Ends and Beginnings in the Earlier Sixteenth-Century Drama

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The history of the earlier English drama used to be wonderfully clear. I was brought up on a simplified and vulgarized account which derived ultimately from the great E. K. Chambers's *The Medieval Stage*,[1] and which afforded some highly memorable patterns: the ancient drama died out completely; but then there was a new start in the liturgical plays (in Latin and inside the church); then these gave way to mystery plays (in the vernacular and outside the church); these in turn gave way to morality plays (in the vernacular and increasingly dissociated from the church); then the early sixteenth century brought secular "interludes" and "school plays"; then came the rediscovery of Roman comedy and Senecan tragedy, and, finally, with the establishment of professional London theatres the way was open for Marlowe and Shakespeare. I would not wish to suggest that everything in this "model" is wrong, but I think that much of it is questionable. It is strongly - even ferociously - evolutionary in nature, emphasizing not only the movement from Latin to the vernacular, from inside the church to outside the church, and from religious subjects to secular ones (apparently regarded as self-evidently better), but the steady development of the dramatic genres themselves. Indeed, a famous article of J. M. Manly[2] discussed the development of the drama as though it were an organism evolving through a kind of Darwinian natural selection. It encouraged students to see an unbroken upwards development, from *Quem Quaeritis* to *Hamlet*. Again, while I would not wish to claim that all medieval plays are of equal value to those of Shakespeare, nor to deny that there were any changes or any development at all, the links and connections between the earlier drama and the later now seem more complex and tantalizing than earlier attempts to chart the development of the comic devil of the mysteries into the comic vice of the moralities and ultimately into Falstaff suggested.

The transformation of the simple model which I inherited has been accelerated by a relatively recent interest in the performance of earlier plays, and (even more significantly for my topic) the collection and analysis of the surviving records of dramatic performances[3] as well as the MSS of the plays. This has both clarified and confused the issues. The simple chronological development, with one genre dying out before or soon after the birth of a new genre now looks quite untenable. To give only one example at this stage, the earliest surviving English morality play, *The Pride of Life*,[4] was probably composed in or about the middle of the fourteenth century -before any of the surviving texts of the mystery plays were written down, and before the earliest reference to the York performances. Similarly, the records indicate the existence of travelling troupes of players before the emergence of the London-based "professional companies." The clear evidence of the local records that there was considerable variety in the dramatic "kinds"

available in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period should perhaps lead us to question our "picture" of the early drama with the great mystery cycles (now still often thought synonymous with "medieval drama") in a dominating central position.

It is worth stressing the variety of dramatic forms recorded. Especially notable are saints' plays, parish plays and other forms of local drama, and folk plays like the widespread Robin Hood plays. And such performances are recorded over a long period of time. Reading, in Berkshire had for instance "Adam and Eve" in 1507, the "play of Kayme" in 1512 and again in 1515, when "Cayme's pageaunt" was seen in the market-place, the "Kings of Cologne" in 1499 and 1539.[5] Worcestershire, which had a long-standing tradition of local drama, had Hockday celebrations, parish plays of Robin Hood, civic pageants, and Corpus Christi processions. As late as 1600 there is a reference to a play in church at Tenbury.[6] Everywhere what we regard as "drama" co-exists with semi-dramatic pageants and festivals, courtly and aristocratic as royal entries and tournaments, indoor festivities for guilds (as a number of the surviving "mummings" written by Lydgate in the fifteenth century), or outdoor folk festivals and popular entertainments. Even puppet-plays or "motions" seem to have been in existence. Payments in York in 1447 to a "ludenti cum Ioly Wat and Malkyn" and in 1448 to "ludentibus Ioly Wat and Malkyn" were once thought to be possible evidence for a drama of the *pastourelle* type, but the unearthing of a Grimsby document of 1431 to "certain instruments of play called Joly Walte and Malkyng" seems clearly to indicate that they were puppets.[7]

Let us turn to a consideration of the fate of the main "kinds" of the medieval drama. Here we shall see both endings and beginnings, some remarkable chronological overlaps, and some cross-fertilisation of genres. The liturgical play (or church music drama) was not to survive the English Reformation, but it had not ceased to exist in late medieval England - the *Quem Quaeritis* was performed in Magdalen College chapel, Oxford, in 1518. Throughout its long history the genre had shown a remarkable adaptability, taking on new subjects, showing itself capable of elaboration (as in the ambitious music drama of the twelfth-century Beauvais *Daniel*) and of touching on political and comic matter. It seems likely that liturgical plays may have influenced a number of the pageants in the vernacular mystery cycles, and in some cases become miracle plays or local parish plays. The Christmas *Pastores* or Shepherds' plays have left their mark on various European festivals, and in Spain fed directly into vernacular drama, producing examples which were taken to the New World. In Tlaxcala in 1538 and 1539 there were performances of Nativity plays (alongside St Francis preaching to the birds, the sacrifice of Abraham, and *La Conquista de Jerusalem* with Christians and Moors). The "Coloquios de Pastores" or "Los Pastores" are still performed in Spanish or in various Amerindian languages in Mexico and parts of the southwestern USA.[8] England cannot match this continuous tradition, but it provides some interesting and suggestive fragments. The so-called "Shrewsbury Fragments"[9] in an early fifteenth-century MS consist of one actor's part (including his cues) in three liturgical plays, an *Officium Pastorum*, a *Visitatio Sepulchri* and a *Peregrinus*. It shows a happy blend of the austerity of Latin liturgical drama and simple English affective devotional verse. As in the cycle plays the shepherd offers his humble gift to the Christ child ("a horn-spone .. / That hay herbar an hundrith pese"). The third Mary at the sepulchre is given an eloquent macaronic lament:

Allas! he that men wend schuld by
All Israel, both knyght and knave,
Why suffred he so forto dy,
Sithe he may all sekenes save?
Heu! cur ligno fixus clavis

Fuit doctor tam suavis?
Heu! cur fuit ille natus
Qui perfodit eius latus?

From about 1520 (long after the advent of the mystery cycles) we have another English play in two parts (or possibly two linked plays), *Christ's Resurrection and Burial*.[10] This may come from a northern Carthusian house, and is very close to liturgical drama (using traditional episodes like the *Quem Quaeritis* dialogue). However, a rubric says that it is to be played "on part on gud-friday afternone, and the other part opon Ester-day after the resurrectione, in the morowe." It looks very much as if the liturgical drama has here produced a vernacular devotional piece of the kind which could be played in a parish church. Again it combines the austerity of the liturgical drama with intense affective laments. Among a number of emotional moments is the tormented and despairing monologue of the repentent Peter. Entering "bitterly weeping" he exclaims:

O my febille promesse!
O my gret unkindnesse,
To my shame resarvyd!
O mynde so unstabille,
Thou hast made me culpabille!
Deth I have deservyd!

The miracles and saints' plays that were enormously popular in medieval England, and which must have formed a very significant and important part of its drama, would not usually have survived the Reformation (and the paucity of surviving texts seems to support this view). But again this long tradition does not seem to have been immediately extinguished. On the eve of the Reformation, in 1534, at Braintree in Essex (which had previously seen plays of St Swithin and St Andrew in the church) there was performed "a play of Placidas *alias* St Eustace." Later references to "the play" in the churchwardens' accounts (1567, 1570, 1571, 1579) are not specific, but may well refer to this play.[11] While some saints were dangerously "charged" at the time of the Henrician Reformation - like St Thomas Becket, whose annual pageant at Canterbury (pernaps a dumb-show of the martyrdom) was suppressed in 1536-7 (to be revived under Mary, with the addition of some giants)[12] - others did not - like the very popular St George. One St George play was performed in some style at Bassingbourne, Cambridgeshire, in 1511. Twenty-seven other villages made contributions to the performance, which took place in a field - one Giles Ashwell was paid "for easement of his croft to play in"; other payments were made to a minstrel and three waits of Cambridge, to a priest for the playbook, and for various garments and the painting of "three fanchoms [kerchiefs] and four tormentors [prob. instruments of torture]."[13] Similarly, while plays presenting a miracle of the Host (like the Croxton Play of the Sacrament) would provoke Protestant hostility, moral stories of penitents Like Robert of Sicily (performed in Chester at the High Cross in 1529 - and said to be an old play)[14] or especially Biblical figures like St Paul or Mary Magdalene (both of whom appear in the early-sixteenth-century Digby plays) might not.

Although it has been rather neglected by critics, the saint's play offered remarkable dramatic potential. It demanded moments of wonder and of horror. Martyr-saints combined in an interesting way the qualities of the heroic with those of patient suffering (Becket could be both lion and lamb, both proud and meek). The elaborations of the lives in such collections as the *Golden Legend* afforded material for

romantic narrative dramas, and in this provided striking similarities and possibly connections with later plays of this kind and with early history plays.

We are fortunate in having a fine English example in the Digby play of *Mary Magdalene* [15](? from the beginning of the sixteenth century). This is a lively, and an elaborate piece with forty speaking parts and fifty scenes cleverly intertwined. It combines legendary matter with events from the life of Christ and with morality-play patterns (when Mary is first led into sin). There are some marvelous happenings - seven devils leave a woman, a bad angel enters hell with thunder, Simon's house is set on fire. And in the course of the play there is plenty of comedy: traditional ranting tyrants, comic duos - a heathen priest and his boy, who makes a burlesque "pagan" invocation, while the priest joins in like a pardoner, so that the whole scene makes fun of the abuses of Christians as well as of "Saracens"; and later a shipman and his boy Grobbe. The ship, which enters "with a merry song," and is presumably a wheeled contraption, takes Mary on a Mediterranean voyage to Marseille, with the shipman pointing out the landmarks ("Yond ther is the lond of Torkye." etc.). The romance element becomes prominent in a later voyage in which the king of Marseille whom Mary has converted (mainly through spectacular miracles: an idol is made to "tremble and quake" and the temple is set on fire by a cloud from heaven) and his queen set off to be baptized by St Peter. On the way the queen dies and there is a storm. The shipman's boy wants to throw the body overboard, but the king persuades the sailors to set it with her child on a rock in the sea, and sorrowfully commits them to the saint ("blyssyd Maudleyn be hyr rede"). Readers of romances - Greek, medieval, and Shakespearean - will of course recognise the narrative theme of the "divided" family. On his way back the ship happens to pass the same rock, and there is a nice theatrical moment when the queen and her child are discovered and the queen is restored to life ("from grevos slepe she gynnyt revyve , Now blyssyd be God, I se my wyff alyve!"). They return home and are welcomed by Mary, but she now leaves them, urging them to be stable in heart, and goes to the wilderness, where she is fed by angels and finally makes a good end.

This bizarre, rambling and romantic drama from East Anglia - which is, however, in its type of narrative not entirely dissimilar to later sixteenth-century secular plays involving magic and many "happenings," like *Old Fortunatus* - has some excellent moments. It is fortunate to have survived the Reformation. The MS came into the possession of the alchemist and collector Myles Blomefylde (b. 1525) of Bury St Edmunds, who may well have picked it up in Chelmsford. Remarkably, it seems likely that it was performed in Chelmsford in 1562. Only a few years later Lewis Wager wrote the *Life and Repentaunce of Marie Magdalene* (c. 1566), a Protestant play on the life of the saint. Here there is no legendary matter: the characters are scriptural, and the stress is on repentance. Interestingly, Wager uses one of the older traditional morality-play patterns (temptation - fall - repentance - salvation) for. this There is a Vice called Infidelitie, and Mary's conscience is touched by Love of God and Knowledge of Sin. The allegorical drama is still alive and well, but this earnest piece looks dull in comparison with the rumbustious comedy and the legendary wonders of the earlier play.

In the "official" drama of later Protestant England, though not in the Catholic areas of Europe, the saint's play fades away - Dekker's *The Virgin Martyr* ( ), a rare example, is set in the safer period of early Christianity, and it is a poor thing compared to Corneille's *Polyeucte* (1643). However, saints' plays sometimes merged with folk drama and popular festivals. A festivity at Maldon in Essex in 1540[16] involving minstrels, morris dancers, ale, and a very large crowd, had a play or pageant containing St John the Baptist (a very popular saint). St John was dressed in calves' skins, perhaps the English equivalent of

camelskin, and perhaps suggesting a link with the mummers' plays recorded in later times. St George's day (April 23rd) continued to be celebrated in various places, and the saint becomes a figure in the mummers' plays. In this period the fullest information comes from Norwich,[17] where there was a guild of St George (founded in 1385), partly religious, partly social, which survived the Reformation to be finally dissolved in 1732. By 1408 there was a "riding": "the George shall go in procession and make a conflict with the Dragon and keep his estate both days." The "George" was a man in "coat armour beaten with silver," accompanied by a club-bearer, attendants and minstrels, and went in procession with the Dragon to a wood outside the city, where presumably the fight was staged. By 1537 "the lady" or "St Margaret" had joined the group. In 1552 the George and Margaret were removed, but it was allowed "for pastime the dragon to come and show himself, as in other years." The Dragon survived: in the eighteenth century it is described as made of basket work and painted cloth, carried by a man inside, and it could move its wings and head.

The nature of the medieval cycle plays is familiar, and I shall concentrate simply on the "mysteries' end."[18] This happened in fact only just at the time that saw the beginning of a new antiquarian interest in them - an extraordinary example of the longevity of a medieval dramatic tradition. We need, however, to remember a few points: (i) much has been lost (we know of cycles or mystery plays which have not survived: and we have only two of at least eleven Coventry plays): (ii) the surviving cycles present a picture not of a monolithic genre, but of considerable variety - in development, technique, and emphasis: (iii) although some cycles probably emerge in the fourteenth century (York is attested in 1376), developments in the fifteenth and even the sixteenth centuries are of great importance, and the MSS of the plays are surprisingly late.

The York documents are fairly full. The "Register" of 1463-77, probably compiled from "prompt copies" of the pageants was annotated by John Clerke, servant of the Common Clerk of York from the 1540s to the 1560s.[19] Mostly these are practical (like the addition of musical cues), but the small cross signs placed beside the *Death of the Virgin* and the *Coronation* may indicate suspension. In the period of Edward VI the Marian plays were suspect, and were dropped between 1548-1553 and then finally in 1561. The cycle was suspended for two years at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, and resumed in 1561 (without some of the Marian pageants), but faced increasing official hostility. In 1562 there was an attempt to shift the staging from Corpus Christi to St Barnabas's day, but the commons would not agree, and the Corporation proposed the Creed Play as a possible alternative for "th' ystories of the old and new testament." The cycle was suspended again until 1567 because of war and pestilence. In 1568 the Dean of York, Matthew Hutton (later to become Archbishop of York, and a man with Puritan leanings) writes concerning the Creed Play that he finds many things which he likes "because of th'antiquities" but adds that he cannot allow because "they be disagreeinge from the sinceritie of the gospell." He recommends that it should not be played, for though "it was plausible to yeares ago, and wold now of the ignorant sort be well liked, yet now in this happy time of the gospell, I knowe the learned will mislike it, and how the state will beare with it, I knowe not."[20] (It is notable how sharply he differentiates the "ignorant" and conservative commons from the (Protestant) "learned" and the "state" - which had every reason to fear Catholic incitement in the North, where unrest turned into rebellion in 1569). The council agreed with Hutton, and the Creed Play was no longer played. But the commons wanted their municipal play, and "were much desyerous to have Corpus chrysty play this yere." The council would not allow it unless the "booke therof" were "perused and otherwise amandyd before it was played."[21] It was played in 1569, pre-

sumably in an amended form, at fourteen stations. This proved to be its last performance. Archbishop Grindal wished to cure the people of their "great stiffness to retain their wonted errors," and all the playbooks were handed in to him for correction. Still in 1579, and again in 1580 (the years respectively of the publication of *The Shepherd's Calendar* and *Euphues*) the commons were earnestly requesting that the Corpus Christi play might be performed. They were put off with the bureaucratic reply that the Mayor and his colleagues "would consider of their request."[22]

The Towneley cycle (probably played at Wakefield) survives in a MS written in the late fifteenth or even early sixteenth century, once in the possession of the Catholic Towneley family (Christopher Towneley was a seventeenth-century antiquary and collector. There are records of sixteenth-century performances at Wakefield. In l556 (during the reign of Mary, in what was possibly a revival) "every crafte and occupation" are enjoined to "bringe furthe theire pagyauntes as hathe bene heretofore used, and to gyve furthe [distribute] the speeches of the same in Easter holydayes." A reference in 1559 suggests that it survived into the reign of Elizabeth - the "regenall [original] of Corpus Christy playe" is to be brought in, and "the mesteres of the Corpus Christi playe shall come and make their accounts."[23] But in May 1576 the ecclesiastical commission at York (which included Matthew Hutton), hearing that it was intended to perform in Wakefield "this yere in Whitsonweke next or thereaboutes a plaie commonlie called Corpus Christi plaie which hath bene heretofore used there," says that there are many things in it which "tende to the derogation of the Majestie and glorie of God, the prophanation of the sacramentes and the maunteynaunce of superstition and idolatrie," and instructs that a letter should be sent to the authorities forbidding the playing of any pageant in which the majesty of "God the Father, God the Sonne, or God the Holie Ghoste or the administration of either the Sacramentes of baptisme or of the Lordes Supper be counerfeyted or represented, or anythinge plaied whiche tende to the maintenaunce of superstition and idolatrie or which be contrarie to the lawes of God or of the realme."[24] This of course amounted to a complete prohibition.

The Coventry cycle (of which only two plays survive) was finally "laid down" in 1579, and, as it has several times been pointed out, it would have been possible for the young Shakespeare to have seen it. The traditional Hock Tuesday play was suppressed in 1561, though "the men of Coventry protested that there was no Papistry or superstition in it."[25] This may have been a local matter rather than one which involved the laws of God or of the realm, since fourteen years later it was performed at Kenilworth for Queen Elizabeth. At Norwich there was certainly a larger sequence, if not a complete cycle. The Norwich pageants lasted beyond the mid-century: we only have two (later) copies of the Grocers' Play, one from 1533, the other, "newly renewed and according unto the scripture," from 1565. The Newcastle Corpus Christi plays were still performed in 1561 and 1562, and possibly later: in 1578 the Millers were to play "the ancient playe of their fellowship," entitled "the Deliverance of the Children of Isrell out of the Thraldome, Bondage, and Servitude of king Pharao," "whensoever the generall plaies of the towne shall be commanded by the mayor." The wording clearly suggests some connection with the past, but the proviso (also found in other guild records up to 1589) equally clearly suggests that it was no longer a regular annual event.

The Chester cycle as we now know it is a rather "literary" text, which is perhaps largely the product of the sixteenth century: it survives in a number of manuscripts - the early fragments from the late fifteenth century, but six from after 1575, the year of its final performance. The scribes of these have local connections, and sometimes antiquarian interests - Edward Gregorie, scholar of Bunbury (a village near

Chester) and churchwarden; George Bellin (who wrote three) of the Ironmongers' company, a parish clerk with antiquarian interests; William Bedford, clerk of the Brewers' Company and parish clerk; and James Miller, rector of St Michael's and precentor of the cathedral, who in 1607 completed an "edition" which had been begun by two previous scribes. There was clearly much civic pride involved in this cycle. There had already been restructuring before the Reformation: its time of performance had changed (in 1521 it is already called "the Whitsun playe"), and was divided into three parts. During the sixteenth century it does not seem to have been performed every year. The last two recorded performances in 1572 and 1575 caused problems. In 1572 there was a complaint that the Mayor, John Hankey, "would needs have the playes go forward against the wills of the Bishops of Canterbury, York and Chester." In 1575, when Sir John Savage was Mayor, the plays were again performed, though some were omitted "which were thought might not be justified for the superstition that was in them." Both Mayors were cited before the Privy Council: Savage's alleged offence was that he "caused to be plaied the accostomed pageons ... of himself to satisfie his owne will & pleasure & contrary to his othe & dutie without the assente or consente of the rest of his brethrene." Both were supported by the present Mayor and the council, and nothing seems to have come of the accusation, but the evident hostility must have discouraged the Chester authorities, for the whole cycle was not played again.[26]

A summary of the chronology is very revealing. The recorded dates of last performances are all in the reign of Elizabeth: 1565 Norwich, 1569 York, 1575 Chester, ?1576 Wakefield, 1579 Coventry. They cover the first fifteen years of Shakespeare's life, and overlap with such plays as *Gorboduc* (1565), Gascoigne's *Supposes* (1566), Wager's *Mary Magdalene* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle*.

Sometimes other Biblical plays were put on in place of the old cycle plays. Thus at Lincoln in 1564 it was decreed that "a standing play [? i. e. not in processional form] of some story of the Bible shall be played two days this summertime" - and *Tobias* was performed at the Broadgate, and again in 1567. That one of the properties was "Hell mouth, with a nether chap" suggests a link with the past.[27] At Shrewsbury (where there had been saints' plays, often performed in a quarry outside the walls), Thomas Ashton, master of the free school produced *Julian the Apostate* in 1565, and the *Passion of Christ* in 1567 (with properties - a head and beard for a fool, six dozen bells for a morris, and gunpowder for a devil - which again suggest continuity with the past).[28] Coventry in 1584 saw "the new play of the Destruction of Jerusalem" by John Smythe, a Coventry man, later of St John's, Oxford. That this is called "the tragedye" suggests a more learned play, perhaps based on Josephus. Nevertheless it would be nice to know if it had any affinities with the old medieval tales of the *Destruction*, which presumably lie behind the play done in Tlaxcala, with its Christians and Moors. In 1591 there seems to nave been a move to restore the Corpus Christi play, but the corporation resolved that "the destruction of Jerusalem, the Conquest of the Danes, or the historie of K[ing] E[dward] the X [Confessor], at the request of the Comons of this Cittie shal be plaied on the pagens on Midsomer daye & St, Peters daye next in this Cittie & non other playes."[29] 1591 was the year of Lyly's *Endimion* and the year after *Tamburlane.*

Sometimes it is not clear if we are dealing with new plays or old survivals in less populous places. The Tewkesbury churchwardens' accounts in 1578 mention payments for "the players" geers, six sheepskins for Christs garments' and in a 1585 inventory there are "eight heads of hair for the Apostles, and ten beards, and a face or vizier for the Devil."[30] Perhaps this was a parish play of the kind we know continued in the Worcester and Hereford area (e.g. Tenbury, 1600). Provincial civic drama continued to flourish at Manningtree in Essex, which, it is said in 1602, "holds by stage plays," an observation confirmed

by references in Dekker's *Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1607) - Cruelty has got another part to play; it is acted like the old morals at Manning-tree' - in Nashe's *The Choosing of Valentines* - "a play of strange moralitie, / Showen by bachelrie of Manning-tree, / Whereto the countrie franklins flock-meale swarme" - and in Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (1612) - "to this day there be townes that hold the priviledge of their fairs and other charters by yearly stage-plays, as at Manningtree in Suffolke, Kendall in the North, and others."[31] The "old morals" sound like morality plays, or hybrids derived from them. Although we do not know exactly what form the "yearly stage-play" took in 1612, "Kendal in the North" (in Westmoreland), affords some startling evidence for the continuity of cycle-plays.[32] The Antiquarian John Weever (1576-1631) refers to the "Corpus Christi play in my countrey, which I have seene acted at Preston, and Lancaster, and last of all at Kendall, in the beginning of the raigne of King James [1603-25]: for which the Townesmen were sore troubled; and upon good reasons the Play finally supprest, not onely there, but in all other Townes of the Kingdome." The Kendal Corpus Christi play (referred to in 1575 and, as "the playe" in 1586) is still being performed in the early seventeenth century - well into Shakespeare's lifetime, and in the very period in which antiquarians like Weever began to record descriptions of these "old plays," Archdeacon Rogers (d. 1595) at Chester and Dugdale (b. 1605) in Warwickshire. It also provides a curious and moving epitaph to the medieval mystery play. John Shaw, the Puritan vicar of Rotherham visited the area in 1644, and describes speaking with an old man at Cartmel who was wofully ignorant of salvation through Christ: "Oh Sir, said he, I think I heard of that man you speak of once in a play at Kendall, called Corpus Christs play, where there was a man on a tree, and blood ran down, &c. And afterwards he professed he could not remember that he ever heard of salvation by Jesus, bit in that play." This is a striking witness to the power of the visual image and to the horrifying *pathos* of a Crucifixion Play.

But it is not altogether clear that the old mystery plays breathed their very last breath at the beginning of James's reign (any more than did the old romances which Cervantes was attempting to kill off at this very time). I will return later to some cases where the Corpus Christi play may have fed into the "literary" drama of the London stage, but will end this section by noting the possibility that some of its episodes may well have continued in the popular theatre of the fairs. A very popular puppet-play, *The Creation of the World* followed by *Noah's Flood* and *Dives and Lazarus*, was played at Bartholomew Fair, and remained popular there and elsewhere until well into the eighteen century. Called a "little opera," it used a number of machines for scenic effects. According to a playbill the last scene of *Noah* "does present Noah and his family coming out of the Ark, with all the beasts, two by two, and all the Fowls of the Air seen in a prospect sitting upon the trees" - the sun rising, a multitude of angels, and other wonderful sights. The *Creation*, says Sybil Rosenfeld, "was in the miracle play tradition."[3]

The "old morals at Manningtree" bring us to another medieval dramatic genre, the morality play, the tradition of which is long, rich and varied, running from the fourteenth-century *Pride of Life* almost to the end of the sixteenth century. This allegorical and narrative type of drama has only recently been given proper attention, having been long dismissed as didactic" - which it is (like Brecht's "Lehrstücke," and much else on the twentieth-century stage), but at its best very good drama indeed. Plays like the well-known *Everyman* (which appears in print at the beginning of the sixteenth century) transform doctrine into art. Morality plays have strong underlying dramatic structures. *Everyman*'s "summoning by death" pattern is shared by the *Pride of Life* and *Dethe and the Goer by the Waye.* Other patterns are that of life as a journey (and a continuous battle against sins and vices), and - especially popular - the "prodigal son"

pattern of temptation, fall, and restoration. Characteristically, the medieval morality play seems to favour a final upward movement to something like the "eucatastrophe" of the folk-tale. The earliest survivor, *The Pride of Life*, may just possibly be the sole exception. The ending of the play is lost, but the Prologue says that Rex Vivus is overcome by Death, and there is a homiletic passage on the fate of the soul. If that passage were part of the stage performance it would conform to the usual upward movement. But if it were not, we would have a striking precursor of the conqueror Tamburlane being brought down by death. But normally the morality play likes to emphasize repentance and the greatness of God's mercy (rather as in the medieval precursor of the Faust story the sinner Theophilus is finally saved through the intervention of the Virgin Mary). Allegorical drama presents "ideal types" of conduct - virtuous, wicked, wayward, spiritual - in conflict, and hence a variety of dramatic possibilities in the treatment of power and vulnerability and of social relationships (as in the testing of the friends in *Everyman* or the father/son relationship in *Mankind*). Many plays are essentially Augustinian, with a strong contrast between the "two cities" and a strong opposition of good to bad. But the allegorical world of signs can be deceitful. Vices disguise themselves as virtues as they set about seducing the usually very vulnerable central figure of Mankind/Humanum Genus. They seduce the audience as well. And they can provide opportunities for the apparently insatiable English desire to juxtapose the serious and the comic - except, of course, in the austere *Everyman*, but that shows some subtle dramaturgy of a different kind, in, for instance, the way it manipulates narrative rhythm and plays off "real" time against emotional time and dramatic time. In short, the longevity of this genre seems less surprising in the light of the dramatic possibilities it offered and the extraordinary adaptability it was to show.

By the mid-sixteenth century the variety of the genre was amply demonstrated. In size the examples ranged from the big "blockbusters" suitable for outdoor performance - from the fifteenth-century *Castle of Perseverance* to the mid-sixteenth century Scottish *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* of Sir David Lindsay to the shorter morality plays or moral interludes suitable for indoor performance. We can also see them being developed in a variety of ways. Lindsay's play, the work of a well-known poet, shows how the genre can be adapted to political and religious polemic. Political themes had emerged earlier in *Magnificence,* again the work of a known literary figure, which combines the traditional temptation / fall / restoration pattern with the "mirror for princes" with considerable dramatic skill. Religious controversy is in general less successful on the stage. In his *King Johan* Bale adapted the morality play to Reformation propaganda (with Papist vices), and the Marian *Respublica* has Protestant vices. But these are not gripping dramas, whereas Lindsay was a genuinely talented playwright, whose experience in the devising of royal entries and pageants helped him to make the fullest use of the morality's symbolic visual effects. The moment when the Three Estates enter led by their vices "gangand bakwart" is effective in a very traditional manner; that when the Prioress has her habit torn off to reveal "ane kirtill of silk" beneath it must have caused a *frisson* of a different kind, emphasized by her remark, "nunnis ar nocht necessair."

The shorter morality play, or "moral interlude"[34] now frequently finds its way into print, and becomes much more diverse in subject-matter. Although the absence of surviving early "secular" plays is probably due as much to the uncertainty of transmission as to a resolutely pious outlook, they now begin to proliferate. The first surviving seems to be Medwall's excellent play of *Fulgens and Lucres* (perhaps staged in the Great Hall at Lambeth Palace in 1497). It is basically a "play of ideas," with a serious plot derived from Tiptoft's translation of the Italian humanist Buonaccorso's tract on true nobility: Lucres has to choose between two suitors, Publius Cornelius, a rich and dissolute nobleman, and Gayus Flaminius, virtuous but

poor and of lower rank. In the play the two argue their case directly to Lucres, not to the Senate as they do in the tract, thus making it a "wooing contest." In the original there was no decision, but here Lucres tells the audience that she chooses Flaminius as the nobler (though she carefully says that she does not despise Cornelius's blood).

The subject was a favourite fifteenth-century humanistic topic, with its roots in the Middle Ages (Chaucer, Dante, Jean de Meun) and antiquity. Here the serious theme of the wooing contest is supplemented by a comic equivalent in a sub-plot in which the comic servants A and B vie for the hand of Jone, the maid of Lucres. It contains dancing by mummers, a singing contest, a wrestling match, and a bawdy burlesque joust, "at farte pryke in cule" [fart-prick-in-the-arse]. Among the many interesting features of the play is the way in which A and B are used in the double role of presenters and jesters, and the development of the character of Lucres, a virtuous, rational and highly independent woman. It is also a significant early example of how "neo-classicism" was to be normally treated on the English stage with its determined mixing of the serious with the comic. Medwall's other play, *Nature*, is more obviously in the morality tradition, but more learned and more complex in structure than most of its predecessors.

Other "plays of ideas" from this period include Heywood's *Gentleness and Nobility* and Rastell's *The Four Elements*. Heywood's *Play of the Weather* treats its serious theme of order and harmony in variety with a light touch. Everybody wants different weather: the Gentlewoman complains that sunshine ruins her complexion; the Boy wants plenty of snow so that he can make snowballs, and so on. So Jupiter decrees that all will have in turn the weather they ask for. This gentle moral play celebrates harmony in diversity, and demonstrates also the economic interdependence of one class on another (like the more obviously political fable of the body and its members). Different again is the lively *Wit and Science* of John Redford, the Master of the singing boys of St Paul's, which requires some skilled musicians and has an appropriately educational theme. Wyt, a student, wishes to marry the lady Science, the daughter of Reason. Among other challenges he has to overcome a giant called Tedyousness. The play has some excellent scenes - notably a comic "recognition" scene when Wyt, transformed by the vices into a fool Ignorance, sees his new appearance in a mirror. Again, this play has some distinctly "popular" elements: Wyt is "slain" by Tedyousness, but then is restored to life, as in a folk play. The play combines allegory and romance with the idea of a journey to Parnassus, but keeps the earlier morality techniques (of symbolic clothes, etc) and characteristic pattern of temptation / fall / restoration - all nicely applied to the learning of Latin paradigms. And there is, besides, a variety of intriguing items from the (lost) court play of "Troylus and Pandor"[35] performed by William Cornish and the Children of the Chapel Royal at Epiphany 1516, to *Calisto and Meliboea*(c. 1525?), based on the early part of the *Celestina* (translated in the seventeenth century as *The Spanish Bawd*), the first known English translation of a play by Terence (the *Andria*) printed as "Terens in English" (c. 1530), and the comedies of Heywood, which use the patterns of the French farce. It would be impossible to claim that all of these delightful plays are dramatic masterpieces, but the general impression of the interludes of the first few decades of the century is very clearly that of a period of lively experimentation which demonstrates the adaptability of the old morality play and the way in which old and new dramatic forms and themes co-exist.

The Henrician Reformation (and the sharper doctrinal reactions in the reigns of Edward and Mary) brought changes to the morality play (as we have already seen in Bale's linking of chronicle material to the morality), but what we see - as we saw in the case of the mystery plays - is not the simple death and disappearance of the medieval tradition. Morality plays continue to be written and performed,[36] in the

period 1558-86, for instance there are almost thirty plays which are moralities, or are closely related to the morality. Many have the old pattern of temptation / fall / restoration, or are prodigal son plays, but there are changes - sometimes due to the change of religion, sometimes not. The group of vices characteristic of the early moralities has generally given way to the single figure of the Vice. The satirical potential is often developed.

A rare and interesting example of a play in which the usual final upward movement to repentance and forgiveness is no longer found is *The Castle of Security* which we know of from the account of one R. Willis who saw it as a small boy at Gloucester c. 1570.[37] This seems to have been a simple brief play with a basic morality pattern (cf. the "summoning by death" plays), and with a symbolic dumb show having a central role. It was the "Mayor's play," performed by a visiting group of players of interludes who had successfully requested a licence. The central figure was "a king or some great prince with his courtiers," and three ladies, who "keeping him in delights and pleasures drew him from his graver counsellors, hearing of sermons, and listening to good counsel and admonitions, that in the end they got him to lye down in a cradle upon the stage, where these thre ladies joining in a sweet song rocked him asleepe that he snorted againe and secretly placed a "vizard like a swines snout upon his face" - with three chains held by the ladies, "who fall to singing againe and then discovered his face that the spectators might see how they had transformed him, going on with their singing." Meanwhile, two old men appeared, "one in blew with a Serjeant at Armes; his mace on his shoulder, the other in red, with a drawn sword in his hand, and leaning with the other hand upon the others shoulder, and so they two went along in a soft pace round about by the skirt of the stage, till at last they came to the cradle when all the court was in greatest jollity, and the the foremost old man with his mace stroke a fearful blow upon the cradle; whereat all the courtiers with the three ladies and the vizard all vanished." After this moment of theatrical wonder, "the desolate prince, starting up bare faced and finding himselfe thus sent for to judgement, made a lamentable complaint of his miserable case, and so was carried away by wicked spirits." Willis's final remarks indicate both the significance of the morality and its powerful emotional effect: "this prince did personate in the morall the Wicked of the world: the three ladies, Pride, Covetousnesse, and Luxury, the two old men, the end of the world and the last judgement. This sight tooke such impression in me that when I came towards mans estate, it was as fresh in my memory, as if I had seen it newly acted."

Similar to this, and more reminiscent perhaps of the end of Doctor Faustus, is The *Conflict of Conscience* by Nathaniel Woodes, a Cambridge graduate and a minister at Norwich (printed 1581; written ?c, 1579), which is based on an account of the life of Francesco Spira, an Italian Protestant lawyer who became a Catholic, and then in remorse for his apostasy died in despair (1548). This vehemently anti-Catholic play combines allegory and homily. Its hero is Philologus, "one that loves to talke." His spiritual enemies are the Vice Hypocrisy, in league with Satan and the Pope, and his companions Tyranny (who takes the disguise of Zeal), Avarice (alias Careful Provision) and Sensual Suggestion. There is also a burlesque priest Caconos. Philologus is arraigned before a Cardinal, and although he stands firm throughout his interrogation, eventually succumbs to the wiles of Sensual Suggestion, choosing life and riches and promising to recant. Confronted by Conscience, he will not change, though he is troubled ("My Conscience speaketh truth, me think, but yet because I feare, / By his advice to suffer death, I doo his wordes forbeare"). God's judgement comes: in the midst of his glory he is suddenly assailed by Horror, falls into despair, is convinced that he is forever damned, and will not (or can not) repent: "I cannot pray, my

spirit is dead, no faith in me remayne." In the final scene a messenger brings the news of his suicide: "Philologus by deepe dispaire hath hanged himselfe with coard." However, curiously, the older pattern was not entirely abandoned. In the same year a second issue of the play appeared, in which the messenger's speech reported a happier ending: "Philologus, that would have hangde himselfe with coard, / Is nowe converted unto God, with manie bitter teares..."[38]

Some of the "hybrid" late moralities[39] are also very interesting. One example, Pikeryng's *Horestes* (printed 1567) will suffice. The material for this version of the revenge of Orestes on Aegisthus and Clytemnestra is drawn from a product of earlier medieval humanism predating the Italian new learning which was the source of *Fulgens and Lucrece* - the "Troy books," perhaps from Caxton's *Recuyll*, probably from Lydgate's *Troy Book*. The play's full title suggests its varied nature - "A Newe Enterlude of Vice conteyning the History of Horestes with the cruell revengment of his Fathers death upon his one naturall Mother." It is a mixture of "history" and "moral interlude," a morality play with a Vice called Revenge (alias Courage - not necessarily an entirely virtuous quality), and a very early revenge play. The discussion of the ideas involved in the revenge theme is open and interesting. In the end the play seems to endorse Bacon's view of revenge as a "kind of wild justice," but is not without ambiguity - Revenge can be the agent of disorder and cruelty, but also of justice. Horestes asks the gods for guidance whether to exact revenge - or to "let the adulltres dame styll wallow in her sin." The Vice (giving his name as Courage) urges Horestes on to kill his mother. This advice is ultimately endorsed by Idumeus and Councell. Nature, however, urges Horestes to desist from this unnatural act ("from mothers bloud withdraw thy bloudy hand!") which would be neither law or justice but "cruell tyraney" and would bring ill fame. But Horestes is determined ("for now nought elles in Horestes but sore reveng bears sway" says Idumeus), and Clytemnestra is captured and brought out - to the gleeful delight of the Vice, who weeps when he sees Horestes sigh ("Jesu, God! how styll he syttes; I thinke he be a saynt, / O oo oo! you care not for me"). Egistus is hanged, and Clytemnestra, her appeals for pity rejected, is led off to death. Horestes is reconciled with Menelaus, marries Hermione and is crowned by Duty and Truth - while Revenge goes off as a beggar to seek a new master. The play has, in addition, an element of "advice to princes" literature, and, probably, a political context. It may well allude to events in Scotland, where, in 1567, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, was murdered, and Mary quickly married the Earl of Bothwell. Murray and other Scottish lords supporting the infant James VI were in London in 1567.[40] The tradition of the Falls of Princes clearly underlies the treatment of the fall of Egistus and Clytemnestra, but the play has the final upward movement of the morality play. Also, in true native English style, it contains much comedy (about half of the play in fact) from episodes and speeches from the Vice, from Hodge and Rusticus, and two braggart soldiers. And it has four songs. *Horestes* is not one of the great plays of the century, but it is an extremely interesting one.

The morality play had proved to be a very adaptable genre. It continued into the 1580s, with, for instance, Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* and a continuation *The Three Lords and the Three Ladies of London*. Ulpian Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (published in 1568), in which Virtuous Living is tempted by vice, was probably revived as late as 1600 at the Rose by the Earl of Pembroke's players, and *The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality* (probably from the 1560s) was presented before Queen Elizabeth by boy actors in 1601.[41] Morality play patterns are detectable in *Doctor Faustus* and other Elizabethan plays, and in some Jacobean revenge plays.[42] Allegorical theatre lived on in the masque.[43]

The varied tradition of folk drama and festival (some of it probably very ancient) continued, although

we catch glimpses only - as for instance the Yule ceremonies at York, the "Yule Riding," in which Yule and his wife rode on horseback carrying a shoulder of mutton (explained in a broadsheet of c. 1570 as the Lamb of God), his face painted like a Jew; and the youths of the city crying, "Yule, Yule" - all reputed to be the occasion of horseplay and licentiousness.[44] Probably, there were also the antecedents of the mumming plays recorded much later by collectors. These were taken by the English to North America, Newfoundland and the West Indies. A multitude of references indicate that Robin Hood plays and games[45] were very popular. A fifteenth-century fragment of one play survives; another was printed (c. 1560) by William Copland: "A newe playe for to be played in Maye games very plesaunte and full of pastyme." Combats, clever escapes, and slapstick violence seem to have been prominent in these. The old Coventry Hock - Tuesday play performed for the Queen at Kenilworth in 1575 has a formalized battle between Danes and English.[46] The ancient tradition of the *mimi* seems to live on and on, sometimes touching more sophisticated theatre, always providing a background for "festive comedy" and carnivalesque celebrations of the "world upside down."

In conclusion, it would now seem that we have to replace our old neat "Darwinian" model with something that looks much more like a muddle - or perhaps, to put it more charitably, a rich "gallimaufry or hodge-podge" which was to prove a potential source of sustenance to later dramatists. The various ends and beginnings in the drama of the earlier sixteenth century do not, of course, "explain" Shakespeare or Marlowe, but provide them with a more varied context and background. And they do suggest some lines of continuity - although in our discussion we need to be more rigorous than the common vaguely suggestive phrase "leading on to." Thus, there were some real and major changes. The most obvious was the development of the London-based commercial theatre, metropolitan in taste and outlook, and a potential source of livelihood (The development of troupes of travelling players seems to have been a more gradual and an earlier one).[47] The changes were not simply in the economic and social organisation of the theatre. There are distinct changes in the style of the plays, increasingly the work of "literary" figures, poets in their own right. Earlier attempts at eloquence by means of aureation, elaboration of rhetorical laments, etc., gradually give way to a more self-consciously literary rhetoric, which clearly owes much to the spreading influence of humanistic education and the conscious imitation of ancient literary models. The "new" London drama from 1574 is evidently much more secular in its subject matter. No doubt this partly reflects changes in fashion and social changes (though we should not underestimate the role of religion in Elizabethan society). It is given a particular prominence because of two factors, that much earlier "secular" drama may have been lost, and, more importantly, that in the later period the presentation of religious topics on the stage had become problematic, and the public drama subject to control and censorship of a new kind. There is no doubt that the Reformation (especially in its later phases) and the growth of humanism and neo-classicism were extremely significant. But the effects of these theological and intellectual currents were not entirely clearcut. *Horestes* and other plays on classical topics sometimes owe less to the "chaste Latin" taught by Renaissance schoolmasters than to the older and wider patterns of "medieval humanism." Protestant hostility often led to the demise of the "Corpus Christi play," but economic changes and changes of fashion may also have played a part, so that the old plays may have come to look quaint and comical to the sophisticated and the "learned" if not to what Dean Hutton called "the ignorant sort."

When we turn to the question of continuities, the tastes of "the ignorant sort" seem very important. The continued existence of a popular audience apparently avid for drama is surely a very significant fact.

Many people seem to have loved their old plays and festivities. In 1546 the Scottish reformer Wishart laments the despising of God's word at Haddington: "I have heard of thee, Hadingtoun, that in thee wold have bein at ane vane Clerk play two or three thowsand people; and now to hear the messenger of the Eternall God, of all thy towne nor parishe can not be nombred a hundreth personis."[48] Further south, in 1549, the reforming preacher Latimer arrived at a town to find the church empty and its door locked: "'at last the keye was founde, and one of the parishe commes to me and sayes, "Syr, thys is a busye daye with us, we can not heare you. It is Robyn Hoodes daye. The parishe are gone abrode to gather for Robyn Hoode. I praye you let [hinder] them not'"[49] Yet this "continuing audience" was not limited to one social class - as in the Middle Ages it encompassed a wide social range. It preserved the characteristic "audience mind," responding to the mimic power of the play world.[50] It is perhaps not too fanciful to suppose that its theatrical expectations had been formed at least in part by the earlier plays: it seems to have been used to the juxtaposition of comedy and serious matter, to "narrative" drama, with rapid alternations of scenes, to wonders and marvellous events on stage, and to scenes of extreme horror (the blinding of Gloucester is hardly more horrific than the callous nailing of Christ to the cross by four torturers in the York play).

Our earlier discussion of endings and beginnings has thrown up some suggestions and hints of continuities and links between the earlier and the later drama, if not a steady teleological development. Those with the earlier Morality play are the most obvious. As we have seen, this was an especially long-lived form which proved able to adapt to the changes in religion. The central character may be a personification - Humanum Genus, Mankind, Everyman, etc. - but it is a relatively small step to a named individual and his fall and (usually) restoration. Bale combined the morality with the history play in *King Johan*. Preston with tragedy in *Cambyses, King of Persia* (printed 1562), with its Vice Ambidexter. Spivack has traced a line through the ambiguous, amoral examples of the Vice to Shakespeare's Iago. And there are some clear particular echoes. The placing of Kent in the stocks, for instance, could well be linked with - and derive some of its power from -the scene in which a Virtue is overcome by Vices and bound or fettered (as in *Youth*, *Hickscorner*, *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis)*.[51] Sometimes we can detect larger morality play patterns - in *King Lear*, for instance, with its symmetrical plot, with some characters sharply differentiated into good and bad, and its "generalized" central figure - both a British King and Humanum Genus - who falls to adversity, poverty, and despair (like Skelton's Magnificence). The traditional narrative patterns of the pilgrimage or journey and of the spiritual battle are echoed in the "slow crawl towards death," the painful, uncertain journey of self-knowledge, and the cruel and callous schemes and actions of the "vices." It is of course all much more complicated and ambiguous than the earlier morality plays, but perhaps the extreme horror of its ending is partly due to our sense that we have been deliberately denied our expectation of a final upward movement to a eucatastrophe.

In the case of the mystery cycles, the question of continuities has been re-opened by Emrys Jones in his *The Origins of Shakespeare*.[52] Critical opinion had for some time been very cautious, partly in reaction to the confidently teleological accounts of the early drama, partly in response to Kolve's brilliant study of the Corpus Christi play, which stressed its autonomy as a genre, and had tended to resist "continuity" and to insist rather on the differences from the later Elizabethan secular drama. However, it is clear that this too was a long-lived form, and that the young Shakespeare could have seen a mystery cycle at Coventry - and if Honigmann's account of his "lost years" is correct and he spent some time as a tutor in a northern Catholic household he would have been in an area where the survival of the old plays was

especially notable. There are some echoes of episodes and incidents (the knocking on the gate in *Macbeth* for instance recalls the knocking on the gate of Hell in Harrowing of Hell plays); there are references to the massacre of the Innocents and to Herod. There may also be echoes of larger patterns - the loss of the golden world before the fall, the "lost garden" of the history plays[53] or the murder of Abel by his brother. Emrys Jones points out convincing parallels between scenes in Shakespeare's early plays in which innocent victims are killed - such as Duke Humphrey in *Henry VI*- and those in the mystery plays where the isolated figure of Christ stands among the tormentors and the crowds.

Looking back over the period, it is hard not to feel a sense of regret at the ending of a tradition of religious drama such as continued to flourish here in Spain, especially a tradition so deeply rooted in society, with such a generously inclusive sense of "sacred laughter", a tradition which was both glorious and homely. Its "homeliness" finds a melancholy testament in the surviving records of payments: for food for the Chester shepherds; at Coventry 3s 4d for God, 3s 4d for two devils, 16d for "worms of conscience," and a pay for "a lynke to sette the worlds on fyer; or at Chelmsford "5 prophetes cappes (one wanting)" or "3 flappes for devils." But on the other had we can see the beginnings of a secular drama with a much wider range of plots and an intense and amazing verbal eloquence and a theatrical originality which is one of the wonders of English literature.

NOTES

[1] Chambers, E. K. 1903. *The Medieval Stage*. London, Oxford University Press.

[2] Manly, J M, 1906-7. "Literary Form and the New Theory of the Origin of Species." *Modern Philology* 4: 577-95.

[3] Notably the volumes of REED, *Records of Early English Drama*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. Chambers had already begun this task: see his valuable Appendix W (Representations of Mediaeval Plays). Anna J. Mill's *Medieval Plays in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1927) is another early example.

[4] See Davis, N. ed. 1970. *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*. London, EETS SS 1. p. c.

[5] Chambers, ii, 392-3

[6] Klausner, David, ed, 1990. *Records of Early English Drama: Herefordshire and Worcestershire*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press. 306-7

[7] Lancashire, I 1979. "Ioly Walte and Malkyng": a Grimsby puppet play in 1431. *REED Newsletter* 1979: 2 6-7. The sixteenth-century antiquarian Lambarde records that at Witney, Oxon, there was formerly a yearly show or interlude of the "Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Christ," in which "the priests garnished out certain small puppets, resembling the persons of Christ, the Watchman, Mary, and others, amongst which one bore the part of a waking Watchman who (espying Christ to rise) made a continual noise, like to the sound that is caused by the meeting of two sticks, and was thereof commonly called Jack Snacker of Witney" (Speaight, G. *The History of the English Puppet Theatre.* London, Robert Hale, 1955; 2nd edn, 1990, p, 34) See also Chambers, 1. 71, ii 157.

[8] Robe, Stanley L. 1954. "Coloquios de pastores from Jalisco, Mexico." *Folklore Studies* 4 Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press (see pp 4-16 for discussion of European origins and colonial development). The Tlaxcala plays are recorded by Fray Toribio Motolinia, *Historia de los indios de Nueva España*. See also John Reed's *Insurgent Mexico* (1914, repr, 1983), part VI, iii, "Los Pastores," for a description of this "ancient miracle play" on the night of Epiphany.

[9] Ed, Davis, N. 1970. 1-7,

[10] Ed Baker, Donald C., Murphy, John L., and Hall, Louis B., Jr 1982. *The Late Medieval Plays of Bodleian Mss Digby 133 and Museo 160*. Oxford, EETS 283,

[11] Chambers, ii 342. It is lnteresting to note that Nicholas Udall (1505-56), of *Ralph Roister Doister* fame (c. 1550-3), and a firm Protestant, was vicar of Braintree from 1537-44.

[12] Chambers, ii. 344-5.

[13] Chambers, ii. 338.

[14] Chambers, ii.356

[15] Ed, Baker, Murphy and Hall. 1982,

[16] Clark, A. 1907. *Notes and Queries*, 10th Series, vol. 7: 181-3, 342-3, 422-3.

[17] Chambers, i. 222-3

[18] The title of the excellent study by Harold C, Gardiner, S,J (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946).

[19] Meredith, P. 1981. John Clerke's Hand in the York Register. *Leeds Studies in English* 12: 245-71

[20] Gardiner, p, 73.

[21] Gardiner, p 74.

[22] Gardiner, p, 76.

[23] Meredith, P. 1994. The Towneley Cycle In Beadle, R., ed 1994. *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre.* Cambridge, University Press, pp. 142-4.

[24] Gardiner, p. 78.

[25] Gardiner, p. 84.

[26] Gardiner, pp. 80-2.

[27] Chambers, ii. 379.

[28] Chambers, ii 394

[29] Chambers, ii. 361; Gardiner, p. 85.

[30] Chambers, ii. 396.

[31] Chambers, ii. 384.

[32] Chambers, ii. 373-4.

[33] Rosenfeld, S. 1960. *The Theatre of the London Fairs in the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge, University Press, pp. 14, 136, 160. Speaight, *History of the English Puppet Theatre*, pp 32 ff. See also Chambers, ii. 158-9; Morley, H. 1859. *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair*. London, Chapman and Hall, pp. 82, 288, 354-5. The sequence of episodes in one early eighteenth-century version of the *Creation* (Speaight, pp. 165-6) sounds remarkably like that of a mystery cycle: Garden of Eden, Creation of Adam and Eve, Fall and Expulsion, Cain and Abel, Abraham and Isaac, Nativity of Christ, Magi, Flight into Egypt, Massacre of the Innocents (with King Herod's soldiers having spears "laden with children") - but ending with Dives and Lazarus.

[34] The earlier history of "interludes" remains somewhat mysterious: it is possible that the early verse *Interludium de Clerico et Puella* and the fabliau *Dame Sirith* may have been performed; the interludes mentioned in *Gawain and the Green Knight* may have been short playlets or "turns" between the courses of a meal. At King's Lynn, Norfolk, in 1385, we hear of "an interlude on Corpus Christi day" and of "the interlude of St Thomas the Martyr" (Chambers, ii 374): and in the fifteenth century we hear (1452) of an "original of an Interlude pleyed at the Cherch gate" at Harling in Norfolk (Chambers, ii.368). These sound like short plays.

[35] Anglo, S. 1969. *Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy*. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

[36] See Potter, Robert, 1975. *The English Morality Play*. London: Routledge, Kegan Paul. Many have proverbial titles (and proverbs were often used in earlier moralities): proverbs fuse the general (maxim) with the particular (application) in a way similar to moral allegory. On the development of the Vice, see Spivack, Bernard, 1958. *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*. New York: Columbia University Press; Happé &, Peter, 1981. "'The Vice" and the Popular Theatre, l547-80." In Coleman, A. and Hammond, A. eds. London: Methuen, 13-31. Examples of contemporary social satire: Wapull's *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* (1576) - greed and acquisitiveness - or Lupton's *All for Money* (licensed 1577, printed 1578) - bribery and corruption. On theological differences, see Rozett, M. T. 1984. *The Doctrine of Election and the Emergence of Elizabethan Tragedy*. Princeton, Princeton University Press. In his conclusion he notes the contribution morality plays as containing dramatized versions of the inner workings of the soul (p. 73), and remarks that Inclination, the Vice in *The Trial of Treasure* is the first example of "a wicked character whose heightened awareness enables him to recognize and understand the implications of his own wickedness (p. 96) - though are surely premonitions of this in earlier villains who "announce" their way of life

[37] Willis, R. Mount.*Mount Tabor, or Private Exercises of a Penitent Sinner*. London, 1639, pp. 110-114, quoted by Hattaway, M, 1982. *Elizabethan Popular Theatre: Plays in Performance*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 65-6) and Bevington, David 1962. *From Mankind to Marlowe*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, pp. 13-14,

[38] "Rarely in the history of the drama has the issue between tragedy and comedy been decided so economically" (Potter, p. 239),

[39] On these see Potter, pp. 279 ff.

[40] See Axton, Marie, ed. 1982. *Three Tudor Classical Interludes*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, pp. 29 ff.

[41] See Craik, T. W. 1958. *The Tudor Interlude*. Leicester: University Press, pp. 110-8. See also Irena Janicks-Swiderska "*The Conspiration betweene Liberalitie and Prodigalitie* and *Old Fortunatus* as Transitional Plays." *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis*. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu tódzkiego Nauki Humanistyczno-Spoleczne. Seria I, 1980, pp. 63-84.

[42] See Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*; Craig, Hardin. 1950. "Morality Plays and Elizabethan Drama," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 1: 64-72.

[43] And found a new lease of life in the new Italian operas and *rappresentazioni* or "oratorios" of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (e.g. Emilio di Cavalieri's *La rappresentazioni de Anima e di Corpo* (1600),

[44] Johnston, Alexandra F. 1976. Yule in York, *REED Newsletter* 1976.1 3-10, Cf. the Chester Midsummer Show (Chambers, ii,356) or the Norwich Riding of St George (Chambers, i, 222).

[45] See Wiles, David. 1981, *The Early Plays of Robin Hood*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

[46] Kuin, R. J. P., ed. 1983. Robert Langham. *A Letter*. Leiden: E, J. Brill, pp. 52, 54-5.

[47] Tydeman, William. 1978. *The Theatre in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: University Press, pp. 215-21.

[48] Mill, p. 74n.

[49] Latimer, Hugh. *Seven Sermons Before Edward VI*, ed. E. Arber. 1869. London: Murry, pp.173-4

[50] Thus, the story of the apparition of a devil during a performance of *Doctor Faustus* spread by the Puritans (see Jump, J. D,, ed, 1962, pp. lix-lx) has a kind of antecedent in the story in the early-sixteenth-century *Hundred Merry Tales* of the player who wore his devil's costume home and frightened everybody. Cf. Don Quixote's meeting with the player Death.

[51] See Craik, T. W. 1958. *The Tudor Intellude.* pp. 93-5. It was apparently a popular piece of iconography, probably related to the "Abuses of the Time" type of satire with its vision of the world upside down.

[52] Jones, E. L. 1970. *The Origins of Shakespeare.* Oxford: Clarendon Press. Chapter 2.