the course of constructing a theory of lawful resistance against unlawful rulers: 'The lawe testifieth to euery mannes conscience that it is natural to cutte awaie an incurable membre'.[106] It is crucial to note once more how conscience becomes the touchstone of a theory of resistance. Similarly, in his *How Superior Powers Oght to Be Obeyd* (1558), and in a passage marked 'Note this al ye Gentelmen and Nobles of Inglande', Christopher Goodman noted: 'But Daniel not contented to do as he was commaunded, did as he was accustomed, the contrary not once, but thrice every day, transgressinge the kinges commaundement.'[107] But perhaps most notorious of all the resistance tracts was John Knox's *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558) which, unsurprisingly given its title, represented the most extreme expression of political misogyny. Yet in most other respects, Knox's argument was no different to those of Ponet and Goodman, particularly in his use of Daniel.[108] However, in the context of early modern politics, this did not matter. Although perhaps more talked about than read, Knox's *Monstrous Regiment* was to have a lasting effect on the reception of Calvinism in England.

In the first place, the resistance theorists did not, like most Lutheran writers, insist that resistance could only be lead by a magistrate. On the contrary, they argued that bodies of people and even individuals could rise up against a

wicked ruler. As Quentin Skinner observes: 'One way in which this conclusion was reached was by developing the private-law theory of resistance in such a way as to highlight its most individualistic and populist implications.'[109] In early modern Europe, such conclusions were, of course, highly dangerous and before long, Calvinism came to be associated with this form of political radicalism and to be seen as an incendiary theology. This was especially the case in England when, with the death of Mary, one female monarch was replaced with another. Elizabeth I knew the writings of the resistance theorists and in particular the misogynistic polity promoted by John Knox. She was not alone in associating Knox's brand of political radicalism with Calvinism. In the words of Keith Randell, Elizabeth's 'attitude towards Calvinism was coloured by the writings of Knox...Elizabeth had decided that Calvinism was a creed which brought civil war in its train.'[110] The fact that Elizabeth *did* adopt Calvinism says as much about her own political expediency than any particular doctrinal devotion and it is of considerable importance that she should have formulated her views on Calvinism in relation to its most controversial derivative school of thought. This was to prove crucial to the development of Calvinism in England, as I will demonstrate in chapter three.

Of course, Ponet, Goodman and Knox also shared the distinction of being rabidly anti-Catholic. They developed their views under the twin miseries of doctrinal persecution and exile. It is therefore important to note that in early Elizabethan England, more 'moderate' Calvinists like Peter Martyr and John Bradford also echoed Calvin's new conception of conscience and, in Martyr's case, Calvin's theory of resistance. As Skinner notes, 'Martyr defends a version of the constitutional theory of resistance both in his *Commentaries upon the*

Epistle of St Paul to the Romans and in *A Commentary upon the Book of Judges*, which he completed in 1558 and 1561 respectively.'[111] These dates are instructive for in 1559 Elizabeth passed the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy, legislation designed to unite the English Church under both her leadership and doctrinal Protestantism. Crucial to both of these acts was the revival of, or rather re-emphasis upon, the official Church homilies, which were appointed to be read at mass throughout the land. In many respects, these homilies can be seen as an ideological reaction *against* the resistance theory that was being debated at the time. Naturally, Elizabeth's precarious religious and political position[112] had much to do with this movement, but it is possible to read in these homilies – which first appeared in Edward VI's reign but which were supplemented by Elizabeth's bishops – a marked reaction to the resistance theory that so characterised the 'left' wing of Protestant thought.

For example, the *Exhortation concerning good order, and obedience to Rulers and Magistrates* states: 'we must refer all judgement to God, to kings, and rulers, and judges under them, which be God's officers to execute justice; and by plain words of Scripture have their authority and use of the sword granted from God'. [113] It is significant that this sermon ignores the Lutheran/Calvinist emphasis upon the spiritual freedom of conscience for its own ideological ends, stating the biblical line:

> all subjects are bound to obey them [Magistrates] as God's ministers, yea although they be evil, not only for fear, but also for conscience-sake...it is not lawful for inferiors and subjects...to resist and stand against the superior powers.[114]

The unproblematic parallel that the homily writer draws between ruler and God smoothes over the complexities of two hundred years of intellectual history. According to the Homilies, Elizabethan subjects were expected to obey, and

conscience was constructed less as the keeper of spiritual and, potentially, political 'freedom' than as a moral counterweight preventing moral or political assertion. In so far as conscience was an 'inward' faculty, it was still answerable to the often-crushing weight of external, political imperatives. The battle lines in Elizabethan England were drawn and fought over the conscience and I have only outlined the initial skirmishes.

It should be clear now why Baines's Marlowe was such a dangerous figure. Logically for most Protestants Paul *did* go against his conscience when he ordered men to be subject to magistrates and logically this is what Calvin and the Geneva Bible also suggest. As Donna Hamilton explains:

> A related rhetoric of subjectivity and idea of individual autonomy that was important to these church-state controversies was the discourse of conscience...which owed some of its most important formulations to contexts within which someone needed to defend action that ran contrary to official church policy.[115]

Paul also helps to emphasise that the dominant culture in early modern society was not a monolith guaranteeing its own cultural hegemony and containing dissent. When Baines's Marlowe addressed the issue of conscience, he was speaking from the cultural and intellectual *centre* in respect of contemporary theological debates. In doing so he exposed the fact that this ideological centre is most at risk when the precariousness of its centrality is exposed to a gaze from the margin which in turn reveals that marginality as only ever supplementary. As Slavoj Žizek writes, ideology 'is a fantasy-construction which serves as a support for our "reality" itself: and "illusion" which structures our effective, real social relations and thereby masks some insupportable, real, impossible kernel'.[116] In relation to the Calvinist subject before the law, this kernel is the Janus-faced God, the figure of authority, the locus of lack, and the producer of

an internal, spiritual, supplementary subjectivity. For these reasons, in chapter three, I will outline in greater detail the development of Calvinism under Elizabeth as well as providing an account of the changing role of conscience and other internal faculties in early modern England. But in order to contextualise this account properly, in chapter two I examine Protestant sign theory. For, in looking at the legacy and application of Reformed semiotics, it will be possible to better understand the experience of subjectivity in early modern England.

Notes to Chapter One

[1] 'The Baines Note', in *Christopher Marlowe: Complete Plays and Poems*, ed. J.C. Maxwell, (London: J.M. Dent, 1976), pp. 513-514

[2] For the legal and cultural implications of being bound over, see Steve Hindle, 'The Keeping of Public Peace', in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, ed. P. Griffiths, A. Fox, and S. Hindle (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp. 213-248.

[3] Jeffrey Masten, 'Playwrighting: Authorship and Collaboration', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 364. It is worth noting that pre-1590, Baines was in all probability in the employ of Queen Elizabeth's secretary of state and spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham. However, after Walsingham's death in 1590, and with the appointment of Sir Robert Cecil, it is likely that Baines's position became more precarious due to the loss of his patron. It might therefore be possible that the warrant represents an attempt to ingratiate himself with the new figure of authority while at the same time distancing himself from his dead patron: the Thomas Walshingham cited in the deposition was a relative of Sir Francis. For more on these links, see Charles Nichol, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (London; Jonathan Cape, 1992), pp. 23-24.

[4] Critics who have examined the Baines document in detail include Paul Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of his Thought* (New York: Russell, 1962), pp. 33-68 and Stephen Greenblatt, '"Invisible Bullets": Renaissance authority and its subversion', in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 18-47.

[5] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 144-145

[6] The phrase is Louis Montrose's. It highlights well the fact that the Baines text is as much a commentary on cultural mediation and the production of subject positions 'before the law' as it is a historical document. Louis Montrose, *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theatre* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 60.

[7] Jonathan Goldberg, '"Sodomy and Society": The Case of Christopher Marlowe', in *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, ed. David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), p. 77

[8] In modern critical discourse the word 'determinate' is rather unfashionable. However, my use of the word draws on Raymond Williams's exploration of the term in *Marxism and Literature*. He notes:

in practise, determination is never only the setting of limits; it is also the exertion of pressures. As it happens this is also a sense of 'determine' in English: to determine or be determined to do something is an act of will and purpose. In a whole social process, these positive determinations, which may be experienced individually but which are always social acts, indeed often specific social formations, have very complex relations with the negative determinations that are experienced as limits. For they are by no means only pressures against the limits, though these are crucially important. They are at least as often pressures derived from the formation and momentum of a given social mode: in effect a compulsion to act in ways that maintain and renew it. They are also, and vitally, pressures exerted by new formations, with their as yet unrealised intentions and demands. 'Society' is then never only the 'dead husk' which limits social and individual fulfilment. It is always also a constitutive process with very powerful pressures which are both expressed in political, economic, and cultural formations and, to take the full weight of 'constitutive', are internalised and become 'individual wills'. Determination of this whole kind – a complex and interrelated process of limits and pressures – is in the whole social process itself and nowhere else: not in an abstracted 'mode of production' nor in an abstracted 'psychology'.

Although it will not be possible in this study to examine 'the *whole* social process' of early modern society, Williams's insistence on the constitutive power of society to produce subjects is extremely important in what follows.

Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 87

[9] See Henry Bettenson's 'Introduction' to *The Later Christian Fathers: A Selection of the Writings of the Fathers from St. Cyril of Jerusalem to St. Leo the Great*, ed. and trans. Henry Bettenson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 1-33

[10] On the early Church in general see F. F. Bruce, *First Century Faith* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977) and Maurice Wiles, *The Christian Fathers* (London: SCM Press, 1977).

[11] B. B. Price, *Medieval Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 56

[12] See Francis Young's *The Making of the Creeds* (London: SCM Press, 1993)

[13] Augustine of Hippo, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. R. P. H. Green (Oxford and New York; Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 6-7

[14] *The Nicene Creed*, in *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 26

[15] Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, *op. cit.* Part of the problem is the *rapprochement* of Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology carried out by the high

Scholastics of the Middle Ages like Thomas Aquinas. It is no mistake that once thinkers started to question the Aristotelian hegemony at the end of the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance, Christ's contradictory *homoousia* should once more become the focal point of debate and inquiry.

[16] See, for example, Gerard Manley Hopkins's extraordinary 'Terrible Sonnets' written in the 1880s. On the impact of Christ on Western culture in general see Jaroslav Pelikan's study *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999).

[17] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Shakespeare and Theory', in *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*, ed. Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 271. Of course, an orthodox Christian would not accept the premise that Christ's is a 'split subjectivity', citing the mysteries of faith in defence. However, faith is not necessarily a prohibition to exploring the ramifications of a postulate that goes against what even the most fervent believer would regard as 'logic'.

[18] Matthew 7: 29. All biblical references are to *The Geneva Bible* (London: Christopher Barker, 1599).

[19] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London and New York: Penguin, 1994), p. 105

[20] Christopher Kirwan, *Augustine* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 220

[21] Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: SAGE Publications, 1995), p. 144

[22] Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Random House, 1950), p. 477

[23] *Ibid.* p. 864

[24] Augustine of Hippo, *Enchiridion* in Bettenson, *The Later Christian Fathers*, p. 225

[25] Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*, trans. John Healey, (London: J.M. Dent, 1947), p. 265

[26] Slavoj Žizek, *On Belief* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 146

[27] Debora Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice and Subjectivity* (Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998), p. 100

[28] On medieval Christology, see Sarah Beckwith's study *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), esp. pp. 22-44.

[29] Kirwan, *Augustine*, p. 218

[30] Pope Gelasius I, *Gelasius I on Spiritual and Temporal Power*. Taken from *Internet Medieval Source Book* (1996). World Wide Web Reference: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gelasius/.html

[31] Some of Aristotle's works were known in the West before this date. To take one example, Anslem of Canturbury knew Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione* as Richard Southern points out in *Saint Anslem: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 48-49, and pp. 62-65. The introduction and subsequent influence of the Aristotelian corpus in the West is a massive topic and for the sake of brevity and clarity, I have only sketched the roughest of outlines. For more on this subject, see Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Volume 2 Medieval Philosophy Part 1, Augustine to Bonaventura* (New York: Image Books, 1962), pp. 211-246, Edward Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Christian Thinkers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), esp. pp. 156-162 and more generally *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny and J. Pinborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), esp. pp. 43-98.

[32] Again, this argument is deliberately broad. It would be patently untrue to say that all pre-twelfth century thinkers were Platonists or neo-Platonists. One such thinker who, it seems, rejected the dominant Platonic metaphysic was the French theologian Rocelin (c. 1050-1120). See Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, pp. 164-166. For a useful summary of the Chartres school as well as an account of the twelfth century revolution in thought, see Peter Dronke ed., *A History of Twelfth-Century Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). It is also important not to disregard the centrality of Plato's *Republic* (3rd c BC) in the ongoing discussion of constitutions and political practice.

[33] Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther: An Introduction to his Thought*, trans. R.A. Wilson (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1972), p. 84

[34] As Frederick Copleston notes, 'The State...has a positive function of its own, and Aquinas did not think of it as a department of the Church or of the ruler as a vicar of the Pope. On the other hand, he thought of the Church as an independent society, superior in dignity to the State, inasmuch as it existed to help man to secure his supernatural and supertemporal end, and of the Pope as subject only to God.' Frederick Copleston, *Aquinas* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955), p. 233

[35] Marcia Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition 400-1400* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 251

[36] Richard Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (London: Pimlico, 1993), p. 95

[37] Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. T. A. Sinclair (London: Penguin, 1992), p. 54

[38] *Ibid.* p. 57

[39] *Ibid.* p. 60

[40] *Ibid.* p. 61

[41] Bernard M. G. Reardon, *Religious Thought in the Reformation* (London and New York: Longman, 1995), p. 2

[42] Marsilius of Padua, *The Defender of the Peace*, in *Philosophy in the Middle Ages: The Christian, Islamic and Jewish Traditions*, ed. A. Hyman and J. J. Walsh (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1973), p. 695

[43] *Ibid.* p. 685

[44] Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition*, p. 339

[45] For more on the background to Ockham's political thought, see A. S. McGrade and John Kilcillen's introduction to William of Ockham, *A Letter to the Friars Minor and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), xii-xxxiv.

[46] *Ibid.* p. 307

[47] Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition*, p. 340

[48] A. S. McGrade, *The Political Thought of William of Ockham* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 221

[49] On Wycliffe, see Anthony Kenny, *Wyclif* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) and on Huss, see Colish, *Medieval Foundations*, pp. 259-262.

[50] Reardon, *Religious Thought in the Reformation*, pp. 44-45

[51] Heiko Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation* (T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1992), pp. 158-159

[52] One theorist who recognised and capitalised on this possibility was Nicolo Machiavelli who famously argued in *The Prince* (1513) that the secular ruler was not only permitted to use force but that it was a constitutive of statecraft that inspired necessary fear in subjects: 'cruelty is used well (if it is permissible to talk in this way of what is evil) when it is employed once for all, and one's safety depends on it, and then it is persisted in but as far as possible turned to the good of one's subjects.' Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. George Bull

(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), pp. 65-66. For Machiavelli, a ruler is characterised by the ability to know when to observe justice and when to ignore it. Further, it is significant that Machiavelli was a product of the republican city-state of Florence, which, like many other Italian cities, was politically independent from any external authority. At a time when power in Europe was becoming more and more centralised, Machiavelli's writings were a potent if incendiary impetus to further debate.

[53] David Aers and Lynn Staley, *The Powers of the Holy: Religion, Politics and Gender in Late Medieval Culture* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), p. 45

[54] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought. Volume 2. The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 50

[55] Aers and Staley, *The Powers of the Holy*, p. 76

[56] As Alister McGrath puts it, 'The influence of Augustine upon Luther at every stage of his theological development is undeniable.' Alister McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 183.

[57] Martin Luther, *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 16

[58] Martin Luther, *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit (On Secular Authority)* in *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*, ed. Harro Hopfl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 5

[59] *Ibid.* pp. 10-11

[60] *Ibid.* p. 12

[61] Robert Weimann, *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, ed. David Hillman (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 37

[62] Luther, *Basic Theological Writings*, p. 19

[63] *Ibid.* p. 603

[64] David Aers, '"A Whisper in the Ear of Early Modernists"; or, Reflections on Literary Critics Writing the "History of the Subject', in *Culture and History 1350-1600. Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. David Aers (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), p. 196

[65] Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), p. 103

[66] Heiko Oberman, *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil*, trans. E. Walliser Schwarzbart (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 324

[67] Luther, *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit*, p. 36

[68] See Harro Hopfl's *The Christian Polity Of John Calvin*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) for more information on the political background to the text, especially pp. 19-55 and pp. 103-127.

[69] Luther, *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit*, p. 22

[70] *Ibid.* p. 14

[71] Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luther's Warning to His Dear German People*, trans. Martin H. Bertram in *Luther's Works: The Christian in Society IV*, vol. 47, ed. Franklin Sherman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), p. 30

[72] *Ibid.* p. 42

[73] *Ibid.* p. 34

[74] See Hegel's *Philosophy of Right: Abstract Right and Morality*, in *The Hegel Reader*, ed. Stephen Houlgate (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 340-355

[75] Oberman, *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil*, p. 204

[76] Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text', in *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh, 2nd edition (London and New York: Arnold, 1996), p. 169

[77] Linda Gregerson, *The Reformation of the Subject: Spenser, Milton and the Protestant Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 4

[78] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeil and trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961), I. 95

[79] *Ibid.* I. 94

[80] *Ibid.* I. 538.

[81] Weimann, *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, p. 51

[82] Baines Note in *Christopher Marlowe: Complete Plays and Poems*, pp. 513-514

[83] Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin, 1961), p. 117

[84] Romans 13: 1-5

[85] Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 15

[86] Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* (London and New York: Allen Lane. The Penguin Press, 1993), p. 56

[87] See Hopfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*, p. 31

[88] See Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible*, chapters one and two for more on these writers and their various influences, pp. 11-88.

[89] Guillaume Bude, 'Selections from *De l' Institution du Prince*', trans. Neil Kenny in *Cambridge Translations of Renaissance Philosophical Texts. Vol. 2: Political Philosophy*, ed. Jill Kraye (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 269

[90] Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible*, p. 65

[91] John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries: Romans and Thessalonians*, trans. Ross Mackenzie (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), p. 283

[92] John Calvin, *Sermons of M. John Caluin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus. Translated out of French into English by L.T.* (London: G. Bishop, 1579), p. 112

[93] *Ibid.* p. 650

[94] Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 1183-1184

[95] Note to Romans 13: 5. The assertion that the magistrate is 'Gods minister' might also be read in the light of Henry VIII's split from Rome in 1533 and his installation as head of the Church of England.

[96] *Ibid.*

[97] Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 145

[98] Shuger *op. cit.* p. 51

[99] As William Bouwsma has observed: 'Calvin's political theory was not original, as in his effort to distinguish two realms of governance in the manner of Luther. He is most instructive where the unresolved tensions in his thought make themselves felt.' William Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 210

[100] Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 192

[101] As Skinner notes, 'This version of the mixed constitution was taken up above all by the Huguenots after the St Bartholemew's Day Massacre in 1572, and underpins the theory of resistance to tyranny to be found both in Hotman's *Francogallia* of 1573 and the anonymous *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* of 1579.' Quentin Skinner, 'Political Philosophy', in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* ed. Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 446

[102] Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 1520

[103] William Lawne, *An Abridgement of the Institution of Christian Religion, written by M. John Caluin* (Edinburgh: 1586) STC 4429, p. 305

[104] Roger A. Mason's Introduction in John Knox, *On Rebellion*, ed. Roger A. Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), xiii Mason also recognises the political importance of the Magdeburg Confession of 1550 which was 'drawn up by the city's Lutheran pastors to vindicate their defiance of the emperor' and which proved 'a valuable source for militant Calvinists whose own leaders were unable to provide ideological backing for their revolutionary schemes', xix.

[105] John Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politike Power* (Menston: The Scholar Press, 1970), Sig. E4^{r}

[106] *Ibid.* Sig. G7^{v}

[107] Christopher Goodman, *How Superior Powers Oght to Be Obeyd*, (Geneva: John Crispin, 1558) STC 12020, p. 72

[108] See Knox, *On Rebellion*, pp. 56, 93, 95-96, 141-143. Knox's development of Lutheran ideology is recognised by Mason who notes that 'Knox's theory was a variation on the constitutionalist case for resistance developed by Lutheran theologians in the 1520s and 1530s.' Knox, *On Rebellion*, xix

[109] Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, p. 234

[110] Keith Randell, *Calvin and the Later Reformation* (London: Edward Arnold, 1988), p. 104

[111] Skinner, *op. cit.* p. 213

[112] See Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 31-35, for Elizabeth's political position at the time

[113] *Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1843), p. 112

[114] *Ibid.* p. 113

[115] Donna B. Hamilton, *Shakespeare and the Politics of Protestant England* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1992), p. 8

[116] Slavoj Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 45

Chapter Two

Reforming Semiotics

The Reformed Inheritance

If there was one arena that rivaled theology in the intensity of debate during the early modern period, then it was semiotics. In many respects, the controversies surrounding the teaching, function and signification of language have similar roots to the theological controversies outlined in the previous chapter. Specifically, they arise in relation to old arguments revivified under the impetus of changes in early modern pedagogy and politics. Particular practices of language very quickly came to be associated with specific political and theological allegiances. As Erika Rummel observes: 'Neither the language nor the issues of the debate in the Renaissance was entirely new. The controversy had roots in both classical antiquity and early Christian thought.'[1] Of particular importance were the relative pedagogical and functional merits of dialectic and rhetoric. Although this issue goes back to the classical period and in particular the opposing merits of the Platonic and Isocratic schools, it was during the Middle Ages that the matter came to the fore.[2]

In the medieval universities, the academic curriculum was divided into two parts. Under the *trivium*, students studied grammar, rhetoric and dialectic and in

the *quadrivium* they examined mathematics, geometry, music and astronomy. However, not all subjects carried an equal pedagogic weighting, a fact that was to have far-reaching consequences for early modern semiotics. Most noticeably, in the *trivium* rhetoric was sidelined in favour of dialectic. Brian Vickers notes:

> In the revival of school and university education in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, rhetoric occupied its place in the *trivium* alongside grammar and logic, but with a much reduced importance. Dialectic appropriated the commonplaces, definition and proof, while moral and political questions were transferred to theology...The subordination of rhetoric to dialectic was increased by the fact that the basic textbook of Latin rhetoric until c.1150, the *De inventione*, failed to deal with three of the five divisions of rhetoric, *elocutio*, *pronunciato* and *memoria*. Limited to *inventiato* and status-theory, rhetoric was seen as an inferior branch of logic, concerned with particular rather than general issues.[3]

This state of affairs did not last. Once more, the shift can be traced back to the recovery of classical authors around the twelfth century, particularly in this case Aristotle, Horace, Cicero and Quintilian. Under the influence of these writers, rhetoric was gradually habilitated as the prime area of semiotic enquiry. But rhetoric only achieved pedagogic primacy during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when, in response to the classical scholarship of the Italian humanists, thinkers in the north of Europe gradually developed their own humanist manifesto. This programme had three main aims. Alister McGrath explains these aims as follows:

> a literary or cultural programme, directed towards the ideal of *bonae litterae*; a religious programme directed towards the ideal of *Christianismus renascens*; and a political programme, primarily directed towards the establishment of peace in Europe.[4]

These aims notwithstanding, this does not explain why humanist scholars believed rhetoric to be the best tool in helping them to achieve their goals. In order to address this point, it is necessary to turn again to Aristotle.

In his *Rhetoric* (3rd c BC), Aristotle notes that rhetoric is 'an offshoot of Dialectic and of the science of Ethics, which may reasonably be called Politics.'[5] Because they discussed rhetoric primarily in linguistic terms, medieval schoolmen were, as Vickers makes clear above, not concerned with the political aspect of rhetoric. So by reviving the Aristotelian definition of rhetoric, early modern humanists subscribed to the view that 'good' literary practice would have a decidedly political aim. Moreover, Aristotle says, 'Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever.'[6] To put it slightly differently, the practice of rhetoric is the practice of affective persuasion. In the context of the fraught early modern political situation, this ability would prove decidedly useful. For as Cicero observes in *On the Orator* (46 BC): 'the wise control of the complete orator is that which chiefly upholds not only his own dignity, but the safety of countless individuals and of the entire State.'[7] This Ciceronian idea, with its 'connotations of social bonding, humanity and altruism',[8] had a particular resonance for humanist scholars. Consequently in humanist discourse, language and its practical application became the measure by which a society was judged and, more importantly, ordered.

Initially, this humanist model expressed itself in a rather uncritical admiration of Rome's political and literary achievements. For example, as the poet and early humanist Francesco Petrarch admits in *On His Own Ignorance* (1367), 'If to admire Cicero means to be a Ciceronian, I am a Ciceronian. I admire him so much that I wonder at people who do not admire him'.[9] Petrarch's view held considerable sway during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries in works such as Coluccio Salutati's paean to Cicero and Petrarch, *On*

Petrarch's Eloquence (1374).[10] Soon however, this rather uncritical view of Cicero gave way to a more hardheaded attitude towards his work and to the classical heritage in general.[11] Of particular importance in this respect was the work of the Italian scholar Lorenzo Valla. Perhaps best known for revealing the so-called 'Donation of Constantine' as a fraud, Valla was a radical in the truest sense of the term.[12] Indeed, by questioning established systems of belief in the way that he did, his iconoclastic approach seems remarkably similar to those of the Reformers who followed him. As Copenhaver and Schmitt point out:

> Time and again...[Valla] challenged cardinal points of Christian belief – the superiority of the monastic life, the special efficacy of religious vows, the usefulness of sacramental theology – in the conviction that his own linguistically acute faith was closer to Gospel purity.[13]

Copenhaver and Schmitt's emphasis on Valla's linguistic acuteness is of particular importance. Through his philological approach to questions of textual authenticity and authority, Valla was almost single-handedly responsible for rigorously historicising the study of semantics. As Richard Waswo argues, Valla saw 'the meaning of words as determined not by ontological correspondence, but by their manifold relations to other words and by their uses in historical contexts.'[14]

Aside from his historicist endeavors, the Italian scholar also questioned the age-old distinction between *res* and *verbum*. In order to understand the importance of the semiotic shift represented in Valla's work, it will first be necessary to review the Platonic semiotic model that he engaged with and supplanted. To begin with, in traditional Platonic and Neo-Platonic conceptions of language, *res* refers to a thing, for example a 'chair'. In opposition to this, *verbum* refers to the word 'chair' used to describe it. Therefore when a human names an object "chair", the word he uses refers ultimately not to a single chair

but to the category or idea of chair that exists above the human in the Platonic realm of universal archetypes. In his *Dialecticae disputationes* (1431-53), Valla presented a challenge to this system. As he notes: ' It makes no difference whether we say, what *is* wood...or, what does "wood"...*signify.*'[15] Waswo explains Valla's semiotic system in this way:

> Proceeding from the twin paradoxes that written words are themselves 'things', and that the word 'thing' can signify any or all things and words, Valla collapses the entire discussion that allowed meaning to be exiled from language into some pre-constituted object-world...There is no separate ontological realm to which words must correspond – for the use of the word constitutes that realm.[16]

Inevitably Valla's conception of the (non) relationship between *res* and *verba* brought into question the precise status of language as a *referential* medium, especially if language signifies from the standpoint of *verba* and not *res*.

But while it is easy to stress the uniqueness of Valla's insights, in fact his work follows in a long line of Christian semiotics that stresses the fundamental distance between *res* and *verba*. Copenhaver and Schmitt explain:

> Augustine, Proclus, pseudo-Dionysius, the author of the *Book of Causes*, and many other medieval thinkers had developed a metaphysical scheme in which God at one extreme and matter or non-being at the other stood as two end-points against which the location of all other entities in the continuum of being could be plotted.[17]

The most extreme example of this form of Christian semiotics is of particular importance to early modern conceptions of language. The so-called Nominalist school promoted an approach to language that offered an identifiable alternative to the Platonic model outlined above. Like Valla, the Nominalists argued that universals existed solely in the human mind.[18] A universal is only ever a way of knowing an individual thing and not a Platonic archetype. There is a further significance to Nominalist semiotics. If the realm of *res* is associated with God and the realm of *verba* with fallen man, it is almost as if the gap between the two

semiotic realms mirrors the gap between God and His creation. It is noteworthy that in late medieval theology, the advance of the anti-voluntaristic school, which taught the unintelligibility of God and the weakness of human will in achieving salvation, corresponds to the rise of the Nominalist school.[19] It is also no surprise that the Nominalists had an influence on the Reformers, with their particular emphasis on man's incapacity to comprehend or reach the Divine.[20] Indeed as Bryan Crockett has pointed out, 'One factor in the religious disquiet of Elizabethan England is the Reformation's indebtedness to the Nominalist movement of the late Middle Ages.'[21]

The most important figure of the Nominalist school was William of Ockham. In the first place, what is intriguing about Ockham's semiotic theory is the way in which it replicates the conceptual paradigms he also uses in respect of God. In the first instance, Ockham does not deny that there are categories of mental concepts above *verba* in the same way that he does not deny the omnipotent existence of God. Nevertheless, these concepts are, like God, at odds with what humans can either predicate or know of them. As Heiko Oberman points out, for Ockham, 'analysis of God's nature and characteristics comes up against an impenetrable barrier in the form of God's peculiar and particular way of being and perceiving, divine activities which are not structured according to...human logic'.[22] This reading applies equally to Ockham's semiotic theory. For example, in his *Summa totius logicae* (c. 1329), he observes:

> I say vocal words are signs subordinated to mental concepts or contents. By this I do not mean that if the word 'sign' is taken in its proper meaning, spoken words are properly and primarily signs of mental concepts; I rather mean that words are applied in order to signify the very same things which are signified by mental concepts. Hence the concept signifies something primarily and naturally, whilst the word signifies the same thing secondarily...all authors who maintain that all words signify, or are signs

> of, impressions in the mind, only mean that words are signs which signify secondarily what the impressions of the mind import primarily.[23]

Fallen language is essentially a secondary mental construct that has no bearing on the primary order of signs. For Ockham, as Martin Elsky notes, 'the mental language prior to utterance in speech belongs to no spoken or written language and is separate from any *vox* made significant by convention'. In short, 'speech and thought are at odds.'[24]

However, although Platonic conceptions of language may have come under attack from scholars like Ockham and Valla, they did not fully succeed in eliminating the Platonic tradition. This is especially the case in relation to the work of Saint Augustine. Augustine's theory of language was, broadly speaking, Neo-Platonic. It was also extremely popular amongst humanists of all philosophical persuasions. So despite its debt to the Nominalist school, Reformed theology was also deeply influenced by an important humanist reading of Augustinian semiotics. This reading arises in relation to Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* (c. 397). In this text, he notes that 'Words have gained an altogether dominant role among humans in signifying the ideas conceived by the mind that a person wants to reveal.'[25] The saint's affective focus is on the interior ramifications of language: 'a sign is a thing which of itself makes some other things come to mind, besides the impression that it presents to the senses.'[26] Combined with this internal imperative is Augustine's conception of language as a spiritual force leading to the gradual illumination of inward truth or *caritas*. However, as Martin Elsky observes: 'For Augustine, the word depends upon the quality of the mind that conceives it.'[27] For this reason, there is always the possibility 'that one might misspeak because of the mind's fallen condition.'[28] Indeed, the last sentence quoted above from *De Doctrina*

Christiana was extremely popular with fifteenth and sixteenth century logicians and linguists precisely because of this problem.[29] Because the Augustinian theory of language was primarily concerned with *mental* language, naturally enquiries came to be structured around the relation of that language to 'reality'. As E. J. Ashworth has noted:

> Medieval and Renaissance philosophy of language is characterized by two central doctrines, which can only be fully understood in conjunction: the doctrine that spoken language is purely conventional and the doctrine that spoken language corresponds to a mental language that has signification.[30]

So what happens, therefore, when Augustine's neo-Platonic semiotics are combined with the insights of the Nominalistic project, denying the human mind *a priori* knowledge of universal mental concepts, and, ultimately, of God?[31]

In the first place, the possibility was raised of human misrepresentation, distortion, and falsification when man came to view the world. For English Protestant writers on language this meant stressing the essential artificiality of discourse. According to George Puttenham in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), 'Speech is not naturall to man sauing for his onely habilitie to speake, and that he is by kinde apt to vtter all his conceits with soundes and voices diuersified many maner of wayes'.[32] In *The Art of Rhetoric* (1553), Thomas Wilson explains the reasons behind Puttenham's assertion. Due to the Fall and 'by the corruption of this our flesh, man's reason and intendment were both overwhelmed.' But when God gave 'the gift of utterance' as Wilson calls it, it was not to all men but to the 'faithful and elect'.[33] The logical question is: what of those who do not fall into this category? Secondly, when combined with what Arthur F. Kinney has called the humanistic 'method of *imitatio* – the art of writing by following specific models',[34] sixteenth century theoreticians, theologians and artists found themselves in something of a quandary when trying

to explain – or imitate – the most magnificent *imago* of them all, God's created universe. If mental language had no connection with 'reality' and if the fallen mind necessarily distorted any *imago* presented to it, could any representation, verbal or visual, have *any* connection to the divine?

The key to these questions lies in the writings of the Roman rhetorician Quintilian, whose influence was so marked in humanist scholarship. In his *Institutio Oratoria* (c. 95 AD) he wrote:

> Whatever is like another object must necessarily be inferior to the object of its imitation, just as the shadow is inferior to the substance, the portrait to the features which it portrays, and the acting of the player to the feelings which he endeavors to reproduce.[35]

According to Quintillian, any imitative/performative action must stand at one remove from the imitated subject. In this, he was of course repeating a classical *mimetic* commonplace.[36] As Plato writes in *The Republic* (3rd c BC): 'The art of representation is…a long way removed from truth, and it is able to reproduce everything because it has little grasp of anything, and that little is of a mere phenomenal appearance.'[37] So while humanist neo-Platonists like Sir Philip Sidney might have asserted the power of representation over philosophy, it is important not to disregard a fundamental anti-Platonic strain present within Platonic thought itself which stresses the opacity of Platonic semiotics. Correspondingly, most early modern theories of language always come up against a maddening non-transparency of language, the knowledge that *res* and *verba* are simultaneously attracted to and repelled by each other. This phenomenon can be observed in action in Ben Jonson's *Timber or Discoveries* (1640):

> Language most shows a man: Speak that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the parent of it, the mind. No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech.[38]

Language always frustrates in its very opacity. In its genitive capacity, it is but an 'image' of a severely limited, fallible, and at the same time awesome, human mind. But it is more than this. Language is a 'shadow', a 'glass', a mode of being which, through its generation, or rather iteration, discloses its paradoxical, fallen status.[39]

Calvin and God's 'Beautiful Theatre'

How, then, did the divergent inheritance of Aristotelian Humanism, Nominalism and Platonic semiotics manifest itself in the work of the Reformers? In the first place as Debora Shuger has argued, 'The split between *res* and *verba*...parallels a separation of sign from signified dividing visible form from spiritual substance.'[40] A good example of this is found in the Reformed doctrine of the Eucharist.[41] To begin with, the iconoclastic impulses of the Reformation were fuelled by a desire to rid worship of an over-reliance on Catholic forms of representation such as crucifixes, statues and stained glass. This point notwithstanding, in relation to Eucharistic doctrine Protestants actually reversed the terms of their own main argument by seeing signs as *representations* of the object in question where Catholics saw signs as the *embodiment* of the object. I am referring here to the figurative or literal status of the host at the mass and the interpretation of the words uttered by Christ at the Last Supper: '*hoc est corpus meum*'; 'this is my body'. Whereas Catholics saw the host as the actual body of Christ most Protestants saw it as a representation of Christ's body. Paradoxically, Protestantism accused Catholicism of being a religion of representation. At the basis of this Reformed contradiction is a deeply

paradoxical semiotics as expounded here by Theodore Beza: 'wee confound not the signe with the thing signified nor abolish the substance of the signe, but make a distinction of that which is conioyned.'[42] Or as Bishop John Jewel puts it: 'wee put a difference betweene the Signe, and the thing itselfe that is signified.'[43] In many respects, the story of the Protestant Reformation is an account of how thinkers tried to wrestle with this paradox at the centre of their semiotic system.

A useful way of developing this issue further is in relation to the work of the French Calvinist philosopher Peter Ramus. Since the publication of Walter Ong's book *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue* in 1958, scholars have connected the growing influence in the period of the work of Ramus with what has been called the visual, or rather spatial aspect of early modern linguistic pedagogy. Specifically, this refers to the pedagogical dominance of diagrams, tables and illustrations over the unadorned word in texts influenced by Ramus. Aside from his attacks on Cicero and Quintilian, Ramus's great insight was to re-formulate the relationship between logic and rhetoric. As Terence Hawkes explains:

> Aristotelian rhetoric was conceived in five parts: Invention, Disposition, Elocution, Memory, and Delivery. Each part was thought to make an indispensable contribution to the construction of good speech. Ramus simply split these into two groups, shifting Invention, Disposition and memory under a new heading of dialectic (i.e. logic), and leaving only Elocution and Delivery under Rhetoric. This effectively split logic from rhetoric, 'reasoning from speech', strengthening the former, and fatally weakening the latter...The dichotomy seemed ultimately self-evident: and with logic separable from speech, Ramist 'logic' quickly became logic itself.[44]

Ramus' 'Method', as it came to be called, soon became known and imitated throughout Europe and tended to find most favour with Calvinists as well as more hard-line Protestants.[45] This was due to a number of factors. First, Ramus

was doubly attractive to many Protestants being both a Calvinist and a martyr (he was among those killed in the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572). Secondly, his Method facilitated what Shuger has called an 'inner iconoclasm... a verbal/textual account of cognition'.[46] Reading became the key in the Ramist system to knowledge in/of the world. Clearly then, with their emphasis on the Word (both preached and read), Protestants could claim an intellectual confederate in Ramus' Method.

However, Timothy Reiss has modified and developed somewhat the critically commonplace argument that the Method introduced a 'spatial' way of thinking. While asserting that 'No one can question that the presence of visual metaphors, diagrams and similar devices in Ramist writings is massive',[47] Reiss nonetheless questions the pedagogic – and by inference, the affective – use to which Ramist Method was commonly supposed to have been put in the period. For example, he notes the 'importance of the visual in the [medieval] manuscript tradition', and observes that 'visual devices of one kind or another had always been basic in *teaching*'.[48] The emphasis on teaching is crucial because it allows for a distinction to be drawn

> between logic as a teaching process, at least touching the domain of rhetoric, and logic as a procedure for understanding reason and acquiring knowledge, as a process of discovery. The first made much of visual devices. The second had little or nothing to do with them.[49]

For Reiss, the essential point is 'that the spatial was not a way of thought, but a method of teaching. What it taught was inseparable from ordered language and ideas *about* such language.' However, 'The ground of discovery...still lay in language'.[50] This conception of language operated on the premise that 'true knowledge concerned our *conceptions* of things, not *res ipsas*'.[51] Until the advent in the late seventeenth century of what Reiss calls aesthetic rationalism,

human language, opaque and fallen, was to remain the central epistemological and affective barrier to knowledge of the world for early modern thinkers.

However, one interesting area that Reiss does not explore is the possibility that the pedagogic and epistemological consequences of Ramus' spatiality might, in part, have been the result of his engagement with Calvinist metaphysics. To start with, it is worthwhile noting the similarities in the *spatial* metaphysics of both John Calvin and Peter Ramus.[52] Interestingly, this similarity manifests itself in Calvin's work through the metaphor of the theatre, a metaphor that appears most frequently in his book of instruction, the *Institutes*. For Calvin, God was the divine 'Artificer'.[53] Indeed, for a thinker who is forever associated with the iconoclasm of Reformed religion, it is perhaps slightly surprising to find Calvin saying: 'We must therefore admit in God's individual works – but especially in them as a whole – that God's powers are actually represented as in a painting.'[54] God's powers are presented here in an admittedly high-powered, but nonetheless representative sixteenth century humanist vein. In another place, Calvin is positively effusive about God's *mimetic* skills: 'let us not be ashamed to take pious delight in the works of God open and manifest in this most beautiful theatre.'[55] But while Calvin is happy to examine what is put upon the stage, like a somewhat cautious post-structuralist he becomes worried when this *mimetic* mindset is applied to the dramatist himself. Or to put it in Ramist terms, when pedagogy is replaced with epistemological enquiry, the intellectual edifice reveals its precariousness.

Calvin notes: '*Every figurative representation of God contradicts his being*'.[56] This is deeply problematical. For if language and *mimesis* are taken within the traditional framework as the 'imitation of an *object* by a subject'[57]

then representation or imitation is held within a metaphysic whereby the perception of an object also involves the perception that it refers back to 'a first-order realm of empirical reality'.[58] But as I have shown, even if this is the case, the fallen human mind has no direct knowledge of this 'first order realm' and consequently we are obliged to make in Beza's words, 'a distinction of that which is conioyned.' Furthermore, by denying this possibility in relation to God, Calvin raises a terrifying prospect: that *mimesis* or imitation must always impel the viewer to acknowledge *their* status in constituting the 'reality' of the *mimetic* or imitated object. This is especially worrying for early modern Protestants. As Huston Diehl explains: 'For early Protestants the challenge of living in a world where human knowledge is partial, indirect, and limited centered on the need to curb the all-to-human tendency to mistake the sign for the thing it signifies.'[59] To put it slightly differently, the challenge of interpretation was intimately bound up with the challenge of salvation.

For these reasons, it is fascinating to find Calvin going on to utilise the trope of the mirror in his discussion of human perception. He notes: 'although the Lord represents both himself and his everlasting kingdom in the mirror of his works with very great clarity, such is our stupidity that we grow increasingly dull towards so manifest testimonies, and they flow away without profiting us.'[60] Here misrecognition becomes more than a trope; it becomes the focal point of Calvinist semiotics. Linda Gregerson has written of the interior, subjective ramifications of this system, noting: 'The self that properly sees the self as a sign reads in the self a double image: at once a likeness of God and the sin that has rendered that likeness obscure. In the book as in the mirror the self sees itself in error.'[61] Staring at the statue of God or gazing into the interior mirror become.

strangely and almost inexplicably, *the same action*. In both cases the subjective ramifications are frighteningly similar. As Calvin concludes, God 'represent[s] himself to us not as he is in himself, but as he seems to us.'[62]

Bearing in mind the theatrical basis of this Calvinist metaphysic, the question arises as to what happens when the Calvinist subject gazes upon an actor? After all, the theatre brings together both *res* and *verba*, both spoken language and outward signs, and it does so through the potentially transgressive figure of the actor, a personage who is both the imitator and the imitated. Perhaps the most important point to note here is that imitation was a branch of rhetoric, and as Arthur F. Kinney remarks: 'In promoting the study of rhetoric...language [was seen] as a logomachy, or contention, and promoted the study of antilogy, the ability to argue either side of a question with comparable ease.'[63] In other words, an actor was dangerous precisely because he used the tools of rhetoric not to argue 'either side of the question', but to persuade the viewer of the veracity of the imitation, even to the point of making imitation seem more 'real' that 'reality' itself. A case in point is 'The Mousetrap' in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (c. 1601), which replicates Claudius' murderous actions on stage as he watches. Disturbed by the 'false fire', he abandons the play calling for light.

In *De Oratore* (46 AD) Cicero explores the transgressive potential of the actor. He notes that the orators 'are the players that act real life' but that they have 'been taken over by the actors themselves.'[64] This is a hazardous shift for Cicero because the actors can be seen to be actively appropriating the wiles of the orators themselves. As he goes on to say of the art of the orator:

> all these emotions must be accompanied by gesture – not this stagy gesture reproducing the words but one conveying the general situation not by

> mimicry but by hints...everything depends on the countenance, while the countenance itself is entirely dominated by the eyes...this is the only part of the body capable of producing as many indications and variations as there are emotions.[65]

What is so dangerous here is the attractive combination of rhetorical persuasion and physical gesture. In the case of the actor on the stage, the danger is heightened because the actor is both the imitator and the imitated, both the sign and the thing signified. In a Reformed context then, to be persuaded by an actor is, potentially at least, to fall even further from God.

Unsurprisingly, this is the argument used by the anti-theatrical writers who attacked the Elizabethan stage. Writing in 1582 against Thomas Lodge, Stephen Gosson interestingly pulls his antagonist up on his supposedly faulty knowledge of Cicero. Responding to Lodge's suggestion that a play is a '*School mistresse of life*', Gosson says: 'It seemeth that Master *Lodge* saw this in *Tulile* [sic] with other folkes eyes, and not his owne'.[66] Lodge is guilty of a false re-presentation of Cicero. It is also worth noting how writers like Gosson attacked the ability of the actors to 'committ euery sillable to memory'[67] because in doing so, they were usurping the skills of the sixteenth-century rhetorician *par excellence*, the preacher. But to return to the combination of *res* and *verba* presented on the stage, Gosson observes:

> The perfectest image is that, which maketh the thing to seeme, neither greater nor lesse, then [sic] in deede it is. But in Playes, either those thinges are fained, that neuer were...or if a true Historie be taken in hand, it is made like our shadows, longest at the rising and falling of the Sunne, shortest of all at hie noone.[68]

Gosson's view is directly opposed to that of Sir Philip Sidney in his *Apology for Poetry* (1595).[69] In that work, Sidney notes that the poet 'coupleth the general notion with the particular example. A perfect picture, I say, for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the Philosopher bestoweth but a

wordish description'.[70] But for Gosson, the gap between the image and the shadow replicates the gap between God and fallen humankind. Spatially, a play and an actor throw this metaphysic into confusion by externalising the 'distinction of that which is conioyned' through outward signs.

In order to understand these issues better, I want to turn in the second half of this chapter to a specific topic, the semiotic significance of which takes further the debates outlined above: clothing. In particular, I intend to examine the interesting connections between the debates surrounding ecclesiastical apparel and the clothing worn by actors on the Elizabethan stage. Both debates arise in relation to questions of authority and they are very much concerned with the limits and propriety of what clothes might signify in certain contexts.[71] More interestingly than this, they also externalise the paradox at the centre of the Reformed conception of *res* and *verba*.

Reformed Semiotics in Action: The Question of Apparel

After Elizabeth I ascended the throne in 1558, almost her first priority was to secure the theological and political unity of the Church.[72] One of the most far-reaching effects of the legislation passed by the Queen in order to achieve this aim was a vigorous and often poisonous debate as to the best form of Church governance. The question at the centre of this bitter divide within Elizabethan society was: how should the church be governed; along Episcopalian or Presbyterian lines? Since 1559, the official structure of Church governance had been Episcopalian. Essentially, this meant that at the head of the Church stood

the Queen and underneath her the Bishops who determined all aspects and forms of worship. All ministers were expected to subscribe to the Church's injunctions and faced expulsion from their posts if they did not conform. In opposition to this centralised system, the Presbyterian wing wanted an organisation whereby ministers and elected elders governed their own congregations, preached their own sermons and decided their own form of worship.

Essentially the Presbyterians wanted, in the words of Donna Hamilton, 'a model for church governance that bypassed royal authority.'[73] In 1590, the Presbyterian John Penry outlined these opposing positions – not entirely without bias:

> To speake more plainly, by reformation we mean, first the rooting out of our Church, of al dumb and vnpreaching ministers, all nonresidents, Lord Arch – bishops and bishops, commissaries, officials, chancellors, and all the rest of the wicked offices that depend vpon that vngodly and tyrannous hierarchie of Lord Bishops, together with their gouernment ...Secondly, by reformation we meane the placing in euerie congregation within England (as far as possible able men can be provided) of preaching pastors and Doctors, gouerning elders, & ministring Deacons...And these are the onely matters that we meane by the reformation.[74]

What is noticeable in Penry's exposition is the division between the practical Elizabethan reality of an Episcopalian system, and an ideal, Calvinist, godly and Presbyterian structure. Indeed, as Patrick Collinson has written of the Presbyterian wing: 'They conducted themselves sometimes like separatists, sometimes like tenacious if aggrieved members of the establishment, and the discomfort of this ambiguous position was virtually chronic.'[75] It was also 'chronic' because the frequent deprivations meted out to those on the Presbyterian wing led many of them to conclude that society did not contain any kinds of structures to validate their ideologies. Such feelings gave rise to the bitterly polemical tone that characterises much separatist discourse.

One of the requirements of Elizabeth's legislation was that all ministers conformed to the Prayer Book. Instituted in Edward VI's reign, but revived and revised under Elizabeth, it was considered by many clerics, especially those with Puritan leanings, to be 'an imperfect book, culled and picked out of that popish dunghill, the mass book full of all abominations.'[76] Issues of contention in the Prayer Book centred on the administration of the sacraments, holy days, and baptism, kneeling at communion, transubstantiation, and the order of the service. But perhaps the most factious issue of all was the injunction concerning what the minister could wear. The so-called Admonition controversy ran almost the whole length of Elizabeth's reign.[77]

The seeds of this dispute were sown early in the reign. As the *Injunctions* of 1559 state:

> her majesty being desirous to have the prelacy and clergy of this realm to be had as well in outward reverence...willeth and commandeth that all archbishops and bishops...or that be admitted into vocation ecclesiastical... shall use and wear such seemly habits, garments, and such square caps, as were most commonly and orderly received in the latter year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth.[78]

By wearing the prescribed clothing, ministers identified themselves with the centralised Church and legitimised its authority. More interesting than this is the idea that wearing a particular set of clothes imbues the *wearer* with an outward authority that he might not otherwise possess. Indeed, because clothes are nominally only outward signifiers, the possibility arises from a reading of the *Injunction* that the clothes themselves might be said to contain an inherent authority. This was precisely the possibility against which the Puritans railed. Published in 1572, *The View of Popish Abuses* says this of the prescribed ecclesiastical apparel:

> There is no order in it, but confusion: no comeliness, but deformity: no obedience, but disobedience, both against God and the prince...these are as the garments of the idol, to which we should say, avaunt and get thee hence. They are the garments of Balamites, of popish priests, enemies to God and all Christians.[79]

By appropriating the discourse of obedience and inverting the authoritative correlations of official doctrine in relation to ecclesiastical garments, the *View* argues that authority resides not in clothes but in man-made laws. To wear these garments is disobedience only if the outward signifier correlates with the inward 'truth' of the law. Patently for many Protestants, it did not.

In order to contextualise these comments, it will be useful to turn to two events in the ecclesiastical careers of the Puritan preachers Arthur Dent and Robert Cawdry. One account of Dent's life notes that in 1584, he 'was much troubled by Aylmer, his diocesan, for refusing to wear the surplice'.[80] It is highly probable that as a noted Puritan, Dent would have objected to John Aylmer, the Bishop of London, along the same lines as the author of the *View*. Yet the question also arises as to whether like-minded ministers objected to wearing the surplice on account of its being prescribed by the sovereign, or because of the suspicion that the Queen's injunctions invested garments with idolatrous signifying power?

Writing in 1702, the church historian John Strype mentions a celebrated case in 1587 when the Puritan Robert Cawdry was brought before the High Commission under its head, Aylmer, for non-conformity. The trial became something of a *cause celebré* partly because it dragged on for four years, partly because Cawdry attempted to sue Lord Burghley, and partly because it marked the rise of James Morice, the Puritan lawyer famous for developing ways of

circumventing the *ex officio* oath.[81] Of particular relevance here is the argument that Aylmer used in order to try and persuade Cawdry to wear the surplice:

> Suppose you were able to keep four or six servants in livery, and one or two should refuse to wear your livery, would you take it all in good part? Are we not the Queen's servants? And is not the surplice the livery which she hath appointed to be worn? And do you think she will be content if we refuse to wear it?[82]

Effectively Aylmer takes his lead from the official sermon *Against Excess of Apparel* that states: 'all may not wear like apparel, but every one, according to his degree, as God hath placed him.'[83] Much excellent work has been done in recent years on the social, political, gender motivations behind such decrees.[84] But what I want to concentrate upon are the religious frameworks underpinning such pronouncements, in particular the similarities between Aylmer's argument and those of the anti-theatricalists in respect of apparel.

1583 was not a good year for Bishop Aylmer. As Strype notes, he 'was called before the [Privy] Council, and there chidden, and what not; as tho' this had been in respect of his severe Actings in the Commission.'[85] More specifically, it seems that the main reason for the Bishop's summons was that by 1583 he had removed almost all non-conformists from preaching posts within the city.[86] Aylmer was not opposed to preaching *per se* or to lectureships, two things close to the heart of the Puritans.[87] Rather, it appears that his zealousness was connected in no small part to his attempts to stifle the radical leanings of the city aldermen, magistrates, and possibly, the Lord Mayor. Sir Francis Walsingham's initiative of 1581 to have bi-weekly lectures in the city was ardently supported by Aylmer 'so long as candidates passed his scrutiny, and were authorized by his seal.'[88] Yet the plan went no further because radicals among the committee of aldermen and councilors set up to discuss it rejected the

initiative, presumably because it smacked of centralised - and therefore popish - diktat. Being more and more occupied with Commission business, and with less and less time to spend on his diocesan duties, Aylmer did not pursue this matter. Indeed, perhaps because of their stance against the Privy Council and the Bishop, the city authorities came to be seen by certain sections of London society as the group to enfranchise the city from its 'abuses'.

Aylmer's time as Bishop of London also runs almost precisely parallel to both the rise and expansion of the London theatre and the attacks made upon it. This is a fact that has, as far as I know, never been mentioned, let alone explored. As noted earlier, the anti-theatrical writers of the period were deeply concerned, as Aylmer was, with 'proper' standards of dress, and not just on the stage. For example, in *The Schoole of Abuse* published in 1579, Stephen Gosson asked: 'How often hath her Maiestie with the graue aduise of her honorable Councell, sette downe the limits of apparell to euery degree, and how soone againe hath the pride of our harts ouerflowed the chanel?'[89] And in his *The Second Part of the Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), Phillip Stubbes writes that ministers 'are knowen and discerned from others also, by exteriour habite, and attire, as namely by cappe, tippet, surplesse, and such like.'[90] There is something curious occurring in both of these examples.

Stubbes was a well-known Puritan minister and, as Michel Massei has shown, Gosson's work 'clearly illustrates the Puritan manner of reasoning.'[91] Therefore, why should these, to all extents and purposes Puritan writers utilise precisely the same arguments that were consistently being deployed *against* their non-conformist brethren in the High Commission? This question is further complicated by the fact that, in a reply to Gosson, Thomas Lodge – no Puritan

he - finds one of his few points of agreement with Gosson in his attitude towards clothing. As Lodge observes: 'as for the state of apparrell and the abuses therof, I see it manifestly broken and if I should seeke for example, you cannot but offend my eyes...a simple cote should be fitted to your backe.'[92] What might these seeming contradictions signify?

The answer lies in the common application of the term 'Puritan' to denote the anti-theatrical writers, if by 'Puritan' is meant a zealous extremist opposed to *any* form of theatre.[93] Both Gosson and Stubbes assert that there is nothing *inherently* wrong with the theatre. Rather, the problem arises in the uses, or *ab*uses to which the theatre is put, particularly in respect of its various signifying practices. Paul Whitfield White is surely correct when he argues that 'we need to resist the commonplace notion that the views of Gosson, Stubbes, and Prynne typified the mainstream or even 'the left wing' or so-called 'Puritan' segment, of Protestant opinion'.[94] Rather, Aylmer, Gosson, Lodge and Stubbes utilise the same arguments in respect of apparel because each man was engaged in the same highly complex debates surrounding what Huston Diehl has termed the 'iconoclastic agenda of the reformed religion' itself.[95] For these reasons, I want to look in a little more detail at the works of a writer who brings together the Admonition and anti-theatrical controversies surrounding apparel; the Calvinist minister Phillip Stubbes.

Stubbes and Cultural Exchange

The public stage was a particular 'abuse' that the authorities both inside and outside the city were enjoined to do something about.[96] Indeed, there is

some evidence that the London city fathers actively encouraged polemics opposing the playhouses. For example, Anthony Munday's *A second and third blast of retreat from plays and Theaters* (1580) not only carries the arms of the corporation of London, it calls on the London magistrates 'to redresse the mischiefs that are likely to ensue by this common plague...when a matter is knowen of them to be euil, it is there part to *reforme* it.'[97] Nonetheless, a few years after writing this, Munday can be found penning plays for Philip Henslowe. Munday's ideological profligacy only serves to bolster my point about the difficulty of associating all anti-theatricalists with the radical 'Puritan' wing. When ideological configurations are as much a matter of opportunism and economic necessity as of 'belief', social, cultural and textual hegemony cannot necessarily be guaranteed. However, probably the most significant texts in the war against the playhouses were Phillip Stubbes's *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) and *The Second Part of the Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), books which can be seen less as the rantings of an extremist and more as the expositions of a 'moderate', conformist Puritan. Furthermore, his are the only anti-theatrical texts to make an explicit connection between the controversies surrounding ecclesiastical apparel and the transvestite stage. For all these reasons, it seems that Stubbes' writings are uniquely positioned to offer an insight into the under-explored connections between these two debates.[98]

In *The Anatomie of Abuses*, Stubbes first addresses the signifying potential of clothing itself. Importantly, he does so in an explicitly religious context. He notes that there is 'No holynes in apparell', a view that would have certainly been held by Aylmer and the authors the *View of Popish Abuses*. Stubbes then goes on to ask: 'why do they than [sic] attribute that to the garments, which is

neither adherente to the one nor yet inherente in the other?'[99] In the ecclesiastical realm, these semiotics appear fairly straightforward; in the context of the stage, they possess other resonances. As he writes:

> to weare the Apparel of another sex, is to participate with the same, and to adulterate the veritie of his own kinde. Wherefore these Women may not improperly be called *Hermaphrodita*, that is, Monsters of both kindes, half women, half men.[100]

The key phrase here is 'the veritie of his own kinde' which in Modern English might read 'the truth of his own nature'. For this reason, according to Whitfield White, Stubbes is able to argue that 'theatrical impersonation impiously subverts one's God given identity and place in the sexual and social order and counters the biblical mandate to imitate Christ in all things.'[101] This is certainly the case, but I want to focus on another aspect of Stubbes's argument.

Why should ecclesiastical garments have no effect upon the wearer, whereas garments worn upon the stage are said to have the power to radically unfix the self? The answer lies in Stubbes's deeply contradictory (paradoxical even) epistemology in respect of outward signs. He acknowledges, as he must, that God 'created man, after his own similitude'.[102] However, after the fall, men were given clothes - much in the same way that for Thomas Wilson men were given language - 'to couer our shame...& not to feed the insatiable desires of mens... luxurious eies!'[103] In practical terms, this means for Stubbes that 'the attyre of Adam, should haue beene & signe, or patterns of mediocritie vnto vs.'[104] But his problem is that to assert that clothes are a 'signe' of anything at all is necessarily to call into question the semiotic and affective divide between man and God instantiated by the founding narrative of the Fall.

This assertion can be made clearer by reference to the writing of William Perkins. Noting that Adam bequeathed to man 'a depravation of knowledge in the things of God', Perkins observes:

> The remnant of God's image in the conscience is an observing and watchful power like the eye of a keeper, reserved in man partly to reprove, partly to repress the unbridled course of his affections. That which the conscience hath received from Adam is the impureness thereof. This impurity has three effects. The first is to excuse sin, as if a man serve God outwardly he will excuse and cloak his inward impiety...The second is to accuse and terrify for doing good...The third is to accuse and terrify for sin.[105]

Perkins demonstrates that the divide between man and God in Reformed theology is deeply fraught. On the one hand, man is separated from God through sin. But, on the other hand, there is a 'remnant' within man of the deity that, however faint, institutes a supplementary connection between the two. At the semiotic level, this means that the signifier *does* potentially have the affective potential to alter the signified, both on the stage and in the pulpit. 'It is trulye said', observes Stubbes, that '*sublata causa, tollitur effectus*: But not, *subrepto effectu tollitur causa*. Take away the cause, and the effect falleth, but not contrarylye'.[106] Or as Othello more eloquently puts it in a rather different context: 'It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul' (V. ii. 1).[107]

For these reasons, it seems that there is perhaps a much stronger connection between the ecclesiastical debates concerning apparel and the scandal of cross-dressing on the London stage. Indeed, it has also not been noted just how similar the anti-theatricalists' rhetoric is in respect of cross-dressing to those Protestant polemicists who railed against Catholic ecclesiastical clothing. This is Robert Crowley, veteran Puritan and editor of *Piers Plowman*, writing of Catholic apparel in 1566:

> How these garments haue bene abused, is manifest to as many as haue considered the doings of Idolaters, sorcerers, & coniurers. For all these doe nothing without them. The Idolater dare not appeare before his Idoll to offer any sacrifice, vnlesse he be in his sacrificing garmentes.[108]

The idolatrous stage and the idolatrous old faith go hand in hand in respect of the discourses used to attack them and in terms of their transgressive signifying power. Indeed, the influential Calvinist divine and Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, William Whitaker, states explicitly what Crowely only hints at: 'Our religion is not like yours [the Catholics], consisting in outward shew of gestures, garments, and behauiour: so that our externall Ornaments may be changed, without any alteration or change of our doctrine.'[109] The argument is unmistakable; certain clothes, worn in certain places, at certain times have the ability to 'alter' the inward state of the wearer.

It is for these reasons that Stephen Greenblatt's notion of 'cultural exchange' in relation to early modern apparel requires to be reworked somewhat. As he writes in *Shakespearean Negotiations*, the physical space within which a particular piece of clothing was worn was paramount:

> The transmission of a single ecclesiastical cloak from the vestry to the wardrobe may stand as an emblem of the more complex and elusive institutional exchanges that are my subject: a sacred sign, designed to be displayed before a crowd of men and women, is emptied, made negotiable, traded from one institution to another.[110]

While agreeing generally with Greenblatt's thesis, the case of the anti-theatricalists suggests the need for some shifts of emphasis in his argument. In the first place, Greenblatt associates 'negotiation' explicitly with exchange. But the problem here is that it might be presumed that *only* in and through exchange did clothes become subject to semiotic, and therefore cultural emptying and negotiation. Yet as I have demonstrated, exchange *per se* was not the immediate issue for writers such as Stubbes and Lodge: the cultural and ideological context

in which these clothes were appropriated, however, was. Undoubtedly the protean early modern marketplace threw the 'meaning' of clothing into doubt at *all* levels of society. Jean Christophe Agnew has noted that

> On the one hand, linguistic usage indicates that exchange had moved outward, as the expanded circulation of commodities; on the other, it suggests that exchange had moved inward, as a subjective standard of commensurability.[111]

With the self as the arbiter of 'a subjective standard of commensurability' ineluctably bound up with the outward imperatives of exchange, the dialectic upon which subjectivity was fought out became all the more fraught as that market burgeoned. Quite simply, in this context the Church had so much more to lose in admitting both the potency of the market and, more importantly in this case, the potential for outward signs to alter inward subjectivity.

Secondly, and leading on from this, if Greenblatt is correct in stating that, for the theatre, 'the acquisition of clerical garments was a significant appropriation of symbolic power'[112] then clearly it might be expected that writers like Gosson or Stubbes would have something to say about such flagrant misappropriation. They do not. In fact, the wearing of ecclesiastical garments on the 'secular' stage is very rarely, if ever, mentioned by Elizabethan anti-theatrical writers. So while Greenblatt is undoubtedly correct in drawing attention to the malleability of semiotic correlations in relation to outward garments, care needs to be taken not to make more of the appearance of old Church garments on the stage than in fact existed. Indeed, when the anti-theatricalists do discuss ecclesiastical clothing, it is rarely in direct relation to their main topic of discussion, the stage.

In *The Second Part of the Anatomie of Abuses*, Stubbes highlights this realisation. In a reply to a query as to whether it is 'lawfull for a minister of th[e]

Gospell to weare a surplesse, a tippet or forked cappe', one of the interlocutors replies:

> As they are commanuded by the Pope the great Antichrist of the worlde, they ought not to weare them, but as they be commaunded, and inioyned by a Christian Prince, they maie weare them without any scruple of conscience. But if they should repose any religion, holinesse or sanctimonie in them, as the doting Papists doe, than [sic] doe they greeuouslie offend, but wearing them as things meere indifferent (although it be controuersiall whether they bee things indifferente or not) I see no cause why they maie not vse them.[113]

For such a normally effective polemicist, Stubbes's tortured logic and strained equivocating only serve to highlight the faultlines within his argument. Although ostensibly a passage about the various authorities of secular and ecclesiastical rulers, the pith of the matter lies elsewhere. What Stubbes cannot get away from is the realisation that the inability to separate completely *res* from *verba* in the ecclesiastical realm always threatens to make the wearer a papist by proxy. The perception that clothes are *not* 'things indifferente' exposes a much wider cultural anxiety predicated upon the simultaneously decorous and rebarbative imperatives of language itself. To deconstruct the exigencies of Reformed theological semiotics is, ultimately, to deconstruct the Protestant God. It was this realisation, perhaps more than any other that terrified Protestant thinkers.

With its iconoclastic impulse to distance *res* from *verba*, Reformed theology led, almost inevitably, to the conclusion that the divine could not have a visible locus on earth.[114] This discourse was not exclusive to the world of outward representations such as pictures, statues, and stained glass. It also penetrated the inner recesses of the human interior. 'But somewhat paradoxically', writes Debora Shuger, 'the Protestant impulse to deny the sacred a visible locus led to (or at least coexisted with) a massive endeavor to

instantiate the holy in some sort of institutional form. That is the essence of English Presbyterianism.'[115] Much as they tried to convince themselves to the contrary, Protestants of whatever ecclesiastical and political allegiance could never fully rid themselves of a deep cultural suspicion that *res* and *verba* were connected, if only in a supplementary sense. The Episcopalian and the Presbyterian wings employ the same discourse in relation to apparel because for each writer, to drive a final metaphysical wedge between *res* and *verba*, between the garment and its outward signification, would mean ultimately that Reformed semiotics could no longer be, in the words of Michel Foucault, 'coeval with the institution of God.'[116] The internalisation of such a rationalist project would not be undertaken for perhaps another one hundred years.[117] So in practice, what Elizabethan discussions of apparel reveal is a deeply unsettled participatory consciousness, a mode of discourse that, according to Shuger, 'tends not to separate words from things',[118] jarring markedly against the Nominalist-inspired, iconoclastic impulses of Reformed theology. Foucault's assertion in *The Order of Things* that during the sixteenth century 'Things and words were to be separated from each other'[119] does not do justice, in my view, to the complexity of Reformed semiotics.

In her study *The Reformation of the Subject*, Linda Gregerson finds at the foundations of Reformed theological semiotics a deeply equivocal view of language. She writes:

> Language was at once the symptom of the Fall and its only plausible remedy, the reiterative trace of providential history and of the transgression with which history began, the instrument by which humans know (and make) their place in the created world. Language was the mirror in which the creature might behold his likeness and take the measure of exile.[120]

In the ecclesiastical realm, to ponder the semiotics of apparel was also to confront the strange reality of an absent/present deity. And on the protean, verbose, often socially transgressive London stage, a man wearing woman's clothing released the paradoxes of Calvinist semiotics by externalising the internal divisions of that discourse. Because they had to insist on the 'distinction of that which is conioyned' through outward signs, Calvinist writers could never fully reform semiotics. This profound realisation inevitably affected Calvinist conceptions of subjectivity and in particular the subject's relationship to God. In the next chapter therefore, I outline in much greater detail the development of Calvinism in Elizabethan England before going on to look at how, in relation to the political and semiotic movements outlined in the first two chapters, the Calvinist subject might have signified.

Notes to Chapter Two

[1] Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 19

[2] The dialectical Platonic school in classical Greece 'provided a specialized and difficult intellectual training in mathematics, logic and metaphysics' On the other hand, the rhetorical school 'going back to Isocrates...was primarily literary in emphasis, taught the art of declamation, and prepared men for political life.' Isabel Rivers, *Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry* (London: George Allen, 1979), p.132

[3] Brian Vickers, 'Rhetoric and poetics', in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy,* ed. Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 725. Much of what follows is indebted to Vickers' essay.

[4] Alister McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 39

[5] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, in Rivers, *Classical and Christian Ideas*, p. 139

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Cicero, *On the Orator*, *Ibid.* p. 140

[8] Vickers, 'Rhetoric and poetics', p. 727

[9] Petrarch, *On His Own Ignorance*, in Rivers, *Classical and Christian Ideas*, p. 143

[10] Salutati's text is included in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, ed. Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 18-26.

[11] An offshoot of this was the anti-Ciceronian movement. See John Monfasani's essay 'The Ciceronian Controversy', in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism. Volume III: The Renaissance*, ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 395-401

[12] The 'Donation of Constantine' was a document supposedly from the fourth century in which Constantine granted the Italian papacy temporal power. Valla was able to show that, grammatically, the 'Donation' could not have been written before the eighth or ninth centuries.

[13] Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 212

[14] Richard Waswo, 'Theories of Language', in *The Cambridge History*, ed. Norton, p. 29. For a reading that opposes Waswo's, see Timothy J. Reiss, *Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe: The Rise of*

Aesthetic Rationalism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 25-26.

[15] Lorenzo Valla, *Dialecticae disputationes*, cited in Waswo, 'Theories of Language', p. 29.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, p. 152

[18] The study of Nominalism has provoked considerable controversy. For the sake of brevity, I have not engaged with these debates because the basic point I am making – that these late medieval and early modern theories of language posit a gap between the semiotic realms of *res* and *verba* – is broadly agreed upon. Studies that engage with the controversy surrounding Nominalism include Jesse M. Gellrich, *Discourse and Dominion in the Fourteenth Century: Oral Contexts of Writing in Philosophy, Politics and Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), *Critical Studies: Nominalism and Literary Discourse. New Perspectives*, ed. Hugo Keiper, Christopher Bode and Richard J. Utz (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), Martin Elsky, *Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing and Print in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989) and Alister McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

[19] For more on the medieval theological background, see James Simpson, *Piers Plowman: An Introduction to the B-Text* (London and New York: Longman, 1990), esp. pp. 116-118. Also of relevance is the work of the medieval mystics, particularly those associated with negative theology. In short, they taught that God is fundamentally unknowable. If man speaks or writes of God, that description is only ever a human one and can have no connection with God's ontological 'being'. Therefore, it is only possible to speak of God negatively. By saying in our own human terms what God is, we are inevitably and inescapably saying what he is not. For more on the Reformers' debt to mystical theology, see Heiko Oberman's 'The Meaning of Mysticism from Meister Eckhart to Martin Luther', in his *The Reformation: Roots & Ramifications* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), pp. 77-90.

[20] For more on the Nominalist heritage of Lutheran theology, see McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins*, pp. 70-85 and Heiko Oberman's *The Dawn of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), especially pp. 52-65.

[21] Bryan Crockett, *The Play of Paradox: Stage and Sermon in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1995), p. 124

[22] Oberman, *The Reformation: Roots & Ramifications*, p. 197

[23] William of Ockham, *Summa totius logicae* in *Philosophical Writings*, ed. Philotheus Boehner and rev. Stephen Brown (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1990), p. 48

[24] Martin Elsky, *Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing and Print in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 30-33

[25] Saint Augustine of Hippo, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. R. P. H. Green (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 31

[26] *Ibid.* p. 30

[27] Elsky, *Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing and Print*, p. 73

[28] *Ibid.* p. 74

[29] In what follows, I am indebted to E. J. Ashworth, 'Traditional Logic', in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy,* ed. by Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 143-172. The reference to the importance of the sentence from *De Doctrina Christiana* is on p. 157 of Ashworth's essay.

[30] *Ibid.* p. 155

[31] I should perhaps state at this point that what I am outlining is a necessarily selective account of what I see as some of the most important elements that contributed towards the Reformed conception of language outlined in the following pages. It is by no means intended as an exhaustive account. For such an account, see *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism. Volume III: The Renaissance*, ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[32] George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (Menston: The Scholar Press, 1968), p. 119

[33] Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric*, in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, ed. Rebhorn, p. 175

[34] Arthur F. Kinney, *Humanist Poetics: Thought, Rhetoric, and Fiction in Sixteenth-Century England* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), p. 11

[35] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler, Loeb Library (London: William Heinemann, 1921), p. 81

[36] This is not to imply that Quintilian was a Platonist: he adhered to no single school of thought. Indeed, it was this independence of mind that attracted Valla to the Roman scholar. As Copenhaver and Schmitt note, 'it was Quintilian, not Cicero, who made Valla the scourge of school philosophy...Like Valla, Quintilian had small respect for the philosophers he knew, and he paid allegiance to no particular school.' In Quintilian's work, Valla saw an 'opportunity to displace scholasticism as doctrine and as curriculum.' Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, p. 215

[37] Plato, *The Republic*, trans Desmond Lee (London: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 364

[38] Ben Jonson, *Timber or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter and Some Poems*, (London and Paris, 1892), p. 119

[39] I explore the early modern trope of the glass further in chapter three.

[40] Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), p. 37

[41] For a concise explanation of the Reformed doctrine of the Eucharist, see the entries for *consubstantiatio* and *transubstantiatio* in Richard Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), p. 80 and p. 305.

[42] Theodore Beza, *A Briefe and piththie sum of the Christian faith, made in forme of a confession, with confutation of all such superstitious errours, as are contrary there vnto* trans.R. F. (London: William How, 1572) STC 2007, Sig. K4^{r}

[43] John Jewel, *The Workes of The Very Learned And Reuerend Father in God Iohn Iewell not long since Bishop of Salsbvrie. Newly set forth with some amendment of diuers quotations* (London: John Norton, 1611), Sig. V6^{v}

[44] Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals: Language and Drama in Society* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 38

[45] The work of English Calvinists like Laurence Chaderton and William Perkins clearly demonstrates the influence of Ramist Method. See also Dudley Fenner's *The Artes of Logike and Rhethoricke* (1584) for a classic Elizabethan example of Ramist Method in action.

[46] Debora Shuger *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice and Subjectivity* (Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998), p. 174

[47] Reiss, *Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination*, p. 106

[48] *Ibid.* p. 107

[49] *Ibid.* p. 108

[50] *Ibid.* p. 127

[51] *Ibid.* p. 128

[52] As Ramus says of Method in his *Logic* (1555), it is like 'a long golden chain...whose rings are those degrees that thus depend on one another and are linked so precisely together that none of them may be removed without breaking the order and continuity of the whole.' Peter Ramus, *Logic* in *Renaissance*

Debates on Rhetoric, ed. Rebhorn, p. 156. In Calvin's conception of the world as God's theatre, there is a similar spatial metaphysic in operation.

[53] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeil and trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961), I. 53. In Calvin's theory of imitation, it is possible to find the competing imperatives of Nominalism, Augustinianism, and Humanism grating against each other. According to William Bouwsma, 'Calvin 'was not prepared, like Lorenzo Valla, to acknowledge that substantives are only human constructions without demonstrable reference to external reality; on the contrary, he relied heavily on substantives...He needed to believe in the concrete existence of some "thing" or "quality". William Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 102. This point notwithstanding, Calvin's belief in substantives does not prevent his spatial theory of God's universe from being deeply problematic.

[54] *Ibid.* I. 63

[55] *Ibid.* I. 179

[56] *Ibid.* I. 100

[57] Timothy Clark, *Derrida, Heidegger, Blanchot: Sources of Derrida's Notion and Practice of Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.156

[58] Christopher Norris, '"Post-Structuralist Shakespeare": Text and Ideology', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis (London: Routledge, 1985), p. 48

[59] Huston Diehl, '"Infinite Space": Representation and Reformation in *Measure for Measure*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 49, 1998, p. 399

[60] Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 63

[61] Linda Gregerson, *The Reformation of the Subject: Spenser, Milton and the English Protestant Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 66-67

[62] *Ibid.* p. 227

[63] Kinney, *Humanist Poetics: Thought, Rhetoric, and Fiction*, p. 21

[64] Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Library (London: William Heinemann, 1960), p. 171

[65] *Ibid.* p. 177

[66] Stephen Gosson, *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* (New York and London: Johnson Reprint Company, 1972), Sig. C4^{r}

[67] *Ibid.* Sig. C8[r]

[68] *Ibid.* Sig. D5[v]

[69] This is unsurprising as Sidney's *Apology* was written against Gosson who had dedicated his *School of Abuse* to Sidney without permission.

[70] Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry* in *Documents Illustrating Elizabethan Poetry* ed. Laurie Magnus (London: Routledge, 1906), p. 52

[71] Judy Kronenfeld's *King Lear and the Naked Truth: Rethinking the Language of Religion and Resistence* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998) gives a good account of contemporary debates on apparel, esp. pp.17-91.

[72] I go into this issue in much greater detail in the next chapter. For more on these debates in general, see Peter Lake's *Anglicans and Puritans: Presbyterian and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988).

[73] Donna B. Hamilton, *Shakespeare and the Politics of Protestant England* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1992), p. 6

[74] John Penry, *A Treatise Wherein Is Manifestlie Proved...*(Edinburgh[?]: 1590), Sig. B3[r]

[75] Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), pp. 132-133

[76] *A View of Popish Abuses Yet Remaining in the English Church*, in *Religion and Society in Early Modern England: A Sourcebook*, ed. David Cressy and Lori Anne Ferrell (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 83

[77] As Peter Lake explains:

> The presbyterians (represented by Thomas Cartwright) wanted to argue that there was only one form of church government. This was set out in scripture and amounted to presbyterianism... Cartwright's opponent, John Whitgift, contended that there was no one form of church government laid down in scripture and that in external matters the church was to be guided by the decision of the Christian magistrate.

Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, p. 13

[78] *Statutes and Constitutional Documents: 1558-1625*, ed. G. W. Prothero (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944), p. 188

[79] *A View of Popish Abuses*, p. 89

[80] *The Dictionary of National Bibliography*, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, Vol. 5, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 826

[81] See John Strype, *Historical Collections Of the Life and Acts Of The Right Reverend Father in God, John Aylmer, Lord Bishop of London In The Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London: W. Bowyer, 1701), Sig. K1^{r}. As Patrick Collinson explains, the *ex officio* oath 'in effect required a man to incriminate himself...The first interrogatories obliged the examinate to confess the lawfulness of his ordination...He was then charged with...nonconformist deviations from lawful procedure.' Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p. 267

[82] William Pierce, *An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts. A Chapter in the Evolution of Religious and Civil Liberty in England*, (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1908), p. 78

[83] *Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1843), p. 326

[84] In general, see Laura Levine, *Men in Woman's Clothing: Anti-Theatricality and Effeminization.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and the collection *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*, ed. Susan Zimmerman. (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

[85] Strype, *Historical Collections Of the Life and Acts*, Sig. H5^{r}

[86] See H. Gareth Owen, *The London Parish Clergy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, 1957), p. 468. In what follows, I am indebted to this study.

[87] See Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 41-42, 186-187, 209-218

[88] Owen, *The London Parish Clergy*, p. 166

[89] Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1973), Sig. C6^{r}

[90] Phillip Stubbes, *The Second Part of the Anatomie of Abuses* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1973), Sigs. P1^{r} – P2^{v}

[91] Michel Massei, '"Stephen Gossson": Playes Confuted in Five Actions. A Critical Introduction to the Pamphlet and its Background', *Cahiers Elisabethains*, 2, 1972, p. 45

[92] Thomas Lodge, *A Reply to Gosson's Schoole of Abuse* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1973), p. 44

[93] For the difficulties of defining the term 'Puritan', see Christopher Hill's *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London: Mercury Books, 1966), pp. 13-29.

[94] Paul Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 173

[95] Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 66. As Diehl has also more recently observed, 'apologists for the stage also appropriate basic tenets of Calvinist theology to wield against their opponents, a phenomenon that has for the most part been ignored in the critical literature.' Diehl, "Infinite Space", p. 396

[96] Jonas Barish's *The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981) offers a useful account of these debates.

[97] Anthony Munday, *A second and third blast of retreat from plays and Theaters* (New York and London: Johnson Reprint Company, 1972), p. 73 (my emphasis)

[98] It is important to state that Stubbes was not simply an anti-theatrical writer. He was a moralist in the broadest sense of the term and as the titles of these two books makes clear, his focus was on the range of 'abuses' that he believed afflicted Elizabethan society.

[99] Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1973), Sig. $D2^{v}$

[100] *Ibid.* Sig. $F6^{v}$

[101] Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing*, p. 140

[102] Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, Sig. $C4^{v}$

[103] *Ibid.* Sig. $C4^{r}$

[104] *Ibid.* Sig. $C6^{v}$

[105] William Perkins, *A Golden Chain*, in *The Works of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Breward (Abingdon: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970), p. 193

[106] Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, Sig. $D2^{r}$

[107] William Shakespeare, *Othello*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and others (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1997), p. 2163

[108] Robert Crowley, *A brief discourse against the outwarde apparell and Ministring garmentes of the popishe church* (London [?]: 1566) STC 6078, p. 34

[109] William Whitaker, *An Answere To A Certeine Booke, Written by M. William Rainolds* (London: ND, 1585) STC 25364, p. 7

[110] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearian Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 112

[111] Jean Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 53

[112] Greenblatt, *Shakespearian Negotiations*, p. 113

[113] Stubbes, *The Second Part of the Anatomie of Abuses*, Sig. P3^{v}

[114] Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*, pp. 44-46

[115] *Ibid.* p. 123

[116] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 34

[117] See John Cottingham, *Rationalism* (London: Paladin, 1984), pp. 36-90

[118] Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*, p. 45

[119] Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 43

[120] Gregerson, *The Reformation of the Subject*, p. 231

Chapter Three

The Development of Calvinism in Early Modern England

Reforming Politics

The history of religious change and development in England also suffers from the predicament posed by historiographical periodisation that I outlined in the Introduction. How is a phenomenon like the Reformation in England to be accounted for without at least some recourse to a split between 'medieval' and 'Renaissance' periods? This difficulty is reflected in historical narratives of this perceived split. So while it is true to say that in 1400 the religion of England was Catholicism and that in 1600 it was Protestantism, accounts of the two hundred years that divide both dates differ markedly. As the historian Jack Scarisbrick points out:

> modern tastes have tended to prefer the grand, long-term explanations of big events (especially if they give pride of place to impersonal changes in social structures or aspirations) and partly from the fact that a basically Whiggish and ultimately 'Protestant' view of things is still a potent influence on our thinking...we still find it difficult to do without the model of late-medieval decline and alienation – followed by disintegration and then rebirth and renewal – just as we still find it difficult to believe that major events in our history have lacked beep-seated causation or have ever run fundamentally against the grain of the 'general will.'[1]

His reading of the Reformation as being 'only in a limited sense popular and from "below"'[2] has not been accepted by all scholars, but it is undoubtedly the

case that due to historians such as Scarisbrick, recent interpretations of the shift from Catholicism to Protestantism have been much more attuned to the vibrancy and complexity of the medieval inheritance. To take one particularly important example, Eamon Duffy's magisterial study *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* demonstrates in great detail how 'late medieval Catholicism exerted an enormously strong, diverse, and vigorous hold over...the people up to the very moment of the Reformation.' As Duffy concludes, 'the religion of Elizabethan England was...full of continuities with and developments of what had gone before.' This is because 'the Reformation was a violent disruption, not a natural fulfilment, of most of what was vigorous in late medieval piety and religious practice.'[3] In order, therefore, to explain how, in the light of these assertions, Elizabethan England adopted Calvinism at all, it will be necessary to examine briefly the events that most deeply coloured the establishment of the Elizabethan Church.

It would be easy to assume that after Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534 one of the initial moves of the fledgling English Church would be to define its opposition – unsurprisingly - in relation to its opponents. In reality, matters were rather more complicated. First, Henry's assertion of royal supremacy was a political act designed primarily to assert the primacy of an English king over his realm and its laws against the 'foreign' jurisdiction of the papacy. Yet the obvious consequence of Henry's actions – the adoption of theological reform – was not pursued as vigorously as some had hoped. As Christopher Haigh notes, Henry 'was not willing to take his realm into schism. It was politic to have preachers and government pamphleteers attack papal pretensions, but Henry was slow to make formal rejection of the primacy of Rome.'[4] When that rejection did

come, once more it had definably political consequences: Henry's most important legacy was the consolidation of a legal, theological and political bulwark that inscribed the English monarch as head of the English Church. The association of the monarch with an instituted programme of Reformed religion, however, would suffer many setbacks in the coming decade.

The radical political restructuring of the nation state undertaken during Henry's reign, however it was conceived, did not easily translate into material practice and it was not helped by the personal vicissitudes of Henry's children. In the eleven-year period after the King's death, England reverted from radical Protestantism under Edward VI to militant Catholicism under Mary I and then back to Protestantism under Elizabeth I. This instability, not to mention Mary's state-endorsed persecution of Protestants, had the effect of seriously weakening the political institution of the English state by the time that Elizabeth ascended the throne. One of the new Queen's great strengths was her ability to see that hegemony requires at the very least the appearance of political stability. Because Church and state were inextricably linked in the person of the monarch, the problem of defining the theological stance of the new Church was, for Elizabeth, paramount. As Donna Hamilton observes:

> the definitional problems included formulating the terms of the English monarch's power over the church (formulations that often also impinged on definitions of his power over temporal affairs), as well as formulating an English church that would be united in liturgy and church polity.[5]

With the passing of the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy in 1559, Elizabeth had, at least in deed, secured the basis for a national Church polity. But as Haigh points out:

> Elizabeth and her allies had achieved their majority by the intimidation and imprisonment of bishops, and by buying off the nobles...The Church of

> England was established by the merest whisper, a margin of three votes: a margin achieved by political chicanery'.[6]

As a result of this political brinkmanship, the Church of England was never quite the institutional rock portrayed by many of its apologists.[7]

Elizabethan Calvinism

As I remarked in chapter one, Elizabeth adopted Calvinism for political as much as for religious reasons. It is undoubtedly the case that in the period 'The political setting of doctrinal evolution was above all monarchical.'[8] But how, specifically, did Calvinism come to permeate early modern England and what were its theological constituents? The influence of John Calvin can be discerned in England as early as the 1530s in the acerbic anti-Catholic plays of John Bale.[9] It was not long before the actual writings of the Genevan reformer appeared in England. Elizabeth herself translated chapter one of the *Institutes* in 1545.[10] Part of the same work (Book three, chapters six to ten) first appeared in 1549 in Thomas Broke's *Communicacion of a Christen Man*, and the whole of the *Institutes* were translated twelve years later in the important edition of Thomas Norton. Various abridgements of the *Institutes* soon followed, the first by Edmund Bunney in 1576. This was soon superseded in popularity by William Lawne's edition published in 1583.[11] However care needs to be taken here. It would be erroneous to see the *Institutes* necessarily as Calvin's most *influential* work in early modern England. After all the *Institutes* was not a medieval *Summa* but intended as a textbook for aspiring ministers.[12] Important conduits through which Calvin's thought were also disseminated were his biblical commentaries and especially his sermons. For example, his vastly popular

sermons on *Timothy and Titus*, first published in 1579, were almost certainly better known to a wider public that the *Institutes*. What this demonstrates is that the spread of Calvinism in early modern England was as dependent upon the ear as it was on the book. Indeed, it was in sermons preached from Paul's Cross in London and from pulpits across the country by Calvinist ministers and preachers that Elizabeth's subjects first encountered the practical application of Calvinist doctrine to their lives.[13] It is also worth noting that Calvinism was not only disseminated via the works of Calvin himself. Other Reformed theologians who were popular in early modern England include Philip Melancthon, Martin Bucer and Heinrich Bullinger.[14] In addition to these figures, doctrinal Calvinists such as Peter Martyr, Wolfgang Musculus and Girolamo Zanchius were widely read and helped to spread the Calvinist word.[15]

There are five main distinguishing theological features of doctrinal Calvinism as it was understood in early modern England: *sola Scriptura*, the denial of free will, the application of grace in the process of salvation, justification by faith and predestination.[16] For reasons of clarity I will discuss each of these theological positions in turn. In the first place, Calvinism shared with all other Reformed religions a focus on the doctrine of *scriptura sola*: the Bible as the central text of the Christian commonwealth. In Calvin's words: 'in order that true religion may shine upon us, we ought to hold that it must take its beginning from heavenly doctrine and that no one can get even the slightest taste of right and sound doctrine unless he be a pupil of Scripture.'[17] In England, though, this issue was somewhat complicated. Since Henry VIII authorised Miles Coverdale's so called 'Great Bible' in 1538, the Bible had officially been available in England in the vernacular.[18] Nevertheless, with the accession of

Mary, the vernacular Bible was discarded and the Latin Vulgate was once again favoured. As a result of this unacceptable Catholic modification, the exiled Protestant scholars William Whittington, Anthony Gilby and Thomas Sampson set about producing their own English edition, the so-called Geneva Bible. When Elizabeth came to the throne, this Bible became extremely popular in England, largely due to its explanatory notes, the scholarly formation of its text and the Calvinistic emphasis of its exegesis. Indeed, its appeal is reflected in the fact that the state-produced Bishops' Bible of 1561 failed to supplant the Geneva Bible in popular and scholarly affection.[19]

It is possible that, behind the enduring popularity of the Geneva Bible, lay a residual Calvinistic mistrust of any centralised power claiming primacy over the authority of Scripture.[20] The Bible is of such importance for Calvin that he places its authority above that of the external institution of the Church. As he notes: 'because the church recognizes Scripture to be the truth of its own God, as a pious duty it unhesitatingly venerates Scripture.'[21] Furthermore Calvin also makes an important connection between the reading of Scripture and the inner life of the individual subject. He writes: 'If we desire to provide in the best way for our consciences...we ought to seek our conviction in a higher place than human reasons, judgements, or conjectures, that is, in the secret testimony of the Spirit.'[22] The Bible is verified by the subject as well as through the connection between Spirit and conscience noted in chapter one. As such, the subject is able to apprehend 'manifest signs of God speaking in Scripture.'[23] However, if all can equally apprehend God through the Bible, is it not possible to conclude that all are equal before God? Not so says Calvin: 'God deems worthy of singular

privilege only his elect, whom he distinguishes from the human race as a whole.'[24]

More than any other major Reformed theologian, Calvin placed great emphasis on the depravity of the human subject before God. He explains:

> God would not have us forget our original nobility, which he had bestowed upon our father Adam, and which ought truly to arouse in us a zeal for righteousness and goodness. For we cannot think upon either our first condition or to what purpose we were formed without being prompted to meditate upon immortality, and to yearn after the Kingdom of God. That recognition, however, far from encouraging pride in us, discourages us and casts us into humility. For what is that origin? It is that from which we have fallen. What is that end of our creation? It is that from which we have been completely estranged, so that sick of our miserable lot we groan, and in groaning we sigh for that lost worthiness.[25]

In what will come to be seen as a typically Calvinist move, the subject appeals to a particular locus of authority, in this case the condition of mankind before the fall, and in doing so reveals the fundamental groundlessness of Calvinist subjectivity. This principle also applies to free will for since mankind lost its original state due to the application of this faculty, so it cannot regain that state through the appliance of the very faculty that caused it to disappear in the first place. Free will is fundamentally perverted and, unlike in Catholic doctrine, 'is not sufficient to enable man to do good works'.[26]

How does the subject come to reconciliation with God? The answer is provided through Calvin's doctrine of grace, bestowed solely by God on those whom He chooses. If grace is given to the subject then through the workings of faith that subject may potentially come to knowledge of their justification. This does not mean, however, that the subject has a voluntaristic influence over his or her own salvation. Calvin explains: 'as regards justification, faith is something merely passive, bringing nothing of ours to the recovering of God's favour but receiving from Christ that which we lack.'[27] To put it differently, through Christ

the Calvinist subject encounters the lack at the centre of its subjectivity. François Wendel summarises this process in the following way: 'Christ, by bringing salvation to us, does not free us from external constraint but...he has to renovate us in ourselves by rectifying our deformed will and orientating it towards righteousness.'[28] It is significant that Christ does not provide the subject with repletion but only orientates it towards the good. This is because of Calvin's conception of Christ as mediator; an Augustinian term first encountered in chapter one and of great critical importance in all Reformed theology.[29] Although I go into greater detail concerning the specific function and application of Christ as mediator in chapter five, for the moment it is enough to say that through the figure of the mediator, man is forced to confront the possibility of his election or reprobation.

As noted earlier, Christ's *homoousia* consists of the consubstantial divine and human 'natures'. Neither of these natures can be separated from the other in orthodox Christian theology. Yet as Wendel observes:

> Calvin affirms equally and more clearly still, that the *distinction* between the two natures is indispensable if we do not want to end by admitting a change in the divinity itself, brought about by the fact of the incarnation and necessarily equivalent to a diminution of it. This is a very important aspect of Calvin's theological thought, and perhaps what is most original in it.[30]

Although this may seem like a relatively minor theological quibble, in fact it is crucial at a conceptual level to understanding the production and expression of subjectivity in early modern England. In relation to Christ, this doctrine is known as the *extra Calvinisticum* which, as Richard Muller explains, means that 'the Word is never fully united to but never totally contained within the human nature [of Christ] and, therefore, even in incarnation is to be conceived of as beyond or outside of (*extra*) the human nature.'[31] For Reformed theologians, this

facet of Christological existence was explained through the maxim *Finitum non capax infiniti* (the finite is incapable of the infinite).[32] Or to put it another way, the divine always exists in a supplementary relationship to the human. I intend to demonstrate in this thesis that in the early modern period, this Christological maxim is reinscribed at the human level. For by allowing, with however many qualifications, a distinction to be made between Christ's divine and human natures, the Reformed Christ bears a striking similarity to the divided subject of early modern England who is made profoundly aware of the gulf between his divine origin and his fallen state, an awareness that often seems constitutive of subjectivity itself. To this end, it is the mediator who makes predestination a reality. For Calvin, 'we are all barred from God's presence, and consequently need a Mediator, who should appear in our name and bear us upon his shoulders...so that we are heard in his person'.[33] According to Calvin, humankind is predestined to either election or damnation and Christ's role as mediator is so important because He 'has rendered election effectual, for by his sacrifice he has appeased the wrath of God and has restored to its efficacy the love that God has dedicated to the elect of all eternity.'[34]

Doctrinal and Critical Dissent

What I have summarised above is an outline of all but one of the major points of the Calvinistic doctrine that comprised the official theology of the Elizabethan Church. The spread of that doctrine was certainly abetted by some influential support. Alistair Fox writes:

> Calvinist beliefs were espoused by many of the most powerful figures in the lay and clerical establishments, including the Queen's favourite, Robert

> Dudley, Earl of Leicester and his circle (Philip Sidney among them), her Secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, and her chief minister, William Cecil, Lord Burghley.[35]

And at both Oxford and Cambridge, Calvinist doctrine was taught to aspiring ministers.[36] But although Calvinism had the imprimatur of political and educational respectability, it would be a mistake to see its development as one of unproblematic acceptance. As Peter Lake says of the Elizabethan Calvinist consensus, 'hegemony is not monopoly. Despite Calvinist predominance, there were anti-Calvinists in the Elizabethan and Jacobean church.'[37] Nonetheless, most of the objections of the anti-Calvinists did not begin to have serious political consequences until the final years of James I's reign and the accession of Charles I in 1625. As Nicholas Tyacke points out 'Calvinism was the *de facto* religion of the Church of England under Queen Elizabeth and King James'.[38] In doctrinal terms 'Calvinism remained dominant in England throughout the first two decades of the seventeenth century'[39] and this was the Calvinism formulated during Elizabeth's time on the throne.[40]

One of the major effects of the Calvinist consensus in religion was the development of personal piety; an advancement that, paradoxically, did not appear to offer comfort to many individuals but which instead manifested a feeling of profound anxiety within the self. Such was the importance of personal piety within the Calvinist schema of salvation that cases of what early modern writers called 'despair' rose markedly during the latter part of Elizabeth's reign. As John Calvin wrote: 'if a man be once desperate, he gieuth himself from euill to worse, and becometh voyde of all shame.'[41] In a society with an almost obsessive focus upon the *ars moriendi*, the art of dying well, the only thing worse than the thought of evil was the thought of an evil death.[42] To despair was

to lose sight of God, and as such, was the theological and affective state believed to lead to suicide. Indeed, according to John Stanchniewski, by the beginning of the seventeenth century such was the proliferation of suicides in England that the situation was commonly believed to have reached 'epidemic levels.'[43] This anxiety was not just personal; it was also providential. As Robert Burton wrote: 'It is controverted by some whether a man so offering violence to himself, dying desperate, may be saved, ay or no?'[44] What Burton hints at is that the anxiety associated with early modern piety was, very often, precipitated by the *inward* debate as to whether one was elect in God or not. And the *outward* manifestation of this affective wrangling was, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, sometimes as likely to be self-violence as it was outward godliness. As Charles Taylor says of this system: 'Each person stands alone in relation to God: his or her fate – salvation or damnation – is separately decided.'[45] Within this theological and affective framework, subjectivity was negotiated and was negotiable.

What I have said above refers to the last and undoubtedly the most contentious aspect of Calvinist doctrine in early modern England, namely predestination. Over the past twenty-five years or so there has been a long-running and important debate as to what precisely this doctrine meant during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and how theologically central it was. In order to explain the topic fully, it will be necessary to outline the parameters of a debate that has been almost completely disregarded by literary scholars in accounts of early modern subjectivity. First, in 1979 R. T. Kendall published *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, a book that was to play a critical role in the way in which scholars debated Calvin's reception in England. Fundamental

to Kendall's thesis is his reading of Calvin's doctrine of the atonement. According to Kendall, the Reformer believed 'that Christ died indiscriminately for all men.'[46] However, as he also goes on to note, even though 'Calvin...thinks that Christ dies for all', it is the case that 'all are not saved.'[47] This theological double bind in Calvin's work opened the way for his followers to develop the logical consequences of this theology in relation to predestination.

Accordingly, argues Kendall, Calvin's successor in Geneva Theodore Beza promulgated the notion that 'Christ died for the elect only',[48] a doctrinal distinction that has given rise to the scholarly notion of 'Calvin against the Calvinists'.[49] In England, Kendall argues, theologians took up the Bezan position on predestination, the most noticeable of which was William Perkins, the pre-eminent Calvinist divine of the period. As a result of this shift, the debate turned dramatically to *assurance* of election or reprobation, or 'justification' to give it its theological name: did Christ die for all men or not? Did Christ die for me? If he did, how might I know? If he did not, what shall I do? This is a notoriously slippery topic. In the first place, to offer unconditional assurance was to diminish the weight of both God's law and individual conscience. For example, in the middle of discussing the assurance of election amongst men, Perkins suddenly warns that in fact those who believe they are justified 'may be reprobates and...no more true members than are the noxious humours in a man's body'.[50] For this reason, the argument was often debated from the standpoint of reprobation. As Kendall goes on to note, the reprobate may believe that they are saved though in fact they are damned: 'The ineffectual calling of the non-elect is...so powerful that the subject manifests all the appearances – to himself and others – of the elect.' As he rightly points out, 'The pastoral implications of such

a teaching are enormous.'[51] It is important to state at this point that it does not follow from this last quotation that assurance of reprobation was any easier to attain than assurance of election. If either of these possibilities were the case then Calvinism would not have held the great authoritative and affective power that it did. Uncertainty was a necessary constitutive element of personal piety: certainty of one's predestined status was only truly confirmed after death.

Kendall's reading of Calvin against the Calvinists has provoked fierce debate. On the one hand, scholars like Nicholas Tyacke who in *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590-1640* has argued that in early modern England, a Calvinist consensus focusing on limited atonement can be defined along the same lines outlined by Kendall.[52] On the other hand, scholars such as Paul Helm in *Calvin and the Calvinists* and Peter White in *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* have rejected Kendall's argument. Noting that both Elizabeth and James legislated against the preaching of hard-line limited atonement, White argues that there was no 'Calvinist consensus' in the early modern period and that scholarly usage of the term predestination 'was usually a synonym for election, and excluded reprobation.'[53] While this is true in a strictly defined theological sense,[54] in practice, in the casuistry manuals and sermons of the period, White's literalist approach is not generally maintained as will become clear. More importantly than this, both White and Helm show that, as Helm puts it, 'Calvin taught that Christ's death procured actual remission of sins for the elect, and that in dying Christ died specifically for the elect.'[55] However, although Calvin says, 'the doctrine of salvation, which is said to be reserved solely and individually for the sons of the church, is falsely debased when

presented as effectually profitable to all',[56] it would not be correct, in the light of his theology *as a whole*, to say that he advances a doctrine of limited atonement. Nonetheless, as with much else in Calvin's work, his exposition often seems to point in an altogether more radical direction: the logical consequence of statements like those above was an endorsement of limited atonement. This development, inspired by the work of Beza, is clearly reflected in the work of later Calvinists.[57] Wolfgang Musculus writes that 'grace is geuen to the elect onely, whome God hath chosen in Christ Jesus before the beginning of the worlde, vnto that purpose, that the glorye of hys grace may be auaunced [sic] in them.'[58] Or as Girolamo Zanchius argues, 'although the grace of redemption, saluation and eternall life which God bestoweth, be earnestly... offered vnto all men by the preaching of the gospell' it is only 'communicated... vnto those who (being from the beginning chosen and predestinate vnto it in Christ, as in the head of all the elect, that they should bee his members and so made partakers of saluation)'.[59] For many of Calvin's followers, if not for Calvin himself, Christ died only for the elect and as John Pelling warned in a sermon of 1607, this doctrine was 'not a matter of speculation, but of practice.'[60]

This doctrine has a number of important consequences. To begin with, the 'Calvin against the Calvinists' camp are mistaken in their assumption that Calvin taught a doctrine of universal atonement and that later Calvinists departed from this teaching. Second generation Calvinists like Beza and Perkins *did* teach limited atonement but in so doing they were developing, not departing from, a particular strand of Calvin's theology. In relation to the question of justification, then, assurance of election becomes even more pressing if man is taught that, as Beza puts it, Christ 'is with his electe and shalbe vntill the ende of the world.'[61]

But this does not mean that man may ever be subjectively assured of election: 'To be assured of our saluation by faith in Iesus Christ, is nothing lesse than arrogance or presumption', notes Beza.[62] Nor can the reprobate ever fully be sure of their status. As Peter White observes: 'Beza agreed with Calvin that one could never be certain who belonged to the ranks of the reprobate.'[63] It often seems that if the Reformers allowed the subject knowledge of their predestined status then this would, in some way, correspond to allowing them to actively participate in their own salvation, a possibility that could not be countenanced. The doctrine of limited atonement that was taught in Universities and preached from pulpits in early modern England inscribes subjective experience as the guarantor of the individual encounter with the stark binary of predestination. It is highly significant therefore that through Christ as mediator, this divine plan is made manifest. Indeed it might even be possible to say that the Calvinist conception of the mediator - a function neither fully of heaven nor fully of earth - seems to mirror the double bind of the subject, caught between the possibilities of election or reprobation.

The Mirror of Conscience

In order to explain how the tension engendered by the doctrine of limited atonement manifested itself in early modern writing, I want to further the examination of the trope of the glass/mirror that I initiated in the last chapter. As Calvin frequently states, Christ 'is the mirror wherein we must, and without self-deception may, contemplate our own election.'[64] However, this Christological

principle is complicated by the most famous presentation of the trope in the Bible, St. Paul's references in Corinthians. The first comes from 1 Corinthians: 'For nowe we see thorow a glasse darkely: but then *shall wee see* face to face. Nowe I know in part: but then shall I knowe euen as also I am knowen.'[65] In Thomas Timme's 1577 translation of Calvin's *Commentarie vpon S. Paules Epistles to the Corinthians*, the Reformer observes that the saint's reference to the glass here 'is the application of the similitude, The manner of knowledge which we haue nowe, dooth belong to imperfection, as it were to childhoode.'[66] Resisting the temptation to read this exegesis as a proto-Lacanian formulation of the mirror stage, it is clear that Calvin's glass is a mirror of optical misrecognition.

Calvin's greatest difficulty is with Paul's contradictory and commonly disregarded alternative reading of the mirror in 2 Corinthians. In this reading, the saint says: 'we all behold as in a mirrour the glorie of the Lord with open face'.[67] This assertion stands in direct opposition to 1 Corinthians. Accordingly, Calvin notes:

> Paule sayth, that we behold the glory of God with his face open: and in the former Epistle hee sayde, that wee dyd not see God now, but as it were in a glasse, and in a darke speaking. In these woordes there seemeth to be some contrariete: yet notwithstanding they doo agree together very well. The knowledge of God now is obscure and bare, in comparison of that glorious light which shall be in the last commyng of Christ. Notwithstanding God offreth himselfe to vs now to be seene so farre foorth as is necessarie for our saluation, and as our capacitie will comprehende. Therefore the Apostle maketh mention of profyte and goyng forwarde, forsomuch as there shall be then a perfection, when Christ commeth.[68]

Again, it is noticeable that the subject appeals to the defining source of authority, in this case God, and is only able to understand/identify with that authority partially ('as our capacitie will comprehende'). It is also significant that Calvin can only explain the Apostle's ambivalent stance by resorting to eschatological

discourse ('there shall be then a perfection, when Christ commeth'). This ideological mystification allows him to sidestep the very real contradiction of the 'glasse' in *Corinthians* without ever satisfactorily explaining it: is man able to see in the 'glass' the reality of election or not?

Behind Calvin's exegetical wranglings is a realisation of the ambivalent absent-presence of God. R. T. Kendall has noted that 'while Calvin says Christ is the mirror in whom we contemplate our election', for later Reformers like Beza Christ does not fulfil this function because, as Kendall goes on,

> we have no way of knowing whether we are one of those for whom Christ died...This makes trusting Christ's death presumptuous, if not dangerous: we could be putting our trust in One who did not die for us and therefore be damned.[69]

In line with my earlier comments on the second generation Calvinists developing Calvin's original ideas, the seeds of Beza's progression can be found in Calvin's work. As he declares in his *Commentarie vpon S. Paules Epistles to the Corinthians*: 'let our faith now behold God as absent. How: Bycause it seeth not his face, but the image only in the glass.'[70] Sir Walter Ralegh expresses the same sentiment slightly differently in his *History of the World* (1614): 'God, which hath made him [man] and loves him, is always deferred.'[71] What both of these examples show is that in Reformed theology, similitude is a profoundly anxious condition.[72] For this reason the 'great untroubled mirror in whose depths things gazed at themselves and reflected their own images back to one another'[73] that Michel Foucault finds in *The Order of Things* can only be a partial, indeed defective reading of what he calls the sixteenth century *episteme*. One-to-one correspondence was deeply ruptured in the Reformed tradition. Like so called '*mimetic* realism', the discourse of similitude would no longer be a matter of passive reflection (if indeed it ever was). The language of Calvinist similitude

became 'increasingly confined to subjective spaces',[74] but this was not a comfortable retreat. Christ relinquishes his function as mirror of election. Instead, the trope of the mirror gets re-appropriated in early modern England by the subject.[75] Unsurprisingly this re-fashioning cannot escape the contradictions of the model it supplants. Indeed in many respects, the internal functions of the subject become surrogate figures of identification that both embrace and repudiate the subject.

As I mentioned earlier, early modern piety was a phenomenon precipitated by the inward debate as to whether one was elect in God or not. Works such as William Perkins's *A Treatise Tending Unto A Declaration* (1588), Robert Linaker's *A Confortable* [sic] *Treatise such as are afflicted in conscience* (1590), Arthur Dent's *A Plaine Man's Path-Way to Heauen* (1601), George Meriton's *A Sermon of Repentance* (1607) or Bishop Lewis Bayley's extremely popular *The Practice of Piety* (3rd edition 1613) all attest to a deep-seated cultural need for such works of personal edification.[76] The dedicatory epistle of Bayley's work gives some idea of what was at stake: '*without Piety, there is no* internall comfort *to be found in* Conscience, nor externall peace *to bee looked for in the World.*'[77] The pious can only be worldly (a fraught state) if they are first godly. Such a marked dichotomy often gave rise to violent metaphors of assault upon, and warfare within, the individual conscience. 'The combat is a mutual conflict of them that fight spiritually', declared William Perkins.[78] At the root of this outlook was a deeply antagonistic notion of the affective consequences of Protestant discourse. In a sermon on Simeon the Puritan preacher Henry Smith memorably expresses this antagonism. Observing that '*Simeon* feared God', Smith goes on: 'Religion may well be called feare, for

there is no religion, where feare is wanting: for the feare of the Lord is the beginning of wisedome.'[79] When such stark reductionism was put into practice, there was only one option for the religious Elizabethan: repentance.

Repentance was the first and most difficult step on the road to potential justification. By far and away the most popular work offering guidance along that road was Arthur Dent's *A Sermon of Repentance*. From the year of its publication in 1583, it was reissued no less than twenty times up to 1638, and as such, can perhaps be viewed as a representative example of Calvinist piety in action. The paradoxical impulse of Calvinist rhetoric can be seen at work in Dent's exposition almost immediately. Ostensibly, the purpose of the sermon is to aid the hearer in his or her journey to becoming 'grafted into Christ by Faith'.[80] But almost immediately, Dent begins to assail his audience: 'Doest thou thinke that God's mercy is common to all? And Christs death a bande for our sins: no, no, when it commeth to the upshot, thou shalt stop short.'[81] Here is as forceful an exposition of the Calvinist doctrine of limited atonement as it is possible to find in the literature of popular piety. It is almost tempting to ask why Dent feels the need to waste his breath on such obvious degenerates. But such a question would not only betray a misunderstanding of his theological objectives, it would also miss the affective purpose inherent in his rhetoric of division and assault.

With their debt to Erasmian Christology, Debora Shuger has noted how the Calvinist passion narratives actively produce a 'self-divided reader' who is 'the rhetorical mirror of the Protestant psyche which, in turn, incorporates the decentered, chimerical selfhood of the late medieval Christ.'[82] This reading can also be broadened to incorporate the 'self-divided' Calvinist subject encountered

in mainstream works of popular piety such as Dent's. Indeed, structured as these texts are around a decidedly distant deity, the focus of attention is shifted onto the mediation the self performs between the meaning of interior existence and the meaning of exterior social subsistence. In Valentin Voloshinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, as Raymond Williams notes, Voloshinov argues 'that meaning was necessarily a social action, dependent upon a social relationship.'[83] This insight can be applied to the texts under consideration. Meaning, or rather meaning*s* are mediated in and around the dialectical 'sign', which, for Voloshinov, stands as an exemplar of subjective and social processes, both 'inward' and 'outward'. He observes that '*The reality of the inner psyche is the same reality as that of the sign.*' From this position, Voloshinov goes on to argue:

> By its very existential nature, the subjective psyche is to be localized somewhere between the organism and the outside world, on the *borderline* separating these two spheres of reality. It is here that an encounter between the organism and the outside world takes place, but the encounter is not a physical one: *the organism and the outside world meet here in the sign.*[84]

The solipsistic and the societal are both united *and* separated by the liminality of the sign, contingent effects of the varied encounters between subject and self, subject and society, subject and God. What *was* 'given' in this system was the certainty that some would be saved and many would be damned; what was *not* necessarily given was the subjective reaction to these alternative positions precisely because knowledge of either of these outcomes was fundamentally and necessarily deferred.

Dent offers his audience a rhetorical and conceptual division of his 'subject'. According to the preacher,

> Repentance is an inward sorrowing, and continuall mourning of the heart and conscience for sinne, ioyned with faith, and both inward, and outward

> amendement. Inwarde I say, in chaunging the thoughtes and affections of the heart: and outward in changing the woordes, and workes, from euill to good.[85]

Interestingly, Dent takes Calvin's Lutheran-inspired conception of 'a twofold government in man',[86] and applies it not only to the subject, but also to conscience. It is conscience that mediates the inward and outward 'amendement' of the subject. But whereas Calvin develops his notion of the 'twofold' subject in relation to the broader question of political jurisdiction, for Dent the issue is somewhat different.[87] He says of the repentant conscience:

> Here then we haue a glasse to behold our selues in, whether euer we haue repented, or no. For if we finde not this change and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vnder damnation. Therefore let euery man looke vnto himself for marke how much he is changed and altered from his former euill wayes, so much hath he repented.[88]

Drawing upon the humanist tradition of the body as the *liber naturae*,[89] this interior gaze would appear to provide, for Dent, a reflexive checklist of the individual's state of repentance. But that gaze rarely if ever provides comfort. It seems that perception always comes up against an impediment, a lack at the centre of subjectivity. As John More wrote in 1596: 'The consience [sic] is lyke a Chyrstall Glasse, wherein (if we will) wee may lyuely viewe our selues. It will shewe euery thing that is amisse in soule and body.'[90] Quite simply, the internal faculties of the Calvinist subject seemed unable to offer that subject concord.

In many respects, these internal faculties came to function rather like the Lacanian *point du capiton*, a utility that can be equated with the Christological function of the mediator, so important in questions of justification. In Slavoj Žizek's formulation, the *point du capiton* 'totalizes an ideology by bringing to a halt the metonymic sliding of its signified'.[91] In Christ, Reformed doctrine constructed a figure that was both the guarantor of that ideology as well as the

sliding mediator. In other words, Christ totalises Himself. But as *point du capiton* or as the manifestation of the *extra Calvinisticum*, Christ cannot be a guarantor of final meaning. Rather He 'is the element which represents the agency of the signifier within the field of the signified.'[92] As one of the central paradigms of early modern selfhood, the mediatory Christ as ideological and elemental *point du capiton* does not signify *directly* in the early modern subject. To take one example, as Henry Smith says his sermon *The Wedding Garment*, 'to put on Christ, is to put on the new man with all his virtues, vntill wee be renued to the image of Christ.'[93] Man is only capable of attaining an Image. It is for this reason that Christ inscribes His mediatory presence in the inability of the subject to account *for* itself *to* itself.

In order to explain this a little further, I want to turn finally to three examples of the mirror from the plays of William Shakespeare. As Richard Hillman has observed, 'the motif of the mirror appears to...possess greater complexity and symbolic potency than have yet been critically recognized.' Moreover, as Hillman goes on to suggest, 'This under-recognition may be related to the received history of subjectivity.'[94] To this end, each of these examples show how Calvinist notions of selfhood find their way into all aspects of early modern discourse, not just those concerned with explicitly 'religious' issues. My first example comes from *Julius Caesar* (c. 1599). In Act One, scene two, Brutus asks of Cassius:

> Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
> That you would have me seek into myself
> For that which is not in me?

Cassius responds:

> Therefore, good Brutus, be prepared to hear.
> And since you know you cannot see yourself

So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of which you yet know not of. (I. ii. 53-60)[95]

By becoming Brutus's 'glass', it is possible that Shakespeare envisaged Cassius's body as the book of nature in which Brutus would 'read' himself. But the problem with this reading is that Cassius knowingly utilises Brutus's stoic discourse of autonomy and combines it with an interior humanist reflexivity to turn Brutus's gaze back upon himself.[96] Crucially this is a gaze mediated *by* and *through* Cassius. Brutus's interiority is no longer self-constituted, but constituted by being objectified.

What precisely is it that the interior gaze sees when it attempts to look *through* the glass? Bearing in mind Cassius's position as his friend's 'mirror', I argue that the exchange between the pair also owes a significant debt to the insights of Reformed theology, largely because it is an exchange predicated upon a form of introspective misrecognition. The following exchange will help to clarify this point. Cassius asks Brutus, 'can you see your face?' (I. ii. 53) To this rather unusual question Brutus replies, 'No, Cassius, for the eye sees not itself/ But by reflection, by some other things.' (I. ii. 54-55) Brutus acknowledges the principle of interior reflection but, importantly, his somewhat strange reference to 'some other things' might suggest that in fact he does not see the inward gaze as, fundamentally, a matter of a one-to-one reflexivity. Perhaps recalling Brutus's admission that – like the Protestant subject – he is 'at war' (I. ii. 48) with himself, Cassius makes his move. He observes that it is 'much lamented' that Brutus has 'no such mirrors as will turn/ Your hidden worthiness into your eye,/ That you might see your shadow.' (I. ii. 58-60) Unlike

Dent and More, Cassius invites his friend not to regard his 'self' but his 'shadow.'[97] What are the reasons for this?

Throughout his dramatic career, Shakespeare viewed the shadows of human interiority with deep suspicion, as, for example, in the following exchange from *King Lear*:

> LEAR. [.....]
> Who is it that can tell me who I am?
>
> FOOL. Lear's shadow. (I. iv. 227-8)[98]

In this, Shakespeare was reflecting an intense cultural tension between the humanist inspired exhortation to 'know thyself' and a tradition of Reformed theology that all but denied humankind's capacity for unmediated knowledge of anything except perhaps their fallen state.[99] A good example of this tension is found in Fulke Greville's poem 'Down in the depths of mine iniquity':

> And in this fatal mirror of transgression
> Shows man as fruit of his denigration,
> The error's ugly infinite impression,
> Which bears the faithless down to desperation;
> Deprived of human graces and divine,
> Even there appears this saving God of mine. (7-12)[100]

God saves man, but only when man has reached his most abject 'denigration'. For Greville as for Shakespeare, gazing into the mirror threatens to reveal what Hillman has termed 'the self-beholder's evanescence'.[101] A further Shakespearian example is found in *Richard II* (1595). In one of its most memorable and well-known scenes, the deposed monarch gazes into a looking glass and then shatters it. Bolingbroke observes: 'The shadow of your sorrow hath destroyed/ The shadow of your face.' (IV. i. 282) Richard agrees that his 'grief lies all within', and goes on to state that 'these external manner of laments/ Are merely shadows to the unseen grief/ That swells with silence in the tortured

soul.' (IV. i. 285-8) Observing both a sharp dichotomy as well as a marked connection between his inward state and its outward manifestations, Richard attempts to conceptualise the liminal imperatives of these two states and the connections between external lament and shadowy similitude. In doing so, he only succeeds in drawing attention to the paradox that while the inward and the outward manifestations of his interiority *are* connected, they also divide, as Calvin noted, because of the insufficiency of the gaze into the mirror, into the self.

It is also worth noting the way in which Shakespeare prefigures both of these examples in his earlier play *Richard III* (c. 1591). Richard has arranged the death of his brother the Duke of Clarence and shortly afterwards in Act two, Queen Elizabeth announces the death of Richard's other brother, King Edward. Responding to this news, Richard's mother, the Duchess of York, says:

> Ah, so much interest have I in thy sorrow
> As I had title in thy noble husband.
> I have bewept a worthy husband's death,
> And liv'd with looking on his images:
> But now two mirrors of his princely semblance,
> Are crac'k in pieces by malignant death;
> And I, for comfort, have but one false glass,
> That grieves me when I see my shame in him.
> (II. ii. 47-54)[102]

What the Duchess of York's speech points up is the way in which the mirror stands as both an affirmation and a negation of early modern subjectivity. Her sons were all 'images' of her husband that sustained her after his death. But after the death of both Clarence and Edward, only Richard, the 'false glass', remains. Interestingly, when his mother gazes on him, she does not see his wickedness but a reflection of her own 'shame'. Similar to Greville's 'fatal mirror', Richard is dangerous because both here and elsewhere in the play, he is 'Cheated of

feature by dissembling Nature,/ Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time/ Into this breathing world scarce half made up'. (I. i. 19-21) His own de-formation allows him to 'moralize two meanings in one word' (III. i. 83) and in this way Richard returns the gaze of the court by remaining for as long as he can a figure of profoundly ambiguous signification. Nonetheless, this position cannot be maintained indefinitely. Before he was King, Richard negotiated the master signifier of kingship but was not tied to it. However the moment he assumes the crown he becomes the mirror of his nation and people as well as the mirror of his own self. Richard becomes the master signifier and as a consequence, internalises its political imperatives. This is too much for him to bear as he comes to realise that it was his indistinct signifying status that gave him real power, not the fixity of monarchy. On the night before the battle of Bosworth, Richard's physical de-formation is manifested in a speech of terrifying subjective dissolution: 'What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by;/ Richard loves Richard, that is, I and I./ Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am!' (V. iii. 183-185) The third glass now lies 'crac'k in pieces'.

The shattering of the physical mirror in *Richard II* and the subjective 'glass' in *Richard III* also serves to draw attention to the gap between materiality and similitude, between trope and rhetoric. For example, on the one hand Thomas Salter could affirm the mirror as marker of self: 'the *Mirrhor* I meane [i.e. one 'meete for vertue'] is made of an other manner of matter, and is of muche more worthe than any Christall *Mirrhor*.'[103] But on the other hand, as I noted earlier, the conscience might itself be said to be 'a Chrystall Glasse' that will 'shewe euery thing that is amisse in soule and body.'[104] In short, the glass as interior trope both affirms and negates the subject. The problem for both Richard

II and Brutus is that this 'authorizing ground' lies deep in the interior 'shadows' and for Richard III, it is that he cannot remain indefinitely in 'the shadow of the sun' (I. i. 26).[105] Richard II's shattering of the glass points up the materiality of interiority – or rather the indivisibility of interiority from the material body – while at the same time showing the impossibility of cohering or materially unifying that very interiority. After all, the internal glass must remain, like conscience, a trope, an agonisingly intangible effect of fallen language.

In *Richard III*, *Richard II* and *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare interrogates a Calvinist inspired discourse of interiority structured around that internal point which the inward gaze either cannot focus upon or see, or else which it tries to appropriate but fails. The mirror or glass is the trope of this misrecognition, this 'unseen grief'. While the divided, reflexive self was still the primary locus of subjective association as I noted earlier, the revenant that holds it all together behind conscience, behind the interior gaze is the 'shadow', the absent/present gaze of a nebulous deity. Reformed theology may have distanced God from man, and the downgrading of human volition might have left man hanging to the deity by a thread, but Calvinist interiority could not 'work' without God, and especially not without Christ. His 'contradictory' subject position, if it can be called that, is replicated in the interior workings of the early modern subject. As surrogate figures of identification that both embrace and repudiate the subject the internal functions of the subject mediate between a centred subjectivity that is rarely if ever achieved and its lack which is more commonly felt. The functions of the self, like Christ, become the *point du capiton*; shadows that fail to offer the subject concord and which reveal the irredeemable lack at the centre of that subject. If the ultimate aim of the Calvinist Christ is to justify His elect,

then the early modern subject is, in Žizek's words, 'incapable of translating this desire of the Other into a positive interpellation, into a mandate with which to identify.'[106] The Calvinist Christ remains, lurking in the interior shadows, gazing upon the divided Calvinist subject, gazing upon itself.

This chapter has been concerned with the internal Other: in the next chapter I want to examine the external early modern Other so crucial to the formation of both individual and national identity during the period, namely the Catholic. In many respects, constructions of this figure were fantasies that say more about the half-expressed fears and desires of early modern subjects than they do about what Catholics were 'actually like'. For this reason, the following chapter will consider the question of fantasy, especially in relation to what might be designated the early modern unconscious. In this way, it will be possible to extend and develop the theoretical examination of Calvinist interiority begun in this chapter as a necessary preparation for my examination of early modern drama.

Notes to Chapter Three

[1] J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), p. 1

[2] *Ibid.* It will be clear from what follows both in this chapter and elsewhere that I agree with Scarisbrick and Duffy's model for interpreting the Protestant Reformation in early modern England. For more on the various twentieth century interpretations of the Reformation, see chapter five of Rosemary O' Day's *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986), pp. 102-132.

[3] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 4

[4] Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 117. Henry flirted with Lutheranism in the late 1530s but this was a short-lived acquaintance, due largely to the political miscalculations of Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell.

[5] Donna B. Hamilton, *Shakespeare and the Politics of Protestant England* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1992), p. 4

[6] Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 241

[7] I develop this issue in chapter four.

[8] Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), ix

[9] See Paul Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 4-83

[10] The manuscript is held in the National Library of Scotland. See *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago and London: University of Chicago University Press, 2000).

[11] See the 'Introduction' to John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeil and trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961) for further information on the various editions of the *Institutes*, I. xlii-l.

[12] As Calvin states in his 1559 introduction, 'it has been my purpose in this labour to prepare and instruct candidates in sacred theology for the reading of the divine word', *Ibid.* p. 4.

[13] For more on the relationship between early modern drama and sermons, see Bryan Crockett's study *The Play of Paradox: Stage and Sermon in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1995), esp. pp. 7-8

[14] Bucer's *De Regno Christi*, written in 1550 for Edward VI, contains an interesting discussion of the structure of a godly Christian commonwealth. See Constantin Hopf, *Martin Bucer and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1946), pp. 99-130. Bullinger was also very popular in England and his *Decades* were widely read. On this, see Ian Breward's Introduction to *The Work of William Perkins* (Abingdon: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970), pp. 16-17.

[15] On Martyr, see Frank A. James's *Peter Martyr Vermigli and Predestination: The Augustinian Inheritance of an Italian Reformer* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) and especially John Patrick Donnelly's *Calvinism and Scholasticism in Vermigli's Doctrine of Man* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976). As Donnelly notes: 'after Calvin, Martyr did more than anybody else to establish the doctrine of predestination', p. 125. He also observes that 'more of Martyr's books were translated into English than into any other vernacular', p. 174.

On Musculus, see his *Common Places of Christian Religion* (London: Reynolde Woulfe, 1563) STC 18308, a popular work in early modern England, as Peter White notes. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, p. 85.

On Zanchius, see his *Confession Of Christian Religion* (Cambridge: John Legat, 1599) STC 26120. Legat was, incidentally, the printer of William Perkins's works. There is an important discussion of Zanchius's doctrine of predestination in Richard Muller's *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology From Calvin to Perkins* (Durham: The Labyrinth Press, 1986), pp. 110-125.

[16] It is worth stating that none of these doctrines was exclusively 'Calvinistic'. All were present in Augustine's work and in the systems of other Reformed theologians.

[17] Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 72

[18] Coverdale's Bible was to all intents and purposes a revision of William Tyndale's banned editions of 1526 and 1534. For an extensive overview of the relationship between the Bible and English politics, see Henning Graf Reventlow's *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), pp. 49-72 and pp. 91-184. I am indebted to this book for much of what follows.

[19] Even the Authorised Version of 1611 took a long time to efface the popularity of the Geneva Bible. For a more detailed account of the various Tudor Bibles, see Nasseb Shaheen's, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), pp. 22-33.

[20] As Richard Muller explains:

The view of the Reformers developed out of a debate in the late medieval theology over the relation of the Scripture and tradition, one party viewing the two as coequal norms, the other party viewing Scripture as the absolute and therefore prior norm, but allowing tradition a derivative and secondary role in doctrinal statement. The Reformers and the Protestant orthodox held the latter view, on the assumption that tradition was a useful guide, that the Trinitarian and christological statements of Nicaea, Constantinople, and Chalcedon were expressions of biblical truth, and that the great teachers of the church provided valuable instruction in theology that always needed to be evaluated in the light of Scripture.

Richard Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), p. 284

[21] Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 76

[22] *Ibid.* I. 78

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.* I. 81

[25] *Ibid.* I. 244

[26] *Ibid.* I. 262

[27] *Ibid.* I. 768

[28] François Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of his Religious Thought*, trans. Philip Mairet (London: Collins, 1973), p. 191

[29] The term has New Testament origins. See 1 Timothy 2.5 and Hebrews 8.6, 12.24 and, especially, 9.15 which reads: 'And for this cause is he [Christ] the Mediatour of the newe Testament, that through death which was for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* in the former Testament, they which were called, might receiue the promise of eternall inheritance.' *The Geneva Bible* (London: Christopher Barker, 1599). Not only does Christ as mediator unite the secular and the spiritual realms, he also reconciles the Old and the New Testament through the legalistic function of the atonement.

[30] *Ibid.* p. 219 (my emphasis)

[31] Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, p. 111

[32] For an interesting if polemical reading of the *extra Calvinisticum*, see Crawford Gribben's *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology 1550-1682* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), esp. pp. 21-25 and p. 77.

[33] Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 875

[34] Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development*, pp. 231-232

[35] Alistair Fox, *The English Renaissance: Identity and Representation in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 61

[36] See H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 101-276 and Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and The Elizabethan Church*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 1-15 and 116-168.

[37] Peter Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635', in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism. A Fourteen-Volume Anthology of Scholarly Articles*, ed. Richard Gamble (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1992), p. 282

[38] Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 7. The beginnings of anti-Calvinist sentiment can be traced back to academic disputes in Cambridge during the 1570s. For example the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at that University, Peter Baro, opposed the Calvinist doctrine of free will. The controversy did not, however, reach a head until 1595. In that year, Baro's disciple William Barrett preached a controversial sermon asserting the certainty of man's salvation supported by scholars like Lancelot Andrewes and John Overall. They were vigorously opposed by powerful figures like the Puritan don Laurence Chaderton and the eminent Calvinist William Whitaker who each held the strict Calvinist line that free will was incompatible with salvation. The dispute came to head with the Lambeth Articles of 1595, which state unequivocally the Calvinist doctrine of the Elizabethan Church (although Elizabeth herself refused to sanction them). However, Arminianism, the doctrine that promotes man's free will and maintains that Christ died for all, did not really gain a foothold in England until the ascendancy of Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645). For more on these debates, see Tyacke's book, esp. pp. 9-86.

[39] Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 5

[40] Like Elizabeth, James aimed for a *via media* as regards Church polity. As Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake point out, 'James I had attempted to construct a unified Church based on a small number of key doctrines, in which advancement was open to a wide range of protestant opinion and from which only a minority of extreme puritans and papists were to be excluded.' Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policies of James I and Charles I', in *The Early Stuart Church 1603-1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p. 24

[41] John Calvin, *Sermons of M. John Caluin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus. Translated out of French into English by L.T.* (London: G. Bishop, 1579), p. 118

[42] On dying and death in the period, see Michael Neil's excellent study *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), esp. pp. 1-48.

[43] John Stanchniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 46

[44] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholie* ed. Holbrook Jackson (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1936), p. 408. The Puritan preacher Henry Smith was acutely aware of this possibility. As he wrote in a sermon published in 1596: 'Christ is called saluation, because no man should despaire, and because it is impossible to be saued without him, for saluation is onely in him'. Henry Smith, *Ten Sermons Preached By Maister Henry Smith* (London: Richard Field, 1596) STC 22779, Sig. D3^{r}

[45] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 216

[46] R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 13

[47] *Ibid.* p. 15

[48] *Ibid.* p. 29

[49] For a useful summary of these debates, see Sean Hughes' essay 'The Problem of "Calvinism": English Theologies of Predestination c. 1580-1630', pp. 229-249 in *Belief and Practice in Reformation England*, ed. Susan Wabuda and Caroline Litzenberger (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1998).

[50] William Perkins, *A Golden Chain*, in *The Work of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Breward (Abingdon: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970), p. 227

[51] Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, p. 7

[52] See *Ibid.* p. 1 and p. 29

[53] White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, p. 5

[54] Richard Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, p. 19, has shown that it is impossible to isolate predestination in discussion of Calvinist theology. So while it is true that 'predestination has as its intention the salvation of the elect', in works of 'popular' religion in early modern England, over-insistence on this point would have been counterproductive.

[55] Paul Helm, *Calvin and the Calvinists* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1998), p. 11

[56] Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 944

[57] This view is endorsed by Alister McGrath in *Iustitia Dei: A History of the*

Christian Doctrine of Justification (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 298-302

[58] Musculus, *Common Places*, Fol. 201[r]

[59] Zanchius, *Confession*, p. 76

[60] John Pelling, *A sermon of the providence of God*, cited in Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 15. It is worth noting here that both the 'Thirty-Nine Articles' of the Elizabethan Church and the 'Lambeth Articles' of 1595 can be read as promulgating a doctrine of limited atonement (though not, it should be said, without a certain verbal ambiguity, probably designed to maintain a doctrinal *via media*). For more on this, see Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 3-4 and p. 31.

[61] Theodore Beza, *A Briefe and pithie sum of the Christian faith, made in forme of a confession, with confutation of all such superstitious errours, as are contrary there vnto* (London: William How, 1572) STC 2007, Sig. D3[r]

[62] *Ibid.* Sig. D8[v]. If anything, the theology of both Beza and Perkins is even more Christocentric than that of Calvin.

[63] White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, p. 22

[64] Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 970

[65] I Corinthians 13: 12. The *O.E.D.* records 1548 as the first figurative use of the word 'glass'. *The Oxford English Dictionary Vol. VI*, prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, 2[nd] Ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989)

[66] John Calvin, *A Commentarie vpon S. Paules Epistles to the Corinthians*, trans. Thomas Timme (London: John Harrison and George Byshop, 1577) STC 4400, Fol. 156[r]. Calvin's exegesis is also indebted to Humanist models of perception. For example, in his *Philebus Commentary* (1492), Marsilio Ficino noted that 'People who stare at matter don't see true things, but some things having the appearance of truth.' Continuing in this neo-platonic vein, he says:

Therefore, just as the image of one face is at the same time in its entirety reflected back from a number of mirrors and just as one image is multiplied in a fractured mirror, so the total image of each Idea is in its individual things and is multiplied on account of the extent and distribution of matter.

Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, ed. and trans. Michael J.B. Allen (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1975), p. 210

A 'glass' or a mirror does not simply reflect; it causes the gaze to be returned to the gazer. Moreover, because, unlike a modern glass, an Elizabethan 'glass' was also a semi-opaque substance through which a gaze may pass, it becomes possible - as Ficino would have it - that the gaze returning to the gazer is not simply an unmediated, one-to-one reflection of his own.

[67] 2 Corinthians 3: 18

[68] Calvin, *Commentarie vpon S. Paules Epistles to the Corinthians*, Fol. 231v-r

[69] Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, p. 32

[70] Calvin, *op. cit.*, Fol.157v

[71] Sir Walter Ralegh, *The History of the World*, ed. C. A. Patrides (London: Macmillan, 1971), p. 396

[72] For more on the mirror in early modern culture, see Debora Shuger, '"The "I" of the Beholder": Renaissance Mirrors', in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, ed. Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1999), p. 37.

[73] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 27

[74] Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), p. 55

[75] As Bernard Reardon's important qualification makes clear, it was the second and third generation of Reformers who really extended the subjective implications of Luther and Calvin's ideas:

Although neither Luther nor Calvin saw religious renewal in terms of the claims of a subjective individualism...their invocation of the rights of conscience in repudiating a traditional system of belief and piety which appeared to them false and oppressive...was to bear fruit which the original reformers would have found little to their taste.

Bernard M. G. Reardon, *Religious Thought in the Reformation* (London and New York: Longman, 1995), x-xi

[76] For more on the casuistic tradition, see Camille Wells Slights, *The Casuistical Tradition in Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert and Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), esp. pp. 3-66.

[77] Lewis Bayley, *The Practice of Piety* (London: John Hodgets, 1623) STC 1605, Sig. A7^{r}

[78] William Perkins, *A Golden Chain*, in *The Works of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Breward (Abingdon: The Sutton Courtnay Press, 1970), p. 238

[79] Smith, *Ten Sermons Preached By Maister Henry Smith*, Sig. A3^{r}

[80]Arthur Dent, A *Sermon of Repentance* (London: I. Windet, 1585) STC 6654. Sig. B2^{v}

[81] *Ibid.* Sig. B3^{v}

[82] Deborah Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity* (Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 105-106

[83] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 36

[84] Valentin Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, in *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov*, ed. Pam Morris (London and New York: Arnold, 1997), p. 56

[85] Dent, *A Sermon of Repentance*, Sig. A6^{r}

[86] Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 847

[87] However, as Shuger notes elsewhere, 'These divisions between public and private domains are not...central to Calvinism, which historically resisted the bifurcation of religious existence from social order'. Debora Shuger, '"Subversive Fathers and Suffering Subjects": Shakespeare and Christianity', in *Religion, Literature and Politics in Post-Reformation England*, ed. Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 66

[88] Dent, *A Sermon of Repentance*, Sig. B3^{v}

[89] See Keir Elam, '"In what chapter of his bosom?" Reading Shakespeare's Bodies', in *Alternative Shakespeares. Vol. 2*, ed. Terence Hawkes (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 140-163

[90] John More, *A Lively Anatomie of Death* (London: W. Jones, 1596) STC 18073, Sig. E6^{v}. See also Henry Lok who, in 1597, said of his sonnet cycle *Sundry Christian Passions*: 'In which (as in a glasse) may be seene, the state of a regenerate soule, sicke with sinne'. Cited in Barbara Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 239

[91] Slavoj Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 99

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] Henry Smith, *The Wedding Garment* (London: W. Wright, 1590) STC 22713. Sig. B5^{r}. Smith's sermon is fascinating for the way in which, through the constant association of man with the copy, the counterfeit and the mimetic, its language constantly undermines the thrust of its message. To take one further

example, we should 'doe all by his [Christ's] example as the scholler writeth by his copie', Sig. A5[r].

[94] Richard Hillman, *Self-Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1997), p. 17

[95] All references to *Julius Caesar* and *Richard II* are to *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and others (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997).

[96] As William Perkins writes: 'thou neuer sawest thine owne face but in a glasse, and neuer out of a glasse, and yet this contenteth thee'. William Perkins, *The Whole Treatise of The Cases Of Conscience* (Cambridge: John Legate, 1606) STC 19669, p. 215

[97] The *O.E.D.* records c 1175 as the first recorded use of 'shadow' as a 'reflected image'.

[98] William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Kenneth Muir, The Arden Shakespeare (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 45

[99] An important classical antecedent is the myth of Narcissus who fell in love with his own reflection. Interestingly in his translation of Sir Francis Bacon's *The Wisedome Of The Ancients*, Sir Arthur Gorges utilises the tropes of the mirror *and* the shadow: 'And hauing espyed the shadowe of his owne face in the water, was so besotted and rauished with the contemplation and admiration thereof, that by no meanes possible he could bee drawen from beholding his image in this Glasse'. Sir Francis Bacon, *The Wisedome Of The Ancients*, trans. Sir Arthur Gorges (London: John Bill, 1619) STC 1130, p. 12

Also relevant is Saint Augustine's *De Trinitate*, and his discussion of interiority and perception. As the saint writes:

For whence does a mind know another mind if it does not know itself? For not as the eye of the body sees other eyes and *does not see itself*, so does the mind know other minds and does not know itself. For we see bodies through the eyes of the body, because we cannot refract the rays which shine through them and touch what ever we see, and reflect them back into the eyes themselves, *except when we are looking into a mirror.*

Saint Augustine of Hippo, *The Trinity*, trans. Stephen McKenna (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1970), p. 273 (my emphasis)

[100] Fulke Greville, "Down in the Depths of Mine Iniquity", in *The New Oxford Book of Seventeenth Century Verse*, ed. Alastair Fowler (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 4. I am grateful to Dr. David Reid of the Department of English Studies, University of Stirling, for drawing my attention to this poem.

[101] Hillman, *Self-Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama*, p. 135

[102] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, ed. Antony Hammond, The Arden Shakespeare (London and New York: Routledge, 1994)

[103] Thomas Salter, *A Mirrhor mete for all Mothers, Matrones, and Maidens*, (London: Edward White. 1579) STC 21634, Sig. A2^{v}

[104] More, *A Lively Anatomie of Death*, Sig. E6^{v}

[105] Cf. this comment from Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of WitchCraft* (1584): 'Some [men] through *imperfection* of sight also are afraid of their own shadows, and (as Aristotle saith) see themselves sometimes as it were in a glass'. *The Discoverie of WitchCraft* in *Life in Shakespeare's England*, ed. John Dover Wilson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), p. 53 (my emphasis)

[106] Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 115

Chapter Four

Catholics and Fantasy: The Early Modern Unconscious

Fantasising the Unconscious

I want to begin this chapter with a quotation from Dr. Timothy Bright's 1586 tract *A Treatise of Melancholie*. Writing of the 'melancholick humour' he notes that it 'counterfeteth terrible obiectes to the fantasie, and polluting both the substance, and spirits of the brayne, casueth it without externall occasion, to forge monstrous fictions'.[1] For Bright, as for many other early modern thinkers, 'fantasie' was not the vaguely creative, illusory concept that it is understood as today, but rather a deeply unsettling aspect of subjectivity.[2] Part of the reason for this is related to Galenic physiology.[3] Unlike, for example, melancholia, which could be traced back to a humoural imbalance in the body, 'fantasie' was part of a second order of psychological taxonomy such as dreams, memory or imagination, which could not be *directly* explained in relation to the body. There was, of course, nothing new about this in so far as these faculties were certainly understood and explicated in various ancient and medieval psychological schemata.[4] But in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these aspects of the self gradually became more and more problematic for many writers. I have noted some of the reasons behind this shift in

the previous chapter, but in this chapter I would like to broaden the scope of my enquiry further.

First, it is interesting that Timothy Bright should use the adjective 'monstrous' to describe the effects of 'fantasie'. As Patricia Parker has shown, the discourse of the monstrous in early modern writing is very often constructed around a desire 'to bring before the eye something unseen, offstage, hid[den].'[5] Parker connects this desire to three elements in early modern culture. In the first place, she associates it with 'the function of the delator or informer as secret accuser'. Secondly she equates it with 'the anatomical context of uncovering, dilating, or opening the secret or "privy" place of women'. And lastly she connects the monstrous with the 'early modern fascination both with monster literature and with narratives of the "discovery" of previously hidden worlds'.[6] I agree with Parker's analysis in each case, but it is also possible to situate this discovery of hidden, frightening aspects of the self within a fourth discourse. This can be explained in relation to Bright's construction of the 'fantasie' as a faculty that offers various 'fictions' to the self. The Greek root of the word 'fantasy' means 'to make visible' but Bright's faculty also hints at the possibility that the self may be eclipsed in some way by internal counterfeits. It also intimates that the 'fantasie' might reveal something that should have otherwise remained hidden from view.

In Freudian psychoanalysis these hidden aspects of the self would be reconfigured as the unconscious. This point notwithstanding, in this chapter I want to turn not to Freudian but to Lacanian psychoanalysis in order to understand better the 'early modern unconscious'. Through his reinterpretation of Freud's own

reading of the unconscious,[7] Lacan argued that it manifests itself by and through language. Underlying Lacan's famous dictum that '*the unconscious is structured like a language*'[8] is a realisation that language is predicated on lack. As Elizabeth Wright notes, 'every word indicates the absence of what it stands for' and because of this, 'Language imposes a chain of words along which the ego must move while the unconscious remains in search of the object it has lost.'[9] As a result, the fantasy of the subject is for repletion, for that wholeness that language fails to provide. That this fantasy is unattainable is a constitutive element of the unconscious. As Lacan notes, 'the unconscious is always manifested as that which vacillates in a split in the subject'.[10] In other words, fantasy operates by (unsuccessfully) papering over a fundamental 'split in the subject'.

I want to suggest that, like the Lacanian unconscious, the early modern unconscious is not strictly realisable in a taxonomic sense. It never manifests itself *directly*. It goes without saying that the 'unconscious' is not a term that early modern writers would have used or recognised. However, this is of secondary importance because I argue that, in Lacanian terms, the early modern unconscious manifests itself indirectly through the language used to describe the interior processes of the self, such as 'fantasie'. Antony Easthope's assertion that 'The Lacanian unconscious is not the Other itself but is rather a function of it and is included in it as its discourse'[11] is broadly validated by the texts I will examine in this chapter. Indeed, it is striking how close Bright's account of 'fantasie' is to this Lacanian principle. He notes: 'fantasie' 'forgeth disguised shapes, which giue great terror vnto the heart, and cause it with the liuely spirit to hide it selfe as well as it

can...from those counterfeit goblins, which the brayne...fayneth vnto the heart.'[12] According to Bright, the early modern self is full of manifestations that the subject can neither contain nor understand. In the case of 'fantasie', this faculty is also intimately bound up with memory, a faculty that, as will become clear, charts the limitations of this form of early modern selfhood. It is this 'unconscious' aspect of the self that I am interested in and which I will return to at the end of this chapter.

With their emphasis on what Bright calls in another place this 'internall darknes'[13] perhaps the texts examined in this chapter might be said to contribute in some way to a pre-history of the unconscious, an unconscious manifested by and through fantasy (or 'fantasie'). I intend to show that this pre-history has a definable basis by arguing that the fierce disputations between Catholic and Protestant, which are all too often ignored in scholarly accounts of early modern interiority, are in fact central to the production of subjectivity in writings like Bright's. By setting these debates in their historical and theological contexts, it will be possible to explain a certain crisis in the taxonomy of self that characterised much of the writing of this period. In this context, I read the term 'fantasy' both as an aspect of the early modern subject and as a theoretical proposition that underwrites much of what follows. I suggest that much of the so-called 'historical' debate between Catholic and Protestant is actually anything but historical and in fact, closer to fiction on both sides. In accordance with Slavoj Žizek's argument that '*fantasy is the means for an ideology to take its own failure into account in advance*',[14] I propose that the historical and ideological instability of these debates between Catholic and Protestant created a space for writers in both camps to fantasise various

subjectivities in a number of intriguing and under-explored ways. More than this, I demonstrate how in early modern writing, 'the subject is never able to assume his or her fundamental fantasy'.[15] As a way into this issue, I begin with a number of these central texts through which early modern society constructed and understood its sense of nationhood.

Early Modern Apocalypse

Protestantism had extreme difficulty as a movement in reconciling its adherence to divine, authoritative paradigms of history with the realities of material and political praxis. This is reflected in the two most popular political genres of the period, the apologetic and the apocalyptic. As Richard Helgerson has observed in his book *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England*, 'both are internally cleft. Apologetic is split between rational transcendence and polemical engagement, between the ideal of stasis and the reality of change. Martyrdom and imperium, suffering and power, divide apocalyptic.'[16] Both forms of writing are also crucial to the construction of the Elizabethan nation. If Helgerson is correct when he suggests that 'in all national self-writing, self alienation and self-aggrandizement are one'[17] then it is also reasonable to suppose that in these writings may be found an important source for the self-divided early modern subject. So while the oppositional nature of Protestant discourse may have been fuelled by its opposition to all things Catholic, soon this oppositional stance was translated at a structural, linguistic and philosophical level into a constitutive given of nearly all

Protestant writings. It is also important to note in this context that early modern writers 'inherited two traditional methods of managing diversity'. As Debora Shuger points out:

> The first and more familiar erases history, subordinating diversity to repetitive pattern, whether exemplary or typological. Augustine's two cities, Protestant ecclesiology, and the moralized history of humanist pedagogy all construct the past as proleptic repetition rather than linear sequence. The second method derives from Aristotle's biological works (including the *Problems*), which record the almost limitless variety of habitats, social organizations, sexual preferences, morphological structures, and domestic arrangements found in nature. Aristotle's approach is singularly amoral; he is not interested in animal behavior as evidence of a normative *jus naturale* or as a model for human society.[18]

I want to suggest that these two methods were not exclusive. Instead they existed in a mutually derivative and generative tension. This is particularly the case in the early modern apology and apocalypse where writers had to construct Protestant England as unquestionably God's chosen realm while at the same time outlining the history of how this seemingly unquestionable fact came about. As a way of exploring this tension, it will be useful first to turn to what might be termed urban apocalypticism.

The rapid growth of London's urban landscape during Elizabeth I's reign jarred with a number of Protestant thinkers. As Margot Heinemann has observed, 'No other town had more than 20-30,000 people – this huge amorphous city was something quite new. A high proportion of London's people had been there for a generation or less, or lived there only part of the year.'[19] Compared to the godly example of Calvin's Geneva, London must have seemed to many Protestant thinkers like a place of dangerous increase, of unfettered movement and fluidity. If urban Protestantism was a religion concerned, in the main, with regulating subjective

positionalities within a broadly defined social 'order', then the ever-expanding liminality of England's capital threatened to undermine that polity and actively engulf the unruly subjects living within its confines. But who was to blame for this urban confusion: man or God?

This was the question uppermost in the minds of Protestant thinkers when, in April 1580, an earthquake struck the city. 'Few episodes', notes Alexandra Walsham, 'left a more enduring impression upon the collective memory of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England'.[20] In a tract written not long after the quake, Thomas Twyne tried to account for the cause of the disaster. In the first place he wrote:

> Among the manifold sygnes and tokens whereby it hath pleased our most gracious God, and mercifull Father, in these the later times of the worlde, and very ripenesse of our sinnes, to call vs to repentaunce, we may not accoumpt [sic] as least this most dreadfull & daungerous Earthquake.[21]

The order of this sentence is interesting. Where we might expect Twyne to say that the earthquake occurred as a result of man's sins, in fact he sees it as part of an inevitable apocalyptic process. God has caused the earthquake in order to 'call vs to repentaunce' but there is a sense that, in these 'later times of the worlde', man's sinfulness is secondary concern in respect of the apocalyptic teleology unfolding in the capital. Indeed, as Twyne says of the earthquake: 'the effect must be acknowledged to rest in Gods hands only.'[22] The tension in the argument becomes more apparent. Twyne writes:

> I beeseeche you in the bowels of his deare Sonne Jesus Christ, euery one to powre out his complaint beefore the fountaine of mercy, and to call upon him to turne from vs those plagues of Pestilence, Sword, & Famine, which by such quakings are euermore foreshewed, and our sinnes doo worthily deserue.[23]

The friction between typological commonplaces ('fountaine of mercy' or 'plagues of Pestilence') and causality ('our sinnes') soon becomes apparent. Twyne's rhetoric appears to be caught between two conflicting poles. On the one hand he wishes to attribute London's impending doom to man's sinfulness, yet on the other hand he attempts to negate any causal reason for the disaster by locating it within a predestined metaphysic of which his apocalypticism is an expression: these earthquakes along with other signs are 'euermore foreshewed'. But to call this position illogical would be to betray the fundamentally secular, twenty first century 'logic' of modern enquiry. The city might be ever expanding and under attack from God, but for most Protestants, faith was the bulwark against the supposedly illogical polarities of providential doctrine as well as providing an internal refuge from the frightening liminality of the city.

This last point has long been recognised, and as expressed by Jonathan Dollimore, contextualises Twyne's position. Dollimore writes that 'Protestantism... intensified religious paradox. In a sense this was intentional: for Calvin faith was generated on the axis of paradox and from within experienced contradiction.'[24] While I agree with Dollimore, I think that his argument can be developed a stage further to suggest that 'experienced contradiction' as he terms it, was in fact necessary to the internalisation of a Calvinistic subject position. Perhaps the only way to reconcile oneself to a project that advocated hardline limited atonement as well as the utter negation of free will is to embrace at an affective level the very contradictions that structure Calvinist theology. In effect, the Calvinist subject *becomes* the very 'contradictions' that he or she internalises. Therefore, when it is

manifested in Calvinist writings, interiority is, I suggest, produced in the subjective dialectic structured between divine paradigms, what Protestant being and practice should aspire to, and the reality of social praxis. It is the failure of the latter to achieve the standards of the former that gives Protestant writing in general its fraught, oppositional intensity. Urban apocalypticism charts this dialectic relentlessly, commenting on the impossibility of achieving a synthesis that would adequately contain these imperatives. In the words of Patrick Collinson, 'Protestantism was supposed to recreate that Jerusalem whose outstanding feature, according to the Psalmist, was that it was at unity in itself. In fact it brought division and accentuated political conflict.'[25] London was no more Jerusalem than it was Geneva and many of the more sceptical writers of the period realised this only too well. Commenting on the futility of the search for the godly city, Thomas Nashe observes in that apocalyptic work *par excellence*, *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem* (1593) that 'There is no perfect societie or Citty, but a number of men *gathered* together.'[26]

As a way of examining more directly how the Protestant subject internalised these contradictions, I want now to turn to a different kind of apocalyptic writing, namely John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church.* First published in English in 1563[27] this magisterial polemic is nothing less than a history of, and justification for, the Protestant cause. Charting the lives and deaths of those who had sacrificed all for the Protestant faith, *Acts and Monuments* is a narrative that 'through repeated readings and tellings, helped to shape the English people's understanding not only of the Reformation but of the world they inhabited as

well.'[28] The centrality of Foxe's text to the political impetus of Protestantism cannot be denied - a copy was ordered to be placed in every church in the land. But what is of particular relevance in this context is the way in which Foxe constructs the figure of the martyr. Within Foxe's narrative strategy, the Marian martyr in particular is a contradictory figure, at once human, afraid and individual as well as being in some way an exalted exemplar, bound up in a divine comedy not of his or her making.

The martyr is most commonly presented in the Christian tradition as a heroic, almost superhuman figure. Traditional iconography, whether of St. Sebastian pierced by arrows or St. Catherine on the wheel, has always augmented this perception. In the theological/literary tradition, the martyr's death is most commonly described as miraculous *and* edifying. The first century *Martyrium Policarpi* speaks of the moment when Polycarp, burning at the stake, is stabbed by a guard to hasten his death: 'when he had done this there came out a dove and abundance of blood so that it quenched the fire, and all the multitude marvelled at the great difference between the unbelievers and the elect'.[29] The focus here is not so much on the actual death, but on the transformative effect of the sacrifice. In marked distinction to this somewhat fantastical narrative, Foxe's account of the same martyrdom is much more prosaic:

> Then they cried again all together with one voice, that he would burn Polycarp alive. And the proconsul had no sooner spoken than it was at once performed...His hands were then bound behind him and he was sacrificed, saying, "O Father of thy well-beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ...I give thee thanks that thou hast vouchsafed to grant me this day that I may have my part among the number of the martyrs in the cup of Christ".[30]

It is almost as if time has lent a certain grandeur to Polycarp's death. This is not quite the case in respect of the Marian martyrs, but even in Polycarp's case it is

clear that Foxe has refashioned and re-appropriated the traditional narrative in a way that inscribes the (proto-Protestant) martyr within a textual field not of his own making.

By assuming the mantle of the martyrologist in a Protestant context, Foxe is presented with a series of narratological and ideological problems. In opposition to the sainthood often conferred on martyrs in the Catholic tradition and the idolatrous detritus that went with this, a large portion of Foxe's text is concerned with a very different kind of 'saint'. These are the Marian martyrs, those often 'ignorant, unlearned and foolish'[31] peoples whose deaths struck such a chord within large sections of Elizabethan culture. Interestingly, the presentation of the martyr as 'ordinary' was not the preferred rhetorical strategy of other authorised Protestant narratives. For example, in the third part of the official *Sermon Against the Fear of Death* (1562), it is written:

> we see by holy Scripture, and other ancient histories of martyrs, that the holy, faithful, and righteous, ever since Christ's ascension...in their death did not doubt, but that they went to Christ in spirit, which is our life, health, wealth, and salvation.[32]

But Foxe's Marian martyrs frequently experience both doubt and fear; by demystifying martyrdom, presenting the martyrs as normal people, Foxe was constructing a textual community of believers with whom the populace could identify. Nonetheless, in order to valorise the martyrs who did die, to create Protestant *exemplae*, Foxe needed necessarily to construct them *in some way* as figures out of the ordinary. John Knott writes that 'Foxe's emphasis is on the heroic faith of the individual and the poignancy of the scene rather than on the fusion of the human and the divine.'[33] While this is true, I want to suggest that Foxe has to

emphasise heroism precisely because he fails in his attempt to fuse the human and the divine in the figure of the Marian martyr. Yet the way in which he does this is not to dehumanise, but rather, to present the martyr as a figure embodying and disbodying the dialectic between divine and contingent narratives. This movement can be illustrated by looking in some detail at Foxe's account of the death of Cicely Ormes on the 23rd September 1557.

Ormes was arrested in Norwich and sentenced for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. It is Foxe's account of her last moments that is especially revealing. He writes:

> looking at her hand, and seeing it black with the stake, she wiped it upon her clothes, for she was burned at the same stake Simon Miller and Elizabeth Cooper was burned at. Then after she had touched it with her hand, she came and kissed it, and said, "Welcome the sweet cross of Christ", and so gave herself to be bound to it. After the tormentors had kindled the fire, she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour"; and in so saying, she set her hands together right against her breast...[and] she gave up her life unto the Lord, as quietly as if she had been in a slumber, or as one feeling no pain.[34]

Immediately noticeable is Foxe's strange conflation of divine and contingent deaths. The issue here is manifestly not one of historical 'truth'. Rather, it is one of rhetorical and ideological persuasiveness. As constructed by Foxe, Ormes becomes a symbolic conduit for the attempted re-formation of the Protestant martyr as simultaneously exceptional and ordinary. Ormes greets the 'sweet cross of Christ' in a movement that is both local and universal. At a local level, Ormes' putting-on of Christ can be read as an attempt to implicate and possibly convert the spectators. To this end, her cry, 'Good people, as many of you believe as I believe, pray for me' is instructive. By attempting through an appeal to belief to connect the transformative

power of prayer with the immolation she is about to suffer, Foxe attempts to unify the divine exemplar with contingent reality positing, like Christ, a redemptive connection between victim and beholder.

However, like many of the other narratives examined so far, Foxe's project is seriously undermined at a structural and an ideological level by the inherent oppositional status of the divine/contingent dialectic. According to Knott, Foxe's is a language

> celebrating a new kind of protestant saint who seems beyond human weakness at the approach of death, yet whatever the rhetorical excesses of Foxe's characterization of his "blessed martyrs" they are rooted in the words and acts of those whose stories he tells.[35]

No matter how hard Foxe tries to focus on the heavenly signification of the deaths, the gaze of the reader and the spectator is always drawn to a pathetically human detail such as fear, barefootedness or tears. There is good reason for this. First, and it is a necessary if obvious point to make, the martyr is not Christ. As I have shown in previous chapters, Calvinist subjectivity comes about when the contradictory signifying chain between man and the deity is internalised by the subject. In a slightly different context, Robert Weimann explicates this phenomenon when he notes that

> the irresolutions between the transcription of actual events and the language of pure fiction, between voice and text, historiography and fabulation are projected into the structure of...figuration and, from there, into the ambivalent circuit of... signification.[36]

A good example of this process can be found again in Thomas Nashe's *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem*. Commenting on his necessary adoption of human nature in order to effect the salvation of man, Christ cries: 'It is a debasement and a

punishment to me, to inuest and enrobe my selfe in the dregs and drosse of mortality. I would resemble the similitude of the meanest, to *gather* the meanest vnto me.'[37] The contrast with Ormes' death is instructive. Where Christ *becomes*, the Protestant martyr can only appropriate. No one present at Cicely Ormes' execution would claim that she died 'as one feeling no pain'. Yet by playing Christ, by invoking his sacrifice at the point of death, the martyr gets drawn into a field of signifiers where signification for 'ignorant, unlearned and foolish' humans becomes simply impossible. For this reason, Foxe's otherwise unremarkable reference to Simon Miller and Elizabeth Cooper who both died at the same stake can be read as an attempt to give Ormes' death some referentiality, to tie the signifier to a (any) signified. But as Žizek writes of the saint, or in this case the Protestant martyr, he or she 'occupies the place of *object petit a*, of pure object, of somebody undergoing radical subjective destitution.'[38] Ultimately, when viewed through the prism of Christ's sacrifice, Ormes' act of martyrdom can only be an empty mimicry, a signifier without a signified and an evacuation of both body and metaphysics.

These points notwithstanding, the second way in which Foxe's narrative of Cicely Ormes' martyrdom undermines itself is, to my mind, the most striking. As the unfortunate Ormes burns, she supposedly cries out 'My soul doth magnify the Lord'. This is, of course, a transliteration of the hymn *Magnificat anima mea* sung by the Virgin Mary when she was told of her pregnancy.[39] Foxe probably wants his readers to assume that Ormes has consciously appropriated this Marian rhetoric, presumably in order to identify her death as a sacrifice in praise of the Lord. In short, her internalisation becomes His glorification. However, if Valentin

Voloshinov is correct when he notes that 'consciousness itself can arise and become a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs',[40] then a different interpretation of Foxe's narrative might be posited. The *Magnificat* may well be a hymn of praise, but it is also a hymn of birth, of origins and of emergence. Yet the very signifier that gives voice (and birth) to this hymn, the body, is in the very process of being materially obliterated, of being removed from signification. History may well be made in a cultural negotiation between conscious and unconscious processes, between martyrs and their apologists. But if it is correct to assume, as many early modern thinkers did, that consciousness emerges 'only in the process of social interaction',[41] then the figure of the martyr, ostensibly dying for the good of 'society', radically *embodies as it dis-bodies* the desire for signification at the very moment of the sign's brutal extinction.

To a great extent, Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* retrospectively defined the Protestant godly community through the stories of men and women who, unlike many of the Marian martyrs, could never have been doctrinal Protestants.[42] But this apparent anomaly did not disturb Foxe who, in common with other Protestant polemicists, had a much larger ideological aim. Writing of the Church Fathers like Augustine and Jerome who had written in praise of the Catholic Church, Foxe says: 'whoever will understand rightly their authorities must learn to make a distinction between the church of Rome as it *was* and as it *is*'. He goes on: 'It is not true, then, that we [the Protestants] are removed from the church of Rome; but rather...that the church of Rome has utterly departed from the church of Rome'.[43] For the

martyrologist, Protestantism is the hidden master signifier standing behind the false Church of Rome and all those whose actions correspond to what is defined as godly Protestant behaviour are retrospectively constructed as rightful Protestants. To put it polemically, Catholicism could be seen as Protestantism's unconscious. For this reason, the threat of Catholicism in Reformed countries like early modern England might well be viewed in psychoanalytic terms as the return of the repressed. So if Jacques Lacan's assertion that '*the unconscious is the discourse of the Other*'[44] is to be taken seriously, then it will be necessary to examine in this light the various ways in which writers 'apologised' for the Protestant Church in opposition to Rome. For in such writings, it is possible to see that the 'return of the repressed' denied early modern writers a vision of a unified English Church. In fact, it opened up acute fissures in the dominant ideology's account of itself, fissures that saw the Other not as a figure emerging from without, but as a more nebulous set of images materialising from the interior of the nation and, ultimately, the interior of the self.

Apologising for the Church

Even a perfunctory examination of the anti-Catholic polemics produced in early modern England would underline how vehemently most Protestants were opposed to a centralised Church dominated by the Papacy. But while it is easy to dismiss these often-voluminous writings as the rantings of zealots, the truth is subtler, and resolutely ideological. The political roots of anti-Catholic discourse lay with those second and third generation Lutherans who had propagated and

developed the master's notion of the faithful congregation. As Quentin Skinner has observed:

> the Lutheran assumption that the Church must be regarded as nothing more than a *congregatio fidelium* ceased to be treated as a heresy, and came to be accepted as the basis of a new and official view of the proper relationship between ecclesiastical and political power.[45]

In the turmoil of Reformation Europe, clear-headed distinctions such as this were sorely needed. Nevertheless, communities constituted like this in the face of external assault often develop, unsurprisingly, an acute sense of persecution: to believe in one's social group as 'the faithful' is often also to construct those outwith that group as a threat to the wholeness of the community. This cultural movement had two closely related effects. The one was the cultivation of an acutely inward gaze. The other effect, and the one that I will focus on first, was an ideological revision of temporal and, by implication, divine history.

The problem for the Protestant thinker was to defend his Church from Catholic attacks that a Reformed Church could have no legitimacy in historical terms. According to the Catholic Richard Bristow, 'Whether they [the Protestants] haue in their Seruice, or any wher els, any thing to be commended...they haue, like Apes, taken it of vs by imitation.'[46] For Bristow, the Reformed Church was only a poor simulation of the Roman Church. In Protestant nations across Europe, attacks like these required a vigorous political programme that would negate this kind of popular Catholic accusation. In England, however, as Donna Hamilton has observed, this project had deeper ramifications:

> Originally developed for the purpose of justifying English political and religious autonomy in relationship to Rome, anti-catholic polemic was the

> central rhetorical tool for constructing and defending the value of the English state and for constructing new narratives of English history.[47]

England's sense of itself as a godly and politically secure nation depended in large part on the success of the re-formed narratives it told itself. One of the most important writers to take up the cudgels and attempt to construct these 'new narratives' was Bishop John Jewel. In his *Defence of The Apologie of the Church of England* (1567), Jewel attacked Catholic claims that theirs was the original faith of the English peoples by effectively disregarding what might be understood as a 'normative' historiography. As he argues, Augustine of Canterbury, who brought Catholicism to England, was not 'the first Planter of the Faith within this Iland [sic]. For the faith was planted heere many hundred yeeres before his coming.'[48] The godly faith, which the Catholic Church had departed from, was there well before Augustine and in breaking away from the Catholic Church the Reformed movement was merely reinstating the 'original' faith, the master signifier that had been obscured by the errors of Rome. Regardless of doctrinal affiliation, arguments such as these require the suspension of certain critical faculties on the part of the reader. In this respect, Catholic polemicists were on stronger ground, and they knew it. In the words of Jewel's adversary, the Catholic proselytiser Thomas Harding: 'As for the church of this land of Britaine, the faith hath continewed in it thirten [sic] hundred yeres vntill now of late.'[49] Harding also lays claim to the original faith of the British peoples, only this time 'faith' equals Catholicism. In breaking from Rome the Protestants have not only abandoned history; they have abandoned God.

The only real response that Protestant polemicists had to this charge was to embellish Jewel's line of attack *ad nauseum*. So, for example, in his *Discovery of*

the Dangerous Rock of the Popish Church (1580), William Fulke observes that 'all ancient histories, that write of the primitive Church, make mention of the same faith which we profess.'[50] Or as William Perkins argues in *A Reformed Catholic* (1597), the Protestant Church 'hath been always a church and did not first begin to be in Luther's time, but only then began to show itself, as having been hid by a universal apostasy for many hundred years together.'[51] As in Foxe's account quoted earlier, Protestantism is the hidden master signifier standing behind the false Church of Rome. For a Church that took especial delight in criticising the Egyptians for extending their antiquity to six thousand years before the creation of the world, assertions like this seem more than a little expedient.[52]

But the issue here is not one of historical or religious veracity, of re-forming erroneous narratives, or even of 'objective truth'. This is an unashamedly nationalistic project for as Patrick Collinson notes, 'religious myths have often made the most critical contribution to the nation as an idea.'[53] More than this, the historiography of these Protestant divines is concerned in the words of Janet Smarr, with 'the symbolic constructions of reality, including its own.'[54] In effect, they deconstruct the 'old' Catholic narrative by appealing at once to a retroactive Protestantism that was always already there, as well as a transcendental notion of 'faith'. Both have the effect of aligning the Protestant cause and its peoples within an avowedly symbolic discourse, namely Protestant history. This movement can also be seen as an example of what Slavoj Žizek has called the 'logic of transference', an 'illusion that the meaning of a certain element (which was retroactively fixed by the intervention of the master signifier) was present in it from

the very beginning as its immanent essence.'[55] Foxe, Jewel, Fulke and Perkins may well associate the Protestant nation with a transcendental faith but this is an ideological and textual project fraught with difficulty.

The most remarkable aspect of the Catholic attacks that I have outlined so far, and one that is rarely if ever commented upon, is the construction of their Protestant opponents as self-divided subjects. Here is Harding once more writing about the leaders of the Reformed movement:

> But what neede I to speake of the strifes and debates, that were and be in our time betwixt the chiefe Maisters of this new Religion? They were at debate, not only side against side, men against men, Preachers of one Churche against Preachers of an other Churche: but also many of them, and that of the most famous were at debate with them selues. Bucer with Bucer, Melancthon with Melancthon, Luther with Luther, Caluine with Caluine, Peter Martyr with Peter Martyr. What a doo had Bucer to keepe him selfe in credite with any side, who, after he ranne out of his Cloister, and tooke vnto him a Yokefellow, first became a Lutheran, after that a Zwinglian, and againe a Lutheran, and last of all, after he came into England, as it is wel knowen, nor perfite Lutheran, nor perfite Zwinglian, but an vncertaine, and ambiguous Mongrel between bothe?
>
> Melancthon, as the worlde hath seene, and as may be proued by sundry his editions of his Common places, and other writings, was so mutable in his Faith, that he seemeth to haue made him selfe a slaue subiecte to al occasions of mutations. As he was neuer stable in his life time, so a little before his death, he turned wholly from his olde Maister Luther, and became a Caluinian Sacrementarie, as his Epistle witnesseth written to the Palsgrave of Rhene, and so he died in the worst change of al.
>
> To declare how Luther disagreed with him selfe, bothe in deedes and writings, it would require a whole booke. The same hath ben at large set forth by Cochleus, and other learned men of our time. What be the contradictions, wherein Caluine fighteth with him selfe, and other his infinite errours, and confusions, Nicholaus Villagagno...hath diligently discoouered.
>
> As for Peter Martyr...it may be doubted, whether Peter Martyr of Oxford, agreed with Peter Martyr of Zurich. What confusion is this?[56]

This is highly effective polemic and it had an identifiable effect. Protestants were not only in danger from the external Catholic adversary, but from a much more nebulous, interior enemy that might be associated with Catholicism, but equally,

might not be.[57] The very adoption of Protestantism caused division in the state and in the self. This tension is everywhere in English writings of the period. According to John Foxe, 'the visible church has, unhappily, within it, not only those who are Christ's inwardly and truly, but many who are his only by profession.'[58] What Protestant writers of the period seemed to fear most was that the Protestant subject position, its interiority, could never be totally secure because beneath the countenance of, supposedly, godly Protestant practice may well lie the complete opposite of godliness, whatever that might be.

It is useful to recall at this point that in 1569, eleven years into Elizabeth's reign, there was a significant Catholic rebellion in the north of England. Although the cause of the uprising was initially political rather than specifically religious, nevertheless it generated considerable religious enthusiasm. Indeed, at least one authority has called the rebellion 'the only significant Elizabethan attempt to overthrow Protestant religion'.[59] Ultimately the rising failed because of the ineptitude of its political leaders. But it demonstrated to the Protestant state that its religious hegemony was susceptible to attack not just from external enemies. However, the increasing numbers of seminary priests and Jesuits in England during the 1570s and 1580s along with the ever-present threat of an external Spanish invasion only helped to accentuate the instability of the political situation.[60] This is Richard Bancroft preaching against the Catholics at St. Paul's Cross in 1588 at the height of Armada fever:

> They [i.e. the Catholics] are resembled in Scriptures, and in the ancient fathers unto diverse things; as unto painted walls and sepulchres, because they are hypocrites: to trees which have nothing but leaves, bicause they are fruitelesse: to the mermaides bicause they hid their errours under their

> counterfeit and faire speeches: to *Helena* of Greece, for that they moove as great contention in the church as she did troubles betwixt the Grecians and the Troians: to the diseases called the leprosie and the cankar, in that their corruption taketh deepe roote and spreadeth so farre: to a serpent that is lapped up togither, bicause they have so many windings and contradictions.[61]

And so it goes on. What is remarkable about Bancroft's argument and lexis is the way in which what starts of as an exegetical deconstruction of Catholicism soon descends, quite literally, into an interior anatomy, charting the slippery progress of the 'cankar', papistry, into the self. Bancroft's concern seems to be less with the Catholic enemy *without* and much more with the 'cankar', the 'serpent' and the monstrous *within*. This is important because as Peter Stallybrass and Allon White point out:

> The logic of identity formation involves distinctive associations and switching between location, class and the body, and these are not imposed *upon* subject-identity from the outside, they are the core terms of an exchange network, an economy of signs, in which individuals, writers and authors are sometimes perplexed agencies.[62]

For Bancroft, the monster does not simply exist on the margins of the Protestant nation: it appears to be actively engaged in a dialogic and potentially metamorphic negotiation with the ideological centre. Moreover, it threatens to reveal that centre to be nothing more than a spurious ideological construct, rather more volatile than its apologists would allow.

Nevertheless, the defeat of the Armada in 1588 along with the systematic and centralised oppression of Catholic practices throughout the 1580s and 1590s marked a retreat, for the time being at least, from the external, from the rhetoric of the universal Catholic enemy. It also had the combined effect of gradually reducing the old religion, as Christopher Haigh puts it, to 'the faith of a small sect.'[63]

Nevertheless, the discourses of internal opposition did not go away. In fact they became, if anything, more widespread. There are two reasons for this. First, Catholicism in early modern England, though never especially visible, went underground. Catholics had to be literally rooted out, from priest holes, secret chapels and, most famously in James I's reign, from underneath the House of Parliament. Secondly, the dampening down of the Catholic threat both internally and externally forced the Protestant gaze inwards. The slow recession of Catholicism as a political threat perhaps allowed Protestants to focus in more detail on the affective ramifications of Protestant theology. As Patrick Collinson has argued:

> The Calvinism which dominated the English church after the mid-sixteenth century retreated from universalism. By stressing and elaborating the doctrine of exclusive election and the correlative principle of covenant, Calvinism tended to restrict the divine plan of salvation to a single nation or people, Israel.[64]

As demonstrated in the discussion of Nashe's *Christs Teares*, the apocalyptic mindset of the period tended towards associating London with Jerusalem and Rome with Babylon. Although the London/Jerusalem association was rarely a comfortable one, what is important in the context of the development of English Calvinism is that the connection was made at all. In addition, the lack of a coherent, identifiable enemy also fractured the Protestant gaze. If Žizek is correct when he writes that 'imaginary identification is always identification *on behalf of a certain gaze in the Other*'[65] then it was a much more nebulous, secret enemy, an opposite within perhaps, who could be found at any time in the recesses of the Protestant interior.

This is a fear that is acutely mirrored in the dramatic literature of the period, especially at the level of language and dramatic structure. Plays such as, for example, John Marston's *The Malcontent* (1604), William Shakespeare's *Othello* (c. 1604), Cyril Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607) or Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (1622) are all deeply concerned with secret locations, peoples or identities. Alison Shell has recently argued that the presence of anti-Catholic rhetoric and imagery in plays such as these can be seen as 'the intaglio of the true church, with the true church defining itself in the process of establishing an other.'[66] But the point about Catholicism is that, despite what the polemicists said, the old religion had 'been there first'. Even if they accepted the assurances of Foxe or Jewel about the historical veracity of Protestantism, at the very least the refusal of Catholic practices to die out once and for all left a nagging doubt as to the ideological stability of the Reformed faith. Unlike Shell, therefore, I see Catholicism in these plays and elsewhere not as a loosely defined Other but as a constitutive element, indeed a dialectical function of the processes of identity formation at this time. Catholicism is dangerous precisely because it can never be adequately 'othered' in the project of Protestant identity formation. Concerned as they are with the literal and metaphorical ramifications of discovery, the rhetoric of these plays engages with the Protestant paranoia of what might be called the opposite within. More than this, these plays are troubled with the terrifying inability to contain this opposite.

The 'cankar' and 'serpent' of Bancroft's sermon is not too far removed, then, from Iago's 'green-ey'd monster which doth mock/ That meat it feeds on.' (III. iii.

170-1)[67] Remaining with the example of *Othello*, it is also worth considering the way in which Shakespeare constructs thought in the play both as something monstrous and as something that can never be *shown*. This is Othello's speech to Iago in Act three after the ancient, echoing his master's words, first plants the seeds of doubt in the Moor's mind:

> Think, my lord? By heavens, he echoes me,
> As if there were some monster in his thought,
> Too hideous to be shown; thou didst mean something;
> I heard thee say but now, thou lik'st not that,
> When Cassio left my wife: what didst not like?
> And when I told thee he was of my counsel,
> In the whole course of wooing, thou criedst "Indeed?"
> And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
> As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
> Some horrible conceit: if thou dost love me,
> Show me thy thought. (III. iii. 110-120)

The relationship between concealment and interiority is extremely suggestive in this speech. Here, the thought that Othello desires to see is, paradoxically, not a thought, but Iago's sordid fantasy life. As Antony Easthope observes, 'Desire is an unconscious search for a lost object, lost not because it is *in front of* desire waiting to be refound but because it is already *behind* desire and producing it in the first place.'[68] To this end Iago is Othello's external opponent, but the ancient's thoughts are his master's internal antagonist. Othello's interior life is dominated by an interiority to which he has no access, namely Iago's. For this reason, Iago's interiority is both *a* fantasy and Othello's fantasy.

The last point is critical for as Žizek notes, 'the moment the subject comes too close to its fantasmatic core, it loses the consistency of its existence.'[69] It is no mistake that Iago's last words - spoken to all the figures on stage but directed to

Othello - 'what you know, you know,/ From this time forth I never will speak word' (V. ii. 304-305) constitute both a denial of interior access and an affirmation that his machinations have acted as Othello's unconscious and have forced him to construct his own fantasy narrative, finding Desdemona false without 'ocular proof'. What this example and those that have preceded it show is that the transmutatory potential of this opposite within was, like Iago, *already always there*. The opposite within is a constitutive given of Protestant discourse, be that discourse historiographical or subjective in focus, and in many respects it acts as the unconscious of these Protestant texts. In this respect, fantasy is both the means of negotiating that subjectivity as well as being that subjectivity's end. In Žizek's words, 'It is never possible for me to fully assume (in the sense of symbolic integration) the fantasmatic kernel of my being.'[70] As will become clearer, when the opposite within returns, it brings with it a profound fragmentation of the Protestant subject.

The Turn Inwards: Casuistry and the Fragmented Self

Around the 1590s as Patrick Collinson has observed, 'there was a profound alteration in religious culture, amounting to the full internalization of the theology of John Calvin...Religion was an act of continual and deliberate submission to the divine will and purpose.'[71] Writers such as William Perkins, Richard Greenham or, to a certain extent, Timothy Bright, charted the movements of this cultural internalisation, providing for the godly (or rather, the would-be godly), a nascent Calvinist psychological schema in their popular works of casuistry. It may be useful

at this point to give a brief outline of how this schema operated.[72] In the first place, a perception or cogitation was believed to originate in the heart, the centre of being in this predominantly Aristotelian schema. Often the cogitation emanated at the behest of the brain. As William Perkins puts it, 'there is a concord and consent betweene the heart and the braine, the thoughts and the affections: the heart affecting nothing but that which the minde conceiueth.'[73] Then, through the presence of an excess of one of the four humours, the conception moved through the body to contaminate the perceptory faculties of the subject. But when a malign perception entered the 'minde', a number of faculties could be affected that were in themselves not a direct consequence of humoural imbalance. There were perhaps two faculties that were considered more important than any other. The first was the fantasy, a faculty that, to repeat the earlier quotation from Timothy Bright, 'forgeth disguised shapes, which giue great terror vnto the heart'.[74] The use of the word 'disguised' is of some interest here: like crypto-Catholics who outwardly professed the new religion but secretly adhered to the old, the inner workings of the fantasy were often masked. Nonetheless, unlike any of the other internal faculties, it was considered possible that a shape forged by the fantasy could materialise externally. But these external visions were external only in so far as they appeared to the subject, for as one contemporary commentator, Antony Nixon, observed, fantasy 'is alwaies occupied in dreaming and doting; yea, euen about those things which neuer haue beene, can, or shall bee'.[75]

The other important faculty that might be affected is the imagination. Perkins noted: 'Now when the minde hath conceiued, imagined, and framed within it selfe

fearefull thoughts; then comes affection and is answerable to imagination. And hence proceed exceeding horrours, feares, and despaires'.[76] The self works against the self, in other words. Similar to the fantasy, this faculty allows the subject to see things internally that are not. Both faculties can be used to explain Macbeth's vision of the dagger in Act two of *Macbeth* (1605). At first, he seems to see the dagger outwith him as a fantastical 'fatal vision'. But then he calls it a 'false creation', an imaginary 'dagger of the mind' (II. i. 38).[77] In this Calvinist understanding of self, both language *and* experience resolutely fail to offer the subject emotional or epistemological certitude. Perhaps what terrifies the writers of these texts most is the failure to achieve a unified *feeling* of fixity within the self.

The most popular English works of early modern casuistry, those by William Perkins, are also those that are most commonly examined by scholars concerned with early modern subjectivity, and rightly so. Nevertheless, there is another more amorphous group of works that appeared around the same time as Perkins' most well known manuals and which were, broadly speaking, concerned with similar issues of interior processes and religious justification. But there is one important difference between these two bodies of writing. Perkins' style has often been noted for its pastoral tone, and to this end his use of a third person narrative voice is an important rhetorical strategy in his works, guiding his readers along the path to possible justification. Yet a small but important sub-group of writers abandoned this approach altogether. They utilised instead both at a literary and an affective level the trope of the interior voice/monologue. Perhaps as a self-conscious development of the popular repentance and casuistry tracts, what these writers present to their

readers is the self-divided Calvinist subject. Is it also too much to conjecture that the writers of these texts borrowed a trick or two from the theatre, that arena of studied polyvocality? For if what Mikhail Bakhtin calls 'Internally polemical discourse'[78] has the power when voiced as theatrical monologue to move its hearers to distraction, how much more rhetorical and affective power might an internal religious monologue read to the self have?

One such text concerned with these questions is Richard Kilby's *The Bvrthen Of a loaden conscience Or The Miserie Of Sinne: Set forth by the confession of a miserable sinner*, printed in 1608 and reprinted many times up to 1630. The most noteworthy feature of Kilby's title is his use of the word 'confession', a term that accurately describes the narrative structure of a text which constructs the narrator as repentant sinner and the reader as beneficent listener. This is noteworthy since the Reformed community viewed the Catholic practice of auricular confession with considerable suspicion. As William Bouwsma points out, 'The burdens of the confessional figured centrally among the original complaints of the Reformers against the papal church'.[79] But away from doctrinal disputation, the confession was a religious and literary trope with a rich heritage. Specifically, it finds its provenance in classical texts such as Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* (1st c AD) and, of course, in Saint Augustine's highly influential *Confessions* (c. 397-8). During the European 'Dark Ages', scholars have suggested that the affective temper of Augustine's work did not appeal to thinkers of this period.[80] Yet after the twelfth century watershed in philosophical and cultural thought, the *Confessions* became the focus of medieval concerns with the interior life. Its popularity waned during and

after the Reformation, no doubt due to the theological associations noted earlier. Indeed, its first early modern translation by Sir Toby Matthew did not appear until 1620. Significantly its next translator (William Watts in 1631) seems to have been moved to take up his pen because he found Matthew's long prefatory introduction 'so arrantly, partially Popish'.[81] An early modern writer like Kilby appropriating the trope of the 'confession' would almost certainly have been acutely attuned to the ideological, theological and literary ramifications of such a choice. Indeed, it is possible to say that what we can see in narrative choices such as these is a shift in focus, concurrent with Collinson's Calvinist internalisation, away from histories of the realm onto histories of the subject. In the case of Kilby's text, he makes a virtue of the oppositional thrust of Protestant discourse, fashioning from it an interior voice that is both accusatory and reformatory.

By using the trope of the confession, Kilby engages simultaneously with the Augustinian presentation of self that is found in the *Confessions* and the Catholic inspired fear of the self being overwritten from within. The hybrid narrative that this produces is intriguing but in order to understand it better, a brief Augustinian excursus is required. In book ten of the *Confessions*, Augustine constructed a guide to interior existence that differed radically from anything that had gone before. Charles Taylor observes that the saint 'was the first to make the first-person standpoint fundamental to our search for truth.'[82] But unlike in modern psychoanalysis, the Augustinian search was not for truth about the self *per se*, but instead for God: 'Let me know you, for you are the God who knows me'.[83] Where Augustinianism does perhaps connect with psychoanalytic models of the self is in

its presentation of the subject in a perpetual state of unsatisfied desire or in Augustinian terms, *caritas*. Augustine declares: 'It is you [God] whom I love and desire, so that I am ashamed of myself and cast myself aside and choose you instead, and I please neither you nor myself except in you.'[84] Crucial here is the idea of the self as something to be overcome. The reason that this is not possible is, according to the saint, due to the affective power of memory. He says of this faculty: 'In it I meet myself as well. I remember myself and *what I have done*... Although it is part of my nature, I cannot understand all that I am.'[85] Memory constitutes the self at the point that memory fails. This apparent contradiction is, in fact, central to the Augustinian understanding of self. For Augustine, memory renders an acute awareness of the presence of sin. Or to put it slightly differently, in encountering sin, the subject is also made aware of the aporia at the 'centre' of memory, an aporia that creates a 'space' for sin to signify. It is in this way that the subject undergoes an internalisation of the absence of God. As Augustine goes on to say, memory 'is in my mind: it is my self. What, then, am I my God?...Where am I to find you? If I find you beyond my memory, it means that I have no memory of you. How, then, am I to find you, if I have no memory of you?'[86] The Augustinian epistemology of self in book ten of the *Confessions* constructs memory, in tandem with sin, as that which animates self, as well as that faculty which renders the subject divided from his maker. It is this epistemology that Kilby appropriates and develops.

Like Augustine, Kilby's narrator begins his account at the originary state of subjective development, childhood. He remembers: 'When I was a child, and first

began to vnderstand, and speake, then was the foundation laide of my miserie.'[87] He then goes on: 'As I grew in age, so I increased in sinne.'[88] While this narrative might be read simply as a variation on a theme of original sin, there is more to it than this. For many early modern Protestants, the status of childhood only served to remind adults of their own fallen state. Indeed, as John Stachniewski has noted, 'It was the puritan view that children (since even elect children were as yet unregenerate) were limbs of Satan.'[89] The reasons for this cultural belief are certainly complex. Yet it is fair to state that the deeply ambivalent patriarchal figures of the period (John Donne's punitive and loving 'three-personed God' for example)[90] reflect a cultural and emotional difficulty that many Protestants had in deciding whether the rod or a kind word would best bring the child out of its sinful state. Effectively what was at issue here was the embodiment of original sin.

For John Calvin, original sin is not an imitation of the first transgression, nor is it caused by a lack of righteousness in man. It is rather a disease that infects the whole of man's being: 'the whole man is overwhelmed – as by a deluge – from head to foot, so that no part of him is immune from sin and all that proceeds from him is to be imputed to sin.'[91] Or as one English Calvinist puts it, 'Sinne is such a canker that it spreadeth secretly.'[92] Again, the rhetoric of something internal overwhelming the self is striking. Sin, as signifier of the human condition actively constitutes man, and children only served to remind many Protestants of this fact. By beginning his text, so to speak, at the beginning, Kilby sets up a number of oppositions central to his narrative strategy. In *explicitly* associating childhood with transgression, loss and division, he actively impels his readers to embrace this dichotomy. Reading the

text becomes almost the same as regarding the unregenerate Protestant child. Moreover, Kilby knew that by calling his text *The Burthen of a Loaden Conscience* he would attract those readers interested in, or perhaps wishing to attain, sanctification. His title is deliberately similar to popular casuistry manuals like Perkins' *The Cases of Conscience* or Greenham's *A Sweet Comfort for an Afflicted Conscience*. Yet what Kilby gives his readers is something very different, something potentially subversive. Significantly, he eschews the conventional narrative form of the casuistry manuals by consistently returning throughout the text to remember either his childhood or his parents. This is no accident. So when the narrator admits later in the text that 'I horriblie dishonoured my father and mother even from my birth untill they were dead',[93] he is admitting to more than conventional filial ingratitude. He is showing by his adoption of the child's subject position within patriarchy that the memory of sin and the sin of memory is the essence of Protestant being. Furthermore in his use of the trope of the 'confession', he also engages *simultaneously* with the Augustinian presentation of self that is found in the *Confessions* and the early modern fear of the self being overwritten from within.

Kilby is not just concerned with making the Protestant subject a child of sin. His aim is more ambitious than this. In fact, throughout the text he fantasises a form of subjectivity in which all the most rebarbative aspects of Calvinist theology and politics coalesce. He goes on: 'I became a recusant, was receiued into the church of Rome by a Seminarie Priest, and did what I could to perswade manie others to leane that waie.'[94] And then a couple of lines later: 'I doe often wonder at my self, how

feruent I was, first a Protestant, then a Roman Catholike, afterwards a Prescian, so that I tooke vpon me to rebuke many.'[95] The connections with the earlier quotation from the Catholic polemicist Thomas Harding are striking. Kilby's fantasy narrator effectively becomes the self-divided Protestant and in so doing invites the reader to embrace his or her opposite within. The varying subject positions that the narrator lays claim to are in themselves a function of this mode of fantasy. As Žizek notes, fantasy 'creates a multitude of 'subject-positions' among which the (observing fantasizing) subject is free to float, to shift his identification from one to another.'[96] This is certainly the case in Kilby's text. But fantasy also does more than this. The awful weight of Augustinian memory in a reformed context ('I doe often wonder at my selfe') along with the Protestant-inspired fear of the opposite-within ('I was first a Protestant, then a Roman Catholike') shows that this form of Protestant subjectivity allows a space for fantasy to flourish, and in doing so, renders that subject open to the return of that which had been repressed.

This last point accounts for the schizophrenic narrative of Kilby's text. One moment the narrator is telling the reader that he 'Neuer kept holy the Sabbath day' or that he 'was once a naughtie servant'.[97] Then, almost in the next breath, he exhorts 'Meddle not with state-matters above your calling', or 'Striue to liue quietly: So shall you escape many troubles, preuent much mischeefe, and inioy many blessings.'[98] These narrative juxtapositions signify a writer at the centre of the Reformed tradition offering a radical critique of the way in which Protestantism produces subjectivity. When the narrator says, 'Desire not to be singular, not to differ from others: for it is a signe of a naughtie spirit'[99], the paradox inherent both

in Kilby's text and in early modern culture at large is foregrounded. It appears that to be singular is also to be forced to face the unconscious of the Protestant self, and the possibility of that self being overwritten by the opposite within. Yet *not* to be singular, to embrace community and conformity, is paradoxically to adopt those very spheres of reality such as politics, ideology and religion, which divide the subject in the first place. Kilby's schizophrenic narrator violates any sense of subjective fixity or symbolic consistency. He fragments, like the narrative into a series of statements and positionalities that ultimately lack both cohesion and coherence.

To develop this disintegration further, it is necessary to return to the question of memory and fantasy. If memory is, according to Sir John Hayward, 'a storehouse of corruption, whereon my wicked fantasy hath always fed'[100] then where exactly does the subject find refuge? The answer in the case of Calvinist subjectivity is that it finds a perverse haven in what might be called interior apocalypticism. If Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* was concerned with outlining the politics of the faithful to the faithful then this sub-genre is concerned with performing the politics of the subject *to* the subject. The literature of the early seventeenth century is filled with often-lurid examples of this apocalyptic self. Writing in 1616, Antony Nixon speaks of those who 'have perswaded themselves to have hornes or Serpents in their bodies, or to be made of glass, and so imagined, that whosoeuer pusht against them would strike them in peeces.'[101] More gruesome than this, Richard Greenham tells of a man who began to 'mislike his calling'. He goes on to recount what happened to this unfortunate:

> He felt on a time a great paine in his leg, and being desirous to goe from his bed to his table for a booke, he could not, his leg remaining sore: then remembering that it was said in the Scripture, if thy foote offend thee cut it off; he straight way laying his leg on a block, and taking a hatchet in his hand, stroake off his leg, not feeling paine, the veines being so torne, hee could not but bleede to death: howbeit he died very penitently.[102]

Both of these examples illustrate what happens when the delicately achieved balance between 'inner' and 'outer' existence implodes, often due to a crisis of faith. The subject ruptures, as it were, ending up in terrible outward violence done to the self. There can be little doubt, therefore, that the internalisation of Calvinist doctrine in the period led to the discovery or recovery of internal demons that left many early modern Protestants deeply fearful, and some unfortunates dead. In fact even the godly, according to Greenham, 'shall be assaulted with euill motions, suspitions, delusions, vaine fantasies and imaginations'.[103]

One of the most baroque examples of this tradition is found in Sir John Hayward's *The Sanctvarie of a troubled Soule* (1604). Again, the narrative voice takes on an ostensibly Augustinian tone. The narrator notes that he had found 'a few sparkes' of Christ's 'image within me' but that 'they were few indeed, and of little force.' He continues to address God: 'Alas, how am I deformed? How am I defiled?...I would faine intreate thy mercie to heale me, but I am loath to offend thy maiesty in beholding me'.[104] For this narrator, the gaze of God is simultaneously desirable and horrifying. Also noticeable here is that, unlike Augustine's reflective narrator who seems to stand both for the saint and for human nature, Hayward's narrator is an accusatory voice and also an egotistical voice. The focus is on the 'I' far more than it is on God. In some respects, God almost becomes a secondary

player in this internal drama: 'Alas, what have *I* done? whom have *I* offended? whom have *I* prouoked?'[105]

This grand egotism, a process that John Stachniewski has identified as central to the Protestant 'process of self-formation'[106] is perhaps best expressed in the narrator's imaginative account of himself at the last judgment. The overwrought rhetoric of internal and external assault is painful in its intensity:

> Who, where, what thing shall then be my comfort, when shall I bee included in these extreme streites? hauing, *on one side*, my sinnes accusing me; *on the other* Iustice threatening me; *aboue*, an angrie Iudge condemning me; *beneath*, hell open, and the boiling furnace readie to deuoure me; *before*, the deuils with bitter scoffes and upbraydings hayling me; *behind*, the Saints and my nearest friends, not onely forsaking me, but reioycing, and praising God for his iustice in my damnation; *within*, my conscience tearing me; *without*, the powers of heauen shaken and dissolued, the elements shiuered in pieces, the whole world flaming, and all damned soules crying and cursing round about me.[107]

In this extraordinary scene, memory plays no part and temporal markers of place and space no longer have any resonance. If the rhetoric concerned with discovering or confronting the opposite within focuses on memory and looking in and back, then these new modes of discourse emphasise what has been called the persecutory imagination,[108] a trope bound up with a strange looking-forward to the predestined moment when the subject learns of his salvation or damnation. The cultural shift that this signals - the gradual establishment of a Calvinist consensus and the internalisation of that doctrine by the early modern subject - finds graphic expression in Hayward's text. More than this, it produces a subjectivity that confronts a fundamental absence, the lack at the centre of the subject with which I began. The narrator says that 'the paine of sense, is farre surmounted (as diuines hold opinion) by another paine, which they terme the paine of losse; and that is to be

depriued, both of the societie and sight of God.'[109] But this is not the end. The narrator goes on to advise the subject: 'Withdraw thy selfe into thy selfe, euen into the most secret closet of thy conscience; shut out all things but onely God, who both filleth and encloseth all things.'[110] With this instruction, then, it seems that the only way to come to terms with the early modern unconscious, the opposite within, is to desire a relationship with the ultimate opposite, the punitive Deity himself. This is surely a type of death drive whereby what the subject desires is not in fact subjective repletion but a perverse relationship with the Law itself. As Žizek writes:

> In contrast to the 'normal' subject, for whom Law functions as the agency of prohibition that regulates (the access to the object of) his desire, for the pervert, the object of desire is the Law itself; the Law is the Ideal he is longing for, he wants to be fully acknowledged by the Law, integrated into its functioning.[111]

To come face to face with God is perhaps the ultimate Christian fantasy, a fantasy that generates the axis of identification and repudiation upon which the Protestant subject is produced. Furthermore, if fantasy is fundamentally a *political* category as Žizek suggests, then perhaps what Hayward's narrator reveals is the political consequences of this aspect of early modern subjectivity. Stressing as Calvinist theologians did the unworthiness of man and the transcendence of God, it is consequently the subject's knowledge of his *distance* from the deity, not his proximity that determines the success of Calvinist internalisation. Fantasy, therefore, can be read as a function of early modern subjectivity that seeks to account for that lack, to negotiate the theological Real within the fallen realm of human transactions. Ultimately, to desire to be 'shut up' with God within the self is

to desire the Law. And the Law is what reveals *as it destroys* the early modern unconscious.

Notes to Chapter Four

[1] Timothy Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie, Containing The Cavses thereof, & reasons of the strange effects it worketh in our mindes and bodies: with the phisicke care, and spirituall consolation for such as haue thereto adioyned an afflicted conscience*, (London: Thomas Vautrollier, 1586) STC 3747, p. 102

[2] I am thinking in particular of the popular application of 'fantasy' to that genre of literature represented by writers like Terry Pratchett and popular fantasy role playing games such as 'Dungeons and Dragons'.

[3] For more on the Galenic body, see Thomas Laqueur's *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 25-29 and more specifically, Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spencer, Shakespeare, Herbert and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), esp. pp. 2-4.

[4] For a good general account of medieval psychological theory, see E. Ruth Harvey's *The Inward Wits: Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Warburg Institute Surveys, Vol. 6 (London: Warburg Institute, 1975). Although more specifically focused, Mary Carruthers' *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) contains much valuable information, esp. pp. 16-79.

[5] Patricia Parker, *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context* (Chicago and London: The Chicago University Press, 1996), p. 245

[6] *Ibid.* p. 231

[7] For Lacan's reworking of the Freudian unconscious, see 'The Freudian Unconscious and Ours', in Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1994), pp. 17-28.

[8] *Ibid.* p. 20

[9] Elizabeth Wright, *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 111

[10] Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, p. 28

[11] Antony Easthope, *Poetry as Discourse* (London and New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 38

[12] Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie*, pp. 103-104

[13] *Ibid.* p. 103

[14] Slavoj Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 126

[15] 'The Fantasy in Cyberspace', in *The Žizek Reader*, ed. Elizabeth Wright and Edmond Wright (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 122

[16] Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 283

[17] *Ibid.* p. 294

[18] Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 48-49

[19] Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and the Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama Under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 4

[20] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 130

[21] Thomas Twyne, *A Short and pithie Discourse, concerning the engendring, tokens, and effects of all Earthquakes in Generall* (London: Richard Johnes, 1580) STC 24413, Sig. A1^{r}

[22] *Ibid.* Sig. B2^{v}

[23] *Ibid.* Sig. B4^{v}

[24] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 105

[25] Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), p. 56

[26] Thomas Nashe, *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem. Whereunto is annexed, a comparative admonition to London* (Menston: The Scholar Press, 1970), Sig. C1^{v}

[27] The first Latin versions of *Acts and Monuments* were published in Strasburg 1554, in Basle in 1559 and 1563, and in London in 1559.

[28] Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 23

[29] *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* in *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 12

[30] John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church*, ed. A. Clarke (London and New York: The London Printing and Publishing Company Ltd., no date), p. 20

[31] *Ibid.* p. 846

[32] *Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1843), p. 105

[33] John Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 46

[34] Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, p. 847

[35] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature*, p. 82.

[36] Robert Weimann, '"*Fabula* and *Historia*": The Crisis of the "Universall Consideration", in *The Unfortunate Traveler*' in *Representing the English Renaissance*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 194

[37] Nashe, *Christ Teares*, Sig. $D4^{r}$

[38] Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 116

[39] See Luke 1: 46-55

[40] Valentin Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, in *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov*, ed. Pam Morris (London and New York: Arnold, 1997), pp. 51-52

[41] *Ibid.* p. 52

[42] The first book of *Acts and Monuments* deals with the persecution and execution of various Christian figures up until the time of Constantine the Great. Book two deals with 'proto-Protestants' such as John Huss, Savonarola and William White, a follower of Wycliffe.

[43] Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, p. 3

[44] Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, p. 131

[45] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundation of Modern Political Thought, Volume Two: The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 81

[46] Richard Bristow, *Demavndes To Bee Proponed Of Catholickes To The Heretickes* (ND) STC 3801, p. 64

[47] Donna B. Hamilton, *Shakespeare and the Politics of Protestant England* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1992), p. 5

[48] John Jewel, *The Workes of The Very Learned And Reuerend Father in God Iohn Iewell not long since Bishop of Salsbvrie. Newly set forth with some amendment of diuers quotations* (London: John Norton, 1611), Sig. A6[r]

[49] Thomas Harding, *An Answere To Maister Ivelles Chalenge* (Antwerp: William Sylvius, 1565) STC 12758, p. 87b

[50] William Fulke, *A Discovery of the Dangerous Rock of the Popish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1848), p. 217

[51] William Perkins, *A Reformed Catholic*, in *The Works of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Breward (Abingdon: The Sutton Courtnay Press, 1970), p. 568

[52] I develop this issue in chapter eight.

[53] Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England*, p. 6

[54] Janet Levarie Smarr, 'Introduction', in *Historical Criticism and the Challenge of Theory*, ed. Janet Smarr (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 5

[55] Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 102

[56] Thomas Harding, *A Detection of Svndrie Fovle Errovrs* (Lovanii: Ioannem Foulerum, 1568) STC 12763, pp. 34b-35b

[57] This is not to say that there were not Protestant polemicists who constructed Catholics as internally divided. As Thomas Beard writes in *A Retractive From The Romish Religion* (London: William Stansby, 1616) STC 1658, Catholicism 'stirs vp contention and strife, and discouers the corruptions of Mans heart, and by opposing against them (as a damme against a streame) makes them to swell and boyle, and burst forth beyond the bounds' (Sig. B2[r]). However, as will become clear in the last chapter, most Protestants spoke of Rome in terms of the anti-Christ, the whore of Babylon and other apocalyptic tropes, which tend to stress the coercive political

authority of Rome. The point still stands that for Catholics, the adoption of Protestantism was caused by a division from the old faith and that division was expressed in the Protestant attempt to unsuccessfully negotiate fifteen hundred years of Catholic history.

[58] Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, p. 13

[59] Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 258

[60] For more on the rise of the Jesuits and the Spanish situation, see *Ibid.* pp. 263-265.

[61] Richard Bancroft, *A Sermon Preached At Paules Cross the 9. Of Februarie, being the first Sunday in the Parleament, Anno. 1588. By Richard Bancroft D. of Divinitie, and Chaplaine to the right Honourable Sir Christopher Hatton Knight L. Chancellor of England* (London: J. Jackson for G. Seton, 1589) STC 1346, Sigs. $B3^{r}$-$B4^{v}$

[62] Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 25

[63] Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 266

[64] Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England*, p. 22

[65] Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 106

[66] Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 26

[67] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. M. R. Ridley, The Arden Shakespeare (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

[68] Antony Easthope, *The Unconscious* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 97

[69] Žizek, 'The Fantasy in Cyberspace', ed. Wright and Wright, p. 119

[70] 'Fantasy as a Political Category' in *Ibid.* p. 97

[71] Patrick Collinson, *English Puritanism* (London: The Chameleon Press, 1983), p. 34

[72] For more on early modern psychological theories, see Katherine Park and Eckhard Kessler's 'The concept of psychology', in *The Cambridge History of*

Renaissance Philosophy, ed. Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 455-463.

[73] William Perkins, *The Whole Treatise Of The Cases Of Conscience* (Cambridge: John Legat, 1606) STC 19669, p. 194

[74] Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie*, p. 103

[75] Antony Nixon, *The Dignitie Of Man, Both In The Perfections Of His Sovle And Bodie* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes for John Barnes, 1616) STC 18585, p. 32

[76] Perkins, *The Whole Treatise Of The Cases Of Conscience*, p. 194

[77] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Kenneth Muir, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Methuen, 1971).

[78] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Doestoevsky's Poetics*, in *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov*, ed. Pam Morris (London and New York: Arnold, 1997), p. 108

[79] William Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 43

[80] As John Benton notes, 'Until the beginning of the twelfth century no reader of the *Confessions* dared or was moved to write a self-examination in the same mode.' John Benton, 'Consciousness of Self and Perceptions of Individuality', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert Benson and Giles Constable with Carol Lanham (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 265

[81] Cited in 'Introduction' to Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, ed. R. S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin, 1961), p. 16

[82] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 133

[83] Augustine, *Confessions*, p. 207

[84] *Ibid.*

[85] *Ibid.* p. 215-216 (my emphasis).

[86] *Ibid.* p. 224.

[87] Richard Kilby, *The Bvrthen Of a loaden conscience: Or The Miserie Of Sinne: Set forth by the confession of a miserable sinner* (Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1608)

STC 14950, p. 1. The text has a sequel called *Hallelu-iah: praise yee the Lord, for the unburdening of a loaden conscience* (Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1608) STC 14955, which does not appear to have been as popular as *The Bvrthen*.

[88] *Ibid.* p. 5

[89] John Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of religious Despair* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 97-98

[90] John Donne, 'Sonnet XIV', in *The New Oxford Book of Seventeenth Century Verse*, ed. Alastair Fowler (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 118

[91] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J.T. McNeil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961), I. 253

[92] Richard Greenham, *The Workes Of The Reverend And Faithfull Servant Of Iesus Christ M. Richard Greenham, Minister and Preacher of the word of God* (London: Felix Kingston, 1599) STC 12312, p. 52

[93] Kilby, *The Bvrthen Of a loaden conscience*, p. 37

[94] *Ibid.* p. 8-9

[95] *Ibid.* p. 9

[96] Žizek, 'Fantasy as a Political Category', ed. Wright and Wright, p. 92

[97] Kilby, *The Bvrthen*, p. 31, p. 41

[98] *Ibid.* p. 40, p. 51

[99] *Ibid.* p. 90

[100] Sir John Hayward, *The Sanctvarie of a troubled Soule* (London: H. Lownes for Cuthbert Burby, 1604) STC 13004, p. 129

[101] Nixon, *The Dignitie Of Man*, p. 34

[102] Greenham, *The Workes Of...M. Richard Greenham*, pp. 5-6

[103] *Ibid.* p. 259

[104] Hayward, *The Sanctvarie of a troubled Soule*, p. 15

[105] *Ibid.* p. 21 (my emphasis)

[106] Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination*, p. 85

[107] Hayward, *The Sanctvarie of a troubled Soule*, p. 22

[108] I take the phrase from the title of John Stachniewski's book *The Persecutory Imagination*, *op. cit.* and p. 330.

[109] Hayward, *The Sanctvarie of a troubled Soule*, p. 38

[110] *Ibid.* p. 124

[111] Žizek, 'Fantasy as a Political Category', ed. Wright and Wright, p. 94

Chapter Five

'*Consummatum est*': Calvinist Exegesis, Mimesis and *Doctor Faustus*

The relationship between Christopher Marlowe and the discourses of later Elizabethan Protestantism remains one of considerable complexity. Two closely connected factors have contributed towards this difficulty. The first is, broadly speaking, cultural. As I have shown, during Elizabeth I's long reign the gradual establishment of a Calvinist consensus in religion facilitated a renewed theological and affective emphasis on the inner life. The Calvinist subject was instructed in popular religious manuals and exhorted from the pulpit to cultivate an acutely inward gaze, a solipsistic turn unremitting in its intensity. Only in doing interior battle with the self could the subject come to terms with the possibility of their election or reprobation. Nonetheless, that subject was also made painfully aware of the accusatory gaze of the divine, a gaze that saw and judged all. In the words of Katherine Maus, 'the inwardness of persons is constituted by the *disparity* between what a limited, fallible human observer can see and what is available to the hypostasised divine observer'.[1] This is what might be called the relational model of early modern selfhood and it is an important cultural paradigm, applicable to the dramatic literature of the period, especially Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (c. 1588-9).

However, and leading on from this, the second difficulty in determining Marlowe's engagement with early modern Protestantism is that many traditional readings of his dramatic achievement have sought to locate his work somewhat outside this cultural mainstream. Originating with Harry Levin's influential study *Christopher Marlowe: The Overreacher*, a significant number of critics have drawn attention to the striving, overreaching hero of Marlovian drama, in particular Faustus, Edward II or Tamburlaine. According to these critics, figures like these are heroic because they reach the boundaries of permitted thought, knowledge and action in the fields of, for example, learning, love, and conquest. But rather than engaging with the limitations of these boundaries or fashioning a new subject position in relation to them, these critics commonly find that the heroic figure transcends these structures by various means. For example, Levin writes that for Faustus at the end of the play, 'Damnation is an unlooked-for way of transcending limits and approaching infinity; it is immortality with a vengeance'.[2] It is noticeable that Levin and the critics who follow him also seek to foreground the individual, but they do so in a very different way from scholars like Maus. Levin's is not the liminal subjectivity produced through an engagement with the discourses of late Elizabethan Protestantism but rather a form of subjectivity associated with post-Enlightenment liberal humanism. The exigencies of religion, politics and social existence are overwritten by the transcendent humanity of the central character and the argumentative strategy of the humanist critic finds its *terminus ad quem* in that individual humanity.

Much work has been done in recent years to dismantle such critical methodologies.[3] But in respect of *Doctor Faustus*, it would be wrong to dismiss readings such as this out of hand. Clearly, such a large group of scholars must be

responding to something potent in the play's makeup. Indeed, I will argue that this appeal by many critics to a freestanding, transcendent hero is an important consequence of *Doctor Faustus*' unusually powerful rhetorical strategies. But I intend to approach this issue from a rather different angle. Forceful though it undoubtedly is, the play's emphasis on the individual should not be taken as an excuse for adopting a similarly solipsistic approach to criticism of Marlowe's dramatic achievement in the play. Indeed, the presentation of interiority in *Doctor Faustus* offers a powerful critique of the relational model of early modern selfhood outlined above. Yet it does so by foregrounding a crucial and neglected aspect of religious discourse, namely the way in which relationality is dealt with in Calvinist theology. In short, where other critics of *Doctor Faustus* might read metaphysical transcendence, I emphasise an urgent and contingent engagement in the play with the exigencies of late sixteenth century Calvinism and in particular with the conception of Christ as mediator, introduced in previous chapters.

Calvin and many of the Protestant Reformers who followed him were less inclined than some medieval theologians had been to draw a sharp exegetical distinction between the events of the Old Testament and those of the New. Rather, the Calvinist tradition understood the New Testament as an unbroken affirmation of what the Old had promised.[4] For this reason, Faustus' exclusive engagement with New Testament texts in his opening soliloquy might be seen as an exegetical move that shifts the focus towards endings, towards divine completion. He says:

> Jerome's bible, Faustus, view it well,
> *Stipendium peccati mors est.* Ha!
> *Stipendium*, etc.
> The reward of sin is death. That's hard.

Si peccasse negamus, fallimur
Et nulla est in nobis veritas.
If we say that we have no sin,
We deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us.
Why then belike we must sin,
And so consequently die.
Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
What doctrine call you this? *Che sera, sera,*
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu! (I. i. 38-50)[5]

What is crucial is that Faustus quotes here incompletely in Latin from two New Testament texts, St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and the First Epistle of St. John. The complete verse of Romans 6: 23 is 'For the wages of sinne is death: but the gift of God *is* eternal life, through Iesus Christ our Lord.' And 1 John 1: 8 which Faustus quotes is followed by two verses that read, 'If we acknowledge our sinnes, he is faithfull and iust, to forgiue vs our sinnes, and to cleanse vs from all vnrighteousnesse. If wee say, we haue not sinned, wee make him a liar, and his word is not in vs.'[6] This omission has the striking effect of bringing together two biblical passages which, taken out of context, offer the sinner little hope of salvation within a predestined metaphysic. In both cases, the doctrinally softer, antithetical alternatives to the harsh message of the verses Faustus quotes are left out. But to what end?

Traditionally, scholars have resorted to what might be termed the 'character flaw argument', seeing this omission as evidence of Faustus' personal/biblical ignorance. For example, Wilbur Sanders finds that Faustus' rejections represent 'the mental history of a shallow mind – a sophist's mind...the investigation is no more than a façade.'[7] Or as G. M. Pinciss has argued more recently: 'Despite all of his advanced studies and perceptive questions, Faustus is completely unaware of his ignorance and blinded by self-conceit.'[8] Both of these readings, similar as they are, present a number of

difficulties. Like Levin, these critics explain away Faustus' flaws by appealing to chinks in the magician's subjective armour. But as A. D. Nuttall has recently pointed out, 'To suggest that Faustus simply forgets the remainder of the quotation is to make Faustus into an ignorant fool...Could we be missing something?'[9] Nuttall's own proposition is that the magician's exegetical error brings together 'certain moral opposites'[10] within a Calvinist context and that Faustus is placed at the centre of these paradoxical forces. While this is certainly true, it is equally important to draw attention to what in exegetical terms Faustus might be trying to occlude in this structurally important speech.

As I remarked earlier, the beginning of the play focuses on endings, a rhetorical turn where according to one scholar, 'every *telos* is realized as a *finis*'.[11] In his opening soliloquy, Faustus first rejects logic:

> Is to dispute well logic's chiefest end?
> Affords this art no greater miracle?
> Then read no more; thou hast attained the end. (I. i. 8-10)

It soon becomes apparent that whatever subject position the magician had previously fashioned for himself is no longer tenable. The apparently unbounded intellectual possibilities available to the early modern humanist scholar seem to have been exhausted. He goes on to renounce medicine: 'The end of physic is our body's health./ Why Faustus, hath thou not attained that end?' (I. i. 17-19) Finally, he rejects law:

> *Exhaereditare filium non potest pater nisi* –
> Such is the subject of the Institute
> And universal body of the Church.
> His study fits a mercenary drudge
> Who aims at nothing but external trash –
> Too servile and illiberal for me. (I. i. 31-36)

The elliptical Latin tag from Justinian's *Institutes*, 'a father cannot disinherit his son unless-', may be read as an ominous portent of what is to come, but again,

scholars have not agreed as to why Faustus systematically rejects all these areas of enquiry.[12] One possible reason is that this opening speech is concerned with the pathological ramifications of the ending as well as its relationship to the magician's construction of a new subject position. Writing about endings, Jacques Derrida has observed that 'Plenitude is the end (the goal)' and this is certainly the case for Faustus in his first soliloquy. 'O, what a world of profit and delight,/ Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,/ Is promised to the studious artisan!' (I. i. 55-57) But, as Derrida also goes on to note, if this plenitude was attained, 'it would be the end (death).'[13] This is exactly the premonitory divination that Faustus finds when he returns to the most important area of intellectual enquiry that he will attempt to disavow, namely theology.

Alan Sinfield has argued that the theological and affective scope of Faustus' exegetical omission in his opening soliloquy is well in keeping with mainstream Calvinism. He writes:

> Faustus' conclusion is bold in form, but it catches correctly the consequences of Reformation theology. Just these passages of Scripture were offered as evidence of election and reprobation...God chooses to save the elect despite their depravity; the others go to hell. Faustus' summary, "What will be, shall be", is doctrinally satisfactory.[14]

Sinfield is correct that the two passages quoted by the magician were associated with the debate surrounding election and reprobation, but it is also important to keep in mind the broader context within which they were utilised. Traditionally, Protestant exegesis of both of the New Testament texts that Faustus quotes from was deeply concerned with what François Wendel has called 'the relation between the redemptive work of Christ and predestination.'[15] This is particularly the case in relation to the biblical commentaries of John Calvin, which were extremely popular in early modern England and would have been available to

Marlowe during his time at Cambridge.[16] The importance of the theological relationship mentioned by Wendel is outlined in the first words of Calvin's *Commentary on 1 John* (1551) when he notes that throughout this text the apostle 'puts forward the life exhibited to us in Christ.'[17] Clearly this is a model of selfhood that places Christ at the centre of the Christian life. Such a strategy is important because Calvin then goes on to write that 'Christ's intercession is the continual application of His death to our salvation.'[18] Both these quotations emphasise that Christ, and more specifically the doctrine of His atonement, are at the forefront of the doctrine of election; the two cannot and should not be viewed in isolation from each other. Interestingly, in *A Case of Conscience* (1592), William Perkins explores in a dialogue between John (*Ioh.*) and Church (Ch.) the ramifications of 1 John: 8-10 for the Calvinist subject. The similarities with Faustus' speech are intriguing, as is its Christological focus:

> Ch. *Some among vs are come to that page, that they say they haue no sinne: and that this estate is a signe of fellowship with God.*
>
> *Ioh.* If we say we haue no sin, we deceiue our selues, [*imagining that to be true which is otherwise*] and truth is not in vs.
>
> Ch. *How then may we know that our sinnes are washed away by Christ*?
>
> *Ioh.* If we confess our sinnes [*namely with an humbled heart desiring pardon*] he is faithfull and iust [*in keeping his promise*,] to forgiue vs our sinnes, and to cleanse vs from all vnrighteousness. If we say [*as they before named do*] we haue not sinned, we make him a lier [sic] [*whose word speakes the contrarie*], and his word is not in vs [*his doctrine hath no place in our harts*].[19]

It is the connection made here between Christology and election that is missed by critics who focus on predestination exclusively and fail to see this doctrine in the play, and elsewhere, in relational terms.[20]

Moreover, if Barker and Hulme are correct when they observe that 'different readings struggle with each other on the site of the text, and all that

can count...as knowledge of a text is achieved through this discursive conflict',[21] then surely it is equally unhelpful to focus only on the gloss that *Faustus* puts on his selective quotations. He quotes incorrectly not because he has a bad memory but because he is offering one reading of these biblical texts in the course of trying to occlude another. Indeed, this scene might well be read as a meditation on the complex ideological and affective processes of early modern internalisation. But the occluded reading is, in cultural and theological terms, the dominant one. In order to bring this reading to light, what must be deinstituted is Faustus' own exegetical appeal to subjective interpretation, an appeal replicated by many critics in their own theoretical readings of the play.

The first text that Faustus quotes from is Romans 6: 23, the first part of which notes that 'the wages of sinne is death'. His comment on this is a rather blunt 'That's hard'. But the exegetical gloss on this text is far wider than this limited reading, as is shown in the classic Protestant reading of John Calvin. At the beginning of his interpretation of this passage Calvin notes that 'Throughout this chapter the apostle maintains that those who imagine that Christ bestows free justification upon us without imparting newness of life shamefully rend Christ asunder.'[22] The last three words are the key here. What Calvin insists upon, justification and new life in Christ, is precisely what Faustus omits in his speech. It is also wryly ironic that in a soliloquy concerned with endings it should be the endings of each biblical quotation that the magician omits. But more than this, Faustus denies the centrality of Christ, rending Him asunder in his reading of the Calvinist doctrine of justification. Significantly, Calvin goes on to warn of the perils of just such a move:

> We ought not to be astonished if, when the flesh has heard of justification by faith, it strikes so often against different obstacles, since every truth that

> is preached of Christ is quite paradoxical to human judgement...[but] *Christ is not to be suppressed* because to many He is a stone of offence and a rock of stumbling. As He will prove to be the destruction of the ungodly, He will likewise be resurrection for the godly.[23]

What is contained in this passage is the contextual and exegetical field that Faustus attempts to airbrush out of his first soliloquy. The magician suppresses any conventional engagement with the saviour, substituting instead subversive parody. It is no mistake that the moment in Act Two when he identifies through parody most strongly with Christ's sacrifice crying '*Consummatum est*' (II. i. 74) is also the point in Christ's life that institutes the historical reality of election and reprobation. At this moment his flesh 'strikes against' him most violently, as the mysterious writing on his arm appears exhorting '*Homo fuge*!' (II. i. 77) It is deeply ironical, then, that the state Faustus aspires to, a subjectivity unbound by the exigencies of Calvinist metaphysics, is attained by denying Christ, the very guarantor of those metaphysics.[24] He cannot fully deny divinity, but the rhetoric of denial, both particular and universal, is that which inscribes Faustus as a pathetically human parody of Christ bound to eternal solipsism.

My contention, therefore, is that scholars of the play like Alan Sinfield underestimate the fact that the doctrine of election and reprobation, as it was most commonly understood in early modern England, was a deeply Christological doctrine. In order to explain more fully the ramifications of this realisation, I want to turn now to Jonathan Dollimore's important discussion of *Doctor Faustus* in his book *Radical Tragedy*. Noting that the play is 'an exploration of subversion through transgression', Dollimore goes on to observe: 'Faustus is constituted by the very limiting structure which he transgresses and his transgression is both despite and because of this fact.'[25] While I agree with this conclusion, I disagree with the way in which Dollimore reaches it. His

position moves beyond that of Sinfield in that he sees a total cultural collapse of the structures that separate God and man as the prime cause of Faustus' stark solipsism. He writes:

> Faustus' pact with the devil, because an act of transgression without hope of liberation, is at once rebellious, masochistic and despairing. The protestant God...demanded of each subject that s/he submit personally and *without mediation*. The modes of power formerly incorporated in mediating institutions and practices now devolve on Him and, to some extent and unintentionally, on His subject: abject before God, the subject takes on a new importance in virtue of just this direct relation.[26]

The difficulty with this reading is the assertion that any kind of mediator, be it the early modern conscience, the institution of the Church or Christ is not important to the Calvinist conception of subjectivity that is interrogated in the play. To adopt this critical position is surely to disregard the fact that the ubiquitous word used by Reformed theologians to describe Christ is the very term that Dollimore rejects: 'mediator'.[27]

In an important development for scholars concerned with the relationship of Protestantism to early modern literature, contemporary theologians have begun to reconsider the importance of Christology within early modern Calvinism. In his seminal study *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination from Calvin to Perkins*, Richard Muller has noted that 'the work of Christ as mediator occupies the center of Calvin's thought' and that 'Protestant orthodoxy did not depart from this emphasis'.[28] For example, Calvin wrote in his popular *Catechisme* (1563) that 'if Christ had not been a partaker of our nature, he had not been a meete Mediatour, to make vs at one with God his Father.'[29] Or as William Perkins notes in *A Golden Chaine* (1591), 'The foundation [of the decree] is Christ Iesus, called from his Father of all eternity, to performe the office of the Mediatour, that in him, all those which should bee

saued might be chosen.'[30] What both of these theologians show is that the idea of Christ as mediator is important because it operates at the level of subjective engagement with this aspect of Calvinist doctrine; it is this element that Dollimore misses in his discussion of *Doctor Faustus*. Nevertheless, in the play this identification is also predicated upon a fundamental lack, what Slavoj Žizek calls a 'radical alienation in the Other.'[31] It is only when the Calvinist mediator, Christ, is internally displaced (or even denied) that the magician achieves the apogee of being, of overreaching subjectivity that has fascinated critics of the play for so long. Ironically, though, it is this dislocation of Christ that spells the end of Calvinist interiority in the play.

Žizek sums up the importance of this realisation when he writes that 'every element in a given ideological field is part of a series of equivalences'.[32] Of course, this relationality also has a structural function. As Žizek goes on to note, this process 'is possible only on condition that a certain signifier – the Lacanian One – 'quilts' the whole field and, by embodying it, effectuates its identity.'[33] In terms of early modern Calvinism and especially within the discursive fields that are invoked during the play, this 'One' is Christ. This explains in part the almost masochistic assertion in Calvin's *Commentary on Romans* (1540) that 'we die in ourselves, that we may live in Him.'[34] This passage calls on the Calvinist subject to internalise the desolation of death as a prerequisite of selfhood. Faustus refuses to do this and in so doing, effectively attempts to efface the Christological context of the theological discourses he has conjured. But to invoke death in this way is also to invoke what is supplementary, namely Christ, and as the play progresses, that supplement comes back to haunt Faustus.

Žizek's work is central to my argument, but that argument can be developed a stage further by drawing on the work of a related thinker, Emmanuel Levinas. In his extraordinary essay 'A Man-God?' Levinas explores the philosophical ramifications of the incarnation in relation to subjectivity. This discussion provides another important framework within which to situate *Doctor Faustus*. 'On the one hand', Levinas writes, 'the problem of the Man-God indicates the idea of a self-inflicted humiliation on the part of the Supreme Being, of a descent of the Creator to the level of the Creature.'[35] This is the idea of the atonement, literally at-one-ment, whereby God 'puts on' mortality in order to save mankind. But on the other hand, as Levinas continues, 'the problem includes...the idea of expiation for others, that is, of a substitution.'[36] For the divine to take on the mantle of man is in many respects, to quote Thomas Nashe in *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem*, a 'debasement'.[37] It is this second problem that provides the focal point of the essay. Levinas goes on to note that 'the idea of substitution...is indispensable to the comprehension of subjectivity.'[38] The important point is that substitution is not just a reality in terms of divine existence. Substitution is also experienced in human terms as that most intimate of senses, consciousness. Paradoxically though, it is the very proximity of consciousness that alienates the subject from itself. As Levinas observes, 'Proximity is not consciousness of proximity. It is not overenlarged consciousness but counterconsciousness, reversing consciousness.'[39] But the most radical aspect of this essay is that in this movement away from consciousness, the subject empties 'itself of *its* being' initiating a form of internal sacrifice that sets in motion the production of divine subjectivity.'[40] Levinas provocatively concludes the essay by stating 'Messianism is that apogee

in Being...which begins in me.'[41] It is the subject who creates the space for God to signify, a movement that is at once generative and apocalyptic. This is especially the case as the magician's diabolically allotted span draws to a close and the pressures of his interiority become unbearable.

Pompa Banerjee has written that 'Faustus is reduced to a caricature, diabolically parodying the divinity he can never attain, emulating Satan who is himself a failed imitation of God.'[42] I concur with this aspect of Banerjee's brilliant article and will return to it shortly. Yet the feeling remains that throughout her essay she underplays some of the more overtly Christological aspects of the play. Faustus' selfhood may well be achieved 'in a subversive coalition with Mephastophilis [sic]' but it is surely going too far to suggest that the magician's subjectivity 'may be said to *originate* in satanic emulation'.[43] If Faustus' subjectivity originates anywhere then it is in his problematic relationship with his putative saviour. Christ and Calvinist theology inscribes Faustus and the Devil as supplements to His originary plenitude. Yet, as Derrida notes, 'The sign is always the supplement of the thing itself.'[44] Christ is the permanently displaced derivation of the play's metaphysic, and the mimetic chain He institutes inscribes the origin of either divine plenitude or human subjectivity as a painfully shifting supplement, one from which the magician cannot extricate himself.

So when Mephistopheles appears to Faustus, it soon becomes clear that whether or not the magician 'confounds hell in Elysium' (I. iii. 61), the focus of the drama shifts from the outward world of learning and advancement to an inward, solipsistic realm where the mimetic function of Christian signs and actions begins to assume a higher importance in the play. In an extraordinary

exchange, Faustus and his tempter share a disquisition on the relationship between hell and interiority:

> MEPHISTOPHELES. [.....]
> Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
> In one self place, for where we are is hell,
> And where hell is must we ever be.
> And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves,
> And every creature shall be purified,
> All places shall be hell that is not heaven.
>
> FAUSTUS. Come, I think hell's a fable.
>
> MEPHISTOPHELES.
> Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.
> (II. i. 124-131)

The ontology of hell presented here appears to be very similar to that found in Calvin's *Commentary on 1 John*.[45] The passage in question runs as follows:

> It is very important to be quite sure that when we have sinned there is a reconciliation with God ready and prepared for us. Otherwise we shall always carry hell about within us. Few consider how miserable and unhappy is a wavering conscience. But in fact, hell reigns where there is no peace with God.[46]

What is most noteworthy about Marlowe's closeness to Calvin's work is the avowedly supplementary discursive field it invokes. In the first place, Calvin comments relatively infrequently on hell in any extended way, either in his commentaries or in the *Institutes*. Moreover, he remained somewhat outside the Reformed mainstream by preferring to stress the metaphorical basis of any biblical references to hell.[47] Marlowe made much of this difference, as John Milton was to do in *Paradise Lost* (1667).[48] But more interestingly, Calvin is commenting in the above quotation on 1 John 1: 9, 'If we acknowledge our sinnes, he is faithfull and iust, to forgiue vs our sinnes, and to cleanse vs from all vnrighteousness.' Crucially, this is the biblical verse that Faustus neglects to quote in his Act One soliloquy when he recites only 1 John 1: 8 ('*Si peccasse*

negamus, fallimur/ Et nulla est in nobis veritas'). By abjuring 1 John 1: 9, Faustus not only offers a partial reading of the biblical text's message, but he also commits himself to the individual hell that Mephistopheles sets before him. By having Mephistopheles describe a Calvinist hell from Calvin's own exegesis of the very passage that Faustus selectively ignores, both text and sub-text are set against Faustus in a movement that will lead to his destruction.[49] In this way, Calvin's exegesis of 1 John 1: 9 becomes rather more than a straightforward borrowing. It can also be read as an example of a writer utilising his intertextual sources interactively, so to speak, in a way that replicates the cultural conditions of an Elizabethan subject's internalisation of Calvinist doctrine.

Another important aspect of Mephistopheles' vision of the underworld is that it points to an underlying connection made in Protestant daemonology between devilish subjectivity and mimesis. In his *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608), William Perkins says this of the Devil: 'Now that hee might shewe forth his hatred and malice, he takes vpon him to imitate God, & to counterfeit his dealings with his Church.'[50] In this mimetic schema, the Devil is a threat precisely because of his *lack* of distinctness. This is why Perkins warns in another text that 'we must bee as unlike the Devill as may be'.[51] Devilish subjectivity is a parody of divine subjectivity. But it is terrible not because the Devil is, as Banerjee puts it, 'the great demonic Other'[52] of the age, as this implies a complete metaphysical and affective separation of God and the Devil that is not really congruent within the play's Calvinistic framework. Rather, devilish subjectivity is terrible because the demon must suffer the pain of his unlikeness to Christ while at the same time desiring to be like Christ and to be reconstituted within the *corpus mysticum*.[53] When Mephistopheles says that

Faustus' demands 'strike terror to my fainting soul' (I. iii. 84), it seems more likely that the intention is to explore this mimetic order from the inside out, that is to say, from the position of the devilish subject, or would-be devilish subject. Interestingly this intention first appears as parody. At his first appearance, Faustus asks Mephistopheles to 'return an old Franciscan friar', noting that 'That holy shape becomes a devil best.' (I. iii. 26-27) Apart from making use of a popular if somewhat cheap anti-Catholic gag, Mephistopheles' ironic religious apparel underlines that it is not his distance from the Godhead that is so terrible, but his very proximity. So when Faustus claims, 'Had I as many souls as there be stars,/ I'd give them all for Mephistopheles' (I. iii. 104-5), he is doing more than simply identifying with the Devil. He is identifying with Mephistopheles' subject-position and mimicking the Devil's paradoxical desire for repletion within this mimetic order. Mephistopheles' warning that 'this is hell nor am I out of it' (I. iii. 78) is more than a portent of what is to come; it is a warning to the magician. Separation from the saviour is not nearly as terrible as the desire for a dimly recalled plenitude.

Perkins writes that when a witch makes a pact with the Devil, 'he gives to the deuill for the present, either his owne handwriting, or some part of his blood, as a pledge and earnest penny to bind the bargaine.'[54] Faustus gives both, conflating signifier and signified within his own material body. Signing in his own blood, Faustus says in a daring parody of Christ's dying words '*Consummatum est.* This bill is ended,/ And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.' (II. i. 74-75) This is clearly a wicked, transgressive act. But Faustus is not, as both Pompa Banerjee and Alan Sinfield argue, 'wicked because he is damned.'[55] As I demonstrated in chapter three, there is no way that he could

definitively know this according to most mainstream Protestant thinkers. Rather, the decree is always deferred. As François Wendel notes, it is not possible to 'clearly distinguish the righteous from the reprobate'.[56] Or as Martha Rozett puts it, knowledge of election or reprobation 'cannot be externally validated or confirmed.'[57] For this reason, our attention is surely being drawn elsewhere.

According to Calvin, Christ's last words were spoken in order to show that 'by his own sacrifice all that pertained to our salvation has been accomplished and fulfilled.'[58] Christ's sacrifice redeems man from sin and death because He was able ultimately to transcend death through His divine and human natures. This is a large part of what Protestant theologians meant when they referred to Christ as the mediator. Yet by imitating Christ at the moment of His death, what Faustus does is to assume the role of devilish parodist prepared for him by Mephistopheles. In this way he effectuates his own spiritual death. But as Calvin argues in his *Commentary on Romans*, Paul specifically exhorts man *not* to imitate Christ's death because 'Our death...is not the same as Christ's but similar to it, for we are to notice the analogy [*analogia*] between the death of this life and our spiritual renewal.'[59] For analogy, read supplement. Denied to Faustus is Calvin's 'spiritual engrafting' to Christ and what opens up before him is a vision of unremitting solecism.

Now the extent of Faustus' actions becomes clear. His body becomes a marker of his terrible offence as he asks:

> But what is this inscription on mine arm?
> '*Homo fuge*!' Whither should I fly?
> If unto God, he'll throw thee down to hell.-
> My senses are deceived; here's nothing writ.-
> I see it plain. Here in this place is writ
> '*Homo fuge*!' Yet shall not Faustus fly. (II. i. 76-81)

Faustus has staked a claim through parodic representation to imitate Christ at the moment of His death. The writing on Faustus' body exhorts him to fly from this delusion, yet he has negotiated a position where, of necessity, the only entity he can fly to *is* himself. Jacques Derrida has shown that 'Writing is dangerous from the moment that representation there claims to be presence and the sign of the thing itself.'[60] As such, the writing on his arm becomes a representation of an Other which is, paradoxically, himself. The repudiatory inscription on his arm constantly defers the plenitude of the magician's desired subjectivity by refusing to allow him to fully centre the Other in himself as Christ does via his *homoousia*. This is central for as Žizek points out, 'the subject emerges via the externalisation of the most intimate kernel of his being (his fundamental fantasy)'.[61] In other words, the writing on Faustus' body becomes an externalisation of the cultural and sublimated internal fantasy of Christ as mediator and of the desire for that unattainable subject position, pinning the magician on an axis between transcendence and contingency, between being a man and being a God.

It is clear that the broader issue I am exploring complicates the oft-repeated critical view that the Reformation brought in its wake a wholesale cultural renunciation of the *imitatio Christi*. But before going on to look at the end of *Doctor Faustus*, it might be useful to offer a little more in the way of cultural evidence for my claims so far. One way of doing this is to isolate two very different readings of Christ which are central to the tradition that I am drawing attention to. The first is from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and reads: 'put yee on the Lord IESUS CHRIST, and take no thought for the flesh, to *fulfill* the lust of it.'[62] Contrasted with this traditional Pauline ideal of Christian

identification and imitation is a second quotation which comes from *A Declaration Of The True Manner of knowing Christ Crucified* (1596) by William Perkins. It reads: '*Christ crucified* must be used of vs as a myrrour or looking glass, in which we may fully take a viewe of our wretchednesse and misery, and what wee are by nature.'[63] These two very different approaches to subjective identification with Christ throw into relief the pathology of a rather problematic theological and cultural movement.

In the medieval period, the affective (and often erotic) temper of much mainstream, Franciscan inspired theology actively encouraged the subject to identify with and, in Pauline terms, to 'put on' Christ.[64] In literary discourse, this often meant filling in some of the narrative gaps in Christ's life by creating alternative narratives for Him.[65] But the Reformation changed all this. Foregrounding, as it undoubtedly did, the individual's relationship with the divine, the way in which a number of the Reformers privileged the personal drama of salvation has led many critics to conclude that early modern conceptions of subjectivity became, as Stephen Greenblatt puts it, 'separated from the imitation of Christ'.[66] In short, Christ is commonly said to assume, at best, a marginal position in relation to the construction of the early modern self. Clearly the issue is not as straightforward as this, particularly in respect of the drama of the period. This is not to turn the plays into religious allegories, but it is to recuperate a set of important discourses at work in these texts that is often glossed over. In the words of Debora Shuger:

> Calvinist anthropology...mirrors (and may derive from) its Christology ...if the various Reformed discourses of experiential inwardness... duplicate the passion narratives, they also suppress them; they suppress the appalling sacrificial subtext of the Calvinist subject.[67]

This Calvinist pathology of masochistic Christological identification is expressed well by William Perkins:

> if thou wouldest be revived to euerlasting life, thou must by faith as it were set thy selfe vpon the crosse of Christ, and applie thy hands to his hands, thy feete to his feete, and thy sinnefull heart to his bleeding heart, and content not thy selfe with Thomas to put thy finger into his side, but euen dive and plunge thy selfe wholly both bodie and soule into the woundes and bloode of Christ.[68]

This form of Christian identification with the saviour is rather different from Calvin's more restrained approach. Here it might even be possible to glimpse a faultline between the Genevan Reformer and his foremost English follower. Whereas Calvin was more likely to accentuate a Pauline Christology in line with Romans 13: 14 and associated with subjective privation, English Calvinists like Perkins seemed more willing to bring to light the suppressed 'sacrificial subtext' of this Christology.[69] But they did not do this simply by repudiating Calvin's Pauline emphasis. Rather, they set masochistic identification in stark contrast to Pauline privation in a way that is dialectical in function. And the locus of this dialectic is the interior of the Calvinist subject.

To put it another way, subjective privation and masochistic identification with Christ are not necessarily opposing Christological positions in the English Protestant tradition and many early modern thinkers, including dramatists such as Marlowe, battled with the ramifications of this subjective dialectic. Such a reading also demands a reconsideration of the ways in which an intellectual movement like Christology is periodised. For example, Richard Halpern had noted that the medieval mode of imitation aimed 'asymptotically it is true – at the ideal of perfect imitation, so that the individual subject was ultimately absorbed or cancelled by Christ as ideological model.' In contrast, he argues, early modern imitation 'posited and even encouraged an irreducible difference

between model and copy, and thereby tended to redistribute some cultural authority to the latter.'[70] But perhaps the difference between early modern mimetic model and copy is not as marked as Halpern perceives it to be. It is not that there is no divergence between medieval and early modern Christology, far from it. But it is possible that in England at least, the adherence to older, medieval paradigms of Christological selfhood is more marked than is often allowed. As the earlier, somewhat 'medieval' quotation from Perkins emphasises and as Faustus' story shows, the 'difference between model and copy' did not necessarily prevent the subject from trying to breach the supposedly 'irreducible' divide. Certainly what stops the subject making this leap is Christ's divinity that in early modern Calvinism sets in motion the supplementary logic that I have been invoking. Nonetheless, the *idea* of the imitation of Christ must have held for many, real affective currency despite the divisions that the Reformation brought with it. Therefore, the attempted appropriation of Christological mimesis by the subject in early modern culture can be read as a pathological drive towards a masochistic 'union' with the deity that the subject knows s/he will not achieve.[71] Yet this subjectivity is constituted by and through the internalisation and expression of that very drive. In Faustus' case it is a drive that points ultimately towards death.

It is not until the final act of the drama that the ramifications of this diabolic inscape are made clear. The magician is given the opportunity to repent by the Old Man who tells him that 'mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet' is necessary for salvation and, importantly, that Christ's 'blood alone must wash away thy guilt.' (V. i. 46-7) But Faustus cannot bring himself to beg for Christ's mercy because he can only identify with the parodic subject position that he has

negotiated. This is evinced in his 'despair', which as I noted in chapter three is understood by Protestants as an utterly subjective theological state that only comes about when the individual loses sight of God: 'Damned art thou, Faustus, damned! Despair and die!' (V. i. 49) The end is upon the magician and in a speech where time seems to contract towards the solipsism Mephistopheles outlined in Act One, Faustus cries:

> The stars move still; time runs; the clock will strike
> The devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.
> O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?
> See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
> One drop would save my soul, half a drop. Ah, my Christ!
> (V. ii. 75-79)

These extraordinary lines are perhaps the cruellest in what is a cruel play. Whereas Christ was able to transcend death because of His *homoousia*, all that constitutes Faustus is Faustus. It is therefore he that pulls himself down. He does not see Christ, only an image, or in Perkins' words a 'myrrour' of his own terrible interiority. His Christ is himself. This is the final and grandest parody of the discourse of mediation and the supplementary logic it implements. Faustus is caught between himself and God but his entry into death will not save him only destroy him. Yet even at this desperately late stage he does not abjure imitation. This is perhaps the most daring moment of all. Faustus cries 'My God, my God, look not so fierce on me' (V. ii. 120) replicating what Christ says in the Gospel before he says '*Consummatum est.*'[72] Why then does the magician continue to imitate Christ right up to the moment of his death? He does so, surely, because imitation is a mode of interior and, ultimately, ideological creation. But it is not Christ who must die in order to save Faustus; it is Faustus who must perish in order to create Christ. In the words of Emmanuel Levinas:

> The infinite is unassimilable otherness, absolute difference in relation to everything that can be shown, symbolized, announced and recalled – in relation to everything that is presented and represented, and hence "contemporised" with the finite and the same.[73]

Faustus and Christ are one and the same and yet they are profoundly not. The magician has now entered a symbolic field within which he can no longer be symbolised. Indeed, his tragedy could also be read as an instance of a powerful epochal trauma for which he stands as sacrificial scapegoat. This is why his last words 'Ah, Mephistopheles' (V. ii. 123) are so necessary. Faustus' death cruelly illustrates that *un*likeness to Christ is the most radical conclusion of Reformed Christology. For at the moment of the magician's death, the Devil seems less of a representation than Christ does.

Notes to Chapter Five

[1] Katherine Maus, *Inwardness and the Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 11

[2] Harry Levin, *Christopher Marlowe: The Overreacher* (London: Faber and Faber, 1953), p. 153

[3] For a concise, recent overview of these debates, see Stephen Cohen's essay '"(Post)modern Elizabeth": Gender, politics, and the emergence of modern subjectivity', in *Shakespeare and Modernity: Early Modern to Millennium*, ed. Hugh Grady (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 20-39.

[4] See David Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 168, p. 210

[5] All references are to the A text. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus, A – and B – Texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)

[6] All references are to *The Geneva Bible* (London: Christopher Barker, 1599)

[7] Wilbur Sanders, *The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 224-225

[8] G. M. Pinciss, 'Marlowe's Cambridge Years and the Writing of *Doctor Faustus*'. *SEL*, 33, 1993, p. 256

[9] A. D. Nuttall, *The Alternative Trinity: Gnostic Heresy in Marlowe, Milton and Blake* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 37

[10] *Ibid.* p. 38

[11] Michael Neil, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 208

[12] See Justinian's *Institutes*, trans. Peter Birks and Grant McLeod (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), II. xiii, p. 73

[13] Jacques Derrida, '"Afterword": Towards an Ethic of Discussion', in *Limited Inc.*, trans. Samuel Weber (Evanston: Northwest University Press, 1998), p. 129

[14] Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 117

[15] François Wendel, *Calvin: The Origin and Development of his Religious Thought*, trans. Philip Mairet (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1973), p. 229

[16] G. M. Pinciss has shown that Marlowe was in all probability exposed to the writings of Calvin and contemporary Calvinists during his time at Corpus Christi College. The concerns of theologians like Calvin and William Perkins are comparable to those discussed in the play, as Pinciss also notes. Pinciss, *op. cit.* pp. 252-255.

[17] John Calvin, *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries John 11-21 & 1 John*, trans. T. H. L. Parker (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), p. 233

[18] *Ibid.* p. 243

[19] William Perkins, *A Case of Conscience* (London: John Legat, 1595) STC 19667, pp. 2-3

[20] A. D. Nuttall has asked, 'Does *Marlowe's* Dr. Faustus ever equate himself with Christ?' He goes on to answer, 'Yes he does...The play itself is theological, through and through. Of course Faustus offers us a hideously distorted version of Christ's assertion. But with that distortion comes a frightening echo. For Christ on the cross, likewise, was paying a debt, had made a pact with the Devil. The violence is, so to speak, a deeply structured violence.' Nuttall, *op. cit.* p. 45. I owe much to Nuttall's argument, here and elsewhere.

[21] Francis Barker and Peter Hulme, '"Nymphs and reapers heavily vanish": the discursive con-texts of *The Tempest*', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 194

[22] John Calvin, *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries: Romans and Thessalonians*, trans. Ross Mackenzie (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), p. 121

[23] *Ibid.* (my emphasis)

[24] This irony probably originates with Calvin. For despite the metaphorical/ supplementary logic of the mediator, Calvin insists in the *Institutes* (pp. 1393-1394) that Christ's physical body would be contained in heaven until the last judgement. Nonetheless, in so far as Faustus can be seen as a parody of Christ, it seems reasonable to suppose that the magician's immolation operates according to the dialectic of divine sacrifice and atonement. Indeed, at the end of the B text of the play, we are told that 'Faustus' limbs [are],/ All torn asunder by the hand of death', (V. iii. 6-7). The focus on terrible corporeal retribution completes the parodic circle: Christ's body as the locus of salvation is contrasted with Faustus' body as the site of transgression.

[25] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, 2nd edition (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 109, p. 110

[26] *Ibid.* p. 114 (my emphasis)

[27] See the entry for 'Mediator' in Richard Muller's *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Terms Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Michigan: Baker Books, 1985), pp. 188. The basis of this doctrine is biblical. See Paul's First Epistle to Timothy 2: 5-6. Calvin's exegesis of this passage in his *Commentary on the First and Second Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy*, trans. T. A. Smail (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), pp. 210-212, is particularly illuminating.

[28] Richard Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination from Calvin to Perkins* (North Carolina: The Labyrinth Press, 1986), p. 10

[29] John Calvin, *The Catechism, or manner to teach Children the Christian Religion* (London: Widow Orwin, 1594) STC 4387, Sig. $B1^{v}$

[30] William Perkins, *A Golden Chaine* (London: Edward Alde, 1592) STC 19660, Sig. $D3^{v}$

[31] Slavoj Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 122

[32] *Ibid.* p. 88

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] Calvin, *New Testament Commentaries: Romans and Thessalonians*, p. 124

[35] Emmanuel Levinas, 'A Man-God?', in *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (London: The Athlone Press, 1998), p. 53

[36] *Ibid.* p. 53-54

[37] Thomas Nashe, *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem. Whereunto is annexed, a comparative admonition to London* (London: James Roberts, 1593), sig. $D4^{r}$

[38] Levinas, 'A Man-God?', p. 54

[39] *Ibid.* p. 58

[40] *Ibid.* p. 59

[41] *Ibid.* p. 60

[42] Pompa Banerjee, '"I Mephastophilis": Self, Other and Demonic Parody in *Doctor Faustus*'. *Christianity and Literature*, 42, 1993, p. 225

[43] *Ibid.* (my emphasis)

[44] Jacques Derrida, "...That Dangerous Supplement...", in *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 83

[45] For more on this borrowing, see my note 'Calvinist Conceptions of Hell in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*', *Notes and Queries*, 245, 2000, pp. 430-432

[46] Calvin, *New Testament Commentaries: John 11-21 & 1 John*, p. 240

[47] See Philip C. Almond, *Heaven and Hell in Enlightenment England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 92

[48] See Satan/Milton's reworking of Faustus/Marlowe/Calvin in book four of *Paradise Lost*:

> Me miserable! Which way shall I fly
> Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
> Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
> IV. 73-75.

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Penguin, 1989)

[49] The idea that the devil might employ Scripture for his own purposes was itself scriptural (see Matthew 4: 6). But it was also part of a much larger discursive field in the early modern period. In the drama, see Antonio's comment on Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*: 'The devil can cite scripture for his own purpose.' William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and others (New York and London: Norton, 1997) I. iii. 94. The idea is also widespread in theological writings. See, for example, Calvin's *28th Sermon on the 1st Epistle to Timothie* that states: 'But see howe the diuell transformeth him selfe and putteth on a vizzard, and disguiseth him selfe to make men beleue that he speaketh in Gods name: to be short, he playeth the Ape, and counterfeteth what so euer God hath ordained [sic] for our saluation.' John Calvin, *Sermons of M. John Caluin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus. Translated out of French into English by L.T.* (London: G. Bishop, 1579), p. 343. Or as William Perkins notes, 'the devil hath a great desire to imitate God in his glorious works so that he may disgrace the works of God.' William Perkins, *The Combat Betweene Christ and the Devill displayed: Or A Commentarie Upon The Temptations of Christ* (London: John Haviland, 1631), p. 397.

[50] William Perkins, *A Discovrse Of The Damned Art Of Witchcraft; So Farre forth as it is reuealed in the Scriptures, and manifest by true experience* (Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1618), p. 615

[51] Perkins, *The Combat Betweene Christ and the Devill*, p. 399

[52] Banerjee, '"I Mephastophilis": Self, Other and Demonic Parody', p. 221

[53] I develop this issue further in relation to witchcraft and inversion in chapter

seven.

[54] Perkins, *A Discovrse Of The Damned Art Of Witchcraft*, p. 615

[55] Alan Sinfield, *Literature in Protestant England 1560-1660* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1983), p. 14 and Banerjee, '"I Mephastophilis": Self, Other and Demonic Parody', p. 234

[56] Wendel, *Calvin: The Origin and Development*, p. 298

[57] Martha Rozett, *The Doctrine of Election and the Emergence of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 44

[58] Calvin, *Institutes*, II. 1432

[59] Calvin, *New Testament Commentaries: Romans and Thessalonians*, p. 124

[60] Derrida, '...That Dangerous Supplement...', p. 83

[61] Slavoj Žizek, *The Indivisible Remainder: An Essay on Schelling and Related Matters* (London and New York: Verso, 1996), p. 36

[62] Romans 13: 14

[63] William Perkins, *A Declaration Of The True Manner of knowing Christ Crucified*, (Cambridge: John Legate, 1596) STC 19685, p. 23

[64] See Marion Glasscoe, *English Medieval Mystics: Games of Faith* (London and New York: Longman, 1993), pp. 32-37 and more generally Rosemary Woolf's study *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968). Of course, medieval Christology was far from being a set of unified discourses. See chapters one and two of David Aers and Lynn Staley's book *The Powers of the Holy: Religion, Politics and Gender in Late Medieval Culture* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), pp. 15-76. Here, David Aers offers an alternative to a dominant critical paradigm in medieval studies that sees Christ as an eroticised and feminised figure by focussing on alternative Lollard depictions of Christ as a locus for political change.

[65] A beautiful example of this can be found in Jacaponi Da Todi's (c.1230-1306) Franciscan inspired poem *Donna del Paradiso*. See also Sarah Beckwith's important study *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), esp. pp.45-77

[66] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 3

[67] Debora Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice and Subjectivity* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1994), p. 90

[68] Perkins, *A Declaration Of The True Manner*, p. 3

[69] One text that may have influenced Perkins is Martin Luther's *Meditation on Christ's Passion* (1519). To take one example, Luther writes:

For every nail that pierces Christ, more than one hundred thousand should in justice pierce you, yes, they should prick you forever and ever more painfully! When Christ is tortured by nails penetrating his hands and feet, you should eternally suffer the pain of even more cruel nails, which will in truth be the lot of those who do not avail themselves of Christ's passion. This earnest mirror. Christ, will not lie or trifle, and whatever it points out will come to pass in true measure.

Martin Luther, *A Meditation on Christ's Passion*, in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 167

[70] Richard Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 44

[71] To this end, note the convoluted logic of Calvin's *Commentary on 1 John* where he says that John 'calls us also to Christ, to imitate him. Yet he does not simply exhort us to imitation of Christ, but, from the union we have with Him, proves we should be like Him. He says that a likeness in life and actions will prove that we abide in Christ.' Calvin, *1 John* p. 247. Even the faith of the elect is mimetically explained by Calvin as 'the copie or counterpane which God deliuereth vs of the original register of our adoption.' John Calvin, *Chap. 1 Sermon 3* in *The Sermons of M. Iohn Calvin vpon the Epistle of S. Paule to the Ephesians*, trans. Arthur Golding (London: Lucas Harison and George Byshop, 1577) STC 4448, Fol. 21[r]

[72] See Mark 15: 34. Of course, such a reading requires a conflation of Matthew and Mark's account of Jesus' death with that of John.

[73] Levinas, 'A Man-God?', p. 57

Chapter Six

'Am I far enough from myself?' Avenging Lineage in *The Revenger's Tragedy*

Western Christianity is a religion based upon division, loss and absence. As I have demonstrated, it is also at a deep-rooted, structural level predicated upon a division from an authoritative father figure. From the primal scene in the Garden of Eden, to Abraham's promise of filial sacrifice, to King David's exquisite laments, there is an important form of Christian subjectivity that is underwritten by a traumatic hiatus between father and son. This hiatus is made all the more painful because repletion, (re)union with the father can never usually be attained within the span of a Christian's mortal existence. It is only after death that the trauma of that split is overcome. Indeed, the sole way that this alliance occurs in orthodox Western Christianity is via the expiatory sacrifice of the mediator, Christ, whose death unites the temporal and the spiritual realms. More importantly than this, for Protestants, Christ's death, prefigured in the three Old Testament examples above, marries the often-competing exegetical imperatives of the Old Law and the New. This is a crucial factor in the development of Christian subjectivity in the West during the early modern period. A central aspect of this development is Protestantism's legalistic focus on the covenant between man and God outlined in various Old Testament injunctions including, most importantly, the Ten Commandments. Protestant theologians were

sensitive to the fact that in textual terms, these injunctions are somewhat inconsistent in the way in which the Bible presents them. For example, Martin Luther asks, 'why does Moses mix up his laws in such a disordered way? Why does he not put the temporal laws together in one group and the spiritual laws in another'.[1] The Reformer's answer to this question is interesting. Moses, he notes, 'writes as the situation demands, so that his book is a picture and illustration of governing and of living... the writing of Moses represents a heterogeneous mixture.'[2] For Luther, the laws of the patriarch Moses are to be understood less as immutable theological monuments and more as a set of discourses produced in relation to contingent social demands and dictates. By refusing to see these discourses as monolithic sanctions, Luther's reading, potentially at least, allows the subject the space to negotiate his or her relationship with the law of the father.

Nevertheless, the difficulty with the Protestant focus on the contingent production of Old Testament dictates is that theologians similarly could not avoid emphasising the universality of the covenant as it was bequeathed to them and hence the applicability of these laws to their own times. This problem manifested itself in an intriguing cultural tension. On the one hand Christianity has always depended upon the memorialising function of its central texts, buildings and rituals as a means of social cohesion. The obvious example is the symbolic function of the Church. When a community comes together to celebrate a mass, for example, they are bound together in an act of worship whose primary objective is to acknowledge the ritual function and historical significance of the host. That ritual also has a cohesive purpose. First, the community of the faithful re-enact the last supper, aligning themselves in history

with the disciples. Secondly they acknowledge through the ritual that the host signifies the expiatory sacrifice of Christ, an act whose significance will hopefully be extended to the community celebrating the mass. Membership of the society of believers is in this way contingent upon individuals acknowledging the precise signifying function of these various social symbols. On the other hand, Protestants in the sixteenth century had to effectively generate new meanings of their own by renegotiating and rereading these memorials in opposition to the Roman Church. In order, therefore, to explore the tension between tradition and self-definition, in this chapter I want to argue that Protestant theologians turned to the metaphor of the father and reinvigorated it with new cultural and social resonances. A particularly important example of this rewriting can be found in John Calvin's *Institutes*. Commenting on the part of the second commandment that refers to visiting 'the iniquity of the fathers upon the children', Calvin observes:

> it is to be understood that the Lord's righteous curse weighs not only upon the wicked man's head but also upon his whole family. Where the curse lies, what else can be expected but that the father, shorn of the Spirit of God, will live most disgracefully? Or that the son, forsaken by the Lord on account of the father's iniquity, will follow the same ruinous path? Finally, that the grandson and great-grandson, the accursed offspring of detestable men, will rush headlong after them?[3]

For Calvin, lineage and especially masculine lineage, is to be understood as a curse. Of course in theological terms this Old Testament curse is counterbalanced by the promise of the New Testament. However, as befits the patriarchal strictures and structures of the Old Testament, the masculine inheritance is a distinctly mixed blessing. The law of the ever-distant father is 'no brief and simple revenge, but one that will extend to the children, the grandchildren, and the great-grandchildren, who obviously become imitators of

their fathers' impiety.'[4] According to Calvin, the subject is caught between the memory of a defining imperative (the curse) that he is forced to imitate and the reality of facing the arbiter, the patriarchal figure of authority (in this case God). More than Luther, Calvin restates the tension between tradition and self-definition in terms of the individual subject's relation to an authoritative father figure. This characterisation was to prove extremely influential in the early modern period.

Mitchell Greenberg has offered a cogent analysis of the place of the father figure in early modern culture. He writes:

> In patriarchal societies, such as those in which monotheism as a religion of the father was born and as it was being reaffirmed in seventeenth-century Europe, the blind spot of ideology is any direct attack upon the father in any of his legal, theological, or merely familial avatars. This does not mean that the intense feelings these social organizations carry with them simply do not exist. Rather, the more intense the attachments, the more intense the love that is demanded, the more intense the feelings of aggressivity and of guilt that must be repressed or sublimated into acceptable outlets.[5]

One of these 'outlets' was revenge tragedy, a dramatic genre that offered writers a particularly powerful set of narrative structures within which to explore these peculiarly masculine relationships. While it often adheres powerfully to Greenberg's model, revenge tragedy also transgresses it by constantly articulating new and different ways in which the operations and structure of revenge might be regarded. Effectively, these plays offered early modern audiences a version of cultural catharsis. For while much of the signifying force of these plays arises as a result of the cultural ubiquity of early modern religion, these plays often utilised the signifying potential of the sacred by translating it into a 'secular' signifying realm. As André Green observes:

> One cannot forget that the sacred, which is the implicit aim of the tragic, is not...a primary reference, or an ultimate one...but is itself the memory, the recall of an act that it commemorates, the murder of the primal father. The

> sacred as the fundamental expression of the religious is inseparable from the prohibition that establishes a particular category of objects to which sexual reverence is due because in them the presence of the dead man is signified. The dead man is given once more the power that death took away, a power to which homage must be paid in order to obviate any possible hostile act of revenge on his part.[6]

The memory of the father is for these reasons the sublimated memory of the sacred, a signifier that, while it may not be reconstituted in drama, nonetheless leaves traces of its vestigial presence. The two texts that perhaps fulfil these criteria better than any others are *Hamlet* (c. 1601) and *The Revenger's Tragedy* (c. 1607). It is to these plays that I now turn.

In *Hamlet*, the audience has to wait until Act Five of the drama to get a glimpse of the skull beneath the skin; in *The Revenger's Tragedy* the skull is unapologetically revealed to the audience at the very beginning of the play. This is just the first of a number of well-known and self-conscious borrowings from *Hamlet* in the later play.[7] But unlike in *Hamlet* where the sight of Yorick's bones leads the Prince into a philosophical disquisition on mutability, the presence of the skull at the start of *The Revenger's Tragedy* is part of a complex strategy of memorialisation that self-consciously reflects the practices of the earlier play but which also differs radically from those practices. Just as *Hamlet* has rightly been seen as the progenitor of *The Revenger's Tragedy*, so *Hamlet* retains its own shadowy begetter in the shape of the text known as the Ur-*Hamlet*, an earlier version of Shakespeare's great tragedy.[8] The exact status and authorship of this Ur-text are of secondary importance. What is relevant, however, is the nature of the relationship between the Ur-*Hamlet*, *Hamlet* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*. It might be possible to view this bond as a familial triad: the Ur-*Hamlet* as ghostly 'father' of *Hamlet* and *The Revenger's Tragedy* as offspring of Shakespeare's play. Because the latter two plays are indebted to their predecessor they are also

forced to acknowledge their parentage, their dramatic lineage, through similarities of language, theme and plot. However, the two later texts are plays in their own right and as such also evince a strenuous textual and thematic attempt to efface this lineage, to re-write the story they were bequeathed.

This tension between memorialisation and generation is crucial in both *Hamlet* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Significantly it manifests itself at a structural level in terms of a familial triad that mirrors the relationship between the texts. In *Hamlet*, for example, the triad consists of Old Hamlet, Hamlet and Claudius. Interestingly, the Ghost's injunction to Hamlet, 'Remember me' (I. v. 91)[9] serves to highlight the ambiguity of this masculine triad. In the first place, it is only by hearing the Ghost's story that Hamlet (and the audience) understands that what has come to pass since his father's death is essentially a false narrative. Claudius should not be where he in fact is. Conversely, the Ghost's tale runs against the narrative thrust of the play itself. His is a retrospectively recounted narrative that, until his son acts upon it, only really signifies in Hamlet's memory. The Prince says that he will 'wipe away all trivial fond records' from 'the table of my memory' and that the Ghost's 'commandment all alone shall live/ Within the book and volume of my brain,/ Unmix'd with baser matter.' (I. v. 98-104) Until he translates memory into action, Hamlet is unable to generate a narrative that will counter Claudius'. The false father will continue to dominate and the ghostly father will remain dis-membered.

There is a long tradition of *Hamlet* criticism that seeks to understand the play's familial wranglings in terms of Freudian psychoanalysis. These readings also draw attention, as I have not yet done, to a fourth figure, Gertrude, whose place in the play's symbolic order is so important. Perhaps the most well known

of these critical accounts is Ernest Jones' study *Hamlet and Oedipus*. In this text, Jones reads Hamlet's relationship to both Gertrude and Claudius as manifesting an essentially unconscious 'anguish at the thought of his father being replaced in his mother's affections by someone else.'[10] In this Freudian family romance, Hamlet 'can forgive a woman neither her rejection of his sexual advances nor, still less, her alliance with another man.'[11] What Jones outlines here is a model of triangulated Oedipal desire where the female is the figure by and through which the masculine symbolic order is constructed. Hamlet desires Gertrude but in order to fulfil that desire he has to compete with another masculine figure, the usurper Claudius. This is significant for as Jones points out, 'Hamlet's attitude towards his uncle-father is far more complex than is generally supposed.'[12] In what is a central insight, Jones goes on to observe that 'In reality his uncle incorporates the deepest and most buried part of his own personality, so that he cannot kill him without also killing himself.'[13] In essence, Hamlet's relationship with both Gertrude and Claudius symbolises what Jonathan Dollimore has called 'the disturbing association of thanatos and eros',[14] those contradictory but constitutive drives that underwrite human subjectivity.

It is possible, however, to go further than Jones does and suggest that in certain early modern dramas the model of triangulated Oedipal desire only ever creates a space for the female tangentially. This means that the predominantly masculine realm of subjective identification locates the female as a signifier through which the symbolic realm is given a coherence of sorts. Nevertheless, the female is rarely the *primary* focus of desire and/or identification in these plays. Or to put it another way, in certain revenge dramas, 'Female identification with the Other always involves an excursion into "masculine" territory.'[15] This

is not to disregard the female as a locus of erotic attachment or desire as some commentators have tended to do. Nor is it to privilege male-male identification over male-female identification. What I intend instead is a reworking of the conceptual map with which certain types of revenge drama might be read. Primarily, this reading recognises that in plays such as *Hamlet* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*, the patterns of subjective response and repudiation operated *in the first instance* along a definably patriarchal axis.

As a way of theorising this issue, it may be helpful to consider the moment in Act Three of *Hamlet* when the Ghost reappears, this time to Hamlet and Gertrude.

> *Ham.* Do you see nothing there?
>
> *Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.
>
> *Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?
>
> *Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.
>
> *Ham.* Why, look you there, look how it steals away.
> My father, in his habit as he liv'd. (III. iv. 132-137)

It is possible to read this scene in a number of competing ways. In the first place, Hamlet may be seeing things, like those Protestant subjects examined in chapter five, and in this way the ghostly figure the audience sees might be an externalised version of the Prince's interior vision. Alternatively Gertrude may be dissembling, skilfully pretending that she does not see her husband's ghost in her chamber in order to conceal her guilt. A third reading, and the one that I will advance, is that this exchange charts the limits of the female gaze and therefore her role in constituting the masculine symbolic order. Because the masculine is the '"original" point of reference'[16] in the patriarchal construction of early modern subjectivity, the symbolic gaze of the masculine begins where the gaze

of the feminine ends. By *not* seeing, Gertrude forces the audience to privilege the gaze of Hamlet because unlike the Queen, it is clear that he also sees what the audience sees. Here, as elsewhere, the point of reference is the dominant father figure. It is also instructive to note here how the 'weak' familial triad in the play comprising Polonius, Laertes and Ophelia gives way during the course of the action to the 'strong' murderous and masculine triad of Claudius, Hamlet and Laertes. It is through the masculine line that the symbolic order is constructed. But this symbolic order is far from unified. When the father returns once more in Gertrude's chamber, the masculine symbolic order is in effect reconstituted *and* undermined. For as the father's ghostly status and the failure of the female gaze both show, the symbolic is always predicated upon representation, upon a chain of endlessly shifting signifiers.

What, then, is the best way to approach the complex masculine structures that underpin much revenge drama of the period? In order to answer this question, I want to return to the tension between memorialisation and generation that I identified earlier at work in early modern discourse. In the case of *Hamlet* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*, the disjunction is provided by the fact that the revenger stands between the imperatives of a dead father and the odious presence of a usurping patriarch. This would seem to bear out Michael Neill's suggestion that 'revenge tragedy, at the deepest level, is less about the ethics of vendetta than it is about the murderous legacies of the past and the terrible power of memory.'[17] There was something about the amorphous presence of memory that was writ large in the complex interiority of the early modern revenger. In *The Revenger's Tragedy* for example, the avenger Vindice not only has to negotiate the memory of a dead father but the memory of his dead lover

killed by the patriarch, the Duke. So the masculine triad of Vindice's dead father, Vindice and the Duke gains symbolic coherence by and through the presence of the female. However, her status, not (initially) as an actant but as a skull, only serves to underline the precariousness of this masculine symbolic order.

It seems that the Italianate setting of plays such as *The Revenger's Tragedy* also enabled writers to explore questions of masculine authority as well as affording them an opportunity to comment upon contemporary political practices. Perhaps in the Italian city-states, early modern dramatists saw a microcosmic replication of the hierarchical structures that underpinned the English political system. But there were a number of important differences. In most cases (such as *Measure for Measure* (1604) or *The Duchess of Malfi* (c. 1612-1614)), the central figure of authority was not normally a King but a Duke. Whereas the King was God's representative on earth, the Duke derived his power from the King and so stood on a lower rung in the mimetic chain of political imitation. This allowed writers a certain freedom. More than the King, the Duke imitated the power of another. Consequently the ways in which the subject interiorised hierarchical structures of political control under a Duke was questioned in a much more radical way than it often was when the ruler in question was a monarch. Robert Weimann has linked this movement to the political impetus of the Reformation. He notes that where older forms of reading and writing presupposed given models of interpretation or style, the Reformation changed all this:

> Because authority, including the authorization of discourse itself, was no longer given, as it were, before the writing and reading began, the act of representation was turned into a site on which authority could be negotiated, disputed, or reconstituted. Modern authority, rather than

> preceding its inscription, rather than being given as a prescribed premise of utterances, became a product of writing, speaking, and reading, a result rather than primarily a constituent of representation.[18]

Authority is produced through the process of representation. Subjects in turn produce representation. Hence, *in* representation the early modern subject is able to explore the manner in which he or she internalises authority and because of this, the means by which authority might be negotiated or even transgressed.

There is arguably no play that explores these issues better during the period than *The Revenger's Tragedy*. I intend to suggest that the intense ambivalence surrounding the father figure in this play is a means of exploring the connection between memory, subjectivity and lineage. It also enables the play to explore the vexed question of authority in relation to the individual subject. As the drama progresses, it becomes clear that all signifiers become fatally destabilised during, indeed because of, the play of masculine/Oedipal revenge. The fact that the play is sustained well beyond the completion of the central act of vengeance offers a radical critique not only of the conventions of revenge tragedy but of Calvinist subjectivity as exemplified by the revenger Vindice. Moreover, the play's sustained exploration of these issues allows a critical exploration of recent work that seeks to go beyond the limits of the traditional psychoanalytic 'corpus', in both senses of the word.

One of the most noteworthy features of the beginning of *The Revenger's Tragedy* is its studied artificiality. As the play opens, the audience is presented with three separate yet interrelated 'bodies': Vindice, the skull of his dead lover Gloriana and the ruling body. Vindice desires revenge on the Duke for poisoning Gloriana:

> Duke; royal lecher; go, grey-hair'd adultery;
> And thou his son, as impious steep'd as he;

> And thou his bastard, true-begot in evil;
> And thou his duchess, that will do with devil:
> Four excellent characters. (I. i. 1-5)

This complex representation, drawing as it does on both the Vice and *memento mori* traditions, situates Vindice at the very outset as both a part of the world he describes and as a metadramatic malcontent who attempts to locate himself outside this realm in order to comment upon it. This distinction will become more and more critical as the play progresses but at this stage Vindice's primary objective is to pass sardonic judgement on the body politic. And 'body' is the key word here. An early modern audience familiar with the official Church homilies would also have been familiar with the ubiquitous political metaphor of the Tudor and Stuart ideological machine which stated, in the words of one of these homilies, that 'the whole body of every realm, and all the members and parts of the same, shall be subject to their head, their king'.[19] What they are presented with at the beginning of the play is a representation that undermines this popular political metaphor. Furthermore, in Vindice the audience have an anti-ideological propagandist who destabilises the essentialist rhetoric implicit in this metaphor. If the body is unstable or is made to seem artificial, so, it follows, are the 'characters' that inhabit those bodies. Moreover, if 'character' is shown not to be an essence then the body becomes a signifier that may have various contingent meanings written upon it.

Vindice acknowledges as much as he ruminates on the skull of his dead lover. He notes that when Gloriana was alive,

> then 'twas a face
> So far beyond the artificial shine
> Of any woman's bought complexion,
> That the uprightest man (if such there be,
> That sin but seven times a day) broke custom,
> And made up eight with looking after her. (I. i. 20-25)

According to the revenger, Gloriana, and in more general terms her female body, made men sin during life. Yet she achieves her most potent signification in death. Moreover, 'she' is going to play a central role in Vindice's revenge, a wicked, sinful course of action by early modern standards. In this way, Gloriana becomes a parody of what she (blamelessly) was in life. She is 'good' in death and therefore beautiful because she no longer tempts men. Yet she is 'evil' too as she participates in avenging herself. In accordance with the play's Calvinistic outlook, the fallen human body does not contain an essence or essential characteristics. Rather it is a territory, a site of intense negotiation on which culture writes and through which the revenger acts. For all these reasons, it is perhaps Michel Foucault who comes closest to understanding this ambivalent attitude towards the body when he describes it as ' the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity) and a volume in perpetual disintegration.'[20] This is certainly borne out when Vindice describes the physical decrepitude of the Duke:

> O, that marrowless age
> Would stuff the hollow bones with damn'd desires,
> And 'stead of heat, kindle infernal fires
> Within the spendthrift veins of a dry duke,
> A parch'd and juiceless luxur. Oh God! - one
> That has scarce blood enough to live upon,
> And he to riot it like a son and heir? (I. i. 5-11)

The body here is cited as the means of potential retribution ('infernal fires') and yet it paradoxically seems a strangely inadequate instrument of revenge, as the play on 'marrowless age' makes clear. More importantly than this, even though the Duke has 'scarce blood enough to live upon', he is still able to 'riot it like a son and heir'. This, more than anything else, seems to be what rankles with

Vindice. As he says, 'O, the thought of that/ Turns my abused heart-strings into fret.' (I. i. 12-13) Indeed, Vindice's sense that the Duke is occupying *his* rightful place seems to be the key to the Oedipal interplay between body and revenge in these lines. At this point in the play, it seems that Vindice literally has no signifying power.

In her book *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, Julia Kristeva provides a framework within which to situate the Vindice's tragedy of nonmeaning. She writes:

> The imaginative capability of Western man, which is fulfilled within Christianity, is the ability to transfer meaning to the very place where it was lost in death and/or nonmeaning. This is a survival of idealization – the imaginary constitutes a miracle, but it is at the same time its shattering: a self-illusion, nothing but dreams and words, words, words...It affirms the almightiness of temporary subjectivity – the one that knows enough to speak until death comes.[21]

The shadow of *Hamlet* looms large here, as Kristeva's reference to Act Two, scene two of the play shows ('What do you read, my lord?/ Words, words, words.' II. ii. 191-192). In more general terms, Kristeva also emphasises that the tragedy of subjectivity (and the subjectivity of tragedy) is its very temporary existence. In order to create meaning, to signify, the Christian subject is obliged to centre meaning in death, or at least in the promise of death. Kristeva suggests that this form of idealisation, however, is located upon the transitory nature of the imaginary. This is why the subjectivity of revenge tragedy might be understood as necessarily temporary. While revenge is necessarily deferred in plays like *Hamlet*, this is as much due to the terrible weight of the revenger's own subjectivity as it is to the conventions of the genre itself. Vindice sees the Duke as a dangerous patriarchal figure that he must destroy. Yet his description of the Duke as a 'son and heir' not only confuses this aim, it also draws a

curious parallel between revenger and patriarch. It is as if Vindice believes that the Duke has usurped his rightful subject position. As he notes sardonically, 'old men lustful/ Do show like young men, angry, eager, violent,/ Outbid like their limited performances.' (I. i. 34-6) The Duke is almost *too* masculine and too angry. In many respects, it seems that the Duke possesses those very qualities that the revenger lacks.

This inversion is doubly interesting in relation to Sigmund Freud's theory of Oedipal desire. As Freud notes in *Dreams*, the Oedipus complex in male children manifests itself primarily in sexual prohibition: 'the fear of a father is set up because, in the very earliest years, he opposes a boy's sexual activities, just as he is bound to do once more from social motives after the age of puberty.'[22] But as befits the Duke's surrogate father status, he has not only opposed Vindice's 'sexual activities' he has actively usurped them by raping and killing Gloriana. Because of this the process of subjective development outlined above by Freud is complicated in Vindice's case. He deals with his predicament by turning to violence. Essentially, the planned violence of the revenger is in response to the life he feels he has been denied. In Italian, 'Vindice' means 'Vengeance' and he assumes this mantle because the 'normal' processes of identity formation and acceptance into the world have been denied him. To put it bluntly, Vindice is trapped in a subjective state that objectifies him as Vengeance and forces a subjective identification with the Other, the Duke. Paradoxically this Other represents both what he desires and what he hates most in the world. Indeed, when he talks of his father's funeral, and says that 'My life's unnatural to me.../ *As if I liv'd now when I should be dead*' (I. i. 120-121 my emphasis), the analogy is unmistakeable. Vindice desires the Duke's death

but simultaneously identifies with the Duke's subject position, indeed mourns for it as his lost heritage. As Slavoj Žizek points out 'to achieve self-identity, the subject must identify himself with the imaginary other, he must alienate himself – put his identity outside himself, so to speak, into the image of his double.'[23] In this respect Vindice's 'double' is the Duke. More than this, the constitutive power of his name goes beyond the actions that objectify him as 'Vengeance'. As Žizek puts it, 'As soon as we enter the symbolic order, the past is always present in the form of historical tradition and the meaning of these traces is not given; it changes continually with the transformations of the signifier's network.'[24] Vindice's subject position is a consequence of what has happened to him as well as a symptom of revenge drama itself, a legacy he has no control over. It is in this respect that the play is at its most Calvinistic.

Vindice's brother Hippolito informs him that the Duke's only legitimate heir, Lussorioso, seeks 'some strange-digested fellow' (I. i. 76) to serve him. Vindice sees this as his chance to get to the Duke by constructing an alter ego for himself. The play's commitment to problematising the politics of identity is revealed when Vindice resolves to be 'that strange composed fellow' (I. i. 96) for as he notes, 'to be honest is not to be i' th' world.' (I. i. 95) Vindice resolves to disguise himself and at the beginning of Act One, scene three the following exchange takes place. Vindice enters disguised:

> VINDICE What, brother? am I far enough from myself?
>
> HIPPOLITO As if another man had been sent whole
> Into the world, and none wist how he came. (I. iii. 1-3)

If Vindice and Hippolito were referring to the 'dramatic' world in these exchanges, then they would appear by their own logic to undermine the veracity of the dramatic representation and the revenger's subject position within it.

Mimesis is, after all, fundamentally 'dishonest' as I pointed out in chapter two. Conversely, if the brothers are referring to the 'real' world then this might alternatively suggest that 'honesty' is more readily found in dramatic representation and disguise. But as Karin Coddon has said of this play, 'With no stable semiotic to mark off natural from unnatural, life from death, the ontological status of playing is itself thrown into question in a far more radical way than one finds in the typical "world-as-stage" topos.'[25] If Vindice's subjectivity is problematised through his status as a player, how, then, is subjectivity in this play to be understood?

One of the most well known attempts to come to terms with this problem is found in Stephen Greenblatt's study *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Greenblatt's central thesis is neatly summed up in the first sentence of the book: 'my starting point is quite simply that in sixteenth century England there were both selves and a sense that they could be fashioned.'[26] Depending on the political and cultural discourses with which they were obliged to negotiate, Greenblatt's subjects are potentially able to 'fashion' a variety of selves in relation to those contingent discourses. Nonetheless, the problem with this thesis is the assumption that there already exists within the subject a transcendent self that performs the process of fashioning. If this is the case then the fashioned self can only ever be a persona; underneath it resides the 'true' self from which various positions are constructed. Such a model, I suggest, cannot adequately account for the ways in which a play like *The Revenger's Tragedy* deliberately destabilises ontological markers of place, space and identity. To be fair to Greenblatt, however, he acknowledges in his autobiographical 'Epilogue' that the notion of selfhood advanced throughout the book is distinctly

problematic. He notes that 'In all my texts and documents, there were, so far as I could tell, no moments of pure, unfettered subjectivity'. The famous anecdote that begins the 'Epilogue' recounts a time that Greenblatt was on a plane and was asked by a distraught father, whose son could no longer speak and who had lost the will to live, to mouth the words "I want to die". Greenblatt could not do this, he explains, because it impinged upon his 'overwhelming need to sustain the illusion that I am the principal maker of my own identity.'[27] It would appear that *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* has come the full theoretical circle from stating that there were selves in the Renaissance and they could be fashioned to saying that, ultimately, the self is an illusion. Indeed, it might be possible to go even further than this. When Vindice becomes 'himself' after being disguised as Piato, he does not revert back to anything resembling a stable self. In fact, if anything his sense of self becomes even more precarious than it was before. As he says in Act Four: 'O, I'm in doubt whether I'm myself, or no.' (IV. iv. 24) This statement could just as easily describe early modern subjectivity. For these reasons, I believe that just as it is theoretically inappropriate to draw a neat distinction between the 'dramatic' and 'real' worlds in this play, or in any other for that matter, so it is impossible to speak of the subject in this play or elsewhere as in any way fashioned, if by this is meant that a transcendent self undertakes these various fashionings. Indeed, what both the play and Stephen Greenblatt seem to be pointing constantly towards, almost despite themselves, is the fundamental *unknowability* of the subject, and also that, as Antony Easthope puts it, 'subjectivity is *impossible*.'[28]

So far, I have focused on the importance of the father figure in the play: what of the mother? Possibly the most important aspect of the mother, not just in

this play but also in early modern culture as a whole, is that 'she' was essentially understood as a symptom of the corporeal. This symptomology has its roots in the texts of Aristotle and Galen and it underwrote the patriarchal structure of early modern sexuality. Women, anatomically and thus morally, were believed to be inferior to men. Early modern theoreticians understood 'male' and 'female' not as distinct genders but as different manifestations of what scholars, following Thomas Laqueur,[29] have called the one-sex body. The principle behind this body was one of anatomical homology. As James I's physician Helkiah Crooke wrote in 1615:

> The testicles in men are larger and of a hotter nature than in women... Wherefore heat abounding in men thrusts them forth of the body, whereas in women they remain within, because their dull and sluggish heate is not sufficient to thrust them out.[30]

What is remarkable about this model is not only that the male and female share the same genital physiology but also that the body is itself a fluid construct with (potentially at least) shifting boundaries. The clear separation between the categories of male and female in post-Galenic discourse cannot be presumed in relation to early modern texts.

This fluidity manifests itself in a number of ways in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, the most interesting being the exploration of 'the mother' in relation to secrets and secrecy. Lussorioso expresses the desire that in his dealings with him Vindice be 'as secret as thou'rt subtle' (I. iii. 74). Vindice replies:

> My lord,
> Secret? I ne'er had that disease o' th' mother,
> I praise my father. Why are men made close,
> But to keep thoughts in best? I grant you this,
> Tell but some woman a secret overnight,
> Your doctor may find it in the urinal i' th' morning.
> (I. iii. 78-83)

These lexically dense lines require further examination. In early modern English the word 'secret' can refer to something told to a person in confidence. Its secondary sense, however, is connected to the verb 'secrete', a taxonomy that, as this speech makes clear, has connections with the female. This is a noteworthy connection because as Patricia Parker has shown: 'The language of the close or secret – of a hidden matter or matrix to be dilated, opened and displayed – pervades the literature of the "privities" of women in contrast to the exteriorised sexual parts of men.'[31] The secret is associated with femininity because in the period (male) thinkers saw a homologous relationship between the secret kept hidden inside and the (to men) secretly located "privities" of women'. Certainly Vindice privileges masculine 'closeness' over female 'secret-ions'. Nevertheless the masculine partiality of Vindice's reading is perhaps not quite as gender-specific as the revenger would like it to be. For as Parker makes clear, the terms 'secret' and 'close' are lexical and cultural bedfellows that, if anything, privilege the feminine over the masculine.

Significantly, the next time that 'the mother' is mentioned in the play as a corporeal taxonomy is when Vindice is trying to persuade his actual mother, Gratiana, to prostitute his sister Castiza. In response to Vindice's monetary bribe, Gratiana says: 'That woman/ Will not be troubled with the mother long,/ That sees the comfortable shine of you.' (II. i. 125-127) It is noticeable that both here and in Vindice's speech above, the word 'mother' is objectified through the deployment of the definitive article 'the'. In both cases what is being alluded to is 'hysteria', the affliction 'o' the mother'. This was a condition where the womb was believed to wander up the body causing loss of breath and panic in the subject. Once more this was not an exclusively female phenomenon. In

Shakespeare's *King Lear*, the King famously cries 'O! how this mother swells up toward my heart;/ *Hysterica passio*! down, thou climbing sorrow!' (II. iv. 54-55)[32] Although this condition was spoken about as if it had a physiological basis, early modern writers knew enough about the anatomical structure of the body to know that the womb probably could *not* wander about the body. As Thomas Laqueur observes: 'Whatever they were debating when they pondered whether the womb wandered, it was not a discussion about the actual travels of an organ from its ligamentary anchor below, up through a foot and a half of densely packed body parts.'[33] So what was at stake in this strange debate?

In *The Revenger's Tragedy*, one possible answer can be found in Castiza's reaction to her suggested match with Lussorioso. When her mother presses her to accept, the following exchange takes place:

> CASTIZA I cry you mercy, lady, I mistook you;
> Pray, did you see my mother? Which way went you?
> Pray God I have not lost her.
>
> VINDICE [*Aside*] Prettily put by.
>
> GRATIANA Are you as proud to me as coy to him?
> Do you not know me now?
>
> CASTIZA Why, are you she?
> The world's so chang'd, one shape into another,
> It is a wise child now that knows her mother! (II. i. 161-167)

In relation to the homosocial politics of the court that now impinge upon Castiza, 'the mother' does not exist. Her mocking tone reflects the fact that Gratiana has entered into a masculine domain that her daughter believes is unnatural. Interestingly Castiza's last comment that 'It is a wise child now that knows her mother' is, as R. A. Foakes points out, and inversion of the common proverb that states: 'It is a wise child that knows his own father.'[34] In this world of unstable shape-shifters, the authority of the mother and the father, indeed of

the family as an authoritative institution (as well as the patriarchal and aphoristic lexis that underpins that authority) is brought into question. As André Green points out, 'The family…is the tragic space *par excellence*, no doubt because in the family the knots of love – and therefore of hate – are not only the earliest, but also the most important ones.'[35] This is why this scene represents much more than a comment upon the plasticity of early modern mimetic art. Indeed, by emphasising the fundamental malleability of familial authority through its manipulation of mimesis, this scene also draws attention to a deep-rooted tension in the period between what various loci of authority, such as the family or the secular ruler, promise to signify and what they actually signify in practice. The place where that tension is most noticeably played out is the subject.

At this stage, it might be useful to return to the Freudian model of subjective identity that I have been commenting upon throughout this chapter. I do so because while Freud posits a similar model of the subject produced in relation to a split from an authorising figure (or group), there are some important differences in respect of the early modern model that require to be examined. In order to do this, it will be useful to turn to Freud's 1933 lecture entitled 'Femininity' which effectively represents his final thoughts on the Oedipal structure of desire and identity formation. According to Freud, both male and female identity/sexuality is determined by a primary split from the mother:

> A boy's mother is the first object of his love, and she remains so too during the formation of his Oedipus complex and, in essence, all through his life. For a little girl too her first object must be her mother…But in the Oedipus situation the girl's father has become her love-object, and we expect that in the normal course of development she will find her way from this paternal object to her final choice of an object.[36]

Clearly the configurations of this model are problematised in light of the texts that have been examined in this chapter, and in others. In the first place, as I

have argued, the patriarch in early modern culture most commonly initiates the primary locus of desire and trauma, whereas in Freud this association is reversed. In relation to early modern writing, then, is the Freudian model theoretically useful? The best way of addressing the problems presented by this model is in relation to the important work of the Freudian critic Leo Bersani.

In his book *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art*, Bersani offers what amounts to a radical reworking of Freud's Oedipus complex. Bersani approaches this task from a number of different angles. The first is textual. He argues that the Freudian text is itself volatile and that 'the psychoanalytical authenticity of Freud's work *depends on* a process of theoretical collapse.'[37] Far from being a stable account of the ways in which identity is constructed, '*the Oedipus complex represses the unintelligibility of Oedipal relations.*'[38] This unintelligibility arises, argues Bersani, because of what he sees as 'our refusal to recognise the violence in which our sexuality is grounded.'[39] This insight is critical because it allows Bersani to go, as it were, beyond the subject as the grounding ontological focus of the Oedipus complex. He notes:

> The violence of the Oedipal structure is not merely that of an imagined rivalry between child and parent; by inhibiting fantasmatic mobility the Oedipal father promotes a self-destructing sexuality, a derivative masochism which threatens both the individual and civilization.[40]

In going theoretically beyond Freud, Bersani conversely offers a reading of sexuality and identification that seems much more useful in terms of early modern culture. In particular, his focus on the political implications of the Oedipal complex is significant. The violence of the father figure, both in generating and radically fixing the actions of his offspring, goes indeed to the centre of how early modern society conceived of itself as a political entity. For example, in Thomas Nashe's rumination on the fragility of the contemporary

polis, *Christ's Teares Over Ierusalem*, the masculine figure of Christ says, 'At my breastes *Ierusalem* hast thou not suckt, but bitte off my breasts'.[41] It is not so much the gender porosity that is so fascinating here as the violence that structures the city and informs the behaviour of its inhabitants towards their 'founding father'. For while Christ gives both the polis and the subject life, represented by his feminine breasts, it is the life giving breasts that are simultaneously the sites of violent attack.

In relation to my reading of early modern culture, it is necessary to go beyond the Freudian body and, perhaps more importantly, beyond the modern gender categories of 'male' and 'female' to a much more uninscribed, porous and violent symbolic order. While the father retains his symbolic centrality in the process of identity formation, it is no longer possible to ascribe masculine 'values' or traits exclusively to that figure. The converse is also true of the mother. In order to explain this further, it will be useful to examine a passage from John Calvin's *Sermons...on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus*. In the first sermon, Calvin offers a fascinating analysis of the genealogy of the father:

> there is a comparison made betweene fleshly fathers, and the father of our soules, (which is but one) as though they were things one contrarie to an other: but all this wil verie wel agree together, if we once vnderstand, how God is our father, and how men are. This name *father* is so honorable, that it belongeth to none, but to God onely. Yea in respect of our bodies. And therefore, when we say, that they which have begotten vs, according to the flesh, are our fathers, it is an vnproper kind of speech: for no mortall creature deserueth this so high and excellent dignitie: yet so it is, that God of his singular goodnesse aduaunceth men, to this so high a steppe, that he will that they be called fathers: and he doth it to this end and purpose, that they should acknowledge them selues to be so much more bound vnto him.[42]

As Calvin makes clear, the role of father is only grudgingly bequeathed to fallen humankind. Because it is a usurpation of God's all-encompassing masculinity,

the subject position of the father participates in what Emmanuel Levinas has called 'This growing surplus of the Infinite'.[43] This means that the father-as-subject is always deferred. The father has no direct access to his name or to the patriarchal subjectivity it represents, just as man has no direct access to the Calvinistic God. In effect, this form of subjectivity is predicated upon a prohibition of the very name that structures early modern society: father, pater, Deus. As Leo Bersani argues:

> The fascination of our civilization, from Job to Kafka, with an absolutely impenetrable Law which refuses to allow itself to be obeyed is perhaps, in psychoanalytic terms, the displaced version of a uniquely human distress: the distress of being inhabited, and even constituted, by the wholly inaccessible and wholly inescapable, alien and alienating, objects of our desires. The mythology of the Oedipus complex presents this monstrous and unavoidable impossibility as a *goal* of human development, as if the primary Oedipal identification constituted a way of transgressing aggressiveness rather than the psychic operation which makes it permanent. The post-Oedipal superego legalizes pre-Oedipal aggressiveness; it transforms object-loss into object-interdiction, and thereby makes us permanently guilty of those very moves of consciousness by which objects of desire become agents of punishment.[44]

So in early modern culture, even if the status of father is given in order that man might be 'so much more bound vnto him', this cleaving to God does not offer stability. Calvin explains in a sermon on Timothy that 'when we thinke we are well disposed to serue God, there is always some thing, I cannot tell what, that holdeth vs backe.'[45] It is impossible in this Calvinist schema for the individual ever to be centred, for in identifying with the father, either *as* a father or as a subject, the individual encounters a fundamental prohibition and thus a subjective lack.

This lack might also be associated with the desire of the 'big Other'. As Slavoj Žizek explains, to desire repletion within the symbolic order, to be reconciled with, in this case God is a fantasy, 'an imaginary scenario filling out

the void, the opening of the *desire of the Other*'. The problem for the subject is that he/she fantasises that he/she *knows* what the 'big Other' wants. Žizek explains that this is a false knowledge:

> by giving us a definitive answer to the question 'What does the Other want?', it enables us to evade the unbearable deadlock in which the Other wants something from us, but we are at the same time incapable of translating this desire of the Other into a positive interpellation, into a mandate with which to identify.[46]

The human subject is incapable of translating, or indeed of identifying with the desire of the 'big Other'. But because this figure structures the symbolic order, the subject cannot symbolically exist without that Other.

In *The Revenger's Tragedy*, this lack is mediated by and through the field of the gaze. With Lussorioso in prison, Vindice gets his opportunity to kill the Duke. The revenger explains to his brother:

> the old duke,
> Thinking my outward shape and inward heart
> Are cut out of one piece (for he that prates
> His secrets, his heart stands o' th' outside)
> Hires me by price to greet him with a lady
> In some fit place, veil'd from the eyes o' th' court (III. v. 8-13).

Here, Vindice acts as ironic anatomist both of himself and of his intended victim. In the case of the Duke, this verbal anatomy ('His heart stands o' the outside') stands in ironic counterpoint to the terrible physical violence that will be visited upon him shortly. Hippolito asks 'where's that lady now?' (III. v. 28) and Vindice replies 'O, at that word/ I'm lost again, you cannot find me yet' (III. v. 28-9) reaffirming the connection between Gloriana and Vindice's subjectivity. He has placed her skull atop a mannequin and put poison on the lips of the 'bony lady' (III. v. 121), hoping to lure the Duke into kissing it. He outlines his rationale:

> Now to my tragic business; look you, brother,

I have not fashion'd this only for show
And useless property; no, it shall bear a part
E'en in its own revenge. (III. v. 99-102)

In Vindice's theatre of death, theatricality is invoked in an ironic parody of the world-as-stage topos, a parody that implicates the gaze of the audience as they try to distinguish the lineaments of the dialectical struggle between representation and 'reality'.

The brothers succeed in tricking the Duke into kissing the skull. As he lies dying, Vindice says:

Look, monster, what a lady hast thou made me
My once betrothed wife.

DUKE Is it thou, villain?
Nay then-

VINDICE 'Tis I, 'tis Vindice, 'tis I.

HIPPOLITO And let this comfort thee: our lord and father
Fell sick upon the infection of thy frowns
And died in sadness; be that thy hope of life.
(III. v. 166-171)

The grotesque death of the Duke represents the ultimate inversion of the discourse of similitude that underwrites the practice of lineage. The Duke's status as (false) father and representative of political authority is predicated upon representation, upon a series of unstable signifiers. In attacking the false father with the skull, the potent symbol of the sexual fulfilment he was never able to attain, the son highlights, in Bersani's words, the terrible way in which, in the arena of violent Oedipal desire, 'objects of desire become agents of punishment.'[47] By making the Duke kiss the body of Vindice's lover, this act becomes symbolic of the reasons behind Vindice's personification as 'Vengeance'. Indeed, when Vindice says to the Duke 'What? is not thy tongue eaten out yet? Then/ We'll invent a silence' (III. v. 194-195) the inversion

becomes clearer. The Duke has been silenced by the lady and now holds an analogous subject position to her. In this way, the silent, ghostly body of Vindice's lover subverts the body of patriarchy by taking away its voice, its ability to confer names upon subjects. By writing voicelessness upon the Duke's body, the skull exposes the fragile ideology of political similitude upon which patriarchal lineage is founded.

Both the sons avenge the father, something that Hamlet does not get to do until his dying moments. They also force the Duke to watch his Duchess cuckolding him with his bastard son, Spurio. Vindice says to Hippolito:

> Brother,
> If he but wink, not brooking the foul object,
> Let our two other hands tear up his lids,
> And make his eyes, like comets, shine through blood;
> When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good. (III. v. 201-205)

These are extraordinary lines. In the first place, they profoundly disrupt the symbolic gaze of the audience. James I famously wrote in *Basilicon Doron* (1603) that Kings 'are as it were set (as it was said of old) vpon a publike stage, in the sight of all the people; where all the beholders eyes are attentiuely bent to looke and pry in the least circumstance of their secretest drifts'.[48] The gaze according to James is a one-way process and it objectifies the populace as they regard the authoritative Other. Vindice's actions profoundly disrupt this gaze of power. His insistence that the Duke's gaze 'shine through blood' inscribes the ruler as the primary spectator of the action he watches (his bastard son with his wife). The gazed-at becomes the gazer. He becomes objectified and the audience become the objectifying Others in relation to his personal drama. In the words of Philip Armstrong, 'Theatre... perpetually contaminates the position of pure spectatorship, precipitating its audience into (the) action.'[49] Vindice's actions not

only politicise the gaze, they show the audience that representation is ultimately an unstable basis for Law. The theatrical power of the audience's gaze disrupts the hegemony of the representation and of patriarchal authority by showing that perception is never passive but is dependent upon a subject's position within the symbolic order. Vindice's self-mocking comment 'When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good' shows that any claims in this play to mimetic art as a 'representation of reality' are disrupted at the level of the gaze.

The play now proceeds almost hastily to its violent *denouement*. Vindice (undisguised) is hired by Lussorioso, this time to kill Piato his alter ego, who caused Lussorioso to go to prison. Vindice gets around the problem of having to kill himself in a wonderful *coup de theatre*. He dresses the dead Duke's body in Piato's clothes and stabs the dead body. Vindice ruminates on the ridiculousness of the situation in which he finds himself. Regarding the Duke's body dressed in Piato's clothes he says:

> I must kill myself. Brother, that's I; that sits for me; do you mark it? And I must stand ready here to make away myself yonder - I must sit to be killed, and stand to kill myself (V. i. 4-7).

In these lines, Vindice identifies with his 'mirror image' and says that he will 'kill' it, as he in fact does. But this is not the end of this signifying chain. There is a deficiency in Vindice's perception of his actions, and that deficiency is brought to the fore, unsurprisingly, by the politics of theatricality. After stabbing the dead body, Vindice says in an important aside:

> This much by wit a deep revenger can,
> When murder's known, to be the clearest man.
> We're furthest off, and with as bold an eye
> Survey his body as the standers-by. (V. i. 92-95)

The use of the collective contracted pronoun 'We're' attempts to locate Vindice and the audience as passive spectators to this act. They are all supposedly

'standers-by' who regard at a distance what has been and is happening on stage. Yet surely the audience's role is more problematic that the 'deep revenger' supposes?

Vindice continues to personify himself as 'Vengeance', a form of dramatic disguise. He also desires that the audience acknowledge him as 'one of them', standing by, observing, detached. But his dramatic disguise, 'Piato', has been displaced onto the Duke. More than this, in stabbing the body he has also 'murdered' Piato. Therefore, the audience is gazing at Vindice, gazing at his alter ego, his mirror of self, and refusing to acknowledge it as such. Vindice can only be 'a deep revenger' if he has someone or something to avenge. Yet he has carried out every act of vengeance that he set out to accomplish. For this reason, it is the audience who supply the lack in Vindice's perception. Vindice is impelled into the symbolic realm of mimetic revenge both by the gaze of the audience and by his subjective fragmentation 'in the mirror'. This is crucial for as Armstrong points out, 'The symbolic gaze of the Other disturbs this imaginary sovereignty of the optical field, by introducing that perspective from which the subject is surveyed as an object.'[50] In the battle between representation and audience for symbolic consistency on the early modern stage, the audience will almost always win no matter how hard the struggle. Vindice is impelled into the symbolic realm of mimetic revenge both by the gaze of the audience and by his subjective fragmentation 'in the mirror'. What he sees staring back at him is only ever a (dead) representation. In other words, Vindice's alter ego, the Duke, positioned him as subject for the nine years that he planned his revenge. Alive, the Duke allowed him to destabilise the semiotic boundaries between dramatic and 'real' worlds. However, his death is also the

revenger's death. For where the father generates progeny, all that Vindice generates is violence; a surplus of meaning that fuels the discourse of revenge drama but which eventually becomes nonmeaning. He becomes in Žizek's words, 'an objectification of a void, of a discontinuity opened in reality by the emergence of the signifier.'[51] The farcical, 'non-realistic' ending of the play, with the brothers gleefully confessing their crimes and being taken for execution, would appear to confirm this. Vindice ultimately signifies 'Vengeance' and in broader terms, revenge tragedy. Yet the one lineage he cannot avenge is the violent lineage of the mimetic tradition to which he belongs. As he signifies in violence, so he dies by violence. It is instructive here to recall Calvin's words on the sins of the father: it is 'no brief and simple revenge, but one that will extend to the children, the grandchildren, and the great-grandchildren, who obviously become imitators of their fathers' impiety.'

Traditional readings of *The Revenger's Tragedy* are noticeable for turning the play and its subjects into a series of morality tableaux. In my analysis, I have demonstrated that the processes of subjectivity utilised and commented upon in this drama are much more complex than this critical tradition commonly allows. Specifically, this tradition sidesteps the way in which Protestantism conceives of the father as a deeply paradoxical figure who both demands filial devotion and repudiates the processes by which that devotion might be expressed. This patriarchal discourse forms such an important part of revenge drama's signifying power because it also underwrites the subjectivity of the revenger himself. Consequently, plays such as *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *Hamlet* provide searching critiques of the investment of the genre of revenge drama in the

political, theological and cultural authority of the father. The subjectivity of the revenger is deeply problematic because in order to signify at all, the revenger must in some way repudiate the father (figure). Nevertheless, that repudiation can only ever be temporary. As *The Revenger's Tragedy* demonstrates so powerfully, the tragedy of the revenger *is* revenge. For as Vindice knows only too well, ''Tis time to die when we are ourselves our foes.' (V. iii. 110)

Notes to Chapter Six

[1] Martin Luther, *Preface to the Old Testament*, in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull (Fortress Press: Minneapolis. 1989), p. 124

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J.T. McNeil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961), I. 386

[4] *Ibid.* I. 384

[5] Mitchell Greenberg, *Canonical States Canonical Stages: Oedipus, Othering, and Seventeenth-Century Drama* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), xxiii

[6] André Green, *The Tragic Effect: The Oedipus Complex in Tragedy*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge and London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 235

[7] See for example at I. i. 116-118, I. iv. 56-64, II. i.118, II. ii. 91, III. v. 163, v. i. 19. All references are to R. A. Foakes' Revels edition of *The Revenger's Tragedy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980).

[8] For a concise account of the Ur-*Hamlet*, see pp. 82-85 of Harold Jenkins' Arden edition of *Hamlet* (Surrey: Thomas Nelson, 1997). For a more recent, sceptical reading of the same 'text', see Emma Smith's essay, '"Ghost Writing": *Hamlet* and the Ur-Hamlet', in *The Renaissance Text: Theory, Editing, Textuality*, ed. Andrew Murphy (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 177-190.

[9] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* ed. Harold Jenkins, The Arden Shakespeare (Surrey: Thomas Nelson, 1997)

[10] Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1949), p. 69

[11] *Ibid.* p. 84

[12] *Ibid.* p. 88

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Jonathan Dollimore, *Death, Desire and Loss in Western Culture* (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 63

[15] Philip Armstrong, '"Watching *Hamlet* watching": Lacan, Shakespeare and the mirror/stage', in *Alternative Shakespeares Vol. 2*, ed. Terence Hawkes (London and New York: Routledge: 1996), p. 236

[16] *Ibid.* p. 221

[17] Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 244

[18] Robert Weimann, *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, ed. David Hillman (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 5

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[22] Sigmund Freud, *Dreams*, in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, ed. James Strachey and Angela Richards, trans. James Strachey (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 225

[23] Slavoj Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 104

[24] *Ibid.* p. 56

[25] Karin Coddon, '"For Show or Useless Property": Necrophilia and *The Revenger's Tragedy*', *ELH*, 61, 1994, p. 80

[26] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1980), p. 1

[27] *Ibid.* pp. 255-257

[28] Antony Easthope, *The Unconscious* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 170

[29] Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 25-62

[30] Helkiah Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia. A Description of the Body of Man with the Controversies Thereto Belonging* (London: William Jaggard, 1615) STC 6062, Book 4, chapter 4, p. 104

[31] Patricia Parker, *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 236

[32] William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Kenneth Muir (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 80

[33] Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud.* p. 112

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[35] Green, *The Tragic Effect*, p. 7

[36] Sigmund Freud, 'Femininity', in *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, ed. James Strachey and Angela Richards, trans. James Strachey (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 152

[37] Leo Bersani, *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 3

[38] *Ibid.* p. 101

[39] *Ibid.* p. 114

[40] *Ibid.* p. 46

[41] Thomas Nashe, *Christes Teares Over Ierusalem. Whereunto is annexed, a comparative admonition to London* (London: James Roberts, 1593), Sig. F3^{r}

[42] John Calvin, *Sermons of M. John Caluin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus. Translated out of French into English by L.T.* (London: G. Bishop, 1579), pp. 9-10

[43] Emmanuel Levinas, 'God and Philosophy', in *Of God Who Comes to Mind*, trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 73

[44] Bersani, *The Freudian Body*, p. 97

[45] Calvin, *Sermons...Timothie and Titus*, p. 992

[46] Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, pp. 114-115

[47] Bersani, *op. cit.*

[48] James I, *Basilicon Doron*, in *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 4

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Chapter Seven

'Nothing is, but what is not'. *Macbeth*, Witchcraft and the Subject of Anti-Time

> The little world the subject of my muse,
> Is an huge task and labour infinite;
> Like to a wilderness or mass confuse,
> Or to an endless gulf, or to the night:
> How many strange meanders do I find?
> How many paths do turn my straying pen?
> How many doubtful twilights make me blind,
> Which seek to limn out this strange All of men?
> Easy it were the earth to portray out,
> Or to draw forth the heavens' purest frame,
> Whose restless course by order whirls about
> Of change and place, and still remains the same.
> But how shall men's, or manners' form appear,
> Which while I write, do change from what they were?[1]

At first glance, the difficulty at the heart of Thomas Bastard's sonnet '*Ad Lectorem de Subiecto Operis Sui*' is with the subject of writing. The 'straying pen' of the sixth line is only ever able to fleetingly record a necessarily impressionistic account of what is a turbulent and changing world. But by the ninth line, it becomes clear that the subject of the poem is not so much the physical world as the world of the subject. To 'portray out' the earth itself or even to 'draw forth the heavens' purest frame' is considered to be 'easy' in comparison to writing the subject. For in the very act of authorial inscription ('while I write') men's 'form[s].../ do change from what they were?' In order to achieve the kind of fixity that would contain this fluidity, it would be necessary

to gain authorial mastery over the intertwined exigencies of both language and world. The poem clearly reveals this ideal as a fantasy. Indeed, the poet's own name, connoting the *Filius Nullius* of bastardy, the son of no one, acts as an ironic commentary on the failure that is the subject of the poem. Yet perhaps more interesting than any of this is the 'wilderness' or 'endless gulf' that appears at the centre of the unruly 'little world'. The inscription of the author may fail to provide fixity and the poem may be unable to name man's ever changing 'form', but in an important sense these are secondary concerns. Rather, it is the 'endless gulf', the unaccountable interior lack that constitutes the sonnet's subject.

I have begun with Bastard's poem because it exemplifies to a considerable degree the kind of subjectivity that will be the focus of this chapter. This subjectivity differs from those examined in the previous two chapters because it is not *directly* concerned with what might be called the institutional function of the subject. What I mean is that in the chapters on *Doctor Faustus* and *The Revenger's Tragedy*, I argued that the subjectivity manifested in these plays was inextricably linked to the corporate identity and signifying function of important institutional figures such as Christ, the Devil or the Father. I also suggested that the structural and affective gap between the institutional figure and the individual subject was what simultaneously constituted and undermined these expressions of early modern subjectivity. It is certainly the case that the ideological construction of these institutional figures reflects, to a certain extent, the political configurations and contradictions of, say, the Church or the Family. Nonetheless, as political avatars with which the individual has little choice but to affectively engage, the figures representative of these institutions also signify the ideological failure of early modern society and discourse to bridge the gap

between individual and institution. The most common result, as I have shown, is a subjectivity that signifies powerfully against the dominant ideological grain and yet is painfully bound to the very ideological discourses and figures that produce it.

But what about those less visible and politically central figures and groups with whom early modern subjects also engaged? What about figures such as prostitutes, vagrants or witches or foreigners who, while not always carrying the same political weight as those institutional figures already mentioned, nevertheless signify powerfully in the early modern cultural consciousness? In an extension of chapter four, I focus in this chapter and in the next one on, respectively, the Protestant engagement with the witch and the foreigner. In particular, I want to suggest that the failure of central institutional figures like God or the Family to offer the subject complete identification opened up a space within which figures like witches and foreigners could signify. Indeed, if Catholicism can be seen as the theological unconscious of the early modern subject then conceivably the figures examined in the next two chapters can be seen as the *social* unconscious of that subject.

In the first place, it is important to state that witches and foreigners were no different to any other groups in (or rather outwith) early modern society in being discussed in explicitly theological terms. Central to this discussion was the theory of inversion. Put simply, these figures represented a deep threat to society because they inverted the perceived 'normal' order of things. To turn to witchcraft in particular, as Stuart Clark observes, 'Witchcraft had all the appearance of a proper religion but in reality it was religion perverted. And since genuine religion was, in theory, a total experience, so its demonic copy was all-

embracing.'[2] Throughout this chapter, I will utilise Clark's definition of witchcraft but I will also attempt to amend it slightly to encompass the production of the 'endless gulf' at the centre of subjectivity that I begun with. For this reason, it is important to state that engagement with figures such as witches gave rise to an identifiable kind of subjective response that can be traced in those early modern writings that record such engagements. However, in a different way from other forms of identification, the subject who engages with a witch is left with, if anything, a deeper sense of the alienating strangeness of the self. For if a witch signifies an 'all-embracing' inversion of 'proper' religious observance and practice then the subjectivity produced through an encounter with a witch will necessarily offer an inversion of Christian selfhood. But this is not simply a case of evil inverting good. If we are to accept the premise that orthodox Protestant religious discourse produced a deeply divided subject, then it follows that in inverting this discourse, *witchcraft replicates these divisions*. If Katherine Maus is correct when she notes that 'Renaissance religious culture...nurtures habits of mind that encourage conceiving of human inwardness...as at once privileged and elusive, an absent, presence "interpreted" to observers by ambiguous inklings and tokens'[3], then any encounter with the witch only serves to intensify this process. In this chapter, I intend to focus on William Shakespeare's exploration of these issues in *Macbeth* (1605).[4]

From the late Romantic period onwards there has been an extremely influential school of criticism that has effectively secularised the Witches in *Macbeth*. This has been achieved by examining them almost solely in relation to the concept of evil. Taken together, these two statements may seem more than a little contradictory, especially considering the theological significance of evil

and its doctrinal converse, good. However, most of the critics who comprise this school of critical thought have, consciously or not, followed the Enlightenment project of conceiving of evil as, primarily, an extrinsic moral category. For example, writing on the Witches around 1818, Samuel Taylor Coleridge argued that 'Their character consists in the imaginative disconnected from the good'.[5] This sense of the Witches' 'disconnectedness' was taken up and developed by Coleridge's admirer William Hazlitt who in 1820 noted that the Witches are 'hags of mischief, obscene panders to iniquity, malicious from their impotence of enjoyment, enamoured of destruction because they are themselves unreal, abortive, half-existences'.[6] More than Coleridge, Hazlitt's reading aligns the numinous Witches with an extrinsic concept of evil. Broadly speaking it was this reading of the hags that remained dominant, at least until the later Victorian period. Then in 1904, A. C. Bradley published *Shakespearian Tragedy* in which he denounced what he saw as 'a "philosophy" of the Witches'.[7] According to Bradley, the precise status of the Witches was not the central issue. Certainly they were not 'supernatural beings' nor were they the 'symbolic representations of the unconscious or half-conscious guilt in Macbeth himself.'[8] Rather, the Witches were 'old women, poor and ragged, skinny and hideous'.[9] But despite making this point, Bradley does not completely disavow the heritage of the Romantics. This is particularly the case when he observes that the hags represent both 'the evil slumbering in the hero's soul' and, more importantly, 'all those obscurer influences of evil around him in the world'.[10] Evil may reside in Macbeth but it also exists in the extrinsic abstract.

Perhaps the most extreme, and certainly one of the most influential expressions of the Romantic/Bradley reading of the Witches' relationship to evil

was the one advanced in 1930 by G. Wilson Knight.[11] He argues that in *Macbeth*, evil

> comes from without. The Weird Sisters are thus objectively conceived: they are not, as are phantasms and ghosts, the subjective effect of evil in the protagonist's mind. They are, within the *Macbeth* universe, independent entities.[12]

For Knight, the Witches represent 'absolute evil'.[13] Indeed, in a reading that makes explicit the presuppositions of his critical predecessors, Knight constructs evil as an extrinsic and essentialised moral category that exists and signifies independent of the human realm. By aligning the Witches within an a-historical, 'objective' and self-determining concept of 'evil', Knight does not engage with the fact that the presentation of the Witches in the play is far more contradictory and unstable than his essentialised rhetoric would suppose. More importantly, all the critics that I have examined reduce the hags to a purely functional role: either they reflect the hero's mind or else some loosely defined evil. In opposition to this reading I want to suggest the converse: that Macbeth's subjectivity reflects *his* various encounters with the Witches.

The principle of inversion that I introduced earlier is highlighted by the words of the Witches' chant: 'Fair is foul, foul is fair:' (I. i. 11)[14] Significantly, this inversion is paralleled in Macbeth's very first words: 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen' (I. iii. 38), a sentence that seems to be constructed upon the linguistic negation of its own grammatical postulates. The important point about this parallelism is that it not only presents the audience with a linguistic connection between the Witches and Macbeth; it also mirrors the terminological instability of referential language that is so typical of contemporary witchcraft texts. To take one example, in James I's *Daemonology* (1597), the knowledgeable interlocutor Epistemon is forced to deny that his understanding

of witchcraft arises because he is himself a witch. As he says to Philomathes: 'I thinke ye take me to be a Witch my selfe, or at the least would faine sweare your selfe prentise to that craft'.[15] In matters of diabolism, the gap between seeming and being is distinctly volatile. This is why Banquo asks Macbeth: 'why do you start, and seem to fear/ Things that do sound so fair?' (I. iii. 51-52). The crucial word here is 'seem'. As will become clear, *Macbeth* is structured around the uncertainty generated by whether someone or something 'seems' or, in fact, 'is'. So by making this connection between the Witches and Macbeth at this early stage in the play, Shakespeare is not suggesting that the Thane of Cawdor *is* a witch, but rather that his internal being might be susceptible to their imprecations.

It is important to state at this point that inversion is not simply a case of promoting one term in a binary opposition over the other. Rather, the principle takes much of its cultural potency from the fact that it is often very difficult to see where one opposition ends and another begins. Stuart Clark has argued:

> by defining categories in relation to each other it [the principle of inversion] entails a constant and ultimately unresolvable semantic exchange between them. The mind only settles on the meaning of one contrary by confronting the meaning of its partner; whereupon the semantic dependence of the second term on the first becomes just as apparent, and the initial act of understanding is unsettled. In this logical sequence there is neither simultaneity, nor priority, only deferment of meaning.[16]

In *Macbeth*, this deconstructive phenomenon is reflected especially in the ambivalent sexual status of the Witches. Banquo asks:

> What are these,
> So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
> That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth,
> And yet are on't? Live you? Or are you aught
> That man may question? You seem to understand me,
> By each at once her choppy finger laying
> Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
> And yet your beards forbid me to interpret

That you are so. (I. iii. 39-47)

Because they cannot be definitively classified as either men or women, the Witches present Banquo, Macbeth and the audience with a perceptual and epistemological problem: what does their corporal ambiguity signify? The anonymous author of a pamphlet entitled *The Witches of Northhamptonshire* (1612) provides one possible answer to this question. The author wrote that 'whatsoever they [witches] appear in visible form it is no more but an apparition and counterfeit show of a body'.[17] This is a common view in witchcraft writings of the period. The word that I want to focus on is 'counterfeit'.

It might be useful to pause here in order to explore the reasons behind this strange terminological choice. In the first place, early modern society lived with death in a way that is almost unimaginable today. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that many should regard the putrefaction of the flesh (including their own) as the actual and metaphorical manifestation of the consequences of sin. As the moralist William Rankins said in 1587, 'the temple of our bodies which should be consecrate vnto him, is made a stage of stinking stuff, a den for theeues, and an habitation for insatiate monsters.'[18] Scholars have noted this negative attitude towards the body amongst Protestant writers of the period and it is common to see references to what one critic calls 'the estranged, filthy bodies of Protestant theology'.[19] But in many respects this is a slightly disingenuous reading of what is a more complex cultural attitude, and it requires some modification. It is undoubtedly true to say that, for example, John Calvin did insist in places upon the depravity of the human body, calling it variously 'carrion, dirt, and corruption'[20] and 'a shameful thing one dare not mention.'[21] Comments such as this follow in a long Christian tradition of flagellation (both

metaphorical and literal) of the corporeal, a tradition that in more general terms Calvin was careful to adhere to. As early as the third century AD for example, it is possible to find Gregory of Nyssa calling the body 'filth'[22] and many of the early Church fathers who Calvin so admired were not known for their convivial attitudes towards the flesh.

Nonetheless, this only represents one side of the tradition that Calvin inherited and with which he sought to negotiate. In the words of William Bouwsma, 'growing recognition that Calvin's formation and culture were that of a Renaissance humanist can now help us understand Calvin the Reformer.'[23] Or to put it slightly differently, it would be surprising if Calvin's extensive humanistic training in Paris did not bequeath to him, if not a complete acceptance of the human body, then at least an awareness of its potential as a vehicle for good. Thus, it is possible to find him stating in a sermon on *Job* that 'Our bodies are, in their essence, good creations of God'.[24] The central word here is 'essence' because in Calvinism it is the human essence that is the manifestation of the divine in man. Metaphysically ratified through this interior function, the body signifies God's providential design that orders the world.

Nevertheless, there is a problem with this metaphysic: sin. If God's providence governs all things, then this must necessarily encompass all human actions, including sin. Indeed, if a man or a woman sins it must logically reflect in some way upon their maker. Calvin famously rejected such a notion and he did so with statements, which if they are not to be seen as illogical, must be seen as one side of an argumentative dialectic. After Adam's Fall, God's image was 'so vitiated and almost blotted out that nothing remains after the ruin except what is confused, mutilated, and disease-ridden.'[25] This quotation is the

dialectical opposite of the statement above that sees the body in its essence as a good creation of God. On the one hand God creates the body as a good essence, yet on the other hand this essence is perverted through sin and can have no connection with the unimpeachable divine essence. Nonetheless, it would be historically and theologically inaccurate to see this as evidence of a contradiction in Calvin's thought *per se*. Rather, it becomes incumbent upon the Calvinist subject to ensure that in his/her battle with sin they conduct themselves in a way that allows *their* subjectivity to be at one with the divine. Ultimately, if the human subject fails to match up to the divine, then this is the fault of the subject, not God. It is this kind of theological distinction that makes Calvinism the religion of interiority *par excellence*. It is also the distinction that gives witches their particular signifying power.

Man's first and most proper relationship is with God and, as I have noted in earlier chapters, early modern theologians and writers conceived of this relationship in identifiably mimetic terms. Calvin noted that God 'is to be seen as in an image' and that 'he is shown to us not as he is in himself, but as he is towards us'.[26] In a sense it is the perceiving subject who verifies the existence of God. However, as Calvin also says, man cannot in fact know God's 'incomprehensible essence'[27] through representation, mental or otherwise, because 'flesh is always uneasy until it has obtained some figment like itself in which it may fondly find solace as in an image of God.'[28] Calvin concludes by stating: 'how can the mind by its own leading come to search out God's essence when it cannot even get to its own?'[29] This is a crucial quotation in any understanding of Calvinist metaphysics and the subject's place within them. In the first place, the Calvinist subject is radically anti-essential in its makeup. This

is not to say that it is an emerging subject or even a subject 'coming into being'. Rather it is a subject defined by and through an existential lack. It is for this reason that Calvin can state that God 'represents both himself and his everlasting Kingdom in the mirror of his works'.[30] As was noted earlier, the reflection seen by the subject is far from clear. The subject may only know God mimetically through counterfeit representation, and it is this process that divides the subject from its theological point of origin.

All this demands that the earlier quotation from *The Witches of Northamptonshire* ('whatsoever they [witches] appear in visible form it is no more but an apparition and counterfeit show of a body') is viewed in a different light. The early modern discourse of witchcraft not only inverts conventional categories of signification, it replicates the contradictions inherent in that discourse's metaphysic: if God is a counterfeit then so are witches. If Protestantism produces a subject whose interiority is structured around a fundamental lack then Protestant witchcraft theory appropriates that paradigm by foregrounding the contradictions that engender that lack. In *Macbeth*, the ambiguous Witches whose riddling speech promises 'A deed without a name' (IV. i. 49) and whose fantastical appearance opens up a gap between perception and comprehension cannot be 'interpreted' because they offer a parody of the subject's choice before God. To identify fully is impossible so the human subject identifies with the Other only in so far as he or she can. It is for this reason that the Witches are, in Terry Eagleton's words, 'the "unconscious" of the drama, that which must be exiled and repressed as dangerous but which is always likely to return with a vengeance.'[31]

And return they do via Macbeth's subjective reaction to his encounter. He says:

> This supernatural soliciting
> Cannot be ill; cannot be good: -
> If ill, why hath it given me earnest of success,
> Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
> If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
> And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
> Against the use of nature? (I. iii. 130-137)

It is immediately noticeable that even though Macbeth putatively attempts to see the shape-shifting Witches in terms of a moral binary between 'ill' and 'good' he cannot privilege one term over the other. The hags who 'seem'd corporal' (I. iii. 81) manifest not essence but difference. Moreover, it is significant that Macbeth should call the action of the Witches 'soliciting'. While this word can refer simply to a request, it also implies prostitution. Indeed, the French root of the word means 'to disturb', a word that accurately describes Macbeth's state and which establishes an interesting connection between the discourses of witchcraft and prostitution. In the first place, both of these figures disturbed the conventions of patriarchal and theological dictates. Because of this, they were discussed in terms that were often strikingly similar. To take two examples, in *Doctor Faustus*, the seductive figure of Helen of Troy appears to Faustus, but almost as quickly, turns into a succubus: 'Her lips sucks forth my soul. See where it flies!/ Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.' (V. i. 94-95)[32] In the second example, the 'Water Poet' John Taylor says of the prostitute that she is a 'Succubus, a damned sinke of sinne' who 'may be taken for the *Epicene*.'[33] These terms could equally be applied (and were) to witches. Where does the prostitute end and the witch begin? In a sense this question is unanswerable because both figures transgress what Laura Levine has called the patriarchal

fantasy of 'pure referentiality'.[34] This transgression has clear implications for patriarchal subjectivity. In encountering a witch or a prostitute the subject fails to definitively 'locate' them, to counter their deeply ambiguous signifying status. For this reason, Eagleton is surely correct when he notes that Macbeth's engagement with the soliciting Witches threatens to reveal the 'region of otherness and desire within himself'.[35] To put it slightly differently, *Macbeth* demonstrates that 'location' always presupposes dislocation.

These points notwithstanding, it might be useful to dwell on the term 'soliciting' for a little longer. While its French derivation means 'to disturb' this is augmented by the fact that the Latin root of the verb 'to solicit' means 'to set in motion'. This is important for two reasons. First, early modern Protestants lived under a providential metaphysic whereby, as has been shown, an individual's existence was pre-ordained, set in motion by God. Secondly, only He could have foreknowledge over what would happen in the future. But the difficulty with the principle of diabolic inversion is that if God is to have foreknowledge over future events then the Devil (and by extension witches) must too.

This is a problem that is at the heart of *Macbeth.* James I attempts to explain the difficulty in this way:

> as to the diuelles foretelling of things to come, it is true that he knowes not all thinge future, but yet that he knowes parte, the Tragical event of this historie declares it...not that he hath any prescience, which is only proper to God: or yet knows anie thing by loking vpon God, as in a mirrour (as the good Angels doe) he being for euer debarred from the fauorable presence...of his creator, but only by one of these two meanes, either as being worldlie wise, and taught by a continuall experience, euer since the creation, judges by likelie-hood of thinges to come...Or else by Gods employing of him in a tune, and so foreseene therof.[36]

According to the King, the Devil either guesses at what is to come or else is used by God as a part-time instrument of prophecy. The problem with both of these suggestions is that, in the first instance, prediction is not the same as foreknowledge and in the second, by making the Devil an instrument of God, James effectively makes God the author of evil. Yet as James makes clear in typically Calvinistic fashion, evil is solely the prerogative of the Devil: God gives 'grace onelie to the elect' and 'the rest...are given over in the handes of the Devill that enemie, to beare his Image'.[37] Again, it is possible to observe the discourse of mimetic inheritance in operation: the reprobate bear the Devil's 'Image' which is, of course, evil. So if James' belief that the Devil is responsible for evil is to be maintained then it follows that evil can only be related to God as a supplement. As Jacques Derrida points out in *Of Grammatology*:

> the supplement supplements. It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself *in – the – place – of*; if it fills, it is as if one fills a void. If it represents and makes an image, it is by the anterior default of a presence.[38]

This quotation makes it possible to see that, as supplement to the Calvinist system, evil also inscribes an anti-time that stands in opposition to the regular time of providential discourse. For this reason, those like Macbeth who engage with diabolic figures to the extent that that encounter permeates their subjectivity must also carry within them an 'image' of a supplementary field of knowledge, one that is 'set in motion' '*in – the – place – of*' the divine image it repudiates.

In Macbeth's case, this process is first manifested by and through his subjectivity. In his first soliloquy he goes on to say:

> Present fears
> Are less than horrible imaginings.
> My thought, whose murther yet is but fantastical,
> Shakes so my single state of man,
> That function is smother'd in surmise,
> And nothing is, but what is not. (I. iii. 137-142)

The Witches' prophecies, their inversion of providential doctrine, lead Macbeth to question the certainty of his own comprehension. His sense of himself as a 'man' is now predicated upon 'what is not' and the present, associated with specific fears and anxieties, gives way to the horribly nebulous 'imaginings' of the future. The aphoristic belief that 'Time and the hour runs through the roughest day' (I. iii. 148) will soon be supplanted by the anti-time that Macbeth's actions will usher in. Indeed, if Stephen Greenblatt is correct when he states that 'existence depends upon institutions that limit and, where necessary, exterminate a threatening mobility',[39] then it becomes clear that the Witches' actions radically mobilise the latent lack at the centre of Macbeth's own 'institution', his subjectivity. It cannot therefore be the case, as Ernst Honigmann has argued, that Macbeth's 'inward-looking honesty...represents the play's most sympathetic value'[40] because the 'value' of inwardness implies stability and this is what Macbeth's subjectivity resolutely fails to offer him. As he says to Lady Macbeth, 'I dare do all that may become a man.' (I. vii. 46) While 'become' may be read as 'befitting', it might also mean that Macbeth is starting to realise that the course of actions he is embarking upon will result in him 'becoming' a different man. To put it another way, Macbeth's subjectivity manifests a supplementary process that defers the promise of a unified 'state' because after his encounter with the Witches he believes himself to be in the process of becoming Other to his previous self. However, this Other is itself predicated upon a desire that ' Vaulting ambition' (I. vii. 27) encourages but which is also paternalistically controlled. As Duncan says to Macbeth, 'I have begun to plant thee, and will labour/ To make thee full of growing.' (I. iv. 28-29) To escape the signifying realm of the father is, as I demonstrated in the last

chapter, virtually impossible. Macbeth assumes the locus of the patriarch after the murder of Duncan but appropriating/internalising the signifying function of the father proves rather more problematic.

Interestingly, this process has ramifications for Lady Macbeth herself. She tells Macbeth at their first meeting that 'Thy letters have transported me beyond/ This ignorant present, and I feel now/ The future in the instant.' (I. v. 56-58) Commentators often miss just how radical these lines are. In a providential context, Lady Macbeth is effectively attempting to bypass providence. If the future is no longer that which is forthcoming but instead the present instant, then the means through which we experience the present instant, our subjectivity, becomes the arbiter of all actions. It is no accident that these lines herald the beginning of the Macbeths' detailed conspiracy to alter the future course of events, to quarrel with providence by plotting the murder of a divinely ordained King. To this end, Lady Macbeth's injunction to her husband, 'To beguile the time/ Look like the time' (I. v. 62-63), can be seen as an attempt to inscribe her husband as the antithesis of divinely ordained providence. If Macbeth is successful in his actions, the anti-time that he institutes will run contrary, or rather be indistinguishable from the regular time of Duncan and his legitimate heirs. The Macbeths must 'mock the time with fairest show' (I. vii. 82) by providing the course of history with a mimetic, perverted, alternative route. Central to this is Macbeth's assertion that his murder of Duncan 'Might be the be-all and the end-all-here,/ But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,/ We'd jump the life to come.' (I. vii. 5-7) It is in these lines that *Macbeth* comes closest to glimpsing an existence, and by extension a moral order, outwith an explicitly providential context. But it is only a fleeting glimpse. As Ned Lukacher has

observed, one of the central problems in *Macbeth* is 'the fact that language cannot be manipulated by a will that can never know its own essence.'[41] Even though Macbeth's subjectivity is closely bound to anti-time - the inversion of providence that he represents - the more his subjectivity is foregrounded, the more Macbeth realises that this anti-time also brings to the fore a deficiency at the centre of his being.

In *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, the philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis outlines a theory of representation that augments my reading of *Macbeth* so far. In the first place, Castoriadis rejects the notion that mimesis offers a 'representation of reality' that is then perceived by the subject: 'Representation...is not a painting hung within the subject decked out with various kinds of *trompe – l'oeil*, or else itself an immense *trompe – l'oeil*'.[42] Instead, it is a much more uninscribed phenomenon:

> Representation is perpetual presentation, the incessant flux in and through which anything can be given. It does not belong *to* the subject, it *is*, to begin with, the subject...Representation is precisely that by which this 'us' can never be closed up within itself, that by which it overflows on all sides, constantly makes itself other than it 'is', posits itself in and through the positioning of figures and exceeds every given figure.[43]

In relation to *Macbeth*, the protagonist's subjectivity is the focus of the drama because he inverts the representative and providential basis of early modern discourse. But because this representative order was itself, as I have argued, deeply contradictory, the subject who harnesses its signifying power by challenging it 'constantly makes itself other than it is'. Ultimately, what early modern discourse knows but cannot acknowledge and what *Macbeth* dramatises is the fact that, as Castoriadis concludes, 'Representation is not tracing out the spectacle of the world, it is that in and through which at a given moment a world arises.'[44]

Macbeth comes to realise that his actions have ushered in a parallel reality to that instituted by God. A modern analogue that helps to explain this process might be Robert Zemeckis's film, *Back to the Future II* (1989) in which the characters Doc Brown and Marty McFly travel forward in time. However, an elderly Biff Tannen, the McFly family nemesis, spots them. Tannen steals Brown's time machine and travels back in time to give his younger self an almanac containing the results of all major sporting events. With the knowledge contained in this almanac, the younger Tannen becomes an extremely wealthy gambler and creates an alternate future reality in which he marries McFly's mother and presides over an anarchic Spring Valley where gambling and prostitution run rife.[45] But whereas in *Back to the Future II* disorder is reflected in the perceived moral decay of American society, in *Macbeth* this disorder first manifests itself in the natural world. After the murder of Duncan, strange signs and occurrences usher in the 'parallel reality' of Macbeth's new order. As Lennox exclaims:

> The night has been unruly: where we lay,
> Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
> Lamentations heard I th' air; strange screams of death,
> And, prophesying with accents terrible
> Of dire combustion, and confus'd events,
> New hatch'd to th' woeful time, the obscure bird
> Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
> Was feverous, and did shake. (II. iii. 55-62)

The time is now 'woeful' and prophesy only speaks of 'confus'd events'. An early modern audience would surely have noticed the connection between this new anti-time and what Macbeth says soon after the discovery of his murder of Duncan: 'Had I but died an hour before this chance,/ I had liv'd a blessed time.' (II. iii. 91-92) They would also be aware that his anti-time institutes an inverted teleology of its own. As John Calvin notes, God's providence also includes

'historical contingency'[46] or what theologians commonly refer to as future contingents. This refers to a range of possible actions in the future that God is responsible for. But by aping God, by killing the providentially appointed King and instituting his own anti-reign, Macbeth also becomes responsible for guaranteeing all the future contingents that pose a potential threat to his position. It is for this reason that the play follows the course of murder and civil strife that it does. Macbeth must be 'master of *his* time' (III. i. 40 my emphasis) for 'To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus'. (III. i. 47) Accordingly Banquo and his line must be destroyed because as Macbeth pointedly notes, 'every minute of his being thrusts/ Against my near'st of life'. (III. i. 116-117)

What Macbeth does not realise until it is almost too late is that 'his' anti-time is not exclusive to him and his own subjective experience. It also impinges on the existence of those he now rules. This is reflected in his inability to master contingency, to contain all the threats to his throne and the anti-time it represents. It is significant that Shakespeare seems to be uninterested in anything other than those events in Macbeth's life that refer directly to his usurpation. He becomes, like Middleton and Rowley's Beatrice-Joanna, 'the deed's creature'. (III. iv. 137)[47] His precarious position is highlighted most forcefully in the language and stage directions of the banquet scene when, after his murder, Banquo's ghost appears. In the first place, it is noticeable that, as the authoritative Folio stage direction puts it, '*The Ghost of BANQUO enters, and sits in MACBETH'S place.*' (III. iv. 40 SD)[48] The symbolic function of Banquo's position is foregrounded here in that, as principal claimant to the throne of Scotland (in Shakespeare's play, at least), he occupies his usurped symbolic space at the head of the realm. It is also important that it is the audience in the

theatre, and not those present at Macbeth's banquet, who are able to see Banquo: 'Pr'ythee, see there!/ Behold! Look! Lo! How say you?' (III. iv. 67-68). As in the example from Hamlet in the previous chapter, the audience is forced to privilege Macbeth's gaze, but in so doing, they only serve to underline his isolation. Macbeth expresses the terror of his isolated perception when he notes: 'the time has been,/ That, when the brains were out, the man would die,/ And there an end; but now, they rise again'. (III. iv. 77-79) Through the appearance of Banquo, Shakespeare allows the theatre audience to glimpse the legitimate real-time of providential history that Macbeth has overwritten. However, in only allowing one person on stage to see Banquo, Shakespeare foregrounds the terrible weight of Macbeth's subjectivity. For like a perverse anti-God, Macbeth is now privy to the imprecations of the dead.

This fact is brutally affirmed in Macbeth's most famous soliloquy. About to go into battle and having learned of Lady Macbeth's death, he says:

> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all or yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing. (V. v. 19-28)

This speech represents an extraordinary cry of rage against the whole metaphysical edifice of early modern society. It is not so much, as Terry Eagleton suggests, that 'Macbeth ends up chasing an identity which continually eludes him.'[49] On the contrary, Macbeth gives up chasing an identity that he realises he could never have attained in the first place. As Emile Benveniste has noted, 'It is in and through language that man constitutes himself as a *subject*.

because language alone establishes the concept of "ego" in reality, in *its* reality which is that of being.'[50] Because of this, the subject is inescapably produced within the symbolic order. But in Macbeth's case, he finds that the symbolic order is predicated upon a shifting signifier, a 'shadow' that only represents what it lacks. His inability to centre himself reveals the traumatic limits of language as representation, as well as the kernel at the heart of the subject, the 'endless gulf' that representation attempts to overcome but that inadvertently exposes that which also animates this 'tale told by an idiot'.

Macbeth's reference to the 'poor player,/ that struts and frets his hour upon the stage' also draws attention to his own Other, the actor playing him on stage. This gap between player and actor is crucial as it parallels Macbeth's own status in the metaphysical discourse that he inverts, always one step away from the self-constituting subjectivity that would transgress both providence and the exigencies of the playhouse. Ironically Macbeth's anti-time no longer focuses on the present or even the future, but squarely on the past, on 'yesterday'. The 'last syllable of recorded time' will only record Macbeth's reign as an aberration, a temporary anomaly in the history of the divinely ordained progress of Kings. Macbeth becomes, to borrow Gerard Manley Hopkins' phrase, 'Time's eunuch'.[51] It is no accident that the man who kills Macbeth, Macduff, was 'from his mother's womb/ *Untimely* ripp'd.' (V. viii. 15-16 my emphasis) It is almost as if, in Macduff's revenge, Shakespeare is adhering to Lady Macbeth's own advice to her husband: 'To beguile the time/ Look like the time.' In a strange way, Macduff also represents anti-time, but in his case it is a 'virtuous' anti-time that acts as the antidote to Macbeth's time of terror. In what is clearly a

deliberate reference to the issue of 'time', Macduff enters with Macbeth's head, and cries 'the time is free.' (V. ix. 21)

The populace acclaims the new King, Malcolm. Yet his claim that 'what needful else/ That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,/ We will perform in measure, time, and place' (V. ix. 37-39) can, in the context of Macbeth's demise, be seen as nothing more than a remystification of the very processes that have been demystified throughout the course of the play. Malcolm may represent the legitimate subject of the master signifier, the Big Other, but the play has conclusively demonstrated the instability of the ideological discourse that institutes this process. As Slavoj Žizek explains:

> The subject of the signifier is precisely this lack, this impossibility of finding a signifier which would be 'its own': *the failure of its representation is its positive condition.* The subject tries to articulate itself in a signifying representation; the representation fails; instead of a richness we have a lack, and this void opened by the failure *is* the subject of the signifier. To put it paradoxically: the subject of the signifier is a retroactive effect of the failure of its own representation; that is why the failure of representation is the only way to represent it adequately.[52]

Macbeth and the Witches invert the 'normal' practices of society. Both stand for a failure of representation, but this is a failure that goes to the centre of early modern discourse. For in challenging providence, both show that the authority of the ideological centre can never convincingly repress its opposite or inverse. *Macbeth* may well be concerned with a deeply traumatic period of anti-time but it also allowed early modern audiences to see that their entire ideological edifice was predicated upon the failure of representation as a *constitutive* necessity. It is for this reason that the lack at the heart of the subject is nothing more than a copy, an inversion of the lack at the centre of society's most deeply held signifying practices.

Notes to Chapter Seven

[1] Thomas Bastard, 'Ad Lectorem de Subiecto Operis Sui', in *The Penguin Book of Elizabethan Verse*, ed. Edward Lucie Smith (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p. 47

[2] Stuart Clark, *Thinking With Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 82

[3] Katherine Maus, *Inwardness and the Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 11

[4] One article which does explore *Macbeth* from the perspective of early modern Calvinism is John Stachniewski's 'Calvinist Psychology in *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Studies*, XX, 1988, 169-190.

[5] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Coleridge's Lectures on Shakespeare and Other Poets and Dramatists* (London: J. M. Dent, 1911), p. 158

[6] William Hazlitt, *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* in *Shakespeare Criticism: A Selection* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1916), p. 311

[7] A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearian Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* (London: Macmillan, 1971), p. 290

[8] *Ibid.* p. 285

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.* p. 291

[11] In associating Knight's reading of the Witches with the vestiges of Romanticism, I am differing from Hugh Grady's account of Knight's work in which he says that 'it is as a Modernist rather than a Romantic that he should be remembered.' Hugh Grady, *The Modernist Shakespeare: Critical Texts in a Material World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 87

[12] G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy With Three New Essays* (London: Methuen, 1954), p. 157

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Kenneth Muir (London: Methuen, 1971).

[15] James VI and I, *Daemonology*, ed. G. B. Harrison (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1925), p. 16

[16] Clark, *Thinking With Demons*, p. 135

[17] *The Witches of Northamptonshire*, in *Witchcraft in England: 1558-1618*, ed. B. Rosen (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), p. 351

[18] William Rankins, *A Mirrovr of Monsters* (New York and London: Johnson Reprint Company Ltd., 1972), Sig. B3^{v}

[19] Bruce R. Smith, 'L[o]cating the sexual subject', in *Alternative Shakespeares Vol. 2*, ed. Terence Hawkes (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), p. 119

[20] John Calvin, *Commentary on Isaiah* in *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, ed. J.K.S. Reid (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 38

[21] John Calvin, *Sermon on Job, no. 58*, in *Ibid.* p. 39

[22] Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Catechetica*, in *The Later Christian Fathers*, ed. and trans. Henry Bettenson (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 131

[23] William Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 3

[24] Calvin, *Sermon on Job, no. 58*, p. 58

[25] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeil and trans, Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961), I. 190

[26] *Ibid.* I. 97

[27] *Ibid.* I. 102

[28] *Ibid.* I. 108

[29] *Ibid.* I. 146

[30] *Ibid.* I. 63

[31] Terry Eagleton, *William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 2

[32] Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus, A – and B – Texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 190

[33] John Taylor, *A Common Whore with all these graces grac'd* (London: James Boler, 1630), p. 106

[34] Laura Levine, *Men in Woman's Clothing: Anti-Theatricality and Effeminization.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 4

[35] Eagleton, *William Shakespeare*, *op. cit.*

[36] James VI and I, *Daemonology*, pp. 4-5

[37] *Ibid.* p. 6

[38] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 145

[39] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearian Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 139

[40] Ernst Honigmann, *Shakespeare's Seven Tragedies* (London: Macmillan, 1976), p. 138

[41] Ned Lukacher, *Daemonic Figures: Shakespeare and the Question of Conscience* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 188

[42] Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 331

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] McFly rectifies this state of affairs by traveling back to the moment when the elder Tannen met his younger self and by stealing back the almanac. But this course of actions is complicated by the fact that McFly is also present in this reality as the character 'Calvin Klein', the name he adopted when traveling back to the future in the first film of the trilogy.

[46] Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 472

[47] Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Changeling*, in *Thomas Middleton: Three Plays*, ed. Kenneth Muir (London: J. M. Dent, 1984), p. 185

[48] William Shakespeare, *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* A Facsimile Edition Prepared by Helge Kokeritz (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 731.

[49] Eagleton, *William Shakespeare*, p. 3

[50] Emile Benveniste, *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek (Florida: University of Miami Press, 1971), p. 224

[51] 'Thou art indeed just, Lord', in *Gerard Manley Hopkins: Poems and Prose*, ed. W. H. Gardner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 67

[52] Slavoj Žizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), p. 175

Chapter Eight

'He was as rattling thunder': Foreigners, Protestantism and *Antony and Cleopatra* as Early Modern Apocalypse

In this final chapter, I want to show how Protestant discourse feeds into the construction of foreigners during the early modern period. In accordance with one of the central arguments of this thesis – that the Other emerges from within – I intend to focus on what might be termed indigenous foreigners, those peoples and representations who emerged from within the dominant discourses of early modern England. I take it as axiomatic that comparatively few early modern individuals, and certainly those who lived outwith the metropolis, had actual experience of foreign peoples. For these reasons, early modern constructions of foreigners are very often fantasy accounts that are closer to the centre of early modern culture than their subjects' 'foreign' origins and locations might suppose. I also want to offer this chapter as a practical example of how the study of early modern religion might be integrated within an account that is not directly about religion matters. Certainly religion is ubiquitous in early modern culture and discourse, as I have demonstrated in this thesis. But if religion is to be satisfactorily reintroduced into the mainstream of early modern scholarship, then it must also be reintegrated as one of a number of important critical tools

that scholars might use in the course of their analyses. This chapter, therefore, stands as a practical example of how this integration might proceed.

Common to these aims is the philosophical and theological idea of revelation. As the philosopher Giorgio Agamben writes, 'What revelation allows us to know must...be something not only that we could not know without revelation but also that conditions the very possibility of knowledge in general'.[1] For Agamben, revelation constitutes the epistemological function of discourse itself. As he goes on to note:

> Language, which for human beings mediates all things and all knowledge, is itself immediate. Nothing immediate can be reached by speaking beings – nothing, that is, except language itself, mediation itself...There can be no true human community on the basis of a presupposition – be it a nation, a language, or even the a priori of communication of which hermeneutics speaks. What unites human beings among themselves is not a nature, a voice or a common imprisonment in signifying language; it is the vision of language itself and, therefore, the experience of language's limits, its *end*.[2]

In what follows, I want to suggest, by focussing on the early modern Egyptian, that this figure threatens to reveal the limits both of language, and more importantly, of the contemporary nation state. Following on from this I argue that the common critical approach to *Antony and Cleopatra* which privileges the racial differences of Egypt and Rome often fails to take into account the way in which the play's mimetic strategy mediates the construction of the foreigner by refusing to locate difference 'elsewhere', but resolutely *here*. To this end, the play's extensive use of the book of Revelation offers a comment on the nature of racial difference as well as the fragility of the Protestant nation.

On the 31st of December 1600, Queen Elizabeth I granted the East India Company its first charter. Even by Elizabethan standards, the venture was a massive commercial success. Over the first five voyages, the company 'averaged

enormous profits of 101 per cent',[3] and extended abundant gains to those members of the mercantile classes and nobility that possessed sufficient capital to speculate on the venture. The stated aim of the project was that the voyagers

> for the honour of this our realm of England as for the increase of our navigation and advancement of trade [and] of merchandise within our said realm and the dominions of the same[,] might adventure and set forth one or more voyages...to the East Indies, in the countries and parts of Asia and Africa...as where trade and traffic of merchandise may[,] by all likelihood[,] be...had.[4]

The phrase 'trade and traffic of enterprise' is, in effect, predicated upon a proto-capitalist principle of the *parity* of economic exchange value. As Fernand Braudel rightly observes, 'markets are found everywhere, even in the most rudimentary societies'.[5] But what is central is the mode and practice of exchange that a particular market might foster. In respect of the East India Charter, cultural dissimilarity is subsumed within the overriding imperatives of colonial expansionism. Exchange seemingly takes place according to some unwritten but universally accepted principles of economic and cultural equality. In each case, the legitimation of the *grand recit* would seem to rely upon a discourse of similitude, not difference: at what price is this legitimation achieved? In *The Modern World System* Immanuel Wallerstein points out that in Tudor England,

> the monarchy was caught in the contradiction of wishing to create a national economy based on new forces that could compete successfully in the new world-economy and being the apex of a system of status and privilege based on socially conservative forces.[6]

It would be surprising in the extreme if those documents of Tudor expansionism exhibited a politics of Utopian economic parity in relation to their projected trading partners. Instead, it is necessary to read against what would appear to be the dominant ideological thrust of documents like the East India Charter in order

to excavate those oppositional positions that might, in this case, be closer to the ideological centre.

In many respects, the way in which this reading is undertaken depends very much upon how older forms of ideological assimilation are approached in theoretical terms. In *The Political Unconscious*, Fredric Jameson offers one particularly useful model. Outlining the dynamics of what he calls 'the *ideology of form*'[7] most commonly encountered in the textual products of a given society, he goes on to note:

> The analysis of the ideology of form, properly completed, should reveal the formal persistence of...archaic structures of alienation – and the sign systems specific to them – beneath the overlay of all the more recent and historically original types of alienation – such as political domination and commodity reification – which have become the dominants of that most complex of all cultural revolutions, late capitalism, in which all the earlier modes of production in one way or another structurally coexist.[8]

In relation to the East India Company Charter, this 'archaic' structure of alienation is revealed, I think, in that nervous little phrase found towards the end of the quoted extract, 'by all likelihood'. This phrase raises the possibility that the Elizabethans' projected trading partners might not be as amenable to the project as might otherwise have been hoped. All this may seem rather obvious, but what it also points towards is the connection between the early modern economic base and that culture's constructions of what might be termed trading subjectivities. Difference, manifested at the barely recognised level of the individual is what defers the otherwise inevitable victory of the dominant colonial narrative. It is this aspect that must be focused upon.

The following example from John Webster's play *The White Devil* (1612) will help to illustrate the points made so far. Set in Italy, a place of political intrigue and sexual licence for early modern audiences, *The White Devil* offers

amongst other things a baroque exploration of the politics of exchange in relation to sexuality. The second scene of Act One is concerned with the prostitute Vittoria's seduction of Duke Brachiano. It is a representation of extraordinary sophistication. As a prostitute, Vittoria's body already stands as both the subject and object of patriarchal commodification. This is important for in the words of Judith Butler, 'The radical difference between *referent* and *signified* is the site where the materiality of language and that of the world in which it seeks to signify are perpetually negotiated.'[9] Such ambivalence can be read in Brachiano's attempt to tie Vittoria to the patriarchal strictures of a name: 'We call the cruel fair', he states: 'what name for you/That are so merciful?' (I. ii. 213-214)[10] The question is not answered. Instead, and significantly, Vittoria's maid Zanche, in her only comment in the entire scene, remarks 'See now they close.' (I. ii. 214) The word 'close' is extremely polysemous in early modern English and connotes a number of discourses such as secrecy, concealment, seclusion, intimacy, union and occultism.[11] But the word also carries with it inferences of trade, of a deal being done. Exchange is associated here with a hidden, transgressive locus that both audiences on the stage and in the playhouse are voyeuristic gazers upon. That Zanche should use this word is doubly suggestive because as a Moor, she adds to the potent sexuality of the scene in an important way. Witness this fascinating stage direction: 'ZANCHE *brings out a carpet, spreads it and lays it on two fair cushions.*' (I. ii. 204 SD) A mixture of prostitute's *boudoir*, Moorish harem and trading post, Zanche's framing narrative contributes towards a sense of what Dympna Callaghan has called the 'erotic grotesque'.[12]

After the scene has been set, what takes place is an exchange between Brachiano and Vittoria that is commonly dismissed as nothing more than a piece of *risqué* knockabout:

> BRACHIANO. What value is this jewel?
>
> VITTORIA. 'Tis the ornament
> Of a weak fortune.
>
> BRACHIANO. In sooth I'll have it; nay I will but change
> My jewel for your jewel.
> [.....]
>
> BRACHIANO. Nay let me see you wear it.
>
> VITTORIA. Here sir.
>
> BRACH. Nay lower, you shall wear my jewel lower.
> (I. ii. 226-233)

Here, the sexual exchange takes on the tone of a colonial encounter. One of the most prized treasures of colonial expeditions of the period were precious stones. Indeed, a tract of 1573 makes the relatively commonplace claim that 'Our men gathered up carbuncles and diamonds with rakes under the spice trees',[13] a statement that throws into immediate relief the competing value systems of trader and native. However, in the case of *The White Devil* it is noticeable that Brachiano does not so much take the jewel from Vittoria as offer a jewel in exchange. Brachiano is placed in a position whereby he is forced to 'trade' with the exotic Vittoria on her own terms. This scandalous parity not only foregrounds the fluidity of the early modern economic base beneath the ideological *façade*, it also draws attention to the potentially subversive power of female colonial subjectivity. Zanche is reduced to providing the framing narrative for Vittoria and making one (albeit crucial) comment during the scene. This in no way diminishes the agency of either of these females. Indeed, in this

scene, Vittoria is able to provide a subversive counter-discourse in opposition to the Duke *through* Zanche because the Moor provides that discourse's objective representation. This is a paradigm that was to prove suggestive to many writers of the period.

Such moments bring to light the outlines of a particularly complex cultural movement. In the first place, it is important to be aware of the fact that these 'foreign' subjectivities are produced by a dominant culture that posits, consciously or not, a connection between economic fluidity and the instability of identity. I want to argue that this connection has become less central than it might be in early modern studies. For example, it is noticeable that in his book *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*, Richard Halpern feels the need to offer what occasionally reads like an *apologia* for utilising Marxist theories of production in his powerful analyses of Tudor economics, pedagogy and textual practices. By arguing for 'the *complementarity* of Marxist and non-Marxist approaches',[14] especially Michel Foucault's theories of discourse and power, Halpern is able to suggest that 'Marx's prehistory of capital provides a model for how theoretical discourse can absorb a genealogical narrative without simply fragmenting.'[15] So if Fredric Jameson was concerned to retrospectively locate the 'archaic structures of alienation' by offering a reading of textual production against the grain, then Halpern reverses this paradigm. Instead, he attempts to 'locate those regions within English Renaissance culture where the elements of a specifically capitalist culture begin to emerge in nascent or anticipatory forms from within the context of a late feudal society.'[16] This is the model that I intend to utilise in the remainder of my discussion. For while I recognise that there can be no theoretical position that is not in some way a retrospective practice,

Halpern's model moves out from the textual products of early modern culture in a way that consciously offers a collision with the retrospectively constructed narratives of the critic. In this way, a dialectic is produced that looks both forward and back, Janus-like, from a nascent economic moment, to a developed late capitalist location that comments on both its own historicity and its more deep-rooted structures of alienation. In order to develop this idea, I want to turn now to what might be termed the early modern Egyptian question.

Tudor and Jacobean England had a problem with Egyptians. In what is in some ways an uncanny pre-echo of the contemporary 'debate' on asylum seekers, the Elizabethan government sought at regular intervals to legislate against a group who were considered to be extremely dangerous. An Act of parliament passed in 1597 noted:

> all such persons not being Fellons wandering and pretending themselves to be Egipcyans, or wandering in the Habbite Forme or Attire of counterfaite Egipcians; shalbe taken adjudged and deemed Rogue Vagabondes and Sturdy Beggers, and shall sussteyne such Payne and Punyshment as by this Acte is in that behalfe appointed.[17]

It is clear from this extract that the term 'Egipcyan' conflates both 'Egyptian' and 'Gypsy', and since Gypsies were commonly believed to originate in Egypt, the modalities of this particular term of abuse are relatively clear. Nonetheless, the lexical and ideological separation of terms and meanings is not as straightforward as this distinction might presuppose (it would be interesting to know if anybody was in fact prosecuted as a 'counterfaite Egipcian' in early modern England). The Tudor government felt compelled to legislate directly against the 'Egipcians' because of their dangerous mobility. As John Cowell writes in *The Interpreter* (1607):

> *Egyptians* (*Egyptiani*) are in our statues and lawes of *England*, a counterfeit kinde of roages, that being English or Welch people, accompany

> themselves together, disguising themselves in straunge roabes, blackening their faces and bodies, and framing to themselves an vnknowen language. wander vp and downe, and vnder pretence of telling Fortunes, curing diseases...abuse the ignorant common people, by stealing all that is not too hote or too heauie for their carriage.[18]

In a society where status and order were still to a large extent determined by regulating the subject's geographical and economic mobility, such fluidity was threatening. Indeed, as Edward Hext, Justice of the Peace in Somerset, wrote to Lord Burghley in 1596:

> Experience teacheth that thexecution [sic] of that godlye lawe vppon that wycked secte of Roages the Egipsions had clene cutt them of, but they seynge the liberty of others do begynne to sprynge up againe and there are in this Cuntry of them'.[19]

It is significant to note that Hext's rhetoric invokes an explicitly racial lexis ('in this Cuntrey'), which appeals to a notion of racial privilege that is so common in English writing of the period. If 'that wycked secte of Roages the Egipsions' were really only English people dressed up, why then invoke a clear discourse of geographic and racial otherness? Clearly, the term 'Egyptian' as a simple synonym for 'Gypsy' or even Englishman/woman will not do. This is not to propose that these early modern 'Egipsions' *were* in fact racial Egyptians. Rather, it is to suggest that this term is rather more complex than it may at first appear, connoting as it does a dangerous economic and racial liminality.

This liminality was also expressed in the alleged actions of these peoples. In his *Lanthorne and Candle-Light* (1608), Thomas Dekker goes out of his way to locate the racial origin of the Egyptians firmly within England. He argues:

> If they be Egiptians, sure I am they never discended from the tribes of any of those people that came out of the land of *Egypt*: *Ptolomy* (King of Egiptians) I warrant never called them his Subjects: no nor *Pharaoh* before him. Looke what difference there is between a civell citizen of Dublin and a wilde Irish Kerne, so much difference there is betweene one of these

> counterfect Egiptians and a true English Begger. An English Roague is just of the same livery.[20]

It is possible to note again a curious logic at work in Dekker's text. 'Egiptians' are not actual Egyptians, yet this contrariety is not predicated upon difference but on an essentialist notion of subjectivity. So even though the 'civell citizen of Dublin' and the 'wilde Irish Kerne' are both from the same country and may be supposed by this logic to share common national traits, the former is 'more Irish' than the other. In the same way, it is possible to tell an Egyptian from a 'true English beggar' because that beggar is more 'English' than the Egyptian. The other problem in this account is that Dekker also draws on a stock of racial commonplaces and stereotypes drawn principally from travel writers who - unlike Reginald Scot who said they were 'The counterfeit *Aegyptians*' and Robert Burton who called them a superstitious and idolatrous race[21] - *were* concerned with explaining what other nations were 'actually like' from the inside out. For example, in the same way that the travel writer D'Audity notes that 'the Aegyptians have been the most superstitious, or rather the most ridiculous of the idolaters',[22] so Dekker relates a list of the Egyptians' 'blacke and deadly-damned *Impieties*'.[23] Where does the racial Egyptian begin and the counterfeit Egyptian end? Racial difference becomes here less a question of skin tone or physical characteristics and more one of subjective fluidity connected firmly to economic and spatial mobility.

To return to the English Egyptians, it might be useful to draw attention to another section of Thomas Dekker's text. In this part, he talks of the Egyptians' cruelty.

> The bloudy tragedies of al these, are only acted by the Women, who carrying long knives or Skeanes under their mantles, do thus play their parts: The stage is some large Heath: or a Firre bush Common far from any

> houses. Upon which casting them-selves into a Ring, they inclose the Murdered, till the Massacre be finished...But if any mad *Hamlet* hearing this, smell villanie, and rush in by violence to see what the tawny Divels are dooing, then they excuse the fact, lay the blame on those that are the Actors, and perhaps (if they see no remedie) deliver them to an officer.[24]

Like the anti-theatrical writers of the period, Dekker forces the reader to consider where the actor ends and where the role begins. The fact that Hamlet, that exemplar of early modern subjectivity for so many modern critics, is invoked here as arbiter suggests that perhaps it is no longer possible to distinguish between original and copy, between where the native ends and where the Egyptian begins. Moreover, these phallic 'bloudy tragedies' are carried out exclusively by the women. To this end, it is no mistake that contemporary writers point to emasculation as a given of life in Egypt: 'The women of Aegypt did in old time...all the offices belonging to men; whereas their husbands were idle, and kept their houses.'[25] Or as Achillas makes clear in John Fletcher's play *The False One* (1620):

> 'Tis confessed,
> My good Anchoreas, that in these eastern kingdoms
> Women are not exempted from the sceptre,
> But claim a privilege equal from the male;
> But how much such divisions have ta'en from
> The majesty of Egypt, and what factions
> Have sprung from these partitions, to the ruin
> Of the poor subject. (I. i. 14-22)[26]

What these examples help to demonstrate is that Dekker's female, Egyptian, English, emasculating, murdering actors represent a fundamental challenge to the early modern *polis*. First, their 'stage' provides a subversive, unlicensed counter-arena that takes the transgressive actions flirted with in the commercial theatre, and objectifies them: in the place of cross-dressed boys, actual women and in the place of entertainment, murder. Secondly, the Egyptians are associated with a form of femininity that challenges the ideological centre

because it emerges primarily, as I have shown, *from* a centre otherwise constructed as margin. For Dekker, as Judith Butler puts it, 'The "threat" that compels the assumption of masculine and feminine attributes is, for the former, a descent into feminine castration and abjection and, for the latter, the monstrous ascent into phallicism.'[27] Because of its cultural centrality, the gaze of the Egyptian-who-is-in-fact-English-but-isn't-quite is acutely seductive as well as decidedly dangerous, operating as it does on the liminal axis between abjection and monstrosity, between England and Egypt.

It might be objected at this stage that my argument simply becomes complicit in the colonial project by reaffirming the dominant culture's often-unpleasant constructions of the East. This charge can be answered by stating that it is too often disregarded that the most popular and well-known presentations of the East in the period remained, at very best, fantasy constructions. Fantasy constructions, moreover, that had little or nothing to do with whatever empirical knowledge *was* possessed.[28] It is also, in my view, too often forgotten that Shakespeare's was a *popular* theatre and that in all probability the literate patrons of that theatre would have been far more conversant with works by, for example, William Bullein or Thomas Nashe than by D'Audity, Sir Walter Ralegh or Richard Hakluyt. So for example, writing in 1573, Bullein talks of men called 'Fanesii' who have 'two heads and six hands' as well as the 'Scipodes' who have one foot 'which is so broad that they cover all their bodies for the rain and the sun.'[29] Pure fantasy: *popular* fantasy. It is also worth recalling at this point the man 'Of here and everywhere' (I. i. 138), the supposedly worldly Othello and his description of 'The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads/Do grow beneath their shoulders' (I. iii. 144-145).[30] Constructions

on the early modern stage of anyone who was not white, male and godly attain, *in the first instance* - and that is an important qualification - a primarily representational status.

In order to develop these points, I want to turn now to William Shakespeare's exploration of Egypt and Rome, *Antony and Cleopatra* (c. 1607). What seems most common to scholarship on this play is a structural and theoretical approach predicated upon difference. In many respects, this is hardly surprising. Much of the power of *Antony and Cleopatra* arises from its avowedly contestatory systems of power, for example Rome versus Egypt, male versus female, sea versus land or eroticism versus asceticism. However, to focus primarily on difference is also, by inference, to privilege that difference in theoretical terms. If part of the play's power arises from the contesting discourses I have outlined above then its tragic force surely originates in the inability of these systems to provide absolute definition, to prevent slippage between two opposing categories, whatever they might be. So while it may be true, as Mary Hamer writes, that early modern constructions of Cleopatra were drawn from 'the Roman poets or Plutarch'[31] or, that in the words of Ania Loomba, Cleopatra 'is framed by a discourse of non-European devilry and libidinousness',[32] such differential accounts must necessarily remain incomplete. What I want to suggest in the following reading is that the difference critics find at work in the play, a difference that, according to Catherine Belsey, locates Cleopatra 'inconsistently *elsewhere*',[33] turns the gaze of both audience and theorist back upon the ideological centre. And this gaze profoundly disrupts the strange mimetic project of the play precisely because it refuses to locate difference 'elsewhere', but resolutely *here*.

The opening scene of *Antony and Cleopatra* draws an important contrast between boundaries and excess. Philo notes that 'the dotage of our general's/ O'erflows the measure' (I. i. 1-2)[34] and then declares that, like a raging river, Antony's eyes 'now bend, now turn/The office and devotion of their view upon a tawny front.' (I. i. 4-6) At the very outset then, the Roman gaze upon Egypt is called to the audience's attention. But once the imperial lovers enter, a strange logic of quantification appears to be at work.

> CLEOPATRA
> If it be love indeed, tell me how much.
>
> ANTONY
> There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.
>
> CLEOPATRA
> I'll set a bourne how far to be beloved.
>
> ANTONY
> Then must thou need find out new heaven, new earth
> (I. i. 14-17).

Almost as if in response to Philo's (unheard) criticism, Cleopatra seeks to quantify, to regulate, and to measure the love that she and Antony share. As Terence Hawkes has pointed out, 'The 'bourns' Cleopatra imposes on love will prove very confining indeed. They extend, in the event, to only half of what we are, for their limits are those of the body.'[35] For his part, Antony recognises this desire as futile but this does not stop Cleopatra seeking to 'set a bourne'. But while Hawkes is correct up to a point, there is also a sense in which the 'limits' are themselves already undermined by the plasticity of early seventeenth century English. The most recent Arden editor of the play, John Wilders, also glosses 'bourne' as a 'limit', and while this is a perfectly acceptable reading, neither he nor Hawkes allows for a second possible meaning.

'Bourne' can also refer to a stream that runs intermittently and the *OED* gives c. 1325 as the first such usage in English.[36] While the grammatical structure of the sentence rules this out as a *direct* meaning of the word, it does at least invoke what is an avowedly supplementary discursive field and one that calls into question this editorial (and monarchical) fixity. A 'bourne' offers both a limit as well as an apex of dissolution. This foregrounds the irony of Antony's comment, 'Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch/ Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space!' (I. i. 34-35) In typical Roman fashion, Antony associates the fixity of geographical location with the fixity of subjectivity. If he cannot have Rome, he will have Egypt. But the ground is already shifting beneath his feet.

His last comment about finding out a new heaven and a new earth might be read as romantic hyperbole, but is also a quotation from the book of Revelation at the point that St. John the Divine sees the New Jerusalem. As the Geneva Bible puts it: 'And I saw a new heauen, and a new earth' (21: 1).[37] And as the Geneva version made abundantly clear to early modern Protestants, the New Jerusalem was instituted to wipe out the perversion that was Rome. But more interesting than this, as Francis Junius explains in his notes on Revelation, Rome 'is spiritually termed Sodome and Egypt'.[38] For the Roman Antony, to be paraphrasing Revelation is highly significant. Indeed, Shakespeare's use of the book of Revelation in *Antony and Cleopatra* is a subject that has received almost no critical attention, perhaps due to the fact that his use of this text seems to run against the grain of most critical interpretations which are predicated on difference.[39] What Shakespeare seems to be doing in his use of this biblical text is drawing attention to the *lack of difference* between Rome and Egypt and the

extent to which the existence of one nation seems to be predicated upon the other. To this end, it is instructive that, as Antony's world crumbles, the failed coloniser should say: 'The land bids me tread no more upon't,/...I am so lated in the world that I/ Have lost my way forever.' (III. xii. 1-4) The flip side of early modern colonial imperialism, it would seem, is spatial and affective dislocation. This is hardly surprising given the Protestant conception of the Roman nation. As Heinrich Bullinger makes clear in his influential *A Hvndred Sermons Vppon the Apocalypse of Iesu Christ* (1573), 'as the Lybarde [sic] or Panther is spotted of sundry colours: so are the Romaynes, a collection of many nations, borne to make sedition and slaughter.'[40] For early modern Protestants, Rome was constantly in a state of disintegration.

Central to this process in Shakespeare's play is the 'enchanting queen', (I. ii. 117) that acutely seductive figure, Cleopatra. It is perhaps difficult for us today to understand just how remarkable a figure Cleopatra would have been on an early modern stage especially in the context of Revelation. In the first place, she is an Egyptian. I have demonstrated the unique standing of this race in early modern England, but it is also worth stating that Reformed theologians also had great difficulties with these peoples. This is largely because their very existence as an ethnic group could not be countenanced in the Protestant view of the world. As John Calvin notes, they 'extend their antiquity to six thousand years before the creation of the world!'[41] Because Protestant polemicists like Bishop John Jewel or John Foxe took great pains, as was seen earlier, to establish that the Protestant Church was both the oldest and thus the truest in the world, such an alternative history could not be ideologically countenanced. Yet Cleopatra offered an early modern audience that very alternative. In the first place, it is

important that she is called 'serpent of old Nile.' (I. v. 25) For while this description can be read in purely figurative terms, it would surely have carried with it the resonances of a cultural discourse associated with seduction and fall, a discourse that was transgressive precisely because it could not be easily separated from the familiar Christian narrative.

Cleopatra, the transgressive queen who joins witchcraft with beauty is dangerous because mimetically, spatially and culturally, she is *never quite where we might expect her to be*. Her presentation and mimicry utterly negates the concept of dramatic mimesis as a simple 'reflection of reality' for in the words of Homi Bhabha, her 'Mimicry *repeats* rather than *re-presents*'.[42] But this is a mimicry that must be historicised within the context of early modern representational politics. It is therefore impossible to read Cleopatra, as some post-colonial critics have tended to do, simply as Rome's homogenised Other. With her seductive assimilation of English eroticisms and Anglo-centric fantasies of what colonial eroticisms *might* be, Cleopatra resists any interpretation that would seek to 'locate' her in one fixed geographical, cultural or political realm.

In order to develop this enquiry further, it might be useful to turn to the crucial moment that Antony loses the sea battle against the Roman forces. This occurs in Act Three and to this end, it is significant that it is in this Act that Shakespeare's use of Revelation really starts to come to the fore. Antony's defeat at sea is the point in the play at which any clearly defined sense he had of geographical fixity is lost. As he cries 'Authority melts from me.' (III. xiii. 94) He recovers sufficiently to state, in a moment of remarkable self-assertion, 'I am/ Antony yet' (III. xiii. 97-98) but this fixity does not last long. And the blame

is attached to Cleopatra. As early as Act Three, scene six, Cleopatra is associated with an enemy that would have generated a particular fear in a primarily Protestant audience: Caesar remarks that Antony 'hath given his empire/ Up to a whore, who are now levying/ The kings o'th' earth for war.' (III. vi. 67-69) This is apocalyptic language and refers explicitly to the seventeenth and nineteenth chapters of the book of Revelation and in particular the Whore of Babylon, associated in Protestant exegesis with the Roman Church. For example, in Revelation 17: 1-2, the Geneva Bible states: 'Come: I will shew thee the damnation of the great whore that sitteth vpon many waters'. It is surely no accident that Shakespeare should utilise as he does a concerted series of quotations from this biblical text in a play that takes place at the point in history that the imperial hegemony of Rome began to give way to its spiritual primacy.

After his defeat, Antony turns on Cleopatra. He says to her:

> I found you as a morsel, cold upon
> Dead Caesar's trencher – nay, you were a fragment
> Of Gnaeus Pompey's, besides what hotter hours,
> Unregistered in vulgar fame, you have
> Luxuriously picked out. For I am sure,
> Though you can guess what temperance should be,
> You know not what it is. (III. xiii. 121-127)

Antony's language inscribes Cleopatra as the 'Whore' so well known to early modern culture. It is noticeable that he should use the metaphor of eating to insult his lover. As Francis Junius makes clear in his notes to Revelation, the Whore of Babylon is 'In profession, the nourisher of all' and is 'most pernicious besotting miserable men with her cup, & bringing vpon them a deadly giddiness.'[43] More than this, Revelation tells us that the Whore of Babylon sat 'vpon a scarlet coloured beast' (22: 3) and as Junius notes, 'This beast is that Empire of Rome.'[44] In their sexual and dynastic union, Antony and Cleopatra

not only produce war, they symbolically prefigure the 'birth' of the Roman Church. Antony's claim that he has 'Forborne the getting of a lawful race' (III. xiii. 112), can in this light, be read as a piece of clearly defined anti-Catholicism. As most early modern writers knew, the historical Antony and Cleopatra lived at a moment that seemed to prefigure the rise of the Roman Empire, a movement that for Protestant theologians also ushered in the spread of Catholic religion. As Arthur Dent explains in *The Rvine Of Rome or An Exposition vpon the whole Reuelation* (1603), 'Rome is called Babylon mystically, figuratiuely...In which respects Rome is spiritually compared to Sodome and Egypt: To Sodome for filthinesse, and to Egypt for idolatry.'[45] In a Protestant context, the play's concern with the merging of spatial, geographic and personal identities would have come as no surprise. Antony is as much a representative of 'Egypt' as Cleopatra is a representative of 'Rome'. In an important respect then, *Antony and Cleopatra* offers us a very Protestant apocalypse.

This apocalypticism is reflected in much of Antony's language after his defeat. Speaking of Octavius Caesar, Antony says:

> He makes me angry,
> And at this time most easy 'tis to do't,
> When my good stars that were my former guides
> Have empty left their orbs and shot their fires
> Into th'abysm of hell. (III. xiii. 148-152)

These lines are taken from Revelation 9: 1 which states: 'the fift [sic] Angel blew the trumpet, and I saw a starre fall from heauen vnto the earth, and to him was giuen the key of the bottomlesse pit.' Exegesis of this passage commonly states that this verse refers to the damnation suffered by the wicked.[46] This interpretation is strengthened by Cleopatra's statement that

> The next Caesarion smite,
> Till by degrees the memory of my womb,

Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discandying of this pelleted storm
Lie graveless (III. xiii. 167-171)

Cleopatra's fear that her 'brave Egyptians' will 'Lie graveless' because of Roman force is very close to Revelation 11: 8 which states: 'their corpses shall lie in the streets of the great citie, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt', that is to say, Rome. In the same way that Antony represents 'Egypt', so Cleopatra's dead Egyptians figuratively stand for 'Rome'. It is noticeable that as the war turns conclusively against Antony, once more he loses his sense of subjective place. At the beginning of Act four, scene fourteen, he asks Eros, 'thou yet behold'st me?' (IV. xiv. 1) and he begins to accept that his subjective dislocation is related to his inability to separate himself from Egypt. He says:

Here I am Antony,
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.
I made these wars for Egypt, and the Queen –
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine,
Which, whilst it was mine, had annexed unto't
A million more, now lost – she, Eros, has
Packed cards with Caesar, and false-played my glory,
Unto an enemy's triumph. (IV. xiv. 13-20)

In a sense, this is the most realistic of all Antony's speeches. For while he is wrong that Cleopatra has gone over to the Roman side, the subtext of the speech places Rome and Egypt not in opposition but as elements of the dialectic that for a Protestant audience, leads to the production of idolatrous Roman religion, the 'enemy's triumph'.

After his botched suicide, Antony quite literally returns to Egypt. 'I am dying, Egypt, dying' (IV. xv. 19) he exclaims to Cleopatra. He also seems to accept the impossibility of distinguishing definitively between Rome and Egypt. As he says after stabbing himself: 'Not Caesar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony/ But Antony's hath triumphed on itself.' (IV. xv. 15-16) If Caesar is associated

with Rome then it might be said that in killing himself, Antony is aligning his suicide with Egypt. But his death is not as straightforward as this. Shakespeare inscribes Antony not as a freestanding subject but as an effect of those apocalyptic discourses that have shaped him and neither located him in this place or in that.

This can all be connected, I believe, to what might be termed the *spatial* importance of the book of Revelation. Saint John the Divine was thought to have written the book on the island of Patmos, a fact that was of some consequence for Protestant theologians. As Arthur Dent explains:

> Some write that this Ile of *Pathmos* is accounted amongst the Ilands called *Sporades*, which lye ouer against *Asia*, and the Citie of *Ephasus*, and was in the sight of both *Europe* and *Africa*, so that it seemed to be as it were a middle seate or holy chaire, out of the which Christ preached by *Iohn* from heauen to the whole world.[47]

The liminal status of Patmos, facing both Europe and Africa, stands as a metaphor for the extraordinary spatial politics of *Antony and Cleopatra*. The lovers represent both Rome and Egypt. Yet neither physical location, nor what it stands for is exclusive to the Roman or the Egyptian. This is because of the subtext of the play, the apocalyptic birth of the Catholic faith. Indeed, Cleopatra poignantly makes this link after Antony has died. She says of her lover:

> His face was as the heavens, and therein stuck
> A sun and moon which kept their course and lighted
> The little O, the earth.
> [.....]
> His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
> Crested the world; his voice was propertied
> As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;
> But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
> He was as rattling thunder. (V. ii. 78-85)

This speech utilises Revelation 10: 1-5 and as Junius makes clear, this is the chapter of the book which 'is a transition from the common historie of the world

unto that which is particular of the Church.'[48] Yet when she asks Dollabella if 'there was or might be such a man/As this I dreamt of?' the reply is almost unbearable: 'Gentle madam, no.' (V. ii. 92-93) It might be true that 'Rome is called Egypt', but such statements only serve to draw attention to the textuality of such utterances as well as to the inchoate centre, the *objet petit a* that structures Antony and Cleopatra's love.

It is noticeable that Cleopatra's biggest fear after Antony dies is that she will be brought to the colonial centre, Rome:

> The quick comedians
> Extemporally will stage us, and present
> Our Alexandrian revels: Antony
> Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
> Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
> I' th' posture of a whore. (V. ii. 212-217)

Cleopatra imagines her objectification on the Roman stage from the position of the colonial subject she would become. Like Calvin's God, the thought of being objectified in the mimetic sphere by someone who could never partake of her 'greatness' is what Cleopatra could not bear. Gazing upon a representation of herself from the colonial centre would not only expose the simultaneously decorous and rebarbative imperatives of early modern mimetic spatiality; it would deconstruct the exigencies of Reformed representational politics. And, of course, this is precisely what it *does* do. Cleopatra's metadramatic comments only serve to draw attention to the fact that, on the early Jacobean stage, she *is* a 'squeaking', cross-dressed boy, yet another potent fantasy figure in early modern culture. It is almost as if the early moderns did not want to get too close to their fantasy constructions, Egyptian or otherwise, for fear of destroying the powerful cultural narratives built around them. Possibly Shakespeare saw this desire for what it was: a pure fantasy that could not be

sustained indefinitely. As Jacques Lacan has stated, the gaze is never a one-way process: it always returns. And in its return, it reveals the centre as a spurious unity, infinitely deferred.

At the centre of Antony and Cleopatra's love is a conjunctive, an 'and' that both unites and defers. Shakespeare's use of the book of Revelation in this remarkable play points us towards the end of this 'and', the end of lovers, the end of individuals, the end of time, and the end of discourse. Perhaps in this respect the audience are as seduced by Cleopatra as much as Antony is. The pre-Christian Whore of Babylon who quotes from the book Revelation, which she could never have known, ultimately collapses both historical and temporal markers. A more radical challenge to Protestant discourse would be hard to find. After all, the most worrying aspect of the English Egyptian was that s/he would offer the populace a glimpse of something that should otherwise have remained hidden. As Thomas Hartman notes: 'the wretched, wily, wandering vagabonds calling...themselves Egyptians...hiding and covering their deep, deceitful practices, feeding the rude and common people...and practising palmistry to such as would know their fortunes.'[49] But to achieve the end, the promise of Revelation, whether offered by Cleopatra or the 'Egipcian' on the heath, also requires death. Perhaps here, then, it is possible to glimpse obliquely the *objet petit a* at the heart of the play in the haunting, ambiguous, sensuous dying words of that 'Rare Egyptian': 'What should I stay-' (V. ii. 312). If Agamben is correct when he notes that 'The fulfilled revelation of language is a word completely abandoned by God'[50] then at the moment of Cleopatra's death when she seems briefly to fight death off, her gaze returns, impelling the audience to confront, however briefly, the Catholic darkness behind the bright Protestant day.

Notes to Chapter Eight

[1] Giorgio Agamben, 'The Idea of Language', in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy* ed. and trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 39

[2] Ibid. p. 47

[3] Ania Loomba, 'Shakespeare and Cultural Difference', in *Alternative Shakespeares Vol. 2*, ed. Terence Hawkes (London and New York: Routledge 1996), p. 183

[4] *Statutes and Other Constitutional Documents 1558-1625*, ed. by G.W. Prothero (London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1944), pp. 448-449

[5] Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 30

[6] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York and London: Academic Press, 1974), p. 269

[7] Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 98

[8] *Ibid.* p. 100

[9] Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), p. 69

[10] All references are to John Webster, *The White Devil*, ed. John Russell Brown (London: Methuen, 1968)

[11] See Patricia Parker, *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context* (Chicago and London: The Chicago University Press, 1996), p. 252

[12] Dympna Callaghan, '"Othello was a white man": properties of race on Shakespeare's stage', in *Alternative Shakespeare's Vol. 2*, ed. Hawkes, p. 206

[13] William Bullein, *A Dialogue against the Pestilence*, in *Life in Shakespeare's England*, ed. John Dover Wilson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), p. 345

[14] Richard Halpern, *The Poetics and Politics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 2

[15] *Ibid.* p. 13

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] 'An Acte for Punyshment of Rogues, Vagabondes and Sturdy Beggars' (39 Elizabeth, c. 4, 1597), in *Tudor Economic Documents*, ed. R. H. Tawney and E. Power (London: Longman, 1924), p. 355

[18] John Cowell, *The Interpreter* (Menston: The Scholar Press, 1972), Sigs. $Bb1^{r}$-$Bb2^{v}$

[19] 'Letter from Edward Hext, Justice of the Peace in Somerset, to Lord Burghley, 25 Sept., 1596', in *Tudor Economic Documents*, ed. R. H. Tawney and E. Power, p. 344-345

[20] Thomas Dekker, *Lanthorne and Candle-Light* (London: J. M. Dent, 1928), p. 236

[21] Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (Arundel: Centaur Press, 1964), p. 174 and see Robert Burton, *The Anatomie of Melancholie*, ed. Holbrook Jackson (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1936), p. 353

[22] P. D' Audity, *The Estates, Empires, & Principalities Of The World*, trans. Edward Grimstone, (London: Adam Islip, 1615), p. 1025

[23] Dekker, *Lanthorne and Candle-Light*, p. 239

[24] *Ibid.* p. 238

[25] D'Audity, *The Estates Empires, & Principalities*, p. 1023

[26] John Fletcher, *The False One*, (London: Routledge, 1883), p. 388

[27] Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, p. 103

[28] It is perhaps significant to this end that in the period, emblems were thought to have originated with ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. See Barbara Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 179-80

[29] Bullein, *A Dialogue against the Pestilence*, p. 344

[30] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Othello* in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and others (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997), p. 2103, p. 2110

[31] Mary Hamer, *Signs of Cleopatra. History, Politics, Representation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), xv

[32] Loomba, 'Shakespeare and Cultural Difference', p. 175

[33] Catherine Belsey, 'Cleopatra's seduction', in *Alternative Shakespeares Vol. 2*, ed. Hawkes, p. 47

[34] All references are to William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. John Wilders, The Arden Shakespeare (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

[35] Terence Hawkes, '"*King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*": The Language of Love', in *Antony and Cleopatra: New Casebooks* ed. John Drakakis (London: Macmillan, 1994), p. 112

[36] *The Oxford English Dictionary Vol. II*, prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, 2nd Ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989)

[37] All references are to *The Geneva Bible* (London: Christopher Barker, 1599)

[38] Francis Junius, *The Revelation Of Saint Iohn The Apostle And Euangelist with the Annotations of Francis Junius*, (London: Christopher Barker, 1599), p. 115. Junius' notes to Revelation appeared in the 1598 and 1601 editions of the Geneva Bible as well as some of the 1599 and 1600 copies. For more on this, see Richard Baukham, *Tudor Apocalypse* (Oxford: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978), pp. 137-138 as well as Crawford Gribben's *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology 1550-1682* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 70-79.

[39] The exception is Andrew Fisher's article '"*Antony and Cleopatra*": The Time of Universal Peace', *Shakespeare Survey*, 33, 1980, 99-111.

[40] Heinrich Bullinger, *A Hvndred Sermons Vppon the Apocalypse of Iesu Christ* (London: John Daye, 1573) STC 4062, p. 170b

[41] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J.T. McNeil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (London: The Library of Christian Classics, 1961), I. 84

[42] Homi Bhabha, '"Of Mimicry and Man": The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', in *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh (London and New York: Arnold, 1992), p. 237

[43] Junius, *The Revelation Of Saint Iohn*, p. 119

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] Arthur Dent, *The Rvine Of Rome or An Exposition vpon the whole Reuelation*, (London: Simon Waterson and Cutbert [sic] Burby, 1603) STC 6640, p. 208

[46] Junius' notes for this passage in *The Geneva Bible* state the following: 'For those powers of wickednesse are thrust downe into hell, and bound with chaines of darknesse: and are there kept vnto damnation' (p. 114)

[47] *Ibid.* p. 6

[48] Junius, *The Revelation Of Saint Iohn*, p. 115

[49] Thomas Harman, *Caueat or Warening, For Commen Cvrsetors* (1567), in *The Elizabethan Underworld*, ed. A. V. Judges (London: Routledge, 1930), p. 64

[50] Agamben, 'The Idea of Language', p. 45

Conclusion

Paradise in the middest of hell

In Timothy Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholie* (1586) there is a striking moment when he briefly seems to see the central Calvinist doctrine of predestination as an essentially rebarbative discourse:

> For as a sworde taken at the wrong end is readie to wound the hand of the taker, & held by the handle is a fit weapon of defence; euen so the doctrine of predestination being preposterously conceiued, may through fault of the conceiuer procure hurt.[1]

It can also be said that the same principle applies to the critical 'conceiuer' of a movement as complex as the connections between Calvinism and the experience of early modern subjectivity. In this context, and facing the various demands of institutional and intellectual pressures, is easy to be critically pre–posterous, to anticipate the event, to write as though the lineaments of certain selective intellectual and cultural movements anticipate the interpretation. But in a study such as this selection is inevitable and the subjectivity of interpretation is unavoidable: the illusion of something exemplary being said must necessarily haunt the critical project. In particular, I am aware that I have tended to focus throughout this thesis on the faultlines in early modern culture, on the more extreme expressions of Calvinism and on those writers and subjects who actively negotiated with the contradictions of Calvinist doctrine. I have, by and large, chosen not to examine those early modern subjects for whom the acceptance, internalisation even, of Calvinist doctrine was unproblematic.

Nevertheless, I remain convinced that for many, if not for the majority of early modern subjects, the internalisation of Calvinist doctrine was not a straightforward matter. If *Doctor Faustus*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* as well as the many other texts considered here share one common element, it is that because of the cultural and subjective adoption of Calvinism: 'Identity is only ever possible as misrecognition'.[2] Whether negotiating their subjectivity with the Devil, the Father, the witch or the foreigner, the linguistic split between the 'I' who enunciates and the 'I' of enunciation is replicated in the division in the subject between themselves and the ultimate figure of authority, God. As Alan Sinfield rightly points out, for the early modern subject 'It is incoherence that makes the self aware of itself, that sets it to work in the endlessly deferred task of discovering coherence'.[3] In many respects, the early modern experience of subjectivity does not make sense, not only to those who lived it but also to those trying to understand it within a historical context. By constructing a narrative, by attempting to explain early modern subjectivity, there is a sense in which the critic is trying to make coherent that which is, ultimately, incoherent.

Perhaps as a final move, this incoherence can be related back to the figure that haunts both this thesis and, much more importantly, Western culture as a whole: Jesus Christ. To return for the final time to William Perkins; in *A Declaration of The True Manner of knowing Christ Crucified* (1596) he states: 'When thou commest to die, set before thine eyes Christ in the middest of all his torments on the crosse: in beholding of which spectacle to thy endless comfort, thou shalt see a paradise in the middest of hell'.[4] A 'paradise in the middest of hell': what Perkins makes clear through this linguistic and theological paradox is

that the experience of Calvinist subjectivity is always the experience of deferred death, an experience mediated by and through Christ. As the theologian Graham Ward puts it in a slightly different context:

> [Christ's] body becomes the symbolic focus for all bodies loved and now departed: real, imaginary and symbolic mothers: real, imaginary and symbolic fathers. His body calls forth all the cathartic objects of our past desires which have been abjected to facilitate our illusory self-unity. The allure of the abject, and the mourning which now will always accompany Christian desire, manifests an internalisation of displacement itself. That is: the lack will now foster an eternal longing that will structure our desire for God.[5]

In the context of this thesis, it is not so much that 'in the Renaissance God was in trouble'[6] but that He had always been in trouble from His very inception. What makes the early modern period so fascinating is that it is one of the comparatively few moments in Western history prior to the twentieth century when a society implicitly recognised the avowedly secular conclusion of its most profoundly theological structures and doctrines. As John Donne knew and as early modern culture frequently conceded, to desire God is, in many respects, to desire both the destruction of the subject and His destruction. Consequently if its theological edifice was to remain intact then it was the subject's knowledge of his or her *distance* from the deity, not proximity, which determined the Calvinist experience of subjectivity. The alternative was a world without God, an alternative that at this point in the history of ideas, society was not yet prepared to embrace. There is something perverse, something abject about a system that engenders such an outcome but it was an outcome nevertheless that Christianity, and in particular Calvinism, had to embrace. Calvinist doctrine demonstrates better than almost any other version of Christianity the cruelty of what might be called the disavowed revelation: even at the point of death, subjects of Calvinism will always be referred to the ultimate death of Christ and the majority will be

found wanting. There can be no Calvinist subject before or while Christ 'lives', and in His death He effectively negates the epistemological postulates of the human subjectivity that His very existence presupposes.[7] In a sense, the Calvinist subject never dies because that subject was, in fact, never properly allowed to live.

Notes to Conclusion

[1] Timothy Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie, Containing The Cavses thereof, & reasons of the strange effects it worketh in our mindes and bodies: with the phisicke care, and spirituall consolation for such as haue thereto adioyned an afflicted conscience*, (London: Thomas Vautrollier, 1586) STC 3747, p. 201

[2] Antony Easthope, *Poetry as Discourse* (London and New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 44

[3] Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 161

[4] William Perkins, *A Declaration of The True Manner of knowing Christ Crucified* (Cambridge: John Legate, 1596) STC 19685, p. 33

[5] Graham Ward, 'The Displaced Body of Jesus Christ', in *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, ed. John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock and Graham Ward (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 170

[6] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, 2nd edition (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), xxix

[7] In the words of Antony Easthope: 'I think it is better for us if we have to accept that desire is endless, that someone else is living our life for us, that in the end (if not before) subjectivity is *impossible*'. Antony Easthope, *The Unconscious* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 170

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