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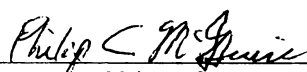
*Staging Anatomies:
Dissection and Tragedy in the Early Stuart Era*

presented by

Hillary M. Nunn

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STAGING ANATOMIES:
DISSECTION AND TRAGEDY IN THE EARLY STUART ERA

VOLUME I

By

Hillary M. Nunn

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

STAGING ANATOMIES: DISSECTION AND TRAGEDY IN THE EARLY STUART ERA

By

Hillary M. Nunn

In early Stuart London, bloodshed on the playhouse stage took on new resonances as the city's public became increasingly fascinated with medical dissection. While the city's population swelled, staged tragedies called upon habits of seeing nurtured within the Anatomical Theatre of the London Barber-Surgeons' Company to examine the individual human body's role within the larger social corpus. Building upon the works of Steven Mullaney, Douglas Bruster, and Michael Neill to describe the anatomy theatre's role in the social world of early Stuart London, my project strives to elucidate popular views of the body's flesh, not only as a carrier of political, religious, and social meaning, but also as a mysterious, yet increasingly charted, biological entity. The public's familiarity with the rituals of anatomy, I argue, provided dramatists and acting companies with vivid new ways of emphasizing the hazards of political divisiveness in plays such as *Coriolanus* and *Sejanus*, where the gruesome dismembering of bodies underscores the self-destructive nature of political infighting. The stagings of dramas ranging from *The Revenger's Tragedy* to *The Atheist's Tragedy* explore this fascination with the lifeless human body in the realm of revenge tragedy, exploiting ideas of the corpse's lingering life to heighten the tragic moral tone while also rendering action more visually striking within the theatre. Such anatomical modes of interpreting the corpse proved particularly compelling within the city's indoor private commercial playhouses, particularly in the



Cockpit in Drury Lane, a theatre designed by Inigo Jones, the Surveyor of the King's Works who planned the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre and who brought perspectivist scenery to the court stage. The Cockpit stage drew upon perspectivist modes of seeing nurtured in both dramatic productions at court and at anatomical demonstrations, encouraging audiences of plays like *The White Devil* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* to envision the bodies of living boy actors not just as female corpses but as multi-layered works of art inextricably associated with bodily mortality. The blinding scenes in plays such as *King Lear* and *Revenge for Honour*, meanwhile, use the habits of viewing nurtured in the anatomical and playhouse theatres to cast doubt on the eye's trustworthiness, asking audiences to reevaluate what they see both in- and outside the theatre. Finally, I argue that the shifts in the theatrical presentation of cannibal banquets sharply reveal anatomical interpretations of the effects that pregnancy – and its influence upon physical appetites – exercised on the female body. Comparing early Stuart renditions of the cannibal banquet to their predecessors, my final chapter traces the convention's gradual emergence from the less shocking realm of allegorical enactment and secondhand reports to the graphic presentation of lovingly cooked and lavishly served body parts of *Antonio's Revenge* and *The Bloody Banquet*. The London public's interest in anatomical dissections, which themselves often commemorated the dismemberment of a corpse through a ritualized feast, encouraged playwrights and acting companies to emphasize the bodily horror of such scenes. The elaborately repulsive onstage banquets that resulted thus manipulated the habits of viewing nurtured within the anatomy theatre, using them to emphasize the moral results of such tragic plots while underscoring the playhouse audience's complicity in such violence.

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INTRODUCTION:
Reading Beyond the Lines:
Reanimating Early Modern Anatomy

"At the beginning of euerie Almanacke," notes Thomas Dekker, "it is the fashion to haue the body of a man drawne as you see, and not onely baited, but bitten and shot at by wilde beasts and monsters." With these opening lines to *The Rauens Almanacke* (1609), Dekker exposes more than the conventional use of such figures, which he calls Moon's Men (Figure 1); he reveals his era's preoccupation with images of the human body under siege as well. Dekker's sardonic initial paragraph dwells upon these observations, wondering at the motives behind such graphic depictions of the human body:

But how ridiculous a shape do they bestowe vpon the silly wretch?
hee standes as if he had beene some notorious malefactor, and
being stript stark naked, to goe to execution: do not those
Roundels hang about him, shew like so many pardons, tyed to the
partes of his body with Labels? Or rather does hee not looke
(when he lyes along) like a theefe begd for an Anatomy in
Surgeon's Hall, (so many Barbers figured in those beastes) slashing
and slicing, and quartering & cutting him vp? truely he does.¹

While Dekker no doubt asks these questions partly to set apart his own use of such a conventional drawing, his commentary asks his readers to look at his work's Moon's Man in a particular new way. More specifically, he asks them to consider the image not simply as a standardly coded representation convenient for conveying information about astrological signs, but as a depiction of an actual human body not just subject to but subjected to dynamic change. In Dekker's eyes, the Moon's Man in *The Rauens Almanacke* can be seen as a body undergoing not only a transition from living to dying, but also an invasive anatomical process of labeling² and examination.

The forces governing these processes, moreover, find their origins not in the otherworldly realm of astrology as the image's labels might suggest, but within human beings modeled on those inhabiting the relentlessly corporeal world of early Stuart London. To Dekker, a man living in a city whose rapidly swelling population magnified the devastation that plague and famine could inflict upon the human body, the Moon's Man becomes more than a traditional symbolic illustration of the stars' power; it also comes to resemble a human being subjected to a degree of bodily damage all too familiar to city dwellers like himself. Dekker clearly envisions humans as the source of the torment the Moon's Man must endure. First, the Moon's Man – presumably already convicted in Dekker's narrative of some wrong – falls into the hands of the state. There, he undergoes the dehumanizing steps that lead to execution, Dekker imagines the Moon's Man undergoing a transformation that Michel Foucault and many scholars after him have clearly outlined: his body ceases to be his own, becoming instead a vehicle through which the crown displays its authority over the individual – and, by extension, over the community – through the infliction of disfiguring punishment that can kill (and sometimes pardon) those under its power.

Yet Dekker imagines a significance for the Moon's Man beyond the scaffold, for he compares him not just to a prisoner to be executed but to a corpse to be dissected. In this sense, such an addition to the Moon's Man narrative flows naturally from the scene of public execution, for, as we shall see, most bodies that became anatomical specimens in early Stuart London were those of executed criminals. Such an explanation, however, fails to account for the disgust – and fascination – that Dekker shows for those involved in conducting the anatomy, and for the process of anatomy itself. The barber-surgeons

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who perform the anatomy, after all, capture Dekker's attention as much as – if not more than – the bodily fate of the Moon's Man, for he forces readers to see not only the corpse but to envision the anatomists "slashing and slicing, and quartering & cutting him vp." The drawing as we have it shows the man's body utterly intact – in fact, he appears to still be alive – and the violence his flesh undergoes in Dekker's imagination stems not solely from the anatomists but from the writer's own thoughts. The physical brutality that Dekker sees as inherent in their radical violation of the human body thus threatens to obliterate the difference between anatomists and vengeful supernatural forces, leading Dekker to comment on the existence of "so many Barbers figured in those [astrological] beasts." Yet Dekker himself uses the traditional labeled image to call these forces into action, prompting his readers to see the results of cruelty that they have not yet inflicted upon the Moon's Man's corpse. The violence of this imagined dismemberment in the name of science stems from Dekker's narrative, not from any depicted actions on the part of the state or the barber-surgeons and executioners who act as its agents; his words, however, clearly reflect not only his own awareness of the steps involved in such procedures but his audience's as well. While the crown had been subjecting its enemies to such bloody treatment for centuries, publicly reducing their bodies to unrecognizable parts to illustrate its political might, the notion that such violent dismemberment could prove scientifically valuable still proved startling, even shocking, to many of the city's inhabitants – and Dekker's description of the Moon's Man's fate clearly resonates with the commonly held apprehension toward the destruction involved in these supposedly scholarly anatomies.

This is not to say, however, that the process – and spectacle – of dissection did not

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scinate the English, and Londoners in particular. As Dekker's narrative reveals, this new interest in anatomical observation was not peculiar to those who depended on their knowledge of the body's structure to earn their living. His enthralled account of the "licensing" and "quartering" of the Moon's Man reveals Dekker's own fascination with this new anatomical exploration, and his assertion that the drawing's maker has "bestowe[d]" the figure with the "rediculous" shape of an anatomical specimen attributes interest, even complicity, in such matters to the artist as well. And most intriguingly, the scenario he imagines for the Moon's Man's body suggests that his readers would themselves be familiar with, if not have firsthand eyewitness knowledge of, the proceedings that systematically converted a felon's living body into a lecturer's anatomical specimen. "[D]oes hee not looke," Dekker asks his readers rhetorically, "like a theefe begd for an anatomy in Surgeon's Hall?," fully confident that they can imagine the scene of dissection with ease. In early Stuart London, his assumption would likely ring true, for the anatomy demonstrations Dekker calls upon served as entertainment for audiences much like, if not identical to, those who read his *Almanacke* and, more importantly, saw plays in the theatre.

Incorporating views of anatomy's significance from a broad range of sources, the chapters that follow explore the ways in which early Stuart dramatists called upon this increasing fascination with anatomical dissection – and its influence on popular conceptions of the body's flesh – to shape the staging of their tragedies. The chapters that follow seek to consider the significance of the visible body itself as a concrete object of public scrutiny within the theatre. More specifically, they will examine the ways that early Stuart playwrights capitalized on the similarities between anatomical and

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commercial theatres to add new layers of meaning to both the dramatic enactment of physical mutilation and the act of witnessing such staged violence. While many recent critics have examined the body's importance as a carrier of political, religious, and social meaning, few have considered how watching bodies undergo what are taken to be gruesome transformations on stage might have affected audience perceptions of dramatic tragedies. Instead, studies that deal specifically with early modern anatomy's influence have tended to consider the body's significance in relation to early modern notions of state power, conceptions of individuality, and modes of written literary creation. Nathan Sawday's *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture*, for example, explores connections between anatomical practice and the era's rhetorical and religious tropes of discovery and exposure. Meanwhile, the essays collected in *The Body in Parts*, edited by David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, address the significance attributed to already distinct parts of the human body in early modern thought.³

In another recent study, Michael Neill argues that Iago performs what amounts to psychological dissection of Othello, thus shedding light onto the mindsets of characters illustrated by their anatomy-tinged playhouse speeches. Comparing the body to the Renaissance stage's discovery space, Neill argues that the body as used in the era's plays was imagined as inscribed with the occult truths of the inner self and "existed to challenge the curious gaze, as if it were there to be opened."⁴ Early Stuart tragedies, with their relentless obsession with acts of spying, torture, and probing bodily mutilation, no doubt uphold this observation, yet Neill passes over the significance of such brutal methodology. Instead, he quickly concludes that the mysteries contained in the dramatic

body "were not merely physiological, but moral-ontological, and psychological" (123). As a result, Neill's arguments strive to elucidate the way that the bodies of individual characters conceal and eventually reveal their particular obsessions and worldviews. Their physical presence as it might have been manifested on the early-modern stage thus becomes less significant to his argument as it evolves.

Neill, like other critics, thus looks past the bloodshed in his examination of anatomy's influence on the early modern stage. Though studies like Neill's offer valuable insight into the importance of anatomical thought in early Stuart London – insights which have proven immensely helpful in shaping my own arguments – most have overlooked the significance imbedded in such bloody playhouse spectacles, seeking instead to explore dramatic dialogue's metaphorical use of ideas borrowed from the study of anatomy. The plays he discusses at greatest length – *Othello* and *The Changeling* – contain intricate characters whose speech proves well-suited to such analysis; the tragedies themselves, however, require surprisingly minimal bloodshed to open their characters' bodies and minds. My readings, however, approach the issue of anatomy's influence on the theatre from a markedly different, though not conflicting, direction. The playhouse community, not the individual dramatic character, serves as my focus; as a result, I will be examining the ways in which early Stuart notions of anatomy manifest themselves on the theatre's stage not only in words but also in more tangible and more immediately visible – that is, more bodily – forms. In short, I will be exploring scenes that enact the physical, rather than the metaphorical, violation of the human body. Such scenes of bloodshed, I argue, call upon the audience's curiosity about the physical makeup of the human body not only to provoke their horror, but to invoke their sympathy

s well. The mechanisms that produce such emotions then become essential to the audience members' involvement in the drama, and, for however brief a period, reshape the ways that they view the violent death-filled world of London and its surroundings.

Because my project emphasizes scenes of violence in tragedy, it will perhaps devote an unusual amount of attention to dramas frequently considered uncondusive to serious study, if considered at all. In some cases, the critical unpopularity of dramas such as *Revenge for Honour* and *The Bloody Banquet* are compounded by the scant knowledge of their performance and literary histories. Yet information regarding dates and authorship is always scanty, and such dramas, though often less elegant than their more famous counterparts, nonetheless allow valuable insight into the culture that produced – and consumed – them. Together with the Shakespearean dramas often cited as containers of universal truths, these more obscure plays offer a unique and often undervalued perspective: they provide a glimpse of the wide-ranging tastes both of London's early Stuart playgoers and of the teeming, bustling city from which they came.

In early modern London, public interest in human dissections and playhouse dramas developed nearly simultaneously. The city's Barber-Surgeons' guild staged four public dissections per year beginning in 1540; because the guild had no permanent facilities for such demonstrations, these anatomies took place in the kitchen of the Barber-Surgeons' Hall and were scrupulously planned to ensure that the proceedings would maintain a professional, scientific air.⁵ The stern atmosphere of these dissections, however, then dissolved into the festive spirit of the banquet hall, for the guild additionally provided a lavish meal for those who attended its anatomy lectures. The expenditures for these celebrations suggest that the dissections were well-attended by the

public, if not by the barber-surgeons themselves. In fact, public interest proved so overwhelming that, in 1636, the barber-surgeons commissioned famed architect Inigo Jones to design the company's Anatomical Theatre as a permanent home for their dissections. More importantly, Jones's plans for the Anatomical Theatre, as we shall see, markedly resemble those of dramatic theatres he designed, most notably those of London's Cockpit.

The similarities in Jones's architectural drawings suggest that public anatomies were taking on the characteristics of staged drama during the same years that the city's theatres were establishing their position within London's civic life – and that, less than sixty years after James Burbage opened the city's first commercial playhouse in 1576, actors and anatomists played to similar audiences in similar venues. Even more intriguingly, the spectacles they presented for their audiences' entertainment bear surprising resemblances to one another, for they both manipulate the human body in front of an audience to communicate strikingly similar social, political, spiritual, and even scientific themes. Early modern comedies and tragedies alike abound with spoken references to dismemberment, as when King Lear, in his famous appraisal of his treacherous daughter, declares "let them anatomize Regan" (3.6.31).⁶ This talk of mutilation looks forward to the staged blinding of Gloucester and mirrors similarly graphic scenes of dismemberment in earlier tragedies like *Titus Andronicus* and *The Spanish Tragedy*, to name but two. Such theatrical violations of the body grew more common – and often bolder – as the practice of dissection gradually gained acceptance within the English medical community. In the years following Elizabeth I's death and preceding the civil war – the early Stuart years that will serve as the primary focus of my

study – these playhouse plots reached their bloodiest extremes, mirroring not only the process of anatomical dissections but also the feasting that followed such events.

Just as commercial theatres were thriving in London, dissection was becoming a larger part of both medical education and the popular mindset in England. In 1540, Henry VIII presented London's Barber-Surgeons' Company with its official charter, which gave the group the exclusive right to examine and license surgeons within the city. Along with this privilege, the king granted the Barber-Surgeons the bodies of four executed criminals per year for the purposes of anatomical research, and, in 1565, Elizabeth I allocated the same number of bodies per year to the College of Physicians.⁷ The records of both the Barber-Surgeons and the College of Physicians refer to these anatomy demonstrations as public, but they give little indication of who actually attended these events.⁸ Further evidence, however, shows that the demonstrations enjoyed considerable popularity among the general public, so much so that neither the Barber-Surgeons nor the Physicians could house the crowds of onlookers in their halls. Many of these spectators, moreover, had no professional involvement with these medical organizations. In the words of historian Sir George Clark, the dissections at the Physicians' Hall "provided a spectacle so acceptable to the taste of the first Elizabethan age that we may suppose as many distinguished strangers were invited as the cramped accommodation of the College could contain" (122). By 1583, the close quarters of the College's hall led the physicians to construct an anatomy theatre, the first in London, in which to stage its dissections.⁹ Among those individuals who attended was Sir Simonds Ewes, a nobleman with no professional connection to medicine who eagerly observed William Harvey perform a three-day-long anatomy at the College's Hall in March of

622, which he watched with "profit and delight, the smell excepted."¹⁰

London's public at large, however, proved more concerned with the anatomies held by the Barber-Surgeons, whose annals mention the presence at dissections of gentlemen that do come and mark the Anatomy to learn knowledge" (Dobson 40). By 1567, the number of spectators at the company's demonstrations had grown so large that the Barber-Surgeons, who had been performing their four annual dissections in their hall's kitchen, had to build special seating in the room to accommodate their anatomies' audiences. Not all of the spectators at the Barber-Surgeons' anatomies, however, acted in the gentlemanly fashion suggested by the account in the annals. As the records of the company's governing court reveal, the curious public – and the surgeons themselves – often behaved rowdily during the demonstrations. "[T]here hath bene," the court noted in 1535,

a generall remissnes in the greater p[ar]t of the Surgians of this Companie in their not appearance and personall attendance ... at the publique Anatomye, and the disorderlynes of those Surgians yt doe appeare for wanting their outward ornament commixing themselves confusedly amongst the Comon people then p[rese]nte, whereby the honor and worthynes of this Companie on the Surgians p[ar]te hath bene much eclipsed. (Young 335)

Though attendance among the company's surgeons may have been declining, "the Comon people" had arrived eagerly to take their places. The court, it appears, takes no action to encourage their attendance; instead, its instructions strive to distinguish the surgeons from the crowds of citizens by demanding that all company members wear their robes and sit in assigned seats in order to restore some dignity to the proceedings. Even more interestingly, the Barber-Surgeons began to insist that those who attended dissections had tickets, though how they obtained these passes for admission – and whether or not

money was exchanged in the process – remains unclear.¹¹ What becomes obvious, however, is that the Barber-Surgeons' anatomies had become the source of fascination for the people of London, so much so that the company's guidelines of decorum failed to contain the public's eagerness to view the proceedings. The Barber-Surgeons instead found themselves running a public show, one whose staging, though less frequent than that of London's playhouse productions, attracted a crowd much like that of its theatrical counterparts and whose enactment developed a strikingly similar sense of drama.

Despite the learned atmosphere the Barber-Surgeons' court strove to maintain, anatomical dissections, historically, were hardly grim affairs. Since the earliest days of such demonstrations in Europe, dissections had been public events that served both as academic exercises and as holidays for their viewers. During the medieval period, when such anatomical displays required a papal indulgence and thus rarely took place, these demonstrations took on an almost festive air, for they devoted themselves to celebrating not only the wonder of the human body but the perfection of established medical knowledge. The most prominent citizens turned out to attend the ceremonies, making these events more social than scientific. The often theatrical festivities surrounding these early anatomies incorporated singing, feasting, and – most intriguingly – the mounting of theatrical productions, resulting in dissections that demonstrated rather than explored the corpse.¹² As a result, such perfunctory anatomical dissections simply illustrated the established theories of authoritative medical texts that physicians knew by rote. As Luke Wilson points out, these early anatomical practices treated the cadaver only as a visual aid for the presiding physicians depended upon ancient authorities, usually Galen's second-century works, to explain the body's inner structure and function.¹³ While today's

anatomy classes continue this tradition of relying on books, where the otherwise messy interior of the corpse can be systematically illustrated and explained for the student. During the process of dissection, those who observed dissections in the middle ages and Renaissance often had little direct contact with either the authoritative text or the corpse itself. In addition, the physician, staring out from his elevated podium as in Johannes de Leetham's *Fasciculo de Medicina* (1493) or, worse yet, gazing at the words of his text as in the 1538 edition of Jacobus Berengarius de Carpi's *Isagogae breves* (Figures 2 and 3), could lecture upon the body without so much as looking at it himself.¹⁴ The physician, Wilson points out, could (or at least thought he could) rely on a dissector, usually a barber-surgeon, to identify the organs within the body, pointing them out for the benefit of the audience as the text, read from on high, made reference to them.

Many critics see these illustrations as reinforcing the social divisions between, on the one hand, physicians – portrayed in current criticism as aloof theorists who never took up from their books – and on the other barber-surgeons, figured as the scorned and iterate workhorses of early modern medicine who provided more practical, if more obviously gruesome, hands-on treatment to the ill. While physicians and barber-surgeons clearly ministered to the body differently – and clearly called upon different training and educational backgrounds in dispensing their treatments – the distinctness of their interests in the anatomized body has perhaps been overstated. Physicians, whose university training focused on reading ancient, often textually corrupt, medical treatises,¹⁵ specialized in administering drugs rather than hands-on care to restore the body's humoral balance, though in practice their efforts often incorporated more direct, even folk-traditional, means of treatment. Barber-surgeons, on the other hand, learned their

trade through apprenticeship and more routinely dealt with their patients' bodies through direct, hands-on care. Their specialties – tooth pulling, bleeding, and wound dressing – exercised far more noticeable effects on the body, either penetrating or sealing its surface to restore its internal operations to their proper balance.¹⁶ Their successes and failures, as a result, were much easier to discern, particularly in the eyes of laypeople, and their practices could accommodate emergencies more efficiently. Such factors made barber-surgeons much more numerous and therefore more accessible to Europe's early modern populace. As we shall see in the following chapter, however, the differences in training and methods that separated the barber-surgeons and physicians failed to establish exclusive domains for the two groups in early modern London. Instead, the creation of the Barber-Surgeons' Company and the College of Physicians deepened the rivalry between the two professions, forcing the medical community and the crown to address once again the brands of authority belonging to the physicians' supposedly more theoretical realm and the barber-surgeons' province of hands-on practice.

In the early days of public anatomy, however, the physicians' association with the more learned theoretical aspects of medicine failed to isolate them from the grisliness surrounding dissections. Whereas a physician's medicinal cures could rarely be proven lethal, and since he allegedly often distanced himself from terminally ill patients to avoid association with death, his mere presence at the bloody scene of dissection linked him to the barber-surgeon's more direct practices. The presence of both physicians and barber-surgeons at the demonstration of the criminal corpse's body, moreover, led many to see both breeds of practitioners as extensions of the executioner himself, another fearful embodiment of the state's power over the individual. In Italy, Katharine Park points out,

anatomist and executioner were in fact often the same person, for the courts often entrusted physicians with still-living criminals, thus giving rise to persistent rumors of vivisection.¹⁷

In the fifteenth-century anatomy theatre, however, physicians – and the texts from which they read – clearly dominated anatomical demonstrations. Because they rarely touched the corpse themselves, physician lecturers had little opportunity to actually view the systems they purported to describe, and, consequently, they rarely had any means of questioning their received medical knowledge. By the early sixteenth century, physicians began to reexamine the relationship between textual authority and experiential knowledge more overtly, often becoming more involved in the dissections they once merely narrated. The title page of Martin Pollich of Mellerstadt's 1493 edition of Mondino's *Anatomy*, for example, depicts a physician who is just as interested in the corpse below him as in the text he holds. Though the larger-than-life lecturer in his elevated chair still dominates the scene, he regards the corpse below more intently than his book (Figure 4). In addition, several of Galen's newly-rediscovered works emphasized the importance of practical experience and thus directly encouraged communication between theorists and practitioners. Universities, as a result, began making their texts and training more accessible to barber-surgeons, offering abbreviated educational programs in the vernacular in addition to the extensive Latin-based schooling for physicians. The scope of anatomical education thus gradually widened, revealing a concern for joining the text's words and the corpse's visual evidence to present a more easily grasped, more thoroughly integrated view of the body's inner workings to all who took a professional interest in dissection.

These efforts often called upon the rhetorical techniques that underlay the structure of early modern university education in presenting and refining new ideas both to university students and to barber-surgeons. These same techniques, interestingly enough, also encouraged the development of playhouse tragic drama, as Joel Altman has so convincingly argued in *The Tudor Play of Mind*. Rhetoric, Altman points out, functioned as a means of inquiry as well as of persuasion in the early modern period, and staged university debates on philosophical points largely inspired the moral explorations embedded in Renaissance playhouse tragedy.¹⁸ Rhetorical modes of philosophical debate, Altman argues, had developed throughout the medieval period, and such techniques certainly were not new to the teaching of medicine either. John of Alexandria, for example, had used them in his medical teaching as early as 1515. His introduction to Galen's *De sectis* modifies Aristotle's standards to create what Roger French calls the "anatomical" *accessus*, listing the six *occasiones* with which a dissection should be concerned, among them the number of organs, their positions and their parts, as well as their relationship to one another. This use of the *accessus* provided students and teachers with a tool for exploring the body itself during dissections, as well as for memorizing and envisioning its structures and their functions. For teachers of anatomy like Taddeo Alderotti (who taught Mondino), the *accessus* incorporated anatomical studies into more traditional structures of learning, thus providing a place for the practice of dissection in a then-suspicious academic environment.¹⁹ Hieronymus Fabricius's uncompleted *Theatrum totius Animalis Fabricae*, too, used Aristotle's rhetorical methods – namely, the grouping and regrouping of observable anatomical phenomena in hopes of arriving at a "cause" – to elucidate the body's systems and parts.²⁰ While Fabricius used ancient

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rhetorical forms to guide his research, other anatomists abandoned these conventions in hopes of producing anatomical texts that would more accurately reflect the bodily sights of the anatomy theatre.²¹ Berengarius, anatomy lecturer at Bologna, emphasized *anatomia sensibilis*, a philosophy that concerned itself exclusively with "those structures perceptible in practice to the senses." In his *Commentary on Mondino* (1521), he used questioning techniques borrowed from classical rhetoric to help students reconcile the anatomies they witnessed with previous commentators' accounts of the body's structures and functions. For Berengarius, blurring the boundaries between theory and practice thus became the simplest way of accommodating both his profession's written tradition and his individual experience.²²

During the same period at Bologna, however, the public dissections' role as entertainment threatened to eclipse scientific inquiry completely. Berengarius, for example, claims that he demonstrated the placenta of a hanged woman to "almost five hundred students at the University of Bologna, together with many citizens."²³ The festive aspects of anatomy came to be so dominant that laws had to be passed to control the public's behavior during public displays. As Giovanna Ferrari points out, Bologna's anatomies became entwined with Carnival festivities, so much so that laws were passed in the early seventeenth century "to stamp out forms of behaviour inappropriate to the solemnity of the annual dissection, such as chatting, laughing, asking indecent questions or grabbing hold of the organs prepared by the dissector." Members of the public sometimes even wore carnival masks to the anatomy theatre, and it was not uncommon for them to arrive armed.²⁴ In the presence of such boisterous onlookers, whose actions foreshadow the confusion that invaded the Barber-Surgeons' Hall along with London's

academic public spectators, the formal rhetoric of dissection gave way to a new brand of dramatic ceremonial atmosphere, one whose theatrical nature threatened to eclipse the solemnity of scientific medical demonstration.

No figure, however, brings out the controversial relationships between the theatrical performance of dissection and anatomical texts more vividly than Andreas Vesalius, the Belgian medical prodigy who served as professor of anatomy at Padua in the early 1500's. Commonly credited with revolutionizing the procedures used for teaching anatomy, Vesalius minimized the importance of ancient texts in his demonstrations and altogether eliminated the barber-surgeon dissector from his dissections. Instead, he made incisions into the cadavers himself, spellbinding his large audiences with his often impromptu lectures on the systems he described. He criticized the efforts of traditional physician lecturers to dissociate themselves from the body while simultaneously claiming authority over it, calling them "jackdaws aloft in their high air, with egregious arrogance croaking things they have never investigated"; his assessment of the more lowly dissectors, however, proved just as uncomplimentary, for he accused them of being "so ignorant of languages that they are unable to explain their dissections to the spectators and muddle what ought to be displayed."²⁵ For Vesalius, in other words, what anatomy demonstrations had been lacking was a properly authoritative voice, one able to communicate observation and the written text's wisdom with equal fluency. Lecturers and dissectors, in his formulation, failed to work together properly to present an anatomy because the two participants could not enter into dialogue with one another, perhaps because those who explicated the corpse could more easily envision the body's confusing interior as accommodating a single mode of explanation. Though they

occupied the same stage, Vesalius argues that the two actors put on separate, and therefore largely irrelevant, performances lacking in meaningful rhetorical exchange.

Vesalius's decision to perform both roles himself not only effectively eliminated this disjuncture, it also made him a star. His direct manipulation of cadavers, as we shall see, made him the center of attention in the anatomy theatre, and when he, rather than an aloof figure on high, explained the body's structures, Vesalius became the physical vehicle for the voice of authority. All eyes focused upon his theatrical interactions with the corpse, and all ears heard his interpretation of the anatomy. For Jonathan Sawday, much authority owes its emergence to the dynamics of theatrical performance, for he envisions Vesalius's demonstrations as undermining the stability of the written word, creating a dramatic contest for authority between the anatomist's speech and the body's structures, which, though clearly visible, remained mysterious and largely unreadable to the lay public.²⁶ In the anatomy theatre, Sawday argues, "The confrontation between the body and the anatomist came to replace the tripartite division of textual authority, living authority, and the passive authority of the body"(65).²⁷ Sawday, however, fails to note that this confrontation between the anatomist and the body itself created a new text in its own right, one formed gradually during the demonstration from the constant collision of observations, both aural and visual, gleaned within the anatomy theatre. The dynamic performance, not the written text, came to serve as the third authoritative element in dissection, one that existed alongside – and as the result of – the "living authority" of the anatomist and the "passive authority of the body." Unlike written anatomy texts, which existed before the enactment of the anatomy and (by tradition) remained unchanged by its performance, this new brand of anatomical knowledge could exist only when spoken

words and the objects they described were perceived simultaneously by an audience observing at firsthand. Although these words and images might be echoed in illustrated books, such printed texts required these two elements of performed anatomy to remain static, unable to act upon one another without the imagination of a reader already knowledgeable about the enactment of dissection. Anatomy texts, in other words, come to function just like playtexts; they could describe the action of theatrical performance, yet they could not reconstruct its elements to capture the motion involved in the staging so necessary to the construction of its meaning.

These limitations to the printed text's authority apply not only to the words which describe the processes of dissection but to the images meant to illustrate the body's structure and function as well. Current scholarly interpretations of the title page to Vesalius's masterful guide to anatomy *De humani corporis fabrica* (1543) reveal the difficulties inherent in attempting to encapsulate these performances on the printed page. The woodcut, reproduced and discussed in almost every twentieth-century treatment of anatomy's history, depicts Vesalius at work, dissecting the corpse of a woman in front of a large, riotous crowd (Figure 5).²⁸ Though most scholars carefully point out that the anatomical theatre pictured probably never existed – that the image was most likely copied from a playtext's frontispiece²⁹ – the image remains useful for examining what Lawday calls the "intellectual texture" of anatomical performance. In his words, the frontispiece provides us with a starting point from which "we can begin to comprehend something of the contradictory emotions of desire and horror which anatomization seems to have engendered within early-modern culture" (66). Just as importantly, it hints at the possibility that Vesalius himself viewed his own anatomical performances, for, whether or not

such a structure ever existed in Padua, the professor claimed that he performed his dissections in a similar theatre that seated five hundred spectators. The illustration has in turn led to a number of critical attempts at reanimating the performance whose action is frozen within its lines. Not surprisingly, such readings often more than simply disagree as to the significance of the action depicted, they often see the woodcut itself differently, describing in conflicting terms its images and the actions they suggest. Luke Wilson, for example, concludes that the woodcut illustrates the circulation of authority within the theatre, where the gap between Vesalius's words and the corpse's silent visual explanations is bridged by Vesalius's direct contact with the corpse. In Wilson's terms, Vesalius and the cadaver perform one another, for the lecturer's words and hands refer to the body's structures, which in turn illustrate the spoken explanations; such dynamics extend to the spectators in the theatre, transforming them into the objects of study, for each fleshy body's "loss of distinction" in the crowd leaves it oscillating "between subjection to an anatomizing gaze in relation to which it is a patient and [an] assumption of an authority of which it is the agent – each, in causal mutuality, continually exchanging itself with the other." For Wilson, however, the skeleton suspended over the dissecting table threatens to hinder the circulation of authority between anatomist and cadaver, for its lack of bodily interior denies the spectator any glimpse of the corpse's inner flesh. As such, the skeleton serves for Wilson as a reminder of anatomy demonstrations' traditional reliance upon lecturers on high, recreating and mocking the "cadaver, surgeon, and professor or text" model – a model that Sawday renames (and reverses in chiasmic fashion) as the tripartite division of "textual authority, living authority, and the passive authority of the body" (65). Yet, Wilson notes, the figure of

Vesalius remains aloof from this exchange of gazes; instead, he somewhat mysteriously claims that Vesalius looks derisively at the two men fighting under the table in the foreground (though the table's corner would no doubt interfere with his line of vision), thereby further isolating outside observers from sharing in the circulation of authority between anatomist and cadaver.

If the scene's visual circuits are interrupted, Sawday is not bothered by it, for he argues that the bisected concentric circles that make up the illustration allow us to glimpse a "cross-section" of the dissection scene, letting us study it as a scientific specimen of anatomical procedures. While Wilson sees Vesalius's gaze as directed at a distraction inside the theatre that in turn distracts the woodcut's viewers from the scene of dissection, Sawday sees it as aimed directly at the page's viewers, "inviting us to step inside the theatre, to join the crowd who have gathered to watch this dynamic confrontation between living and dead authorities" (66). The anatomist, however, makes no such contact with the viewers' gaze; instead, Vesalius's eyes appear to stare off blankly, almost distractedly, at something outside the scope of the woodcut, something which the illustration's beholders cannot possibly see. The image as Sawday sees it, however, zeroes in on the corpse's uterus to offer the woodcut's audience answers about the cosmos rather than frustrate their attempts to examine nature's mysteries. "What is depicted," Sawday grandly claims, "is no less than a demonstration of the structural coherence of the universe itself, whose central component – the principle of life concealed within the womb – Vesalius is about to open to our gaze" (69-70). The picture, Sawday argues, thus serves as the perfect counter to Copernicus's then-radical theory of the heliocentric universe, published the same year in *De Revolutionibus Orbium*



Coelestium. Rather than allow the sun to become the central point of all life, Sawday argues, the Vesalius title page proclaims the human body as the nexus from which not only the human race but the universe itself emerges.

Remarkably enough, however, the womb which Sawday sees as the focal point of the illustration may or may not actually be visible within the woodcut itself. The woodcut's shading, after all, seems to reveal a hollowness in the abdomen rather than any structures that may lie beneath the subject's skin. The fact remains, however, that Sawday and a host of other critics never question that the womb proves the subject of the illustration's scrutiny.³⁰ Writing about anatomy's influence in *Othello*, for example, Howard Marchitello also relies on the womb's supposed visibility in the woodcut to argue that Vesalius held anatomy capable of explaining both the scientific and individualized personal narratives of dissected bodies.³¹ Marchitello's argument, moreover, clearly reveals how the uterus, though obscured if visible at all in the illustration, has become so central to the woodcut's interpretation: he and his fellow critics have read – and believed – Vesalius's written text. The woodcut, Marchitello argues, renders the woman's body "emphatically and publicly open," and this openness is further exaggerated by the anatomist's written description of what is occurring within the dissection scene (29). Marchitello quotes from Charles O'Malley's translation of Vesalius's account of the action as follows:

Then we have resected all the intestines from the mesentary, but we have left the rectum in the body as well as the whole of the mesentery of which we have to some extent separated the membranes so that its nature is exposed to view. However, the present figure has been drawn for the special purpose of indicating the position of the uterus ... exactly as [it] occurred in this woman; we have not disturbed the uterus in any way. (29; Marchitello's ellipses)

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Vesalius, in Marchitello's account, then goes on to explain that the woman had claimed to be pregnant in order to avoid execution for her unnamed crime. The anatomy thus offers, for him, "ocular proof" of the woman's lie by exposing her "demonstrably 'empty' uterus" and thus reinforcing her guilt. The *Fabrica*, Marchitello concludes, thus "promises on its very page that the text is the body itself – the body of a woman whose entirely legible status as non-pregnant locus of the state's power over life and death is materially beyond dispute" (29).

Marchitello thus assumes not only that he and other observers can make out the woman's uterus in the woodcut, but that we can see within it well enough to determine what it is, in fact, empty. Like many critics, he trusts implicitly Vesalius's account of what the scene supposedly renders visible, and he never raises the possibility of disjuncture between the text's words and the illustration. His reading, as a result, mirrors those of the ancient anatomists that Vesalius so roundly upbraided, for it overlooks the evidence presented by the body as we see it in favor of the solutions suggested by the verbal text. In addition, Marchitello simultaneously overlooks conflicting evidence presented by the words of the very text he takes as his authority. Fitting the text to the image in a manner typical of pre-Vesalian anatomy, Marchitello offers no explanation for the complications suggested by Vesalius's extended account of the frontispiece's scene. Vesalius's comments directly following those quoted in Marchitello make the scene's image less clear, for the anatomist states:

However, the present figure has been drawn for the special purpose of indicating the *position* of the uterus and bladder exactly as they occurred in this woman; we have not disturbed the uterus in any way, and *none of the uterine membranes has been destroyed*. *Everything is seen intact* just as it appears to the dissector

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The illustration, Vesalius suggests, shows the *position* of the intact uterus, not necessarily the interior of the organ itself. But Marchitello, knowing that the womb occupies the general area exposed to our view, sees its empty insides within the illustration's lines, recognizing the organ's form even though, as his own narrative insists, it has been cut open and therefore no longer holds its familiar shape. The *Fabrica's* words, meanwhile, insist that the womb remains intact, that none of its membranes has been destroyed. Not only does Vesalius's text frustrate Marchitello's reading, then, it also throws doubt on the presentation of the body's interior as revealed in the woodcut. The text, after all, claims that the illustration reveals the body's interior "just as it appears to the dissector," yet surely, viewers may well be thinking, the dissector can see the body's interior more clearly than *that*. Presumably, and hopefully, Vesalius would have a much easier time differentiating the uterus from the bladder than we have from our position outside the page, where we can only see lines that suggest various layers of flesh. Here, Marchitello's observation that anatomy reveals a "successive play of surfaces" rather than any essential truth about the body's nature proves particularly powerful (23), for, though we can see into the woman's body, we cannot, from our position, quite make out what lies within it.³²

Despite his unrelenting emphasis on observation's importance in anatomy, then, Vesalius begins to resemble one of his dreaded lecturers on high, offering us a text whose words serve as the only means of explaining the enigmas presented by its illustrations. Though we may look at the woman's body on the title page, we can learn little about its interior on our own; to satisfy that curiosity, we must turn to Vesalius's text, which in

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turn frustrates our efforts to decode the frontispiece's image. The *Fabrica*'s title page, as a result, fails to reconcile the conflicts between text and visual image in the anatomy theatre – and, as the words and images involving the frontispiece's events suggest, Vesalius would not have wanted it to. The disjunction between his verbal and pictorial representations of anatomy – the gap between actions and visions described by the text and what the *Fabrica*'s woodcuts reveal – makes Vesalius our privileged onlooker, both our star witness and lone interpreter in the play of anatomy set motionless before us. He can, therefore, situate himself as anatomy's prime authority not only in the theatre of dissection, but in the realm of printed texts as well. In fact, his printed texts extend his authority even more fully than he might have expected, for his explanations of earlier anatomy are among the only ones that survive; as a result, he constructs our perception of the field's history as well as our perception of his single-minded attempts to reform it.³³

Though he maintains that written texts cannot rival anatomical demonstrations as an effective means of communicating scientific knowledge, Vesalius insists that books with illustrations as lavish as the *Fabrica*'s serve the student much more effectively. For those who cannot attend anatomies – whether because they lack bodies to anatomize or because of their own "fastidious nature" – Vesalius claims that such images provide a needed means of visualizing the principles of dissection, for they "greatly ... assist the understanding of these matters and place them more exactly before the eyes than even the most precise language" (O'Malley 323). Yet, even in his book, Vesalius carefully and frequently insists that such images cannot replace the interaction between anatomist and cadaver that produces meaning within the confines of the anatomy theatre. The *Fabrica* and its illustrations remain, as a result, strictly inanimate accounts of his theatrical

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performance – ones that cannot replicate the experience of watching a Vesalian dissection any more than a playtext can recount the enactment of an early Stuart drama such as *King Lear*.

Twentieth-century critical attempts to interpret the *Fabrica*'s frontispiece, whether we find them compelling or strained, illustrate the difficulties and temptations inherent in envisioning the actions represented in such anatomical illustrations. Like critics replicating the lines of dialogue reproduced in a printed dramatic text, these critics imagine movement in the drawing's lines that accords with their vision of the scene. The lines of the title page's drawing can, after all, be read to produce meanings that contradict, vary, or match those suggested by Vesalius's written text. Though it is tempting to read Vesalius's account of the dissection as a description of the very moment depicted on the title page, the woodcut cannot, in itself, offer the viewers of Vesalius's book the same vision of the woman's interior. More importantly, the woodcut cannot reveal the details of the woman's attempts to escape execution by claiming pregnancy that Vesalius tells us preceded this moment, nor can it show us layers of her body that will be uncovered in subsequent steps of the dissection. The illustration can show us none of these openings, for its artist can only record one image of the dissection process at a time, freezing it for our closer examination.³⁴ Even if this moment proves an artist's composite of many moments, the lines of the individual woodcut interrupt the natural flow of performed action, capturing it within the image's lines, immobilizing it for the viewer's closer inspection. What Sawday sees as a cross-section thus serves as a freeze-frame as well, an image that can only offer visual testimony (artistically interpreted at that) to a single step in one anatomy's process. As Wilson's and Sawday's examinations of the title

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age show, studying these halted images yields considerable insight into the cultural status of early modern dissection, allowing us to inspect the woodcut to find larger significance in its figures and to interpret the symbolic meaning of its carefully placed textures. Yet, as such readings reveal, efforts to treat these figures as static cannot last long. Not only do the figures' gazes, upon close inspection, suggest dynamics among the individuals depicted, the position of their limbs suggests bodily motion as well. And, in extrapolating these motions, critics, naturally enough, turn to Vesalius's written account of the dissection's unfolding action.

Attempting to circumvent the limits that such static images place on the dissection scene, critics like Sawday and Marchitello remind us that the title page depicts a phenomenon that is essentially an action. For that, after all, is what anatomical dissection came to be in the early modern era: a process of dismembering the body in an active exploration of its structure and function. Even for those who make no cuts upon the body, the scene requires – and encourages – conscious involvement, forcing the observer to consider words and motions together to gain a clearer understanding of the scene's meaning. The *Fabrica's* reader, after all, must envision the body undergoing the dissecting processes described in the text in order to understand its meanings more fully. Thus, no matter whether human anatomy is described through illustrations, through words, or through a combination of these factors, the student must imagine it for himself, and these mental images must make room for other images when subsequent layers of the body are removed. The observer, in short, must be able to envision the body in a number of superimposed layers connected by the dissector's actions. In the case of the *Fabrica's* title page, then, the student must be able to see Vesalius removing the next membrane –

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an action that Sawday and Marchitello both eagerly anticipate. The relationship between the illustration and Vesalius's written account of it, however, need not agree completely; as Marchitello's well-received interpretation shows, critical readings can successfully expand beyond the confines of both written and pictorial accounts of the scene. Critical desire to bridge the gap between the written and the visual records – to imagine the action that these two sources separately describe – creates a third realm of meaning that grounds itself in the clash of these more stable authorities.

Lending these stable authorities motion, the illustration's interpreters come to view the woman's dissection not solely as verbal or visual, but as both; in short, they come to see the anatomy as a performance, one that their own engagement helps to orchestrate. Just as, in Wilson's words, Vesalius "performs" the cadaver, critics "perform" the scene depicted on the *Fabrica*'s title page, describing its actions to their readers in a way that endorses their previously determined reading of its meaning. Their treatments' blending of the *Fabrica*'s visual and verbal authorities thus meets Terry Eagleton's definition of enactment, for such readings "transform the 'raw materials' of the text into a specific product, which cannot be mechanically extrapolated from an inspection of the text."³⁵ Even more intriguingly, the title page dynamics between what Wilson calls "cadaver, surgeon, and professor or text" and which Sawday renames "passive authority of the body," "living authority," and "textual authority" strikingly resemble the tripartite division of dramatic criticism that Harry Berger, Jr. outlines in his study *Imaginary Audition*.³⁶ Much current study of Shakespearean drama, Berger argues, emphasizes what he calls the theatrical mode of criticism, which "regulates scrutiny [of the written dramatic text] in accordance with the constraints and opportunities of

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performance." Such criticism fares better in his estimation than the unnamed, quickly dismissed model of criticism that completely ignores all constraints of a play's early modern context, yet he prefers a third type of criticism, purportedly of his creation, labeled the "literary model." This mode, he explains, "gives permission to readerly techniques that may produce effects that seem too minute or too complex to be digested in performance" but always, he claims, resituates the play on the early modern theatrical stage (139). Curiously enough, studies of the *Fabrica* title page find themselves enacting a complementary critical move. While the texts that critics encounter – the title page's woodcut and Vesalius's written explanation of its action – initially prove static upon the page despite the active nature of the dissection process they describe, interpreting the ontispiece's meaning demands the performance, or, in Berger's term, the "deacceleration," of its actions. Looking at the lines of the title page illustration, critics engage in a "microanalysis" that Berger's "deceleration" makes possible by fixing features not discernible in the normal rhythm of communication – a communication that, in this case, takes place visually. But, as even Berger admits, this frozen scene must be reaccelerated to become a part of the larger drama – and its early modern context – once again, where its minute details may be lost but where the larger all-encompassing effects of performance become clear, and even dominant (148).

For Berger, however, this larger drama ultimately remains fixed on the printed page, for he implies that staged dramatic production always begins with the text as it has come to us in the form of physical writing. As a result, he implies that all attempts to consider performance remain secondary because enactment, even in the early modern period, always based itself on interpretation of the written word. Like a pre-Vesalian

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anatomist, Berger thus overlooks the role that the acting process played in modifying and even rewriting playtexts, for he imagines the text surviving its enactment unchanged despite the contradictory proof that its performance in the theatre might have presented. While scenes in a playtext, like the frontispiece fixed to the *Fabrica's* page, set forth abundant material for critics to, in Berger's term, "microanalyze," the actions they strive to represent remain, at heart, only a small part of the step-by-step process of enactment that determines their effectiveness. For Vesalius, too, as we have seen, these motions were best observed in the anatomy theatre, where the live performance of a dissection would provide students with the optimal conditions under which to study the body's structures and functions. Like a drama critic emphasizing performance, Vesalius insisted that the interpretations formed upon the theatrical stage take precedence over those resulting from even the most careful readings of anatomical texts, regardless of how ancient or well-respected. Anatomical texts, in turn, should reflect what happens on the stage rather than determine the outcome of performances in the theatre of dissection. As with many critics of early modern drama, Vesalius holds that conclusions about human structure and function must prove actable to be valid; his *Fabrica*, as a result, purports to function like a theatrical script, providing inherently and admittedly inadequate textual accounts of anatomical performance for those who cannot, for whatever reason, attend. The *Fabrica*, moreover, encourages its readers to use its illustration as a means of understanding dissection as it happens in the theatre, for without knowledge of this process, Vesalius argues, the study of anatomy is in danger of slipping back into an exclusively textual realm.³⁷

Written eyewitness accounts of anatomies, moreover, show even more

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emphatically that the activities in Vesalius's theatre involved the purposefully dramatic presentation of both living and dead human bodies. The notes left by Baldasar Heseler, a student who between 13 and 28 January 1540 attended a series of Vesalius's demonstrations in Bologna, offer a firsthand account of the difficulties that anatomists and students alike experienced (and still experience) in their attempts to reconcile canonical texts with the visual evidence offered by the dissected cadaver.³⁸ Heseler's notes allow us to eavesdrop on Vesalius's lectures, reminding us that the anatomist not only served as a visual focal point for dissections but occupied the central speaking part on the anatomical stage as well. And, as Heseler clearly suggests, Vesalius thoroughly enjoyed the attention that this dual authority commanded. The public anatomy at Bologna consisted of two parts: Matteo Curtius's lectures, which repeated traditional ancient theories of the body's interior functions, and Vesalius's dissections, which occurred in separate sessions with Curtius looking on. The described setting for Vesalius's demonstrations bears a striking resemblance to that of the *Fabrica*'s title page dissection, for Heseler tells us that "[A] table on which the subject was laid, was conveniently and well installed with four steps of benches in a circle, so that nearly 200 persons could see the anatomy." Heseler's verbal description, however, offers a more extensive account of the actions occurring within the room, often providing a fuller sense of their theatrical nature. For example, he describes in detail the procession that opens the first anatomical demonstration. "[N]obody," he tells us, "was allowed to enter before the anatomists, and after them, those who had paid 20 sol. More than 150 students were present and D. Curtius, Erigius, and many other doctors, followers of Curtius. At last, D. Andreas Vesalius arrived, and many candles were lighted, so that we all should see, etc."

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(85-87). Heseler's description thus reveals not only a number of similarities between the anatomy and the indoor private theatre, among them seating and lighting patterns, it also allows us to watch the spectators, from doctors to paying customers, arrive and the student's words, most importantly, hint at the theatrical – and dramatically authoritative – nature of Vesalius's delayed entrance.

Once on the stage, Heseler's account reveals, Vesalius becomes a showman, beguiling his audience and berating the resident Bolognese anatomists simultaneously. Heseler reports that Vesalius mocked the anatomizing skills of Erigius by painstakingly pointing out the flaws in his cutting procedure, even comparing his method to a butcher's. Such remarks evidently helped Vesalius win over the crowd, rousing scorn for Erigius throughout the theatre, where "all laughed mightily at this 'anatomicus!'" (223). In the account's most notable instance, Vesalius invited Curtius to join him at the cadaver to settle their debate over what veins to bleed in cases of pleurisy. The two instructors had been contradicting each other with growing vitriol in their separate presentations on the subject, and Vesalius wanted to call upon what he saw as the corpse's indisputable visual testimony to prove the truth of his theory. "Now," the young anatomist told Curtius, "we want to look at this and we should in the meantime leave Galen, for I acknowledge that I have said, if it is permissible to say so, that here Galen is wrong ...". Curtius, however, remained unwilling to abandon written authority so easily, claiming that Galen "well understood everything, and consequently, we also follow him." Undeterred, Vesalius proceeded with his dissection of the veins nourishing the lower abdomen, offering visual evidence that they in fact proved the optimal spots from which to let blood in cases of pleurisy. The young doctor's persistence, along with Curtius's resistance to

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demonstration, or perhaps his inability to interpret it, leads to a full-fledged argument, a contest for authority that Heseler finds compelling enough to quote at length in his otherwise businesslike notes:

Curtius replied: I am no anatomista, but there can be also other veins nourishing the ribs and muscles besides these. Where, please, Vesalius said, show them to me. Curtius said: Do you want to deny the ducts of Nature? Oh!, Vesalius said, you want to talk about things not visible and concealed. I again, talk about what is visible. Curtius answered: Indeed, I always want to deal with what is most obvious. Domine, you do not well understand Hippocrates and Galen concerning this. Vesalius replied: It is quite true, because I am not so old a man as you.

Embroiled in direct, public personal confrontation, the two men cling to their respective positions, refusing to budge and resorting to insults when the possibility of finding middle ground fades. Their argument thus reveals more than their growing personal animosity, it also highlights the crisis of authority plaguing the study of anatomy. Both, after all, claim that they want to address what is most obvious; the difficulty, however, arises from their conflicting ideas about which factor – ancient authorities or the corpse itself – explains the body's functions more plainly. Yet, as this debate clearly shows, neither the written text nor the cadaver offers any simple answers, for both require familiarity with a particular mode of interpretation, and both require the observer to set their systems into motion so that their inner workings can be revealed. Neither Curtius nor Vesalius, moreover, can find a way of bringing these two authorities into constructive dialogue; instead, their conversation becomes an inconclusive, publicly staged fight – one with enough dramatic power to compel the serious-minded Heseler to record it. For him, the debate quickly grows frustrating, leading him to conclude that "with much quarrel and scoffing they attacked each other, and in the meantime they accomplished nothing"

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(273). Like many critics of other, more traditional early modern dramas, Heseler thus waits in hope of an authoritative interpretation, whether it be textual, visual, or a hybrid of the two.

Though the disorder among the spectators at the Barber-Surgeons' dissections in early modern London seems never to have reached such an overtly dramatic pitch, the company's attempts to quell the chaos that public anatomies brought to its halls proved just as unfruitful. While Vesalius's Italian anatomies on occasion produced heated personal and scientific debate, London's public dissections seem to have been staged for the benefit of an audience hoping to be entertained as much as to be educated. The Barber-Surgeons' elaborate banquets evidently proved equally important to the city's interest in anatomy; when the company's coffers ran low in 1606, it canceled all public anatomies for three years rather than disappoint the public by staging anatomies it could not afford to conclude with elaborate post-dissection feasts (Young 327). By 1636, however, the crowds were back in full force, and it became apparent that the only way to accommodate so many viewers would be to construct a special place for the dissections' performance. The result was the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre, designed by Inigo Jones to provide spectators with a clearer view of the corpse and the anatomist who worked on it. The view from the public's seats, as we shall see in Chapter Three, allowed onlookers to watch these dissections from a position and angle much like those they would enjoy at commercial London playhouses like the Cockpit, looking on as these different performances unfolded as if they were in fact aspects of the same drama.

In order to better illustrate the influence anatomy came to exercise on the early Stuart tragic stage, my project will first trace the role that the practice of dissection came

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to play in early Stuart London society. Chapter One, "The Life of the City: Bodies and Boundarylines in Early Stuart London," examines the place that public anatomical dissection came to occupy within the imagination of early seventeenth-century London. Both the barber-surgeons and physicians allowed laypeople to attend their anatomies, giving the city's growing population a new perspective through which to view the ever-growing number of human bodies they encountered in their daily life. As letters and diaries of the era reveal, Londoners from a wide variety of backgrounds attended these anatomies in hopes of making social connections, as well to satisfy their curiosity and gain scientific knowledge. The anatomical mode of seeing they learned there – along with London's changing social, political, and topographical nature – furnished playwrights with a store of strikingly corporeal images to use in presenting political tragedy on the stage. The public's familiarity with the rituals of anatomy, I argue, provided dramatists and acting companies with vivid new ways of emphasizing the hazards of political divisiveness in plays such as *Coriolanus* and *Sejanus*.

In my second chapter, "The Dead in Action: Corpses on Stage and in the Communal Imagination," I explore the ways that early modern anatomical demonstrations influenced public perception of murders, both on the stage and in the world surrounding them. Ballads and broadsides, despite their declared moral purpose, display an overwhelming curiosity about the carnage left behind by bloody murders of the day. The stagings of dramas ranging from *The Revenger's Tragedy* to *The Atheist's Tragedy* to *The Duchess of Malfi* reveal this fascination with mixing moral teaching with scandalous bloodshed, exploiting supposedly lifeless bodies and their disconnected parts to satisfy their audience's lurid curiosity about the human corpse while simultaneously

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Chapter Three, "Lethal Passivity: Perspective, Painting, and the Staging of Female Bodies," examines the way that anatomical and pictorial modes of seeing converge within the playhouse, complicating the presentation of tragic heroines, most notably in *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*. The male characters within such dramas not only seek to place strict limitations on the mobility of women, their demented possessiveness also drives them to enshrine the objects of desire in (and, in extreme cases, as) works of art which they alone can enjoy. These tragedies, moreover, were often staged in playhouses that encouraged the perspectivist modes of seeing so common in both staged productions at court and at anatomical demonstrations. As a result, audiences were led to see female characters – embodied by boy actors – as multilayered objects designed to be appreciated for their aesthetic beauty, if not, strictly speaking, as works of art. Playwrights in turn exploited this confusion, manipulating the shared characteristics of these artful representations of female bodies as portrayed in painting and in anatomy to make even their lifeless forms lethal to those so driven to possess them.

Scenes that direct their violence toward the vulnerable human eye serve as the focus of my fourth chapter, "Believing Your Eyes: Witnessing, Blindings, and Enactment of Stage Violence." There, I examine the ways that early Stuart plays capitalize on habits of viewing borrowed from the anatomy theatre to force audience members to share in their characters' physical pain. My analysis will concentrate on the plucking out of Gloucester's eyes in *King Lear* before moving onto Abilqualit's feigned scene of torturous blinding in *Revenge for Honour*, examining how that play exploits anatomical and

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theatrical habits of viewing to secure the audience's belief in the torture scene's veracity only to present the victim, with eyes intact, in the next act. As a result, the play dupes those who watch from both onstage and off, casting doubt on the eye's trustworthiness both in- and outside the theatre.

My final chapter, "Incorporating the Corpse: Staging Banquets of Blood in Early Stuart Theatre," examines the ways that public anatomical dissection influenced the staged presentation of cannibal banquets in the early seventeenth century. Comparing late renditions of this gory set piece to their predecessors, the chapter traces the convention's gradual emergence from the less shocking realm of allegorical enactments and secondhand reports, as exemplified by Jasper Heywood's 1560 translation of Seneca's *Thyestes*, to the graphic presentation of lovingly cooked and lavishly served body parts of *Antonio's Revenge* and *The Bloody Banquet*. The London public's interest in both anatomical dissections, which themselves often commemorated the dismemberment of a corpse with the enactment of a ritualized feast, and in gruesome stories of both Old and New World cannibalism, I conclude, encouraged playwrights and acting companies to emphasize the bodily horror of such scenes whose staging would not have been possible without the habits of viewing nursed within the anatomy theatre.

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⁴ See Michael
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Notes: Introduction

¹ *The Rauens Almanacke. The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, vol. 4. (London, 1885) 1-2.

² The *OED* states that the word *label* did not refer to attachments made to objects to identify their nature and function until the late seventeenth century. Though the labels in the Moon's Man drawing certainly conform to the earlier sense of the word – that of a piece of linen attached to a document to supplement the meaning of the words written therein – the labels Dekker speaks of nonetheless serve to apply meanings to parts of the drawn man's body.

³ Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995); David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, eds. *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

⁴ See Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 123.

⁵ For full details on the development of dissection procedures, see Jessie Dobson and R. Milnes Walker, *Barbers and Barber-Surgeons of London* (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979) 38-45, and Sidney Young, *The Annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (London: Blades, East and Blades, 1890), especially 315-320 and 360-370. Unfortunately, these sources offer no indication of the number of observers that the Hall's kitchen accommodated for the company's early anatomies.

⁶ This statement does not appear in the Quarto version of *King Lear* but does appear in the Folio. All of my citations to Shakespearean plays will refer to *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997), which contains both versions of the *Lear* text, unless otherwise noted.

⁷ For information on the privileges granted to the Barber-Surgeons, see Dobson and Walker 34 and Young 588; Sir George Clark addresses the College of Physicians' dissections as well in *A History of the Royal College of Physicians of London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), particularly on 122.

⁸ Francis R. Packard in "From Barber-Surgeons to Surgeons," *Landmarks in Medicine: Laity Lectures of the New York Academy of Medicine* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1939) insists that these anatomies are described as public only because of the corpses to be dissected were taken from the gallows (27). Sir George Clark agrees, adding that the public status of the Physicians' anatomies "does not necessarily mean more than that they were open to all members of the College" (122). As we shall see, however, the records of the Barber-Surgeons reveal that many who observed their anatomies had no direct connection to the medical profession.

⁹ A.M. Lassek.
Charles C. Thomas, 1964.

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¹³ See "Will
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¹⁵ See Vivian
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¹⁶ See Nan
of Chicago P., 199

⁹ A.M. Lassek, *Human Dissection: Its Drama and Struggle* (Springfield, IL.: Charles C. Thomas, 1958) 135.

¹⁰ *The Diary of Sir Simonds D'Ewes (1622-24)*, ed. Elisabeth Bourcier, Publications de la Sorbonne, Littératures 5 (Paris: Didier, 1974) 128.

¹¹ See D'Arcy Power, "Notes on Early Portraits of John Banister, of William Harvey, and the Barber-Surgeons' Visceral Lecture in 1581" in *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 6 (1913): 18-35. Power presents a document that mentions tickets were necessary to gain entrance to a dissection; it makes no mention, however, of how these passes were doled out. Unfortunately, Power offers no date for the document that he cites. In his *Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr. Nicholas Tulp: An Iconological Study* (New York: New York UP, 1958), William S. Heckscher cites Power's article to support his claim that the London Barber-Surgeons charged admission to their dissections as their counterparts in Germany and the Netherlands did. Though there is ample proof of these admission charges on the continent, evidence supporting such conclusions about the sale of such tickets in London is not so readily available.

¹² Both early modern and twentieth-century commentators have tended to emphasize the rehearsed quality of medieval dissections, overlooking their own period's habit of restating long-established interpretations of the body's structures and functions. While H. W. Haggard's description of the happenings surrounding a typical fourteenth-century anatomy clearly illustrate this dismissiveness of medieval medical learning, they offer a vivid picture of the festivities surrounding the dissection itself, where "an introductory oration was read and the physicians sang in chorus. Then came the dissection, which was a perfunctory affair A celebration followed the dissection and there was a concert, banquet or theatrical performance. The whole affair occupied the greater part of two days and was concluded by ceremoniously burying the slightly mangled corpse." See H. W. Haggard, *Devils, Drugs, and Doctors* (New York: Harper and Row, 1929) 144.

¹³ See "William Harvey's *Prelectiones*: The Performance of the Body in the Renaissance Theater of Anatomy," *Representations* 17 (1987): 68-95.

¹⁴ In his book *The Body Emblazoned*, Jonathan Sawday proposes an emblematic reading of this illustration as well, asking whether it can be seen as "a demonstration of morality, with the three central figures ... illustrating the downward passage from youth, to maturity, to death" (65).

¹⁵ See Vivian Nutton, "Humanist Surgery," *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. A. Wear (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 75-99.

¹⁶ See Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990) 20-21, 32-35, and 154.

¹⁷ See her article "Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Italy*.

¹⁸ See Joel Altman, *Development of Elizabethan Drama*.

¹⁹ See Roger Fox, *Medical History* 23 (1978).

²⁰ See Andrew Wear, *Teaching and Research in Anatomy*. A. Wear (Cambridge) is a physician, but his topics, however, mysterious, have been devoted so much time to anatomy that what the students say is not surprising.

²¹ See Nutton, *Anatomical Texts*. So many anatomical texts have changed to accommodate the canonical works of the past.

²² See R. K. Fox, *Anatomical Teaching in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

²³ Berengario, *De Anatomia*.

²⁴ "Public Anatomy in Bologna," *Past and Present* 100 (1975).

²⁵ C.D. O'Malley, "Anatomy Scene," *J. Hist. Med.* 13 (1968).

²⁶ Such dynamic anatomy was the subject of Walter Ong in *Rhetoric of the Theatre*, which transferred that rhetoric of the word to the word. See Sawday, *Anatomy and the Performative*.

²⁷ Sawday, *Anatomy and the Performative*, rather it became an anatomy of the corpse now were a

²⁸ In addition

¹⁷ See her article "The Criminal and the Saintly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994): 1-33.

¹⁸ See Joel Altman, *The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1978).

¹⁹ See Roger French, "A Note on the Anatomical Accessus of the Middle Ages," *Medical History* 23 (1979): 461-68.

²⁰ See Andrew Cunningham, "Fabricius and the 'Aristotle Project' in Anatomical Teaching and Research in Padua," *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. A. Wear (Cambridge UP, 1985) 195-222. Fabricius's faithful application of Aristotle's topics, however, mystified his students during anatomical demonstrations, for he often devoted so much time to examining individual parts of the body that he failed to perform what the students saw as a completed dissection.

²¹ See Nutton's article for an overview of different methods used for writing anatomical texts. Some texts were translated into the vernacular. While some texts changed to accommodate this move toward practicality, copies and variations of older canonical works continued to circulate as well.

²² See R. K. French, "Berengario da Carpi and the Use of Commentary in Anatomical Teaching," *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. A. Wear (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 42-74.

²³ Berengario as quoted in Park, 15.

²⁴ "Public Anatomy Lessons and the Carnival: The Anatomy Theatre of Bologna." *Past and Present* 117 (1987): 50-106, especially 99.

²⁵ C.D. O'Malley, as quoted in Jerome Bylebyl in "Interpreting the *Fasciculo* Anatomy Scene," *Journal of the History of Medicine* 45 (1990): 285-316.

²⁶ Such dynamics, in Sawday's view, completely reverse those described by Walter Ong in *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue* (Harvard 1958). The anatomy theatre transferred authority from the text to the voice, Sawday claims, while Ong argues that rhetoric of the day gradually came to emphasize the written text over the spoken word. See Sawday's note 33 on 282. Both arguments, however, overlook the performative authority produced by the interactions of these modes.

²⁷ Sawday of course hastens to note that the text did not disappear completely, but rather it became ancillary to the more dramatic interchange which the anatomist and the corpse now were able to reproduce.

²⁸ In addition to the readings discussed below, also see the treatments in Neill's

Issues of Death: Mortality and the Imprint of Gender (Cornell U.P., 1993), and *Medicine* 12 (1993):

²⁹M. H. Spielmann, in the 1920s, explaining the construction of an anatomy (*André Vesale, Anatomist*, 1925). In his history of California P., 1964 depicted in Vesalius's (140); Wilson (73) and

³⁰O'Malley and questions the earlier

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³²This proves *Fabrica*, where the see. Yet even there

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³⁵Quoted in *Rhetoric of Performance*

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³⁷Defending accusations that such "careful dissection" counters, he has "a dissection with the

Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy, Wendy Wall's *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell U P, 1993), and Mary G. Winkler's "The Anatomical Theater" in *Literature and Medicine* 12 (1993): 65-80.

²⁹M. H. Spielmann reports that Signor Moschetti, curator of the Museum of Padua in the 1920s, explained in a letter to him that the school's records show no grants for the construction of an anatomy theatre until 1583. See *The Iconography of Andreas Vesalius (André Vésale), Anatomist and Physician, 1514-1564* (London: J. Bale & Danielsson, 1925). In his hugely influential *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels, 1514-1564* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1964), Charles O'Malley notes the similarities between the theatre depicted in Vesalius's frontispiece and those depicted in editions of Terence and Plautus (140); Wilson (73) and Sawday (63) both note his remarks.

³⁰ O'Malley assumes that the womb is visible in the drawing; Bylebyl never questions the earlier author's interpretation (299).

³¹ Howard Marchitello, *Narrative and Meaning in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).

³² This proves true of the closer look inside the female body offered later in the *Fabrica*, where the letters of the text's diagrams are obscured and the uterus is hard to see. Yet even there it remains intact, according to the words on the page.

³³ Curiously enough, this lack of sources allows Vesalius's judgments upon his predecessors' means of performing anatomy to stand; in fact, Hecksher, and Bylebyl after him, point out these judgments have had tremendous influence over present day critical studies of anatomy and, in turn, have helped guarantee Vesalius's star status.

³⁴ Medieval and modern illustrators alike have circumvented this difficulty by using illustrations with flaps layered to show different strata of the human interior. See, for example, the translation into English of Henri de Mondeville's *Chirurgia, preceded by Anatomia* (c. 1462; Wellcome Historical Medical Library ms. 564), which offers views of four layers of a woman's abdominal area.

³⁵ Quoted in W. B. Worthen, "Deeper Meanings and Theatrical Technique: The Rhetoric of Performance Criticism," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40 (1989): 452.

³⁶ Harry Berger, Jr., *Imaginary Auditions* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1989).

³⁷ Defending his decision to include illustrations in the *Fabrica*, Vesalius denies accusations that such woodcuts discourage students from learning anatomy through "careful dissection and observation of the parts themselves." On the contrary, he counters, he has "encouraged the candidates of medicine in every way to undertake dissection with their own hands." He then goes on to blame anatomists' greedy desire to

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³⁸ *Andreas Vesalius*
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gain fame through the writing of books for the general decline in the teaching of dissection, for students no longer began hands-on anatomy at a young enough age. This, in turn, he claims, only necessitates more books to prevent a general fading of knowledge about dissection. See O'Malley 322-23.

³⁸ *Andreas Vesalius' First Public Anatomy at Bologna, 1540: An Eyewitness Report*, ed. and trans. Ruben Eriksson (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1959).

For many writers, the dictum that man is the world, the human body should be gauged, its constructing, and evaluate it otherwise. In (1606), for example, "he thereby the form body, he argues, serves image of "the lesser universall" (iii r). His idea, however, perpetuates the microcosm/macrocosm analogy, of the body's size usually a Renaissance writers larger concepts it may be, of course, playwrights. God's concern for the spiritual and moral

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CHAPTER ONE:
The Life of the City:
Bodies and Boundarylines in Early Stuart London

For many writers in early seventeenth-century London, Pythagoras's ancient dictum that man is the measure of all things held more than figurative truth. In their world, the human body not only served as the ideal by which all earthly proportions should be gauged, its physical makeup constituted the perfect means of measuring, constructing, and evaluating intellectual concepts whose immensity proved difficult to imagine otherwise. In *A Comparative Discourse of Bodies Naturall and Politique* (1606), for example, Edward Forset vows to use the human body as the rule by which to "trie thereby the forme of a commonweale, what therein is right or wrye" (2).¹ The body, he argues, serves as the best measure for such comparisons, for it serves as an image of "the lesser world, euen the diminutive and modell of that wide extending uniuersall" (iii r). His and other early modern writers' deployment of this conventional idea, however, perpetually questions and reformulates the subtleties of this microcosm/macrocosm duality, for their comparisons reveal the immensity, rather than the triviality, of the human body in early modern thought. Though the individual human body's size usually assigned it to the smaller element in this conventional dichotomy, Renaissance writers insisted that its flesh held equal – if not greater – import than the larger concepts it might represent.² For lyric poets, anatomists, churchmen, and, of course, playwrights, the human body's fleshly complexities constituted direct evidence of God's concern for the physical; their attentions to the body, as a result, could claim spiritual and moral as well as earthly purpose.

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more than the human body's magnificence projected onto a grander scale. In his *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (1623), a series of meditations and prayers recording his physical and spiritual hardships during the course of a near-fatal illness, Donne maps not only the physicians' response to his disease but his own attempts to cope with its spiritual consequences – and the prospect of impending death. The initial stages of his illness, marked by his intense struggle against his own failing body, bring Donne to a new awareness of the human body's glory. In Devotion IV, he concludes that

It is too little to call man a little world, except God, man is a diminutive to nothing. Man consists of more pieces, more parts, than the world; than the world doth, nay, than the world is. And if those pieces were extended and stretched out in man, as they are in the world, man would be the giant, and the world the dwarf, the world but the map, and the man the world. If all the veins in our bodies were extended to rivers, and all the sinews to veins of mines, and all the muscles, that lie upon one another, to hills, and all the bones, to quarries of stones, and all the other pieces, to the proportion of those which correspond to them in the world, the air would be too little, for this orb of man to move in, the firmament would be but enough for this star; for, as the whole world hath nothing, to which something in man doth not answer, so hath man many pieces, for which the world hath no representation. (508)³

With his insistence that their bodies prove far more intricate – and sizeable – than the world humans live in, Donne reverses the conventional poles of the microcosm/macrocosm duality. His analogy traces parts of the human flesh onto the earth itself, painting its surface with veins, sinews, and bones only to find that the world can no longer support the bodily components that, according to biblical tradition, borrowed their substance from its soil. Yet when God shaped the human body from such humble materials, he also infused it with a soul – and this soul, in the eyes of Donne the churchman, is what makes each of the body's elements superior to its earthly counterpart.

When Forset transplants this analogy to the political realm, the associations with

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the heavenly remain equally strong. For him, the body politic itself resembles a divinely ordained construct, one that functions as smoothly as the human body. "As in the creating of man God conjoined a soule for action, in a body passive," Forset explains, "so in his ordinance of mans sociable conversing (to make the union of a body politike) he hath knit together a passive subjection to an active superioritie" (3). Not surprisingly, Forset attributes this "active" principle to the king himself – in this case James I – while assigning the rest of the English populace to passive subjection. His insistence on these assignments, moreover, emphasizes the growing insecurity regarding the king's ability to maintain social order, for, as many critics have argued, his treatise seeks to mollify a population shaken by the Midlands riots of 1607, where peasants' rebellion against the king's orders of land enclosure – brought on in large part by a fear that such actions would result in mass starvation – openly called into question the sovereign's indisputable control of the body politic.⁴

While Donne and Forset develop such analogies for drastically separate reasons, both writers emphasize the divine nature of the human body, celebrating it as a means of lauding the overarching forces – whether those of the sovereign or God himself – which not only shape the flesh but govern its parts and their functions. Yet, in a move that seemingly undermines the unity among the bodily parts they seek to glorify, both writers systematically disassemble the human corpse in their efforts to illustrate the wondrous construction that underlies its wholeness. Donne, after all, maps the body onto the globe piece by piece, linking veins and muscles not to one another but to rivers and hills. Forset, as we shall see, dotes upon the association between the king and the body's head, so much so that his strict attention to this analogy separates the sovereign from the

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remainder of the populace, who, despite their various social positions, receive only the vague moniker of "members" of the body politic. His development of the analogy thus enacts a verbal beheading of the social corpus, separating the country's body from its leader even as he strives to strengthen the link between the king and his people. Both Forset and Donne, as a result, violate the warning that Forset himself later issues on the potential dangers of breaking connections among the parts of the body politic: "To knit and match together sundry things by an aptnesse of application, is the proper effect of union, but to disioyne the well coupled from their lovely analogies of each to other, is a violent divorce and distraction" (Ar). Both writers, however, engage in such violent behavior in their attempts to explain the nature of such integral connections. Separating what, according to their own arguments, is inherently linked, Donne and Forset also supply new connections, jarring apart the order of the human body to illustrate the similar structure of the political and the earthly realm. Their actions, as a result, tear apart the corporeal body not just to learn how it is put together, and not just so they might reassemble it in a Frankensteinian attempt at gaining mastery over the natural order, but so they might see how the links among its parts explain the relationships among other elements of the world's systems.

This drive to anatomize – to pull apart bodies thought to be organic wholes, to detach, sometimes violently, their members from one another and to then classify their functions – permeates the world of early modern London. As Donne's and Forset's uses of anatomical methods suggest, this compulsion applied to more than just human bodies, and the era's writers found a multitude of uses for such systematic examinations of their subjects. The word *anatomy*, after all, became a favorite element in book and treatise

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titles as writers began exposing to dissection subjects ranging from melancholy to death and from time to rhetoric.⁵ As handy as the step-by-step processes of anatomy proved in examining these abstract concepts, however, their use in the exploration of the physical world remains among its most compelling, especially in early modern London where the harsh realities of daily existence were themselves becoming the subject of writers' and playwrights' attentions. During the reigns of James and Charles, after all, the city's population jumped forty percent – from an estimated 250,000 inhabitants in 1603 to 350,000 in 1642⁶ – and such rapid growth brought with it a host of problems, ranging from housing shortages to increased criminal activity. The influx of people from the countryside not only led to increased crowding within London proper, it nurtured the growth of the suburbs, gradually transforming what had once been the city's distinctly marginalized Liberties into extensions of the city itself. As a result, people from a wide variety of social classes filled the urban streets, mixing in ways that threatened to violate time-honored distinctions in the English social hierarchy. All those who lived within London's changing metropolis, moreover, suffered from the disadvantages of its crowding, though their vulnerability to such hardships varied according to social standing. While shortages of food and other necessities undoubtedly affected the lower classes more than the elite, urban problems such as the plague observed no such distinctions, threatening all classes equally.

The members of the city's various social classes, and the residents of its different geographical areas, all played vital parts in the functioning of the city, and writers of the day display eagerness to determine the precise distinctions among the city's various geographical and human components. Their insistence on the existence of such a rigid, if

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newly-altered, social hierarchy thus became the subject of inquiry on the stage, where the plays – and play – of the theatre presented and realigned such social categories not only within the exotic realms of their dramatic setting but within the framework of London's culture at large as well. The theatres, too, were themselves often accused of obscuring the social differences among audience members. The stage's explorations of these questions of social stability become particularly vivid in its tragedies, where entire populations often participated in brutal explorations of the body politic's workings. For playwrights and acting companies, physical violence against dramatic characters ranging from stabbings to dismemberment to total annihilation of the body's flesh provided the most effective means of probing the inner workings of the social body – an abstract concept whose very size threatened to render it imponderable. The early Stuart tragedies that use such bloodshed in the most explicit explorations of the exertion of social and political power – in particular, Jonson's *Sejanus* (1603) and the Shakespearean *Coriolanus* (1608) – blame faulty leadership for the disorder and division in the social body, for they ultimately reenact Forset's beheading of the body politic through their grisly plots. While *Sejanus*'s bloody destruction occurs offstage, away from the audience's view, the violent onstage spectacle that brings *Coriolanus* to its close ultimately offers a more hopeful vision of the body politic's survival, for its final scene, unlike Jonson's, attempts to establish hierarchical, organic order once again among the members of the body politic.

This early modern habit of taking apart and reassembling the social body, whether on- or offstage, illustrates what Linda Woodbridge sees as the era's fondness – in literary and other realms – for assembling large collections of small units.⁷ Renaissance England,

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she points out, "was an aggregator's world," where printers moved small blocks of type to create short tales that were in turn grouped together to make larger works, which were then bound together as books. Like patchwork quilting, this process gathered scraps of material into new units, sewing them together in innovative ways to create a final product whose meaning built upon – and often surpassed – that of its individual parts. This mode of artistic creation, Woodbridge argues, mirrors that of early modern dramatic and literary composition, where writers called upon, even "recycled," well-known stories from written and oral traditions, modifying their plots or blending them with other tales to communicate new meanings to their audiences. Playwrights, she points out, often spliced these tales together, moving from segments of one plot to portions of another as they incorporated different storylines into their dramas. In her concern for the new folk aesthetic such reassembly can bring, however, Woodbridge overlooks the violence of the fragmentation that must precede it. For her, the process that reduces materials to scrap – whether it be the deterioration that comes with age or a zealous writer's brutal severing of a text's lines from one another – pales in importance to the patchwork process that puts these pieces back together into a colorful newly-constructed whole.

As Bakhtin reminds us, however, individual physical bodies as portrayed in texts – and, I would add, the bodies of early modern texts themselves – rarely achieved such strict closure in the early modern era. Woodbridge's formulation binds together fragments of texts to create "finished" literary products that, once set into print, retain a degree of independence from other texts even if later writers mine them for raw material. Even such a limited degree of stability, however, remains impossible for the individual human in Bakhtin's formulation. Instead, he argues, humans and their bodies as

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portrayed in literature remained inextricably bound by an "umbilical cord which tied them to the fruitful womb of earth."⁸ In so figuring individual humans as unborn babies, Bakhtin's words reformulate Donne's overlapping maps of the human body and the physical world, interlacing the individual human body with the earth it lives upon. Yet, where Donne sees the human body overshadowing the earth's physical makeup even while blurring the boundaries between their bodily territories, Bakhtin imagines humans as unweaned, perpetually feeding off the earth's bounty and therefore dependent upon it rather than dwarfing it. Though they disagree as to which element achieves dominance in this formula, both writers agree that the firm link between the individual and the earthly binds him to the human community. Donne, after all, famously proclaims in his *Devotions* that "No man is an island" and that "every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main" (575); Bakhtin declares a similar sentiment, though decidedly less poetically, when he notes that in Donne's era all bodies "represented a material bodily whole and therefore transgressed the limits of their isolation" (23). For both writers, then, the individual and the surrounding physical world remain so closely linked that their boundaries become virtually undistinguishable, and, as a result, all humans prove equally connected to their physical environment and to each other. In Donne's mapping and measuring of the world, the insides of the human body become perpetually reformulated by their contact with elements of the earthly world surrounding them; for him, this interdependence explains not only his own illness but the spiritual individual's investment in – and sometimes overwhelming attachment to – his physical being. His view of the human body, as a result, accords with Bakhtin's formulation of its composition as a perpetually changing cipher through which the earth itself flows.⁹

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In a world where the boundaries between the human body and its environment prove so permeable, the growing fondness for anatomy initially seems contradictory. After all, the idea of separating such firmly entwined structures and functions from one another would seem a frustrating, if not utterly fruitless, project for minds so accustomed to finding similarities rather than differences among their objects of study. This very insistence upon the interrelationships among individuals and community, however, hints at a growing sense of separation within early modern London. If no man is an island, after all, why does Donne not realize his connection to his species sooner? Why must he suffer a near-fatal illness to reach his conclusion? Why must Forset declare so vehemently that "To knit and match together sundry things by an aptnesse of application, is the proper effect of union" while to "disioyne the well coupled from their lovely analogies of each to other, is a violent divorce and distraction"? The threads that bind the individual to her society evidently threaten to unravel on both writers, and the prospect of such disintegration clearly worries them. Forset's treatise, with its anxious attempt to illustrate political and social unity, simultaneously reveals the uselessness of the social body's parts in their unconnected state. How, his treatise asks, can a social body function without a head of state to rule it? More implicitly, his treatise also wonders what use a sovereign could prove without a political body to govern, just as Donne wonders what a human spirit can be without a fleshly container to keep it on earth. Faced with such unponderable questions, Forset opts for the only reasonable solution: reinforce the stitching that "knits" and "matches" the parts of the social body together, even if such retracing renders the flimsiness of the seams more obvious.

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anatomist's conviction that understanding and valuing individual parts will increase appreciation for the functioning whole. His political analogy's praise for the body's members thus mirrors the work of the poetic blason, a mode of love lyric rooted in the rhetorical tradition of *descriptio*, which methodically offered extended celebratory accounts of individual parts of its object's body. While many have largely overlooked the convention's classical roots, critics have recently focused on the early modern blason's highly formulaic treatment of the female body. Both Nancy Vickers and Jonathan Sawday argue that the blason, with its heaping of praise upon the separate – and therefore disconnected – segments of a woman's idealized form, ultimately reduces the woman to an indistinguishable and largely disregarded mass of body parts.¹⁰ As Sawday points out, moreover, the growing popularity of the blason paralleled that of anatomical dissection itself, with the "definitive edition" of Clément Marot's *Blasons Anatomiques des Parties du Corps Féminin* appearing in 1543, the same year of Vesalius's *Fabrica*.¹¹ Yet not all critics have envisioned such poetic dismemberment in such wholly negative terms. Bakhtin, for example, insists that blasons traditionally mix praise and denigration in their poetic violence,¹² while Linda Woodbridge carries the idea even further, insisting that the rituals of blasoning resemble those of ancient fertility rites. For her, the brutality of the poems hints at an early modern view of dismemberment as regenerative rather than simply mortal.¹³ Like Forset separating the parts of the political body to sew them together more securely in the popular imagination, blasons as Woodbridge conceives them allow poets to re-create not just their mistresses, but the human race as a whole. For them, such cuts announce new life rather than mark a definitive end; their words in turn strive to suture together body parts into a newly-strengthened whole rather than to

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In plague-stricken early modern London, however, the real-life counterparts to these new combinations of mangled body parts often resulted in deformed, even monstrous, collections of flesh that unsettled rather than reinforced notions of social order. The plague in particular not only threatened all citizens equally regardless of social rank, but the massive death and fear of contagion it produced interrupted the rituals of civic life upon which notions of hierarchy largely depended. The outbreak of disease in 1603, for example, forced the delay of James I's official entry into London after his coronation while also necessitating the closure of the theatres. As Michael Neill points out, the impracticality of observing the smaller-scale ceremonies of burial in the face of the plague's onslaught took a great toll upon the city's inhabitants as well.¹⁴ The massive numbers of deaths rendered the performance of ceremonies for individuals impossible, for the need to bury so many bodies so quickly made the commemoration of an individual's life – and social status – through funereal rites impractical. Indeed, the rapid proliferation of the dead in the city necessitated mass burial, a practice that heaped together corpses in common pits without regard for social standing. Such abbreviated ceremonies and services thus failed to distinguish one plague victim from another, obliterating differences between individuals as well as leveling social distinctions among classes. As a result, in René Girard's words, the plague alone remained distinct because it "destroy[ed] all forms of distinctness."¹⁵ The anonymous bodies in the plague's wake, Neill argues, left citizens newly aware of the precarious nature of London's social hierarchy. Playwright and pamphleteer Dekker for one bemoaned the disappearance of burial customs, figuring the ground around London as nothing more than a "great

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warehouse, which is piled up with winding-sheets" where "the scholar and the carter" occupy "one bed." In a city struck with such death, Dekker complains, bodies become frighteningly anonymous, and not even clothing – the most traditional marker of social status – remains to denote an individual's identity. As his pamphlet *News from Graues-end* (1604) reveals, mass burials demanded that "Servant, and maister: Fowle and fair: / One Livery weare, and fellowes are,"¹⁶ for the bodies that once wore material emblems of social rank now sport only the blankness of white winding sheets. And those sheets offer the flesh no protection, because, lacking stitches to hold their spiraling material together, they pose no barrier to decay, leaving their fabric, and that of the body soon after, to become worm's meat.

The plague, in Dekker's figuration, thus leads to the gradual unraveling of the very social fabric of London, ripping out the seams that, in Woodbridge's model, hold the body politic together. All human bodies, despite their uniqueness in life, begin to resemble one another after death; yet without such differentiation, the city's social structure cannot survive. The dismemberment and decay that bodies meet in their mass grave thus come to embody for Dekker the disintegration that the city itself faces as a result of the plague's destruction. In the eyes of Donne the churchman, however, what amounts to destruction for the city contains hope for the individual, who is cut free of the close-fitting material world by his own physical pain. Whether God sees fit to "dispose of this body, this garment, so as to put it to a farther wearing in this world," Donne writes in his *Devotions*, "or to lay it up in the common wardrop, the grave," the individual soul will always be at heaven's disposal (523). The cutting that God inflicts upon humans, he argues, only makes their bodies more unified, for the pain of ill health allows the ailing to

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Early modern anatomical approaches to the concept of the body politic as illustrated in nonmedical works like Forset's have become the subject of much critical

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attention in the past two decades. While the earliest critics to examine such corporeal images focused on the political meanings that early modern culture attributed to individual parts of the body, the idea that the body politic's parts could be separated – that they could be considered apart from one another in the first place – has itself become the subject of study. If, as some critics now assert, the metaphor of the body politic had begun to lose its power in the seventeenth century,¹⁹ a host of early modern writers proved willing to subject this dying metaphor to a strikingly corporeal post mortem examination. Jonathan Sawday among others has noted that the growing seventeenth-century interest in anatomy furnished Londoners with a model for thinking about the growing discontents within their political realm. "The internal human division" of anatomy, he states "was now to be perceived as stretching into the sphere of all civil life. The politics of the body – a politics which involve a form of self-reflexive violence – have begun to emerge" (17). For him, John Donne's writings, with their relentless quest to outline the individual's place in the physical and spiritual realm, ideally illustrate the gradual, brutal blending of the individual's body with the spheres of both politics and geography. Donne's poems and sermons relentlessly dwell upon the idea of anatomy²⁰; for Sawday, however, Donne's treatment of his own disease in the *Devotions* amounts to an internal exercise in Foucauldian state punishment. Emphasizing Donne's attempts to interrogate and tame his own rebellious body through a language of examination, torture, proof, and punishment, Sawday argues that Donne treats his own body as that of a convicted felon fallen into the state's hands. The physicians, Sawday implies, serve as the judges in Donne's scenario, for he reports in Devotion IX that "They have seen me, and heard me, arraigned me in these fetters, and received the evidence; I have cut up

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mine own anatomy, dissected myself, and they are gone to read upon me" (534). As both the wielder and the victim of the anatomist's knife, Donne figures himself as exposing his own inner workings through the liberating cuts of self-anatomization, a process that allows him not only to escape his diseased body momentarily but to examine it to determine the source of both its spiritual and physical malfunction.

While Donne's writings perpetually question the boundaries between human flesh and both the material and spiritual worlds surrounding them, the seventeenth-century historian James Howell perceives his own body as containing no such helpful means of contemplating salvation; instead, he imagines his flesh rendering his spirit immobile, tying it to the physical realm and preventing it from reaching its glory. Donne sees his body blending in with the earth itself, mapping out its parts to correspond with the features of the globe's topography; Howell, on the other hand, imagines the material world as confining his flesh, circumscribing the extent of his movements and even assigning rigid physical shape to his most personal thoughts and mental characteristics. As logical as such claustrophobia may seem – Howell, after all, wrote while seriously ill and confined by Parliament to Fleet prison for his close association with Charles I – his systematic dividing and bequeathing of his learning and personality traits reveal the extent to which he envisioned his physical body as determining the life span of the less corporeal aspects of his being.²¹ In August of 1643, he wrote to Sir Brevis Thelwall, "my soul, while she is coop'd within these walls of flesh, is but in a kind of perpetual *prison*. And now my *Body* corresponds with her in the same condition; my *Body* is the *prison* of the one, and these *brick-walls* the *prison* of the other." Even from his prison cell, though, Howell insists that everyone outside the Fleet's walls exists in a similar

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physical prison, one whose wider boundaries foster an illusion of freedom. "And let the English People flatter themselves as long as they will, that they are free," he continues, "yet are they in effect but *prisoners*, as well as other Islanders are; for being surrounded and clos'd about with *Salt-water* (as I am with these *Walls*) they cannot go where they list, unless they as the *Winds* leave first, and *Neptune* must give them a pass" (356-57). For Howell, then, the early modern world is one full of nearly impenetrable barriers, ones that separate the divine from the corporeal, the captive from the free, and the English from the remainder of the earth. In such musings, Howell echoes the words of the melancholic Robert Burton, who asks, "What is our life but a prison? We are all imprisoned in an island" (173).²² Though both men begrudgingly admit a possibility for safe sea passage, the population they envision remains trapped within both the bounds of the physical world and the politics of their society, as well as within their own physical flesh. Yet such entrapment, as Burton suggests, inspires the human yearning to escape seemingly unbroachable physical boundaries. As he puts it, "The world itself to some men is a prison, our narrow seas as so many ditches, and when they have compassed the globe of the earth, they would fain go see what is done in the moon" (173). Thus, while Donne imagines such physical bodies converging upon one another, linking the world together in a pattern that allows confluence despite its fallen state, Burton sees exploration as revealing only the extent of the world's unapproachable territories. For Howell, trapped within an ailing body itself sealed behind locked doors, the boundaries appear even more impenetrable, for he sees only a world of binding concentric circles which allow passage solely to humans who confront their own physical deaths.

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modern London have provoked in recent years strikingly similar debates about the relationship between different elements of London society and the civic body as a whole. In his influential study of the relationship between London and the suburbs that lay outside its walls, for example, Steven Mullaney argues that the playhouses occupied a space both physically and ideologically on the margins of the city's public life.²³ Beyond the walls – and jurisdiction – of London proper yet outside the country gentry's power, these suburbs functioned as a free space, one appropriately known as the Liberties, which could openly host activities that might otherwise threaten London's intramural social order. The Liberties, Mullaney argues, helped clarify the limits of the community while also granting limited license to libidinous social impulses it could not control. For him, the spectacles staged beyond London's walls – whether they be bear-baiting, prostitution, executions, or playhouse drama – "revealed the gaps and seams, the limits and contradictions of the social fabric" (38). As Douglas Bruster so rightly points out in his revisioning of Mullaney's argument, however, the relationship between London and its Liberties is itself part of this social fabric, for the theatre, even if extramural, remained an integral part of the community's life. Instead, he argues, the city's theatres – whether outdoor public playhouses or indoor private stages, in- or outside the city's walls – "were both responsive and responsible to the desires of the playgoing publics, and were potentially no more marginal a part of London than their publics demanded." The theatres, in short, functioned primarily as places of business seeking to please their customers, and in the course of their commerce, "they regularize and normalized carnival," fulfilling a social need while achieving their primary goal: "making a profit" (10).

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The divisions between London's Barber-Surgeons and Physicians, likewise, were not necessarily as clear as the members of the two groups (and many twentieth-century critics) would have liked to think. Both groups were firmly established in the intramural world of London proper, though the Barber-Surgeons' Hall occupied a position barely within the confines of the city (see Figure 6). As Ralph Treswell's 1612 sketch shows so clearly, their grounds, situated just inside Cripplegate, inhabited a place on the fringes of the city proper, sandwiched in almost as an afterthought at the extreme northwest corner of London's otherwise rounded walls (Figure 7).²⁴ The College of Physicians, meanwhile, occupied locations much nearer the center of the city – while they had originally had their grounds in Knighttrider Street, they had moved to Amen Corner at the west end of Paternoster Row in 1614. The differences between the two groups on the levels of both social and intellectual prestige, however, often proved murky, leading the College of Physicians to defend aggressively what they considered their profession's turf: the practice of what we would now call internal medicine. The members of the Barber-Surgeons' Company, after all, held widely varying degrees of education and expertise; though some were university educated, most had gained their training through apprenticeships and many could barely read English, let alone Latin. Among the more educated tiers of the Barber-Surgeons' ranks, however, training and practice had long focused more substantial attention on the inner functioning of the body than the Physicians' curriculum,²⁵ and the company's members did not hesitate to prescribe treatments that called upon such knowledge. As early as 1555, the College attempted to impose fines upon surgeons who administered medicinal cures without consulting a physician first. Any surgeon's use of chemical approaches to health threatened to

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establish, in the College's eyes, a potentially dangerous pattern, for it might signal the Barber-Surgeons' gradual adaptation of the Physicians' methods of healing the body from the inside out. But, as far as the Physicians were concerned, the workings of the body's inner systems fell exclusively within their province, and surgeons who dared to trespass into this realm of practice could cause their patients irreparable damage. Surgeons, after all, had traditionally concentrated on the body's surfaces as they made their diagnoses and administered their treatments, devoting themselves to treating external injuries and manifestations of disease on the skin, as well as the complications arising from such afflictions, usually by means of external medication.²⁶

Though, as Nancy Siraisi points out, surgeons had been giving their patients cures by mouth for centuries,²⁷ the College of Physicians' determination to maintain their medical prestige left them intolerant of such practices. Between 1572 and 1603, Clark reports, the College called more than twenty surgeons before their board of examiners to receive reprimands for similar encroachments on the physicians' professional grounds. Three ignored the College's summons altogether, while still others flaunted their social connections to argue exemption from the charges. The barber-surgeon John Banister, for example, claimed he could not attend his own hearing before the College in 1587 because Queen Elizabeth had personally requested his attendance at a friend's bedside; five years later, the queen requested that the College admit Banister among its members, thereby forcing them to accept him as an equal despite his lack of university education. In 1595, the physicians addressed a letter to the Barber-Surgeons' Company claiming that the College had been too lenient in its enforcement of their professional boundaries, warning that those who administered internal cures would be subject to newly-stringent

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reprimands. Such threats, however, failed to deter the Barber-Surgeons, who countered with an attempt to convince Parliament to grant them power to practice internal medicine in 1597. By 1605, the debate had become heated enough for the Barber-Surgeons to propose a meeting with the College on neutral ground so that they might come to an agreement about their professional boundaries; the Physicians, however, made no reply and the controversy escalated instead, for the College obtained an Order in Council of 1632, on the books if not in force until 1635, that prevented barber-surgeons from performing anything but minor operations without a physician present.²⁸

This contest for authority over the inside of the human body extended into the realm of anatomical dissection as well. Though the Barber-Surgeons appear to have had the upper hand in this contest, having been granted four bodies per year by act of parliament in 1540 while the College only received such a grant in 1564/5, the College nonetheless enjoyed a superior reputation for knowledge of the body's interior. Ironically, the Barber-Surgeons bolstered the Physicians' claims to authority in the field of anatomy, since the Company lacked a competent lecturer and had to call physicians into its halls to help educate its members during its quarterly dissections. Thus, though physicians abstained (at least officially) from practicing surgery, their extensive knowledge of the body's physiology helped convince the College's members that they knew more of the field than the surgeons themselves. In 1555, in addition, the College of Physicians enacted a statute that effectively limited the Barber-Surgeons' use of dissection for the study of anatomy, proclaiming that no physician could publicly announce or undertake a dissection within seven miles of London unless it was to take place inside the College or the Barber-Surgeons' Hall. If the surgeons wished to hold an

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anatomy, however, they had first to send their master and two wardens to seek permission (and presumably a lecturer) from the College. "[A]s it is thought most just and reasonable that those who benefit from any of the fellows should display their gratitude to the College," the statute concluded, "the surgeons are to honour their demonstrator by accompanying him from the street to the theatre" (Clark 54). Though such rules might well have been motivated by the physicians' desire to prevent amateur anatomies' spread of "dangerously misleading instruction," the College's declarations nonetheless reveal its desire to ensure an appearance of authority over the Barber-Surgeons and to consolidate its position as dispenser of medical knowledge. Their statutes, whether inspired by a genuine concern for public health or by professional rivalry, declare the Physicians the lone authoritative voice of anatomical knowledge in London; they, in effect, stake a claim to anatomy, declaring governance over dissections in the name of the College.²⁹ The Surgeons, moreover, made no official complaints against that claim; they instead took pains to ensure their guest lecturers' comfort throughout the anatomy, specifying that the physician should be allowed to stand in front of the hearth during the dissection and furnished with clean clothing throughout the demonstration.³⁰

The Physicians, however, never remained secure in what they insisted was their rightfully superior social and professional position. Although they saw themselves as having a degree of authority over surgeons, the Physicians' ability to exercise such power centered on their ability to convince the public and barber-surgeons themselves of their own inferior station. In doing so, moreover, the Physicians sought to promote their view of the medical profession as a highly stratified yet smoothly functioning whole. Though they had different areas of expertise, the College held, physicians and surgeons worked

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together to serve the community at large; physicians, the College further claimed, should use their superior knowledge to determine the separate practitioners' respective spheres of influence. For some London physicians, such a view of physician-surgeon relations nurtured a sort of professional noblesse oblige, encouraging the College's members to educate their underlings so that they might better fulfill their role in the medical community. This physician-as-teacher relationship as it appears in print, however, hints that members of the College perceived dangers inherent in making such anatomical knowledge available to their barber-surgeon underlings. Even Helkiah Crooke, a London physician who strove to tailor his anatomical writings to a barber-surgeon audience, proves anxious about maintaining the boundary between physicians' and surgeons' respective areas of expertise. In his influential work *Microcosmographia: a description of the body of man* – a treatise in English based on Vesalius's work and which went through at least six printings between 1615 and 1631³¹ – Crooke strives to delineate clearly the two practitioners' provinces of knowledge while simultaneously denying any antipathy between the groups. He writes in his "Preface to the Surgeons":

For my part I conceiue of the Art of Chyrurgery as a part of Physick; and there of Chyrurgeons as Citizens of the Physitians Commonwealth: the difference is, that wee hauing most what better meanes by education to aduantage our wittes, apply them vnto the most abstruse part of the Art separated from the sense and consisting in contemplation and collection; the Chyrurgeon worketh by his eye and with his hand, and dwelleth as if were in the Confines of that Country whose inner part we inhabit. If therefore they warrant the frontiers and keepe their Stations well and duly therein, may not we better attend to improue the portion that is allotted vnto vs? But wee are both like couetous Farmers, who incroach vpon and get more grounds into their hands then they can well manage³²

In Crooke's scheme, in other words, surgeons function much like Mullaney's Liberties,

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for they live in the debased suburbs – the "Confines" of the "Country" that surround physicians' more urban Commonwealth – where they use "eye" and "hand" to minister directly to their patients' physical needs. Crooke, moreover, insists that these hands-on treatments, though they may take place on the wrong side of the city wall, remain within physicians' control nonetheless, for such cures are themselves "part of Physick" even if physicians deign not to practice them. The Barber-Surgeons thus become, in Crooke's figuration, the Physicians' representatives, performing those duties too basic for learned men's attention. Thus, even with the preface's attempts to reinforce the hierarchical relations between physicians and surgeons, the work underscores his profession's dependence on the supposedly lowly practitioners. As with Bruster's assessment of the allegedly marginal theatrical aspects of London society, surgeons were "potentially no more marginal a part of London than their publics demanded," and the public demanded quite a bit of the barber-surgeons. Even more interestingly, Crooke depended largely on these supposedly inferior figures for his book's audience, just as playwrights and theatre owners did. *Microcosmographia*'s inclusiveness, moreover, threatened to make Crooke's work marginal, for his attempts to cater to such an audience provoked tremendous controversy among his colleagues at the College of Physicians, many of whom strove to stop the book's printing. The medical knowledge it put forth, they argued, should only be available to those learned enough to read in Latin. For some, the book's illustrations, particularly in its chapter on reproductive functions, constituted moral indecency.³³ The *Microcosmographia*, for them, proved a dangerous work, one that threatened the boundaries between physicians and surgeons, perhaps even ceded territory to the College's supposedly more barbarous counterparts. In fact, Crooke's book contributed to

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his already existing reputation as a physician on the margins. As Clark reports, the College complained that he had previously been lax in paying his professional dues and had been known to overcharge patients for often unsuccessful treatments (204). Crooke's preface to his book, therefore, could be seen as a performance equally driven by the profit motives that enlivened the Liberties.

Just as such anatomical treatises became more available in the London marketplace, the knowledge to be gained – and the spectacles to be seen – at anatomy demonstrations made these public dissections popular with a wide range of audiences. Young upper class men, for instance, were encouraged to attend both dissections and lectures on anatomy as part of their university training even when they had no intention of making medicine their way of life. James Howell, for one, urged his young cousin at Oxford to attend anatomical lectures while at school. "I understand," he wrote on 3 July 1631, "there is a very able Doctor that reads the Anatomy-Lecture this Term; ... you cannot spend your hours better than to hear him" (412). Similarly, a note in the young Sir Thomas Crosfield's diary suggests that he attended anatomy lectures at Oxford in March of 1626.³⁴ This upper class interest in dissection drove privileged Londoners to attend dissections at the College of Physicians in London, where, as we have already seen, Sir Simonds D'Ewes tells us he witnessed William Harvey's anatomical demonstration for three days in May, 1622, much to his "proffitt and delight, the smell excepted."³⁵ As D'Ewes's entry hints, these upper class observers' interest in dissection often reflected their desire to be entertained – to watch as the flesh that once belonged to an executed criminal dramatically revealed its innermost secrets – as well as their desire to learn about the workings of the body's interior.

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One particularly compelling account of this blend of titillation and education that non-medical observers gleaned from such dissections appears in the introductory pages of Helkiah Crooke's *An Explanation of the Fashion and vse of three and fifty Instruments of Chirvrgery*, a treatise bound with the 1631 edition of *Microcosmographia*.³⁶ There, in a section entitled "From the Printer to the Reader," the text offers a lavishly detailed description of a body dissected at the College of Physicians' Hall. "A body was brought from the place of Execution to the Physitions Colledge to be Cut vp for an Anatomy," the printer recounts, and, by chance, it had belonged in life to "a cruell Wretch, who had murthered the Son of one Master *Scot* a Chyrurgian of goodnote in this City." The printer's intent, if uneducated, interest, however, lies not with the body's interior, as we might expect of an anatomist, but with its deformed exterior, which he interprets as a direct reflection of the criminal's dissolute character:

This Wrech was of a very truculent countenance and aspect, as the Almighty God would therein discover the cruelty of his heart. His haire was black & curled not very long, but thick & bushy, his forehead little aboue an inch high, his browes greate and prominent, his eyes set deepe in their sockets ... and his [lower] lip was as big as three lips. Such was his face, but the greatest deformity was in his feete and that almost to admiration. For deuided betwixt foure and fiue inches deepe into two toes, ioynted like other mens toes but as large each of them as halfe the foote could make it, with a naile proportionable: the left foote was divided likewise in the middle but the diuions was not above three inches deepe

In short, the man's body exhibited all the traditional physical traits associated with demonic evil, and all those who saw them should have recognized them as such. "This monstrous shape of a man," Crooke's printer concludes, "I haue thought good to cut and haue added this relation thereto from certaine knowledge; (for there were a thousand witnesses of it) that you may know Almighty God doth sometime set his brand and marke

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Similarly, one of our earliest – and only – mentions of the activities within the Barber-Surgeons' Hall suggests that those who attended the Company's events may have done so for personal gain of another sort. For Henry Machyn, a merchant tailor whose business centered around the planning and furnishing of funerals, attendance at dissections at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall would no doubt have proven financially beneficial if not intellectually stimulating. In an evaluation of Machyn's diary that mirrors class attitudes so integral to the perceived gulf between London's surgeons and physicians, John Gough Nichols explains that "The writer was a citizen of London, of no great scholarship or attainments, as his language and cacography plainly testify, sufficiently prejudiced no doubt, and not capable of any deep views either of religious doctrine or temporal policy."³⁷ Despite this harsh assessment, Machyn clearly knows the value of ingratiating himself with the Barber-Surgeons, whose close links to the community's sick and dying might well have secured future customers for his funerary business. Not surprisingly, Machyn's diary devotes much space to reports of funerals and deaths, occasionally making special note of executions of felons destined to become anatomies at the surgeon's hall.³⁸ He may, moreover, have attended the festivities that surrounded the surgeons' anatomies as well, as two intriguing entries in his diary, both on

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August 10, 1562, suggest. The first reports the conviction and subsequent hanging of Phelype Furney, a goldsmith, for making counterfeit coin, and of one Walker for robbery; the second reports his attendance at an elaborate feast at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall. "The x day of August," he reports, "was Barbur-surgyons' fest, and they capt ther communion at sant Alphes at Crepull-gatt, and master Recherdsun dyd pryche, the Scott; ther was good syngyng; and after to ther halle to dener, and after dener a play" (290). Moving from his observations at the gallows to his account of the Barber-Surgeons' communal celebrations – ceremonies that, significantly, include a theatrical presentation that might well have resembled the plays that traditionally followed dissections on the continent – Machyn notes the occurrence of events required for the proper performance of an anatomy. While its account offers no details either of the criminal corpses' fate or of the nature of the play he attends at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall, Machyn's diary nonetheless reveals the vital role that spectacle plays in both proceedings, emphasizing the ritualized corporeal display inherent in both the disposal of criminal bodies and in the dramatic performances that reinforce communal ties among the company's members.

Whether or not this conjunction of events signals Machyn's attendance at a dissection, his careful notation of the condemned men's execution reveals a surprising omission in the story of the deformed criminal recounted by Crooke's printer. The two writers tell their stories from different points in the condemned men's drama, though both trace the criminal's path from the gallows to the place of dissection and offer an account both of the crimes that led to execution and of the punishment that the state demanded in answer for such wrongdoing. One key difference separates the narratives, however: Machyn's brief entry carefully, if incompletely, notes the felons' identities, noting their

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occupations and their names, while the printer's lavish description of the deformed corpse fails to mention the name the "cruell Wretch" might have answered to in life. The omission of this one key piece of information occurs so routinely in our limited accounts of dissections that it appears to have been part of the etiquette of attending anatomies, and understandably so. Dissociating the corpse from the name it once carried, after all, allows the destruction inherent in dissection to pass for an intellectual, objectifying (if not objective) act rather than a brutal personal affront. More importantly, such a separation between the corpse and its identity in life allows dissectors to treat the corpse at hand as a representative body, one whose structures illustrate those common to all humans rather than peculiar to one particular corpse. Yet these explanations fail to account for the omission of the corpse's name in the description offered by Crooke's printer, where the body's external features, so lavishly described in the text, not only separate the murderer's corpse from most human bodies but also isolate the monstrous criminal from the rest of humanity psychologically and even spiritually. His characterization of the criminal, with its emphasis on the heinousness of his crime and its direct effect on a member of the city's medical community, hints at the crisis that surrounds the body's arrival in the anatomy theatre, for the links between the corpse and the observers threaten to transform the anatomy that follows from a professional exhibition into an act of revenge.

The description in Crooke's text thus brings into question what Sawday sees as a clear delineation between dissection and punishment in the early seventeenth century. Noting that of the large numbers of executed criminals only a small number became subjects of medical anatomies, Sawday concludes that "dissection as an additional form of punishment would hardly have impinged to any great extent on the popular mind."³⁹

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Those observers surrounding the deformed criminal, however, appear far less certain of this differentiation. The printer's words, after all, focus on the man's wickedness; for him, the anatomy to follow serves, if not as a punishment, then at least as a moral imperative. The corpse, he concludes, "I haue thought good to cut," for it explicates God's means of marking the dissolute so that citizens might avoid them; he makes no mention, however, of any cuts involved in the dissection itself nor of the interpretations that physicians placed upon the body, nor does he offer any account of the atmosphere of the dissection that follows. Instead, he concentrates on conveying the general amazement at the corpse's appearance as a deformed individual. His account thus presents his readers with an image of physicians and surgeons confronting the criminal's intact body, leaving them frozen, perhaps with knives poised, in a perfect position to inflict further disgrace, if not pain, upon what remains of one who harmed a fellow medical man. The drawing he includes in the text, moreover, presents the criminal not as a lifeless corpse but as a living man, suggesting that the printer still envisions him as a subject capable not only of actively inflicting evil but of feeling physical pain. Thus, though the printer offers no direct hints as to how the dissectors approached the body, his description nonetheless suggests his own temptation to view the anatomical demonstration as a form of personalized – and officially sanctioned – vigilante justice.

Such associations between the anatomists and executioners were not uncommon in the early days of public dissection. As Katherine Park reveals, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italian judges occasionally gave anatomists the bodies of still-living criminals so that they might examine them as they died rather than merely after their death. Though such instances were extremely rare, they nonetheless encouraged a link

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between the anatomy and execution; Park agrees with Sawday, however, that such instances did not lead the public to view dissection as an extension of capital punishment in early Stuart England.⁴⁰ The Barber-Surgeons, moreover, worked to prevent such associations. As the records of the Company's court reveal, the bodies brought to their halls for dissection occasionally managed to survive hanging. In 1587, the court declared that, should a corpse "revive or come to life again as of late hath been seen," the members who carried in the body would be subject to penalty from the company.⁴¹ Such decrees not only spared those present at the anatomy the shock of watching their anatomy's subject come back to life, they also shielded the Barber-Surgeons from accusations that they in fact completed the job of dispatching the corpse in the first place.

Despite such attempts to clearly separate the duties of the anatomist and the executioner, dissection nonetheless became intricately linked with punishment in the early modern mind. Jack Wilton's capture and near-death at the hands of anatomists in Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller*, as we shall see in Chapter Four, clearly shows that distinctions between anatomist and executioner remained mysterious to England's early modern public. Their confusion stems largely from the increasing overlap between modes of displaying the punishments levied against criminals and of laying open the body in the theatre of dissection. Where, however, did the state's punishment end and the anatomist's exploration begin? As the account offered by Crooke's printer shows, criminality still clings to the corpse, making such distinctions even more difficult to ascertain, and conversely, as Michel Foucault reveals, the violations of the body that occurred at some scenes of execution often resembled dissection. In one particularly grisly case in Avignon, the executioner quickly, almost mercifully, killed the criminal

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awaiting execution before going on to utterly obliterate the man's body upon the scaffold: "[H]e severed the sinews near the two heels, and then opened up the belly from which he drew the heart, liver, spleen and lungs, which he stuck on an iron hook, and cut and dissected in to pieces, which he then stuck on the other hooks as he cut them, as one does with an animal."⁴² The executioner's display thus subjects the body to a dismemberment similar to – though no doubt less precise than – the one it might have undergone in the anatomy theatre.

According to Foucault, such gruesome executions serve to illustrate the overwhelming might of the sovereign, whom the criminal has foolishly and thoughtlessly slighted in attempting to subvert the laws of the state. Such bloody spectacles of the state's power thus display, for the spectators' benefit, the ruler's all-encompassing authority, for the more severe the violations done to the body in the sovereign's name, the more manifest his control of the populace becomes. Yet, as Foucault points out, such displays inevitably reach an end that not even the state's power can supercede, since "A body effaced, reduced to dust and thrown to the winds, a body destroyed piece by piece by the infinite power of the sovereign constituted not only the idea, but the real limit of punishment" (50). Because the body can only undergo so much destruction, that is, the state can only lay claim to a finite – though nonetheless awesome – amount of power.

In early Stuart England, these displays of the king's political might were enacted outside London's walls, in the same suburbs where the City's population attended the playhouse's more conventional (at least to twentieth-century eyes) staged dramas. As they journeyed to the theatres, playgoers passed by the remnants of these brutal executions, gazing on the heads and sometimes whole bodies of criminals on exhibit

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outside the city walls. There, in the Liberties – an area in which the sovereign's authority could grant license but could not altogether prevent licentiousness – executions ambiguously embodied both the magnitude and the inadequacy of the sovereign's power. As Mullaney explains, "Dead or alive or at some point in between, the condemned marked the frontier beyond which human authority did not extend. Once dead, their bodies remained and continued to serve as ambiguous signs of power, marking at once the manifest efficacy of the reigning social structure and the all-too-immediate limits of social and political control" (40). The condemned thus becomes literally an outlaw, someone assigned a particular marginal place on the outskirts of the cultural landscape. Unable to obey the rules of the city, the outlaw is first relegated to the world beyond the wall; in punishing him for his offense, however, the crown reveals its own limits, for it cannot pursue him beyond his death.

The anatomists, however, might have proven capable of extending this pursuit, at least in the eyes of London's inhabitants. Dissections, after all, not only gave physicians the power to disgrace the deceased, they allowed them to levy such evaluations of their being in a scientific language that claimed to reflect universal order. In doing so, however, the anatomist risked, on the one hand, slipping from their role as scholars into that of revengers, as when Crooke's printer imagines the physicians contemplating their own dramatic revenge. On the other hand, overlooking the criminal behavior associated with the corpse risked inviting the outlaw back into the community and thus completing a cycle with a forgiveness more characteristic of comedy.⁴³ Dissection requires, after all, that the corpse be transported from the Liberties back into the city proper, where, as an anatomical subject, the body comes to exemplify not just those who live outside the law

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Given the dangers of offering such a complete narrative of a criminal's progress from outcast to example to anatomical specimen, it comes as no surprise that so few accounts of executions make any mention of the Barber-Surgeons' claims to the corpse. Of course, not many corpses became anatomical specimens, but seldom does the unusual fate of those that were transported to the anatomists merit comment from observers. Such comments, however, would endow anatomists with the power to grant criminals a post-mortem reprieve, allowing them, or at least the bodies they once occupied, to become once again viable members of the community. In this context, then, the namelessness of the corpse in Crooke's printer's narrative takes on new meaning, hinting that the College ultimately refused to see their specimen as anything more than a slightly-less-than-human anomaly. No matter how tempting the notion of enacting revenge upon the murderer's corpse, the College hesitates to endow the body once again with the wicked spirit that had inhabited it, for such a move would grant the depraved criminal a new, even expanded, role in the body politic.

Individual criminal bodies thus play a significant – and signifying – role in defining the body politic, for it is upon them that the limits of the sovereign's power manifest themselves. Because they establish both the corporeal and topographical boundaries beyond which the crown's might loses its effectiveness, the gruesome displays on the Liberties' scaffolds reinforce the outline of greater London's body politic. For Foucault, the dynamics of social control exhibited on such early modern execution grounds call for a mode of analysis he labels "political anatomy," a mode which examines the body politic as a "set of material elements and techniques that serve as

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weapons, relays, communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge" (28). His theoretical model, however, assumes a situation in which the crown alone benefits from its relationship to the populace; in his view, the king holds the power to reduce his helpless, dependent subjects to utter ruin one by one, and those who behold his exhibitions of power become once again faithful, if fearful, upholders of royal rule. As his fondness for retelling gory tales of execution makes evident, moreover, Foucault's explorations of the body tend to consider the body only when it sets the individual apart from the society in which he lives. "[T]he people" surrounding his scaffold, after all, "had to bring its assistance to the king when the king undertook 'to be avenged on his enemies,' especially when those enemies were to be found among the people" (59). Those who watch the spectacle thus become, in his account, an undifferentiated mob, one whose very violations of the law become incorporated into the king's will. Though Foucault makes brief mention of the saturnalia that surrounds the scaffold, his conception of the body politic remains one clearly masterminded by regal authority. His theory, with its emphasis on the rabble's blindly unconscious surrender of power to the king, thus overlooks its own implicit assumption of the individual's ultimate willingness to assent to his place in the social state.

However, as religious and political dissent became increasingly obvious in England's body politic, the reliance of London's society on the individual citizens' ready participation in the city's highly stratified social structure became increasingly apparent. The body that is intramural early Stuart London, as a result, placed just as much emphasis on its ability to unify the individual members of its population into a single, seemingly

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organic whole as on its ability to extricate those who strayed from its social prescriptions. The municipal perimeter that the activities of the scaffold sought to secure, however, encompassed rather than ruled out a variety of criminal activities while excluding the areas where such behavior became subject to punishment. As even the most cursory glance at Ben Jonson's comedies clearly shows, the society within London's walls accommodated plenty of unsavory characters who cheated and swindled their fellow citizens, largely without consequence, to earn their livings, yet they and their real-life counterparts – and even the actors that embodied them – played vital (if not central) roles in the body politic despite their socially eccentric status. The opening of intramural theatres like the first Blackfriars in the 1570s, moreover, increasingly emphasized these characters' – and the stage's – influence upon the life of the city proper. In this sense, the city served as a permanent home for digressions from the officially acknowledged social order, thereby incorporating elements of Bakhtin's carnivalesque into its daily operations. In tolerating such subversive playhouse characters, not to mention their real-life counterparts, London society celebrated those who violated the social order as vital parts of its character. As a result, they, like the executed criminals in the Liberties, became the exceptions who proved the sovereign's rule. In so doing, they contribute to the formation of a coherent civic body politic that shares characteristics of the grotesque body as outlined by Bakhtin, for, in London and its suburbs, "the body and bodily life" possess "a cosmic and at the same time an all-people's character" in which "the material bodily principle is contained not in the biological individual, not in the bourgeois ego, but in the people, a people who are continually growing and renewed" (19).

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sense of these words," the people of early Stuart London spoke of the civic body without regard to such a differentiation. Their descriptions of properly functioning societies, as Forset's treatise clearly reveals, relied extensively upon theories of the corporeal body to communicate hierarchical conceptions of communal order. These anatomically termed theories of the body, of course, may appear more literary than scientific to modern audiences, but to Londoners of the seventeenth century the speech of the two disciplines had not yet become so distinct. Forset, for example, demands that London's magistrates should act as the city's physicians, ministering to its health and purging it of undesirable elements that interfere with its internal workings. In order to make such determinations, magistrates must master the fundamental skill of "the dilligent noting and distinguishing of each part from other, by the extent of their workings, by their adherence and mutuall respects, or by any other their discrepant properties" to ensure the proper application of the law. The magistrate, Forset concludes, "is to have as penetrating an insight, as carefull an overlooking, and as particuler a knowledge of each thing considerable in the civill bodie, as the Anatomist hath in the serching and severing of every veine, arterie, or synew, or in the describing and bounding out of everie of their parts, passages, offices, or actions, in the bodie naturall" (79). Assuring order within the civic body, in his formulation, requires knowledge of the same minute detail – and seemingly roughly physical methods of treatment – as medical mastery of the corporeal body.

Most notably, Forset insists that a realm led by a powerful governor will not only ensure that all inhabitants are fed sufficiently but will guarantee that its people thrive – and that the circumference of its political power widens. "Who seeth not," he asks rhetorically,

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that it belongeth to the office of the Soveraigntie, to provide for the nourishing and mainteining of the state with necessaries, to amplifie the dominions there of, for profit and dignitie, to spread abroad the encrease of the people of the Colonies, in the nature of generating and propogating, to cherish in the subjects an appetite of acquiring commodities, to graunt to them places of Mart and Market for the digesting of the same unto all parts of the Realme, and so to change forme and assimilate them to their most behoofe: to give order for the holding and retaining of that which is become their well agreeing and naturall sustenance, and for the expelling as well of the hurtfull overcharge, as the unprofitable excrements of the weale publique. (13-14)

The sovereign, he argues, feeds his people by providing them with open markets in which to make their living. Forset's conception of the state's body, moreover, assumes that these people will always remain within the boundaries of the body politic regardless of how far their livelihoods take them from its center. Their reliance on its structure thus broadens the scope of the state's power, pushing out the boundaries of the markets that strain to expand past the city walls and into the surrounding frontier. As it grows in physical size, taking in the land that surrounds it and even expanding into colonies across the sea, the country's markets incorporate the areas that once were its outskirts, making them extramural extensions of the city, areas where the commerce of London proper reigns even if its magistrates cannot.⁴⁴ For Forset, these lands, though technically beyond the bounds of the City, participate in the life of the body politic, contributing to – and benefiting from – "the force of a well ordered government." Only danger, moreover, awaits those who consider themselves beyond the scope of this government, since, "out of the circle," he writes, "there can be neither welfare or safetie, but contrariwise, all confusion, slaughter, rapine, and unjust bereaving of him of all that is or can be deare unto him" (14).

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This expanding, hungry, all-consuming city quickly becomes a character in its own right on the early modern stage, where questions of a ruler's obligations to his people routinely make their way into the foreground. As Devon Hodges points out, early modern drama often portrays a sovereign's physical dividing of the body politic's territory, his unlinking the bonds that not only connect him to his people but his lands to one another, as fundamentally unnatural and utterly destructive, for such divisive actions underlie the tragic downfall of King Lear's mighty realm.⁴⁵ The nuances of this physical interdependence of civic leaders and the populace receive more extended attention in tragedies like the Shakespearean *Coriolanus*, a political drama that explores the functioning of the body politic through vivid presentations, both visual and verbal, of human anatomy. Set in Rome – the very city to which Londoners traced the founders of their own metropolis⁴⁶ – the play explores the wrenching apart of the body politic. From the first act, where Menenius famously offers his belly fable to calm the hungry Roman crowd, the play increasingly exploits comparisons between human anatomy and the civic body, and the analogy grows more concrete – and markedly more corporeal – as the action builds. What the play initially posits as a rhetorical trope gradually takes on fleshly form onstage as the Roman populace, like the rebellious bodily members of the belly fable, seek actively – and eventually, physically – to examine Coriolanus to ascertain his corporeal contribution to the body politic's wellbeing. The citizens' demand for such visible proof – and Coriolanus's reluctance to accede to their inspection – ultimately results in a brutal enactment of threats against the body politic's integrity; the largely theoretical political dismemberment that results in the form of his exile from Rome, moreover, ultimately comes to manifest itself onstage through the immediate –

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In the initial moments of the play, Menenius calls upon notions of human physiology to explain to a hungry mob the Senate's rightful role at the center of Roman political life. In his scenario, the belly defends itself against angry claims from the body's other members that, "like a gulf," it lolled in the body's middle, "idle and inactive, / Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing / Like labour with the rest" (1.1.88-90).⁴⁷ Faced with such a potential mutiny, the belly replies that, though it receives the food, it justly apportions nourishment throughout the body. "But if you do remember," it tells the discontent members,

I send it through the rivers of your blood
Even to the court, the heart, to th' seat o'th' brain;
And through the cranks and offices of man
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive their competency
Whereby they live. (123-129)

Menenius's explanation thus recycles an old theory of the body – he himself admits that it is a tale his audience has most likely heard (79-82)⁴⁸ – to placate the citizenry's growing discontent with the Senate's rule. Though his fable makes no claims to medical expertise, it nonetheless calls upon popular conceptions of the individual corporeal body to explain the workings of the less tangible body politic, concentrating digestion entirely in the stomach when popular medical theory held that all members of the body played a vital role in the process. For early modern anatomists, Michael Schoenfeldt reports, digestion occurred not only in the stomach but throughout the entire body, and it was believed that the process could not be complete until the individual members attracted and made use of their required nourishment.⁴⁹ As a result, digestion became not just a process of distribution by the stomach and passive acceptance by the body's other parts, but a

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Yet the idea of social stratification that underlies the belly fable remains equally applicable to discussions of both political and corporeal bodies, at least according to early modern standards, for Crooke found enough medical merit in Menenius's tale to include it in his *Microcosmographia*. In his introductory remarks, Crooke notes that Menenius had taught a valuable lesson on the importance of harmony among the body's parts – a lesson which members of both the ruling and the underclass should still heed. "[I]f both Princes and Peasants would weigh and consider the mutuall offices betweene the principall and the ignoble parts," Crooke argued, "Princes might understand how to rule, and Peasants how to obey." His explanation of the rulers' duties makes the political/anatomical analogy even more explicit:

Princes may learne of the braine how to make Lawes, to gouerne their people; of the heart, how to perseiue the life, health, and safety of their Citizens; of the Liuer, they may learn bounty and liberality. For the braine sitting in the highest place, as it were in a Tribunall, distributeth to euery Organ or Instrument of the sences, offices of dignity: the Heart like a King maintaineth and cherritheth with his liuely and quickning heate, the life of all the partes; the Liuer the fountaine and well-spring of most beneficiall humidity or iuce, nourisheth and feedeth the whole family of the bodie, and that at her owne proper costs and charges, like a most bountifull Prince. (13)

The organs associated with the ruling class thus govern the body, organizing its parts and nourishing them with its distribution of heat and vital spirit. In providing for the body's lower orders, moreover, the body's more elevated functions can monitor the contentedness of the citizens, ensuring that they remain happy in their less enlightened roles. The upper classes in Crooke's version of Menenius's belly fable thus remain

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substantially more aloof than those in the fable repeated in *Coriolanus*. There, Menenius's labeling the senate as the body politic's stomach inextricably links it with the basics of bodily maintenance – food and its distribution – even if he carefully omits any mention of digestion. Croke, on the other hand, assigns all organs associated with the body's use of food to the lower classes.

As for the meaner sort of people, they may easilie vnderstand by the ministering and fertile organs, what bee the limits of seruice and subiection. For the parts that are in the lower bellie do all serve the Liuer; the Stomacke dooth concoct the meate, the Guts distribute and diuide it, the veines of the *Mensentarie* prepare it, the bladder of Gall, the Milt and the Reines, do purge and clense the princely Pallace, & thrust as it were out of the Kitchin, downe the sinke, all the filth and garbage. (13)

While Croke carefully gives specific bodily roles to society's individually-named ruling elements – the Lawes, the Tribunall, and the King – he offers no such specific description of the meaning the lower order's work might have in the political realm. Nor does he offer them any titles. Instead, the stomach and the other organs of digestion simply serve those who outrank them. And though Croke claims that comparisons to the body will show the lower classes "what bee the limits of seruice and subiection," his description offers no suggestions for determining when demands for servitude have overstepped their bounds. Instead, he returns to the theme of interdependence to draw his version of the belly fable to its close. „Asserting that the higher and lower parts "doe affoord their mutuall seruices" to one another, Croke concludes that "if any one of them do at any time faile of their duty, presently the whole Household gouernment goes to ruin and decay" (13).

Despite their variations, these versions of Menenius's belly fable strive to create a vision of social order out of a theory of internal bodily order. The human body and the

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social body, these renditions claim, function according to the same distributions of labor; each of the interpretations also ensures that all members receive adequate sustenance in return for their contributions to the good of the larger social body, upon which all its parts depend. Both versions of the fable thus strive to naturalize the hierarchical system that early Stuart Londoners had traditionally seen as so integral to their society, just as both renditions occur in contexts where this social order has come under sharp questioning. Placed near the beginning of a text that made medical learning available to a wider audience, Crooke's version attempts to reinforce traditional class divisions among medical practitioners. In his view, Menenius's fable serves as an example of an effective check upon popular ambition, showing that the bold use of social authority can prevent the hierarchy's destruction, for the populace "hardly brook[ed] the gouernment of State" until Menenius sternly "revoked them, and laide as it were a Lawe vpon their furie" (12). Crooke thus uses the fable's success as a political tool to bolster his argument that the *Microcosmographia's* presentation of anatomical knowledge to an audience of unLatined barber-surgeons could pose no territorial threat to the College of Physicians; instead, he implies, his book will enable the surgeons to provide their lowly services more effectively and thus allow the physicians to remain even more aloof from the less savory aspects of medicine. And indeed he argues that every surgeon should be taught anatomy so he might be more cognizant of his knowledge's limits and avoid endangering patients by "diuid[ing] an arterie in stead of a veine; for he that is ignorant of these things, shall euermore be in doubt, in things safe and secure still fearefull; and in things that are to be feared, he will be most secure and audacious" (17).

In Coriolanus's Rome, meanwhile, Menenius tells his belly fable to a citizenry not

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only alienated by the ruling class's lack of concern for their hunger but scorned by the newly-heroic general who is obliged – by the very system Menenius describes – to serve them. In a sense, then, as Arthur Riss points out, the people and Coriolanus pose equal threats to the state because they both assert the particularity of their bodies against the authority of the unifying body politic.⁵⁰ The play's obsession with the language of dismemberment, as Zvi Jagendorf observes, echoes this near-universal refusal to overlook personal cravings in the name of a larger social good. Dwelling on synecdoche, the characters' words underscore the disunity of the body politic, painting its members as a collection of independent but uncooperative limbs.⁵¹

The belly fable that the Shakespearean Menenius conveys, moreover, places considerably more focus on the supposedly lowly systems of the corporeal body, yet such emphasis on food and its digestion proves wholly fitting in the context of early Stuart London. There, in a city teeming with people yet lacking supplies of food, the failure of Menenius's speech appears just as predictable as the working class's association of political leaders with the hoarding of nourishment. As Gail Kern Paster points out, the fable of the belly as spoken on the London stage "not only makes the city a body, but it also makes the body a city with many features of city life" (126).⁵² While Menenius's anatomy marks out divisions of labor within the body, his belly fable maps the body's relationship to the land in much the same manner as Donne's devotional topography, only on a more urban scale, with its marking of storehouses, workshops, and central courts. The living, breathing, consuming body politic thus becomes linked to the land itself, incorporating the city's ground – and the divisions already existing in its geography – with the people and their sovereign to add a third dimension of the London social corpus.

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The city, a functioning body in need of perpetual feeding, transforms into a tangible, stomach-like center of consumption, one that takes in and assimilates elements from beyond its walls and then expels what cannot be incorporated into the body politic.⁵³

The land in London's immediate vicinity, moreover, proved inadequate to support the urban center's burgeoning population, resulting in a governmental concern with the production and rationing of food. A cursory glance at the Short Title Catalog reveals an astounding number of proclamations limiting the consumption of food on particular days. While many of these actions simply reinforce religious restrictions in the Lenten season, directives regulating the price of grain and ordering general fasts clearly respond to shortages in the city's food supply.⁵⁴ Many government actions, in fact, circumvent religious restrictions to provide food for the city. In 1621, for example, frozen rivers left the population without an adequate supply of fish for the Lenten season; as a result, the city had no choice but to allow more butchers to open for business to feed the hungry citizens.⁵⁵ Throughout the year, foodstuffs were in such low supply in the newly-urban London that Robert Gray, for one, urged citizens to move to the New World rather than endure the London's shortages any longer. In his 1609 pamphlet *A Good Speed to Virginia*, Gray comments that the British body politic could no longer provide for all its inhabitants, complaining that "Our multitudes, like too much blood in the body, do infect our country with plague and poverty; our land hath brought forth, but it hath not milk sufficient in the breast thereof to nourish all those children which it hath brought forth."⁵⁶ The land, here figured as an overly fertile woman, must be purged not only to secure the success of individuals but to ensure the survival of the country – of the body politic – itself. Such concerns for London's well-being manifested themselves in the London city

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ordinances as well. A 1602 proclamation, "Prohibiting Further Building or Subdividing of Houses in London," attempted to limit the growth of the population within the city's walls, claiming that even in current conditions people in the city "could hardly be provided of sustenance of victual, food, and other like necessities for man's relief upon reasonable prices."⁵⁷ The crowding within the city walls – and the social unrest that London's ruling classes feared might result from such shortages – left officials striving to control intramural population growth so that inhabitants would remain firmly within the grip of its laws. The same proclamation, after all, expressed concern that "such multitudes should hardly be governed by ordinary justice to serve God and obey her majesty without constituting and adding more officers, and enlarging of authorities and jurisdictions for that purpose." Such efforts, however, could not turn back the tide of people flowing into the London area, and, as feared, the concentration of people increased the burden upon the body politic's internal systems.

As K. J. Lindley points out, however, the reasons for the resulting civil disturbances prove far more complex. Not one of the city's early Stuart riots can be traced directly to food shortages, Lindley claims; instead, most arose during public festivals, particularly on May Day and Shrove Tuesday. During these holidays, members of the urban lower classes often destroyed the very places where the City's rule had the least influence.⁵⁸ The brothels and theatres of the northern suburbs became their most frequent targets, and, as we shall see in Chapter Three, the Cockpit Theatre fell victim to such holiday rage. Nor can riots be attributed to unruly suburban mobs. The city walls, after all, failed to either contain or exclude riots, which routinely spread from city to suburb and vice versa (109), and, though London magistrates were prone to blame

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persistent disorders on the suburban populations just beyond their control, people who lived inside the city walls routinely joined the crowds that rampaged through the Liberties on Shrove Tuesdays (116). The threat to London's security thus came from both within and without, and efforts to secure magisterial power often resulted in even greater disturbances. In 1640, for example, the execution of a rioter hanged, drawn, and quartered for murder led to yet another riot among those assembled at the scaffold (125).⁵⁹

Though this increasing unrest in London grew far more slowly than the unrest we see in *Coriolanus*, Londoners became increasingly aware of the state's declining health, and their concerns manifested themselves in medical terminology as they sought to diagnose the diseases plaguing the body politic. Thomas Wilson's *The State of England, Anno Dom. 1600*, for example, opens with a discourse upon proper methods of investigating the state's health. For him, political analysis equates to medical diagnosis, and a competent social critic must observe the body politic as a physician observes a patient's body:

A lerned and skilfull Phisician, when he desireth to understand perfectly the state and disposition of any body, the first thing he doeth, he will feel the pulse, howe it beates, and thereby he fyndeth the force of life which it holdeth and the vigor of the human which possesseth the same. Thereupon he demandeth of the patient divers questions, howe the body hath bene governed; what diet; what order; what exercise. That knowne, he beholdeth the outward appearance, he vieweth the face, the body, and each external member. Thirdly he cometh to the inward and unseen partes, and of them he devyneth by dreames, delights, cogitations, and sometimes by phantasyes which are not alwise sure. This order must be holden in understanding a body politicke, Kingdome or Comonwealth. First wee must feele the pulse, how the State is for the mayne pointe of its essence, viz. whether it be absolute or dependant, hereditary or elective, growinge or declyninge, how and why; and soe of the other 2 in order the parts external and

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For Wilson, examining the body politic is a gentle occupation, one that requires observation and questioning of the state to gather information which will, in turn, be interpreted to assess the health of its internal workings. His physician proves remarkably aloof, collecting information from a position supposedly outside the social body and engaging in no behaviors that might interfere with the state's smoothly running internal functions. Not surprisingly, he gives England a nearly clean bill of health, concluding that, though the state may have had slight illnesses, among them the ever-looming problem of succession, it is in overall good shape for a country of its age and standing.

Only thirty-eight years later, however, the prognosis proves remarkably changed. In a country facing growing internal division – where the split between royalists and parliamentarians posed increasing interruption and imbalance to the systems that maintained the body politic – the diagnoses of the state's health became far more grim. In 1638, Sir Henry Slingsby, a royalist member of parliament later executed for treason, bemoaned not only the body politic's grave illness, but the dangers inherent in administering the radical treatments prescribed for its near-lethal disease. After watching the execution of several Scots, Slingsby lamented that neither the London government nor the rebels would benefit from the violence surrounding such uprisings:

Neither ye one nor ye other can expect to receive advantage by this war where ye remedy will prove worse yn ye disease. I like their opinion who would not have violence offer'd to ye quiet repose of a country, no not to reform & cure ye same, nor allow of yt reformation w[hi]ch is purchas'd with ye blood & ruine of the citizens. We ought not to usurp the tyrannical possessions of Common Wealth, w[i]th such druggs as war brings, whose best physis is infection; it is of so ravenous & maligne a nature yt if it continue any whie we shall not be able to distinguish ye sound from ye sick, both in respect of their manners, & out of their

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The risk involved in suggested treatments for the country's ills, Slingsby argues, proves simply too invasive. Making war on those who threaten the integrity of the body politic, in his view, jeopardizes the country's very foundations, infecting all of England rather than selectively driving out the rebellious elements that currently plague it. Slingsby's account thus hints at a change in the public's perception of the social body's overall health. While Wilson remained content to observe the body politic from a distance, evaluating and interpreting its external signs to minister gently to it, Slingsby sees those surrounding him advocating a more directly physical approach to fighting the country's internal disease. They, in other words, resort to the potentially dangerous hands-on methods of surgery, submitting the state to violent, bloody treatment in hopes of ensuring its survival. Taking such a firm line against those who rebelled against the body politic proved justifiable in the eyes of John Donne, who argues that the king must eliminate dangerous symptoms of internal disease even if his actions have no effect upon its root cause. In Devotion IX, Donne holds that the destructive nature of such symptoms excuses profoundly violent responses from the sovereign, stating that "Sometimes the insolency of those that are great, put the people into commotions; the great disease, and the greatest danger to the head, is the insolency of the great ones; and yet, they execute martial law, they come to present executions upon the people, whose commotion was indeed but a symptom, but an accident of the main disease; but this symptom, grown so violent, would allow no time for consultation" (535). Slingsby, however, opposes leaving the body politic to such surgeons; he worries not only that such contagious violence will render royalists and rebels equally dangerous, but that the resulting chaos

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will obliterate the distinctions among the country's social classes as well. The sick and the sound, he fears, will resemble one another "both in respect of their manners, & out of their estates," obscuring, if not utterly flattening, the social hierarchy upon which the monarch's power depends. What Slingsby fears even more than the violence inherent in maintaining the state's internal balance, then, is the social chaos that will result from an armed conflict between the belly of the body politic and its members.

Donne's comments, with their emphasis on the nobles' ability to influence common opinion and actions, doubtlessly carry resonances of the instability which followed the Essex rebellion, the 1600 uprising that threatened to eliminate Elizabeth's rule. Interestingly enough, Essex himself, imprisoned and awaiting sentencing after his plot's failure, felt the stigma of surrendering his body not only to the state, but to the members of its public. Although, firmly incarcerated in the Tower, he remained sheltered from the citizens' gaze, Essex bemoaned his vulnerability to public opinion, viewing the popular attacks upon his actions as if they were violations of his physical body. On 12 May 1600, he wrote Elizabeth of the humiliation that such exposure brought upon him, complaining that

... I not only feel the weight of your indignation ... but, as I were thrown into a corner like a dead carcase, I am gnawed on and torn by the basest creatures of the earth. The prating tavern haunter speaks of me as what he lists; the frantic libeller writes to me what he lists; they print me and make me speak to the world, and shortly they will play me upon the stage.⁶²

Mourning what he sees as his ultimate loss of privacy, Essex bemoans his own physical powerlessness in the face of popular opinion, a force which he sees gradually taking control of the once independent motions of his personal body. The people of England,

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he argues, will not only achieve their physical revenge upon him via his execution – an execution he (successfully) begs to have staged in private rather than in front of the public's eyes – but will have the power to perpetuate, if not rewrite, his shame through dramatic reenactment. As justified as Essex's fears may be, his overriding, almost histrionic scorn for the citizenry mirrors the contempt for popular opinion that leads the playhouse Coriolanus to his ultimate downfall. Like an actor striving – and, in both his own and the public's eyes, failing – to embody a tragic hero, Essex attempts to govern his audience's perception of his character, realizing that popular opinion will eventually evaluate his action's consequences to the body politic.

Coriolanus, however, ultimately fails to realize his own role within – and dependence upon – the social body; instead, he first hurls insults at the Roman rabble and later strives to win their votes while simultaneously remaining aloof from them. His overwhelming concern for his own private body over that of the body politic – a concern we might well see reflected in Essex's remarks and actions – shines through most clearly in his refusal to participate in the tradition of publicly exhibiting his battle wounds to the citizens, a decision that ultimately costs Coriolanus his place in Roman society. Unlike his Plutarchan forerunner,⁶³ the Shakespearean Coriolanus professes disdain for the custom, claiming, "I cannot / Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them / For my wounds' sake to give their suffrage" (2.2.134-36). His hesitation reveals more than modesty; it shows Coriolanus's disgust for the system of exchange that renders his martial valor into a political meaningful commodity.⁶⁴ The display of wounds, after all – a ritual that occurs, significantly, in the city's marketplace – allows the commoners to rehearse the history of battles in their own words, transforming them into socially significant tales

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rather than an individual's private war stories. Their stories themselves, moreover, interpret an individual body as a public artifact, effectively translating its visible marks into integral components of the public realm. The individual's flesh, then, becomes the crowd's raw material, and the cuts in it, supposedly suffered in the name of the populace rather than for individual glory, render the flesh into scraps to be reassembled, patched together anew, according to the public's whim. Coriolanus, however, refuses to allow his own skin to become the fabric for such a peculiarly literal form of refashioning. Though he grudgingly grants small groups of citizens permission to see his wounds, Coriolanus's refusal to exhibit them to the public at large, in Cynthia Marshall's words, "attempts to halt the process of signification" that allows both the Roman populace and the theatre audience to grant him a heroic identity. Instead, his refusal to show his wounds – themselves apertures which might allow a glimpse at his inner motives – creates a theatrical space which a hero might occupy but which onlookers have no means of filling.⁶⁵ Such hesitance transforms Coriolanus's body from the very raw material of a new body politic into a physical anomaly – in Sicinius's words, "a disease that must be cut away" from the city's flesh (3.1.294). Thus banished, Coriolanus becomes a social outcast, a once-peerless leader in battle whose pride has deprived him of even the lowest place within the body politic.

Such similarities between the figures of Essex and Coriolanus hint at early Stuart staged dramas' ability to explore and contain in a comparatively peaceful arena the real dangers lurking within the English body politic. There, in the theatre, citizens watched as such social conflicts unfolded and reached their end, and the consequences of such radical treatment to the body politic became apparent. Although many of the theatres that

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hosted these dramas existed in a socially liminal zone where carnivalesque explorations of power flourished, the players themselves could not afford to be linked to the encouragement of social chaos. Acting companies, after all, depended on the sponsorship of nobles to remain in business. And, following the alleged connections between the Lord Chamberlain's Men's performance of *Richard II* and the Essex rebellion, acting companies remained painfully aware of their susceptibility to the state's wrath. Their plays, moreover, remained subject to governmental control in the form of the censor, and, when unacceptable plays like *Isle of the Dogs* took the stage, the state made its anger known via prison sentences for those playwrights judged responsible. In this climate, therefore, any questioning of the social hierarchy called for subtle presentation, and any grim forecasts of the state's health required careful cloaking. Such questioning endowed drama with its social purpose, at least as far as Philip Sidney was concerned. For him, a tragic play serves a diagnostic function within the body politic, for it "openeth the greatest wounds and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue; that maketh kings fear to be tyrants, and tyrants manifest their tyrannical humors"66 Tragedy's primary function, in his view, stems from its ability to interpret and represent imbalances in the body politic. Exposing the flaws upon the body of state, dramas provide players and playwrights a vehicle through which to offer social commentary while simultaneously allowing rulers to glimpse at least a segment of the population's perception of their government. Like a Roman citizen demanding to see Coriolanus's wounds, Sidney maintains that the injuries and infections of the body politic should be displayed to the public so that its members can evaluate its health. In the playhouse, moreover, this dramatic presentation – a sort of staged exploratory surgery – relies upon

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In the eyes of some nobles, the theatre stage provided the only acceptable place where the populace should express such concern with the affairs of state. Sir Thomas Roe, for one, claimed that watching plays provided the community with a healthy distraction from the political world, where public scrutiny proved not only inappropriate but meddlesome. In a letter to the Queen of Bohemia on October 29, 1630, he notes that due to plague there have been

No plays these six months, and that makes our statesmen see the good use of them. If our heads had been filled with the love of Pyramus and Thisbe, or the various fortunes of Don Quixote, we should never have cared who had made peace or war, but on the stage. Now every fool is inquiring what the French do in Italy, and what they treat in Germany.⁶⁷

Roe's praise of comedies as a diversion not only shows his disagreement with Sidney regarding the purpose of drama but it also suggests that Roe might well see tragedies as encouraging too much public interest in the dynamics of state affairs. Dismissing the citizens of London as an uninformed – and unteachable – rabble, Roe longs to supply them with fantastic entertainments utterly devoid of political overtones. His assertion that play audiences regard politics as simply another form of mythical theatre figures Londoners as voracious consumers of entertainment incapable of distinguishing playacting from political negotiations and the real-life consequences they entail. The division Roe posits between the two activities, however, never attained such clarity in early Stuart London, as Roe's own desire to use plays to distract the populace – itself a political ploy – reveals. And, though Londoners no doubt attended theatre to be entertained, Henry Slingsby claims that at least some playgoers sought more philosophical pleasures there as well. In the country's troubled times, he sees visits to the

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theatre as simply reinforcing the dramatic nature of political events taking place outside the theatre. In 1638, he laments that

At such time we need not go to the Theaters to understand by
fabulous representations ye tragick revolutions of human fortune;
ourselves shall be ye actors, & calling Devils & furies to our help
shall subvert all policies, disgrace magistracy, abuse Law, filling
our minds & hearts w[i]th malice hatred & murder. (13-14)

The drama that permeates a country teetering on civil war transforms all its citizens into actors, threatening to cast them as tragic characters driven to undertake forbidden acts that lead to changes, if not instability, in the body politic. Tragic plots, whether they occur within the theatre or beyond its walls, in the City or in the Liberties, thus become concrete elements of early Stuart existence for members of the populace, regardless of their class standing. And though Slingsby claims that political realities make theatrical plots redundant, he nonetheless invokes their "tragick revolutions" as cautionary tales in hopes that those who watch such dramas unfold will eschew these rebellious actions and thus avoid the personal – as well as political – tragedies they induce.

In a world where such sudden social changes called the very notion of the country's stability into question, setting a tragedy like *Coriolanus* in Rome can only nominally dissociate its political commentary from its English surroundings. Even when the discourse takes place exclusively in terms of Roman law, the bloody enactment of staged bodily mutilation so common in these plays connects the action – and its tragic themes – to the physical world of early Stuart London. There, in the urban playhouse, the audience sees performers enact the feigned shedding of each other's blood in ways that emphasized the stage's connection to, rather than separation from, the early modern city. Staged violence, after all, often took forms familiar to playhouse viewers, who would

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have recognized the conventions of the wrestling match in *As You Like It* from their attendance at such events and perhaps even would have interpreted the mysterious "*Exit persued by a bear*" stage direction in *The Winter's Tale* in terms of the Southwark's popular bear baitings. The connections between staged swordplay and the growing taste for public dueling contests would prove even more familiar to the playhouse audience, for the same stages upon which Hamlet and countless other dramatic characters died from stab wounds hosted real-world swordfights that occasionally resulted in actual deaths. Many of the duels were staged between professionals for show, much as wrestling matches were; some public duels, in fact, appear to be strictly contests of skill with nothing more than bets at stake. Others, however, were contests held in public to settle personal rivalries. In such cases where honor was at stake, the gentry often hired more accomplished swordfighters to take their places. By 1613, such duels had become commonplace – and dangerous – enough for James to ban them through his *Proclamation against Private Challenges and Combats*.⁶⁸ Phillip Gawdy's letters reveal the extent of the public's fascination with such contests, for he pays particular attention to such duels and his reports suggest that he tracks them like a sports fan despite his wariness of the danger involved. In 1597, for example, his report of a public duel-for-sport that ended with a death shows more enthusiasm than disgust. "Ther was a pryse played at the Swann at the Banke syde," he explains to his brother, "wher Turner, and one Dunn playing the pryses, Turner thrust Dunn into the eye and so into the braynes that he fell downe dead without speaking any one word."⁶⁹ For Gawdy, the injuries prove more fascinating than the action that produced them, for he, in this and in most cases, devotes more attention to the scene's gruesome bloodshed than to the victor's reactions.⁷⁰ Such

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spectacles of real blood, not to mention the actual corpses of the defeated swordsmen, occupy the same stage, perhaps even hitting the same marks, where actors engaged in the combats required by their dramatic plots.

The stage, then, carried associations with real-life violence that undoubtedly influenced the audience's habits of viewing dramatic combat. The resonances of such action thus tightened the link between the exotic locales represented in drama and the violent world that not only surrounded, but permeated the early modern playhouse. Dramatic violence, moreover, could not always be contained in the fictional world of the plot, where supposedly safe dramatic enactments of stage combat occasionally resulted in actual injuries, not only for the actors involved but for members of the audience as well. Gawdy, for example, reports rumors that a 1589 play turned lethal when "My L. Admyrall his men and players having a devyse in ther playe to tye one of their fellowes to a poste and so to shoote him to deathe, having borrowed their Callyvers one of the players handes swerved his peece being charged with bullett missed the fellowe he ayimed at and killed a chyld, and a woman great with chyld forthwith, and hurt an other man in the head very soore" (23). Though Gawdy takes this as evidence of the foolishness of playacting and playgoing, the event proved no deterrent to other members of the London public, who continued to flock to such violent plays.⁷¹

For audiences familiar with – and perhaps even fanatic about – the display of violence in- and outside of theatre, the performance of public dissection proved almost as naturally attractive. The idea of watching a body being systematically dismembered may have lacked the element of surprise inherent in a duel's deadly results, yet the prospect of seeing the hidden insides of the human form nonetheless proved intriguing to members of

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the early modern public. The relative difficulty of attending such events, moreover, heightened the mystique of such dissections. Public anatomies, after all, occurred far less frequently than playhouse dramas or, for that matter, public executions or swordfighting contests. Both the physicians and the surgeons conducted anatomies frequently, yet they only invited the public to attend quarterly; the public, as a result, often saw bodies leave the gallows to be dissected, but the corpses' ultimate fate remained a mystery. Just as, as Foucault suggests, "a hidden execution was a privileged execution" (58), the sudden disappearance of the corpse to a secure location behind the anatomists' walls emphasized the crowd's isolation from the body and exclusion from the final stages of social ritual. In addition, the College of Physicians delivered its anatomical commentary chiefly in Latin, a factor that would further isolate the public, either deterring its attendance or rendering the scene strictly spectacular for London's less educated citizens. While lecturers at the Barber-Surgeons' public anatomies spoke in English, gaining admittance to anatomies often required social connection, especially in the days before the construction of the company's anatomy theatre. And all those who attended public anatomies, as we have seen, required a ticket to gain admission; how members of the general public acquired such tickets, however, remains unclear.⁷²

The walls of the anatomist's halls nonetheless proved just as permeable as the walls of the theatre, for the practices of one seeped into the rituals of the other, allowing playhouses to cater to the public interest in anatomy. Their presentations could also modify the scientific drama of dissection to suit their audiences' craving for spectacular violent action more closely. As we shall see, the dramas presented at both indoor and outdoor theatres gloried in bloodshed, yet plays designed for the indoor theatres' more

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upscale audiences often attached greater moral importance to violations of the physical body while assuming greater anatomical knowledge upon their audience's part. The scenes in which playwrights catered to this popular curiosity about dissection, moreover, often implicitly linked dismemberment to public execution. Even more compellingly, such scenes often placed the anatomist's tasks in the hands of an angry mob out to revenge the wrong inflicted upon it by an ambitious member, usually a leader, of the body politic. In Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* (1603), for example, the Roman mob frantically and viciously rips apart the fallen leader's flesh; what makes their frenzy even more remarkable is that the crowd takes out their anger upon his already dead body, seizing his "unfortunate trunk" to "rent it limb from limb" (5.807, 811).⁷³ In enacting their revenge, the individuals in the mob undergo a paradoxical transformation, both becoming less distinct from one another and enacting highly individualized forms of revenge. As Terentius reports to his on-stage audience, the crowd becomes

A thousand heads,
A thousand hands, ten thousand tongues and voices,
Employed at once in several acts of malice!
Old men not staid with age, virgins with shame,
Late wives with the loss of husbands, mothers of children,
Losing all grief in joy of his sad fall,
Run quite transported with their cruelty – (5.811-17)

Terentius's description not only portrays the mob as nothing more than a collection of body parts, his words also emphasize the social leveling that their revenge creates. Old men, wives, and virgins forget the constrictions assigned to them by virtue of their positions within Roman culture, joining in the rabble's riotous vengeance against the already executed Sejanus. Their abandonment of their traditional social roles, moreover, transforms Rome's once civilized community into a monstrous body politic, one with

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thousands of heads, tongues and hands but without a heart, a brain, or even a belly. In enacting their frenzied revenge, the crowd thus both tears apart an individual and reconfigures a social body where mob members take on new and grotesque roles. For though Terentius's description initially portrays the crowd as a mass of confused body parts, he goes on to assign to these parts vivid individual tasks in the destruction of Sejanus's corpse. Each group seizes upon a particular part of Sejanus's body, with

These mounting at his head, these at his face,
These digging out his eyes, those with his brain
Sprinkling themselves, their houses, and their friends
Others are met, have ravished thence an arm,
And deal small pieces of flesh for favors.
These with a thigh; this hath cut off his hands;
And this his feet; these fingers, and these toes.
That hath his liver; he his heart; there wants
Nothing but room for wrath and place for hatred. (5.818-26)

As the crowd rips Sejanus's body into segments, Terentius verbally dismembers the monstrous mob to give his audiences a closer look at its brutal inner workings. Yet Terentius can attach no names to these rioting members of the body politic; he cannot tell us who they are or even the class to which they belong, for their actions obscure all hints of their social position along with their individual identities. Terentius can thus identify the mob's members only by naming the body part they grab; the rioting individuals, then, become only "these" who perform a particular atrocious role in Sejanus's destruction.

While the members of the mob organize themselves around particular members of Sejanus's body and thus play a particular part in the physical annihilation of the corpse, their cooperative efforts ultimately emphasize the disorder that Sejanus's life and death have brought to the Roman body politic. The play's closing reveals that the populace remains divided despite the calm that has settled over them; some, according to one

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messenger, have even begun to regret the loss of Sejanus, "Wish[ing] him collected and created new" though their "hands yet reek with his warm blood" (887, 885). Their actions, however, have torn apart not only the corpse, but the body politic, so wildly that reassembly proves hopeless. Terentius's description of the dismemberment of Sejanus's corpse underscores Rome's grim situation as well, for the details of his account foreground the uncertainty of the mob's motives and character even as they give his audience a clearer picture of its function. Despite the relentless naming of body parts, William Slights argues, Sejanus's destruction as Terentius reports it cannot be compared to an anatomical dissection, though critics have often done so, for it lacks "the anatomist's systematic and orderly presentation of the human body and its parts" (185). Instead, Slights claims, the scene can only communicate the lack of internal order in the body politic.⁷⁴ Yet, while Terentius's account provides no "orderly presentation" of Sejanus's body, it nonetheless offers an anatomy of a different sort. With its careful delineation of "these" groups, the speech outlines the functions of the crowd's members, revealing not only each action's relationship to the riot as a whole but their interactions with the body parts they surround. His account of the riot thus constructs an image of a social body, which, though clearly deformed, can be systematically described. Terentius's words thus become an anatomy not of Sejanus but of the crowd that rips apart his corpse, offering his audiences his examination and assessment of a chaotic, deformed mass of members that contradicts the very notion of the body politic as an organic whole.

The audiences onstage and in the playhouse, moreover, cannot challenge Terentius's conclusions, for the rioters never appear before their eyes. While the complexities of staging a mob scene doubtlessly contribute to the decision to situate it

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offstage, such placement imposes strict limits upon the audience's ability to interpret the actions of the unrestrained mob. We can, after all, envision the mob only according to Terentius's description of it, for we can only see its parts from the angle and in the order that he presents them to us. As his second-hand account guides the viewers' perception of the riot by directing their attention to particular events within it, Terentius's account encourages the audience to imagine a bigger, more chaotic riot than could ever have been presented upon the playhouse stage. For, in an era where small acting companies required double and even triple casting, no company could represent *Sejanus's* melee with actual actors' bodies as convincingly as a first-hand report's rhetorical amplifications could. More importantly, staging such a riot onstage would necessarily limit its size to that of the theatre's playing space, whereas a verbal description could create images of civic tumult that fill not just the playhouse but an entire city. For those attending early Stuart theatre, moreover, such verbal images of riotous cities would evoke memories of London's own public disturbances, prompting playgoers to imagine the play's riot spilling out into the streets of their own city regardless of the setting the script attached to the action. As a result, neither London nor Rome, not to mention *Sejanus*, survives the enactment of Jonson's play unscathed, for the collective fantasy of the playhouse encourages audience members to imagine the physical bodies of all three entities ripped apart by the play's violence.

In *Coriolanus*, on the other hand, when such dramatic civic violence appears on stage, the destruction it wreaks becomes both more immediate and comprehensible to the audience. *Coriolanus's* challenges to the mob in the final scene, for example, hint that his death will parallel *Sejanus's* bloody mutilation – *Coriolanus* angrily, tauntingly dares the

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people to "Cut me to pieces, Volscies!" and the crowd answers with calls to "Tear him to pieces!" (5.6.112, 121) – yet a melee on par with that described in *Sejanus* never ensues. Instead, Coriolanus dies at the hands of Aufidius's conspirators, men whose relationship to the Volscian body politic remains utterly mysterious. Though the stage echoes with chaotic shouts of "Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!" (130), the voices of the conspirators drown out those of the Volscians as the momentum builds toward the onstage murder. The playtext offers little hint as to how the stabbing itself would have been staged, simply demanding that "conspirators *draw and kill Martius, who falls*" and that "Aufidius *stand on him*" (130).⁷⁵ How integral the mob's actions prove in Coriolanus's death thus remains unclear. They could, for example, swarm around the body and the conspirators, or they might simply cheer them on from a more reserved distance. While the playtext allows for either possibility, it offers no indication that the scene turns into one of extended mob violence; in fact, it suggests that order might return almost instantly, with Aufidius taking control. His assertion that "you'll rejoice / That he is thus cut off" (138-9) meets no objection from the suddenly silent crowd, and the play ends with an orderly removal of Coriolanus's body less than twenty lines later. The staging of Coriolanus's climactic death results in a more controlled finale for the play itself despite the violence inherent in the crowd's demand for revenge and the enactment of the killing before the playhouse audience's eyes.

As spontaneous as it might appear, the enactment of Coriolanus's killing links his death and the Roman rabble's actions to a particular location not only in the playhouse, but within the city as well; such an ending proves fitting for a play that provides a renewed sense of order for the city Coriolanus's actions had so disturbed. Rome's body

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politic, after all, survives intact despite Coriolanus's threats to its integrity, for his refusal to participate in its internal systems results in the dismemberment of his personal body rather than of the city's political corpus. Given the attainment of such a social balance, temporary or not, the choice to contain the mob through a necessarily limited enactment of its anger upon the theatre's stage fits the play's thematic tone. Though such a staging may ground the violence more fully in the theatre than the staged accounting of murder in *Sejanus*, where reports of the crowd's violence encourage the audience to envision their own city under siege, the playhouse walls ultimately prove no less effective in containing the images provoked by *Coriolanus*'s bloody ending. For, as gruesome as the account of Sejanus's violent dismemberment proves, it presents the audience with no visual evidence of the mob's destruction. The audience, however, witnesses the staging of Coriolanus's bloody death firsthand, and his supposedly mutilated body becomes concrete evidence of the crowd's and the conspirators' damaging actions, even though the actor playing his role necessarily remains intact and alive. Such visual evidence, while tying the action to a different time and place, serves as a tangible reminder of the effects that civic unrest, whether in London or in Rome, can inflict upon not just individual citizens but upon a city's entire populace. Thus, though *Coriolanus* offers no spoken anatomy of the citizenry comparable to Terentius's, its final scene nonetheless offers a powerful visual representation of the dynamics, both internal and external, that animate the body politic. Such lessons, punctuated with staged bloodshed, prove just as applicable to the world beyond the theatre walls; they carry reminders not only of past civic rebellions, but of those that Londoners saw looming ahead of them. More importantly, they allow the populace, both on- and offstage, to participate in, as well as witness, the punishment of

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¹ All citations to Forset are from the 1606 edition of *A Comparative Discourse of the Bodies Naturall and Politique* (London, 1606).

² As we shall see in Chapter Three, many architects modeled their buildings, especially theatres, on the human body's proportions in hopes of mirroring the divine harmony of its parts, and the body's physical perfection took on similar importance for writers dealing with a startlingly wide variety of subjects.

³ All citations to Donne's *Devotions* refer to the text as it appears on in Volume 3 of *The Works of John Donne*, ed. Henry Alford (London: John W. Parker, 1834) 494-614.

⁴ Most recently, Forset has been so interpreted by Arthur Riss in his "The Belly Politic: Coriolanus and the Revolt of Language," *ELH* 59 (1992): 53-75.

⁵ Devon Hodges offers a list of eighteen such "anatomy" titles in *Renaissance Fictions of Anatomy* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1985) 127-28; similarly, Jonathan Sawday provides another eighteen titles of nonmedical anatomies published in England between 1570 and 1653 in his influential *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 278. Both lists, of course, are far from exhaustive. Nor do they offer any indication of anatomical discourse's popularity in poetry, where it exercised far more influence than discussions of the blason form suggest.

⁶ Douglas Bruster calculates these population figures in his *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992) 19; his statistics are based on a compilation of those provided by Wrigley and Schofield, *The Population History of England*, 531-32 and Ann Jennalie Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981) 94. For further information on Bruster's compilation of such statistics – and for references to variations in such calculations – see his pages 122-23, note 19.

⁷ See "Patchwork: Piecing the Early Modern Mind In England's First Century of Print Culture," *English Literary Renaissance* 23 (1993), 14-20.

⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge: MIT, 1968. Reprinted Indiana U P, 1984) 23.

⁹ For a full discussion of this idea as posited by Bakhtin, see his *Rabelais and His World*, especially his Introduction and Chapter Five, "The Grotesque Image of the Body and Its Sources." Also, see Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's helpful discussion of the carnivalesque impulse as manifested in Renaissance drama in *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1986).

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¹⁰ As the praised woman's body undergoes a process of dismemberment akin to dissection, Vickers and Sawday hold, her involvement in the poem as an identifiable object of praise diminishes, rendering the blason a poetic contest of wit between male rivals rather than a celebration of female beauty. As Vickers point out, the blason's placement of the female body between two male poetic rivals transforms her flesh into a battlefield that both men strive to master. See her "This Heraldry in Lucrece's Face" in *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1985). Such a contest, in Sawday's view, takes on homoerotic overtones, for the dismembered female body becomes a means of communicating sexual desire between men; see his *The Body Emblazoned*, 191-212.

¹¹ See Sawday 193-196 for a detailed discussion of the similarities between Vesalius's construction of the female body and that of the blasoners.

¹² See pp. 426-30 in *Rabelais and his World* for Bakhtin's brief discussion of the blason's early form and function.

¹³ See pp. 21-25 for a general discussion of the regenerative properties of dismemberment, and her "Black and White and Red All Over: The Sonnet Mistress Amongst the Ndembu" in *Renaissance Quarterly* 40 (1987): 247-97 for a discussion of blasoning in particular.

¹⁴ See his discussion as it appears in "'Peremptory nullification': Tragedy and Macabre Art," the first chapter of his book *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

¹⁵ René Girard, "The Plague in Literature and Myth," in *To Double Business Bound: Essays on Literature, Mimesis, and Anthropology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978), 135-53. Quoted in Neill, 18.

¹⁶ *Newes from Graves-ende, Dekker's Plague Pamphlets*, ed. F. P. Wilson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1925), p. 94. Neill offers these quotations from Dekker as well, p. 19-21.

¹⁷ See Donne's sermon as it appears in volume 6 of *The Works of John Donne*, ed. Henry Alford (London: John W. Parker, 1834).

¹⁸ See Neill's full discussion on pages 31-32.

¹⁹ Arthur Riss offers a valuable survey of this critical trend in the opening pages of his "The Belly Politic."

²⁰ See 50-51 for Sawday's readings of Donne's heavily anatomical poems – especially "Anatomie of the World," "A Valediction: Of My Name in the Window," and

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"Loves Exchange"; Sawday also notes fifteen modern studies that he claims figure Donne as a student of the human body's medical function on 291.

²¹ Howell contemplates his own death in terms of Grunnius Sophista's last testament, in which the ancient thinker divided his only personal possession – his actual physical body – among those who could most efficiently use its parts. As Grunnius "thus dissected his body," Howell writes, "so I thought to divide my mind into legacies," offering his friends the segments of his study most useful to them. Dividing his thoughts as if they were flesh, Howell bequeaths his knowledge of philosophy and mathematics to Lord Cherbery and Sir K. Digby, his historical observations to Dr. Usher, and his knowledge of politics and foreign states to a Lord G. D. Howell's distribution of his languages involves more minute divisions, for he leaves his Latin to "my dear Mother the University of Oxford" and spreads his Spanish, Italian and Dutch among three friends and two merchant companies; his "little smattering of *Dutch*, British, and my *English*," however, he did not "esteem worth the bequeathing." What Howell considers his mind also includes less concrete segments of his individual constitution, for he specifies that his "love," which seemingly occupies a neatly outlined section of his brain, "be diffused among all my dear Friends, 'specially those that have stuck unto me." See *The Familiar Letters of James Howell, Historiographer Royal to Charles II*, ed. Joseph Jacobs (London: David Nutt, 1892) 422.

²² Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Holbrook Jackson (New York: Vintage, 1977).

²³ Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988).

²⁴ John Schofield, ed., *The London Surveys of Ralph Treswell* (London: London Topographical Society, 1987) plate 9. Since Treswell's main emphasis lies in recording London's houses, he gives us no hints as to the size and shape of the hall proper; Jessie Dobson and R. Milnes Walker, however, provide illustrations in their *Barbers and Barber-Surgeons of London* (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979), as does Sidney Young in *The Annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (London, 1890).

²⁵ Cambridge, after all, not only granted baccalaureates in both medicine and surgery during the sixteenth century, the school required more substantial anatomical knowledge from those who went into the presumably lower-class profession. As Peter Murray Jones reveals, Cambridge's Edwardian statutes of 1549 required that those who wanted a baccalaureate in surgery had to perform two anatomies before graduation, while those wanting a similar degree in medicine only had to attend two such dissections. See Jones, "Thomas Lorkyn's Dissections, 1564/5 and 1566/7" in *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliography Society* 9 (1988): 209-29. As Jerome Bylebyl points out, surgeons in Padua often held university degrees as well. See his "Interpreting the *Fasciculo* Anatomy Scene," *Journal of the History of Medicine* 45 (1990): 285-316.

²⁶ For most barber-surgeons, the chief means of curing internal disorders and

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maintaining health was, of course, bleeding, a practice that itself barely penetrated the body's surface. For a full discussion of the surgeon's domain, see Chapter Six "Surgeons and Surgery" of Nancy Siraisi's *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990).

²⁷ See, for just one example, Siraisi 185-86.

²⁸ For details of the parries from two different views, see Dobson and Walker, 54-55 and Clark, *A History of the Royal College of Physicians of London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954) 153-56.

²⁹ See Clark 178-179 for a full account of the College's attempts to proclaim instruction in anatomy as their turf.

³⁰ See Dobson and Walker 38-41 for details of the Surgeons' moves to accommodate their physician lecturers during anatomy demonstrations.

³¹ See K.F. Russell, *British Anatomy, 1525-1800: A Bibliography of Works Published in Britain, America and on the Continent* (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1987) 56-57. The treatise was also reprinted in 1651 and 1691.

³² London, 1615 ; STC 6062 (Reel 1409).

³³ Others also were angered by what they saw as the book's unacknowledged dependence on its source materials. See Clark 204.

³⁴ *The Diary of Thomas Crosfield., M.A., B.D., Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford*, ed. Frederick S. Boas (London: Oxford UP, 1935) 102.

³⁵ *The Diary of Sir Simonds D'Ewes. (1622-24)*, ed. Elisabeth Bourcier, Publications de la Sorbonne, Littératures 5 (Paris: Didier, 1974) 128.

³⁶ Helkiah Crooke, *Microcosmographia* (London, 1631).

³⁷ *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant Taylor of London, From A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1563*, ed. John Gough Nichols, Camden Society First Series Number 42. (London: Nicholls and Son, 1863) i.

³⁸ 1560-1: "The xxiiij day of Febybruary whent to hang xviiij men and ij / women, and serten ware browth to be bered in serten parryches in London; the barbur-surgens had on of them to be a notheme at ther halle" pp. 251-52.

³⁹ The Barber-Surgeons, he notes, were only granted four bodies per year, while an average of 560 criminals were executed per year during the reign of Henry VIII, 560 during Edward VI's, 280 during Mary's, 140 during Elizabeth's, and 140 during James's.

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⁴⁰ Park, in "Renaissance Italy," quotes Fallopia to be given over to us, for opium, but he suffers man, exulting, asking intercede for a part died." See 20-21.

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The number of available bodies fell while the visibility of dissection grew, he argues, yet he sees no anxiety about the source of these bodies surfacing until the middle of the seventeenth century. See 56-57.

⁴⁰ Park, in "The Criminal and the Sainly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994), follows Linebaugh. She also quotes Fallopius to support her view: "The Grand Duke of Tuscany ordered a man to be given over to us, for us to kill as we wished and then dissect. I gave him two drams of opium, but he suffered from quartan fever, and its crisis halted the effect of the drug. The man, exulting, asked that we give him a second dose, so that if he did not die, we would intercede for a pardon with the duke. I gave him another two drams of opium, and he died." See 20-21.

⁴¹ Quoted in Dobson, 42.

⁴² *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977) 51.

⁴³ In this respect, the process resembles that outlined in one of the twentieth century's most famous nonmedical anatomies, namely Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton UP, 1957), where the young hero of comedy must prove himself in the out-of-bounds green world before re-entering the city to triumph over the powers of the old order.

⁴⁴ The power of colonies to make such additions to the girth of the body politic inspired Donne to label the Virginia Company with one of the most vital organic roles of the body politic. In 1622, Donne told the company that they functioned as "not onely a *Spleene*, to drain the ill humours of the body, but a *Liver*, to breed good blood," thus extending their country's population into other, supposedly ungoverned lands. Quoted in Sawday, 25.

⁴⁵ See Hodges, 69-70.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the links Londoners saw between themselves and the Romans, see Bruster's chapter "City Comedy and the Materialist Vision."

⁴⁷ All citations to Shakespearean plays will refer to *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997), unless otherwise noted.

⁴⁸ For a full explanation of the history of the fable, from Aesop to Milton, see David G. Hale, "Intestine Sedition," *Comparative Literature Studies* 5 (1968): 377-88. Sidney, for one, was completely entranced by the tale, and commented, "I never read that ever words brought forth but then so sudden and so good an alteration; for upon reasonable conditions a perfect reconciliation ensued." See his *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Forrest G. Robinson (New York: Macmillan, 1985), 41.

⁴⁹ See Michel
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⁴⁹ See Michael Schoenfeldt, "Fables of the Belly in Early Modern England," *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York: Routledge, 1997) 245.

⁵⁰ See his pages 63-64 for a discussion of how class divisions – and the insistence of individuals within these divisions upon provisions for their own physical comfort and sustenance – link the play's plot to the controversies surrounding land enclosure.

⁵¹ See his "Coriolanus: Body Politic and Private Parts," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41 (1990) 458.

⁵² Gail Kern Paster, "To Starve with Feeding: The City in *Coriolanus*," *Shakespeare Studies* 11 (1978): 123-144.

⁵³ The city's walls thus come to share what Schoenfeldt sees as one of the stomach's chief characteristics: serving as the site where the interior world comes into contact with elements of the surrounding exterior world.

⁵⁴ Between the years 1603 and 1640, at least sixty-two proclamations were issued restricting what Londoners could eat. A proclamation forbidding the consumption of flesh was issued annually; the remainder of these decrees deal with revisions and refinements to dietary codes and commerce in grain.

⁵⁵ *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign and Domestic, from the Reign of James I* (London, 1858), volume 10, pages 219 and 225.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Bruster, 19-20.

⁵⁷ Quoted by Bruster, 20.

⁵⁸ K. J. Lindley, "Riot Prevention and Control in Early Stuart London," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series* 33 (1983): 109-26.

⁵⁹ Lindley points out that two rioters in 1629 were executed for murder, but such extreme sentences for the offense appear to be rare.

⁶⁰ *The State of England, Anno Dom. 1600*, Camden Miscellany vol 16, Camden Third Series vol. 52. (London: Camden Society, 1936) 1.

⁶¹ *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, ed. Daniel Parsons (London: Longman, 1836) 13.

⁶² *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign and Domestic, from the Reign of Elizabeth I* (London, 1858), volume 5, p. 435.

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⁶³ In fact, in the Plutarchan version, Marcius Coriolanus parades his wounds so effectively that the populace itself becomes embarrassed and immediately gives him their approval. As the war hero shows "the scars and gashes that were still visible on his body, from the many conflicts in which he had signalised himself during a service of seventeen years together," the observing public becomes "put out of countenance at this display of merit, and told one another that they ought in common modesty to create him consul." See Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. John Dryden (New York: Modern Library, 1932) 271-72.

⁶⁴ I owe this idea to Jagendorf, p. 465.

⁶⁵ See Marshall "Wound-man: Coriolanus, Gender, and the Theatrical Construction of Interiority," *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture*, ed. Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan, and Dymna Callaghan (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996) 96 for quotation and 103-106 for additional discussion.

⁶⁶ Sidney, 45.

⁶⁷ *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign and Domestic, from the Reign of Charles I* (London, 1856) vol. 4, p. 369-70.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the development and significance of duelling in England, see Robert Baldick, *The Duel: A History of Duelling* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1965).

⁶⁹ *Letters of Philip Gawdy of West Harling, Norfolk, and of London to Various Members of His Family, 1579-1616*, ed. Isaac Herbert Jeayes. (London: J.B. Nichols, 1906) 93.

⁷⁰ Gawdy also reports a February 1614 duel during which the seconds for both the Marquis of Amchora and his opponent "wer slayne" within minutes; the nobles themselves "cam of very sore hurte" (177).

⁷¹ In *The Elizabethan Stage*, E. K. Chambers suggests that the accident may play a role in the Lord Admiral's Men's disappearance from record – and perhaps from the stage – until 1588-89 (Volume 3, p. 135-36). He later suggests in a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* (August 28, 1930) that the incident would easily fit the staging required by the shooting of Bablylon's governor in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine Part II*.

⁷² See D'Arcy Power, "Notes on Early Portraits of John Banister, of William Harvey, and the Barber-Surgeons' Visceral Lecture in 1581" in *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 6 (1913): 18-35. Unfortunately, Power attaches no date to the sole document that mentions these tickets; even more frustratingly, he gives no indication as to whether those without connection to the medical professions were required to pay for their admission to the dissection. See Power, 28-29.

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⁷³ All quotations refer to Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* as edited by Jonas A. Barish for the Yale Ben Jonson Series (New Haven: Yale, 1965).

⁷⁴ See William Slights, "Bodies of Text and Textualized Bodies in *Sejanus* and *Coriolanus*," *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England* 5 (1991) for an account of critical interpretations of the crowd's dismemberment of Sejanus as dissection.

⁷⁵ The Norton edition insists that only two conspirators undertake the murder; the First Folio confirms that two performers probably enacted the crime on stage, giving the stage direction, "*Draw both Conspirators, and kils Martius, who falles.*" See *Coriolanus: A Facsimile of the First Folio Text*, intro J. Dover Wilson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1928).

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CHAPTER TWO:
The Dead in Action:
Corpses on Stage and in the Communal Imagination

The citizens of early modern London and the suburbs that grew around it were no strangers to the sight of blood. As we have seen, urban residents constantly and consistently encountered evidence in the streets of the body's susceptibility to mortal mutilation, whether stemming from disease, from the violent actions of their fellow citizens, or from executioners who acted on behalf of the state. Such evidence of the body's physical fragility also became increasingly commonplace on the playhouse stage, where the brazen display of supposedly-dead bodies – and parts thereof – often concentrated the horrific sights of early Stuart London into the space of a single dramatic performance. Tragedies that relied on such gruesome scenes, however, insisted that audience members regard these dead bodies and their parts as more than simply grim proof of human mortality. Though they clearly carry resonances of traditional *memento mori* themes, the corpses and detached body parts of the era's tragedies demand so much attention from both on- and offstage audiences that they sometimes seem to become vital, if not vivacious, characters in the drama in their own right. Characters in both Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1611) and *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1606),¹ for example, and in the Shakespearean *King Lear* not only bring the bodies of characters who have died onto the stage, they insist that onlookers examine these physical remains to evaluate the relative justice of the deaths they mark. The words spoken around the bodies of actors who feign death thus instruct spectators on the proper interpretation of the corpse as physical evidence while providing a narrative that assigns responsibility for the individual character's demise. In such situations, the body proves more than a stage

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property, for the dialogue surrounding it often requires listeners to imagine the relentlessly still corpse in front of them engaged in the actions – whether virtuous, corrupt, or simply and physically human – that preceded its death.

In another sense, of course, the corpses in such scenes remain vigorous characters simply because their appearance on stage usually requires the presence of an actor – one who, despite his best efforts to seem otherwise, remains fundamentally alive. The dramas' repeated insistence that such bodies on stage lack life, moreover, brings into sharp focus the difficulties of representing death itself in the playhouse, for, despite the mortal injuries a character might meet in the course of the drama, the actor embodying him or her generally safely arose from the stage to personate other, if not the same, characters in later performances.² While the insistent and assertive liveliness of the actors might seem to limit a play's mortal realism, the presence of such breathing cadavers on stage instead allowed early modern dramas to explore common cultural perceptions of the nature of the human corpse itself. The growing popularity of anatomical demonstrations performed on executed criminals, after all, revealed a willingness to find public uses for the bodies that, when alive, had been considered worthy only of public scorn and ostracism. As we have seen in the previous chapter, however, such a mutilation of the condemned corpse risked contaminating the anatomist's work with stigmatizing traces of criminality and execution; in addition, as in the account that Crooke's printer offers of the deformed corpse in the Physician's Hall, the dissection itself could be seen as a tempting chance for personal revenge against a convicted criminal. Yet even though the outcast nature of the criminal body made the mutilation of dissection more acceptable for both anatomists and their observers, Renaissance



anatomists appear not to have seen the cutting itself as an extension of the individual's legal punishment.³ The corpse, however, carried enough criminal resonances to allow the onlookers to distance themselves from the demonstration's systematic, seemingly inhumane disassembly of the body. The procedure, such rationale insisted, may mutilate the body of an outlaw worthy of public persecution, yet the dead flesh's insensibility promised that the mutilation involved carried little trace of cruelty.

The criminal corpse thus became the safest specimen for the anatomist's explorations of the human body's mechanical functions; the justifications involved in such explorations, meanwhile, ultimately underscored the mystery of the soul's relationship to the physical human body even as they revealed the flesh's wondrous workings. After all, no corpse, whether or not it carried resonances of criminal behavior, could provide physical evidence of the forces that had governed its internal motions in life. Yet those who performed and watched the dissection of the criminal body insisted that traces of criminality remained in its innermost structures even though the act of execution presumably separated the specimen's soul from his physical body. Such lingering associations between the body and the characteristics of the individual who had occupied it, Katharine Park argues, proved particularly powerful in northern Europe, where death was considered "an extended and gradual process, corresponding to the slow decomposition of the corpse and its reduction to the skeleton and hard tissues." While Italian habits of thought considered a dead body as "no longer a person," the English perceived the flesh as carrying echoes of its former inhabitant – so much so that they envisioned the dead body as a "sensitive and potentially active corpse that must be both protected and contained."⁴ Thus, though the legal system admitted no extension of



judicial torture in granting a criminal's body to the Barber-Surgeons or Physicians for dissection, popular beliefs continued to attribute a degree of sensibility to the corpse even as the anatomist stripped away its tissue.

For characters in early Stuart tragedy, these lingering ties between the soul and the body not only excused the inevitable visual signs of life given off by actors who played the dead on stage, they encouraged viewers to see even the most convincing theatrical representations of dead flesh as somehow endowed with physical vitality. As a result, when actors brought stage properties in the shape of supposedly lifeless body parts into the theatre, the audience could see these detached limbs as somehow endowed with a volition of their own.⁵ Such associations clung most fiercely to severed hands, which frequently appear on the early modern dramatic stage and that, significantly, anatomists saw as the body part most representative of humanity's greatness. Still linked with the soul in the popular imagination, these body parts – as well as entire corpses – resonated with physical, materially palpable vitality. The dead, as a result, could never be counted out, for even if their ghosts did not return to torment the living, their bodies necessarily remained as powerful, even active reminders of their lives and, often, of the wrongdoing that brought about their ends. Whether as dismembered parts or as surprisingly mobile corpses, the dead reappeared in the action, where their relentlessly physical power exercised a fleshly impact upon those who still occupied the world of the living. The physical remains, moreover, become an effective means for other characters to implement schemes that produce tangible effects in the material world. Though unable to propel themselves, severed body parts and corpses nonetheless move about the stage, inspiring actions in other characters and taking up vital roles in countless revenge plots,



thus acting as characters in their own right.

While, in the anatomy theatre, spectators and anatomists alike worked to forget these cultural notions of the corpse's liveliness, playhouse dramas exploited the lingering connections between the dead body and the life that had inhabited it. As anatomy became a greater part of London's cultural life, plays – and revenge tragedies in particular – used their theatrical ability to reanimate supposedly dead flesh to explore questions of what made human bodies alive, feeling, and capable of action. Characters in dramas not only continued to ponder the nature of death in traditional fashion, they often marveled at how tenaciously the human body clung to its traces of vitality, even after encountering, and succumbing to, the seeming finality of death. The presentation of the human body on the playhouse stage thus left viewers to question death's effectiveness in eliminating the deceased from the earthly realm, where their flesh, especially if female, still could inspire and even cause palpable material consequences. The words that speakers attached to the dead encouraged viewers to imagine the corpse taking a vital role in the action as well. Just as anatomists constructed narratives of the body's motion that sought to help audiences understand the operation of living flesh, characters in early Stuart tragedies described the dead's actions in ways that encouraged audiences to share their assessment of the deceased's living virtue. In both cases, such performances of the body invited onlookers to see vitality in the supposedly lifeless corpse, thus blurring distinctions between the living and the dead – and between the realms of flesh and the spirit. Whether in the anatomy theatre or in the playhouse, then, audiences increasingly began to share Macbeth's confusion at the astoundingly physical sight of Banquo's ghost, marveling that



The time had been
That, when the brains were out, the man would die
And there an end. But now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns
And push us from our stools. (3.4.77-81)⁶

Even in Protestant regions of early modern Europe, popular belief often attributed an almost magical aura to the human corpse and its parts. The English elite's practice of eviscerating and dividing the corpse not only allowed parts of the body to be transported great distances, it allowed its segments to be distributed to multiple church parishes where the deceased could benefit from the prayers of a greater number of people. For Katharine Park, the ease with which the English undertook such practices underscores the popular belief that "personal identity and properties could inhere in [the body's] scattered parts as easily as in the whole."⁷ While anatomists frequently scoffed at such unscientific reverence of dismembered bodies among the public, their lectures often had the contrary effect of reinforcing such ideas among the laypeople who attended. Anatomists, after all, often circulated dissected body parts among audience members (who frequently mishandled them), thereby perpetuating the tendency to marvel at bodies in segments rather than as complicated organic entities made of interdependent segments.⁸ On the continent, this public curiosity turned into a money-making opportunity for anatomists, for pieces of the corpse were often sold off like relics to those who attended anatomies. Human skin proved particularly popular, for accepted thought often attributed magical powers to its protective properties. The sixteenth-century sculptor Silvio Cosini of Fiesole, for example, made a vest out of the skin of criminals' corpses, thinking that the toughness of their flesh would bring him supernatural protection.⁹ Medical practitioners



found healing properties in smaller units of deceased bodies as well, distilling a valuable drug known as *mumia*, or mummy, from human corpses.¹⁰

Without the strong associations Park sees between the individual and his lifeless corpse, the mass burials that accompanied the plague would have proven far less offensive to Londoners, who longed to treat corpses according to the class dictates that held sway over them in life. The state too relied on enduring associations between the dead body and the individual who had occupied it, for without such links the display of executed bodies at the city wall could carry no messages about the consequences of offending the crown. Indeed, without such associations, the criminal corpse could not exist at all, for then all dead human bodies would carry identical significance. The London public, however, wanted to believe that the criminal's body remained fundamentally different from that of the law-abiding citizen and that those attuned to these physical differences could rightly discern the presence of an outlaw, whether alive or dead. The city's increasing population, however – and the growing number of people both in the Liberties and within the walls who depended on criminal activity to survive – made distinguishing such signs of criminality increasingly difficult. Displays of bodies that had belonged to convicted outlaws thus held particular appeal for Londoners, offering them a chance to search for characteristics that revealed criminal tendencies. As the city's population grew, the public's opportunities to conduct such inspections multiplied as well, for citizens not only encountered the bodies of executed criminals on display in the Liberties, they saw them exhibited in the anatomy theatre as well, and parallel enactments of such displays soon made their way into early Stuart London's popular entertainments. The era's increasingly common sensationalistic murder



pamphlets, for example, scrutinized the appallingly brutal actions of those who killed, seeking to trace their aberrant deeds to physical characteristics in their monstrous bodies. Henry Goodcole's pamphlets, as we shall see, vividly illustrate Londoners' increasing awareness that their crowded city streets obscured what were once thought to be reliable exterior physical indications of a person's inner nature. Murderers, such pamphlets reveal, could look like law-abiding citizens, and their anonymity only encouraged – and further enabled – them to further exploit their fellow citizens.

The corpses of murder victims, however, provided clearer evidence of the criminal body's tangible monstrosity, for it was commonly held that such bodies possessed the ability to point out the identity of their murderers through the voluntary exhibition of physical signs. Well into the seventeenth century, European law admitted the principle of bier-right, which held that the body of a recent murder victim would bleed when in the presence of its killer. In Germany, for example, suspects touched the corpses of murder victims according to a highly ritualized procedure while the public looked for new blood to appear on the cadaver to signal guilt. While such procedures were never a formal part of English Law, James I endorsed the principle of bier-right in his *Demonologie* (1597), where he cited such mysterious bleeding as proof of the effectiveness of drowning trials for suspected witches. Just as "water shal refuse to receiue" witches, James writes, so "in a secret murther, if the dead carcase be at any time thereafter handled by the murtherer, it wil gush out of bloud, as if the blud wer crying to heauen for reuenge of the murtherer."¹¹ In his view, the blood of the corpse itself takes action against the murderer, reviving itself into action in a purposeful attempt to accuse its killer. Other legal and religious authorities disputed the cause of such accusatory



bleeding – some saw it as an act of what remained of the soul in the body, others saw it as proof of the body's antipathy toward the killer, while still others saw it as simply the body's release of air from its wounds – yet very few accounts attribute these occurrences to God's direct intercession. Instead, they almost always traced the bleeding to motivations, whether physical or spiritual, within the supposedly lifeless corpse itself.¹² The idea as perpetuated by the English population at large, moreover, clearly viewed such bleeding as hinting at the enduring life of the corpse. When Gloucester approaches Henry's body in the Shakespearean retelling of Richard III's history, for example, Lady Anne's exclamation of "O gentlemen, see, see! Dead Henry's wounds / Open their congealèd mouths and bleed afresh" insists upon the corpse's lingering power to act in the material realm despite its lifelessness.¹³ Similarly, a corpse's renewed bleeding leads to the conviction of a multiple murderer in the pamphlet *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (1591).¹⁴

This belief in the principle of bier-right, however, becomes strangely inverted in the case of Thomas Sherwood's encounter with the corpse of his victim as described in Henry Goodcole's *Heavens Speedie Hue and Cry sent after Lust and Murther* (1635). Goodcole's pamphlet – one of an increasingly popular genre of moralistic and sensational accounts of the acts and motivations of murderers – tells the story of a crime spree that Sherwood, popularly known as Country Tom, and his partner Elizabeth Evans, also known as Canberry Bess, carried out in the suburbs of London. As the ordinary of Newgate prison, Goodcole served as confessor (and perhaps torturer) to both Sherwood and Evans, and his pamphlet recounts the convicts' descriptions of their violent deeds as well as offers his own retelling of the events surrounding their executions. In one of many vivid



descriptions of the duo's brutality, the pamphlet records Evans's story of Country Tom's return to the scene of one of their early crimes, where he encountered a bleeding body that threatened to reveal him as a murderer; in this case, however, the flesh that nearly gives him away is not that of Tom's victim but his own. According to Evans,

[Sherwood] on Candlemas day last pressed amongst the Jurers, at the *Christopher* Taverne in Turnmill Street *alias* Turnbull Street to view the dead Corps of Master *Rowland Holt*, by him murthered. *Sherwoods* Nose immediatly gushed out with such issues of blood, that he feared thereby to be discovered, and returning unto her said, I have suffered such a thing this day about Master *Holt*, wee must of necessity leave of this course of life. (C3r)¹⁵

While the principle of bier-right insists that a murdered cadaver can gather enough locomotion to identify its killer through its own willful bleeding, Sherwood's story insists that a dead body can exercise mysterious powers forceful enough to draw blood from the living perpetrator. Holt's corpse thus not only communicates with the living world, it acts upon it, causing physical – and revealing – harm to an active, breathing, and supposedly self-controlling body. And, as tempting as it may be to dismiss Sherwood's conclusion as the workings of a guilty conscience, it is important to note that his fear stems not just from his lack of bodily control but from his conviction that others will see his bleeding as significant. If he can trace his own bodily behavior to Holt's corpse, Sherwood reasons, then the other onlookers surely will as well, especially if the murdering duo fails to "leave of this course of life."

The early Stuart era's murder pamphlets overflowed with such graphic descriptions of bodies; in most cases, however, writers reserved the most explicit accounts for their descriptions of the murderer's brutal mutilation of his victim.¹⁶ Emphasizing the bloodiness of the killings, after all, emphasized the evil that lurked



within the killer while simultaneously rendering his victim doubly sympathetic. As a result, pamphlets commonly describe rotting corpses found in ponds and in hastily, poorly dug graves¹⁷; one even lavishly describes a victim discovered with "worms crawl[ing] in his mouth, nose, ears, and his whole body ... puttressed."¹⁸ In another particularly vivid example – C.W.'s *The Crying Murther* (1624) – the murderers undertake a destruction of their victim's flesh so thorough that it mirrors the utter obliteration of the body performed in the anatomy theatre. The pamphlet describes the killing of a Somerset curate named Mr. Trat, and its words dwell almost lovingly on the criminals' disposal of the corpse. Its narrative infuses the scenes of killing with terrible detail, offering vivid descriptions of the atrocities inflicted upon Mr. Trat's body. Apprehending the curate as he traveled to his mother's house, four criminals delivered "two mortall wounds" to his chest; the murderers then brought Trat's body back to his own house, where they undertook elaborate measures to hide the body in hopes of delaying their crime's discovery. In the words of the pamphleteer,

There these Butchers, with their hands already smoaking in his blood, did cut up his carkeise, unbowell and quarter it; then did they burne his head and privy members, parboile his flesh and salt it up; that so the sodaine stincke and putrefaction being hindred ... His armes, legges, thighs, and bowels were powdred up into two earthen steenes or pots in a lower roome of the house, close adioyning unto the wall, the bulke of his carkeise was plac'd in a fatte or tubbe, covered over with a cloath in a cha[m]ber over head, all which me[m]bres thus dissevered were so artificially iointed, laid and handled, that if these devils had beene Butchers they could not have done it more orderly and cunningly.(B3v)¹⁹

The pamphlet thus amplifies the quartet's evil deeds by dwelling on the cold-blooded care they exercised in their attempts to obscure their crime. The pamphlet's printer anticipated such fascination on the public's part with the terrifying implications – and horrific

attraction – of the criminals' thorough desmemberment of Mr. Trat that he devoted his title page to a woodcut of the murderers at work upon the curate's dead body (Figure 9). In it, each murderer devotes attention to a particular body part, performing a different role in the body's mutilation. What remains of Trat's body fills the middle of the image, yet the criminals' busy evisceration of the corpse leaves the body an empty shell of its former living self. The body's tilted position in the frame, however, not only keeps it the center of visual attention, it seems to imply that a trace of liveliness remains in the corpse, which appears to stand under its own power on one oddly-angled foot. The curate's increasingly empty body, however, transfers the viewer's attention to the three men who grandly brandish their knives and gleefully display the segments of the body they have severed before handing them to their female partner, who performs the more domestic pickling of Mr. Trat's flesh. The woodcut thus provides the readers with a gruesome, if somewhat absurd, illustration of the murderers' gradual commandeering of Mr. Trat's body, encapsulating the story through a dramatic image that bears an odd, though striking, resemblance to early woodcuts of the anatomical dissections.

Like the woodcut in *The Crying Murther*, the illustrations in anatomy texts tended to see the dead human body as somehow retaining its locomotive power, for such treatises featured illustrations of active, animated bodies that maintained their liveliness even though their skin had been flayed and their tissue dissected to expose the deepest recesses of the human interior. In the *Fabrica*, for example, a series of woodcuts commonly known as Vesalius's "musclemen" offers depictions of the body in progressively more radical stages of dissection, yet these figures stride (or pose) leisurely in the countryside, apparently unhindered by the increasing damage done to their bodies

(Figure 10). For Devon Hodges, the first three illustrations effectively obscure the violence of dissection; by the final two, the progressive stripping of the body's layers has rendered the figures monstrous, forcing the observer to confront the emptiness of the mutilated, unmoving human form, even though the muscleman's bones still "are poised to retain the signs of human suffering."²⁰ For Glen Harcourt, however, the final two musclemen reveal the failure of Vesalius's attempts to represent the body's structure and function simultaneously. The anatomist's desire, Harcourt argues, to emphasize the human body's ability to perform action – and the necessity of internal action for the maintenance of its life – renders the *Fabrica*'s figures unrealistically mobile in the muscleman series, for in most cases the dissection would have destroyed the structures necessary to sustain the poses that the corpses hold.²¹ While Hodges concludes that the final two drawings – where the muscleman first hangs from a gibbet and then is propped against a wall – declare the finality of death, the bodies in the illustrations nonetheless insistently exhibit signs of life; in both cases, after all, the feet of the hideously stripped carcass still struggle upon the ground to bear the weight of the body, and the figure still manages to hold his arms away from his torso even though his muscles drape powerlessly from his bones.

Fighting off death despite the barely-recognizable state of his corporeal body, this last muscleman hardly seems to fulfill the role of accomplice to anatomy that Jonathan Sawday sees Vesalius's figures consistently enacting. For him, the musclemen "stroll through the pastoral landscape, casually allowing themselves to be gradually deconstructed," and while such comments certainly apply to the series' early, more fleshed-out figures, they overlook the active anguish of the concluding illustration.²² His



reading of dissected bodies instead imagines corpses as completely drained of all life – that is, up until the point where the cutting itself begins. His interpretation of self-displaying anatomies – arresting illustrations common in seventeenth-century anatomy texts in which seemingly live humans pull back their own flesh so viewers might glimpse the interior of the body – presumes that the bodies had no life before being opened, that somehow they owe the power to open their eyes and move their hands to a source that lies outside their own bodies. For Sawday, such figures, specifically those shown in Spegelius's *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1627) (Figure 11), show anatomy "to be a science which (contrary to what we might expect) seems to animate the body, and endow it (albeit temporarily) with a life of its own so that it could assist in the engaging spectacle of its own division."²³ According to his view, then, the body's vitality vanishes utterly upon its death, and only cutting can "endow" it with its new short-lived life as a self-demonstrating anatomy. As common-sensical as such assumptions may seem to us today, such conclusions deny the lingering resonances of liveliness that northern Europeans discerned in their corpses. Thus, while Sawday sees anatomy restoring life to cadavers, the inhabitants of early modern London were more likely to have seen the dissector's knife cutting into flesh from which signs of life, even if muted, still emanated.

This is not to deny, however, that figures in illustrations such as Spegelius's are not assisting in their own anatomization. On the contrary, the motions their bodies – particularly their hands – perform to open up their interiors reaffirm that locomotive force still remains in their dangerously exposed, supposedly lifeless flesh. These half-anatomized figures, Katherine Rowe points out, hold their hands in positions that, in the conventional language of Renaissance gesture, signal hospitality rather than



defensiveness. With open palms and slightly spread fingers, the bodies featured in these illustrations welcome the viewer's gaze "as one might welcome a guest into one's house," thus using their hands both to call attention to and take apart their own bodies.²⁴ The hands of such self-demonstrating anatomies – just as for live humans – embody the "point of contact between collective notions of person and the world of interiority, intentions and will," serving as the primary symbol of humanity's special status among God's creations as well as the ultimate symbol of human agency.²⁵ The emphasis that early modern anatomical illustrations place on the hand – both of the dissected corpse and of the anatomist – leads Rowe to conclude that cadavers were seen as "less the Foucauldian subject, more nimble and mobile than the horizontal poses of dissected corpses imply, more animate, finally, even when dismembered and anatomized."²⁶ Illustrations of the hand's dissections, she convincingly shows, offer a particularly vivid image of the corpse's active involvement in its own demonstration, for the muscles seem to perform the dissection even as they constitute the subject of the examination (Figure 12). As in the case of the Vesalian musculen, depictions of the human hand thus illustrate its form via its function, even when its dissection interferes with the structures needed to perform its actions. The disconnected tendons and ligaments, however, somehow retain adequate resonances of their former liveliness to illustrate the peculiar actions that make the hand so integral to individual – and human – identity.

For early modern anatomists and dramatists, the hand epitomized humanity's separateness from – and superiority over – other earthly creatures, for it embodied the individual's ability to deploy his reason to adapt to the surrounding environment. The hand proved particularly important for Ambroise Paré, the hugely influential French



surgeon whose works were translated into English by Thomas Johnson in 1634 and had circulated widely in Europe in Latin and French versions throughout the sixteenth century. Like other anatomists, Paré's praise of the hand calls upon Galen's celebration of the structure in his *On the Usefulness of Parts* to claim that, while animals are born with specialized defenses, the hand gives humans alone the flexibility to proactively influence their own surroundings.²⁷ Figuring the hand and its motions as contributing to human learning rather than simply performing manual tasks that ensure physical survival, Paré concludes that

... as Mans body is by nature naked and unarmed, so is his minde like a smoth table in which nothing is painted, nothing graven; but for helpe of his nakednesse he hath hands, and for supply of his ignorance, reason and speech. And by these three being as it were the ministers of infinite varietie of things, he clothes and defends his body with all things needful & inriches his minde with the knowledge of Arts & sciences.²⁸

The hand thus works in conjunction with speech and reason – two other exclusively human qualities – to help the species not just to survive but to create an intellectual realm unknown to brute beasts. Though anatomists like Helkiah Crooke espouse similar theories of the hand's status, echoing Aristotle's claims that it served as "the instrument of instruments,"²⁹ such assessments of the hand's meaning prove particularly powerful for Paré as an experienced military surgeon. Paré, after all, had gained extensive knowledge through direct contact with the wounded and the sick, and his writings strove to elevate the status of the hands-on work that such surgery demanded. While members of the College of Physicians hesitated to use their hands in treating the sick, as we have seen in Chapter One, Paré claims that such direct contact forms the essence of effective medical care. Herophilus, he argues, considered physicians "*The hands of the Gods*"; therefore,



Paré implies, these elite practitioners violate their purpose when they refrain from touching their patients (A3r). Meanwhile, Paré claims that the directness of surgery's art brings its practitioners into closer contact with humanity's God-given reason. Defining his vocation, whose very name finds its root in the Greek *chiros*, or *hand*, Paré writes:

Chyrurgerie is an Art, which teacheth the way by reason, how by the operation of the hand we may cure prevent and mitigate diseases, which accidentally happen unto us. Others have thought good to describe it otherwise, as that; it is that part of Physicke which undertaketh the cures of diseases by the sole industry of the hand; as by cutting, burning, sawing off, uniting fractures, restoring dislocations, and performing other workes, of which we shall hereafter treat. Chyrurgery also is thus defined by the Author of the medicinall Definitions; The quicke motion of an intrepide hand joyned with experience: or an artificial action by the hands used in Physicke, for some convenient intent. (B2r)

For him, surgery – indeed, medical practice as a whole – depends upon the hand. While the London's physicians admitted the importance of such direct treatment, their insistence upon their profession's distinct superiority over the surgeons' compelled them to downplay the role of the hand in their work.³⁰ As a result, even though physicians such as Crooke claimed that the hand "may justly be compared to the soule," the College nonetheless emphasized the hand's role as a tool better suited for human defense than for learning. "For doth not the industry of men's hands prevaile," Crooke writes in the 1615 edition of *Microcosmographia*, "against the hornes of the Bull, the teeth of the Lyon, and the paw of the Beare, yea whatsoever is comprehended under the scope of heaven, by the skill of the hand is brought under our subjection and made tributary unto us."³¹ Though the hand may allow humans to overcome all types of earthly adversity, for Crooke and his fellow physicians it could only do so through actions tinged by associations with brutal shows of force. Their reluctance to use their hands directly – or indeed, to employ



tools that exerted direct force upon the human body's surface – hearkens back to the fundamental similarities between helpful tools and damaging weapons. As Elaine Scarry notes, "What we call a 'weapon' when it acts on a sentient surface, we call a 'tool' when it acts on a nonsentient surface"; such divisions collapse, however, in the medical realm, where patients and doctors alike are taught to speak of instruments as "tools" even though they enter and affect living human bodies. Maintaining this "learned identification," she argues, runs counter to human intuition, for when confronted with a "tool" like a dentist drill "Every child recognizes it as a weapon and responds accordingly."³²

Yet, by the time that his *Microcosmographia* underwent its second printing in 1631, Crooke's text revealed a growing appreciation among physicians for the learned skillfulness, if not the delicacy, of surgeons' hands-on methods of treatments. Along with Crooke's treatise on anatomy, the 1631 edition included Paré's guide to surgical instruments in its entirety under the title *An Explanation of the Fashion and vse of three and fifty Instruments of Chirvrgery*.³³ This addendum reproduced Paré's detailed woodcuts of often frightening-looking surgical tools, picturing them individually as well as in various groupings and including instructions for each instrument's use (Figure 13). The usefulness of such a guide evidently proved obvious to Crooke's readership, for neither Crooke nor his printer offers any introduction to justify the new addition; nor had Paré's text – either as reprinted with Crooke's book or as translated by Johnson – included any apology for dwelling on such brutal-looking tools. Instead, the tools appear straightforwardly upon the pages, as they had in fact often appeared in medieval treatises, revealing a recognition among both physicians and surgeons that hands-on treatment played an integral role in medical care. Though the appearance of this guide to tools in a



treatise supposedly written for surgeons need not imply that physicians used such instruments, Crooke's text nonetheless admits that these tools, as well as the hands that use them, serve as vital instruments in the healing process. And for Crooke, the hand is just that – another instrument. His rendition of this Aristotelian notion, however, reveals an ambivalence about the significance of the hand, for, though the hand is itself only a tool, "it is the first instrument so it is the framer, yea and imployer of all other instruments."³⁴

As Rowe argues, Crooke's simultaneous insistence upon the hand's status both as humble tool and as the signal of human uniqueness belies the difficulties of ascertaining early modern views of the relationship between actions and their origins. A tool, she points out, serves as an extension of the hand, which is itself figured as a tool of the human body itself. Early modern illustrations, however, often linked numerous tools to create complicated chain reactions that obscured the original source of action. She asks of one early modern emblem (Figure 14), for example, "Where along the sequence of a hand holding a scepter shaped as a hand holding a sword should a reader locate the origin of action?"³⁵ A similar confusion informs depictions of dissections in which the anatomist's hand meets that of the corpse he is dissecting, as in the portrait of Vesalius following the title page in the *Fabrica* (Figure 15) or Rembrandt's painting *Anatomy of Dr. Tulp* (Figure 16), where the viewer sees an uninterrupted line connecting the living anatomist and the lifeless corpse. While such images illustrate the anatomist's symbolic mastery over this most uniquely human feature, his close contact with the corpse once again calls attention to the lifelike qualities of this supposedly dead body.³⁶ The source of the corpse's apparent vitality, moreover, remains unclear: does it stem from



resonances of life within the corpse, or does the act of dissection once again endow the stone-cold flesh with vitality? Is, in short, the corpse a tool that the anatomist puts into motion to reenact the functions of the living body, or does the corpse itself act as an equal partner in its own display?

Such questions of an individual's ability to control bodies – those of others as well as his own – come into sharp focus in the revenge tragedies of the early Stuart era. The deployment of corpses and body parts in such plays explores popular notions of the corpse's ability to act in the world of the living, while simultaneously examining the extent to which revengers could use the remnants of the deceased as tools in their own schemes. While the earlier Elizabethan tragedies – *Titus Andronicus* (1591) and *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587) in particular – undoubtedly manifest popular fascination with such issues, their Stuart counterparts foreground the mutilation of bodies more routinely and more explicitly, performing increasing numbers of murders and torture sessions before their audiences and heaping more and more corpses upon the stage. Four corpses, for example, lie upon the stage as both *The White Devil* (1612) and *The Revenger's Tragedy* come to their ends; the closing scene of *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614) confronts viewers with the dreadful sight of five bodies, and seven dead bodies appear on stage during the last two scenes of *The Atheist's Tragedy*, while *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* (1632) leaves its audience to examine three corpses and a disembodied human heart. Characters on stage handle severed body parts – particularly hands – with greater frequency as well in the Stuart era, allowing playwrights, actors, and characters to exploit segments of the living corpse for greater dramatic effect.



In Cyril Tourneur's much maligned *The Atheist's Tragedy*, for example, the bodies of five lifeless characters appear on stage, along with the bones of an untold number of skeletons during the graveyard scene. The corpses of the atheist D'Amville's two sons, moreover, appear in two separate scenes as their father presents them first to doctors and then to judges in hopes of obtaining explanations – and restitution – for the ending of the family he had seen as his means of immortality. The freshly-murdered body of Montferrers also appears before the audience's eyes to underscore the diabolical nature of D'Amville's prideful, atheistic schemes. His ambition, after all, leads him to commit this murder against his brother so that his own sons will inherit the baronetcy; the murder, moreover, occurs before the audience's eyes, with D'Amville thrusting his brother into a gravel pit and blaming the incident on two drunken servants whose fighting he had carefully orchestrated. Less than fifteen lines after D'Amville delivers this lethal shove, servants bring Montferrers's body back onstage, allowing the gathering crowd to meditate on his sudden death. For D'Amville, the presence of the corpse permits him to engage in a dramatic display of grief purposely designed to convince the onstage audience that he has played no part in the murder. "No breath? No motion?," he cries in feigned disbelief as he studies his brother's corpse, hoping to convey shock at what is in fact an intricately premeditated plan (2.4.36).³⁷ Making the body itself the focus of attention for both his onstage audience and for those who watch from within the playhouse, D'Amville demands that all who hear him look upon his brother's body to witness its sudden lifelessness. His grief, he contends, would prove less overwhelming had Montferrers "been taken from me like a piece / O' dead flesh"; yet D'Amville insists that the corpse



still exhibits painful traces of the lively spirit that had only recently animated its bones.

"But come hither, pray look here," D'Amville insists,

Behold the lively tincture of his blood!
Neither the dropsy nor the jaundice in't,
But the true freshness of sanguine red ...(61-65)

His words thus name the very signs of life that should be missing from the body, allowing him to mourn convincingly in the presence of his onstage audience while simultaneously acknowledging the life that playhouse spectators might make out in the actor's flesh. The body, bleeding in the presence of its murderer, resonates with signs of life that emphasize the brutality of D'Amville's actions; D'Amville's description of the body, however, constructs a story around his brother's wounds that convinces the theatregoers to deny, if temporarily, that the flesh they behold contains any vitality.

D'Amville's own performance, we soon learn, is not the only act that he has directed in staging Montferrers' death – an act which he diabolically refers to later in the scene as "a sweet comedy" (89). When D'Amville's servant Borachio appears at the end of the scene, he proclaims that the push D'Amville delivered to his brother failed to result in death. Instead, Borachio tells us that he had lain in the pit to administer the final blow and to ensure that the scene of the crime revealed an accidental death rather than a murder. Displaying the bloody rock that he used as his weapon, D'Amville's minion proclaims that he

...knocked out's brains with this fair ruby,
And had another stone just of this form
And bigness ready; that I laid i'the
Broken skull upo' the ground for's pillow,
Against the which they thought he fell and perished. (99-103)



With its emphasis on the display of the bloody rock, Borachio's speech not only outlines the machinations involved in the murder, it demands that the playhouse audience gaze upon the instruments used in committing the crime. The weapon becomes a chief focus of attention, yet Borachio's careful account of his murderous actions make clear that he too is a tool in D'Amville's plotting of the killing. When Borachio calls the scheme "the most judicious murder that / The brain of man was e'er delivered of," he might well view himself as an active contributor in the plot's formulation (106-07); for D'Amville, however, the "man" that Borachio speaks of can only be himself, the sole mastermind of the killings. In his reply, D'Amville takes credit for single-handedly coordinating all the factors that contributed to the murder's enactment, for he insistently modifies his servant's speech to proclaim

Not any circumstance
That stood within the reach of the design
Of persons, dispositions, matter, time,
Or place, but by this brain of mine was made
An instrumental help ... (108-12)

Though he may not have delivered the fatal blow, D'Amville asserts that, as the schemer behind the murder, he deserves sole credit for its successful completion. The evil duo's self-congratulating talk, moreover, finds particular pride in their ability to employ so many people in the orchestration of their scheme. Overlooking his own role as a pawn in D'Amville's plan, Borachio bemusedly marvels at the public's unknowing complicity in the murder. "[T]hose that saw the passage of it made / The instruments," he snickers, "yet knew not what they did" (139-40).

Fittingly enough, it is just this sort of supreme confidence that renders the near-simultaneous deaths of his sons Rousard and Sebastian so crushing for D'Amville. When



his son Rousard succumbs to lingering illness and Sebastian to wounds inflicted by a jealous husband, D'Amville refuses to believe that their young lives could have been extinguished so quickly, and in such a manner so contrary to his view of nature's workings. By confronting the audience with the prostrate bodies of the dead Sebastian and the barely-living Rousard, the beginning of the play's last act vividly illustrates the difficulty of discerning life from death. Though a servant reveals that Sebastian has been "Slain," D'Amville refuses to admit his son's evident lifelessness, instead concluding that he has merely "lost his hearing" (5.1.49, 52). D'Amville greets the servant's statement that Rousard is "ready to give up the ghost" with similar hostility (64), driving him to demand that the doctor apply the medical wisdom of the ancients to save both his sons. "Doctor," D'Amville admonishes him,

...behold two patients in whose cure thy skill may purchase an eternal fame. If thou hast any reading in Hippocrates, Galen, or Avicen, if herbs or drugs, or minerals have any power to save, now let they practice and their sovereign use raise thee to wealth and honour. (70-75)

D'Amville's faith in such science leads him to overlook the lifelessness that other characters onstage recognize immediately in Sebastian's corpse. Yet the doctor jumps to corresponding, if perhaps more realistic, conclusions, for he effectively pronounces Rousard dead while he still exhibits obvious, if muted, signs of life. Though the playtext demands at least two audible groans from D'Amville's ailing son (78, 102), the doctor pronounces Rousard as dead as his wounded brother, proclaiming upon his initial examination that "these bodies are deprived of all the radical ability of nature" (87-88). As they debate the state of the two bodies, then, both D'Amville and the doctor offer hasty evaluations about what defines a living body. For both, an ability to perform action



remains primary; as a man who routinely inspires individuals to move unknowingly, even senselessly, on his behalf, however, D'Amville proves unable to recognize such absolute lifelessness.

D'Amville's steadfast refusal to acknowledge the limits of medicine's ability to understand the human body also makes him an ardent believer in anatomy's usefulness in comprehending individual character. In the play's climactic scene, he claims the body of his nephew Charlemont for dissection even before his death so that he might uncover the physical source of the young man's courage when faced with unjust execution. While Charlemont freely admits his guilt in the accidental death of Borachio, even jumping onto the scaffold "with an active spirit" and with a faithful "expectation of the victory" that will await him in heaven, D'Amville grows increasingly distracted by the prospect of death as the execution grows nearer (5.2.126, 124). He is, after all, still confronted with the bodies of his two sons, prominently displayed before the judges upon the stage. D'Amville, however, sees Charlemont's still-breathing body as equally corpse-like. Just before his nephew's execution is to begin, D'Amville tells the judge

I would find out by his anatomy
What things there is in nature more exact
Than in the constitution of myself.
Methinks my parts and my dimensions are
As many, as large, as well composed as his –
And yet in me the resolution wants
To die with that assurance he does. (143-49)

Though his body appears similar to Charlemont's in external form and fashion, D'Amville recognizes that he remains essential different from his nephew. The variations in their character, he insists, stem from biological differences in their body's internal structures, which dissection will render obvious to the inquiring eye. As the person who demands



that such a post-mortem be undertaken, D'Amville thus associates himself with the anatomist's ability to discern the internal motions that would have animated the body in life. It is worth noting, however, that he never claims that he will undertake the anatomization himself; instead, he merely claims that he aims to "find out" via dissection what makes Charlemont's faith so distinctive. The ambivalence of his words, then, renders the role that D'Amville imagines for himself in the dissection unclear. If his plan includes turning Charlemont over to an anatomist, D'Amville might be signaling his faith not only in the relevancy of dissection but in those who perform it; on the other hand, he might be plotting the dissection in hopes of using the anatomist too to help in his exposure of his nephew's body – and from a greater physical distance – after the execution. If he plans to perform the anatomy himself, as Jonathan Sawday assumes,³⁸ then D'Amville might be hoping to demonstrate his victory over both his nephew and his faith; in such a case, his interpretation of the body's material signs would allow him to declare complete mastery over its internal functions and, by extension, over the natural world which Charlemont's human form epitomizes. Or he may be genuinely searching for the source of Charlemont's courage in the face of death – a courage that Huston Diehl sees D'Amville suddenly beginning to envy.³⁹ No matter how D'Amville envisions his plot, however, his plan exploits the bodies of others, dead and perhaps living, in hopes of staging a grand finale that will visually demonstrate the validity of his secular worldview while also providing him with material proof to explain his nephew's intangible – and supposedly baseless – spiritual faith.

The Atheist's Tragedy, however, ultimately denies the effectiveness of D'Amville's seemingly logical mode of thought, for the play's infamous ending



systematically forces him – as well as those who watch him, both from onstage and off – to confront the collapse of this highly developed sense of secular order. Laying claim to Charlemont's body after death suddenly becomes inadequate to D'Amville, whose desire to orchestrate his nephew's demise – and to uncover the truths within his body – drives him to ask permission to execute as well as anatomize his nephew. D'Amville insists that he alone can rightfully dispatch Charlemont, arguing that a "shag-haired cur" like the approaching executioner cannot behead someone of his nephew's high station (221). In proclaiming that "The instrument that strikes my nephew's blood shall be as noble as his blood" (222-23), moreover, D'Amville figures his own body, not the lethal ax, as the means that will bring about Charlemont's death. The ax, after all, has no fleshly body, let alone "blood" of its own. When D'Amville speaks of his own body as an instrument for the act's completion, however, what power should we imagine as directing his actions? He may see his own flesh as acting in accordance with his mind's wishes, thus imagining his hand as the tool of his brain. He may, on the other hand, imagine himself as acting on behalf of a state that, ironically, fulfills the execution of his own plan. Perhaps his words signal a slip into religious faith, or perhaps they simply serve as his rhetorical attempt to gain possession of the executioner's ax so that he might further his own revenge.

Whatever his motives, D'Amville's demands bring him into increasingly immediate proximity with Charlemont's physical being, closing the distance between his physical body and that of the nemesis he has sought to ruin from afar. D'Amville, once content to enact his plots and inflict injury through others, now craves more direct contact with his victim. His wish to make Charlemont both the subject of dissection and the victim of his ax not only dangerously associates himself with his nephew's downfall, it



strengthens the hazardously close connection between dissection and capital punishment as well. Even more interestingly, neither the idea of Charlemont's impending dissection nor of his execution provokes notable horror from those onstage. Both Charlemont and Castabella fearlessly leap to the scaffold in anticipation of their deaths, and their actions provoke a voiced response only from the shocked, faithless D'Amville. Similarly, D'Amville's request to make an anatomy of Charlemont provokes a remarkably calm response from the judge, who says, "Be patient and you shall" (152). As D'Amville's actions bring him nearer to Charlemont's body, however, his actions' social propriety becomes an issue, leading the second judge to caution him that the office of executioner "will impress a mark / Of scandal and dishonor on your name" (227-28). The judge's concern thus stems primarily from D'Amville's desire to wield the ax that dispatches his nephew, not from his yearning to open his body to inspection after his death. Though Sawday insists that D'Amville's actions would associate him with two practices – anatomy and execution – equally tainted by infamy,⁴⁰ the judge's readiness to turn the corpse over for dissection suggests that subjecting the body's interior to scrutiny in hopes of discerning the nature of its owner clearly carries less disgrace in the public's eyes than involvement in execution itself. And though the play's enigmatic ending – and the spiritual readings it has provoked – stress the close connection between anatomy and execution, they reaffirm both practices' utility in the revelation of spiritual truth.

In taking up the ax to kill his nephew, however, D'Amville suddenly and inexplicably kills himself instead, for, according to the stage directions, he "*raises up the axe*" and "*strikes out his own brains*" before staggering off the scaffold (236). As grave, disfiguring, and undoubtedly difficult to stage as his injury is, D'Amville nonetheless



manages to speak more than twenty lines that not only confess his plan but renounce the atheism that inspired his plots. Despite the apparent change in his philosophy, however, the former atheist's words retain their familiar concern with agency, only now he speaks of his own body as well as those around him as mere instruments in a larger plan. God, D'Amville tells the judges, "commanded" the action of the ax to illustrate the dangers of relying upon human reason. "[T]hou think'st / Thyself a wise man," D'Amville tells the accommodating judge while confessing, but "I outreached thy wit and made thy justice murder's instrument" (246-47). Only divine intercession in the form of the errant ax had rescued the innocent Charlemont from such a humanly-ordained unjust death. The judge, however, remains ambivalent about the lessons of D'Amville's downfall, for his comments seek to reaffirm human power even while they celebrate the mysterious omnipotent workings of the divine. Unbinding Charlemont's hands, the judge proclaims that "With the hands / Of joy and justice I thus set you free," thus figuring his own physical body as the tool of human institutions larger than himself (262-63). His ensuing speech, however, traces not only D'Amville's death but his plan and its consequences to a less earthly force:

The power of that eternal providence
Which overthrew his projects in their pride
Hath made your griefs th'instruments to raise
Your blessings to a greater height than ever. (264-67)

The judge thus argues that God orchestrates his justice in mysterious ways, using hardship as his tool to reward the worthy. His words, however, stop short of asserting that D'Amville himself proves an instrument of the divine. While Charlemont's "griefs" prove the "instruments" of his rewards, D'Amville's prideful "projects" stem from human will, a force that exists alongside and independent of the divine. D'Amville's death,



however, brings such conclusions into question, for the stunning sight of his apparently self-inflicted ax wound leaves them to ponder the nature of God's interventions in the human realm. Neither the judge nor the onlookers can determine what brought the ax to come crashing into his skull. Should we conclude that God himself took hold of the ax that delivered the blow, or should we trace the action itself to divine influence over D'Amville's body? Does, in short, God exert power over the physical body of the individual human, or must he use external means himself to inflict punishment and rewards upon humans? From where, to rephrase Rowe's questioning of the sword-and-hand emblem, does the force that drives the ax originate?

Such broad theological questions highlight the ambivalent position of the criminal body itself in the early modern era. Whether or not divine forces took control of D'Amville's body or of the ax to bring about his death, the blow that killed him cannot be said to be purely self-inflicted. If nothing else, the bizarre nature of his ending leads those onstage to conclude that it is divinely inspired. Thus, even in this limited sense, responsibility for the body's physical actions cannot be assigned with any certainty. D'Amville's subsequent professions of faith, moreover, emanate not just from a grotesquely wounded body but from an obviously, even aggressively, mangled head. Yet even as the audience gazes at the gaping, fatal wound, D'Amville's words continue to pour forth to influence the observers' interpretation of the event's significance. His body, manifesting continued motion that might suggest an even further illustration of God's power, fights off death long enough for D'Amville to explain the meaning of his own mysterious disfigurement. A power greater than nature, he claims, had struck dead his posterity whose flesh he had envisioned as extending his influence, and it has now



inflicted a similar punishment upon his own body to drive the message home. Even if his "*striking out his brain*" leaves D'Amville's head only discreetly bleeding, his body serves as a visual illustration of a decidedly compact form of justice. The blow, after all, not only reveals his guilt, it also physically uncovers the brain that exercised such earthly logic. For Huston Diehl, D'Amville's ax blow – one that she labels tellingly and paradoxically as both "self-inflicted" and "unintentional" – illustrates the conventional belief that an atheist's denial of the divine "murders his own God-given reason."⁴¹ D'Amville's still-talking body, however, relies on his listeners to decipher the meaning of the scene formed by the interplay of his wound and his words, for he insists that those who watch him interpret its significance to the society they inhabit. They must, in short, consider the possible moral ramifications of a body whose criminal nature should, according to tradition, be nothing more than an illustration of near-divine state power. D'Amville's execution thus leaves the insides of his body exposed to inspection, and the public anatomization he had planned for Charlemont becomes aimed instead at his own flesh. His bloodied corpse, along with the bodies of his sons, thus remains onstage for the playhouse audience to inspect and interpret as corporeal embodiments of D'Amville's self-proclaimed pride.

While the bodies of D'Amville's sons take up substantial roles at the climax of *The Atheist's Tragedy*, the bodies of female characters prove especially vulnerable to such displays of violence in the playhouse, and the appearance of their physical remains on stage typically provokes vows of revenge from the male characters who behold them. According to early modern custom, after all, damage inflicted to a woman's body or reputation amounted to a personal attack on the men of her family, who, as a host of



twentieth-century critics have shown, viewed their daughters and wives as property best governed with a stern hand.⁴² As the early modern obsession with cuckoldry makes clear, a woman who evaded such controls had the potential to directly influence her husband's physical nature, for her sexual infidelity could cause him to sprout invisible horns that nonetheless determined society's view of his body.⁴³ It is not surprising, then, that a woman's death, especially when brought about by the wrongdoing of others, could stir physical torment within the men who, if they did not love her, at least held sway over her. For a male character in a revenge tragedy, the sight of a daughter or wife's corpse (or even just remnants of her body) offers horrifyingly concrete evidence not only of the pain and oftentimes torture that led to her death, but also of his inability to protect her from her attackers. In imagining the torment that accompanied a woman's death, then, men on the early modern stage consistently imagined her physical pain as suffered by their own male bodies. As Karen Newman shows, the era's rhetoric helped these men to forge such sympathetic connections, for it often encouraged them to see women as bodily extensions of their own flesh.⁴⁴ The Protestant preacher Thomas Gataker, she points out, upholds such a traditional notion of a woman's proper corporeal connection to her husband in his *Two Marriage Sermons* (1623), arguing that wives should be "a limbe or a member" that is "fastned" to the man's body. Rather than creating a union of man and woman in one flesh, Newman argues, Gataker's words reveal that the conventions of early modern marriage transform woman into a prosthetic part attached to a male body. She becomes something grafted onto her husband for utilitarian purposes, a foreign object joined to him to facilitate his movements through everyday life. In short, a man's wife, and any



daughters that might result from their marriage, become tools, instruments that he can use to improve his status – both materially and socially – in the world around him.

When female characters appear onstage as corpses, then, the visible damage to their bodies encourages male characters to imagine themselves as physically injured as well, propelling them into vengeful rages – and, occasionally, evoking overwhelming sorrow – that prove integral to the dramatic action. The descriptions they offer of the physical torments that led to the woman's death, moreover, often determine the onlookers' evaluation of her virtue in life, regardless of whether they look upon her from on- or offstage. Significantly, when the body representing a woman's corpse exhibits bleeding wounds, her death is more likely to be attributed to her improper sexual behavior. While female characters, like their male counterparts, often succumb to gunshot and stab wounds, the staging – and delivering – of such bloody injuries takes on new resonances when suffered by women. These invasive wounds, feigned though they may be, mark the female character's body as open and uncontained, thus inevitably associating her, as Patricia Parker has argued, with sexual promiscuity.⁴⁵ The wounded female body, like the sexually "dilated" female body Parker describes, offers audiences a glimpse of its inevitably sexualized secret interior, thus offering concrete evidence of her flesh's easy penetrability; when such wounds occur on the early modern stage, moreover, they prove even more threatening to cultural modes of thought, for they associate the body of a boy actor with womanly openness through the enactment of such scenes. The female character's wounds, in short, threaten to expose parts of the human body that should, in all decency, be hidden from the public at large. Woman characters who suffer and die from such bleeding wounds on stage thus serve as human illustrations of the deadly



results of female sexual looseness, leaving characters like Vittoria Corombona in *The White Devil* and, of course, Annabella in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* to die permanently associated with the dangers of uncontrolled female sexuality.

A female character's death thus served as the final judgement upon her inner being, providing the audience an emblematic shorthand for determining her essential nature. When her death resulted from ruptures in her body – when, that is, an onstage enactment led onlookers to believe that her inner physical being could be glimpsed, however tentatively, through the apertures in her skin – she became inevitably tainted with the associations of whoredom.⁴⁶ Even more interestingly, an overwhelming number of women who die onstage in early Stuart dramas succumb to poisoning and suffocation, causes that leave far fewer temptations to look into the forbidden female body. For critics like Parker, the relative bloodlessness of strangulation in particular manifests a cultural desire to seal off woman's dangerously open body, permanently trapping her sexuality and the open speech that accompanies it within her flesh.⁴⁷ The results of such methods of killing, moreover, leave the bodies of female characters largely intact upon stage, allowing them to serve as self-contained and easily simplified symbols of virtue which, in turn, become stage properties for the male characters who use them in enacting their individual schemes.

The end of the Shakespearean *King Lear* (1605), for example, presents onlookers with four bodies to interpret, three of which belong to women characters. While the overpowering image of Lear holding the body of his recently-hanged daughter Cordelia attracts riveted, pitying attention from critics and audiences alike, the scene prominently features Goneril and Regan's corpses as well. Like Cordelia, Lear's less admirable



daughters leave the stage during the play's final scene to die away from the playhouse audience's eyes; the circumstances surrounding the older sisters' deaths, however, cement the rebellious, uncontrolled nature of the behavior they have exhibited throughout the play. Thus, when an unnamed gentleman explains the dire circumstances surrounding Goneril's and Regan's deaths, his onstage audience expresses little pity, instead interpreting their murder-suicide as a vivid illustration of the sisters' decadence. The gentleman, holding a bloody knife so "hot" that "it smokes," reveals that Goneril has stabbed herself after poisoning Regan (5.3.222).⁴⁸ "[S]he has confessed it," he reports, yet even if her words had mirrored those delivered by a criminal before execution, they gain little sympathy from the characters who hear the gentleman's account (226). Instead, Albany orders the man to "Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead," asserting that "This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble, / Touches us not with pity" (229-31). As doleful as the story of their deaths may prove, not even the sight of the sisters' corpses can move the onlookers to forgive their actions. Instead, the prominent display of Regan's corpse alongside Goneril's bleeding body only reinforces the shamefulness of their lives. While the corpses force Edmund to confront his role in their deaths, realizing that "The one the other poisoned for my sake" (239), the sight of the sisters' monstrous bodies inspires little pity from those who view them, only driving Albany to brusquely demand that their faces be covered.

The sight of Cordelia's executed body, however, evokes overwhelming pathos from the onstage audience. While the bodies of Goneril and Regan lie onstage, Lear carries in the corpse of his youngest daughter, uttering words that dwell relentlessly upon the sudden lifelessness of her flesh. "I know when one is dead, and when one lives," Lear



asserts, examining his daughter's hanged corpse in hopes of finding a trace of life (5.3.259); her body, however, remains insistently immobile, systematically denying his attempts to reanimate it. His words, moreover, repeatedly lament that she has no breath to "mist or stain" a mirror, driving him to ask her lifeless flesh, "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life, / And thou no breath at all?" (261, 305-6). Her body's motionlessness thus becomes the focal point not only for Lear's words but for the onlookers' eyes. Even if his description of Cordelia's lifelessness runs counter to what the playhouse audience sees – the actor who plays her, after all, would need to keep breathing – Lear's words encourage the spectators to envision his daughter's body as sealed off from the realm of the living; her flesh thus remains utterly and aggressively isolated from the rest of the physical world, for it, as he tells us, cannot even open itself to take in the air necessary for survival. Cordelia's flesh, thus separated from the fallen earthly realm that surrounds her, thereby becomes the ultimate emblem of chastity, the eternal embodiment of all that is "excellent ... in woman" (272).

The attention that Lear draws to Cordelia's corpse – and the onstage onlookers' active refusal to gaze at Goneril and Regan's shamed, sinful bodies – illustrate the undying connection that early modern drama forges between a male's honor and his ability to control the motions of the female body. While the revelation of such powerlessness helps bring on Lear's death, the lethal advances that wives, daughters, mistresses, and queens suffer amount to physical affronts against their own personal bodies that, in most cases, drive male characters to take up direct – and often deadly – revenge. Their inspiration for revenge, moreover, often emanates from their interactions with the prominently displayed remains of their beloveds' physical bodies. Whether they



dote upon the women's intact corpses or simply carry around skeletal remnants of their female bodies, these men prepare their plots – and steel their nerves – through study of the lifeless corpses. In *The Revenger's Tragedy*, for example, the remains of two women's bodies appear separately on the stage to inspire revenge in the men who survive them. Vindice, as we shall see in the following chapter, clings to the skull of his wronged lover, speaking to it and displaying it to the audience as he enacts his intricately plotted revenge. In addition, Lord Antonio calls upon his wife's corpse to illustrate the brutality of the rape committed against her by the Duchess's youngest son. "[D]iscovering the body" for the benefit of Piero and Hippolito, Lord Antonio asks the lords to be "sad witnesses" to the doleful sight that "strikes the man out of [him]" (1.4.5).⁴⁹ His wife's bodily death – a death which she induced herself through poison out of shame – thus enacts physical damage upon Antonio, inflicting upon him a palpable corporeal blow as well as insulting damage upon his own sexual potency. In the conversation that ensues, Piero and Hippolito reveal their own awareness of this dual injury to Antonio, for they console him not only by lambasting the rapist as a "serpent" but also by celebrating the chastity of Antonio's unnamed wife, describing her as the "blush of many women" and the "Precedent for wives" (63, 7, 6). Antonio's words, moreover, encourage increasingly intricate study of his wife's corpse, calling the attention of both his onstage audience and playgoers to the details of her appearance as he discovers them. "I marked not this before," he proclaims as he sees a prayer book resting beneath her cheek; he then points out the poison bottle from which she had drunk and the suicide note clutched in her right hand (13-16). His words, highlighting both the beauty of her flesh and the injustices done to it, dwell upon the surfaces of his wife's body, speaking of her as a beautiful but



empty shell now deprived of spirit. Glossing over any traces of brutality that the physical altercation and sexual violation might have left on his wife's body, Antonio instead dwells on the damage the rapist has inflicted upon his own physical being. His wife's rape and death signify primarily as a stain upon his honor, providing, in his words, the culmination of the duchess's son's "long lust to eat / Into my wearing" (33-34). Her emphatically empty body, moreover, serves as such a powerful testament to this insult that Piero and Hippolito vow revenge upon Antonio's behalf. Thus, though her body provides the focal point of the scene, Antonio's wife remains conspicuously absent; her flesh, so stone-cold that Hippolito refers to her as "so fair a monument" (68), becomes nothing more than an obscene reminder that women's bodies may indeed be wrenched from those of their husbands and used as tools to bring dishonor upon their supposedly controlling masculine bodies. Yet, even when forced out of Antonio's physical control, the lady's body serves as a powerful tool for the grieving husband, for his narrative account of her body and the events that brought on her death ensures that her death will be physically – and equally brutally – avenged.

In a culture that saw women's bodies as so attached to the bodies of men, the recounting of a woman's capable formulation and enactment of her own deeds inherently challenged commonplace modes of thinking. Early modern women, after all, undeniably took action in their everyday lives despite habits of thought that imagined them as inherently passive creatures, and female characters undoubtedly engaged in plottings of their own right in the era's dramas. While comedies generally solved the conundrum by placing women's bodies firmly under male control through marriage, tragedies offered no such tidy means of securing the power of individual men over their increasingly untimid



female counterparts. The narratives that male characters construct to explain the meaning of displayed female corpses underscore their desire to act as women's protectors and governors, as Antonio's speech over his wife's body clearly shows; such accounts, however, reveal the speakers' anxious recognition of their own failure to deploy these seemingly limitless powers effectively. Though such words focus on women's bodies successfully to re-emphasize the physical connections between men and their victimized wives or daughters, they nonetheless admit that other forces – some stemming from within the body – can seize control of female flesh. In many cases, after all, women themselves take on active roles that, while hastening their own deaths, strike painful blows at comfortable notions about proper, even natural, feminine submissiveness. Staged tragedies often punish women who encroach too deeply into the male realm, labeling their displayed dead bodies as monstrous aberrations upon the female ideal, as in the juxtaposition in *King Lear* of Goneril and Regan's hideous corpses with Cordelia's idealized beauty in death. Other tragedies, however, reveal greater ambivalence about the consequences – and origins – of women's ability to take independent action, especially when such activities involve criminal deeds that undermine not only male authority but the stability of the state's governing power. Lady Macbeth's active role in the plotting and collusion behind Duncan's murder, for example, offers perhaps the most complex dramatic exploration of women's capacity to both motivate and implement criminal behavior; in fact, the ambiguous words of the playtext render futile attempts to determine whether Lady Macbeth or her husband originally conceived the idea of killing the king for political gain.



These cultural anxieties regarding women's ability to fully participate in criminal activity, however, surfaced not only on the stage but in popular printed accounts of actual murders as well. Henry Goodcole's *Heavens Speedie Hue and Cry sent after Lust and Murther*, for instance, wavers in its assessment of Elizabeth Evans's accountability for the crimes that she and Thomas Sherwood committed in the London suburbs. The pamphlet provides background on each of the robbers before recounting the murders they committed, the criminals' individual confessions and executions, and the disposal of their bodies after death. Following Evans, also known as Canberry Bess, from her rural roots to her body's ultimate home in the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre, Goodcole provides an extremely rare account of a body's movements from criminal conviction to dissection, and his awkward struggles to reconcile Evans's feminine body with her aggressive crimes reveals his bewildered inability to ascertain the source of her aberrant behavior. While the version of the story told in the ballad *Murder upon Murder* (Figure 17) pins all blame for the criminal duo's actions on Bess, claiming that "For by alluring tempting bates / she sotted so his minde / That unto any villany, / fierce Sherwood was inclind,"⁵⁰ Goodcole's account ultimately fails to conclude whether Evans could be held responsible for her crimes or whether her body simply served as a convenient instrument in Sherwood's diabolically brutal schemes.

Claiming that his purpose in undertaking the pamphlet is to educate readers on the dangers of the city, Goodcole traces the criminals' movements through London, vowing that writings like his will help prevent similar lawless robbers from infiltrating – and victimizing – the city. Even as Goodcole calls himself as a "Watchman," however, his suspicious eyes dwell less on the town itself than on the body of Elizabeth Evans. A



woman, his writing asserts, should have no part in murder and thievery, yet Canberry Bess not only played a role in the crimes, their successful completion depended as much, if not more, on her physical participation in the plot. The scheme's effectiveness, after all, stemmed largely from her female body, for she used it to entice victims away from crowds into secluded areas more conducive to robbery and murder. Such blatant use of her body as a lure sends Goodcole sputtering, driving him to lament Bess's apparent moral laxity:

A woman, Oh shame unto her modest tender Sexe to become a setter, or set on such a brazen face, that upon a man unknowne unto her, shee seazeth in the open Streets, and with her deceitfull smiles, and salutes, so inchants, and incaptivates, and leads him into slaughter. Like a decoy Ducke, shee is alone going abroad, but not alone returning, associated with multitudes homeward: The bargain shee strikes up, and goeth before, to a secret appointed place, upon whom, unawares, to the seduced person, attendeth a mercilesse strong. (A2v)

Using her body to lure victims into the trap where Sherwood awaits, Evans actively denies the modesty that Goodcole expects from a woman. Daring to approach men, she becomes, at least in Goodcole's view, the reason for the victims' downfalls, even if she relies upon Country Tom to administer the physical blows that lead to their ruin. The pamphlet thus blames Evans not for having contributed to the masterminding of the plan nor for delivering the lethal beating, but for allowing her body to be involved in the commission of the crimes. Considering Evans as a physical component of – not a rational contributor to – the plan, Goodcole holds her accountable for the crime even though she played no direct role in the physical attack that brought on the victim's death.

In doing so, moreover, Goodcole follows Elizabethan precedent for the evaluation of an accessory's guilt, for his assessment of Bess's culpability accords with the



statements issued in an earlier murder case by the magistrate Edmund Plowden. In *The Commentaries or Reports* (1571-79), Plowden had concluded that those who collude in murders share responsibility even in they refrain from delivering deadly harm:

And notwithstanding there is but one Wound given by one only, yet it shall be adjudged in Law the Wound of every one, that is, it shall be looked upon as given by him who gave it, by himself, and given by the rest by him as their Minister and Instrument. And it is as much the Deed of the others, as if they had all jointly holden with their Hands the Club or other Instrument with which the Wound was given, and as if they had all together struck the Person who was killed.⁵¹

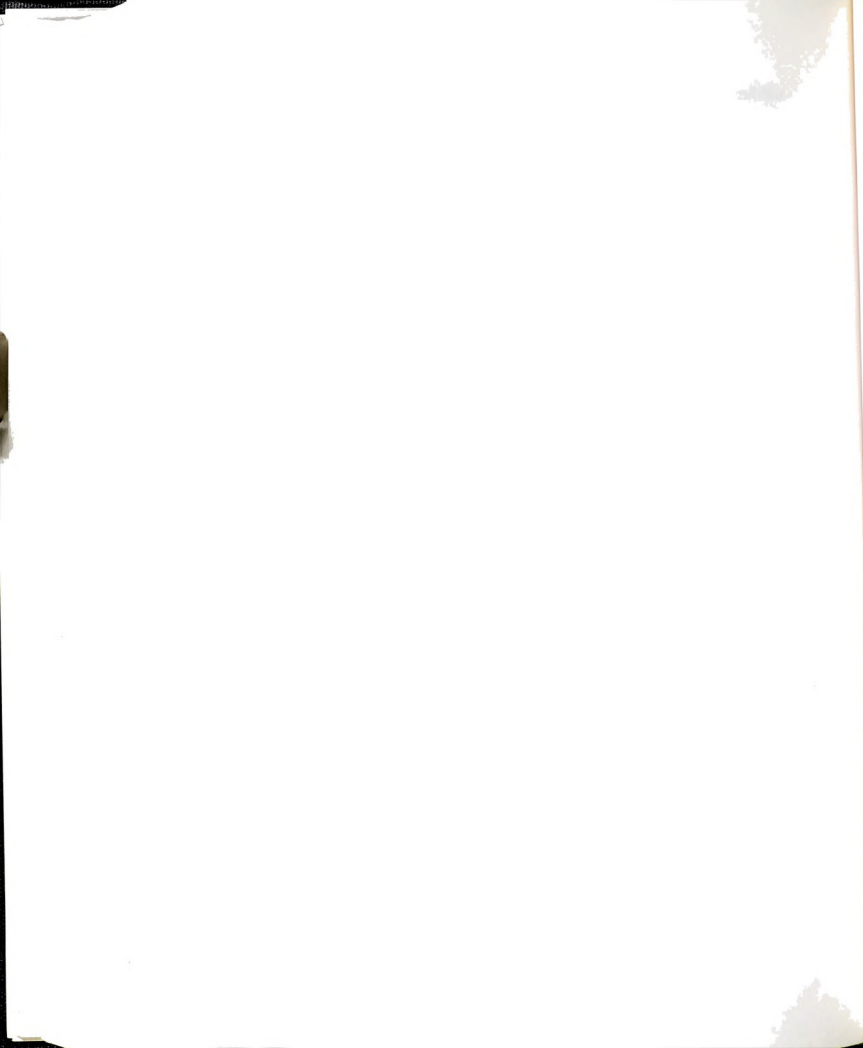
Those who take part in a killing, inspiring it either through their payment or their collusion, thus prove just as guilty of the murder as those who perform the killing. Plowden, moreover, figures the murderer and his accomplices as parts of a single murdering body, for they "all jointly hold" the killing weapon "with their Hands." If his explanation grants leniency to any of the parties involved, the person who inflicts physical harm to the victim proves its beneficiary, for such an assassin serves merely as the "Minister and Instrument" of those who plan the crime in the first place. Despite the bloodiness of their deeds, Plowden implies, their actions are not solely their own; instead, their more distant accomplices inspire their deeds, providing the motivating forces that drive their bodies to inflict deadly blows upon the victims. The assassin's body becomes, in short, not only his own means of taking drastic, brutal action for his own gain, but the tool of all those who take part in the planning of the crime.

Though Goodcole mentions Sherwood first in the pamphlet and clearly traces the brute force of the murders to his physical actions, the pamphlet struggles – and ultimately fails – to clearly determine the nature of Evans's role in such scandalous murders. As hard as he tries, Goodcole cannot reconcile Bess's participation in such brutal actions



with her supposedly passive female body, leaving him unable to assert with any confidence whether she acted as the plan's mastermind or minister. As a result, his assessment of her responsibility for the murders wavers throughout his account. After initially calling her a "decoy Ducke" who brings "shame unto her modest tender Sexe," Goodcole shifts the blame for Bess's actions onto her employers in London, who abandoned her after a man "tempted her unto folly" – evidently an understandable fall in a rightly passive young woman. The flaw, he opines, lies with the friends who "frowned" on her, who showed their own "unnaturall blemish" in their move "to forsake, cast off, and forget their owne deere flesh." Bess's female body, in Goodcole's figuration, depends on family ties to govern its overwhelming, fleshly-driven impulses; once severed from such a controlling social entity, her turn to "a base course of life" of immoral physical attachments proves lamentable, but only natural (A4v).

Her union with Country Tom, however, evades Goodcole's self-consciously broad-minded attempts to comprehend Bess's nature. Goodcole's words reveal the monstrosity he sees inherent in their union; for him, their dependence upon one another takes physical form, melding them into one body, grafting them together to create a single unnatural, inhuman – and inhumane – creature that preys upon innocents in the untamed streets of London's suburbs. Bess "constantly accompanied" Tom "day and night for the terme of a yeare, or there abouts," and their attachment grew so strong that the two "combin'd" to "put in practice their new invented mysterie of Iniquity." Their scheme, in fact, relied on the strength of this connection, for "Whensoever they went forth out of their Lodgings, they severed not themselves, but kept within sight one of another alwayes, both hunting one prey" (A4v-Br). Their physical relationship thus



makes them more than a criminal team, it verbally transforms them into a single hideous corporeal creature, one that remains an organic whole even when Tom and Bess separate in the street to implement their thieving scheme. The pair's union, in his eyes, even produces monstrous children, for he speaks of their scheme as "A new kind of invented wickednesse" which he hopes "Gods mercy, and the late exemplary Justice, [has] strangled in the birth" (A2v).

Yet Goodcole still remains fundamentally unsure of Bess's complicity – indeed, of her ability to be complicit – in the scheme. Bess, after all, remains a "decoy Ducke," a lure set out to attract men rather than a "mercilesse strong" who pounds the life out of them. That role, Goodcole stresses, belongs to Sherwood. Goodcole's account, moreover, lays particular significance on Country Tom's methods of killing, carefully describing the tools he uses in his attack upon Thom Claxton, a "proper costly apparrelled" lieutenant that Bess lured from Bloomsbury in Gray's Inns Fields one night during Easter week in 1635. "Inhumanely," Goodcole writes, "with a short Trunchin of Iron which Sherwood carried under his cloake by his bloody polluted hands, with his weapon he instantly deprived master *Claxton* of life" (B2v). An illustration of the truncheon, complete with ominous spikes, fills the pamphlet's margin; in fact, the drawing appears on the title page as well (Figure 18). Goodcole's words, however, figure more than just the truncheon as Tom's instruments in the murder, for his emphasis on Tom's "bloody polluted hands" traces the force of the blows back to the body that delivered them. His description also makes clear, however, that both Bess's "hands were so foully stained with blood" as well through her part in the crime (B2v).



In his account of her execution, though, Goodcole refuses to name Bess as an equal accomplice in any of the pair's crimes; instead, he claims that, because she is a woman, she cannot be held solely responsible for her cruel actions. "A Woman she was that died," he argues, "for whose weake and timerous Sexe sake, something must bee allowed tollerable" (C2v). His rationale thus emphasizes the power of Country Tom's brutality, not only in the killing of Claxton but also in the corrupting of Bess. When the two criminals undergo confession individually before their separate hangings, however – Tom's on April 14, 1635, and Bess's on April 17⁵² – Goodcole is shocked to find that Evans declares her own motives and offers a differing final assessment of their criminal actions. As the pamphlet's accounts of the confessions makes clear, the words Bess speaks while isolated from her accomplice impress Goodcole not only in their difference from Country Tom's ideal (and most likely idealized) final speeches, her words hint at the existence of a motivating force within her that Goodcole had never before encountered, one so foreign to him that he has no choice but to admit his own ignorance of its workings. "Concerning her," Goodcole tells us, "I have very little matter offered to dilate; I found this *Sherwood* and her so different in their severall confessions unto me, that I wonderfully admired, that two alwaies unseparable in such professions of evill, should be so contradictory one unto each other" (C2v). The two criminals – whom he had once spoken of as "combin'd" – now prove rigidly separate from one another, and Evans suddenly appears to have independent thoughts of her own. Even more remarkably, Goodcole's account figures Sherwood as properly atoning for his despicable actions, while Bess's confessions render her motives even more inscrutable. She grows increasingly mysterious as her execution proceeds, leading Goodcole to proclaim her – in

a word that, for Patricia Parker, embodies all his frustrated attempts to evaluate her obscured female nature – impossible to "dilate."

Even though Goodcole proves unabashedly puzzled by Bess's suddenly frank confessions at the scene of execution, he sincerely attempts to find the meaning behind her mysterious words rather than dismiss them as mad rantings. The tenor of her speech, however, leaves those assembled suddenly facing the stunning revelation that Bess's motives find their roots in a world they cannot comprehend. Marveling at her vitriol, Goodcole writes,

Yet something I found in her worthy of note, at the time of her confession, a perfect hate, and exclamation against all Theeves, which caused her destruction. And furthermore in signe of such her distraction, of such unholy courses, proceeded from her mouth a most serious request unto all them present assembled, advising all poore simple women to marry an honest man, though but a Ragge gatherer, rather than a lewd man or a Theefe, rendring the reason of such her earnest admonition, because an honest man may make an evil woman turne from her evill waies, but it was hard for an evill man to make a wicked woman good, with divers at her admonitions to the wonder of the standers by, considering what a life she had lived in. (C2v)

Though Goodcole is obviously taken aback by Bess's "distracted," her statement contains adequate appeal to his moral mode of thinking to merit serious contemplation. He offers no direct commentary, yet alone interpretation, of her words; instead, he remains uncharacteristically quiet, perhaps stunned by the inscrutability of the "life she had lived in." While Country Tom's accusations against the beguiling power of whores had assured Goodcole (and the crowd his description helps construct) that he correctly recognized the evil influences from which his corruption grew, Bess's derisive comments regarding thieves and her admonitions to women offer no clear apology for her actions, yet alone provide a universally recognized scapegoat for her crimes.⁵³ She, after all,

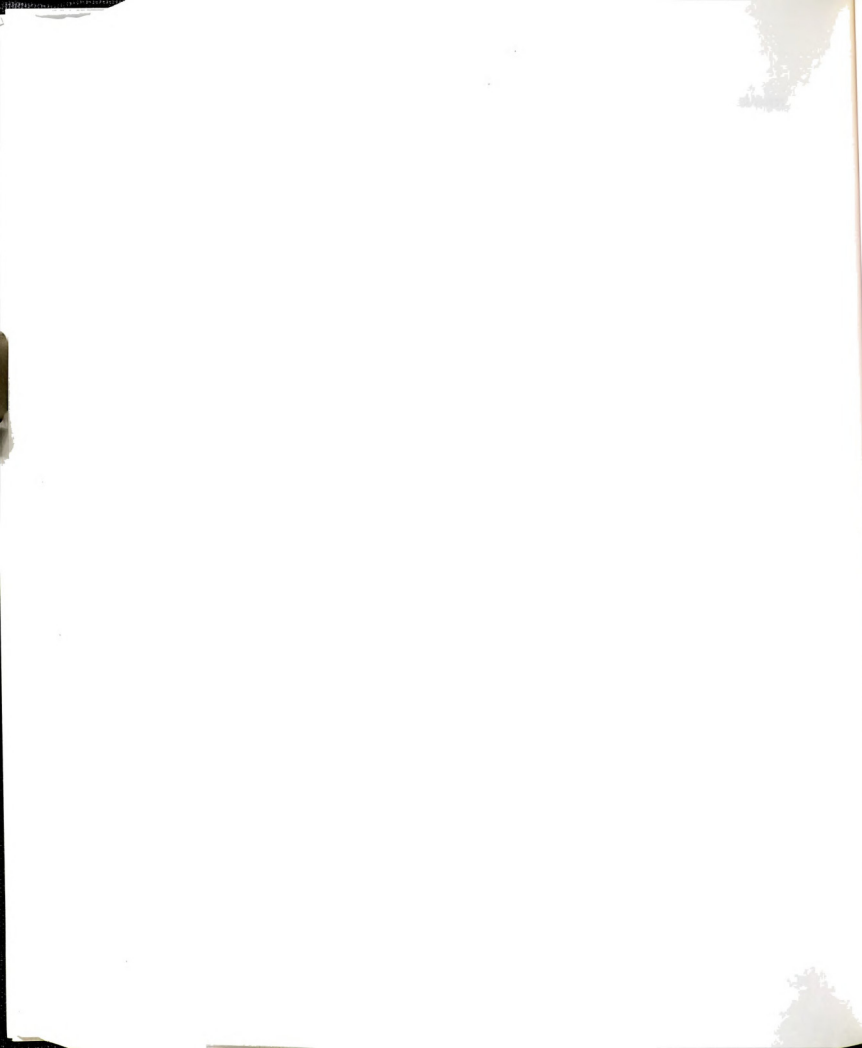


acknowledges the evil that lurks in thieves yet simultaneously admits women's susceptibility to being drawn in by them; that appeal, her speech implies, stems primarily from practical concerns for economic security – concerns that no doubt would strike her audience as legitimate for any woman considering a marriage match. Similarly, Evans's insistence that men mold women's virtue, whether for good or ill, would doubtlessly accord with many of the onlookers' views of a husband's power over his wife. Ironically, Goodcole's inability to assimilate Bess's reinforcement of conventional wisdom leads him to devote his full sympathies to Country Tom by the end of the pamphlet. While Goodcole had begun by painting Bess as a victim of the city's streets, corrupt men, and unconscientious friends, he concludes his account of Sherwood's fate with the assertion that he served merely as "the dismall accomplisher of her damned plots" (C4r). Evans, once the mere tool of a brutal thief, suddenly become the brains behind the operation, bearing, in the eyes of her confessor, the majority of the guilt for the murderous crimes she and her partner had committed.

Goodcole's condemnation of Evans may strive to offer some sympathy for her predicament as a friendless woman in a large city, yet his pamphlet stresses that offenders like her should be kept under the citizenry's watchful eye – and luckily, the barber-surgeons assisted Londoners in such surveillance by transforming her body into an anatomy in their hall. "[A]fter her execution," Goodcole reports, Bess's body "was conveyed to Barber Surgions Hal for a Skeleton having her bones reserved in perfect forme of her body which is to be seene, and now remaines in the aforesaid Hall, of whom I hope, God did take mercy" (C3r). Emphasizing that Bess's skeleton is in the Hall "to be seene," Goodcole's account urges city-dwellers to inspect her – and witness the end

rewards of her evil deeds – for themselves. In his pamphlet's closing, he begs his readers once again to visit Bess's skeleton, reiterating that "the Coy-duck, or divellish allurer in sinne and confusion, was dissected, and her dryed carkase on Sceleton of Bones and Gristles is reserv'd in proportion to be seen in Barber Surgeons Hall" (C4r). Goodcole's description makes clear that he perceives her skeleton as resonating with her crimes; for him, it remains a faithful, accurate reminder of the "sinne and confusion" that she had embodied, both in her life and at her death, even though her flesh may no longer adorn her bones. Subjecting her remains to inspection within the confines of the Barber-Surgeon's Hall, moreover, emphasizes the community's ultimate control over even the most criminal of female bodies, for it can determine the contexts in which they will be interpreted after death.

The pamphlet's account of Elizabeth Evans's journey from criminality to displayed medical specimen, however, omits a crucial step in her body's transformation, for it makes no mention of the dissecting process that removes her flesh from her bones. The Barber-Surgeons themselves make no appearance in Goodcole's narrative; instead, Bess moves from newly-dead corpse to skeleton without any account of the anatomical procedures that strip the tissue from her skeleton. This omission of the dissection proper renders all the more vivid Bess's transformation from a living, utterly unruly member of society to a skeleton with no ability to evade public control, underscoring the state's swift power to make examples of those who violate its laws and customs. Describing the dissection procedure would have certainly interfered with such a moral message but, more importantly, the inclusion of such proceedings would have risked portraying the surgeons as engaged in practices that appeared just as barbaric as the crimes committed



by Evans and Sherwood. Though such acts may have struck some as poetic justice, their inclusion would also have risked inspiring sympathy for the murderous Bess.

The investment that Goodcole and his fellow pamphleteers share in this philosophy of criminal collusion manifests itself in their emphasis upon not only the physical instruments of murder but upon the human hands that commit such violent deeds. Both Goodcole's *Heavens Speedie Hue and Cry* and C.W.'s *The Crying Murther* offer vivid illustrations of the criminals' weapons, and *The Crying Murther*'s woodcut, as we have seen, places particular emphasis upon the murderers' wielding of knives, picturing these instruments as extensions of their user's deranged glee in their post-mortem preparations for hiding Trat's body. As Lake points out, pamphlets commonly devoted lavish attention to murder weapons, citing examples of prominently featured cudgels and pickaxes.⁵⁴ Goodcole's pamphlet and *The Crying Murther*, moreover, make repeated mention of the murderers' hands, calling upon them to reinforce the vision of the physical connection between the bodies of the killers and their victims. *The Crying Murther*, for example, describes the hands of Trat's murderers "smoaking in his blood," while *Murder upon Murder* speaks of Canberry Bess's and Country Tom's victims falling "into their hands." Goodcole, as we have seen, refers to Sherwood's "bloody polluted hands" upon the truncheon and claims that both his and Evans's hands prove "fouly stained with blood" (B2v). In his attempt to trace the criminal duo's aberrant behavior to its source, Goodcole extends the hand's figurative significance even further, claiming that the two learned their habits from an allegorized habit of Idleness, who "scornes to worke, especially with the hands, for that is not gentilelike." Yet this yearning for the good life – a desire that drove the criminals to London in hopes of evading the countryside and the



manual labor it requires – ironically transforms Sherwood and Evans into instruments of evil, for in the city "a master they have at hand, (the Devill) that safely as they suppose, setteth them to worke" (A3v). In their attempts to escape the physical demands of rural life, Goodcole implies, Sherwood and Evans become tools for the devil himself, concretely illustrating proverbial wisdom regarding the dangers of idle hands. And, while Goodcole's explanation may imply that both criminals are in fact victims in their own right, he ultimately holds both equally accountable for their willingness to become the instruments of more powerful seductive forces.⁵⁵

The confident interpretation of the hand's actions thus depends upon the observer's ability to trace its movements to the motivating source behind them. In the theatre, such attributions pose no problem in cases where the dismemberment occurs onstage, as with De Flores's amputation of the dead Alonzo's finger in *The Changeling* or in the case of the multiple staged dismemberments in *Titus Andronicus*. In fact, when most characters encounter a stray body part, they immediately work to determine what body it came from – and in many cases, another character, often one responsible for the mutilation in the first place, proves more than happy to name not only the victim but to explain the circumstances that led to the dismemberment. Misattributions, however, sometimes occur, as when Imogen in *Cymbeline* mistakes Cloten's headless body for her lover's. The audience, however, remains aware of her mistake and can thus watch the ensuing action secure in the knowledge that her lover lives; their reunion at play's end, as a result, holds greater surprise for Imogen than for those in the audience.⁵⁶ Yet, in almost every case, body parts are rightfully traced back to their owners by the time that the play's action concludes.⁵⁷



In the notably horrifying case of the dead man's hand in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, however, the play closes without identifying the former owner of the gruesomely deployed severed member so instrumental in Ferdinand's torture of his sister. Instead, Ferdinand's use of such a grisly token hints at his ever-increasing proclivity toward random violence, offering concrete evidence of his deranged willingness to harm bodies whose owners remain at best tangential to the plot. As his obsession with his sister the Duchess leaves him increasingly unhinged, for example, Ferdinand attacks the doctor charged with diagnosing the source of his madness, claiming that he will "flay off his skin, to cover one of the anatomies this rogue hath set i'th' cold yonder, in Barber-Chirurgeons' Hall" (5.2.75-77); by the play's end, reports surface that Ferdinand has been seen displaying the symptoms of lycanthropy, lurking around the graveyard at midnight, howling and carrying "the leg of a man / Upon his shoulder" (5.2.14-15).⁵⁸ While playhouse audiences never directly observe this wolf-like behavior, Ferdinand's presentation of the dead man's hand – a hand he claims belongs to the Duchess's husband Antonio – allows spectators to witness firsthand the increasingly deranged status of his mind. The dead man's hand, after all, signals the imperfect connections between Ferdinand's means of expressing his thoughts and the mind that conceives them, for the severed limb holds no direct biological link to the brain that directs its motions; its gestures therefore cannot be traced organically to the mind that propels it into action on the stage. Ferdinand's appropriation of the severed hand thus interferes with the assumed connection between an individual human's hand and brain, making the faulty circuitry of Ferdinand's mind concrete for the audience to see.



The ultimate success of Ferdinand's demented plan, however, provides an equally powerful reminder of the hand's particularly ambiguous relationship to the human body. Within the context of the play, Dale B. J. Randall observes, the dead man's hand "is fundamentally a tool" that "serves Webster both literally and figuratively as an extension of Ferdinand," allowing the playwright a material means of representing his character's grasping – and incestuous – desire for power over his sister.⁵⁹ Ferdinand, however, also consciously uses the hand as an instrument of torture as well in his elaborately planned jailhouse meeting with his sister, deploying it to force the Duchess to question perpetually her own interpretation of what she sees. His plan thus not only uses the hand but his sister's body and mind as his instruments, for he relies on her ability to perceive his show as he predicts, thus playing an active role in the production of her own horror.⁶⁰ First, he orders that the room be darkened for the occasion of their meeting so that he may uphold his vow never to gaze upon his sister again. Then, upon the pretense of "sealing [his] peace" with her, Ferdinand extends the dead man's hand in place of his own, asking the Duchess to clasp it. "[H]ere's a hand / To which you have vow'd much love," he tells his sister, prompting her to grasp it and "affectionately kiss it" (4.1.42-45). His evil intent, however, begins to surface verbally when he issues a quibbling, self-consciously clever rejoinder to his sister:

I will leave this ring with you, for a love-token;
And the hand, as sure as the ring; and do not doubt
But you shall have the heart, too. When you need a friend
Send it to him that ow'd it; you shall see
Whether he can aid you. (47-51)

The contorted, enigmatic wit of Ferdinand's response thus serves a multitude of purposes, allowing him to foreground strategically his story of the hand's origin while also



providing the Duchess and the audience with distinct glimpses into the nature of his madness. The audience, after all, can see that the hand Ferdinand extends is not his own, for, even though the servants bearing tapers have left, their eyes can nonetheless make out the action on the still-lit stage⁶¹; they may not, however, be able to determine from their positions exactly what it is that Ferdinand offers his sister. They thus share, at least partially, the Duchess's confused response to her brother's intentionally vague suggestion that she return "it" to "him that ow'd it." For the audience, the "it" might signify either the ring or the hand, or even possibly the heart that Ferdinand promises to furnish the Duchess – and any of the three physical objects he mentions could, for observers, suggest symbolic expressions of fealty or, alternatively, more literally material, even fleshly, embodiments of such feeling. The Duchess, however, deprived of any vision of what Ferdinand offers her, can only interpret Ferdinand's action through the feel of the hand and the sound of his words, both of which lead her to observe "You are very cold. / I fear you are not well after your travel" (51-52).

When the lights return, the Duchess recoils upon realizing what Ferdinand has offered her, exclaiming "Oh horrible!" (53). The intensity of her reaction no doubt bolsters the playgoers' assuredness regarding the hand's macabre nature, yet the Duchess's distinctly clear identification of the bizarre offering as a dead man's hand suggests that the stage property itself may not have been easily discernible at a distance: "What witchcraft doth he practise," she asks herself, "that he hath left / A dead man's hand here?" (54-55). But this description, as startling and definitive as it may seem, fails to offer any clues to the hand's origin. Where, we are left wondering, did the hand come from? To whom had it belonged? Ferdinand, not surprisingly, anticipates these



questions and uses them in accelerating the step-by-step torture of his sister. Moments after the Duchess catches her first glimpse of the dead man's hand, Ferdinand's spy Bosola opens the discovery space curtains to reveal what the stage directions describe as *"the artificial figures of Antonio and his children, appearing as if they were dead"* (55). Neither the Duchess nor the audience, however, can be as confident in the figures' artificiality as the printed text's readers. Thus, when Bosola refers to the waxwork body of Antonio – presumably missing a hand – as "the piece from which 'twas taken," he associates the dead man's hand with an equally lifeless owner (56). The combined displays, Bosola declares, constitute a "sad spectacle" designed to provide the Duchess with incontrovertible evidence – not only firsthand but now also eyewitness – of her family's fate (57). Bosola's words thus direct the Duchess's interpretation of the spectacle she sees before her, encouraging her to conclude "now you know directly they are dead" (58); she conveys her mournful acceptance of this reading, moreover, through ironically ambivalent phrasings that both encourage the audience to believe Antonio and the children have been executed and highlight the theatrical nature of Ferdinand's and Bosola's display of bodies. The Duchess's plea to be bound "to that lifeless trunk," for example, not only reinforces the supposed authenticity of Antonio's death; in retrospect, it underscores the artificiality of the villains' carefully constructed tableau (68). Similarly, the Duchess heightens both the pathos and the unreality of the image in the discovery space with her assertion that " I account this world a tedious theater, / For I do play a part in't 'gainst my will" (83-84).

The Duchess's observations, however, need not carry such ambivalent meanings for the playhouse audience, for the lifeless bodies of Antonio and the children might well



exhibit characteristics they have come to associate with the theatrical staging of death.⁶² More than fifty lines of dialogue ensue between the Duchess and her torturers, moreover, before she exits, thus heightening the morbid, dramatic impact of the bodies and amplifying the Duchess's genuine grief. Only after she leaves, overcome with grief, does Ferdinand tell the audience that the bodies too have been an illusion designed to torment his sister. "Excellent," he utters conspiratorially,

... as I would wish; she's plagued in art.
These presentations are but framed in wax
By the curious master in their quality
Vincentio Lariola and she takes them
For true substantial bodies. (110-14)

Like the dead man's hand, the figures serve only as tools in his deranged and diabolical plot. The Duchess, however, remains unaware of the bodies' artful nature. The sculptor Lariola uses no parts of Antonio's or the children's bodies as the foundations of his waxworks; they prove, instead, complete artistic fabrications accurate enough to fool the Duchess and perhaps the playhouse audience. In revealing their artificiality, Ferdinand thus ascertains the nature of the figures for his spectators, making them privy to a plan that remains hidden from the Duchess. The artificial bodies thereby serve as tools in Ferdinand's scheme, becoming, like the dead man's hand, extensions of his body, serving as instruments that not only express his own desires but as the means through which he hopes to satisfy his desires as well. Tormenting his sister, after all, remains his main goal – there is no information he wishes to extract from her, and her fate is already sealed – and the dead man's hand and the waxworks enable him to rouse fright, horror, and grief, along with a host of other unimaginably terror-filled emotions, within the Duchess. She reacts in exact accordance with Ferdinand's plan, responding with the very physical and



emotional responses that he "would wish." Her living body thus proves equally prone to Ferdinand's manipulation; though he might never touch her directly, she becomes his pawn and puppet, performing the actions he hoped to inspire within her.

In *The Duchess of Malfi*, then, the dead man's severed hand resonates with life, acting a vital role within the plot even though it remains physically disconnected from the brain that had originally directed its motions in life as well as from the mind that governed its movements after death. The vigor of this dead object – one that may or may not have contained any flesh in its manifestation upon the early Stuart stage – underscores the far more palpable vitality of corpses in early modern theatrical plots, which both depend upon and accommodate the audience's ability to recognize traces of liveliness in those who are supposedly dead. Like the corpses of Antonio's wife and of Lear's daughters, the dead man's hand provides a focal point for the audience's attention and a means through which characters can express a wide range of personal emotions, from rage to hate and from paternal grief to deranged, incestuous love. The dead, whether in the form of an intact corpse or of a single representative segment of anatomy, thus maintain a concrete, vital presence on the early Stuart stage, where their supposedly lifeless bodies serve as objects that inspire revenge, rekindle love, provoke philosophical contemplation, and – in the most extreme instances – transform into instruments of torture and, as we shall see in the following chapter, even mutate into murder weapons.

It is no surprise, therefore, that characters that make such use of bodies and their parts – those who use corpses and limbs with such flourish – often do so in their most desperate moments. Meditating upon the lifeless corpses of loved ones inspires many early Stuart tragic heroes with new and bizarre methods of using the physical remains of



the deceased in obtaining their revenge. Whether they undertake such tactics in hopes of purposely rendering their revenge poetic, or whether they deploy corpses as weapons simply out of convenience, they usually do so in order graphically to illustrate their own passionate attachments to both the object of their revenge and to the dead person whose body they deploy in the killing. Often, they do so in the hopes that their lovers, though long gone, will be able to take vengeful pleasure in the execution of those who had tormented them in life. The living revenger thus imagines the corpse of his beloved not just as a reminder of the one he adored but as a physical being that still carries resonances of life – resonances which he can then manipulate in the enactment of his personal revenge. As we shall see in the following chapter, however, his mobilization of the corpse, though often effective in bringing about the malefactors' death, also brings about the revenger's own downfall, for after his attainment of revenge the motivations he has attributed to the corpse's motions vanish, leaving him to see what the onstage audience has seen all along – an obscene decaying body with no means of locomotion, dead weight on the stage that the revenger no longer has reason to reanimate.



Notes: Chapter Two

¹ While the authorship of *The Revenger's Tragedy* is in doubt, current critics generally attribute the play to Cyril Tourneur.

² Occasionally, of course, plays explore the consequences of breaking this cycle by having characters die while enacting roles in plays-within-plays. In *Women Beware Women*, for example, both Isabella and Livia die while still in the process of portraying roles in the masque they stage.

³ The idea of using dissection to extend state punishment of the criminal did not gain primacy until the eighteenth century. Few Renaissance accounts of executions mention, yet alone savor the fact, that the criminal corpses could become cadavers for anatomies; those who do so seem to include the information as an afterthought, as we shall see below. See, in addition, Douglas Hay, Peter Linebaugh, John G. Rule, E. P. Thompson, and Cal Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth Century England* (New York: Pantheon, 1975). Many scholars such as Katharine Park, however, imply that such conclusions oversimplify popular views of the body's lingering life. See her "The Life of the Corpse: Division and Dissection in Late Medieval Europe," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 50 (1995): 111-32. See also Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 56-57.

⁴ Park, "Life" 115, 118.

⁵ Significantly, these theatrical properties were often real body parts, for many props were often made of animal carcasses. See Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage: 1574-1642* (London: Cambridge UP, 1970).

⁶ *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997). All subsequent citations to Shakespearean plays will refer to this edition. While Banquo's ghost fails to appear on stage in many contemporary performances of *Macbeth*, the stage directions included in the First Folio text demand not only that the Ghost enter, but that he "sits in Macbeth's place" (s.d. 3.4.36).

⁷ Park, "Life" 119.

⁸ Giovanna Ferrari reports that revelers often mistreated these organs, tossing them among themselves in the anatomy theatre. See her article "Public Anatomy Lessons and the Carnival: The Anatomy Theatre of Bologna," *Past and Present* 117 (1987): 50-106, especially 99.

⁹ Katharine Park, "The Criminal and the Saintly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994): 26.



¹⁰ See Park, "Life" 116-117.

¹¹ *Daemonologie, Minor Prose Works of King James VI and I*, ed. James Craigie (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society, 1982) 56.

¹² For an extended discussion of "bier-right," see Henry Charles Lea, *Superstition and Force*. 4th ed. (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1971) 359-370, especially 369. Park refers to Lea in "Life," citing him to support her claim that for northern Europeans the corpse remained closely tied to the individual while southern Europeans let such associations slip more quickly. Lea, however, points out that Italians held a strong belief in the concept of bier-right as well, citing Ficino as one of its believers; he nonetheless implies that the concept endured more strongly among the northern Europeans, who brought it with them to America, where it played an active role in judicial proceedings well into the nineteenth century.

¹³ *Richard III* 1.2.55-56. I owe this reference to Lea, 360.

¹⁴ See Sandra Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640*. (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1983) 104.

¹⁵ All references refer to the pamphlet refer to Henry Goodcole, *Heavens Speedie Hue and Cry sent after Lust and Murther* (London, 1635).

¹⁶ There were, however, many cases where criminals met with very bloody deaths, both within and outside the context of state execution. See Clark, 102.

¹⁷ See Clark, 100 ff.

¹⁸ See Peter Lake, "Deeds against Nature: Cheap Print, Protestantism and Murder in Early Seventeenth-Century England," *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1993) 260.

¹⁹ C.W. *The Crying Murther* (London, 1624). The pamphlet is reproduced, with modernized spelling, in Joseph H. Marshburn and Alan R. Velie, *Blood and Knavery: A Collection of English Renaissance Pamphlets and Ballads of Crime and Sin* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1973).

²⁰ Devon L. Hodges, *Renaissance Fictions of Anatomy* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1985) 5. Thomas Laqueur makes similar observations about the muscle men in his *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990) 75-77.

²¹ Glenn Harcourt, "Andreas Vesalius and the Anatomy of Antique Sculpture," *Representations* 17 (1987): 46-49.



²² Sawday, 112.

²³ Sawday, 113.

²⁴ Katherine Rowe, "'God's handy worke': Divine Complicity and the Anatomist's Touch," *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York: Routledge, 1997) 300.

²⁵ Rowe, "'God's handy worke'" 286.

²⁶ Rowe, "'God's handy worke'" 288.

²⁷ Not only did the hand help people to defend themselves, it allowed them, as Jonathan Goldberg reveals, to develop the uniquely human act of writing. See *Writing Matter: From the Hands of the English Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990)

²⁸ *The Workes of that famous Chirurgion Ambrose Parey, translated out of Latine and compared with the French by Tho. Johnson* (London: 1634) H2v

²⁹ *Microcosmographia: a description of the body of man* (London, 1615) 729.

³⁰ See Rowe, "'God's handy worke'" for a discussion of the hand's role in the debate between London's barber-surgeons and physicians.

³¹ Crooke (1615), 729

³² Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford, 1985) 173-75.

³³ Crooke, *Microcosmographia: a description of the body of man and An Explanation of the Fashion and vse of three and fifty Instruments of Chirvrgery* (London, 1631).

³⁴ Crooke (1615), 729.

³⁵ Katherine Rowe, "Dismembering and Forgetting in *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 45 (1994): 288.

³⁶ See Michael Neill, "'Amphitheaters in the Body': Playing with Hands on the Shakespearean Stage," *Shakespeare Survey* 48 (1995): 23-50, as well as Rowe, for discussions of Vesalius's depiction of his anatomization of the hand. For a discussion of Rembrandt's painting, see William S. Heckscher, *Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr. Nicholas Tulp: An Iconological Study* (New York: New York UP, 1958) and William Schupbach,



The Paradox of Rembrandt's "Anatomy of Dr. Tulp" (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1982).

³⁷ All citations refer to Cyril Tourneur, *The Atheist's Tragedy*, ed. George Parfitt, *The Plays of Cyril Tourneur* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978) 104-197.

³⁸ Sawday, 83.

³⁹ Huston Diehl, "'Reduce Thy Understanding to Thine Eye': Seeing and Interpreting in *The Atheist's Tragedy*," *Studies in Philology* 78 (1981) 52.

⁴⁰ Sawday, 83.

⁴¹ Diehl, 55.

⁴² See, for example, the work of Lynda Boose, "The Father and the Bride in Shakespeare," *Ideological Approaches to Shakespeare: The Practice of Theory*, ed. Robert P. Merrix and Nicholas Ranson (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1992. 3-38), Dymphna Callaghan, *Woman and Gender in Renaissance Tragedy: A Study of King Lear, Othello, The Duchess of Malfi, and The White Devil* (Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities, 1989), and Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity in English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991).

⁴³ Douglas Bruster, *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992).

⁴⁴ Newman, 8-9.

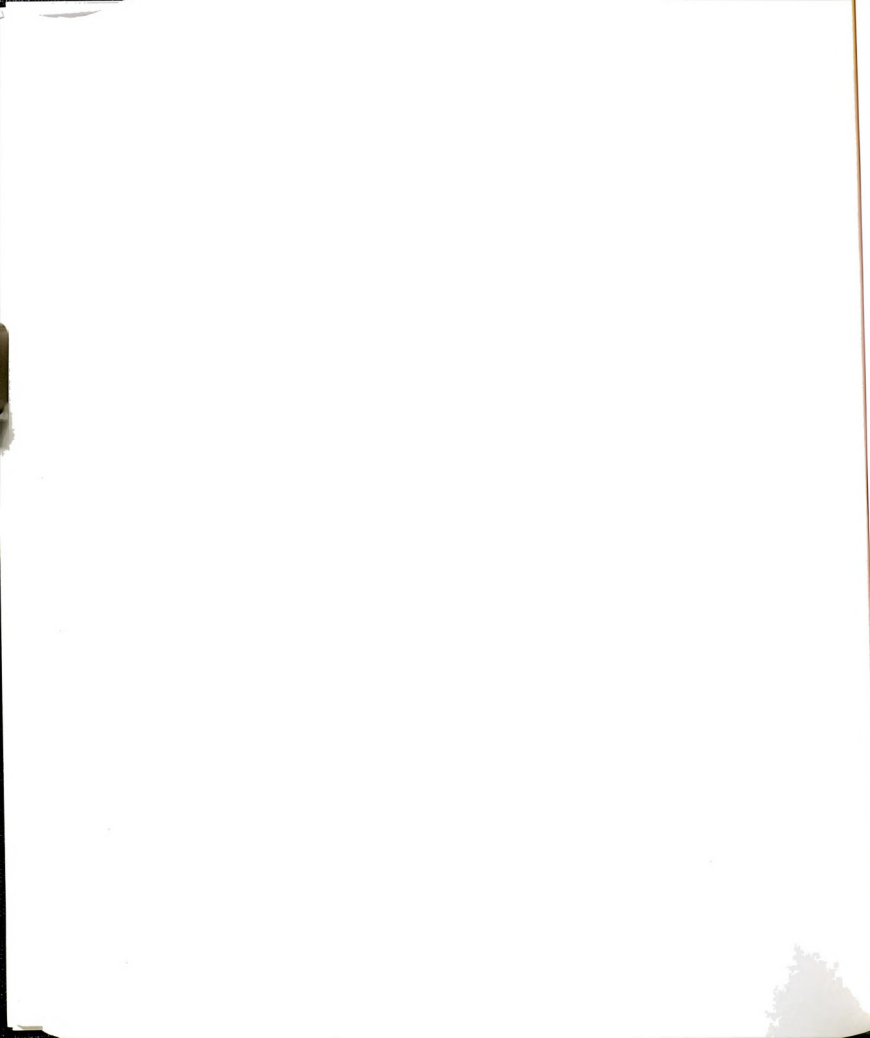
⁴⁵ Patricia Parker, "Othello and Hamlet: Dilation, Spying, and the 'Secret Place' of Woman," *Representations* 44 (1993): 60-95.

⁴⁶ Not surprisingly, women characters rarely died such violent deaths upon the early modern stage. First of all, delivering such penetrating blows risked exposing not the body of an uncontrollable female but that of the boy actor who took up her role upon the stage. As a result, audiences often hear that women have died from stabbings without witnessing the blow, as in the case of *King Lear's* Goneril.

⁴⁷ Parker, 71.

⁴⁸ All references to *King Lear* in this chapter refer to the conflated text as printed in the Norton edition.

⁴⁹ Cyril Tourneur, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, ed. George Parfitt, *The Plays of Cyril Tourneur* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978). 6-98.



⁵⁰ *Murder upon Murder* (London, c. 1635)

⁵¹ Quoted in Rowe, "Dismembering" 283-4.

⁵² *Murder upon Murder* specifies that Tom was hanged on April 14; Goodcole's pamphlet lists only the dates of the two executions without mentioning which criminal met his or her end on which date, though he treats Tom's confession and execution first.

⁵³ How commonly Tom's type of idealized confession, characterized by pleas to both God and the public for forgiveness, occurred is a matter of debate among scholars. In *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), Michel Foucault holds that prisoners routinely opted to devote their last words to expressions of anger against the authorities rather than to petitions for forgiveness (60-61); Thomas Laqueur takes a similar stance in "Crowds, Carnival and the State in English Executions, 1604-1868" (*The First Modern Society*, ed. A.L. Beir et. al., Cambridge, 1989, 320). Lake argues that murder pamphlet accounts of execution rigorously and routinely deny variations from heartfelt confessions in their efforts to "close off" the subversive interpretations of executions (276), while J.A. Sharpe sees such published accounts as faithfully representing the condemned's roles as "willing central participants" in a moralistic theatre of punishment" in "'Last Dying Speeches': Religion, Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 107 (1985) 156. Frances E. Dolan has recently offered a recap of studies focusing on the question of agency in women's scaffold confessions in "'Gentleman, I have one more thing to say': Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563-1680," *Modern Philology* 92 (1994): 157-178.

⁵⁴ Lake, 261.

⁵⁵ Interestingly, however, he extends no such accountability to the criminals' victims, even though they themselves fall victim to Bess's seduction. Evidently, being seduced by a woman is forgivable, whether or not she is the instrument of the devil.

⁵⁶ See Mark Taylor, "Shakespeare's Talking Heads." Unpublished essay, 1995.

⁵⁷ Curiously, the identifications that prove the least problematic in staged dramas involve what would seem the most anonymous of body parts: bare human bones. The opening scene of Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy*, as we shall see in the next chapter, allows the audience to eavesdrop as Vindice addresses the skull he holds in his hands, and his words reveal not only the identity of the deceased but Vindice's relationship to her as well. Though we may wonder how Vindice gained possession of the skull, the weary, almost comical, utterance Hippolito issues upon his entrance – "Still sighing over death's visard?" (49) – suggests that such soliloquies have been a long-standing habit; more importantly, Hippolito's words do not question Vindice's identification of the skull,



even if they do question the sanity of the holder. Similarly, the opening scene of *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (1631) by Henry Chettle centers on Hoffman's meditation upon "the dead remembrance of my living father" as he "strikes ope a curtaine where appears a body." See the play as edited by Harold Jenkins for the Malone Society (London: 1950).

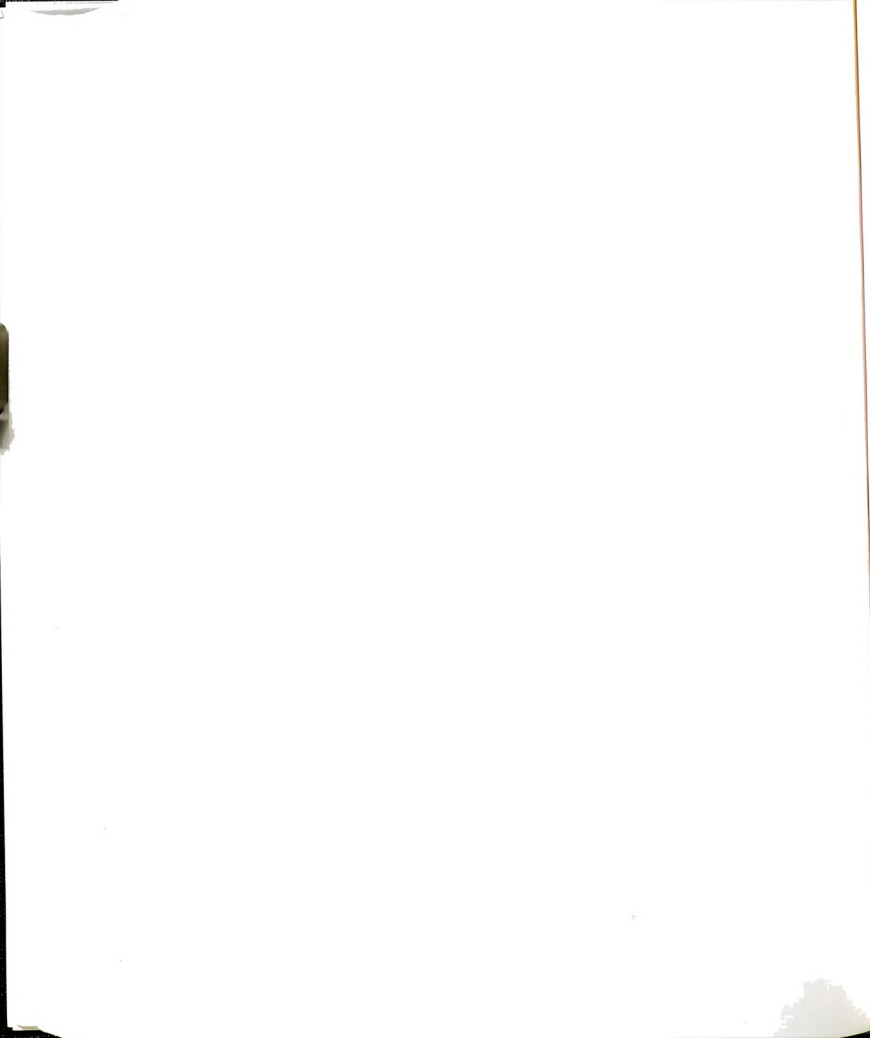
⁵⁸ All citations refer to John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi, The Selected Plays of John Webster*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

⁵⁹ See Dale B. J. Randall, "The Rank and Earthy Background of Certain Physical Symbols in *The Duchess of Malfi*," *Renaissance Drama* 18 (1987), 172-79 for an evocative reading of the significance that the hand – and the ring upon it – add to the play's incestuous plot line.

⁶⁰ In this sense, Ferdinand acts like the torturers Scarry describes in *The Body in Pain*, for he "uses the prisoner's aliveness to crush the things that [s]he lives for," i.e., Antonio and her children. See Scarry, 38.

⁶¹ As R.B. Graves points out, the play was produced both indoors at the Blackfriars and outdoors at the Globe; in both theatres, night scenes would necessarily still take place on a well-lit stage ("*The Duchess of Malfi*: Globe and Blackfriars," *Renaissance Drama* 9 (1978): 193-209). As Gurr points out, audiences at both sorts of theatres were alerted to a scene's night setting through dialogue and by the presence – and removal – of candles (170).

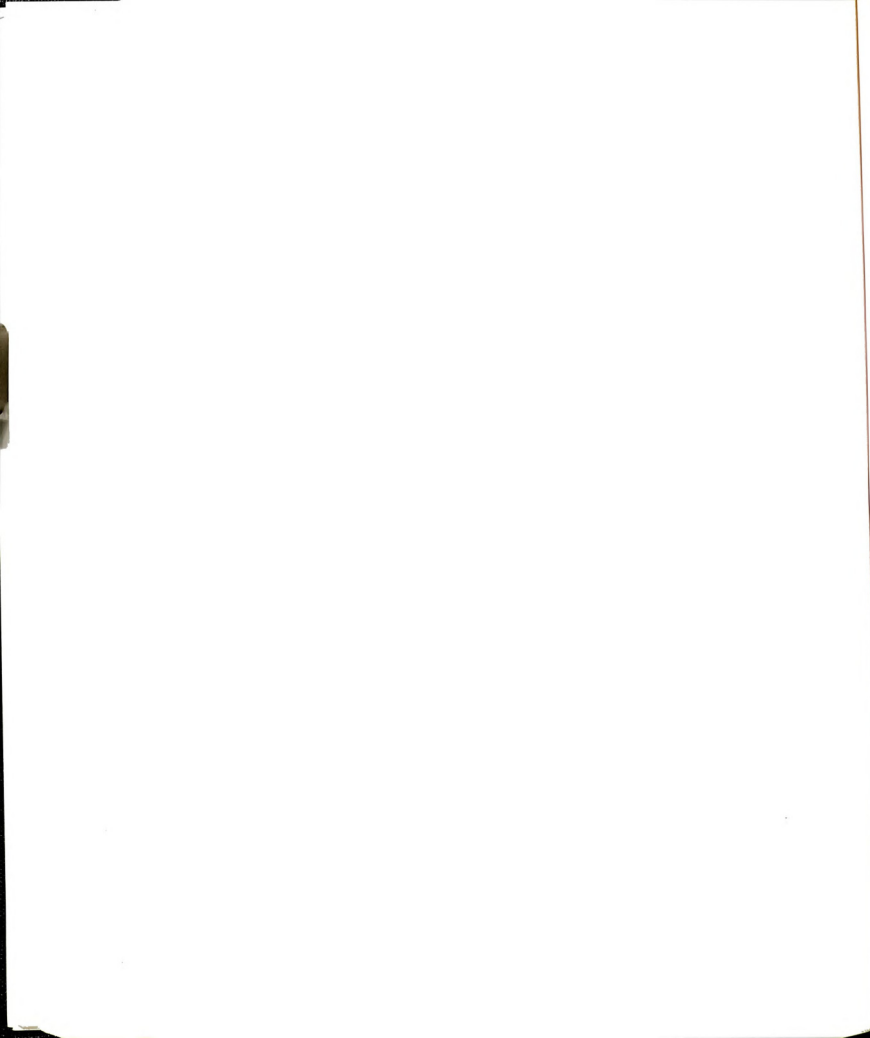
⁶² Even if the audience could discern that the figures were indeed made of wax rather than flesh, they would nonetheless carry resonances of ceremonies devoted to the dead, for, as David M. Bergeron points out, wax carvings of the deceased frequently appeared during royal funerals. See "Wax Figures in *The Duchess of Malfi*," *Studies in English Literature* 18 (1978): 331-39.



CHAPTER THREE:
Lethal Passivity:
Perspective, Painting, and the Staging of Female Bodies

In the Summer 1969 edition of *New Theatre Magazine*, D. F. Rowan published two unlabeled sets of architectural plans from the Worcester College collection of Inigo Jones's works (Figure 19). These plans, dating from 1592 to 1616 by their paper's watermark, had been grouped with yet another set of drawings, and the three sets together were catalogued as Jones's designs for the London Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre. Rowan, however, argued successfully that the building described in the two unidentified sets of plans would have conflicted with the known location and proportions of the Anatomical Theatre¹; the Barber-Surgeons, moreover, had not commissioned Jones to design their theatre until 1636. In 1973, Iain Macintosh concluded that the two mysterious sets of theatre plans instead showed the Cockpit Theatre in Drury Lane, an influential indoor playhouse also known as the Phoenix whose layout had been previously undocumented.² By 1985, Mackintosh's assertion had gained wide acceptance within the academic community,³ thus giving scholars not only their first indication of the Cockpit's structural features but their first glimpse at an early modern indoor playhouse's interior, for no such plans for the Blackfriars or the Salisbury Court had survived.

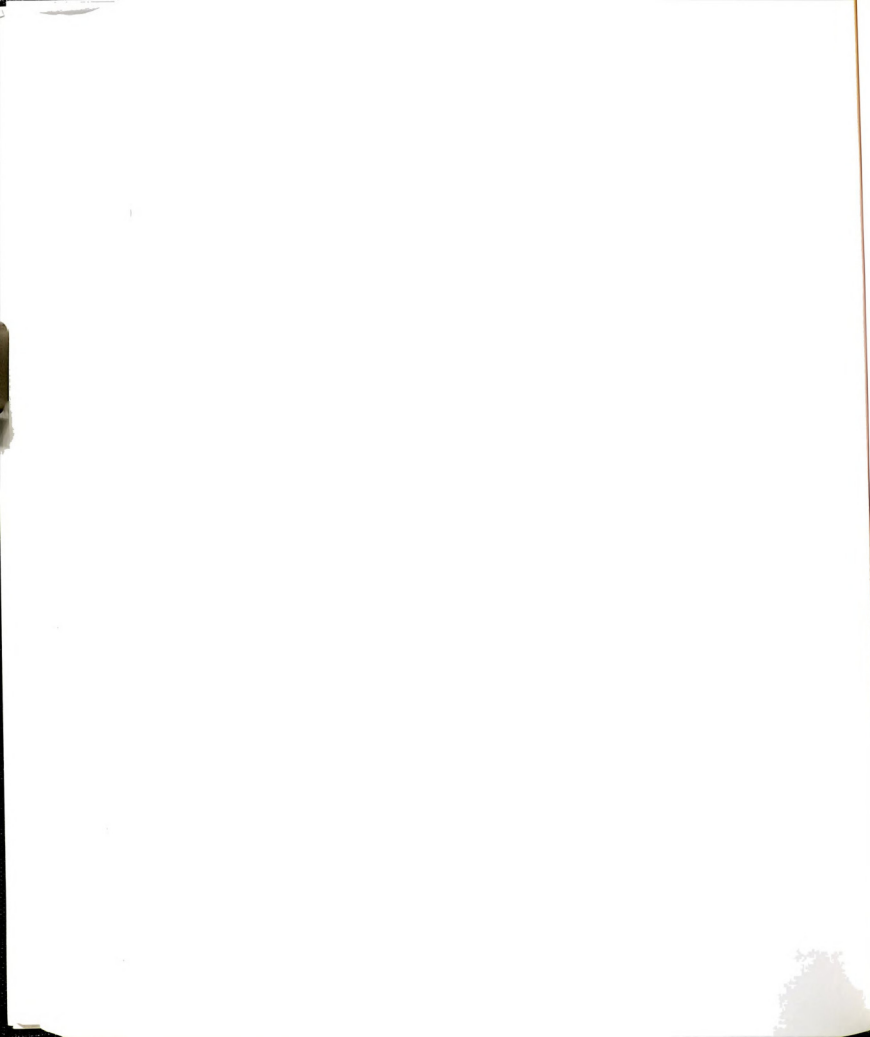
The original cataloguers' confusion between the plans for the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre (Figure 20) and the Cockpit, however, is eminently understandable; the drawings of the two theatres, after all, bear an astounding resemblance to one another. Though the Anatomical Theatre held fewer people than the playhouse, it provided its patrons with a similar view of the unfolding action, allowing them to gaze upon the events below from vantage points similar to those enjoyed by spectators at the Cockpit.



According to one of the few descriptions of the building's interior, the decorations inside the Barber-Surgeons' theatre proved a bizarre variation upon those of the early modern commercial playhouse as well. Henry Chamberlain tells us in his 1770 survey of London (published just after the Barber-Surgeons' Company had voted in 1769 to tear down the Anatomical Theatre, after years of neglect),

The theatre contains four degrees of Cedar seats, one above another, in an elliptical cupola; this room is adorned with a bust of King Charles I, the figures of the seven liberal sciences, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac; the skins of a man and woman on wooden frames, in imitation of Adam and Eve; the figure of a man flayed, done after the life, all the muscles appearing in their due place and proportion; the skeleton of an ostrich; an human skeleton, with copper joints, and five other skeletons of human bodies. But as this furniture was introduced by the surgeons, it is now of no use, and the theatre is entirely deserted. The hall is one of the works of that great Inigo Jones, and is a masterpiece of its kind; that elegant simplicity which characterizes all his works, giving the spectator the highest satisfaction.⁴

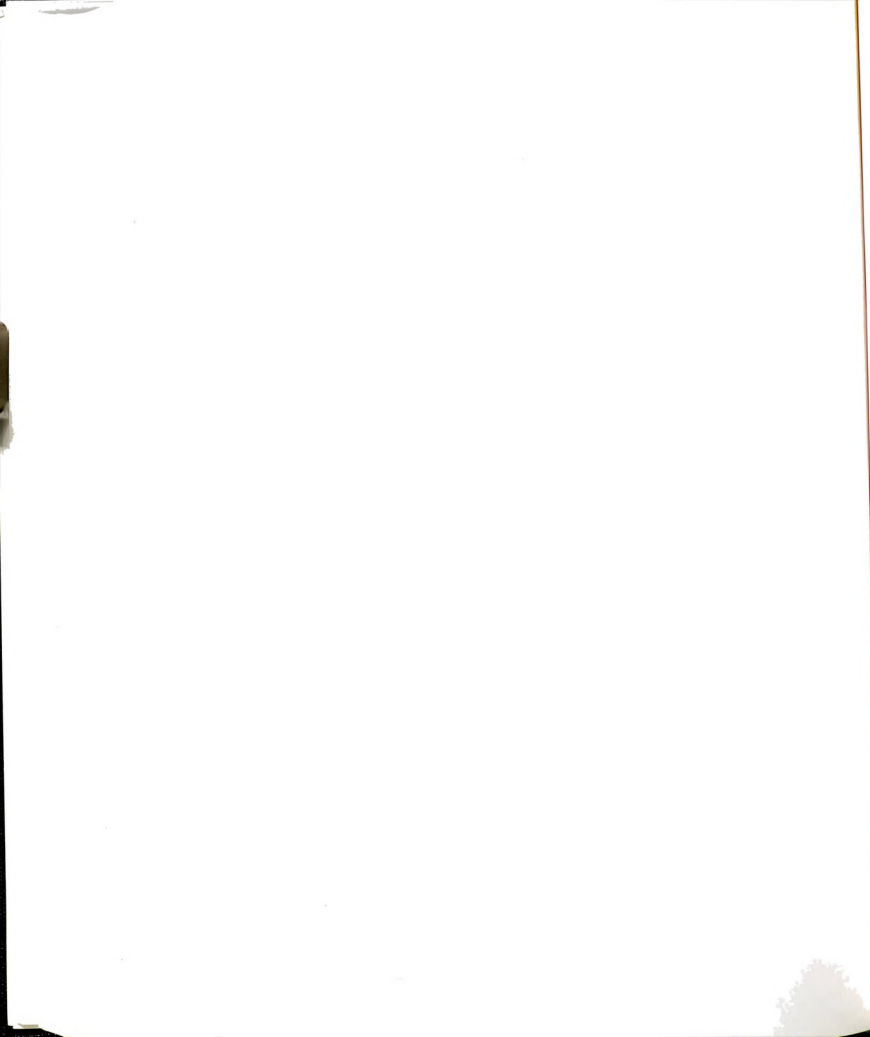
Though Chamberlain offers no indication of precisely how these decorations were arrayed within the theatre, their presence sets a scene nearly as suited to a dramatic performance as to a dissection. His mention of the zodiac's signs in particular – signs which the company's records tell us were painted on the theatre's concave ceiling⁵ – resonates with the "heavens" of the outdoor public theatres (as well as with the anatomical figures Dekker calls upon in his *Rauens Almanacke*). The anatomical models may not have appeared as permanent fixtures in either open-air public playhouses or indoor ones, yet their stages featured classical style statuary, as the plans for the Cockpit reveal, and, as we have seen, such theatres often presented similar anatomical images of the human body as part of dramatic plots as well. The Anatomical Theatre's "figure of a man flayed" gains particular praise from Chamberlain, whose careful noting of its "just



proportion" introduces his own concern with the aesthetics not just of the human body, and not just of the representation of its muscles as the figure reveals them, but of the Anatomical Theatre itself, which, Chamberlain asserts, gives "the spectator the highest satisfaction."

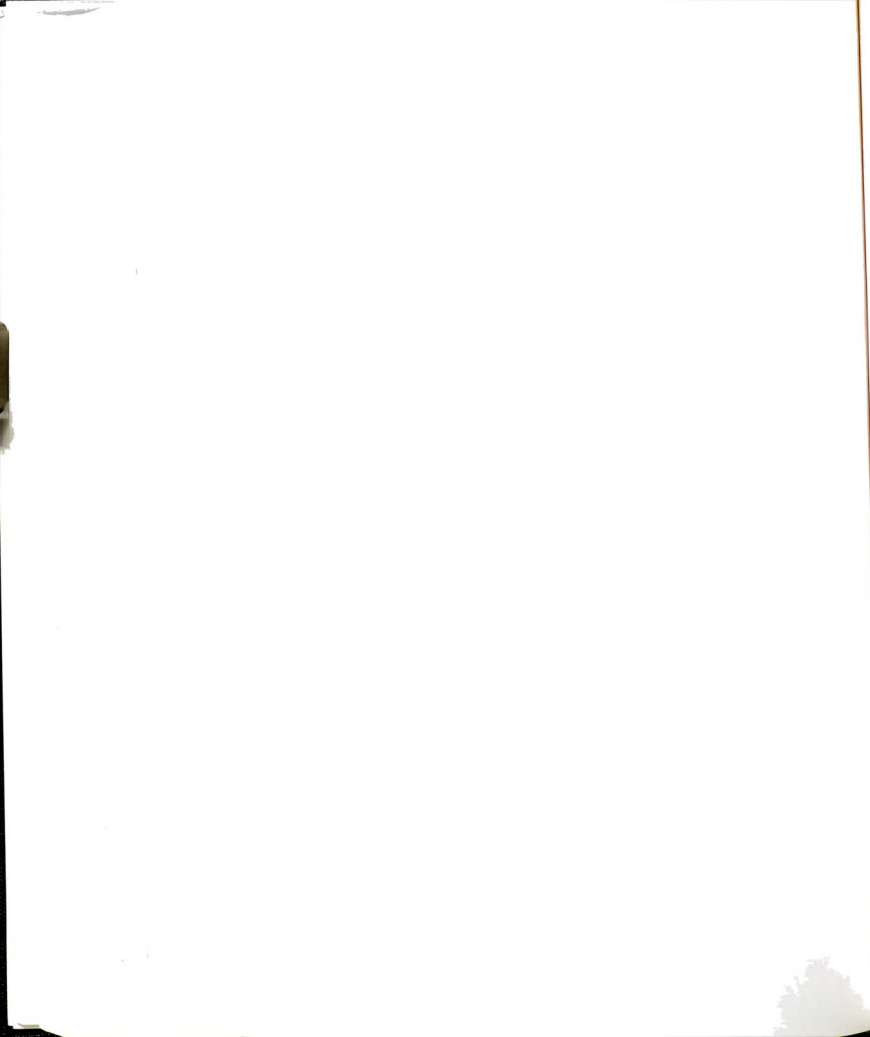
What visions Chamberlain imagines these spectators beholding, however, remains unclear. He may well be praising the Anatomical Theatre itself as an aesthetic object, one that in its mere existence inspires a sense of appreciation in those who behold it. His choice of the word *spectator*, however, carries with it inevitable associations with dramatic performance – that is, with a concern for the activities that happen upon the theatre stage as well as for its construction. Even though Chamberlain most likely never saw the Barber-Surgeons' theatre in use, his comments suggest that Jones's design for the venue provided the "highest satisfaction" to those who occupied its four galleries as spectators during anatomical dissections. Chamberlain gives no indication of his position within the theatre as he views the preserved and flayed human figure, but his attention to the "due place and proportion" of its muscles suggests his appreciation not just of the body's internal arrangement, but of the figure's placement within the theatre as well. His comments thus portray the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre as an ideal viewing place, one that allows those who attend its demonstrations to inspect thoroughly the perfect proportions of the displayed human form.

The strikingly similar plan of the Cockpit also would have provided many of its audience members with such a nearly ideal view of the well-proportioned action unfolding within its walls. The structure of the Cockpit, and of other London indoor commercial theatres like the Blackfriars, proved ideally suited for accommodating the

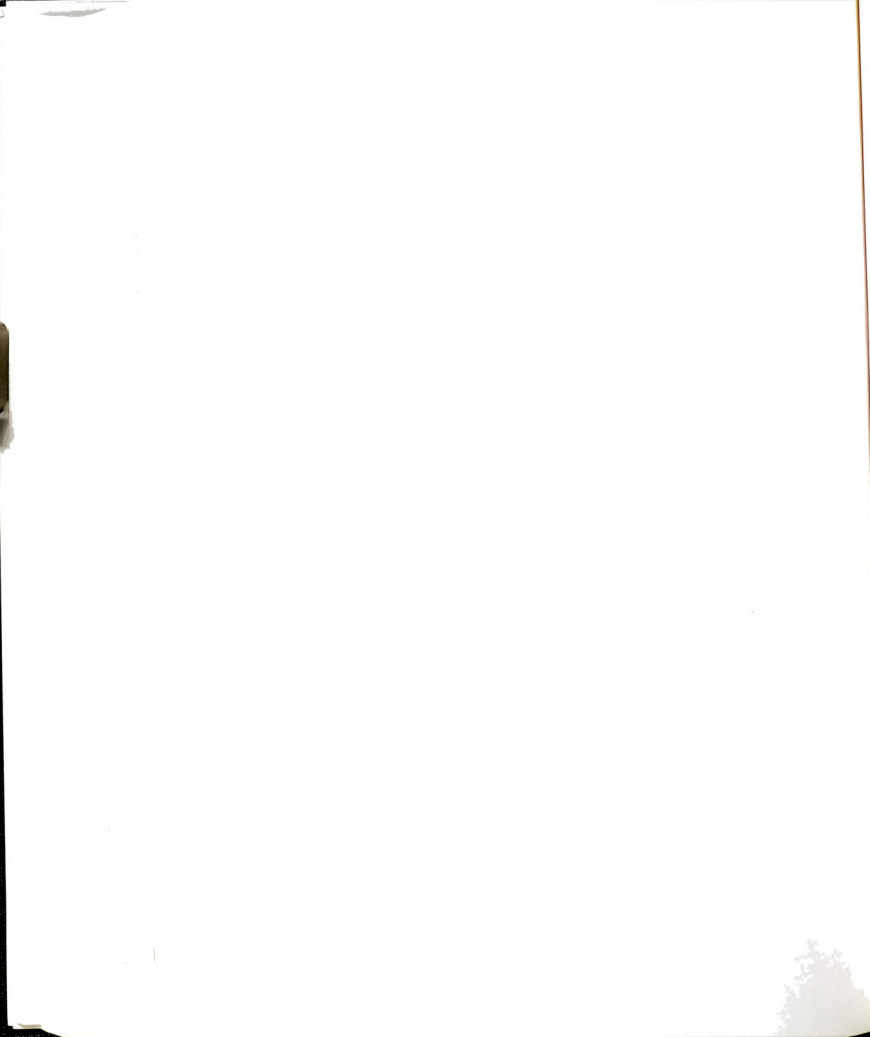


perspectivist habits of seeing that the performances of masques at court were beginning to introduce into the commercial theatrical realm. Even in the public theatres, where players performed their dramas on largely bare stages, the descriptive language of plays called upon audiences to envision perspectivist scenes unfolding before them as backdrops to the dramatic action, as would have been the case in Globe performances of the Dover cliff scene in *King Lear*, to be discussed in this chapter. The King's Men, however, also staged the same scene in the indoor Blackfriars theatre, for the company routinely performed the same dramas in its indoor and outdoor theatres. Not only could the Blackfriars house productions year-round without regard for weather, it also brought in more money from more affluent – and more educated – spectators. Unlike in the public theatres, where groundlings paid one pence to stand close to the stage while more well-off theatregoers remained in the distant galleries, the members of the indoor theatre audience – composed only of those rich or ambitious enough to manage the minimum six pence admission – found the best seats closest to the stage.⁶ There, viewers could enjoy far more intimate views of dramatic action, for the indoor stage's action – and its still-limited scenery – occupied a playing space far closer to their eyes. The indoor theatre productions that these affluent playgoers witnessed, as a result, not only could call upon cutting edge modes of perspectivist viewing borrowed from masque performances, they also could manipulate such habits of viewing in hopes of maintaining their plays' appeal – and bolstering their prestige – among the status-conscious members of their audience.

To stir these habits of viewing, many plays performed in the indoor theatres made more emphatic use of the discovery space – an area that, in the indoor theatre, consisted of little more than a draped doorway that led to the players' backstage area. The people

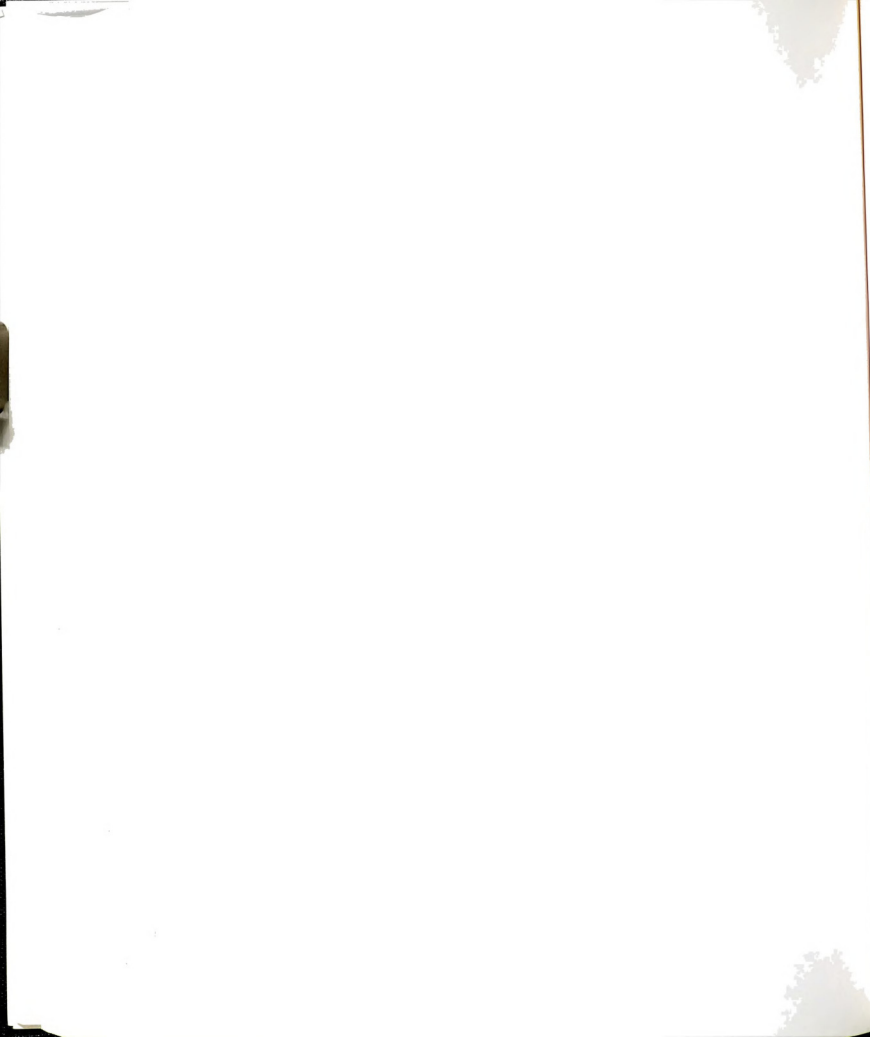


and objects that occupied this area appeared, in effect, within a frame, and, as audiences peered into this clearly bordered space, they gazed through a doorway that functioned much like the frames and viewing devices artists used to facilitate perspective painting.⁷ As perspective modes of viewing became more commonplace, both in dramatic performance and in the culture at large, the tragedies staged in these indoor theatres began to manipulate these modes of seeing more overtly in their dramatic plots, calling upon perspective painting's means of creating the illusion of depth to foster the notion that dramatic characters enjoyed an existence extending beyond the series of exterior signs that actors used to bring them to life. Placing the actor's bodies in such a perspectivist framework, early Stuart tragedies encouraged audiences to view characters not just as enacted works of theatrical fiction, if not art, but as individuals who, at least for the duration of the play, owned bodies in their own right. Though they remained aware that actors (or in early modern terms, "personators"⁸) lent their physical beings to the people in the plays, spectators no doubt still evaluated characters through the words spoken by them and about them – and in the early Stuart era these words grew increasingly concerned with outlining interior traits.⁹ Audiences, as a result, imagined physical depth not only for the play's setting, but for the dramatic personages who took action within its plot. Commenting on this elaborately conjured illusion of interiority, Michael Neill briefly but provocatively notes, "It is almost as if the body, like the discovery space which gave the Elizabethan stage its structural focus, existed to challenge the curious gaze, as if it were there to be opened."¹⁰ When the human form appears within the frame of the early Stuart indoor theatre discovery space, however, the body yields to this inquisitive gaze, for the gruesome action of the era's tragedies often



exposed the inner workings of the individual human while daring spectators to look at the structures purportedly lying beneath the actor's skin. As the spectators' willingness to envision a character's internal nature expanded, tragedies increasingly exposed the body's interior to view, creating scenes in which revengers display bodies (and their parts) to prove their mastery of both those they love and those who have jeopardized their place in society. Like anatomists in the theatre, such characters explain and adorn lifeless bodies in order to illustrate their ultimate understanding of them, thus bringing the gruesome sights of the anatomy theatre into the playhouse to reclaim through bloody demonstration their once-powerful position in relation not just to individuals but to the community at large.

Those who sat in the benches and galleries of London's indoor theatres thus observed dramas from angles resembling those enjoyed by spectators within the Anatomical Theatre, and, while the bodies that the playgoers saw on stage remained alive, the characters that actors embodied often underwent feigned bodily destruction resembling anatomical dissection. From many of the indoor playhouses' seats, members of the audience thus could fully appreciate not only the perfect proportions of the human form, but the effects of the violence done to flesh and to the character occupying it. In many of the dramas staged in the London theatres, both outdoor and indoor, death did not bar a character's now-lifeless body from reappearing in front of the spectators' eyes, for as we have seen, corpses reappear on stage in *King Lear* and *The Atheist's Tragedy*, among countless other plays. While the living characters in such plays often dare audience members to detect signs of life in these bodies – bodies that remain insistently dead within the plot but adamantly alive for the actors who occupy them – a number of early



Stuart plays took full advantage of indoor theatre stagings to take such self-contradicting displays a step further. The revengers in plays such as Cyril Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy*,¹¹ for example, along with those in the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and Philip Massinger's revision of its plot in *The Duke of Milan*, not only bring the bodies and body parts of their beloveds onto the stage, they purposely exploit early Stuart notions of proportion – embodied in the human form as well as in the playhouse itself – to create the illusion that these women in fact remain alive. Putting to use the tricks of perspectivist painting, these revengers both obscure and expose the internal nature of the women characters whose flesh they paint in the course of the dramatic action, asserting control over their lovers' bodies while also using them as instruments in their revenge.

With James's ascension to the British throne, the English court rather suddenly came to favor the Italianate methods of perspectivist portraiture that had long enjoyed popularity on the continent. Pointing out that the portraiture of Tudor England had commonly represented a variety of times and places on a single canvas, Roland Mushat Frye outlines the Stuart shift to perspective painting, in which an artist presents a single event against a background whose features become increasingly smaller, drawing the observer's eye to a vanishing point on the horizon. His examination of the radical shifts in artistic mode illustrated in two portraits executed three years apart by Robert Peake the Elder – the 1600 *Eliza Triumphans* (Figure 21, also known as *Queen Elizabeth Going in Procession to Blackfriars*) and the 1603 *Young Prince Henry Hunting with a Friend* (Figure 22) – clearly reveals the speed with which at least one artist adopted the principles of perspective of *quattrocento* Italy.¹² The preferences for unified depictions of time and space that accompanied this new mode of painting, he continues, nurtured a



growing concern for classical unities in Stuart drama as well – a concern that Frye sees exemplified in the plays and masques of Ben Jonson. Though Frye admits that these unities meant little to most early Stuart dramatists, he argues that Jonson's relentless attention to such principles in court masques, along with Inigo Jones's devotion to perfectly perspectivist scene paintings for these productions, ultimately transformed English drama.¹³ These masques sought to create unity among the audience members as well, underscoring the totalizing glory of the growing empire, for, unlike their tragic counterparts that filled the stage in the commercial playhouses, the court masques generally ended in comic scenes that reestablished social harmony. For instance, the first masque to incorporate perspectivist scenery – the Jonson-Jones production of *The Masque of Blackness* in 1605 – ends with the daughter of Niger declaring Britannia's near-universal majesty. The social unity created among the characters thus mirrored the artistically unified space against which their scenes were enacted. The monarch's chair, moreover, served as the organizing principle for the entire spectacle, for all the flats were arranged to grant him the ideal view of the scene's vanishing point; as numerous critics have noted, such arrangements not only underscored the ruler's position at the center of court life, it reinforced the notion of his unique ability to oversee the kingdom and, therefore, his divine right to govern.¹⁴ Jones's comments, moreover, reveal his own conviction that creating such illusions demanded the same skills as painting itself, for he declared masques to be "nothing else but pictures with light and motion."¹⁵ Such modes of staging, Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong argue, transformed theatre into "a machine for controlling the visual experience of the spectator," and into a place where that "experience is defined by the rules of perspective."¹⁶



In the commercial theatres, where audiences were becoming more familiar with such perspectivist habits of viewing even if they were not among the elite attending such performances at court, such aesthetic principles often produced the opposite effect, underscoring the tragedy of divisiveness rather than the glory of unity. The commercial theatres, after all, could exercise no such absolute control over the experiences of the spectator, for the viewer's imagination determined a vast majority of the dramatic scene's elements. The playing companies, however, often performed at court, where they enacted roles upon stages set with perspectivist scenery and doubtlessly found the notion of claiming such mastery over the audience's visual experience powerfully appealing, even if bringing such elaborate settings to their playhouse stages proved impractical if not impossible. Not only would the scenery have proven expensive to the companies and constraining on the relatively bare public and indoor theatre stages, but it would have also tied their plays' free-flowing action to one location. Players made use of such perspectivist modes of staging nonetheless, calling upon their viewers to imagine vistas complete with vanishing points as occupying the world of the play. Productions in the city's playhouses thus sought to recreate the perspectivist effects of court masques through words, describing the elements of unpresentable locales as appearing progressively smaller at greater distances. In *King Lear*, for example – a tragedy first printed in 1608, the same year the King's Men secured the use of the indoor Blackfriars – Edgar describes in perfect accordance with perspectivist principles the view from his supposed position atop the Dover's cliffs to his blind father and to the playhouse audience:

Halfway down
Hangs one that gathers sampire, dreadful trade!



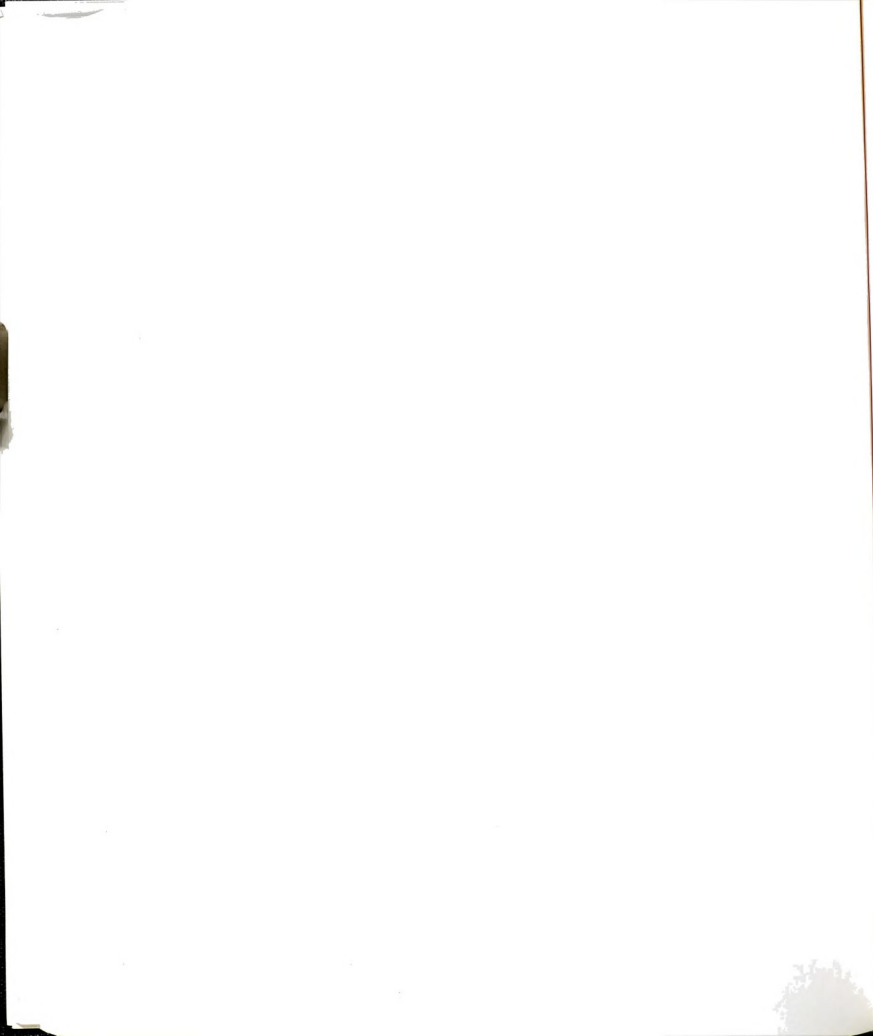
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminished to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. (4.6.14-20)¹⁷

As many critics have noted, Edgar gradually progresses from descriptions of nearer objects to comments on those further away, greatly emphasizing the relative smallness of objects in the distance.¹⁸ His words thus trace the view to its vanishing point, ceasing their account where the objects in the distance become "too small for sight." For audience members accustomed to imagining the surroundings in which dramatic action takes place, Edgar's description maps out the scene below, prompting them to envision not only the fishermen and boats in the distance, but their spatial relationship to the two men on the top of the cliff as well. When Gloucester attempts his jump from the cliff, as a result, early modern audience members may well have believed, along with the blind man, that the fall would prove fatal.¹⁹

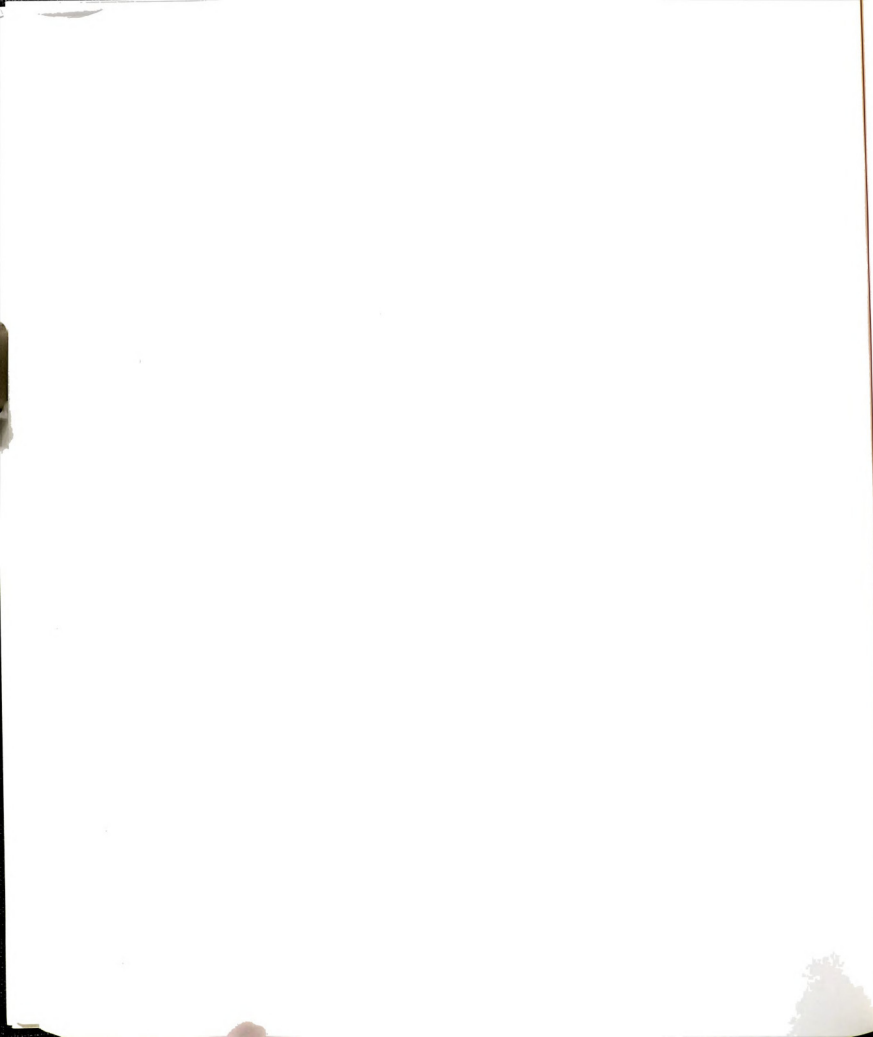
Though audiences at both public and indoor theatres were willing to envision such scenes, those who attended performances at the more exclusive indoor playhouses probably proved even more familiar with the conventions of such perspectivist modes of seeing. A large portion of the indoor theatre clientele not only enjoyed more wealth than those who frequented the public theatre, they enjoyed social positions that granted them easier access to the court and its new fondness for perspectivist masques and portraiture. Yet even those city dwellers who had no access to the court showed increasing familiarity with the principles of perspective, for the artistic images that adorned the books and pamphlets they encountered in the streets showed increasing concern with such artistic modes; the often-recycled woodcuts that illustrated inexpensive ballads and broadsides,



for example, though far from artistically rigorous, constructed landscapes and indoor scenes that hinted at the existence of a vanishing point (Figures 17 and 18). When the acting companies took up residence in indoor playhouses, then, performers found themselves occupying spaces that more fully accommodated their clientele's changing habits of viewing. While the sightlines at the Blackfriars and the Cockpit prevented companies from allowing all their spectators ideal glimpses of the increasingly perspectivist scenes staged upon their still sparsely furnished stages, their seating arrangements nonetheless allowed a greater number of viewers hints of the effects that such scenery could create. During court entertainments, after all, the vanishing point upon which the sets focused could only be properly viewed from one seat, the one occupied by the king. At the Cockpit, however, a greater number of people could enjoy a nearly-perfect view, thanks to both the theatre's seating arrangement and the companies' continued reliance on the individual's imagination to create visions of the dramatic setting. The plans for the Cockpit clearly show that, even though some seats offered better prospects than others, the benefits of perspectivist viewing could be enjoyed from more than one position. As John Orrell points out, the Blackfriars likely offered such sightlines as well, for he argues through careful examination of scene-setting language in Blackfriars plays that its seats were most likely arranged in angled rows, resulting in wedge-like sections of elliptical seating.²⁰ The Blackfriars thus appears to have offered its spectators a view of the action similar to that of the Cockpit, whose seats offered multiple audience members good, if not ideal, views of the prospects that the dialogue set out before them.



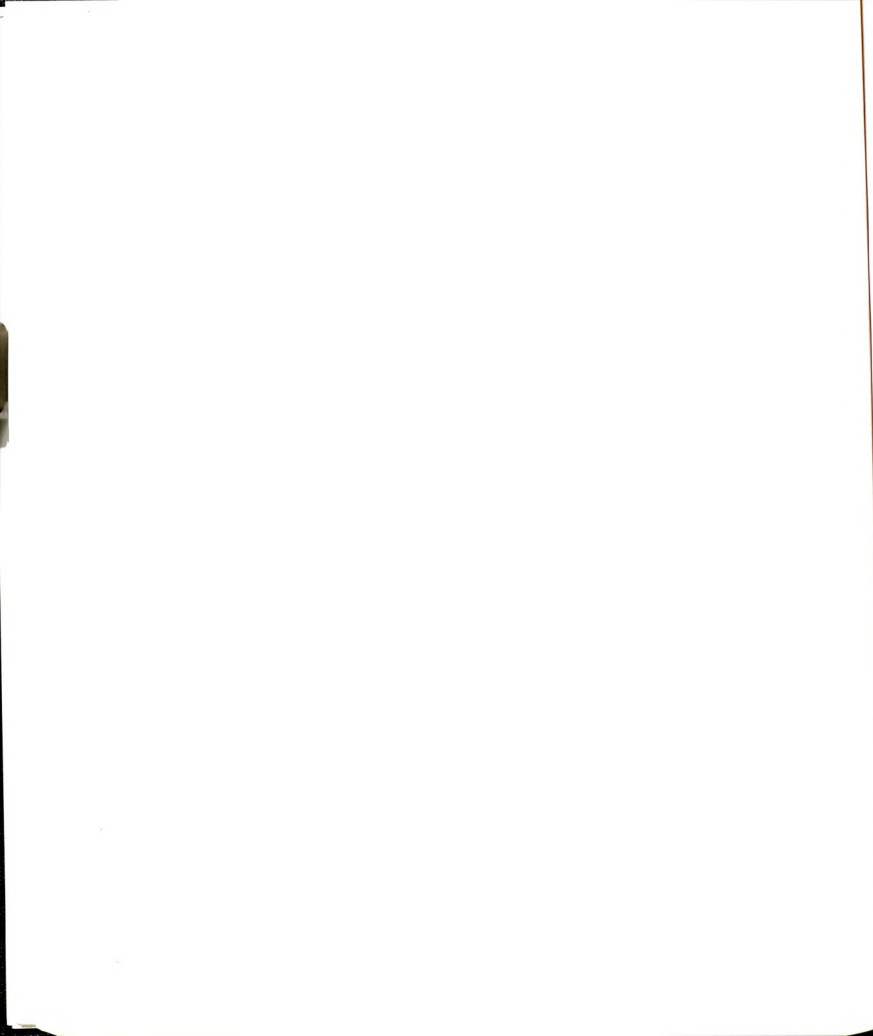
Even more strikingly, Jones grounded his plans for the Cockpit and the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre upon continental architectural authorities that held the human body itself as the appropriate measure for the construction of theatres and other large buildings. During his sojourn in Italy of 1613-1614, Jones acquired treatises by Marcus Vitruvius Pollio and Sebastiano Serlio, in which he made liberal notes reflecting his fascination with their designs.²¹ For Vitruvius, the ideal proportions of the human body served as the basis for all architectural designs, proving most vital for the construction of public buildings such as temples. His treatise on symmetry carefully outlines the relationships among the body's parts, noting, for example, that "the human body is designed by nature that the face, from the chin to the top of the forehead and the lowest roots of the hair, is a tenth part of the whole height" and the length of the foot "is one sixth of the height of the body; of the forearm, one fourth; and the breadth of the breast is also one fourth."²² A compass centered on the navel, he points out, outlines a perfect circle around the body's head and outstretched arms and legs, just as lines connecting the feet to the head and the two outstretched arms yield a perfect square. Sebastiano Serlio expanded upon Vitruvius's principles in his influential treatise on theatre construction, *Architettura* – a treatise translated into English in 1611 by none other than James's newly-perspectivist court artist Robert Peake. Serlio not only bases his construction on the human body's perfect circle-within-a-square proportions, he asserts that the theatre's design should be drawn to accommodate the bodies of those who actually attended performances. His designs, as a result, allowed space for each individual body – eighteen inches – as the basic unit of measure in theatre construction.²³



While Vitruvius concentrated on the relationships between the body's exterior and architectural construction, Serlio expanded his predecessor's analogy by searching for architectural guidelines in deeper recesses of the human form. His devotion to the construction of perspectivist lines of sight in theatres led him to conclude that anatomical dissection itself contributed the understanding of perspective in both painting and architecture, claiming that witnessing dissections made artists more aware of the importance of proportions and spatial relations in their work. In Serlio's view,

[T]here is as much difference betweene an open body and a solide, as there is betweene the modell of mans body, that is nothing but bones without flesh and skinne: and a living body of a man covered over with fleshe (although it is hidden under it.) And as those paynters are much perfecter that have seene, and perfectly beheld right Anatomies, then to others that onley content themselves with the outward bare shew of Superficiencies, so it is with perspective works; for they that wel understand and perfectly beare in mind the hidden lines, they shall better understand the Arte then others, that content themselves with the shew of outward Superficies.²⁴

For those who study the inner alignment of the human form at dissections, the underlying significance of the sightlines which create perspectivist illusions in paintings and in the court theatre becomes clearer even when the lines themselves remain obscured. Jones's designs for the Cockpit, based like Serlio's on the eighteen-inch seating degree,²⁵ thus not only place the human form at the center of his theatre design, they strive to translate the hidden lines of the body's interior into the sightlines of the theatre, calling upon audiences to see these lines penetrating the bodies of the actors onstage like an anatomist's knife, rendering their imagined bodily interiors visible – and vital – within the dramatic action. For a theatre architect like Serlio, then, the inner alignments that anatomy reveals serve as the very basis for perspectivist viewing, for dissection gradually exposes multiple layers



of the bodies to instruct spectators on the proper way of seeing and interpreting the body's multi-dimensional construction and, by extension, all artistic works that embody the human form's perfect proportions.

Jones's adaptation of such principles in his plans for both the Cockpit and the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre, as a result, allowed him to experiment with replicating these artistic and anatomical sightlines – the very habits of viewing that Serlio had so praised – in buildings devoted to uncovering the functions of the human interior, thus tracing the intersections between the two seemingly different activities hosted in these venues. Building the Cockpit theatre upon the foundations of the abandoned Royal Cockpit, a gaming house in Drury Lane, to skirt laws limiting new construction, Jones may well have happened upon the shape of the playhouse's auditorium by accident; as John Orrell points out, however, the original gaming cockpit's shape provided the perfect outlines for the architect to experiment with constructing the interwoven sightlines Serlio had so praised.²⁶ Though no plan of the original Drury Lane gaming cockpit has survived, accounts of other such buildings in London reveal that the habits of viewing nurtured there already bore a striking similarity to those called upon in both masque performances and the Barber-Surgeon's Anatomical Theatre. Eyewitness accounts of the Cockpit note the presence of a central table, on which the birds were coaxed into fighting, surrounded by raised tiers of benches – one account specifies four – filled with spectators. The Grass Inn cockpit, in fact, reminded Zachariaas von Uffenbach so clearly of the dissections he had witnessed that he declared the sporting arena "a 'theatrum anatomicum', for all round it there are benches in tiers, on which the spectators sit."²⁷ Thus, when Jones agreed to build upon the gaming cockpit's foundation, the site already



carried with it not just echoes of the bloody cockfights once staged there but the lingering traces of viewing habits that were to be associated with his anatomy theatre. His blending of such characteristics with constructions that further emphasized Serlian notions of perspective thus resulted in a theatre that could exploit principles of proportion – and of viewing – gleaned from artistic and medical, as well as combative, realms.

While indoor playhouses like the Cockpit increasingly exploited perspective modes of viewing, they by no means replicated the elaborate scenery found at court productions. In fact, their staging remained remarkably simple, with few props and few, if any, painted pieces of scenery. Yet the small size of their houses – the Blackfriars, for example, occupied an interior space that measured at most a mere 46 feet by 66 feet and the Cockpit's exterior measured an even smaller 40 feet by 55 feet, while the Globe's yard alone seems to have measured 55 square feet and was surrounded by three stories of galleries – allowed viewers to enjoy a closer proximity to the action.²⁸ Though no drawings of the Blackfriars remains, James Wright reported in his 1699 treatise on the London theatres *Historia Histrionica* that it, the Salisbury Court, and the Cockpit were "almost exactly alike for form and bigness"²⁹; given that the Cockpit stage measured a mere 23 feet 6 inches wide and only 15 feet deep, London's indoor theatres must have allowed their audiences a rather concentrated view of the dramatic proceedings. The title page of *Roxana* by William Alabaster, for example, depicts theatregoers both immediately in front of and above the stage, peering intently at the actors (Figure 23); though it, like Jones's drawings, shows no hint of a trap door, a square sketched into the drawing included with the printed text of Nathaneal Richards's *Messallina* (1640) suggests the stage might have included such a feature (Figure 24).³⁰ Neither title page,



however, reveals how scenes requiring a discovery space might have been acted, instead showing only draperies covering the three doors at the back of the stage. Before the identification of Jones's plans for the Cockpit in 1973, critics such as T. J. King argued that an acting area able to accommodate properties ranging from beds to chairs of state lay behind the stage's draperies; following G. K. Reynolds, King suggests that the Cockpit's discovery space may in fact have consisted of a removable curtained frame, which he suggests proves visible in the *Messalina* title page.³¹ In a magical perspective trick of their own, however, the Cockpit drawings, once identified, revealed that the stage's three entranceways lay hidden immediately behind the curtain, leaving no room for such a frame and requiring the larger four-foot-wide middle doorway to serve as the stage's discovery space. The first stage direction of *Eastward Ho* (1605), Orrell points out, shows that the Blackfriars too used its larger central stage entrance as a discovery space, for that Children of the Queen's Revels play orders that "*At the middle dore, Enter Golding discovering a Gold-smiths shoppe.*"³² The indoor theatre audience, as a result, had to peer through the door to discern the action in the recessed area, forcing them to look upon it in the same intimate – and perhaps even perspectivist – manner by which they would consider a portrait within a frame.

The Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre, built twenty years after the Cockpit, provided an even more intimate atmosphere, for its elliptical shape measured less than 40 feet across at its widest.³³ The theatre's four-tier observation area, where spectators stood rather than sat, doubtlessly put spectators in close proximity to the body, allowing them a clear view of the corpse, if not of its increasingly empty interior. How well the spectators could make out the insides of the corpse from their vantage point, after all, remains



uncertain; though they could see the body displayed and hear of its structures, they no doubt shared a view less privileged than that of the anatomist and, to some extent, of his assistants. Like the king observing a dramatic performance at court, the anatomist enjoyed the ideal view of the anatomized corpse's interior while others in the theatre strove to make out what those in direct contact with the corpse could see from their ideal vantage point.

Though the company's regulations ordered that the most substantial cuts be made to the corpse before the demonstration began, anatomists continued to use cutting tools as the dissection proceeded. The Barber-Surgeons' Court of Examiners, for example, declared that the anatomy stewards should keep the dissection knives clean during the demonstration, implying that they did in fact become dirty; in addition, the only known depiction of a dissection performed by London's barber-surgeons before the civil war – the 1581 depiction of John Banister at work on a corpse in the hall's kitchen – clearly shows a pair of scissors and a knife on the demonstration table (Figure 25).³⁴ The Court nonetheless ordered in 1567 that the dissection's spectators should not view the anatomized corpse until the anatomist could unveil it properly for them. Their records reveal regulations requiring that

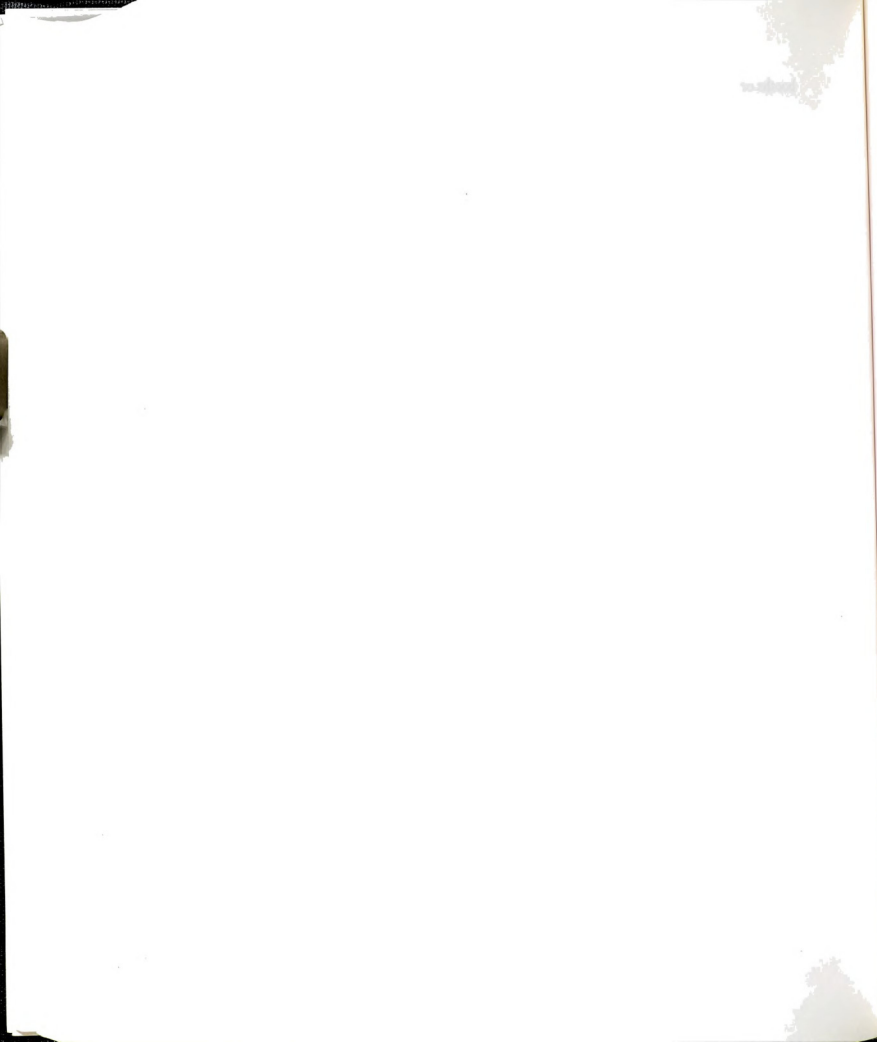
there shall be pillars and rods of iron made to bear and draw curtains upon, and about the frame where within the Anatomy doth lie, and it is wrought upon for because that no person or persons shall behold the dissections of the body, but that all may be clean and covered with fair clothes until the Doctor shall come and take his place to read upon the parts dissected.³⁵

At the center of the dissections theatre, then, the Barber-Surgeons placed a structure that resembled – in function if not in form – the indoor playhouse's discovery space. Whether the commercial theatrical discovery spaces consisted of similarly portable curtained metal



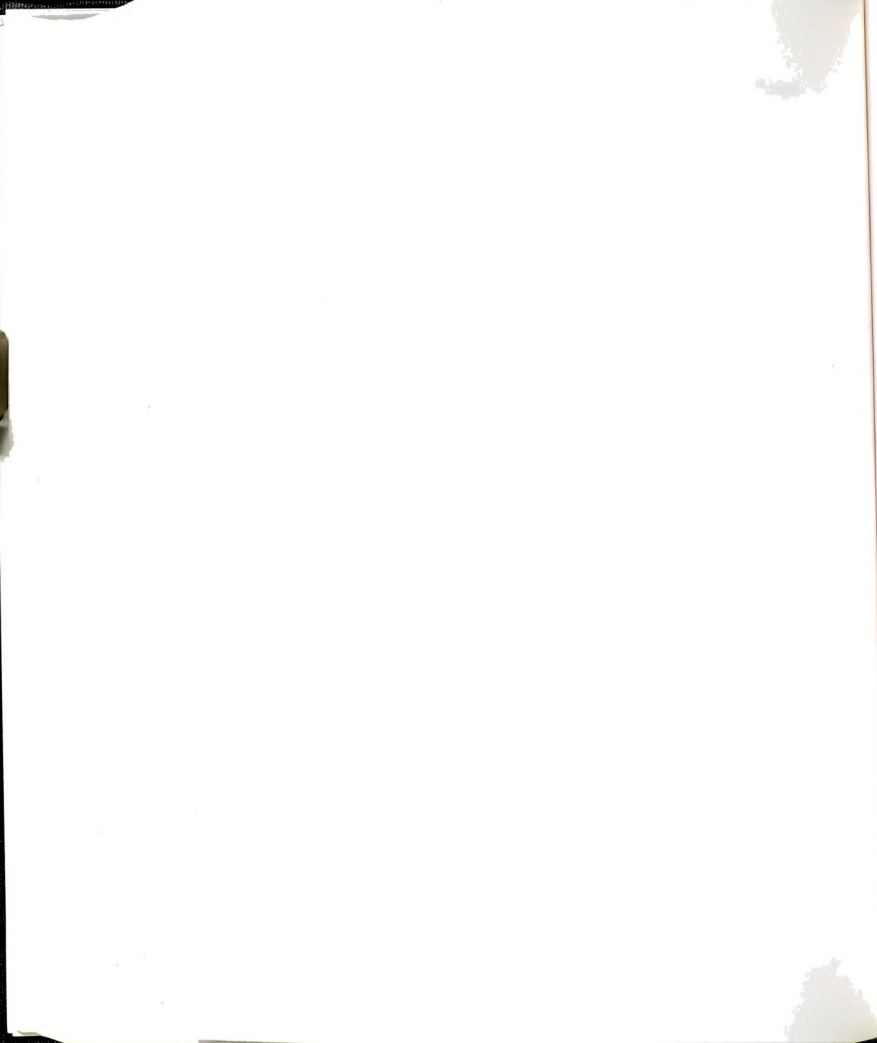
booths or of doorways unveiled for the occasion, the curtains in both theatres first hid and then revealed bodies to guide the audience in their scrutiny of their forms, thus offering viewers similarly framed glimpses of human flesh. Spectators at both the performances of bloody revenge tragedies in the indoor playhouses and at dissections in the Barber-Surgeons' new theatre thus not only witnessed the gradual revealing of deeper and deeper recesses of the human body, they gazed at the body in conditions that underscored the flesh's three dimensional nature even when the exact nature of its corporeal layers remained indiscernible.

The Cockpit's place within the social fabric of the city offers further intriguing insight into the commercial world of London theatre during the early Stuart era. Christopher Beeston – an actor who had been a member the King's Men before beginning his own career as a troupe leader and playhouse entrepreneur – had commissioned Jones to convert what had been the Royal Cockpit in Drury Lane into the Cockpit theatre for the economic, not aesthetic, differences the playhouse could make for his company. An indoor venue, after all, would allow his troupes to perform year-round, whereas open-air playing had demanded that shows be shut down during the cold winter months. Under Beeston's guidance, companies with four different noble sponsors – Queen Anne, Lady Elizabeth, Prince Charles, and Queen Henrietta – occupied the elite Cockpit theatre in the years following its completion and before the war; after 1636, a children's company under the name of Beeston's Boys performed in the Cockpit as well. The theatre enjoyed a location outside the London walls in a burgeoning part of the metropolis, yet also near the Inns of Court (see Figure 6), and, by 1623, the people frequenting this area beyond the walls grew numerous – and important – enough for the Privy Council to pave the



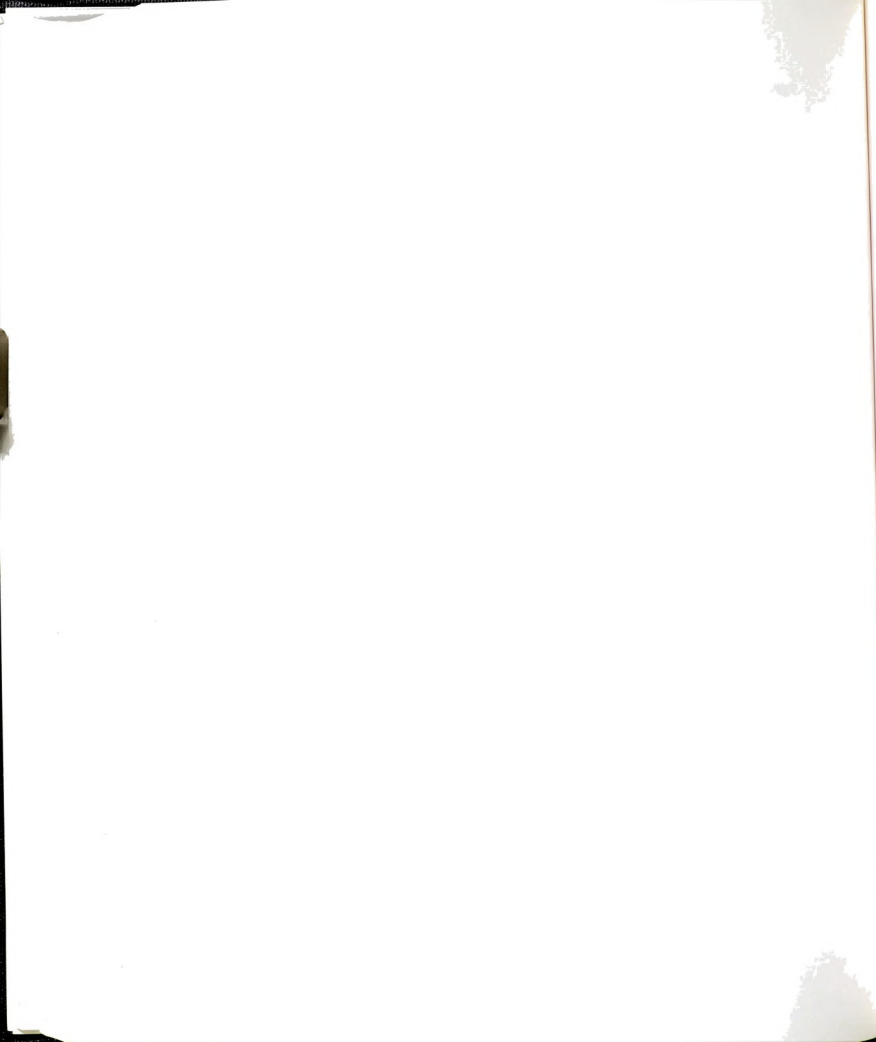
street.³⁶ Performances at the Cockpit, as a result, developed a reputation nearly as prestigious as those at the Blackfriars. In 1624, for example, James Howell used both the theatres as bait in his attempts to lure a distant friend back to London. "Black-Friars," he cajoled, "will entertain you with a Play spick and span new, and the Cockpit with another."³⁷ As Howell's comments suggest, the newer theatre remained second to the Blackfriars, whose intramural liberty had come by 1608 officially under the Lord Mayor's rule, making it the only overtly commercial theatre within the city walls at the time and the oldest indoor one.³⁸ Attending performances there, as a result, carried associations not just of wealth but of prestige, especially for those who had only recently gained the means to afford admission. The newly-rich youth in Lupton's *Young Gallants Whiligig* for one, Gerald Eaves Bentley points out, sees attending plays at the Blackfriars as a clear sign of his improved social status, for he "now vpon the Fryers stage [will] sit," even though "The Cockpit heretofore would serue his wit."³⁹

Unlike the Blackfriars, however, the Cockpit company never could shed its associations with the rowdy world of the London suburbs, for the plays that Beeston's adult companies performed – and the actors in them – all had strong connections to the outdoor Red Bull and its unsavory frequenters. Such associations not only ensured that the Cockpit would never surpass the Blackfriars in prestige, they may have been the root of a violent chain of events that nearly ruined Beeston's business prospects at the new indoor theatre. In 1617, the year after the Cockpit's completion, an unusually large and violent Shrove Tuesday riot among the apprentices of London extensively damaged Beeston's newly-opened theatre. As Edward Sherburne reports, the apprentices' debauchery led to the near-destruction of the Cockpit:



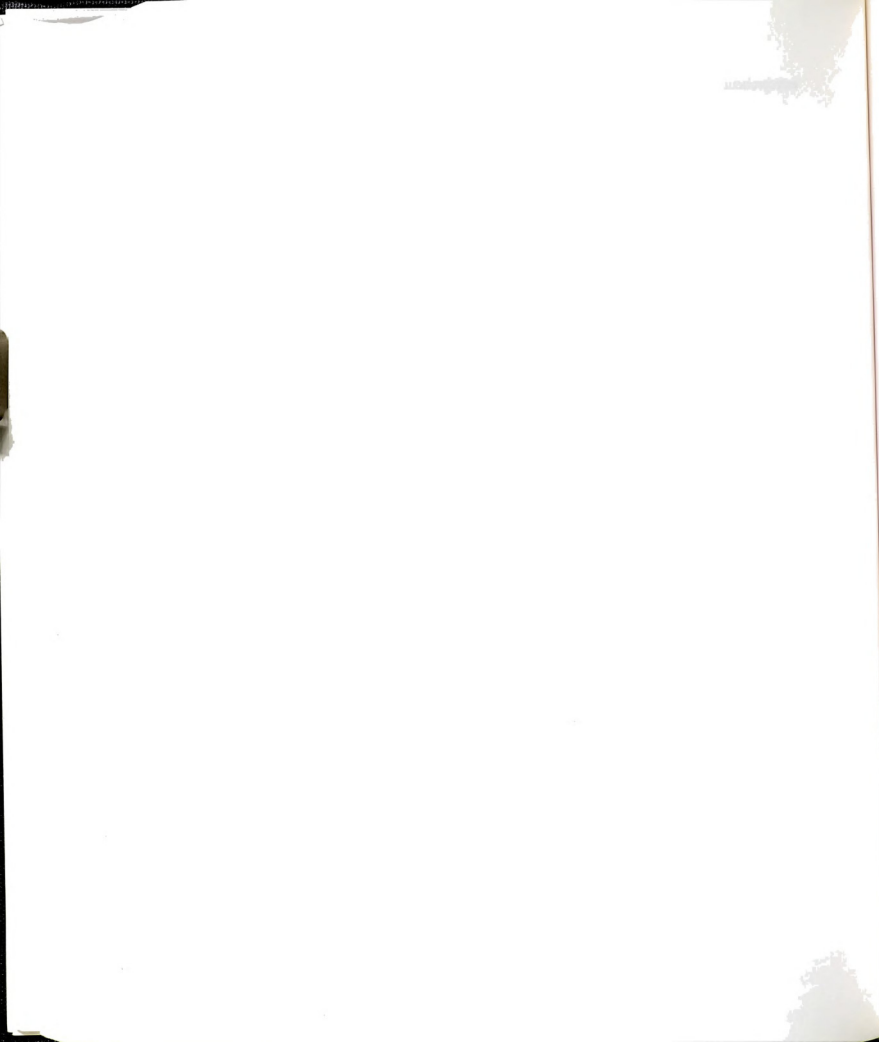
[M]aking for Drury Lane, where lately a newe playhouse is erected, they besett the house round, broke in, wounded divers of the players, broke open their trunckes, & whatt apparell, bookes, or other things they found, they burnt & cutt in peeces; & not content herewith, gott on the top of the house, & untiled it, & had not the Justice of Peace & Sherife levied an aide, & hindred their purpose, they would have laid that house likewise even with the grownd. In this skyrmishe one prentise was slaine, being shott throughe the head with a pistoll, & many other of their fellowes were sore hurt, & such of them as are taken his Majestie hath commaunded shal be executed for example sake.⁴⁰

Andrew Gurr argues convincingly that this riot proved anything but random. When Beeston's players moved to the Cockpit, he points out, they transferred from the Red Bull to the more expensive indoor theatre the plays that had proven so popular among London's less wealthy citizens. The indoor theatre's construction, as Gurr shows, thus more than separated the apprentices from the entertainment that they could once afford, it also isolated them from the Red Bull's rowdy setting, depriving them of one of their favorite outlets for debauchery.⁴¹ In some respects, their riot proved successful, for the damage done to the Cockpit forced Beeston's company to return to the Red Bull, at least temporarily.⁴² The king's attempt to quash such violence among the apprentices, moreover, failed to check the group's rage, for at least some of them rioted against Beeston's theatres the following year. On Shrove Tuesday of 1618, the justices of Middlesex reveal, some apprentices had planned "To Summon oithers in the Skirtes and Confynes, to meete at the ffortune, and after that to goe to Playhouses the Redd Bull, and the Cock Pitt, w[hi]ch they have designed to rase, and pull downne" For Gurr, the apprentices' failed plans to revisit their destruction upon the Cockpit – as well as to direct their rage against the Red Bull, a theatre they enjoyed attending – signal the group's desire to inflict purposeful damage upon Beeston's business, punishing him for his



entrepreneurial attempts to raise the price of seeing his plays.⁴³ In their attempts to destroy both theatres, the apprentices thus resorted to actions much like those represented within the plays they viewed, seeking revenge for wrongs done to them by social forces beyond their control.

The published text of John Webster's *The White Devil*, meanwhile, provides an intriguing illustration of the effect that the variations in performance conditions among theatres could have upon a play's success. In 1612, four years before the Cockpit's opening, the Queen Anne's Men debuted the play, itself based on the real-life scandals – and murders – provoked by the adulterous love between Vittoria Accoramboni and Paolo Giordano Orsini. The company's audience at the cheap Red Bull playhouse, however, evidently failed to appreciate the play's mixing of true crime and lofty philosophizing. Webster's preface to the 1630 printed edition of the play makes clear that *The White Devil* earned a hostile reception from its first viewers at the suburban public theatre, which, as we have seen, was reputed to attract audiences prone to bawdiness and violence. Webster reviles these viewers who had scorned his play, quoting Horace to compare them to barnyard pigs and calling them "ignorant asses" who favored novelty over quality (29, 10).⁴⁴ Yet the playwright concedes as well that the play's dismal reception may have stemmed from the poor conditions under which it was initially performed, "in so dull a time of winter, presented in so open and black a theater" (4-6). The unsuitability of performance conditions, he argues, not the script of the play itself, produced *The White Devil*'s poor reception. The tragedy's subsequent performance record endorses his theory as well, for *The White Devil* not only became a part of the Queen Anne's company repertory, it enjoyed a new popularity after Queen Henrietta's Men took up the play in



1630 for performance in their indoor theatre, the Cockpit.⁴⁵ There, in a theatre that boasted controlled lighting, more comfortable temperatures, and more upscale patrons, *The White Devil* met with an atmosphere much more suited to its tone – or so Webster and countless drama critics since him have argued in retrospect.

Webster's commentary on the initial failure of *The White Devil*, as convenient an excuse as it may be, nonetheless underscores the influence that the conditions of viewing exercise over an audience's evaluation of a dramatic presentation's significance. In the early Stuart era, characters within plays themselves – even within *The White Devil* – commonly express such convictions, emphasizing not only that things seen must be interpreted but that such visions can also lead to varying conclusions. In fact, plays of the time consistently emphasize the deceptive power of even the most compelling visual evidence, presenting audiences with instances where characters base faulty conclusions on supposedly incontrovertible concrete signs. While Othello's misinterpreting of the "ocular proof" supposedly offered by Desdemona's handkerchief provides the most familiar instance of this early modern concern with the trustworthiness of visual perception, *The White Devil* stages a number of scenes that dwell on the factors that drive characters to place such faith in what their eyes perceive. According to the play's conniving Flamineo, the closer an individual examines a vision, the more likely he is to endow it with false significance. Calling the nervous Camillo a "mathematically jealous coxcomb" for wanting to "lock up" his wife, Vittoria Corombona, Flamineo declares

I have seen a pair of spectacles fashioned with such perspective art
that, lay down but one twelve pence o'the board, 'twill appear as if
there were twenty; now, should you wear a pair of these spectacles
and see your wife tying her shoe, you would imagine twenty hands

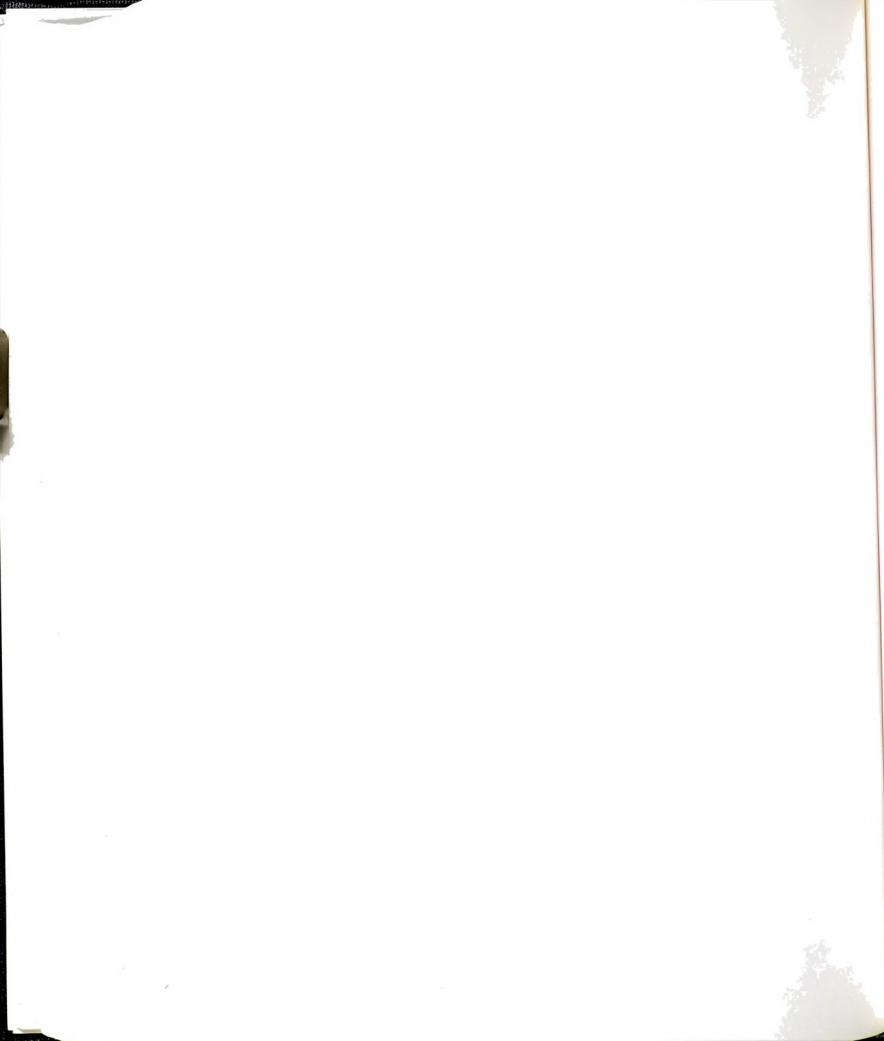
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were taking up your wife's clothes, and this would put you into a horrible causeless fury. (1.2.103-11)

Attempts to examine visual evidence so carefully, Flamineo thus declares, can lead viewers to misinterpret what the eye sees. Tools like perspective glasses that supposedly facilitate the process of seeing, he argues, often only interfere with the viewer's ability to rightly discern what lies before him, for such devices not only render one image into multiple images, the frame they impose temporarily renders the image motionless and leads the viewer to misinterpret its relationship to the interrupted action. The perspective glasses Flamineo imagines, after all, prove capable of reversing motion, driving the hypothetical viewer to see the hands of many strangers removing his wife's clothes when she is (according to the narrative) in fact putting them on. In Douglas Bruster's words, the perspective glasses' power to multiply conjures within Camillo "a nightmare of generation," for the world seen through their lenses is one of "uncontrolled and uncontrollable reproduction."⁴⁶ The mere description of such a sight of multiplying visions, then, drives Camillo to imagine not only manifold images of his wife but the actual physical reproduction of humans. Though he remains aware that the perspective glasses can only create an illusion – that the images seen through them are in fact products of artistic rather than biological generation – his mind quickly forms an undissolvable association between the two modes of reproduction. Although Camillo quickly counters that such misinterpretations stem not from eyesight itself but from technological tricks, his jealousy grows nonetheless as Flamineo insists that such pervading sexual obsession distorts vision. Despite Camillo's avowed distrust of the perspective glasses' illusory power, the image that Flamineo creates for Camillo thus becomes a more convincing representation of his wife than what his own unaided eyes



can discern.

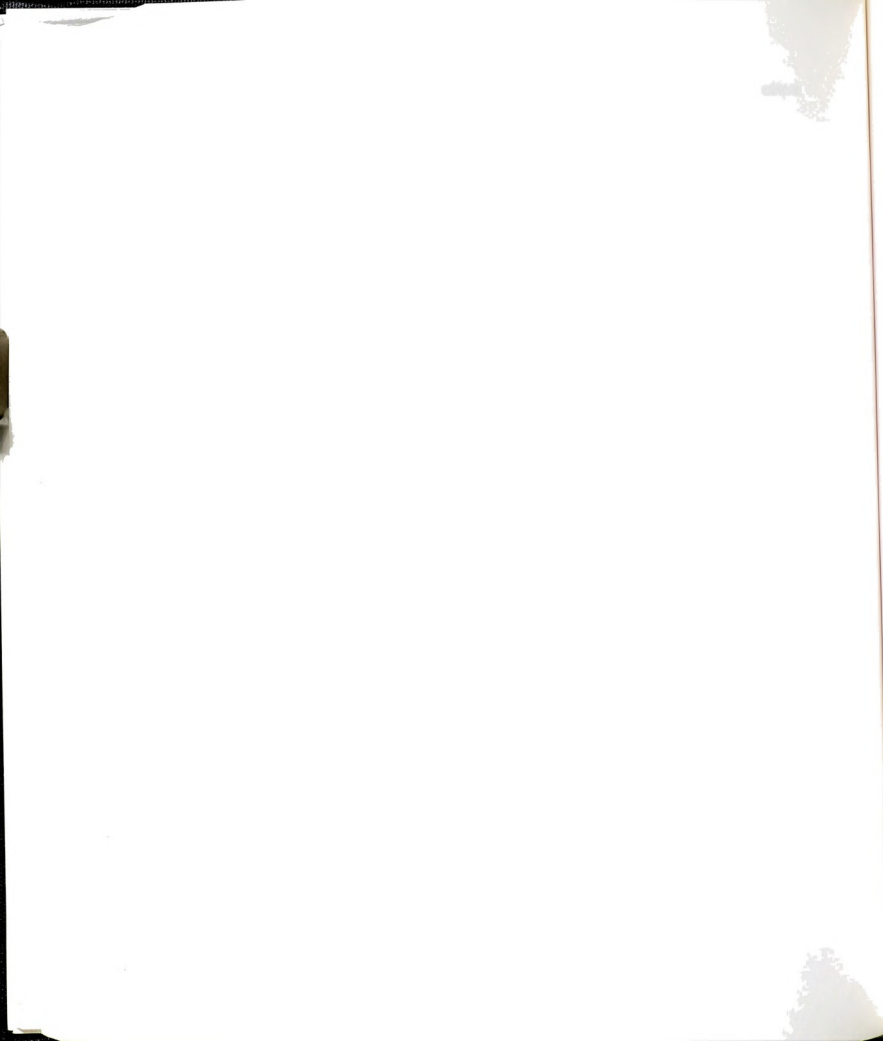
In nursing such illusion within Camillo, however, Flamineo creates an environment in which his own plans to arrange a rendezvous between Vittoria Corombona, who happens to be his sister, and the duke Brachiano can reach their fruition. His mocking of the minutiae that occupy the jealous minds of husbands thus not only encourages Camillo to stand back and watch Flamineo's conference with Vittoria from afar, it also encourages him to take faith in Flamineo's recounting of the conversation's details. Flamineo's speech, as a result, guarantees rather than prevents Camillo's cuckolding, for it establishes the logistics of the tryst by tricking Camillo into a locked room for the night. Presumably unable to hear the dialogue that ensues between his wife and his supposed agent – a dialogue which, ironically, the playhouse audience can clearly hear despite their farther remove⁴⁷ – Camillo implicitly trusts Flamineo's commentary on the scene and ignores any evidence that the sights of their conversation might inspire within him. Fearing that he will look upon the scene as one who looks through the perspective glasses of Flamineo's anecdote, Camillo yields to his agent all powers of interpretation, thereby surrendering to him the means of skewing his view of the action played out before him.

Camillo, however, is not the only one who fails to trust what his eyes see, for *The White Devil* continually exploits Flamineo's claims of vision's untrustworthiness, presenting its characters – and its playhouse viewers – with sights whose veracity becomes undercut by ensuing actions. Not only do characters disguise themselves to hide from other members of the court, they often adopt such new roles without informing the audience beforehand, as when Lodovico and Gasparo appear in the habit of Capuchin



monks to murder Brachiano in the final act. Even seemingly obvious traits such as life and death become subject to doubt, as in Flamineo's orchestration of what appears to be his own murder at the hands of Vittoria and Zanche. Flamineo hands the two women pistols and secures their promises that they will kill themselves after murdering him; they, however, "*shoot and run to him, and tread upon him,*" relishing their easy revenge instead. After a rather histrionically vivid death scene, during which he claims that "There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds," Flamineo suddenly proclaims five lines later, "I am not wounded" as the stage directions order him to "*riseth*" (5.6.143, 148). His act, fooling his would-be killers and perhaps the playhouse audience, further emphasizes that neither the on- or offstage audience can rest assured in the veracity of what they see taking place before them. The theatregoers' implicit awareness that all actions appearing on the stage are scripted and feigned, however, endows scenes such as Flamineo's staged death with a rare breed of dramatic power. Such scenes, after all, caution audiences of the dangers involved in relying upon what they see, showing that actions even within admittedly feigned theatrical performances cannot be taken at face value. Like those who look through perspective glasses, the playhouse viewer learns that he can never be sure of the veracity of what he sees, for the play continually compels its spectators to reassess the plots acted out before them, forcing them to reinterpret the significance of scenes whose meanings at first appear transparent.

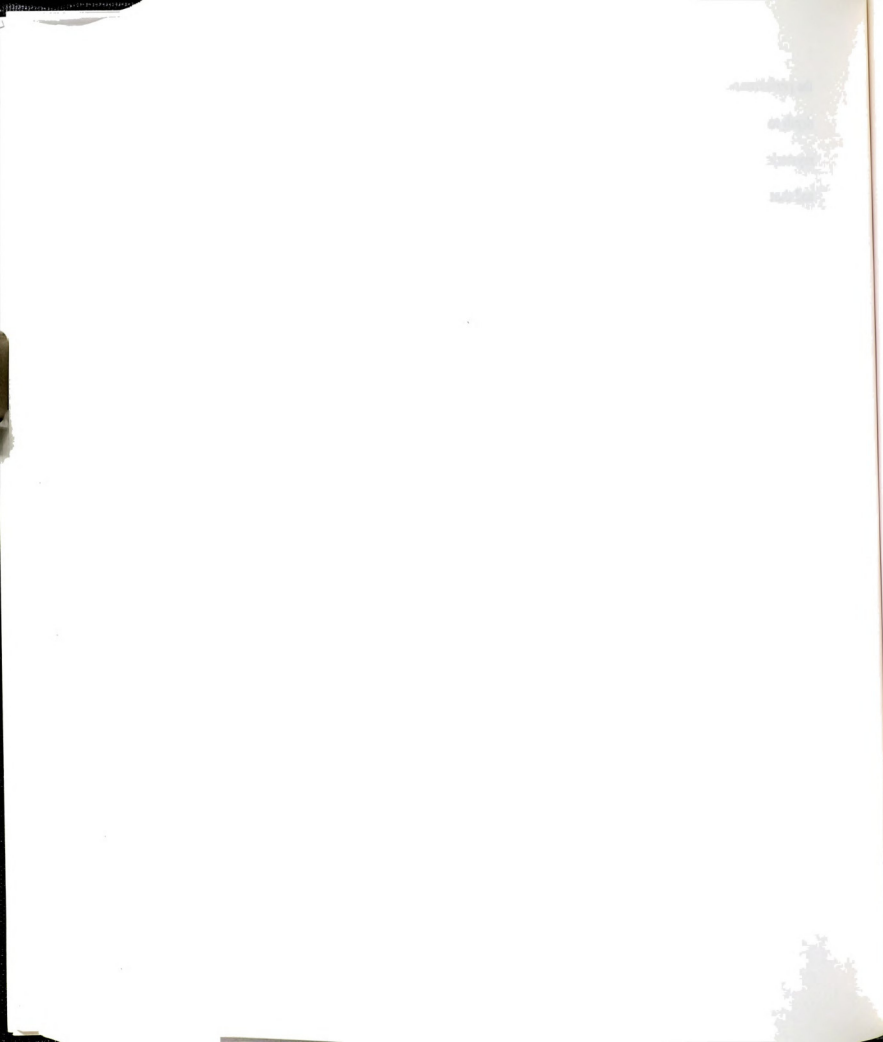
The presentation of Isabella's and Camillo's deaths via dumb shows in Act 2 Scene 2 offers a particularly vivid example of the play's habit of forcing observers to question the meaning of what they see along with the conditions under which they form such conclusions. The scene focuses the audience's attention to the deepest recesses of



the performance space, adding layers of meaning to the scene as its dumb shows add depth to the observing characters' words. The scene begins with Brachiano and a mysterious conjurer on a bare stage. Brachiano reveals that the time is "dead midnight" and that he has come so the necromancer might "show" him "How the intended murder of Camillo / And our loathed duchess grow to action" (3-4). The necromancer obliges, narrating the murders that take place before their eyes. First, the two observe as two men – who, though named in the text, never appear again in the playtext and who act under orders from an authority never clearly identified – lay the groundwork for Isabella's murder:

Enter suspiciously Julio and Christophero. They draw a curtain where Brachiano's picture is, put on spectacles of glass, which cover their eyes and noses, and then burn perfumes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture; that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles, they depart laughing. (s.d. 24)

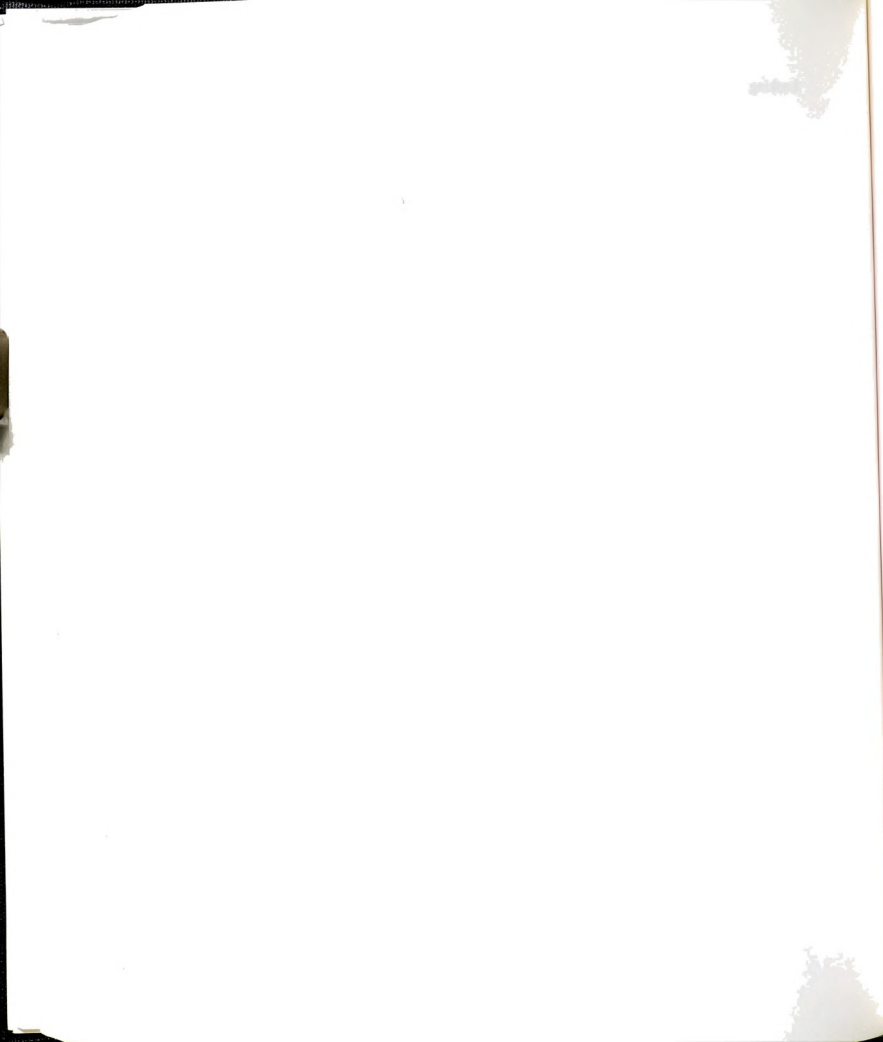
Pulling aside a curtain – one that might cover either the stage's discovery space or the portrait itself – the two assassins add a new element to the playing area, providing both the on- and offstage audiences with a new focal point: the portrait that provides a second representation of the duke on stage. As they look upon the painting themselves, moreover, the assassins wear special "*spectacles of glass, which cover their eyes and noses.*" These glasses, worn exclusively during the application of the presumably invisible poison, may well suggest that the compound proves so dangerous that they must protect their own faces from it⁴⁸; the appearance of these glasses following Flamineo's dissertation upon "*spectacles fashioned with such perspective art,*" along with Isabella's subsequent blindness to the poison's presence, however, suggests that these lenses allow the assassins special power to discern the presence of an otherwise invisible chemical.



Looking upon the portrait, their spectacles reveal a danger painted upon the canvas that the others cannot see. Where they see a portrait's lips bathed in poison, Isabella sees an image of the duke whom she continues to love in life, despite his scorn. Whether she envisions the portrait as a stand-in for Brachiano's body or as a representation with more spiritual connotations, her ensuing actions clearly suggest that she sees its image as closely linked to the duke to whom she is devoted, for the stage directions reveal that she *"draws the curtain of the picture, does three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice."*

Poisoned, she then collapses, dying as her son Giovanni and the doting Lodovico look on.

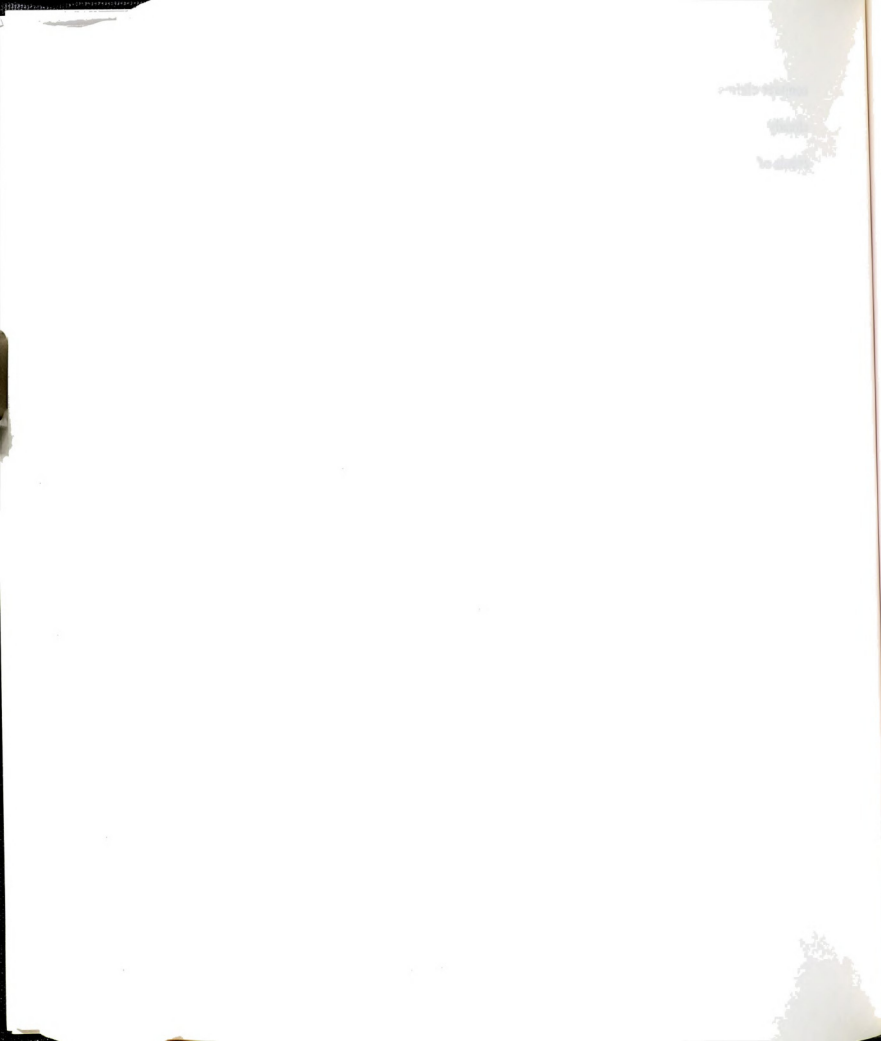
Despite the stage direction's explicit outlining of the action, however, Brachiano remains unsure of what exactly the dumb show reveals. "Excellent!" he exclaims after the display's conclusion, "then she's dead" (24), yet his joyous words contain elements of doubt, for they drive the conjurer to explicate the meaning of the display in intricate detail. While the conjurer's ensuing explanation offers both Brachiano and the playhouse audience a seemingly definitive interpretation of the murder scene, his words also have the disconcerting effect of isolating the dumb show's events from any certain place in time. His words describe the events largely in present tense, as if narrating something that occurs as he and Brachiano speak, yet his description explains events that have already culminated before the duke's – and the playhouse audience's – eyes. The conjurer's explanation, moreover, not only makes clear that "She's poisonèd / By the fumed picture," it grounds the events of the murder in the past by noting that kissing the portrait constituted an inviolable part of Isabella's nightly rituals. The conjurer's explanation thus links the implementation of the murder with the duchess's habits, firmly establishing its origins in the past and their subsequent effects in the present. Though the



conjurer claims that the poison "presently" suffocated Isabella's spirits, the murder has already been performed on stage, and the body has already been removed. Placing the events of the dumb show in time with any certainty thus becomes virtually impossible; its events could have occurred hours ago, after Brachiano's parting from Isabella, or mere seconds before the conjurer utters his account of the display. His words, intended to clarify the scene played out before Brachiano and the playhouse crowd, thus render it more mysterious than ever, leaving those who watch unsure whether they have witnessed an event as it occurs or whether they have glanced back into the recent past.

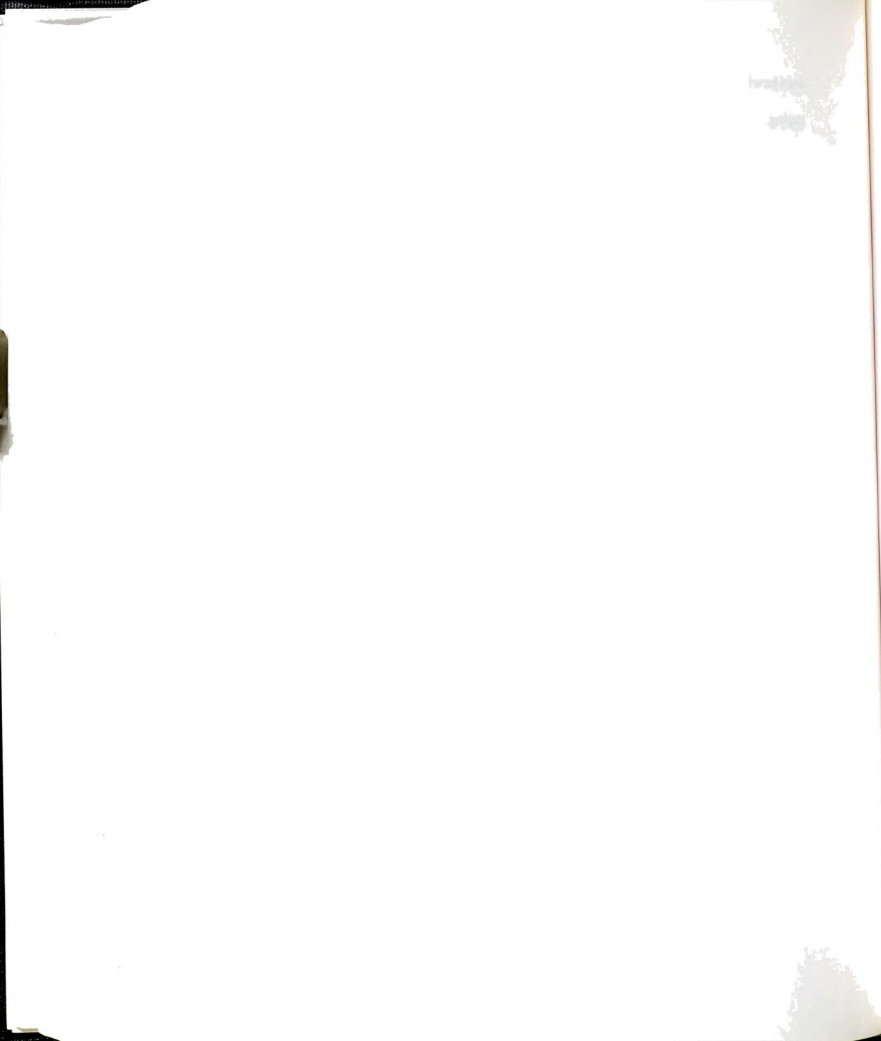
The scene that the conjurer interprets, moreover, most likely played itself out in the stage's discovery space, situated in the back of the theatre and framed by a doorway. As a result, the events of the dumb show occur in an area physically separated from the larger stage, and this distance renders the dumb show's connections to the larger action even more obscure, for Brachiano remains fundamentally unsure of what he has seen even after listening to the conjurer's explanation. "Methought I saw / Count Lodowick there," the duke comments, still not sure that his eyes have accurately construed the display (31-32); the conjurer's reply – "He was; and by my art / I find he did most passionately dote / Upon your duchess" (32-34) – only heightens the mysterious nature of the scene and the supernatural powers that produce it by tracing the event's roots even further into hidden aspects of the past.

The scene's second dumb show quickly ensues, offering Brachiano a similar glance at Camillo's murder during a vaulting contest and compounding the duke's confusion even further. "'Twas quaintly done," he comments after Camillo's body is silently removed, "but yet each circumstance I taste not fully" (37-38), confessing his



own bewilderment regarding the display's meaning. The conjurer, however, replies by urging Brachiano to trust what his eyes report. Prefacing his explanation of the scene with the assertion that "Oh, 'twas most apparent," the necromancer guides the duke through a step-by-step interpretation of what his eyes have seen (39) . "You saw them enter" and bring forth the vaulting horse, he tells Brachiano, leaving him to decode the rest for himself, claiming "your eye saw the rest, and can inform you / The engine of all" (45-46).

The conjurer's teachings nonetheless fail to endow Brachiano with perception acute enough to discern the nature of the dumb show's relationship to their conversation's place and time. While the duke gradually proves more adventurous in his interpretation of the display, hazarding that "It seems Marcello and Flamineo / Are both committed" (47-48), he remains unaware of the immediate danger the dumb show's events present to his own well-being. Like the playhouse viewers, Brachiano remains fundamentally unsure of the relationship – both spatial and temporal – between the events the conjurer narrates and the main stage that he occupies as the murders occur. Peering toward the furthest recesses of the playing space, neither the on- or offstage observer can be sure whether his gaze passes through the palace's walls to reveal events as they happen or whether the discovery space frames completed but still secret events like a window into the past. Such staging, many have argued, distances the audience from the murders, rendering the killings "curiously aseptic,"⁴⁹ yet, as Dena Goldberg points out, recounting these deaths rather than staging them would isolate observers from them even more effectively. For Goldberg, the dumb show forces the play's viewers to "feel complicit" in the "gross violation" of Isabella's privacy while emphasizing Brachiano's own



insensitivity to the pathetic scene playing out before him.⁵⁰

While the scene undoubtedly confronts the playhouse audience with visual evidence of Brachiano's isolation from his wife, perhaps even making them aware of their own complicity in voyeurism as Goldberg claims, the scene's ending forces all who watch the dumb show to recognize their own proximity to its actions. Both the playhouse audience and Brachiano, after all, suddenly become aware of their own false sense of isolation from the dumb shows' events, as the conjurer abruptly shifts from his narration to explain the increasing physical threat they pose. The attendants who have just exited as part of the dumb show, the conjurer tells Brachiano,

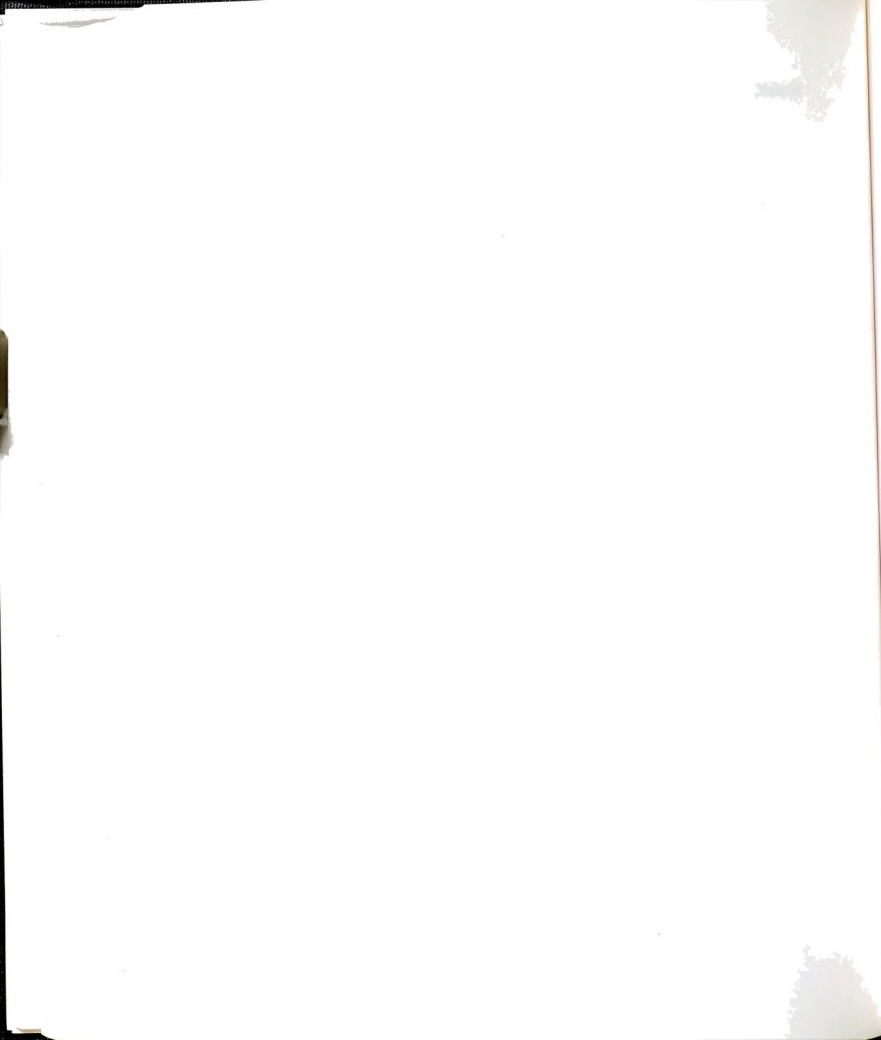
...are come with purpose to apprehend
Your mistress, fair Vittoria. We are now
Beneath her roof. 'Twere fit we instantly
Make out by some back-postern. (49-52)

The scene played out on the main stage, one that had systematically obscured the relationship between the dumb shows and its viewers, suddenly collapses whatever comfortably isolating gaps in space and time that viewers might have perceived between the dumb show murders and their onstage observers. The very people whom Brachiano had secretly observed through the conjurer's presentations, that is, not only step over the boundaries that make the dumb show distinct, they also intrude upon the space from which he could observe without himself being discovered. Most intriguingly, that space where Brachiano stands – and upon which the playhouse audience has looked – itself undergoes a magical transformation. After two dumb shows and fifty spoken lines, the conjurer informs the playhouse audience – and perhaps Brachiano as well – that he stands not upon a blank stage, nor in his own quarters, but in Vittoria's house. The conjurer's words thus abruptly enfold the stage's location with the world of the dumb show, placing



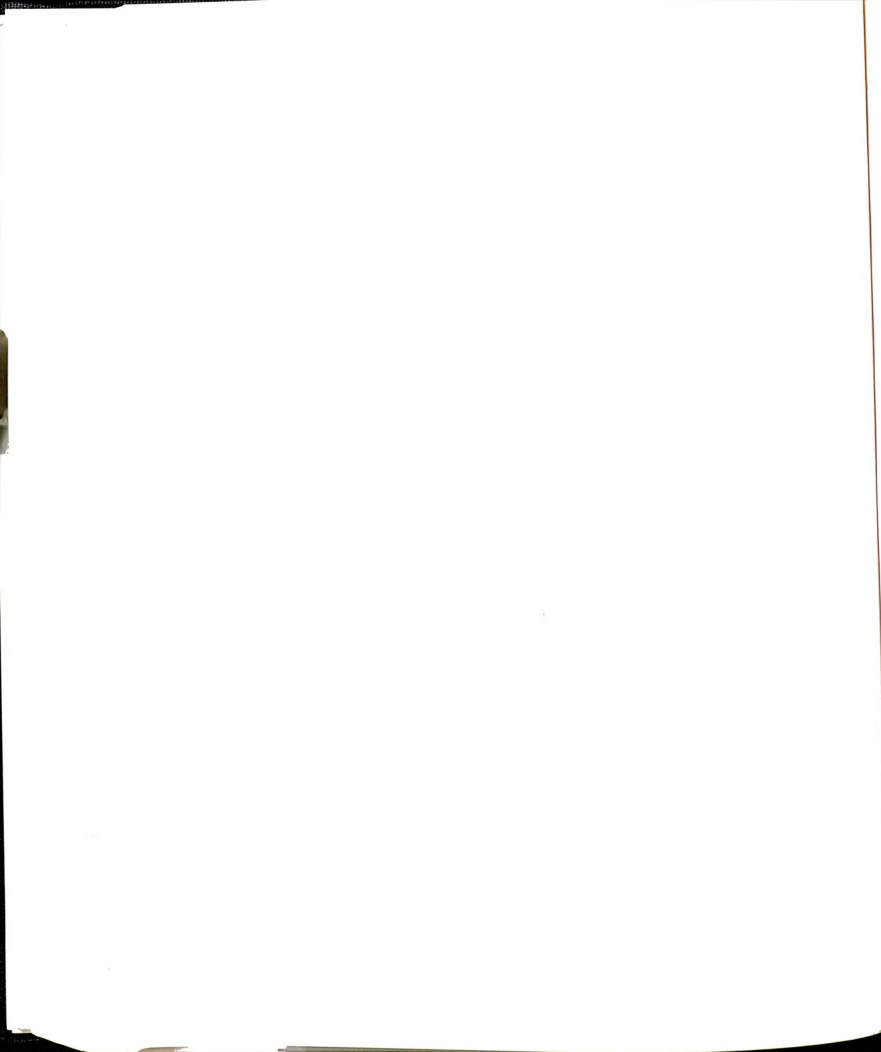
himself, Brachiano, and the apprehending attendants not only under the same roof but also within a few perilously close minutes in time. The once seemingly distinct worlds, then, suddenly seem destined to collide as the events of the dumb show abruptly break through the frame of the discovery space, telescoping toward the front of the stage.

Nursing the viewers' assumptions of the dumb show's distance from Brachiano and the conjurer only to obliterate these constructed boundaries by scene's end, the scene thus abruptly changes the audience's perception of the landscape of *The White Devil*. The conjurer's magical transformation of the setting, using words to collapse the seemingly rigid divisions between the stage's foreground and background before the playhouse observers' eyes, thus actively demonstrates the commercial theatre's willingness to exploit principles of visual perspective to elude and dazzle its audiences. Habits of perspective viewing – themselves conjured by the structure of the stage and further nurtured by the sightlines of the indoor theatres – invite the playhouse viewer to look upon the dumb shows as offering concentrated glimpses of secret, internal, and presumably hidden court events. Yet the conjurer, the dumb shows' narrator, single-handedly sets these presumably visual dynamics into motion, forcing both his on- and offstage audiences to realign their perceptions of the scene through his spoken words. His interpretations of the scene themselves thus become a part of the playhouse sightlines, for he, like Edgar in *Lear*, serves as a lens that focuses the spectators' view of the events played out before them. Using their words to direct the viewers' interpretation of the actions that occur in front of their own eyes, both characters call upon audience members to envision the spatial world of the drama as echoing the dimensions of the world beyond the stage; their efforts to conjure such associations, moreover, call upon the audience to envision the



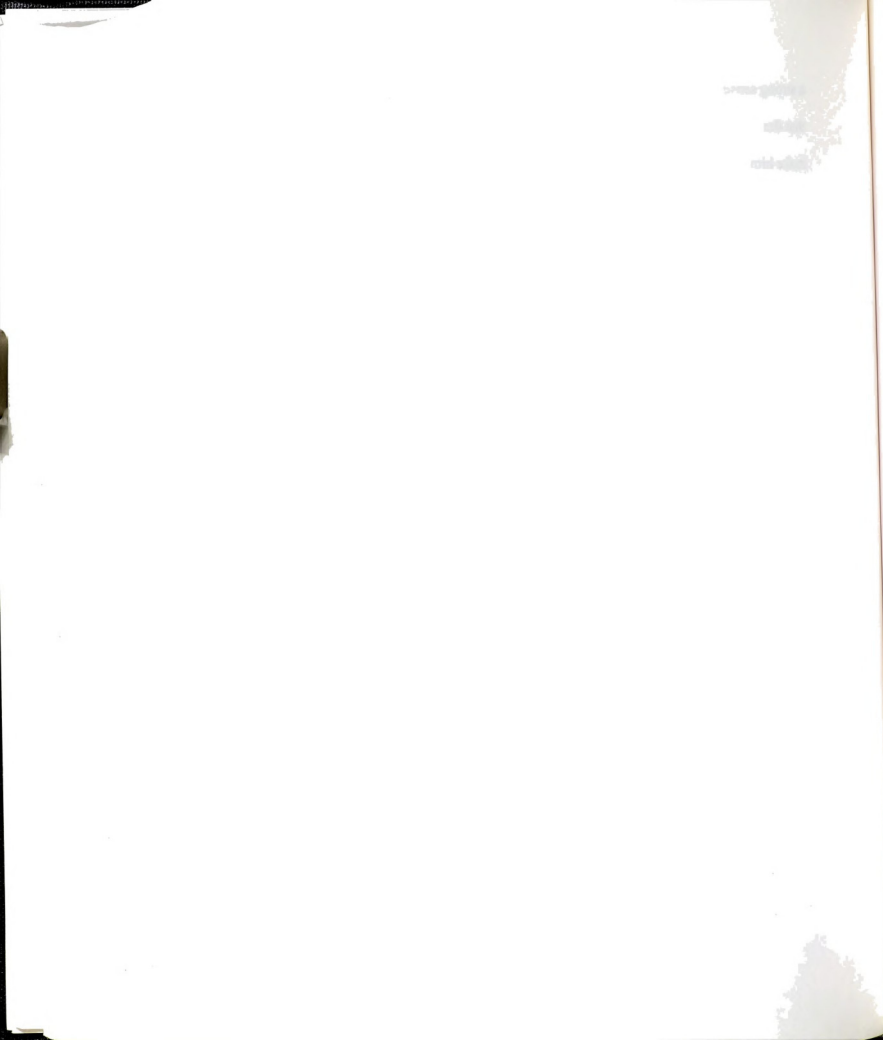
dramatic action as occupying a perspectivist visual field, one that their own imaginations impose upon the playhouse stage.

In directing both their on- and offstage audiences' interpretations of such narrated but highly visual scenes, the conjurer and Edgar both masterfully fulfill the role of "An Excellent Actor" as described in the 1615 edition of *New and Choise Characters*, a work often attributed to Webster that offers concise descriptions of various types of Londoners. Originally published in May of 1614 as an attachment to "The Wife," a poem by Sir Thomas Overbury (who, fittingly enough, fell victim to an infamous poisoning plot in 1613), these sketches proved enormously popular, undergoing three printings by 1615, each incorporating a greater number of characters.⁵¹ The "Excellent Actor" described in the text is more than a good orator; his power also stems from his ability to use his physical presence to provide the audience with a visual focus. The writer of the *New and Choise Characters* maintains that "by a full and significant action of body," the ideal actor "charms our attention" (43); even more intriguingly, the writer adds that mapping the audience's connections with the actor exposes a tangled grid of sensory interactions that outline their relationship. "[S]it in a full Theater," the author claims, "and you will thinke you see so many lines drawne from the circumference of so many eares, whiles the Actor is the Center" (42). The excellent actor's speech, the writer argues, enthralls the audience so completely that the aural connection between him and his audience proves almost concrete enough to be seen, with the lines that trace the audience's attention converging upon the site of the actor's body, making him the focal point for their eyes even as he demands the attention of their "so many eares." Though the sketch ultimately skirts the issue of interplay between sight and sound in the theatre, it nonetheless reveals



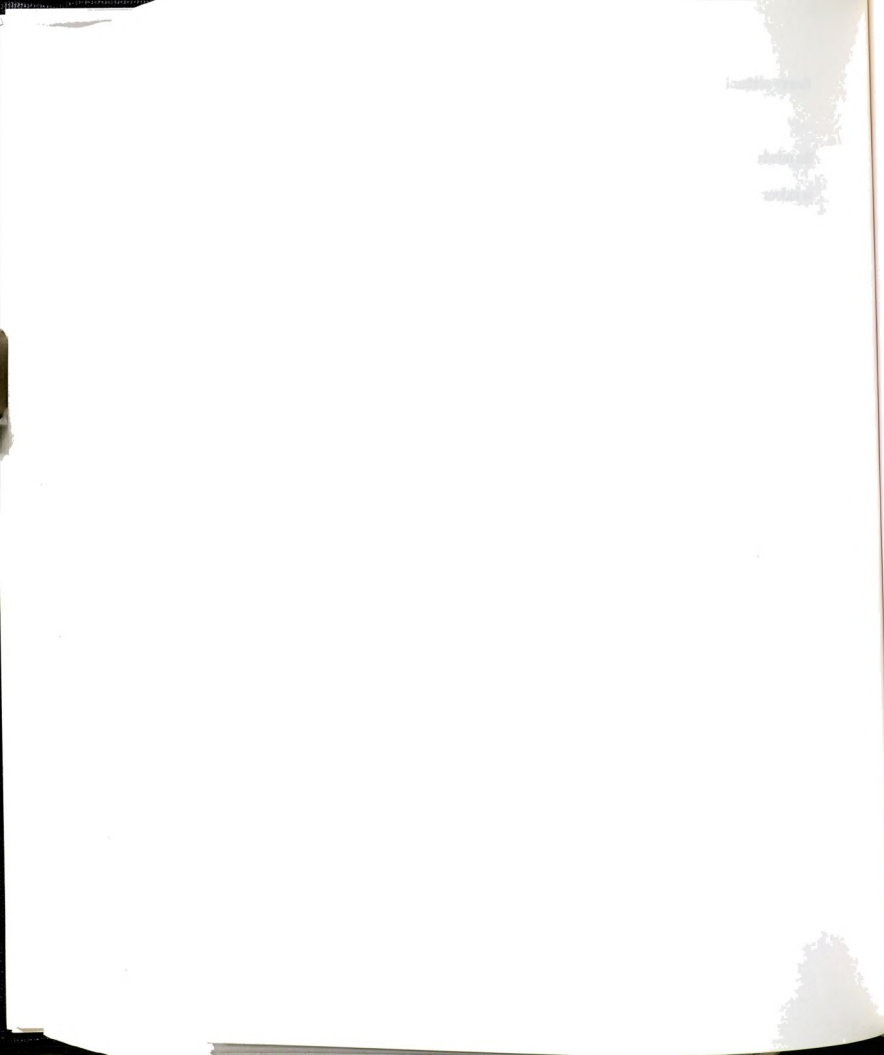
a strong sense of the visual aspects of the actor's connection to the audience, concluding that the excellent actor "is much affected to painting, and tis a question whether that make him an excellent Plaier, or his playing an exquisite painter" (43). The actors' ability to sway verbal and visual perceptions, in other words, becomes so entwined within the playhouse that the origins of his theatrical effectiveness remain indiscernible.

Interestingly enough, the appreciation for both painting and theatrical illusion that *New and Choise Characters* assigns to its excellent actor applies to those who earn their living through their association with early modern stages, whether in the commercial playhouse or in the anatomy theatre. The great Richard Burbage, for instance, was known as a painter as well as an actor, having been commissioned in 1613 and 1616 to furnish escutcheons for the Earl of Rutland.⁵² In 1603, the same earl's accounts reflect his associations with another famous artist with theatrical connections, showing a payment made to "Henygo Jones, a picture maker."⁵³ Some playhouses, more importantly, may have made explicit use of perspectivist scenery in the early modern era. *Periaktoi*, three-sided paintings that revolved to alter stage settings, for example, made their first appearance on the Blackfriars stage during a puppet show in the 1580s,⁵⁴ and Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels* mentions the use of similar scenery in 1601.⁵⁵ The Cockpit, Orrell contends, may even have used a rather elaborate perspectivist set in a Caroline production as well, as suggested by a sketch in Jones's hand labeled "for ye cokpitt for my lord Chamberlain 1639" (Figure 26). The drawing depicts a cityscape constructed according to perspectivist principles beneath an elaborate arch. Though this sketch remains a subject of debate among critics, many of whom argue that the set was intended for the Cockpit in Whitehall rather than the Cockpit playhouse, the Drury Lane



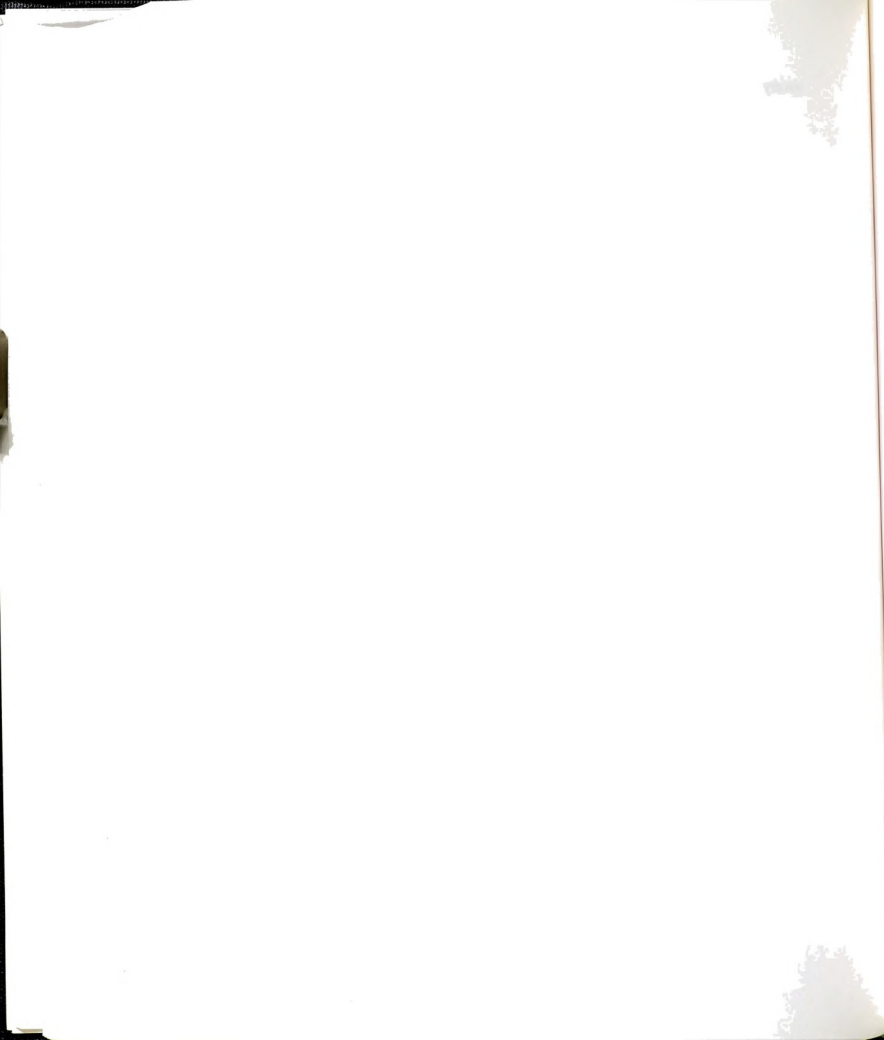
theatre certainly accommodated such scenery in the years after the Restoration.⁵⁶

The increasing exploitation of such perspectivist principles – whether conjured in the minds of the spectator through dialogue or actually constructed for theatrical displays in indoor playhouses, in court entertainments, or even in the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre – sought to create settings that deployed changing artistic ideals in the context of theatrical performance. While only the king enjoyed the proportionally perfect view in court entertainments, the design of theatres like the Cockpit and the Blackfriars – and, of course, the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre – increasingly offered Londoners of lesser standing a glimpse at ideal, visually unified spectacles. Just as acting troupes, theatre designers, and painters exploited such principles to endow the images in their artificial worlds with life, medical practitioners celebrated the body as an artistic creation, even calling upon the principles of perspective to interpret the life-giving unity of the body's elements. The anatomist Helkiah Crooke, for example, like the architects Vitruvius and Serlio before him, held that the study of the human body not only prepared all artists and craftsmen for their work but served as the basis for all their projects as well. In a chapter in his *Microcosmographia* entitled "How profitable Anatomy is to Philosophers, and in a manner to all Artificers and Handy-crafts men," Crooke argues that "inasmuch as the proper and proportionable subject of his art is a body Naturall, and the body of Man is as it were the square and rule of all other bodies, he ought not, nor cannot be truly accounted a Naturall Philosopher, who is ignorant of the historie of Mans body." Such study, he claims, not only provides concrete support for the notion that man is the measure of all things, it also inspires renewed admiration for the human body's creator, stirring Crooke to proclaim in an awe-filled reverie, "[W]ill thou



not cry out, though it bee against thy will, O admirable Architect! O vnimitable workeman!" (15).⁵⁷ For him, the wondrous unity among the body's parts reveals not just the divine power that created it, and not just the artistic elements of that creation, it also reveals the workmanlike attention to detail evident in the execution of the body's divine plan. Crooke's reflection thus pinpoints his admiration of the body as a built entity, as a functional edifice – one that, like any admirably constructed building, not only facilitates movement within but interacts with the world outside its bounds as well.

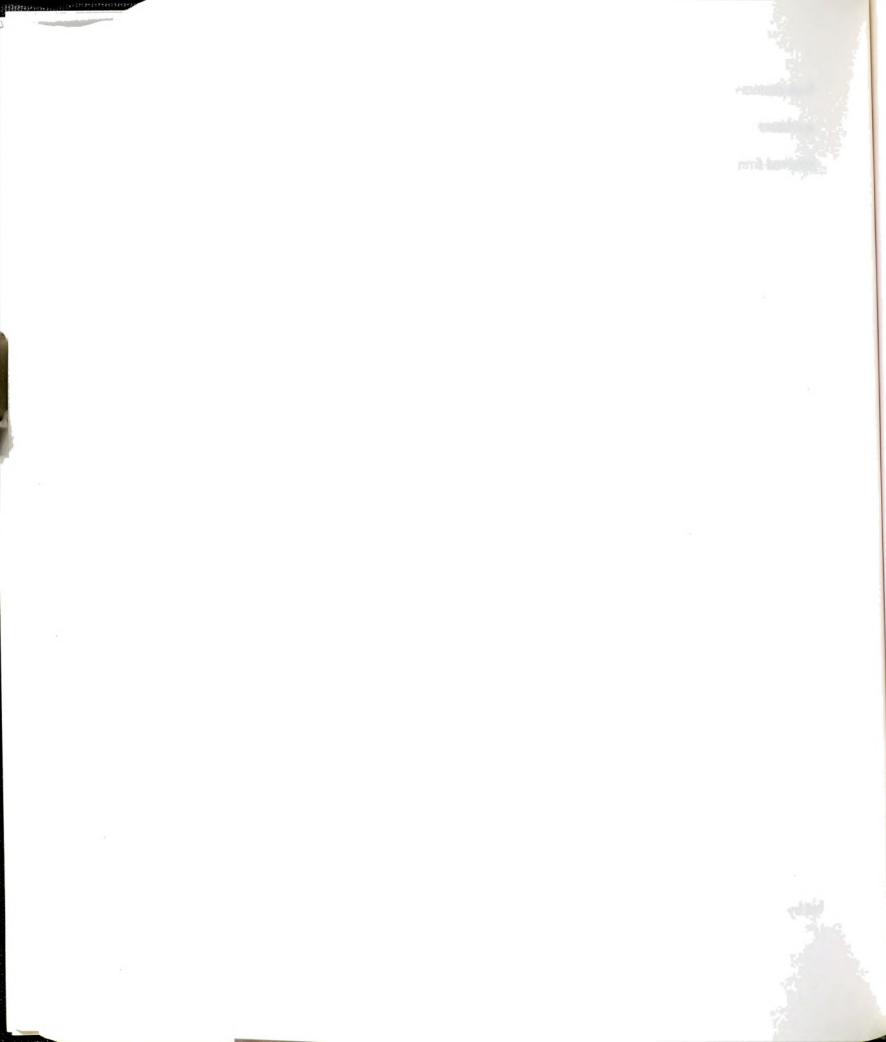
As we have seen, this admiration for the body as an edifice inspired Jones and others who designed buildings to use the human form as a model for projects that in turn focused visual attention upon the body. In the anatomy theatre, where the internal proportions of the body itself provided the subject of the crowd's curiosity, the use of perspectivist principles in viewing and presenting human flesh minimized the effects of the destruction inherent in the practice of dissection. Anatomy, after all, required its practitioners to violate the body's internal unity as well as to crack open the barriers presented by its protective skin and bones. The perspectivist modes of seeing that Jones's Anatomical Theatre called upon, however, encouraged viewers to see the violence of dissection simply as a means of exposing a greater, glorious unity among the body's parts. The relative smallness of the Anatomical Theatre, moreover, allowed those who entered a close, privileged glimpse at the dissection specimen's insides, permitting the spectators to view the wonders of the body's perfect proportions at close range. Yet the theatres often incorporated practices that interfered with this ideal point of view. The barber-surgeons, for example, often permitted spectators to approach the corpse after the dissection and to inspect parts of the body at close range during the anatomy itself.⁵⁸



Such customs were designed to offer fresh views of the body, yet they encouraged spectators to pay disproportionate amounts of attention to the individual organs that were removed from the body and circulated through the audience, perhaps leading them to see organs as somehow set apart from the body rather than contributing to the operation of the whole. Even more interestingly, the tools that anatomists used could cause similar distortions, altering the size and relative importance of the body parts they were used to examine. As James Howell's August, 1646, letter to a Mr. R. B. reveals, the illusory effects of such anatomist's devices proved well known enough to become fodder for rhetorical comparisons. Claiming that R. B. has flattered him, Howell tells him

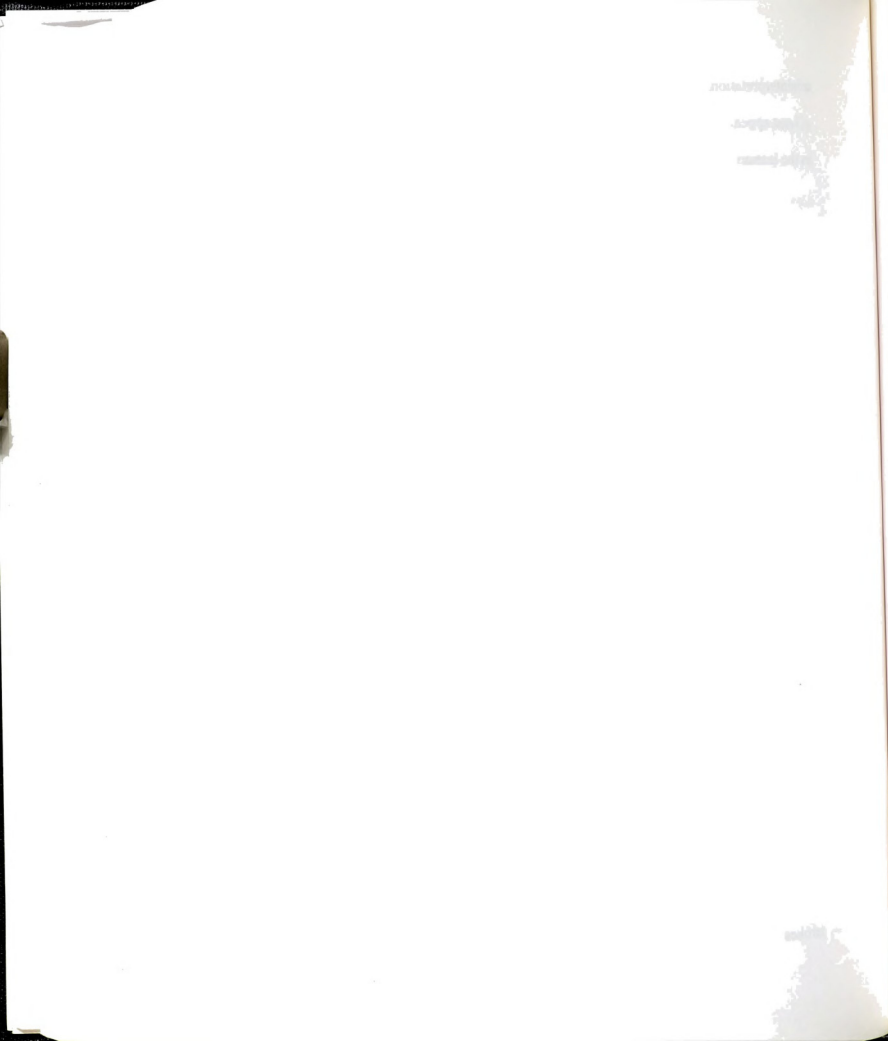
[Y]ou look upon me thro' the wrong end of the perspective, or rather thro' a multiplying-glass, which makes the object appear far bigger than it is in real dimensions; such glasses as Anatomists use in the dissection of Bodies, which can make a Flea look like a Cow, or a Fly as big as a Vulture.⁵⁹

Like Camillo in *The White Devil*, Mr. R. B. has fallen victim to an optical illusion itself facilitated by a manipulation of perspective principles, for his eyes have misinterpreted what they see, leading him to false conclusions. Howell's comparison, however, also suggests his awareness of the visual distortions that take place in the anatomy theatre; in his view, the tools of dissection – ones designed to focus the audience's attention more precisely at minute elements of the human body – also have the ability to mislead those who lack the ability to interpret such visions properly. While Howell clearly sees the potential that such perspective and multiplying glasses hold to mislead the novice, he nonetheless marvels at the new views of the natural world that such technological innovations have to offer. He is, in other words, overwhelmed not only by their novelty but by their scientific potential; he remains concerned, however, with the dangerous



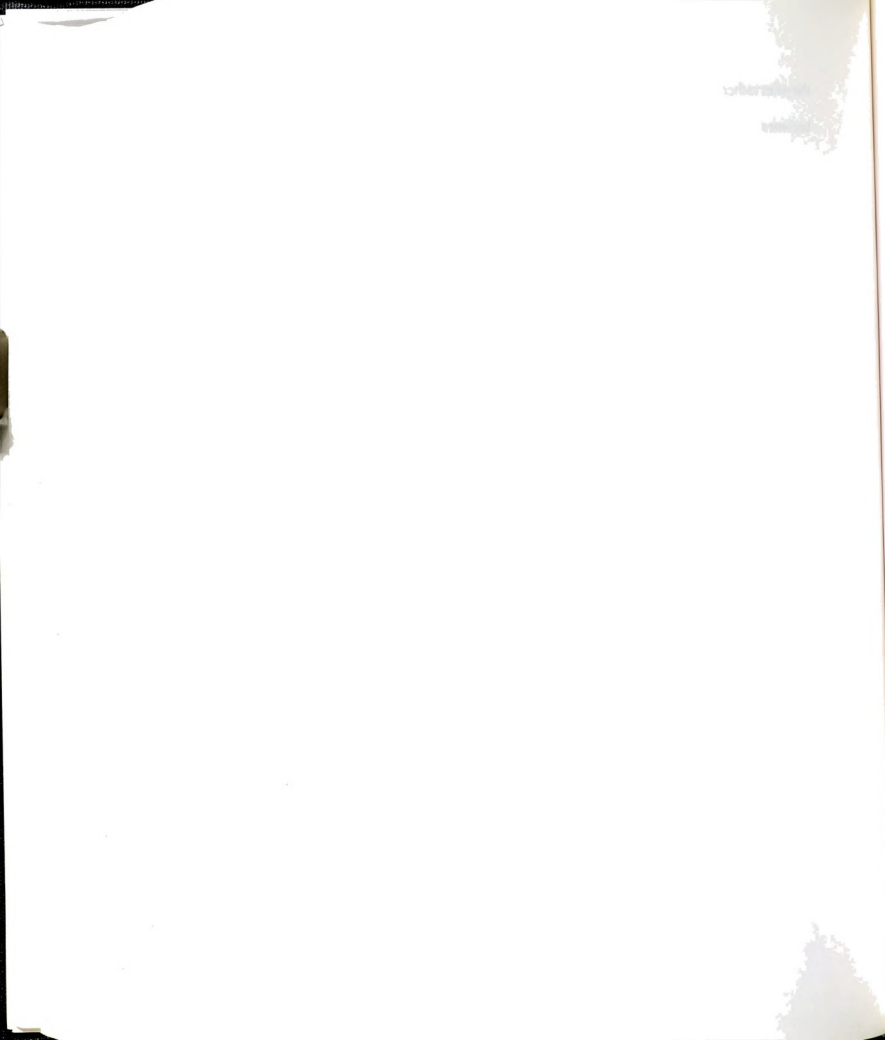
misinterpretations that might arise from such tools' power to amplify and to remove – or at least appear to remove – tiny elements of the body from their often mystifying context in the human form.

The characters of the early Stuart stage, however, often trust what they see far more implicitly than Howell, even when the objects they look upon purposely exploit the principles of artistic perspective to distort vision. Flamineo's cautions regarding the spectacles fashioned from perspective art, as we have seen, only exacerbate Camillo's misinterpretation of his relationship with Vittoria; similarly, the conjurer's exploitation of the audience's new habits of viewing dupe both his on- and offstage audience into imagining a greater gap between themselves and the dumb shows' action. Most strikingly, however, the scene staged by the conjurer to illustrate Isabella's death presents the audience with two widely varying models for interpreting products of perspective art. Neither the assassins nor the duchess, after all, views the painting of the Duke as a mimetic work. For Isabella, on the one hand, the painting proves a direct substitution for her husband, a representation evocative enough of his bodily and spiritual being for her to kiss. In her eyes, the portrait is more than paint on canvas – instead, it embodies her husband's inner being as well as his physical form. She sees in the painting, in short, not just a representation of his flesh but of the qualities she imagines that that body contains. The assassins' actions, on the other hand, effectively mock her willingness to see such significance in the portrait, using her habit of overlooking the now-poisoned artistic surface in their plan to execute her death. The special spectacles that the assassins wear when applying this poison also hint that they too see something aside from the paint strokes that make up the portrait. Looking through their glasses, they see what lies atop



the paint rather than what the painting strives to represent. For them, then, the painting becomes primarily not a work of art, but a murder weapon.

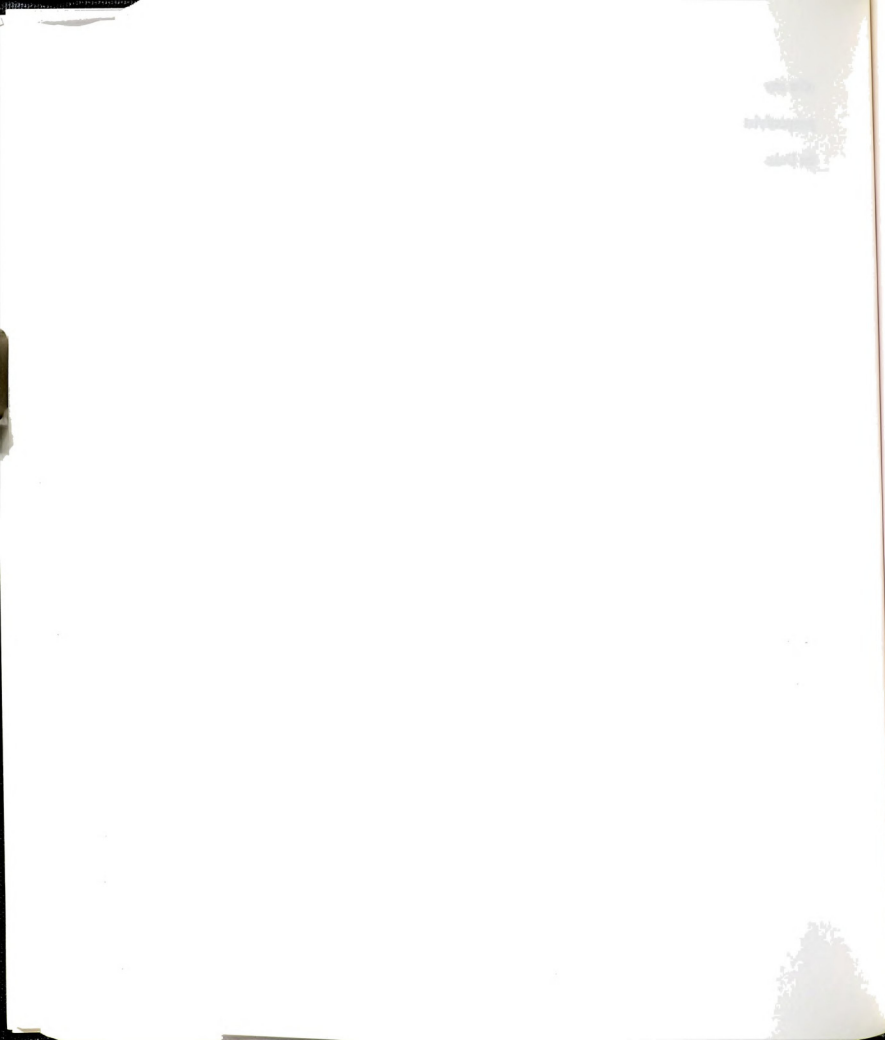
In James Shirley's *The Traitor*, however, these two modes of viewing come together in Lorenzo's plotting to kill the Duke of Florence. Debuting in the Cockpit in 1631, just one year after *The White Devil* was revived on the same stage, *The Traitor* used portraiture to highlight the mutilation involved in Lorenzo's murder plot while simultaneously granting the portrait itself a far less immediate role in the killing. For Lorenzo, however, the portrait serves as a means of steeling himself for the revenge he has been scheming to undertake rather than as a murder weapon per se. As his plotting approaches its climax – after he has both secured the aid of Petruchio and driven Sciarrha into a murderous madness – Lorenzo informs the audience of the extent of his own obsession with the Duke. Musing that no man should attempt to kill a duke who has not yet proven himself an accomplished murderer, Lorenzo declares himself "Practic'd already ... though no man see't," revealing that "every day / I kill a prince" (20-22).⁶⁰ Then, in lines with invocatory power reminiscent of a conjurer's, he commands his "tragic witness" to appear before him as "*He discovers the duke's picture, a poniard sticking in it*" (22). As the audience gazes upon this startling sight, Lorenzo explicates the significance of the stabbed portrait, telling his listeners that "though it bleed not, I may boast a murder," and that in the image "first the duke was painted to the life, / But with this pencil [brought] to his death" (23-25). The portrait's wounds thus not only foreshadow the Duke's demise, they constitute a nearly artistic representation of his murder in their own right, transforming the lively image of the leader into an even more realistic vision of his death to come. Though neither the dialogue nor the stage directions



offer any clues about what this portrait would have looked like – whether it deployed perspectivist modes of representation or whether it even resembled the actor portraying the Duke – its presence onstage highlights both the unreality of painting and the all-too-real brutality of Lorenzo's stabbings. If Lorenzo's plan succeeds, after all, the Duke's flesh will contain wounds nearly identical to those of the portrait, and they may well be created by the same knife. In this sense, the portrait's stab wounds prove even more lifelike than the picture, for they add a third dimension to the portrait, lending depth to its flat, painted surface.

To the deranged Lorenzo, however, the differences between the Duke's physical body and his portrait prove increasingly indistinct. On one level, Lorenzo remains aware that the wounds he delivers to the canvas serve only as rehearsal for the actual murder he schemes. Explaining his fear that he might be overcome by dread or compassion when the time comes to enact the murder, Lorenzo claims he has trained himself so that his knife may "Through all his charms as confidently wound him / As thus I stab his picture, and stare on it" (35-36). The power to confront – and to kill – the Duke thus stems not just from Lorenzo's practiced, determined wielding of the knife but from his ability to confront his victim's eyes as he delivers the lethal wounds. Acknowledging that his power to murder remains linked to his power to hold the Duke within his gaze, Lorenzo loses his awareness of the portrait's separateness from the duke as he lapses further into his rage, leaving him to imagine that the Duke's own physical senses extend through his painted body to perceive danger – and pain. "Methinks the duke should feel me now," Lorenzo muses, wondering

Can he less than tremble
When I lift up my arm to wound his counterfeit?

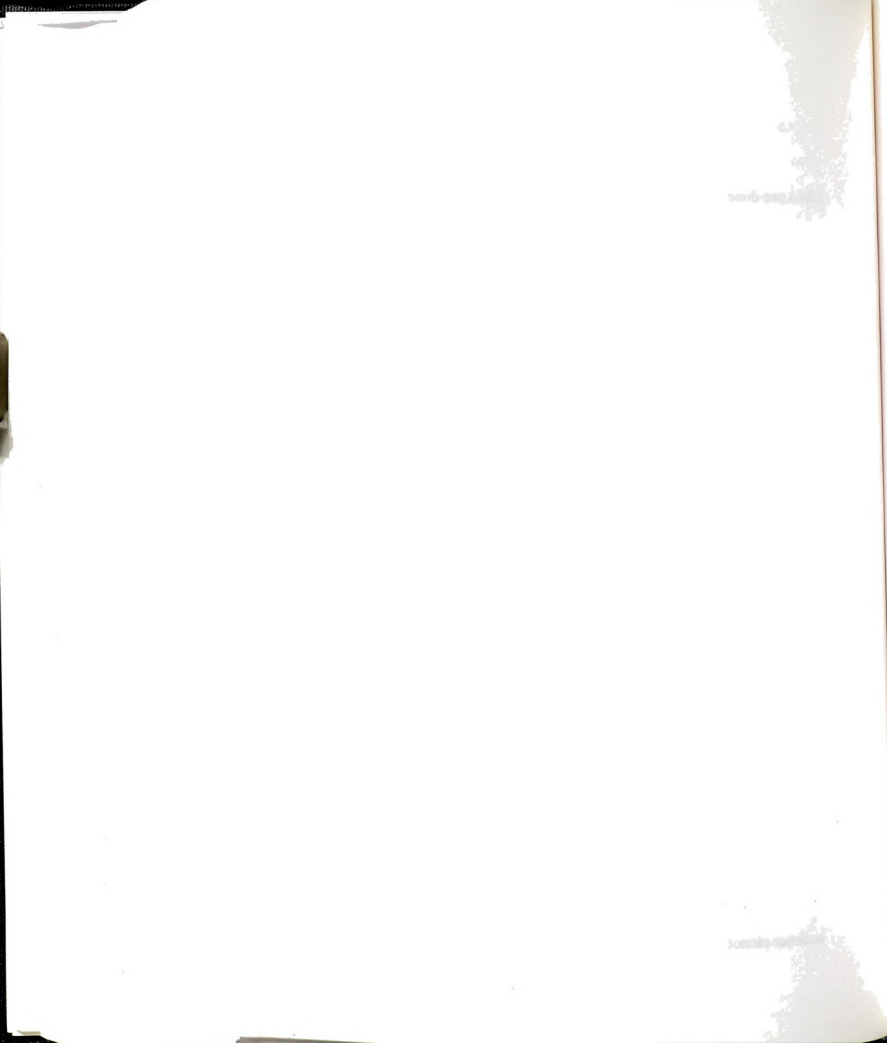


Witches can persecute the lives of whom
They hate when they torment their senseless figures,
And stick the waxen model full of pins.
Can any stroke of mine carry less spell
To wound his heart, sent with as great a malice? (37-44)

Like a two-dimensional voodoo doll, the portrait, in Lorenzo's eyes, becomes a conduit conveying pain directly to the physical body it represents. Yet as he finishes his soliloquy, the connection between portrait and flesh becomes even more direct, for Lorenzo becomes convinced that the painted figure of the duke should not only feel the stabbing his effigy receives but can see through his portrait's eyes as well:

He smiles, he smiles upon me. I will dig
Thy wanton eyes out, and supply the dark
And hollow cells with two pitch-burning tapers,
Then place thee porter in some charnel house
To light the coffins in. (45-49)

Seeing the portrait not just as an embodiment of the Duke's flesh but as an extension of his senses, Lorenzo attacks the painting in hopes of damaging the man it represents. Yet even in his deranged conviction that the portrait performs actions that his eyes cannot see or control, Lorenzo's remains aware that his violence against the painting cannot injure the living duke. Lorenzo, after all, blinds the portrait to prevent the figure of the duke from staring back at him, aware that he will have to inflict these injuries upon the duke's actual body to achieve the revenge for which he yearns. Even though Lorenzo and the playhouse audience know perfectly well that the duke remains unharmed, the violence directed at his portrait nonetheless tempts them to imagine the ruler's body as experiencing actual damage through Lorenzo's rehearsals. Watching the portrait undergo such incremental destruction – damage where the thrusts strive to eliminate specific sensible capabilities and that is both coldly premeditated and delivered in rage – the audience cannot help but imagine the bloody fate awaiting the duke and the pain that



would accompany it. The two-dimensional portrait thus foregrounds the duke's death with the same immediacy for them as it does for Lorenzo, for in witnessing its destruction they build a connection that conveys the stabbings' impact from the lifeless portrait to the physically susceptible man it represents.

This confusion between the living and the dead takes a drastically different turn in the final scene, where the interactions between the Duke and Amidea's corpse utterly reverse the dynamics that Lorenzo establishes between aggressor and lifeless painted object. There, Amidea's corpse – adorned to contain the illusion of life – takes on an integral, if not technically vital, role in murder in its own right. The Duke's demand that Amidea become his mistress leads to her tragic death at the hands of her brother Sciarrha, who kills her in a crazed attempt to save her chastity; Amidea's second brother Florio then plots to revenge both his sister's death and Sciarrha's madness. Telling Lorenzo that his sister will concede to the Duke's wishes, Florio orders Amidea's attendants to arrange her corpse in bed, fittingly asking them "not to inquire the reason / Of this strange service" (5.3.4-5); Lorenzo then ushers in the Duke, who attempts to awaken the presumably sleeping Amidea with a kiss. Just as he discovers that he has kissed a corpse, however, Lorenzo and Petruchio charge into the chamber in hopes of killing the Duke while simultaneously rescuing Amidea, whom they presume still lives. While Florio may well have intended to blame the Duke for his sister's murder, Lorenzo and Sciarrha quickly expand the plan to amplify their own valor in hopes of gaining credit – and political power – with the public; their conflicting plots, however, drive them into a duel that results in both their deaths.

All of this ensuing stage business, meanwhile, takes place around the supposedly



lifeless body of Amidea, resting on the bed that is "*discover'd*" at the beginning of the scene. Such a stage direction strongly suggests that her body – actually that of a boy actor who is in fact very much alive – occupies the small discovery space at the back of the Cockpit stage. Positioned there and adorned to convey an impression of lingering life, Amidea becomes a work of art in her own right, framed by the middle entranceway's timbers, becoming, in essence, the precise opposite of a *tableau vivante*. This spectacle thus serves as a startling counterpart to Lorenzo's portrait of the duke, also an artful object "*discover[ed]*" to the audience. Like portraits which strive to capture aspects of their subject's life and inner character, the adornments placed on Amidea strive to prevent the appearance of liveliness from fleeing her body; the reactions that both the stabbed painting and Amidea's corpse provoke, meanwhile, suggest that their artists have succeeded in convincing at least some of the play's characters of their subjects' vitality. The playhouse audience, of course, remains keenly aware of the lifelessness of the portrait, yet the vehemence of Lorenzo's attacks upon the Duke's painting – along with his insistence upon speaking to the figure on canvas as if it were alive – may lead off-stage spectators to wince at the poniard's thrusts as if delivered upon an actual living body. Similarly, early modern audiences, believing as we have seen that corpses held resonances of their spirit, would be easily convinced of the lively appearance of Amidea's corpse as represented on stage; such viewers' familiarity with theatrical convention would also assure them that the actor who embodies Amidea would rise again at the end of the performance to enact other theatrical roles.

While such factors encourage playhouse spectators to see life and lifelessness simultaneously in both the portrait and the corpse, the playgoers' view of these objects

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from beyond the stage accentuates their nature as human fabrications that attempt to capture life through artistic means. Their presentation, moreover, exploits the habits of perspectivist viewing to highlight the character's attempts to create in such supposedly lifeless objects this illusion of vitality. Both the portrait and Amidea's body, first of all, appear within the bounds of physical frames, for even if the objects do not appear within the defining walls of the discovery space, the curtains that surround and cover them set them off from the remainder of the stage. Secondly, though we have no indication of the dimensions of the Duke's portrait, the ease with which Lorenzo hides it suggests its small, portable size. The corpse's position at the back of the stage, farther from the audience's eyes, renders it proportionally smaller than the props and characters nearer the audience. Amidea's corpse and the duke's portrait, then, act as the vanishing point in a perspectivist framework, both serving as the central point around which all the other visual features array themselves. Thus, though as long as Amidea remains motionless, her body becomes the organizing principle that governs – and enables – the remainder of the action.

The staging's suggestion of such perspectivist arrangements, however, cannot overcome the audience's fundamental awareness of the lifelessness, within the dramatic action, of both the duke's portrait and the adorned Amidea. Instead, in the spectator's eyes, the two objects remain fundamentally dead within the dramatic action while paradoxically taking on vital roles within the plot. The exhibition of these bodies – first, the duke's as represented in the portrait and then Amidea's as arrayed to induce the appearance of life – forces the playhouse viewers to acknowledge the power of visual illusion as well as to confront their own participation in the creation of such illusions.

Their increasing horror regarding Lorenzo's verbal and physical violence against the portrait, after all, allows playhouse viewers to watch the Duke move from speaking of Amideia's lively beauty in sleep to a horrified recognition of her death with a much greater understanding of his altered perception, for the scene prompts them to imagine the duke falling for the same ruse that the portrait earlier perpetrated upon them.

For the layperson, Devon Hodges argues, anatomy's power to display both internal and external aspects of the body, submitting both the corpse's surfaces and depths to public examination, lies at the heart of dissection's broad appeal in the early modern era.⁶¹ This interplay, Hodges suggests, shines through most clearly in Lyly's *Euphues* (1578), a work itself labeled an anatomy, where the Epistle Dedicatory praises the revealing power of both anatomy and portraiture as it defends the written word's power to dissect the human mind:

For as every Paynter that shadoweth a man in all parts, giveth every peece his iust proporcion, so he that disciphereth the qualities of the mynde, ought aswell to shew every humor in his kinde, as the other doth every part in his colour. The Surgion that maketh the Anatomy sheweth aswel the muscles in the heele, as the vaines of the hart. If then the first sight of Euphues, shal seeme to light to be read of the wise, or to foolish to be regarded of the learned, they ought not to impute it to the iniquitie of the author, but the necessitie of the history.⁶²

The mocking tone that characterizes the passage, Hodges claims, subverts the author's claim to desire "depth and objectivity," instead highlighting his work's "emphasis on the paintedness of the world as revealed by an anatomy"; Lyly's words thus reveal an innate understanding that "anatomy transforms a subject into an external display, a painting perhaps, of transitory and discontinuous matter."⁶³ In the early Stuart theatre, the onstage adorning and tinting of (supposedly) dead human flesh places an even greater emphasis

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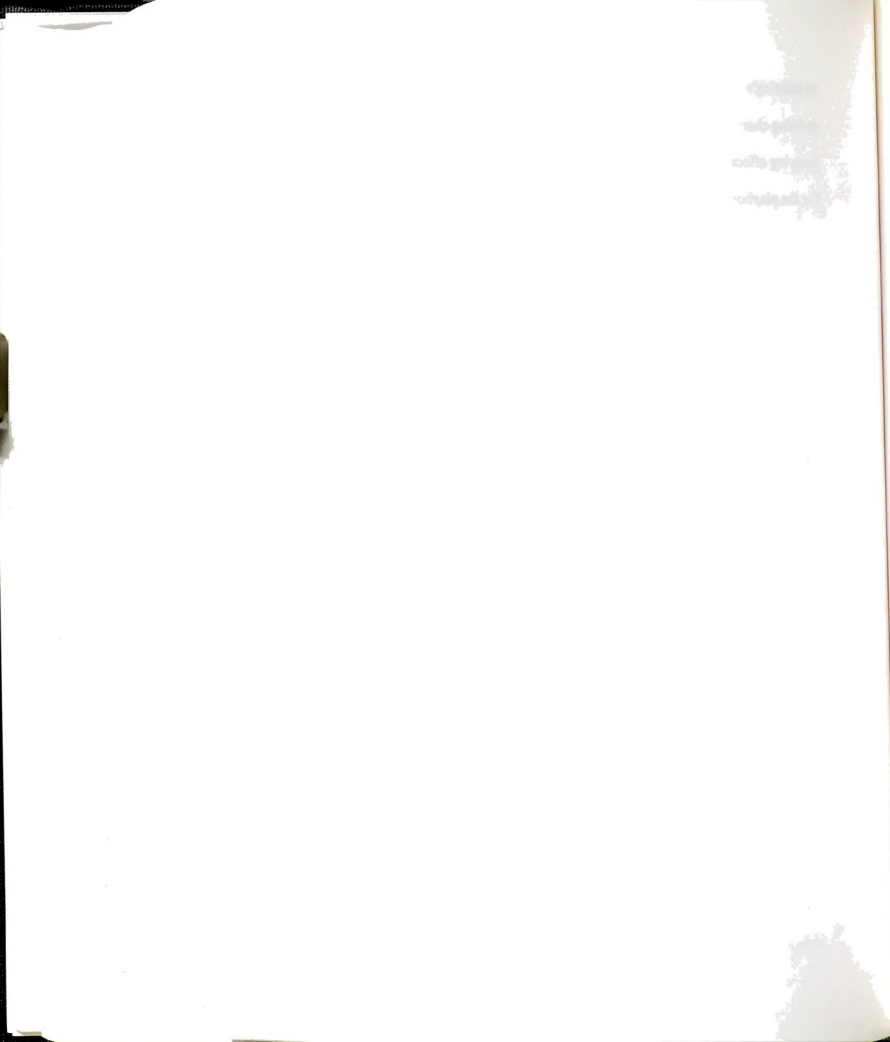
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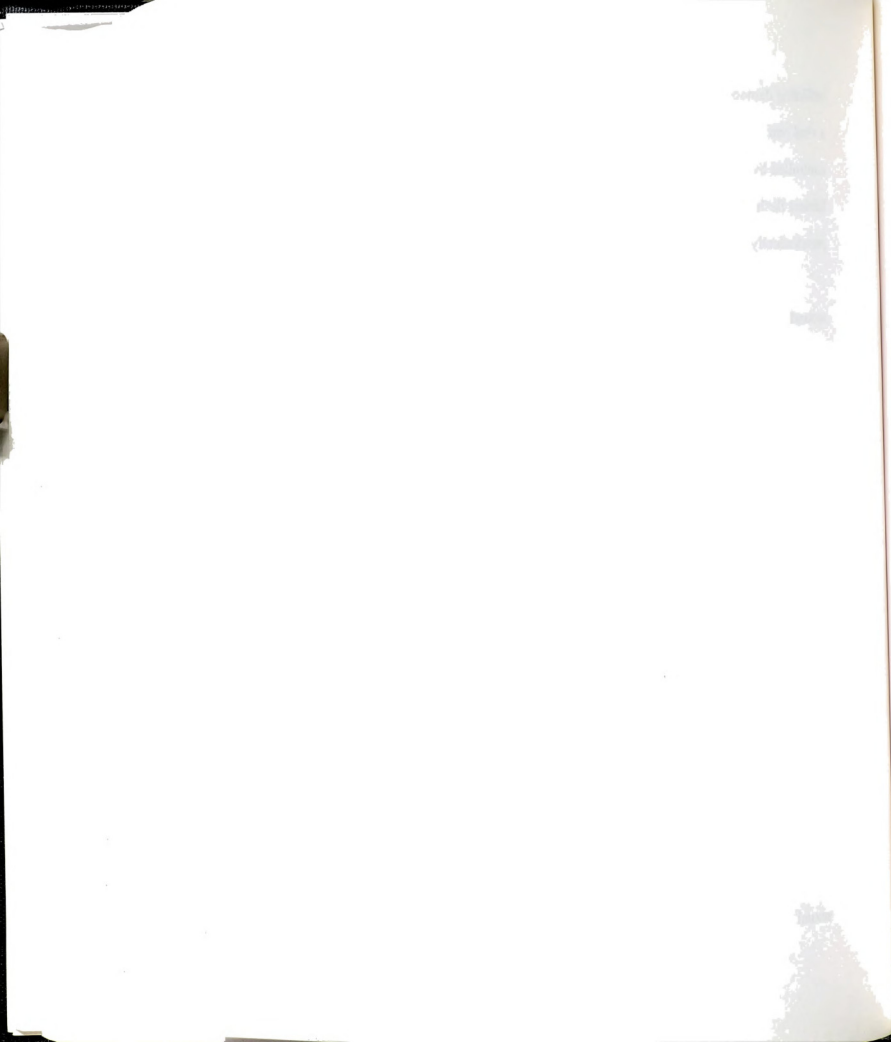
on painting's perceived power to represent – and contain – a character's interior nature, enabling characters within the drama to engineer displays of the body designed to halt the decaying effects of time upon flesh while also allowing them to achieve their revenge. For the playhouse audience, such shocking scenes also serve as show-stoppers, forcing viewers to confront bodies whose deadness suddenly becomes simultaneously more vivid and more doubtful as a result of their renewed centrality within the plot. In the case of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* (1611) and *The Duke of Milan* (1622), revengers cast their beloved's corpses in starring roles in their revenge; Vindice in *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1608) extends the same privilege to his deceased love, Gloriana, even though her body has been reduced to a simple, bare skull. The revengers in all three plays, moreover, transform their lovers' bodies into "external" displays of the "transitory and discontinuous matter" of human flesh through artistry that recreates the bodies as literal paintings, for these men apply ample amounts of pigment to the women's complexions to ready them for their roles in their revenge plots.

While Amidea's corpse serves as a tool in the murder of the Duke in *The Traitor*, the artistically arrayed bodies in these other revenge plots play even more integral – and perhaps even more active – roles in their tormenters' killings. In fact, in both the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *The Duke of Milan*, the bodies of wrongfully killed women directly cause the deaths of their own murderers. Through the help of the plays' revengers, these dead women appear to achieve revenge for their own deaths, thus enacting aggressive actions that their ladylike demeanors would never have permitted in life. Able to involve themselves in such action directly only after their deaths, the women's bodies gain a new kind of power, for their demise renders their flesh capable of



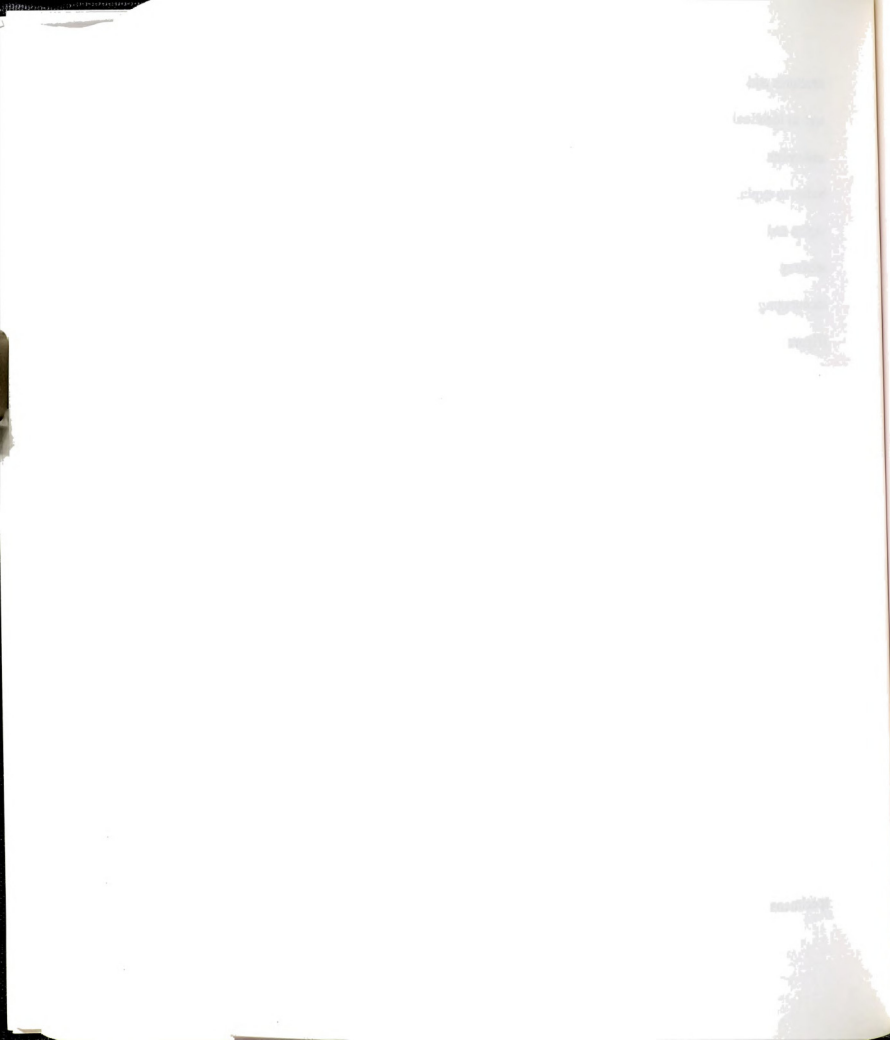
inflicting damage on bodies other than their own. Their bodies, however, can fulfill such a vital part in their plays' revenge plots only by becoming artistic objects utterly controlled by male characters, for the revengers in both dramas paint the (supposedly) lifeless flesh of the (supposed) women to create an artful illusion of life that, paradoxically, wields the power to kill.

Women in these revenge tragedies thus become literal extensions of the men around them, serving as illustrations of male status as well as tools – even, in Karen Newman's word, prosthetics⁶⁴ – through which men can exercise and illustrate their power. The actors who embodied these women were of course not female, at least not according to typical twentieth-century definitions of the term, but early modern audiences held conceptions of male and female anatomy that may not have markedly interfered with perceiving boy actors as female. Although, as Jonathan Sawday argues, anatomical texts commonly labeled the female body as "monstrous" and "grotesque," seeing it as an erotic entity governed by the uterus and capable of reducing "heroic masculine rigour into luxurious sensual excess,"⁶⁵ the inordinate attention that the dissector focused on the womb pinpoints early modern anatomy's inability to otherwise differentiate between male and female bodies. Such exclusive attention to the womb proves a logical extension of the anatomists' problems in obtaining female corpses, a difficulty so overwhelming that it escalated Vesalius's life-long graverobbing habits to an even lustier pitch.⁶⁶ Unable to secure an adequate number of female bodies, anatomists concentrated on dissecting organs unique to women whenever female corpses became available. As a result, the bodies of women, both alive and dead, came to be seen as little more than carriers of the sexual organs that separated their bodies from those of men, and, aside from the



structures and functions obviously connected to reproduction, female bodies were then seen as identical to their male counterparts. Yet, as Thomas Laqueur points out, anatomists continued to rely on their habitual analogies between men's and women's bodies to explain and understand even such seemingly uniquely female structures as the vagina and the uterus. The *Epitome* of Vesalius's *Fabrica*, he notes, provided students of anatomy with nearly identical illustrations of male and female reproductive systems, encouraging students to see women's organs as the internal, inverted reflection of men's (Figure 27); for Berengarius, the notion proved so commonsensical that he declared, almost off-handedly, that "the neck of the uterus is like the penis, and its receptacle with testicles and vessels like the scrotum."⁶⁷ Such notions – which European anatomists had expounded since the time of Galen – thus perpetuated classical ideas of the woman as a less developed man, a creature whose lack of internal heat prevented her reproductive organs from descending properly.⁶⁸ For Laqueur, these classical ideas of human physical structure result in the cultural belief, prevalent until the Enlightenment, in the "one-sex" body, where men and women share the same material characteristics whose differing expressions create two different genders.⁶⁹ Though his ideas have met with increasing opposition from critics who emphasize early modern notions of the male's and the female's distinct contributions to the formation of an embryo,⁷⁰ the interchangeability that early anatomists saw between men's and women's non-reproductive functions remains clear, and the bodies upon which such observations were based remained almost exclusively male.

Just as the anatomical theatres' reliance on the gallows rendered female dissection specimens a rarity, requiring anatomists to extrapolate the characteristics of the female



body from the male, the playhouses had to make the best use of available male bodies for their display of female characters. In the early modern playhouse, where audiences may well have looked upon the cross-dressed bodies of boy actors as embodying traits different from those of men rather than identical to those of women, viewers looked upon the sexually undeveloped bodies of these boy actors as not entirely male or female, allowing the play's dialogue to instruct them on the proper modes of looking upon female characters. This is not to say, however, that audiences took no delight in the punning deceptions of cross-dressing or even double cross-dressing; on the contrary, comedies and tragedies alike encouraged these multiple associations to delight their viewers further. All such means of coping with the necessary use of boys' bodies, however, underscore the cultural significance of the processes of vision that discerned – and perceived as meaningful – all degrees of variation upon the male body. As dialogue and costumes encouraged audiences simultaneously to ignore and to take special note of the boy actor's maleness, the early modern indoor theatre focused relentless attention upon the boy actor's body, often placing him at the center of the stage and making his supposedly female character the center of the action. In early Stuart tragedies where the boy actor must take on the role of a deceased woman, the process of interpreting the actor's flesh and the character he embodies grows even more complex, for the audience must willfully ignore much of the visual evidence – of the boy's male features and his aliveness – as well as the culturally driven interpretations derived from that evidence presented by the scenes played out before them.

The boy's body, caught in webs of dialogue and sightlines that encourage viewers to look beyond the flesh's surface to discern the heroine's nature, thus challenges the



spectators' habitual means of interpreting both female bodies and womanly character. The relentless attention to the boy actor's bodily surfaces in tragedies like the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and Massinger's *The Duke of Milan* (which relies heavily on the earlier play for its plot), for example, illustrates the cultural frustration with the perceived, yet unknowable, mysteries and dangers lurking within even the most virtuous, obedient female bodies. The King's Men performed both plays, presumably in both the Blackfriars and the Globe, and while Massinger's name is clearly attached to the printed version of *The Duke of Milan*, the authorship of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* remains disputed.⁷¹ In both plays, a self-indulgent ruler's sexual obsession results in a woman's death by stabbing, which drives the ruler into a crazed denial of her lifelessness. Suddenly realizing their own culpability in the women's deaths, both leaders insist that the women they have helped kill in fact retain their lively beauty. Members of their court, struggling to accommodate the delusions from which their rulers suffer, seek out experts to help perpetuate the appearance of liveliness in the corpses; their efforts, however, ultimately result in their leaders' demises, for the experts they call upon to add lifelike layers of paint to the dead women's faces ultimately murder the men their efforts were meant to help. Using the illusions that painting creates as the basis for their staged revenge, both the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *The Duke of Milan* threaten to collapse the distinctions between the individual woman's character and paintings made of her, since, in both cases, the individual's body serves as the canvas upon which her own portrait is created. Even more interestingly, the painted corpse – thus transformed into a work of human art in its own right – becomes an essential, active element in a murder plot, for though the dead women cannot exercise their own revenge, they nonetheless deliver the lethal doses of

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poison to the men who had dishonored them in life and driven them to their deaths. The paint applied to their bodies' surfaces thus invites audiences to imagine these supposedly dead women as actively contributing to devious, if righteous, revenge plots, encouraging viewers to imagine the women as nurturing a yearning for a violent recourse that heretofore had lain buried within their virtuous living forms.

After deposing the young, inexperienced Govianus in the play's first scene, the Tyrant of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* becomes obsessed with winning over the younger man's true love as well. The young virtuous maid – who, despite her position at the center of the drama, receives only the name of Lady – refuses the Tyrant; in retaliation, he orders her into prison, where her kindly jailers allow her to spend her days in the company of the incarcerated Govianus. When the Lady learns that the Tyrant will shortly force her into marriage, she chooses death over the threat of sexual violation; she receives, however, little help from her true love in enacting her plan. She asks the almost comically morose Govianus to kill her with his knife, begging him, "for honors sake dispatch me," yet he can do little but complain of his own powerlessness (1275).⁷² Searching for the most noble course of action to help her evade the Tyrant's grasp, he tells her instantly, with a haste that reveals his own panic, that "I shall neuer kill thee well," that the deed is "more then I can performe," and that "I shall not have the power to doe thee right in't" (1311-14). His wavering drives the Lady to obvious impatience, for when he asks how he should perform the murder in the first place, she answers with an exasperated, "art thou yet ignoraunt, ther is no waie / but throughe my bosome" (1329-30). Govianus's lengthy self-derision soon proves accurate, however, for when he takes up the knife he "Runs at her and falles by the way in a Sound," leaving the Lady to



declare him a "poore spirited man" before taking up the knife and efficiently killing herself (1342). Not even the news of the Lady's death, however, can sway the Tyrant's determination to possess her. Vowing that neither death nor the "marble prison" of the tomb will "keep her bodies lockt up fro myne armes," he and his attendants disinter her corpse – a corpse which, he insists, retains its lively beauty. "[S]hees only pale," he concludes, noting that she exhibits naturally "the colour of the Courte" that "mistresses most strive for" (1800-1). Despite the attending soldiers' shocked insistence that "shees dead my lord! (1808), the Tyrant orders that her body be taken back to court and decked with jewels in an attempt to perpetuate the liveliness he sees in her corpse. His efforts, however, fail to fool even his courtly flatterers, for when the Lady's body later appears on stage, his musicians declare through a rather unsympathetic song "one Night of death makes it look pale and horred / the Daynty preserv'd flesh how soone it molders" (223-4). The Tyrant nonetheless remains determined to keep his darling for "seavne yeare hence" and calls in a "Picture drawer" to help the corpse regain its lifelike beauty. His dementia drives him to inform the corpse of his plan, assuring the lifeless form that paint will not impinge upon its modesty. "It is no shame for thee most silent mistris / to stand in need of Arte," he assures the body, for even "weemen alive are glad to seeke her friendship to make up the fair number of their graces" (2260-64).

The Lady, of course, can take no comfort in the Tyrant's words; his reassurances, however, succinctly remind the audience of the condemnations that conservative religious writers like Philip Stubbes leveled against the courtly practice of face painting. In his massive and frequently reprinted *Anatomie of Abuses*, Stubbes rails against the use of such cosmetics, quoting ancient authorities to argue that "No painting can make any to

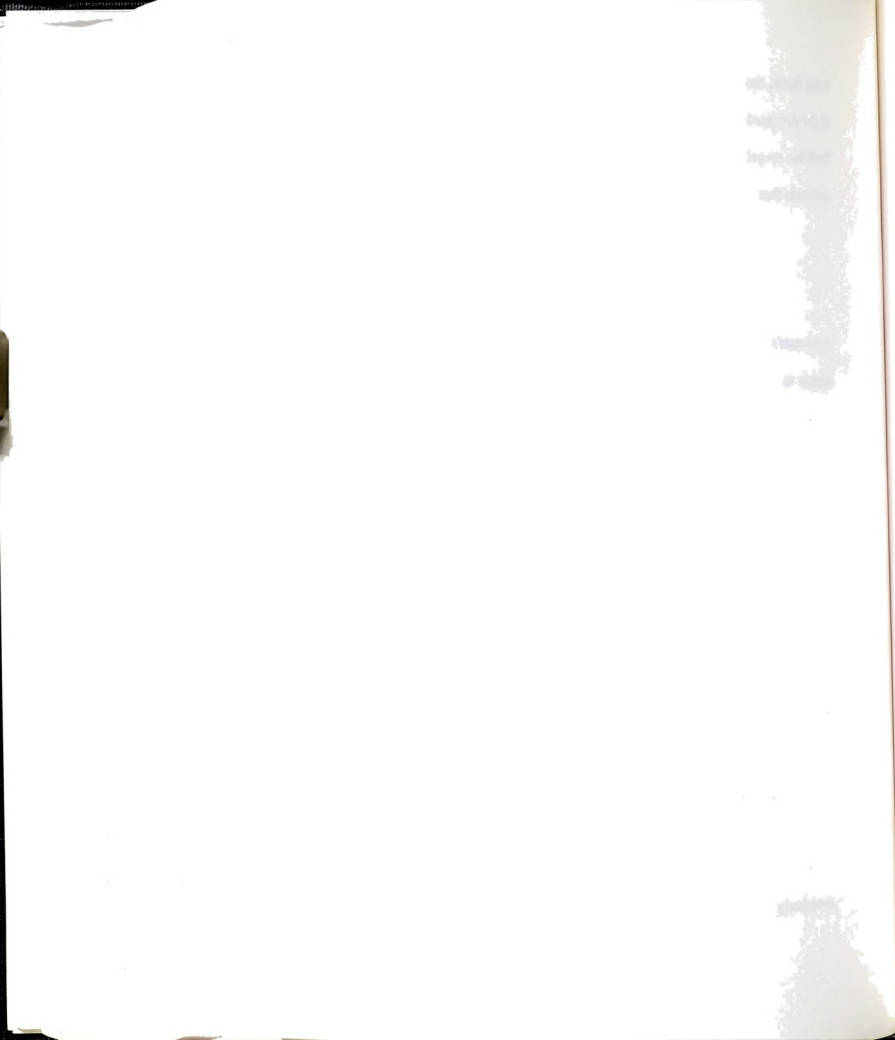


seem fairer, but fowler."⁷³ While such an assertion may seem quite believable in the case of the deceased Lady, Stubbes contends that cosmetics not only bring such foulness to the flesh but reveal the body's internal corruption as well. Ciprian, among others, he writes, contends that

a Woman, thorow painting and dying of her face, sheweth her self
to be more then whorish. For (sai the hee) shee hath corrupted and
defaced (like a filthie strumpet or brothel) the woorkmanship of
God in her: what is this els but to turne trueth into falshood with
painting ... (65-66)

A woman's painting her face, he argues, defaces God's artistry; although her actions appear to influence only her body's surface, they in fact reach below her skin to corrupt her soul. Her willingness to adjust her appearance, then, has the power not only to transform her inner character, turning "trueth into falshood," but to deface God's own artistry, obscuring what is divine within her through her vain use of paint.

Such associations, recalled by the Tyrant's words, thus associate the Lady with the internal corruption produced by such painting even though the playtext implies she had worn no cosmetics in life and even though her lifelessness allows her no power to protest their application. The boy who has embodied her onstage, meanwhile, would have relied on such cosmetic artistry to lend veracity to his portrayal throughout the performance. Whether or not the same boy actor still fills the role of the dead Lady (and the scene's climactic appearance of the Lady's Ghost raises substantial doubts as to whether he could have) the Tyrant's reassurances call attention to the boy's own already-painted face, underscoring his complicity in the process of making his own male body pass, at least within the theatrical context, for that of a woman – in short, of turning the truth of his own body into falsehood. Although those who frequented the theatre would most likely



grant little credence to the arguments put forth in Stubbes' anti-theatrical tract, the Tyrant's mention of such notions lends these arguments vitality within the theatre, making them a part of the audience's interpretation of the action even if they go unbelieved. Viewers, as a result, are invited to associate the once-pure Lady – and whatever remnants of her spirits they envision clinging to her painted corpse – with the vanity and corruption that comes with the use of such cosmetics. Looking upon the boy's body in a playhouse whose sightlines and stage resemble those of an anatomy theatre, moreover, these same viewers may well have envisioned the Lady's complexion as a sign of her body's internal state as well, as medical practitioners routinely did; as a result, the colors that the players chose to apply would have conjured additional associations regarding her inner disposition – whether sanguine or choleric, melancholic or phlegmatic – as well as her physical status, ranging from grotesquely and undeniably dead to rejuvenated and apparently alive.

While the ruler admittedly discerns the decay setting in on the Lady's flesh, his demented speeches reveal his conviction that art can nonetheless restore her body to at least the appearance of its former liveliness. Govianus, who arrives disguised as the painter to take his revenge, perpetuates this illusion, tinting the corpse to bring out the signs of life that linger in her body. The man who earlier could not break the Lady's skin with his blade now applies tint to her cheeks, outlining the liveliness of her face in hopes of creating the illusion of life beneath her flesh once again. His efforts thus seek to demonstrate the beauty of her body in life in the same manner that anatomists sought to retrace the internal motions that had sustained their now-dead specimens. Attempting such reanimation without ever piercing the Lady's skin, Govianus's artistic approach to

revenge heightens the confusion between life and death, for, as Svetlana Alpers reports, early modern painters systematically exploited the similarities between pigment and flesh to lend their subjects more substance. Citing the faces of Rembrandt's portraits as her strongest evidence, Alpers argues that the bold, thick – in her word, "rough" – application of paint "convey[s] the sense that what is built up out of pigment so handled is simultaneously in a state of decay."⁷⁴ Govianus's brushstrokes, applied directly to the Lady's skin, thus challenge viewers to differentiate her flesh from its adornment, to separate art not only from life but from death, while simultaneously positioning him both as the artist who seemingly restores his beloved to life for the purpose of revenge and as the impotent man who brought about her suicide by refusing to participate in her murder.

Although the playtext offers no hints as to how this painting would occur on stage – indeed, it may have merely been suggested by the dialogue – the results please the Tyrant, convincing him that "o shee lives agen / sheel presentlie speake to me" (1343-4). His willingness to lend credence to these artfully produced signs of life, however, ultimately leads to his own demise. Even after Govianus's painting of the corpse, the Tyrant remains aware that the Lady is not technically alive, yet he claims that he can endow her flesh with its spirit once again through a kiss. His attempt to enliven her body, however, utterly backfires, for immediately upon kissing her the Tyrant announces that "I talke so longe to death, Ime sick my self" (2351). Announcing that the paint he applied is in fact "the best poison I could get for monie," Govianus berates the dying Tyrant for his insolent attempts to defy the finality of death, exclaiming

Cannot the bodie after funerall
 sleep in the grave for thee? must it be raisde
 onlie to please the wickednes of thine eye!
 does all thinges end w[i]th death and not thy lust? (2360-63)

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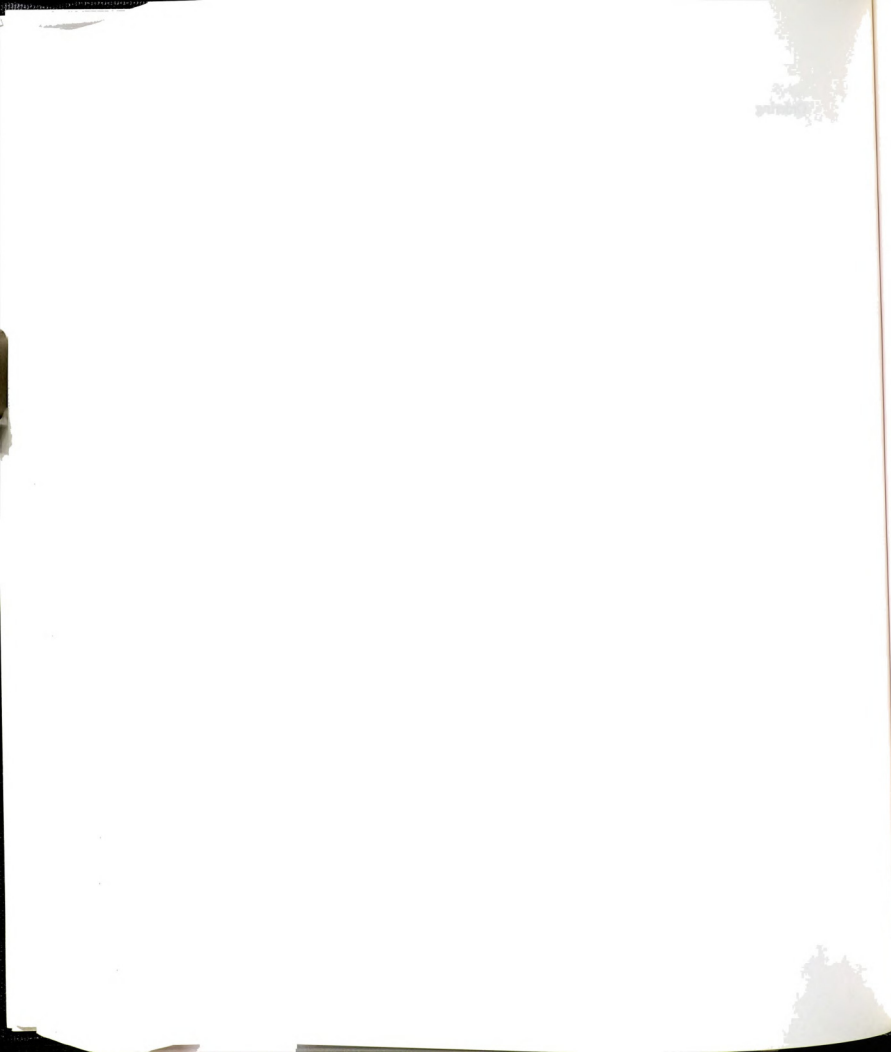
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Ordering the corpse to be painted, Govianus claims, the Tyrant exposes his own vanity, not the Lady's. His willingness to undertake such a project – and the sight that his efforts produce in the form of the onstage painted corpse – thus serve as a concrete illustration of the Tyrant's prideful delusions of power, revealing his certainty that his desire for the Lady can cheat death. Govianus's painting of his beloved's flesh, however, suggests his own desire to master the decay that encroaches upon her body as well. Though he despises painting's attempts to trap liveliness in a body that remains adamantly dead (at least within the context of the drama), Govianus meticulously exploits her body's lingering, if illusory, vivacity, using it both to gain his revenge for his beloved's death and to reclaim his realm. Govianus applies his poisoned tint, moreover, to a three dimensional fleshly surface that, though it looks more lifelike than any painting, viewers implicitly know is misleading. The Lady, after all, had been represented by a boy actor when alive, and her dead corpse may or may not be embodied by the same performer. What the Lady's tinted flesh would have looked like poses a particularly vivid staging enigma, for the play's climax requires her "Ghost" to appear "*in the shame [sic] form as the Lady is drest in the Chayre*" and to exit the stage "*with the body as it were attendinge it*" (2386, 2446).⁷⁵ Whether this suggests the participation of a second actor or the use of a stage property, the scene forces the audience to accommodate an unfamiliar representation of the Lady, thus creating an even greater disjunction between her appearance in life and in death.

In *The Duke of Milan*, in which Massinger adapts and amplifies the climax of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, the Duke's arrogance results in the artful transformation not only of a Lady's corpse, but of the face belonging to a living woman – Eugenia – as well.



The Duke's oft-proclaimed devotion to his wife Marcelia transforms into self-absorbed obsession as he leaves on a dangerous diplomatic mission to the French court; fearing that the journey will result in his death, the Duke leaves his trusted confidante Francisco with orders to murder Marcelia should he not return alive. That way, the Duke proclaims, she can attend to him in the afterlife, whether in heaven or hell, like the proper wife of an Indian prince. Such regents, he explains, "Are cheerfully attended to the fire," concluding that "Nor will I be less honour'd, that love more" (1.3.362, 365).⁷⁶

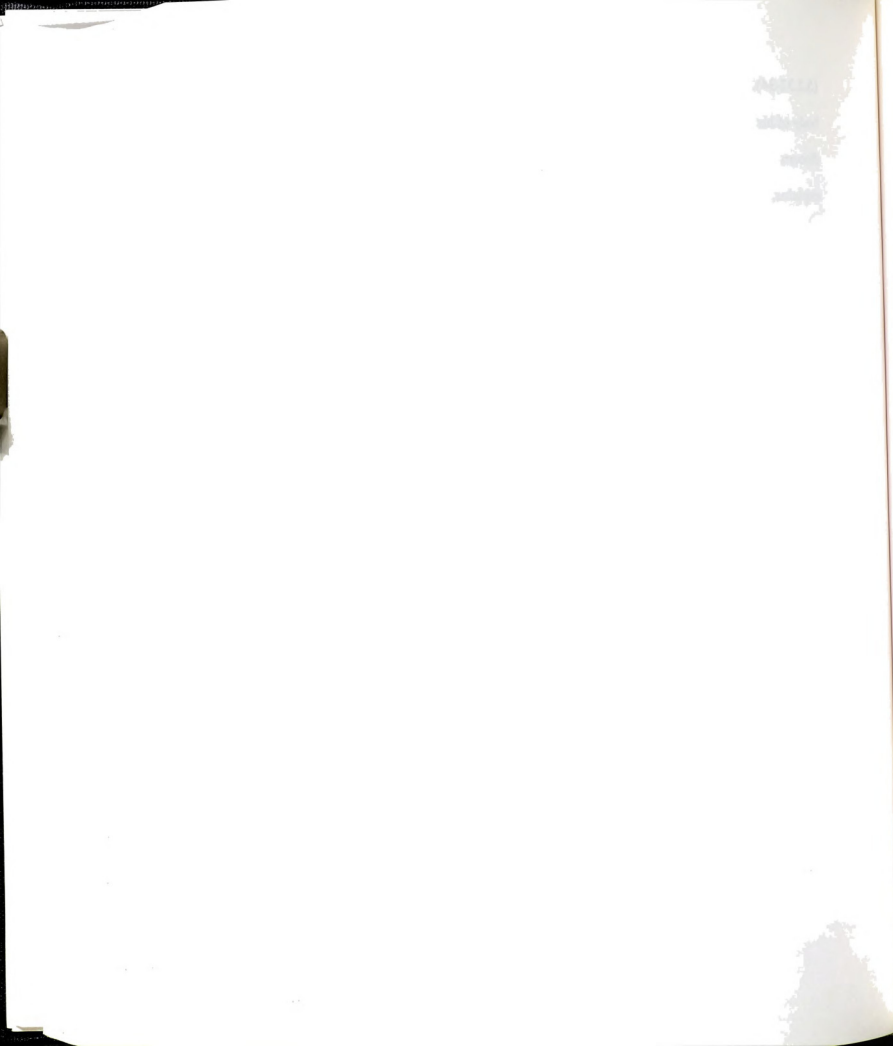
Unbeknownst to the Duke, however, Francisco has vowed to avenge the downfall of his sister Eugenia, who had borne the Duke a child before being abandoned in favor of Marcelia. Francisco thus tells Marcelia that the Duke has ordered her death, presenting her with a warrant that omits all mention of contingencies regarding the Duke's return; though Francisco later informs her of the true nature of the Duke's order, her rage remains unquieted, leaving her determined to make her husband regret his plan. When the Duke returns, she and Francisco trick the Duke into believing they have fallen in love; their act, however, proves too convincing, driving the Duke to stab Marcelia in a jealous rage. Before she dies, she manages to confess both her knowledge of the Duke's order and her angry plot to revenge it, leaving the Duke dumbstruck as well as physically paralyzed, "As if he wanted motion" (314).

In their efforts to restore the Duke, who is so immersed in shock that he too momentarily resembles a corpse, the royal attendants call in physicians; their attempts to calm their suicidal patient, however, require the doctors to offer the Duke hope for the clearly dead Marcelia's survival. "[W]isely his physicians looking on / The duchess' wound," Pescara explains, and "to stay his ready hand, / Cried out it was not mortal"

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(5.2.32-34). Like the Tyrant of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, the Duke orders that the body of his beloved be brought upon the stage, but, unlike the Tyrant, the Duke fails to discern that the lady's flesh is in fact lifeless. "The gentlest touch torments her," he explains, insisting that Marcelia retains the ability to feel even as he notes "How pale and wan she looks!" and "How slow her pulse beats, too!" (48, 60, 65). When he inquires how long she will remain asleep, the physicians claim they have given her a potion "That she may be less sensible to the torment / The searching of her wound will put her to" (91-92). Heartened by the news but also overcome by his own grief, the Duke offers Marcelia conventional ceremonial signs of respect, kneeling before the corpse and forcing his mother and sister to do the same. As they watch the Duke inadvertently parody such solemn courtly gestures, his attendants turn for help to a mysterious Jewish physician who has just arrived at court and who proves, of course, to be Francisco in disguise. With him comes his dishonored sister Eugenia, masked and posing as his assistant. His powers, Francisco explains, cannot rouse Marcelia again, but they can make her "senseless trunk t'appear / To him as it have got a second being," producing such detailed illusions as making "her veins run high too" as if they still actively conveyed her blood (142-3, 148).

After ordering that they be left alone with the corpse, Francisco and Eugenia contemplate both the leveling power of death and the destructive nature of human pride as they paint Marcelia's body. Their conversation establishes the decayed state of the corpse, if it is not already apparent to the audience, while also suggesting the extent of Francisco's own growing distraction. He tells a perplexed Eugenia that the ravages of death affect even the "proudest fair" while speaking of Marcelia as if she is still alive,



claiming that "For [her] delight the elements are ransack'd, / And art with nature studied to preserve her" (178-80). Next, he begins addressing the body itself, telling it that "Your ladyship looks pale" as he daubs color upon her cheeks while issuing a condemnation on the use of such cosmetics that surpasses the Tyrant's:

See, my Eugenia, how many faces
That are ador'd in court borrow these helps,
And pass for excellent, when the better part
Of them are like to this. (185-88)

Claiming that courtiers prove just as corpse-like underneath their makeup, Francisco not only insults all those who adorn their faces with such cosmetics but also establishes the corpse's essential similarity to the living creatures that surround it. Marcelia lacks life no more than most at court; the paint on her body, moreover, makes her look just as vivacious as any other who waits upon the king. For Francisco, then, such painting carries no power to damage Marcelia's internal character, and his handiwork, the text implies, lends an unquestionable air of liveliness to the corpse. Once Francisco paints her hands and lips and applies scent to her mouth, her body looks eerily alive even to Eugenia, one with full knowledge of the illusory nature of her brother's handiwork. Francisco's painting, however, strikes Eugenia as desecration rather than beautifying art even though he undertook the project in the name of avenging wrongs she herself has suffered, leading her to declare that "thus to tyrannise upon the dead / is most inhuman" (198-99). Her sudden realization of her brother's disrespect for the boundaries between art and nature leaves her clearly appalled, reeling at the extent of his barbarity. In her eyes, the mockery he has made of Marcelia's body leaves him even less human than the duchess's unbreathing flesh, for his actions reveal his lack of human compassion while his painting ultimately makes the corpse, though empty of spirit, look more and more at



home among the world of the living.

When the Duke arrives to look once again upon Marcelia's body, he too comments upon the corpse's apparent lack of spirit before commenting upon Francisco's amazing, artful paint job. "Can she speak yet?" he inquires, leaving Francisco to answer that such results will take more time (205). Francisco's painting thus clearly prompts the Duke to envision strong signs of life in Marcelia's body, for her flesh exhibits the vivacious beauty which had led him to dote upon her both before and during their marriage. Yet even as he takes delight in her renewed beauty, the Duke discerns the devastating emptiness of her body. Examining Francisco's handiwork, the Duke marvels that

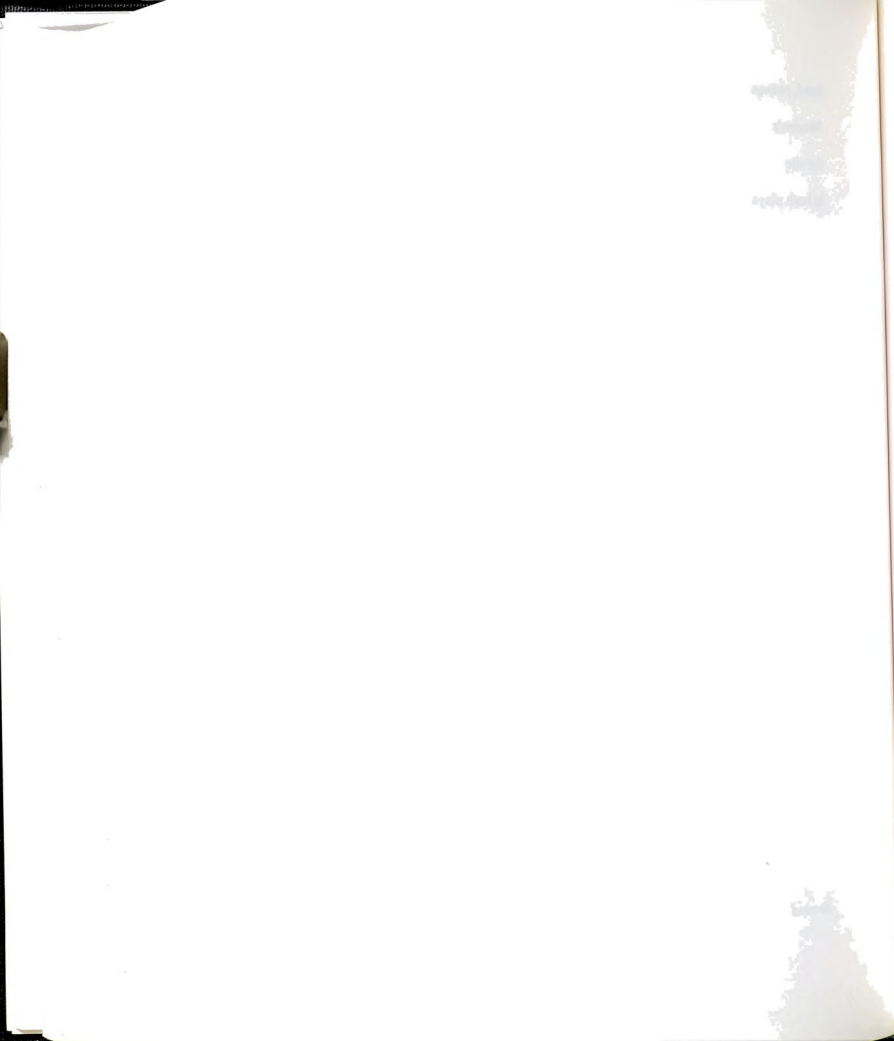
This hand seems as it was when first I kiss'd it.
These lips invite too. I could ever feed
Upon these roses, they still keep their colour
And native sweetness; only the nectar's wanting ... (209-12)

The words he speaks strongly suggest that his inspection of Marcelia involves not only viewing her body but also touching it, even kissing it, in an attempt to imbue her flesh once again with living spirit. Yet, as with the Tyrant before him, his kiss exposes him to deadly poison rather than administers a life-giving cure to the supposedly lifeless woman's body. Marcelia's body, inanimate despite her lively looks, refuses to receive the Duke's kiss passively and instead inoculates him with a deadly potion. He manages to sentence Francisco to all the tortures "that flesh can feel" before succumbing to the poison that leaves him exclaiming, "An Aetna in my entrails!" (231, 246).

The woman's flesh in both these plays thus reverses the customary flow of power, making the male body an unwitting subject to its force even as he asserts his will to govern the female body not just in life but in death. The woman's spirit, on the other

hand, proves long absent from the bodies in both *The Duke of Milan* and the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and therefore plays no part in this reversal; instead, her body serves as the site where this change of dynamics occurs, shifting power from one male character – in both plays, a deranged Duke – to the younger man whose position and privileges he has hoped to claim. The pitifully impotent Govianus, whose inability to stab the Lady despite her pleas leaves her bemoaning his "poore spirited" state, becomes at the play's end a powerful, presumably capable ruler. Though the guidance of the Lady's ghost undoubtedly plays a role in his sudden effectiveness, her flesh serves as his primary tool for achieving revenge. Similarly, the body of the Duchess in *The Duke of Milan* provides Francisco with a means of avenging his sister's disgrace, yet, like Govianus, he proves unable to possess his beloved sexually during life. Despite the marked success of his attempts to secure her participation in the plot against the Duke, Francisco only gains the power to put Marcelia's flesh to his personal use after the Duke himself kills her with his own knife. While the rulers in both plays assume possessive power over female bodies just as they assert ownership of their realms, the women's flesh becomes the means of their downfall because their male rivals can turn it to their use as they scheme for revenge.

The nature of the corpse's role in the staging of the plots, however, remains fundamentally – and purposefully – unclear. In both plays, after all, the audience members see the woman's supposed corpse deliver the poison to a man implicated in her death; she remains lifeless, yet her flesh administers the lethal dose and becomes, despite its senselessness, an active agent in her tormenter's death. Yet neither the Lady of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* nor Marcelia of *The Duke of Milan* applies this poison paint



herself, nor can she; instead, her body simply serves as a canvas on which the revenger can lay the artistic bait for his trap. In the eyes of the deranged Tyrant and the Duke, the paint exercises magical powers that border on the regenerative, for the illusions of life they produce suggest that their beloveds' bodies may indeed rise again. Like well-painted portraits, the tinted bodies of the women seem to contain the potential for vital movement – even more so, since the corpses provide a three-dimensional canvas for their painters. The corpses, moreover, resemble the living so closely that even some critics seem uncertain whether their roles in the plays' climactic murders prove active or passive. Annette Drew-Bear, for example, argues both that these deceived men suffer from "blind lust" and that such scenes "[act] out the idea that painted lust leads to a spiritual and physical death," thus laying responsibility for the poisoning first on the women's deluded tormenters and then on the lifeless corpses.⁷⁷ Her comments imply that the painted bodies themselves contain lust, rather than serve as objects of it; the spiritual decay she mentions, as a result, seems equally to apply to the dead women and the deluded men. The lust that the Tyrant and the Duke act upon, however, is anything but blind, for it is provoked by the act of gazing upon the newly-painted corpses. At the same time, the revengers' skill in painting facilitates such willingness to discern signs of life in dead flesh, and their trickery irrevocably slurs the women whom they seek to avenge even as they grant these women a vital role in their tormenters' deaths. In applying pigment to their bodies, the plays' revenging men thus must also ward off their own fear that their work obscures the chaste spirit they had envisioned governing the corpses in life; Govianus and Francisco, as a result, become just as capable of overlooking less pleasing aspects of dead flesh as the men they seek to ruin.

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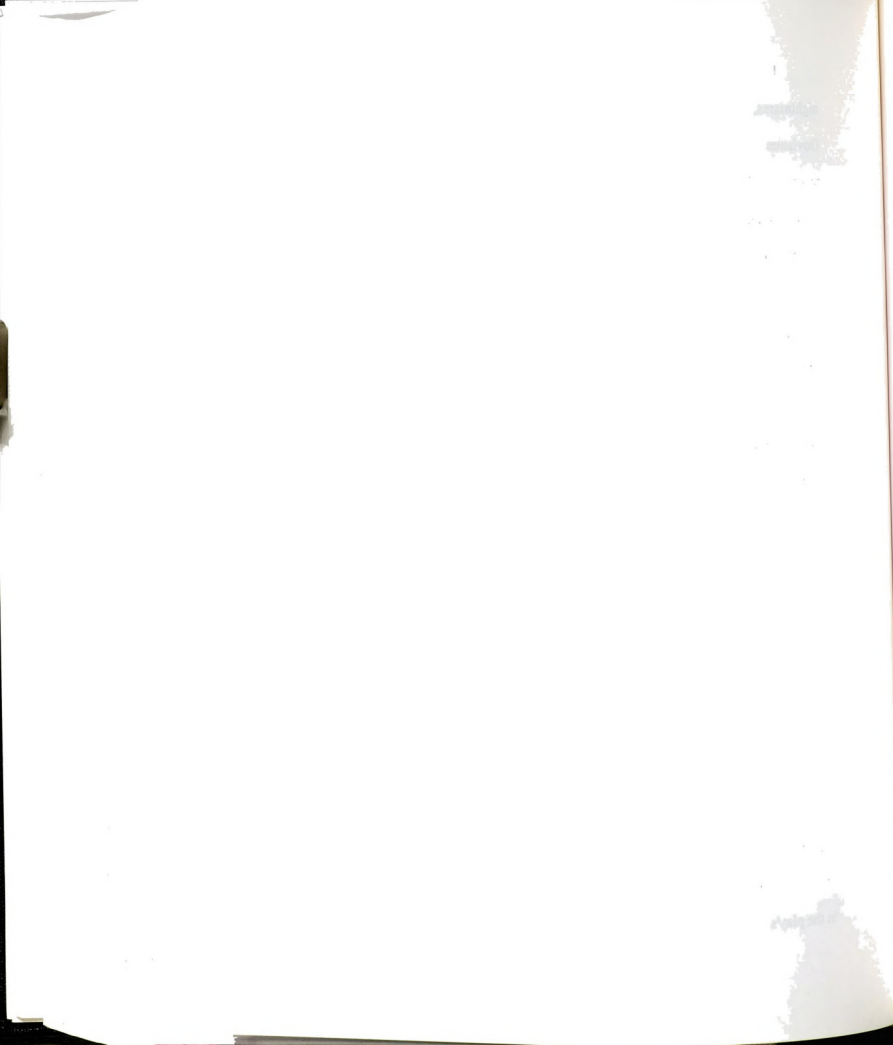
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For the Tyrant and the Duke, then, these painted bodies become perspectivist nightmares, for their efforts to see depth in their surfaces precipitate their own deaths. Govianus and Francisco, meanwhile, exploit these habits of viewing to achieve their revenge while struggling to deny the possible existence of a spirit capable of murder lurking beneath their beloveds' flesh. The playhouse audience, on the other hand, must weigh both points of view, along with their own interpretation of the boy actor's body and of the painted corpse it represents, to reach its own assessment of the corpse's participation in the murders. Privy to both the tormenters' and the revengers' viewpoints, they may well credit the women with a role in enacting the revenge; their observation of the paint's application, as well as their awareness of theatrical convention, on the other hand, could lead them to dismiss the corpse's importance. Even without the distorting powers of perspective glasses, then, Govianus and Francisco present the Tyrant and the Duke – and the audiences who behold them in the theatre – with images that not only accurately depict the now-deceased women as they appeared in life but also force their observers to study the corpses to reevaluate the women's bodily and spiritual nature as well.

Even when observers would be most likely to dismiss a dead woman's power to act as independent agent in extracting her revenge, however, her remains can nonetheless serve as a vital tool in murder in early Stuart tragedy. In Cyril Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1608), for example, only the skull of Vindice's deceased beloved Gloriana appears on the stage, yet it takes part in the killing of the lustful Duke. Though the skull represents someone that the audience has never seen as a living character – in fact, even in the play's first scene she appears merely as a skull – Vindice insists that the spectators



consider his use of her bones as involving her in the plot to avenge her death. From the play's opening scene, after all, Vindice addresses the skull as a living thing even as he contemplates its deadness. He hails the skull as both "Thou sallow picture of my poisoned love" and "thou shell of death," speaking to it as he would to his beloved while also clearly recognizing that Gloriana's spirit no longer enlivens it (1.1.14-15).⁷⁸ Yet even as he realizes that the skull signals Gloriana's absence – that it was "Once the bright face of my betrothed lady" but is no longer so – Vindice speaks to her bones as if Gloriana still inhabited them. "Thee when thou wert appareled in thy flesh, / The old duke poisoned" for not submitting to his lust, Vindice explains, thus signaling his awareness of her death while simultaneously insisting that she makes out the words he speaks to her (31-32). For the audience, the skull holds a number of mysteries – how did Vindice gain possession of it? how do we know it is in fact Gloriana's? – but for Vindice the bony head remains the indisputable embodiment of his dead beloved's spirit.⁷⁹ Holding such conversations with his beloved's skull evidently proves a habit with Vindice as well, for when his brother Hippolito comes upon the scene, he wearily asks why Vindice is "Still sighing o'er death's vizard" (49). Vindice's speeches thus reveal both his refusal to accept Gloriana's death and his determination to make the Duke who murdered her pay for his crime; the skull, serving as a reminder of his beloved's life as well as of her death, thus provides not only a physical, bodily image that accommodates these contradictory ideas but the perfect weapon through which to achieve profound revenge against the Duke, allowing Vindice to make his enemy confront both the body and the spirit hurt by the old man's uncontrolled lust.

Disguised as Piato, Vindice sets his scheme into motion, instituting a plan through

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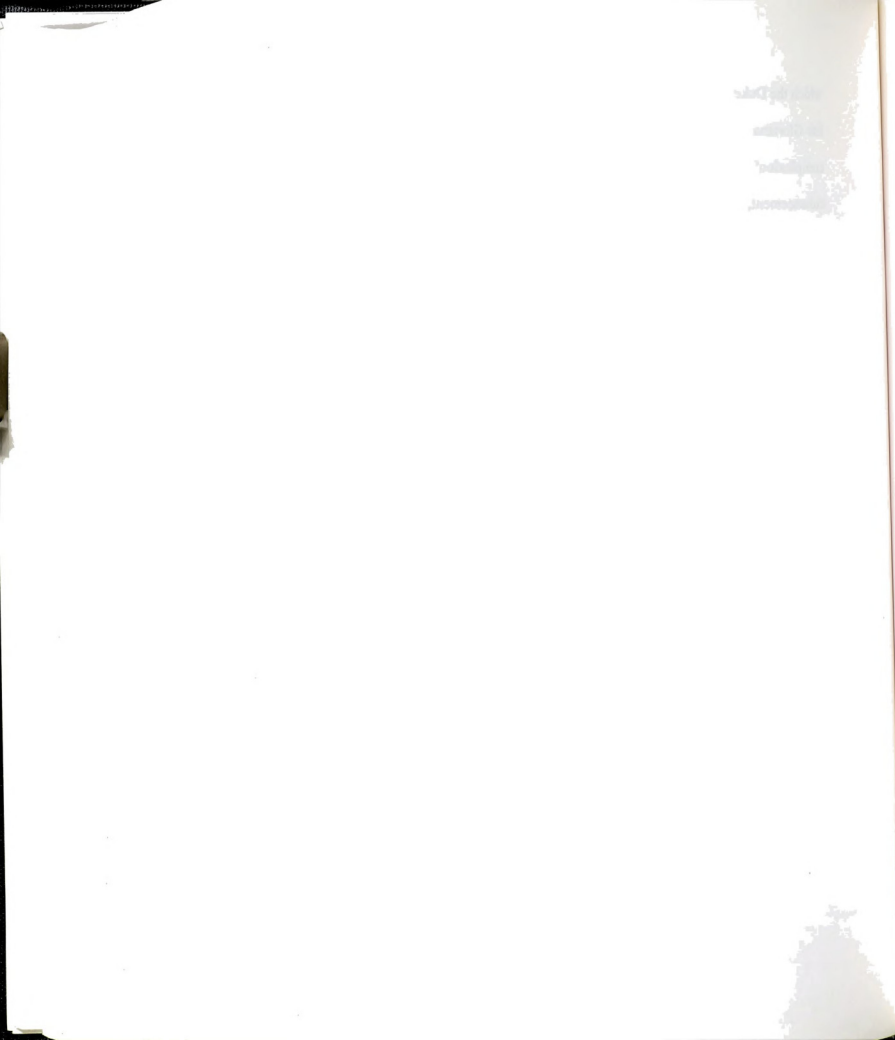
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which the Duke can be brought to ruin through his own sexual obsessiveness. Though in life Gloriana's beauty surpassed "the artificial shine / Of any woman's bought complexion" (1.1.19-20), her face, or what is left of it, now requires extensive cosmetic enhancement, even more than that which lent the corpses in the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *The Duke of Milan* their semblance of life. Holding "*the masked skull of his love, dressed up in tires,*" Vindice not only points out the paint adorning its cheeks but craftily covers the skeletal head with a veil as well. Like the revengers in the two later plays, Vindice condemns courtly women's use of makeup even as he calls attention to its presence on his chaste beloved's face. Here, he tells Hippolito while pointing at the skull, is "A pretty hanging life, that has forgot now to dissemble" and "an eye / Able to tempt a great man – to serve God" (3.5.54-55). Adapting the blason's pattern of praising the female body, Vindice then invites the women of the audience to look upon their own cosmetic foolishness, declaring that "Here might a scornful and ambitious woman / Look through and through herself" to learn that "false forms" can "deceive men but cannot deceive worms" (96-97). His cautions thus relentlessly focus attention on Gloriana's grotesquely adorned skull, forcing audiences not only to confront her death but the inadequacy of his means of disguising her skeletal state. While his words undoubtedly carry resonances of *memento mori* themes, they also underscore the female body's status as an object of beauty meant to be beheld as well as the notion that bodies prove permeable to the human gaze. A discerning eye, he insists, can penetrate the layers of paint that adorn Gloriana's surface, seeing not only through her makeup but into the innermost recesses of her body – that is, straight into her bones.

Vindice, however, is quick to separate his Gloriana from the evils of such



artfulness; instead, he claims that he has adorned her so extravagantly so that she can play a role in exposing – and punishing – the evil that he clearly sees within the Duke. The skull, in his formulation, offers a contribution to the plot equal to his own, for as he tells Hippolito

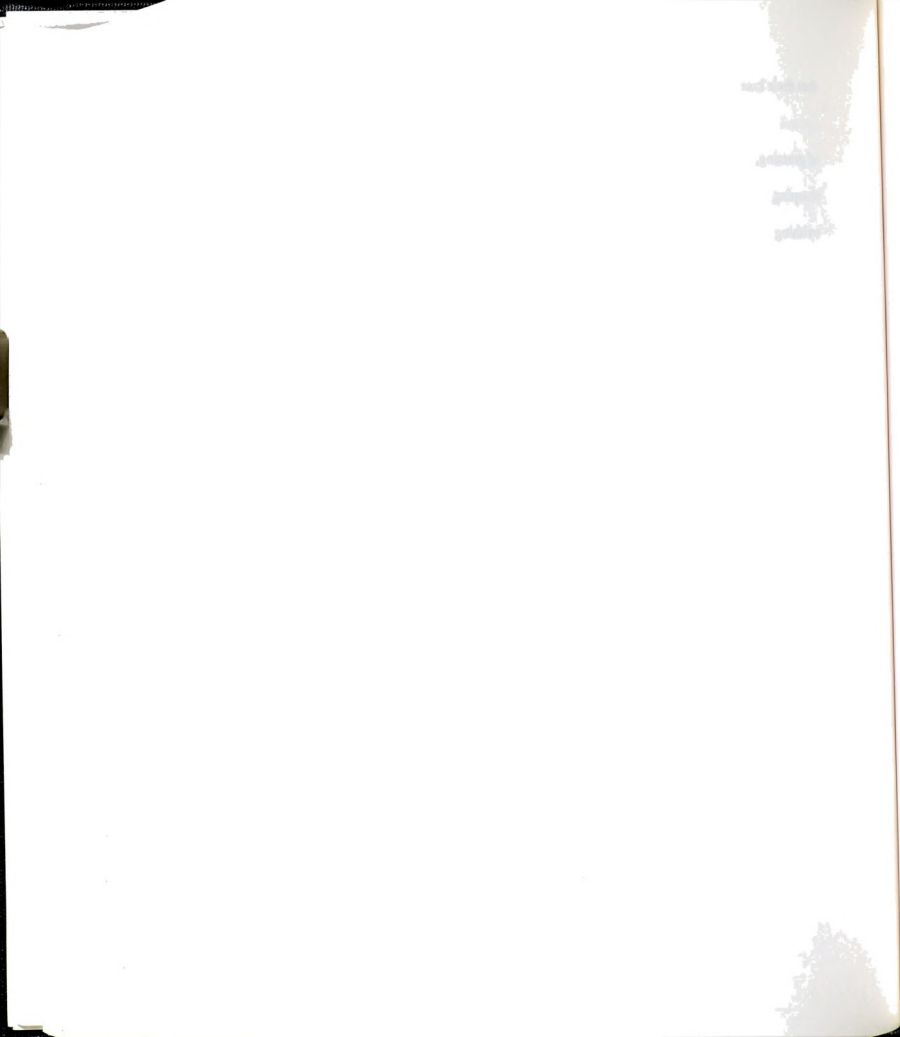
I have not fashioned this only for show
And useless property, no – it shall bear a part
E'en in its own revenge. This very skull
Whose mistress the duke poisoned with this drug,
The mortal curse of the earth, shall be revenged
In the like strain and kiss his lips to death.
As much as the dumb thing can, he shall feel ... (99-105)

The paint Gloriana wears thus allows her to administer a sort of Old Testament justice to the Duke, ensuring not only that he receives a lethal dose of the very same poison that killed her but that the drug will reduce him to a similarly skeletal state. Her lips, in Vindice's vision of the scene, actively deliver the lethal dose, for they "kiss" the Duke just as purposefully as he kisses the skull. Vindice's mocking comments about his own handiwork in preparing Gloriana's remains – he claims, for instance, that she makes "as fair a sign / as some old gentlewoman in a periwig" (111-112) – emphasize his unflinching awareness that his beloved's body remains essentially lifeless.⁸⁰ His insistence that she can indeed enjoy revenge, however, hints at more than his growing derangement; his actions call upon traditional notions that the spirit indeed lingers in the corpse, and that, in accordance with the notion of bier right, the corpse could point out its own murderer. Yet the flesh of Gloriana's corpse has already disappeared – perhaps with the help of Vindice himself, for her recent death would not have allowed for such sudden decay. As a result, she cannot bleed in the presence of her murderer, but, thanks to Vindice, she can nonetheless mark him with a damning liquid of another sort – the poison

that their kiss will transfer to his own body.

Vindice's ruse, moreover, works precisely according to plan. After only five lines of greeting, the Duke tells the painted, skeletal Gloriana "I must be bold with you" before stooping to kiss her (144); the poison immediately courses through his veins, leaving him writhing on the stage as Vindice explains the motive for his revenge. "Look, monster," Vindice tells the dying Duke, "what a lady thou had made me / My once betrothed wife" (163-64). Causing such physical agony to his enemy, however, is only the beginning of Vindice's plan, for he vows to torture the Duke even further by forcing him to observe his own cuckolding, telling the Duke that he is in the ideal place to witness his wife's affair with his bastard son, Spurio. "Here in this lodge they meet for damnèd clips," Vindice tells the Duke, declaring that "Those eyes shall see the incest of their lips" (178-9).

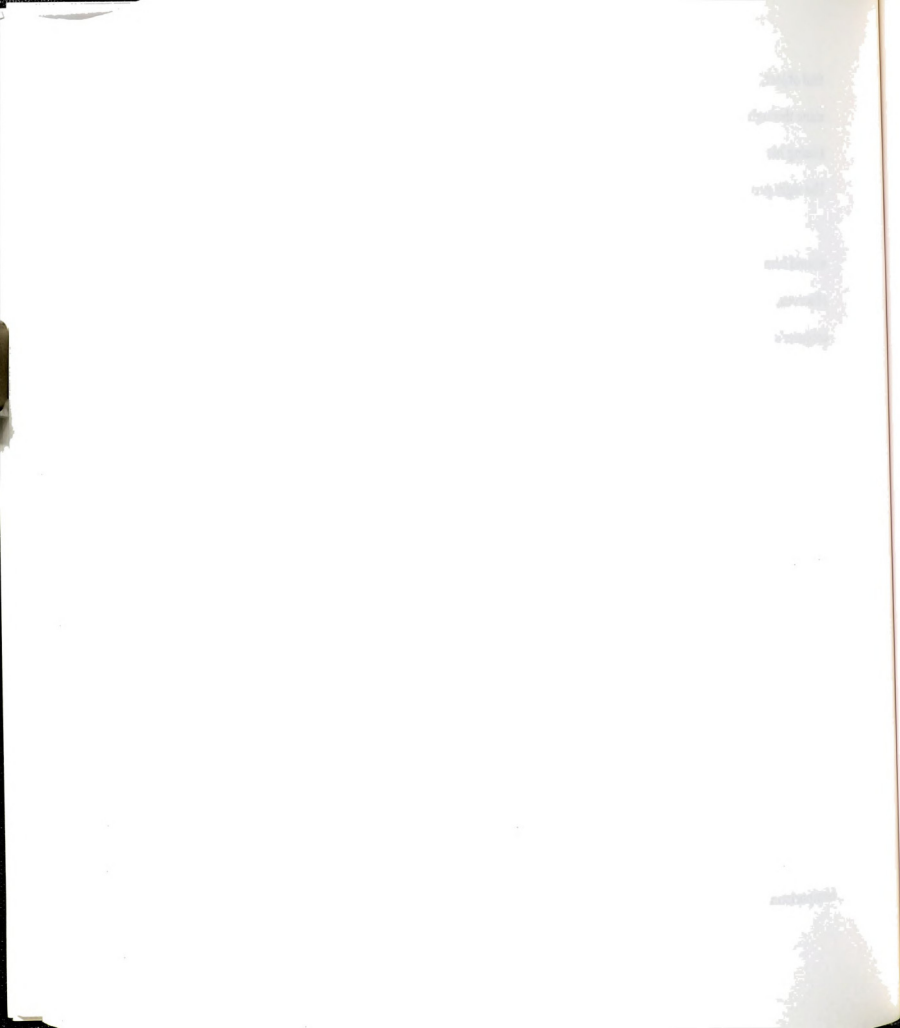
These words not only inform the Duke of his wife's affair, they also offer the playhouse audience their first indication of the action's location; like the off-stage spectators of dumb shows in *The White Devil*, they too must suddenly readjust their interpretation of the scene, altering their vision of the setting to imagine its relationship to the action that the dialogue leads them to anticipate. Vindice, meanwhile, ensures that the Duke cannot avoid viewing the scene. While, as we shall see in the next chapter, many torturers deprive their victims of their power to see, Vindice takes drastic steps to keep the Duke watching the scene that is about to unfold before him. Declaring to the Duke that "Thou shalt not lose that sight for all they dukedom," Vindice orders that the torches be extinguished and tells Hippolito to silence the moaning victim by nailing down his tongue with a dagger (186). Even more gruesomely, Vindice commands his brother to keep the Duke's eyes open at all costs, telling him that "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" (195-97). The Duke, as a result, must endure the sight of his wife kissing his son, and he must also overhear both express their long-held desire to kill him. The sight proves more than the Duke can endure, driving him finally to his death.

Like Brachiano in *The White Devil*, then, the Duke learns of secret goings-on around him by watching scenes unfold in front of him. The scenes that Brachiano observes, however, occur in locations removed from those he occupies; gazing upon the conjurer's dumb shows, he peers into distant rooms to witness murders he orders without being present for their enactment. Though he must make a hasty exit at the conclusion of the dumb show, the events depicted there free him and his beloved Vittoria from their individual inconvenient marriages. The Duke in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, however, holds a far less privileged position in relation to the events he witnesses. He, after all, has no previous knowledge of the affair between Spurio and the Duchess, and his silent observation of the lovers' interaction underlines his shameful position of cuckold. Furthermore, he watches while undergoing bodily torture, during which he cannot even scream to vent his pain. As he watches Spurio and his wife kiss, then, the Duke's world shrinks smaller and smaller, for not only do his own actions come back to haunt him in the form of Gloriana's poisoned skull, he also realizes the limitations of his own physical powers of perception. He, after all, had failed to discern his wife's infidelity, and, when forced to view it, he must make it out through a blur of excruciating physical pain.

In kissing a poisoned work of art, the Duke also resembles Isabella in *The White Devil*, who kisses Brachiano's portrait only to die from its poison, yet even in this comparison the Duke proves less savvy. The Duke, after all, kisses Gloriana confident



that she is indeed a living creature; Isabella, however, kisses Brachiano's portrait in a symbolic gesture of loyalty and love without overtly confusing it with her husband's body. Lust no doubt helps mislead the Duke, yet the skull's three-dimensional nature makes his attribution of life to Gloriana's bones appear not only more gruesome in the theatre but perhaps also more comprehensible. Her body, after all, lies at the root of his attraction to her – and that body remains fundamentally present, even if only in the form of a small segment of her fleshless skeleton. Clearly, the Duke's confusion of an adorned skull for a living being produces a gleefully shocking theatrical effect, vividly pointing out the deceptive power of paint when applied to the human body as it simultaneously mocks the Duke's susceptibility to such artificially created beauty. Unlike the Duke of Milan and the Tyrant, however, the Duke of *The Revenger's Tragedy* attaches no name, yet alone the name of a dead woman, to the human remains he kisses. Instead, he experiences what he thinks is a new reaction to a new woman. While the beauty he sees unquestionably owes much to Vindice's artistry and to his own willingness to attach such associations to the "bony lady," the Duke may nonetheless perceive and amplify remnants of the skull's liveliness. Reduced to a partial skeleton, Gloriana's body suffers an obliteration far more drastic than her counterparts in the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *The Duke of Milan*, yet, as was the case for Vesalius's musclemen, something of her living essence remains. Aided by Vindice's paints, she retains her vivacious power to enthrall the men around her, underscoring not only the deceptive danger of such pigments but her lively inner allure as well.

The concluding scene of John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1632), enacted upon the Cockpit stage, provides its audience with an even more striking example of the

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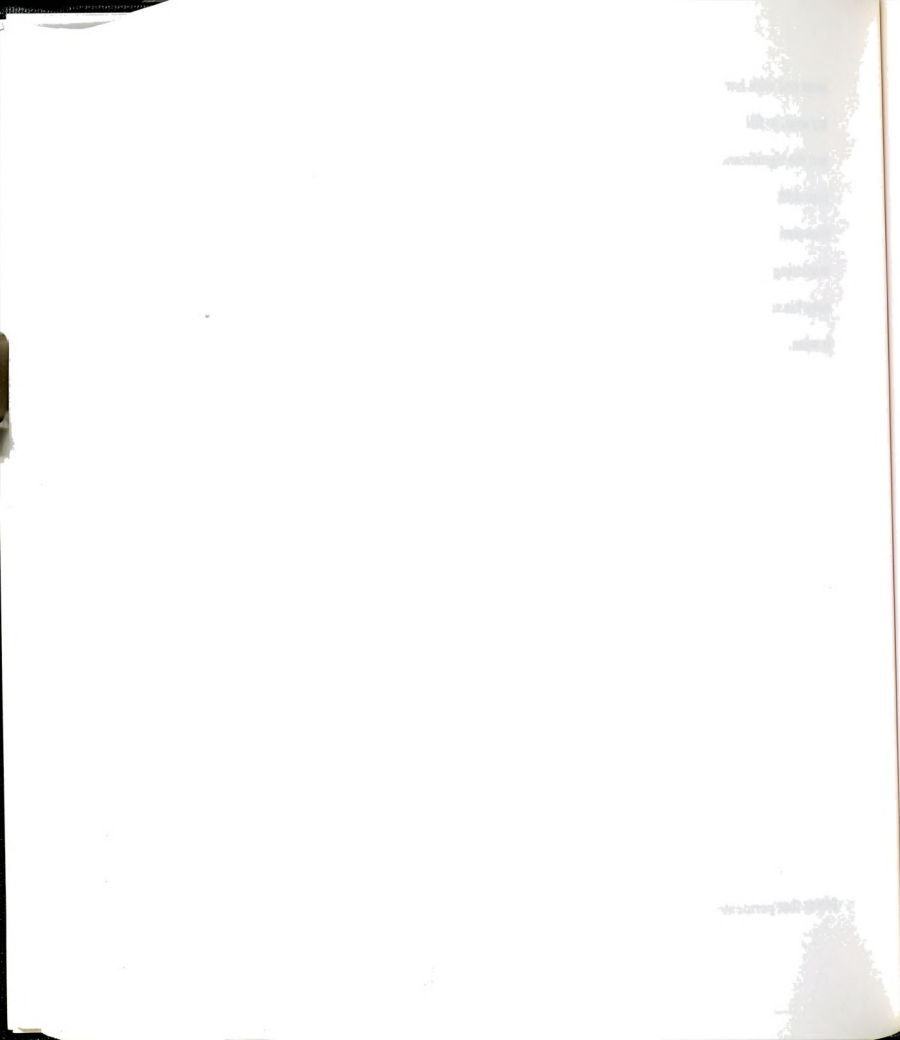
enthraling power of human remains, for in it the internal organs of a newly-murdered woman take center stage, entrancing – and horrifying – the onstage crowd that has gathered to honor yet another possessive husband. Soranzo's birthday celebration ceases, however, the moment that Giovanni enters the feast brandishing his pregnant sister Annabella's excised heart on his dagger. Suspecting Annabella's infidelity, Soranzo had previously ordered the brutal Vasques to find out who had fathered the child his wife still carried; through a brutal interview with Annabella's nurse Putana, Vasques learns that the pregnancy is in fact the result of Annabella and Giovanni's incestuous affair. Soranzo's jealousy leads him to order Giovanni's murder, setting the banquet as the scene of his retributive killing; Giovanni, however, foresees the plan and schemes to seek revenge against Soranzo, whom he holds responsible for ending his idyllic but scandalous union with his sister. Unlike his predecessors in the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *The Duke of Milan*, however, Giovanni kills his beloved himself before using her body as an intermediary in his revenge, and, while his predecessors rely on poisoned painted flesh as their murder weapons, the deranged incestuous lover of *'Tis Pity* kills his rival with a sword still smeared with his sister's blood – and which may well still hold impaled her disembodied heart.

For Giovanni, killing Annabella himself constitutes an integral part of his revenge against Soranzo; Annabella, meanwhile, recognizes her own role as intermediary in her brother's murderous plot as she surrenders herself to her lover's sword. Like the Lady of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, Annabella chooses to die at the hands of her true love rather than fall victim to his usurping rival. Lying on a bed on the Cockpit stage, Giovanni declares his murderous intentions to his sister, telling her that their ideal affair

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must end with her equally ideal, almost divine, death. "Go thou," he tells her, "white in thy soul, to fill a throne / Of innocence and sanctity in heaven" as he prepares to murder her; the significance of his words proves clear to Annabella, who declares "Then I see your drift – / Ye blessed angels, guard me" (5.5.64-67).⁸¹ No other course of action, Giovanni explains, can end their affair. While he seeks to "save" Annabella's "fame" by murdering her, he simultaneously sets into motion his plot against Soranzo, for even as he stabs his sister Giovanni proclaims, "Thus die, and die by me, and by my hand. Revenge is mine..." (85-86). Killing his sister thus marks the culmination of his rivalry with her husband, whose arrival had, at least in Giovanni's mind, interrupted his ideal, if taboo, relationship with his beloved sister.

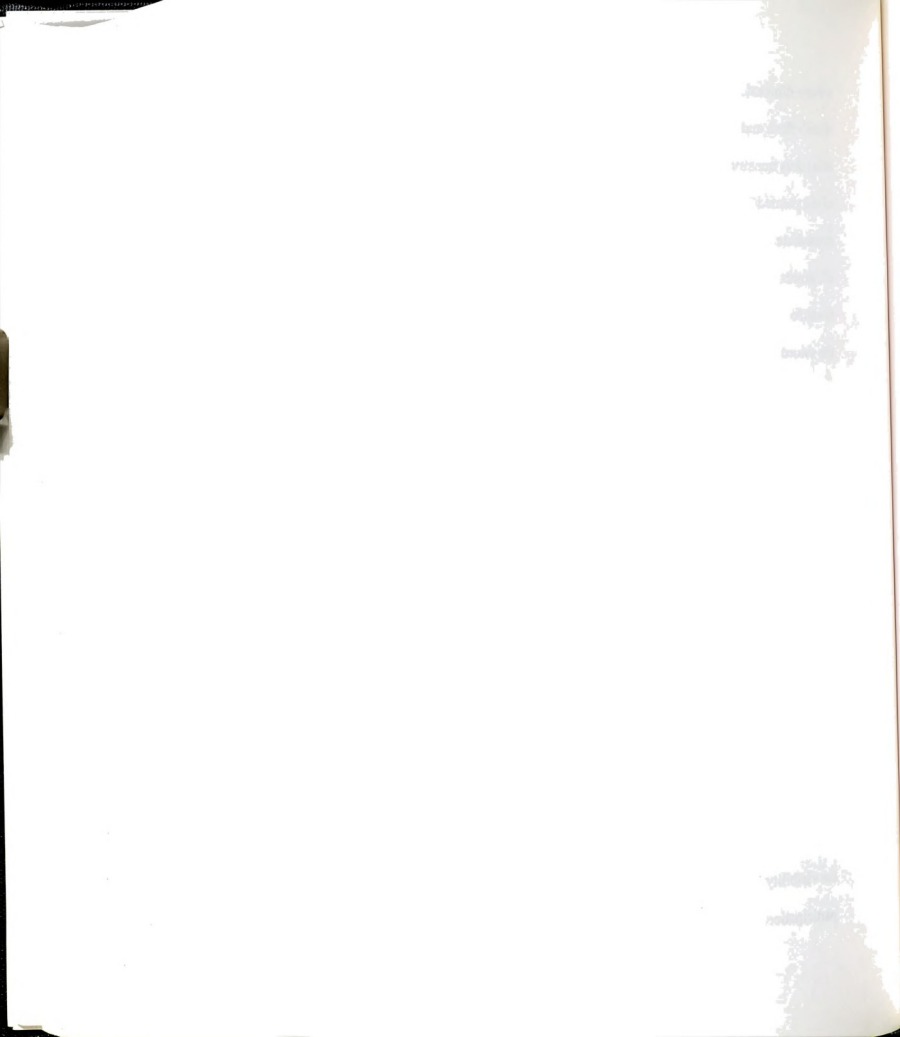
Preceded by the onstage enactment of this vengeful murder, Giovanni's brandishing of his sister's heart at the birthday banquet supplies the deranged brother with stunning proof of the level of intimacy he shared with Annabella. Giovanni – like Govianus, Francisco, and Vindice – takes control of his lover's body, using it as a vehicle through which to achieve his revenge. The excision of Annabella's heart, however, allows Giovanni to demonstrate the extent of his power over his lover's flesh more vividly – and more concretely – than the revengers of the earlier plays to both his on- and offstage audiences. While these earlier heroes could only use paint applied to the already dead flesh of corpses to imply control over their lovers' internal depths, Giovanni plunges his knife through the surface of Annabella's living body, thus declaring her entire inner physical being as his domain. Soranzo, Giovanni implies, might have held title to Annabella's body as her husband, but he alone, as her brother and soul mate, can wield power that permeates her physical and spiritual interior. Annabella's heart thus serves as



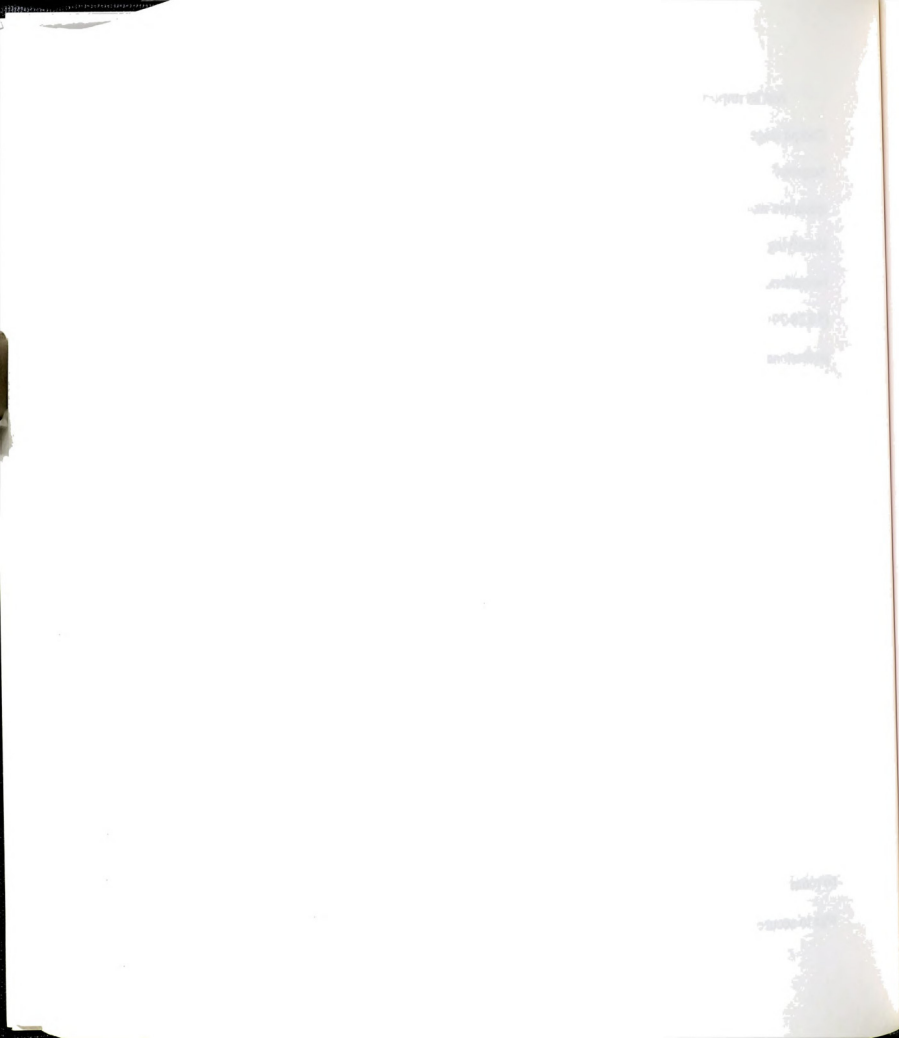
a three-dimensional illustration of Giovanni's declaration of ultimate control over his sister's flesh and the spirit that had animated it. Giovanni's brandishing of his sister's heart thus transforms her body into a display whose gruesomeness not only surpasses that of the painted bodies and skulls of earlier plays but also gives the beloved's corpse a more immediate – and undeniable – power in the achievement of his revenge. Giovanni, after all, grants his sister's heart a vital role in the murder of her possessive husband, directing Soranzo and all the revelers to focus their attention on Annabella's excised organ even as the sword enters his flesh:

Soranzo, see this heart, which was thy wife's;
Thus I exchange it for thine,
And thus and thus. Now brave revenge is mine. (5.6.74-76)

Annabella's heart, possibly still impaled on the dagger that cuts through Soranzo's skin and brings him to death, thus becomes inextricably associated with Giovanni's revenge, lending its force, or at least endorsement, to the thrusts that kill her husband. The revenge the brother achieves, then, may well be seen partially as Annabella's, yet her heart's position, skewered upon the dagger, also underscores her status as the first victim of Giovanni's vengeful rage. Her impaled heart serves as an image of her powerlessness while emphasizing her body's position as a battleground in the rivalry between her brother and her husband. If her heart remains impaled on the dagger as Giovanni kills Soranzo, after all, her brother's blade achieves revenge by literally passing through her body, and the organ that kept its flesh and spirit alive.⁸² And, while the faces of heroines whose bodies became instruments of revenge appeared onstage in preceding tragedies, the visibility of such a small segment of Annabella's body minimizes her own participation in the death of her tormenter.



Just as importantly, in presenting his sister's heart to the banqueters on the Cockpit stage Giovanni delivers a lecture almost identical to those offered at the Barber-Surgeons' anatomies in a venue that itself predicted the sights – and sightlines – that spectators would enjoy at the Anatomical Theatre. Like a professor pointing out and identifying individual organs, Giovanni uncovers Annabella's heart and displays it to the banqueters, telling them, "'tis a heart,/ A heart, my lords, in which is mine entombed" (5.6.28-29). But Giovanni's mania cannot allow him to maintain such an air of professionalism, for in his deluded state he confuses the body he has mutilated with the banquet itself. He tells Soranzo's disgusted dinner guests, "You came to feast, my lords, with dainty fare;/ I came to feast, too, but I digged for food/ In a much richer mine" (25-27), transforming his sister's body into his own physical sustenance. As we shall explore further in Chapter Five, Giovanni dares to speak of ingesting Annabella's heart, incorporating her into his body, to illustrate what he sees as the purity of their transgressive love and the enduring nature of their physical union. His statement thus reflects what Linda Woodbridge sees as the Renaissance view of dismemberment as regenerative, for the segments that resulted from such fragmentation could easily be imagined as incorporated (or in her words, "recycled") into new materials.⁸³ Offering a deranged parallel to the already-demented visions of reproduction that Camillo imagines as he considers the powers of perspective glasses in *The White Devil*, Giovanni fantasizes about incorporating Annabella's flesh into his body, thus creating a self-perpetuating biological entity that melds his body with his sister's. Yet his murderous jealousy leaves no room for even such ideal self-contained, cuckoldry-proof reproduction; instead, his urge to secure exclusive possession of his sister drives him to kill their unborn child,



"[plowing] up / Her fruitful womb" as well as stabbing into Annabella's heart. His actions thus directly cause three deaths – those of Annabella, himself, and Soranzo – while assuring that his and Annabella's child will never be born; his rage, as a result, ensures that his generation is his family's last.

For those characters who witness Giovanni's presentation, however, his actions hint at none of these potential meanings. Instead of pure love, his brandishing of Annabella's heart illustrates nothing more than his moral depravity. Most of the characters at Soranzo's banquet, after all, have no knowledge of Giovanni and Annabella's incestuous love; as a result, the story that Giovanni tells upon his entrance compounds the shock of his bloody spectacle. The Cockpit's audience members, on the other hand, not only know of the affair between Annabella and Giovanni, they have watched it develop from the opening moments of the play. Though the final scene proves no less shocking for them, the offstage audience can see the grisly spectacle from perspectives unavailable to those characters who watch exclusively from within the plot. Audience members can thus see the events unfolding before their eyes as containing echoes from similar scenes they have encountered, whether in revenge tragedies like the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* or in the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre. For them, these images of mutilation may blur together, allowing them to call upon lessons generated in different contexts to interpret the dramatic spectacle unfolding before them.

'Tis Pity thus leaves its viewers examining a stage full of cadavers in hopes of finding some significance in the overwhelming violence that has taken place there, thereby calling into question at least one Renaissance writer's interpretation of theatrical dynamics. Thomas Nashe, in his 1592 commentary upon Shakespeare's *Henry VI*,

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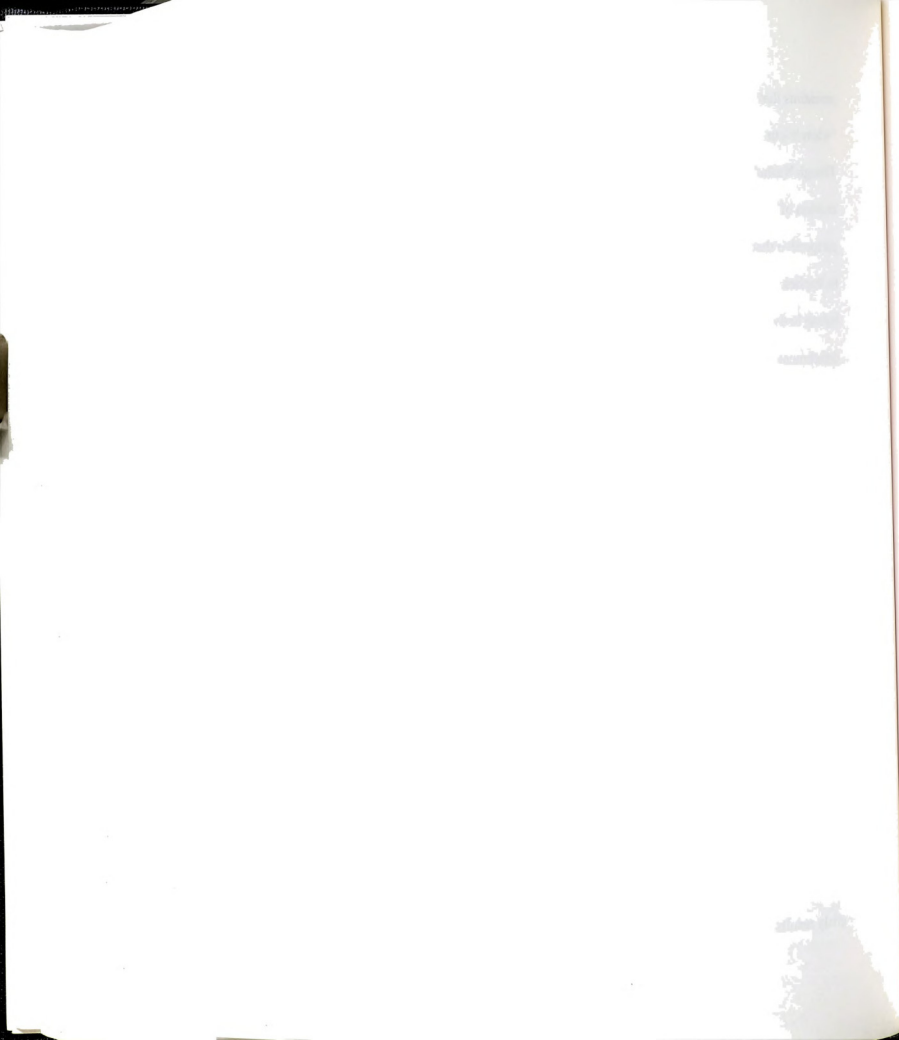
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proclaims that the theatrical stage has the capacity to present its audiences with plays "wherein our forefathers' valiant acts ... are revived" to be "most lively anatomized." ⁸⁴ Though Nashe's remark refers specifically to history plays, his words juxtapose the creation of dramatic action in the commercial theatre with the coolly scientific perspective that their staging seems to permit. Bringing characters to life in the theatre, he implies, offers the playhouse audience an opportunity to inspect, even dissect, the human body and psyche for themselves, while simultaneously granting its members detachment from the violence inherent in such acts. Thus isolated from the stage's feigned brutality, Ford's audience can take further comfort in the knowledge that the seemingly lifeless corpses onstage belong to actors who serve only as temporary embodiments of the play's characters. During the performance itself, however, the actors' bodies provide the audience with corporeal sources for the actions and utterances that shape the play's events. Examining the heart that supposedly belongs to Annabella, then, allows the audience, not to mention Giovanni, to examine the bodily presence that brings her to life in the theatre.

But, by bringing the heart to the stage, Giovanni thus violates the distinctions between the anatomical and commercial theatres. Though his presentation of his sister's excised heart clearly follows the procedures of the Barber-Surgeons' anatomies, Giovanni nonetheless displays the organ in the wrong theatre, or at least to a less prepared audience. While earlier dramas had exploited new habits of perspective viewing to coax viewers into envisioning the physical interiors of onstage corpses, Giovanni's ardent display of Annabella's impaled heart forces the spectators of *'Tis Pity* to confront the grisly results of an anatomy they had not expected to encounter. The heroes of *The*



Revenger's Tragedy and *The Duke of Milan* use paint to encourage audiences to envision what lay beneath the skins of deceased characters; Giovanni in *'Tis Pity*, on the other hand, digs beneath the flesh's surface, forcing viewers to see and interpret what lies beneath his sister's flesh. His actions thus obscure the boundaries between anatomical and commercial theatre, leaving audience members struggling to maintain the distance that either theatre posits between spectators and the bodies they observe. As a result, those who sat in the Cockpit audience to see *'Tis Pity*, aware though they may have been of the artfulness inherent in what they viewed, abruptly faced their own involvement in the construction of the horrific theatrical procedures that they witnessed.

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Notes: Chapter Three

¹ For a full explanation of the plan's incompatibility with the site of the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre, see D. F. Rowan, "A Neglected Jones/Webb Theatre Project: Barber-Surgeons Hall Writ Large," *New Theatre Magazine* 9 (1969): 6-15.

² Iain Mackintosh, "Inigo Jones – Theatre Architect," *TABS* 31 (1973): 99-105.

³ John Orrell summarizes the history of the debate about the Cockpit's plans in his chapter "The Cockpit in Drury Lane" in *The Theatres of Inigo Jones and John Webb* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 39-77.

⁴ Henry Chamberlain, *A new and compleat history and survey of the cities of London and Westminster, the Burough of Southwark, and parts adjacent; from the earliest accounts, to the beginning of the year 1770* (London, 1770) 1550.

⁵ D.F. Rowan quotes from the Court Records and Audit Books of the Company, housed in the Guildhall Library, in which the Clerk of the Court reveals plans that the "Concave seeling of the [Anatomical] Theatre shalbe painted With the Constellacons foth the Heavnes, and the 7. planet." See Rowan, 10.

⁶ Andrew Gurr, "Money or Audiences: The Impact of Shakespeare's Globe," *Theatre Notebook* 24 (1988).

⁷ For a full discussion on the tools that artists used in the creation of perspective art, see Svetlana Alpers's chapter "'Ut pictura, ita visio: Kepler's Model of the Eye and the Nature of Picturing in the North" in *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983).

⁸ By the end of the sixteenth century, Andrew Gurr and Louis Montrose point out, the term *acting* came to be associating with academic debate, while the term *personating* came to describe the performance styles that presented inner emotions and interior conflict, often through soliloquy. See Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage: 1574-1642* (London: Cambridge UP, 1970) 99-100 and Louis Montrose, *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theatre* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1996) 90-91.

⁹ Katharine Eisaman Maus offers a particularly thorough account of this concern for discovering the human mental interior in her *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995).

¹⁰ Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 123.

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¹¹ While the authorship of *The Revenger's Tragedy* is in doubt, current critics generally attribute the play to Cyril Tourneur.

¹² Roland Mushat Frye, "Ways of Seeing in Shakespearean Drama and Elizabethan Painting," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 31 (1980) 337. For a more extensive – and more nuanced – discussion of perspective art's growing popularity in England, see Clark Hulse, *The Rule of Art: Literature and Painting in the Renaissance* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1990).

¹³ Frye, 339.

¹⁴ Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong discuss the political and social ramifications of such arrangements in their book *The Theatre of the Stuart Court* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1973); Ernest B. Gilman considers the centrality of the monarch as a further example of the masque's overall effects as a "wonder," claiming that the presence of the king combined with the scenery to "heighten the effect of myth and fantasy" to make the display "optically plausible" rather than realistic. See his *The Curious Perspective in England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978) 63.

¹⁵ Inigo Jones, *Tempe Restored*, lines 47-50. Quoted in Orgel and Strong, vol. 2, 480.

¹⁶ Orgel and Strong, vol. 1, 7.

¹⁷ All references to *King Lear* in this chapter refer to the conflated text as printed in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997).

¹⁸ Frye points out the perspectivist nature of this description, 341, as does Philip McGuire in *Shakespeare: The Jacobean Plays* (London: Macmillan, 1994).

¹⁹ See McGuire, 91-93.

²⁰ While many historians have assumed that this earliest indoor theatre arranged its occupants in rows set squarely against four walls – as the temporary court theatres had – Orrell's argument effectively reveals that the Blackfriars seating avoided such square corners. See his "The Private Theatre Auditorium," *Theatre Research International* 9 (1984) 79-101, esp. 85-86. Orrell later summarizes his argument in *The Human Stage: English Theatre Design, 1567-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988) 187-203.

²¹ Orrell, *Theatres*, 8. Orrell reports that Jones owned and heavily annotated the 1567 Venetian edition of Vitruvius by Daniele Barbaro (33). For a detailed look at Jones's reading and annotating of such continental texts, see John Peacock, "Inigo Jones as Figurative Artist" in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990) 154-179.

²² Vitruvius, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover, 1960) 72-73.

²³ See Orrell, *The Human Stage*, 172.

²⁴ Serlio. *The First (-fifth) booke of archetecture*, trans out of Italian into Dutch, and out of Dutch into English by Robert Peake (London, 1611).

²⁵ Orrell, *Theatres*, 46-47.

²⁶ Orrell, *Theatres*, 46.

²⁷ *London in 1710*, trans. W.H. Quarrell and M. Mare (Oxford, 1928) 48, quoted in Orrell, *Theatres*, 46-47. Orrell argues that the similarity in descriptions of cockpits during the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries vary so little that the form can be considered standard and seldom changing.

²⁸ Measurements of the London playhouses and their stages are drawn from a variety of sources. Figures for the Globe are drawn from Orrell, *The Human Stage*, 151; Orrell offers measurements for the indoor playhouses in *The Human Stage*, 190, expanding upon those noted by Gerald Eades Bentley in vol. 6 of *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon UP, 1968) 87-92. Orrell also offers additional measurements for the Cockpit, based on Jones's plans, in "The Private Theatre," and Andrew Gurr provides yet another set of measurements in *The Shakespearean Stage*, 148.

²⁹ Wright's text is reprinted in Robert Dodsley's *A Select Collection of Old English Plays* as edited by W. Carew Hazlitt (London, 1876), vol. 6, 408.

³⁰ Both illustrations are reproduced in Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage: 1574-1642*.

³¹ T. J. King, "Staging of Plays at the Phoenix in Drury Lane, 1617-42," *Theatre Notebook* 19 (1965): 153-54.

³² Quoted in Orrell, *Human Stage*, 192.

³³ The Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre has undergone no thorough examination by theatre historians, so its measurements are much less precise than those of London's commercial theatres. While these numbers are not total guesses, they are estimates based on my own amateur readings of reproductions of Jones's plans.

³⁴ The painting is itself a fine example of the Tudor era's lack of concern for Italianate ideas of artistic perspective, with the assistant in the foreground dwarfed by the

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observers in the background as well as by the corpse, the skeleton model, and the glorified Banister.

³⁵ See Jessie Dobson and R. Milnes Walker, *Barbers and Barber-Surgeons of London*. (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979) 40-41.

³⁶ See the 8 June 1623 letter from Privy Council to Justices of the Peace of Middlesex (M.S.C. i. 383), as quoted in Bentley, vol. 1, p. 228: "Whereas the high way leading a long the backside of the Cockpitt playhouse neere Lincholnes Inne Fields, and the streete called Queenes streete adioyneing to the same, are become verie fowle and almost impassable, there, is become a streete, through w[hi]ch: his matie: and orselues and divers of his Subiects doe often passe. And therefore it is verie necessarie & fitt that the same should be paued w[i]th: stones, as other Streetes are"

³⁷ *The Familiar Letters of James Howell, Historiographer Royal to Charles II*, ed. Joseph Jacobs. (London: David Nutt, 1892) 214.

³⁸ See Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, 53. Other intramural venues like St. Paul's had offered commercial performances in earlier years, but their producers described them as rehearsals for court performances in order to avoid city regulations.

³⁹ Bentley, vol. 1, 225.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Bentley, vol. 6 p. 224.

⁴¹ See Gurr, "Money or Audiences," throughout.

⁴² Quoting Fleay, Bentley reports that Beeston's Queen Anne's Men returned to the Cockpit approximately three months after the riot. On June 3, the records of a Chancery suit claim that the troupe was "now comme, or shortly to comme from the said Playhowse called the Redd bull to the Playhowse in Drurie Lane called the Cockpitt." See vol. 1 p. 56.

⁴³ The relatively rapid return of the Queen Anne's Men to the Cockpit, Bentley argues, signals that the apprentices' attack upon the costumes and promptbooks had proven more damaging than the destruction to the theatre building. See vol. 1 p. 56. Such pointed attacks against the texts and stage properties need not invalidate Gurr's argument that the apprentices blamed the Cockpit itself for depriving them of their plays, yet such arguments do suggest that the apprentices primarily sought revenge for price increases more than they sought a long-term solution to the loss of their plays by forcing the return of their favorite dramas to the more affordable Red Bull.

⁴⁴ All citations refer to John Webster, *The White Devil, The Selected Plays of John Webster*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

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⁴⁵ See David Stevens, "A Study of Christopher Beeston and the Phoenix or Cockpit Theatre," diss., Bowling Green State University, 1973. Stevens offers an extensive list of playtexts owned by the Cockpit troupes, noting the properties needed for their performance as well as the date of the scripts' acquisition.

⁴⁶ Douglas Bruster, *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992) 55.

⁴⁷ As Dena Goldberg argues, *The White Devil* relies on such voyeurism to produce a sense of the ambiguous relations between public and private at Brachiano's court. Her insistence that the playhouse audience immediately identifies with the onstage courtiers and attendants, however, fails to account for their access to conversations that are presumably utterly private, yet her assessment of the play as evidence of a growing public fascination with court gossip – and of the potential for historical misinterpretation that arises from faulty recountings of events at court – endorses the notion of the play's concern for the intricacies involved in interpreting visual as well as aural information. See her "'By Report': The Spectator as Voyeur in Webster's *The White Devil*," *English Literary Renaissance* 17 (1987): 67-84.

⁴⁸ As F. T. Bowers points out in "The Audience and the Poisoners of Elizabethan Tragedy" (*Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 16 [1937]), poisoning by inhalation was commonly considered an effective means of causing death in the early modern era. Though poisoning proved an especially popular means for lower-class wives to murder their husbands, at least according to murder pamphlets of the day, Bowers argues that the court looked upon killing by poison as a characteristically Italian mode of murder. For an more detailed development of such notions, see Mariangela Tempera's "The Rhetoric of Poison in John Webster's Italianate Plays" in *Shakespeare's Italy: Functions of Italian Locations in Renaissance Drama*, ed. Michele Marrapodi (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993) 229-49.

⁴⁹ So claims Rupin Desai in his "'Spectacles fashioned with such perspective art': A Phenomenological Reading of Webster's *The White Devil*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 1 (1984), 190. Desai offers evidence from Dieter Miehle to support his position. Similarly, Goldberg offers a survey of scholars who argue that the dumb shows offer audiences a means of distancing themselves from the plot's more violent actions.

⁵⁰ Goldberg, 74. Interestingly, Goldberg claims that Brachiano's coldness may be the result of "the magic glass through which he views the action." The playtext, however, makes no mention of such a literal glass, though the conjurer does insist that Brachiano don a "charmed" night-cap before the dumb shows begin (21).

⁵¹ For a detailed discussion of the arguments surrounding the text's authorship, see volume four of *The Complete Works of John Webster*, ed. F.L. Lucas (London: Chatto & Windus, 1927) 6-14. All citations refer to *New and Chose Characters* as published in that volume, 5-61.

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⁵² See Gurr's *The Shakespearean Stage*, 81.

⁵³ Quoted in Orrell, *The Theatres*, 6.

⁵⁴ See William E. Miller, "Periaktoi: Around Again," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 15 (1964): 60-65.

⁵⁵ As Gurr points out in *Shakespearean Stage*, the induction to Jonson's play speaks of a "piece of perspective" (185).

⁵⁶ See Orrell 60-64. In 1958, William A. Armstrong asserted that the company at the Cockpit used "expensive painting settings" in its production of *Hannibal and Scipio*, calling upon the play's preface for support; T. J. King, however, refutes this claim, asserting instead that the lines Armstrong cites as evidence prepare the audience to imagine scene changes for themselves rather than signal a switch in backdrop. See King's "Staging Plays at the Phoenix in Drury Lane, 1617-42," *Theatre Notebook* 19 (1965): 147-48.

⁵⁷ Helkiah Crooke, *Microcosmographia: a description of the body of man* (London, 1615) 14-15.

⁵⁸ See Giovanna Ferrari, "Public Anatomy Lessons and the Carnival: The Anatomy Theatre of Bologna," *Past and Present* 117 (1987): 50-106, especially 99, for accounts of the circulation of dissected body parts through the audience. Samuel Pepys's report of his February 27, 1662/3 attendance of an anatomy at the Barber-Surgeons' Hall dwells on his viewing of the body after the end of the formal dissection. See *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Henry B. Wheatley (London: George Bell and Sons, 1897).

⁵⁹ *The Familiar Letters of James Howell, Historiographer Royal to Charles II*, ed. Joseph Jacobs. (London: David Nutt, 1892) 425. 15 Aug 1646.

⁶⁰ James Shirley, *The Traitor*, ed. John Stewart Carter (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1965).

⁶¹ Devon L. Hodges, *Renaissance Fictions of Anatomy* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1985).

⁶² *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. R. Warwick Bond (London: Clarendon, 1903) vol. 1 180. Hodges quotes this passage, p. 22.

⁶³ See Hodges, 22-23.

⁶⁴ See Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity in English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991) as discussed in Chapter 2.

⁶⁵ Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 221.

⁶⁶ See Katharine Park, "The Criminal and the Saintly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994). The *Fabrica's* illustrated initial letter woodblocks often catch cherubs perpetuating these graveyard excavations as well. Such activities to counteract the rarity of bodies, of course, reached an even higher pitch in the eighteenth century, when Resurrectionists commonly unearthed bodies to sell them to anatomists, both rogue and legitimate.

⁶⁷ Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990) 79. See, for a full discussion, 78-88. Laqueur also points to recent scientific research the bolsters these views.

⁶⁸ See, for example, Lesley Dean-Jones, "The Cultural Construct of the Female Body in Classical Greek Science," *Women's History and Ancient History*, ed. Sarah B. Pomeroy (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1991). 111-37.

⁶⁹ Laqueur, Chapter 2.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Sawday 213-18.

⁷¹ A.R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway, editors of *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990) attribute the play to Middleton's pen, but some have recently claimed that the play was in fact written by Shakespeare, perhaps with the help of Middleton. Most recently, Charles Hamilton's published edition of the playtext, which he argues also went under the title *Cardenio*, attributes the drama to John Fletcher and William Shakespeare. See his *Cardenio, or the Second Maiden's Tragedy* (Lakewood, Co.: Glendbridge, 1994). Eric Rasmussen has also seen Shakespeare's influence in the play; his arguments appear in the article "Shakespeare's Hand in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40 (1989): 1-26, and his debates with MacD. P. Jackson concerning the play's origins soon follow in "The Additions to *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*: Shakespeare or Middleton?," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41 (1990) 402-407.

⁷² *The Second Maiden's Tragedy (1611)*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1909).

⁷³ Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London, 1584) 66, as reprinted by The New Shakespeare Society, ed. Frederick J. Furnivall (London: 1877-79).

⁷⁴ Svetlana Alpers, *Rembrandt's Enterprise: The Studio and the Market* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1988) 81.

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⁷⁵ In the course of arguing that the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* influenced Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, David M. Bergeron comments that "It is interesting to speculate that the 'effigy' necessary in the production to represent this dead Lady could have been used for one of the 'wax' figures in Webster's play, both plays written for production by the King's Men." See his "Webster's Allusion to *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*," *English Language Notes* 17 (1980) 253-55. Such notions, however, remain mere speculation, since no evidence exists that the wax figures or the corpse of the Lady were indeed stage properties (which would undoubtedly have proven both expensive and cumbersome) and not actor's bodies.

⁷⁶ Philip Massinger, *The Duke of Milan*, in *The Selected Plays of Philip Massinger*, ed. Colin Gibson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978).

⁷⁷ Annette Drew-Bear, *Painted Faces on the Renaissance Stage* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1994) 61.

⁷⁸ All citations refer to *The Revenger's Tragedy* as edited by George Parfitt in *The Plays of Cyril Tourneur* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978).

⁷⁹ For an intriguing examination of the mysterious origins of body parts on the early Stuart stage, see Mark Taylor, "Shakespeare's Talking Heads," unpublished manuscript (1995).

⁸⁰ His comments upon Gloriana's adorned skull, as Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky points out, resemble the deranged jokes of serial killers; see Lobanov-Rostovsky *The Cannibal Banquet: Violence, Enactment, Tragedy in the English Renaissance*, diss., Harvard 1993.

⁸¹ All citations refer to *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* as edited by Marion Lomax for the Oxford Drama Library in John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995).

⁸² Even before William Harvey's lectures in the 1620s about the heart's role in circulation, anatomists had seen the heart as an organ vital for sustaining human life. Aristotle, for example, considered it the seat of the soul, while other ancient anatomists held that the heart played a central role in maintaining humoral balances.

⁸³ "Patchwork: Piecing the Early Modern Mind In England's First Century of Print Culture," *English Literary Renaissance* 23 (1993) 21.

⁸⁴ *Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil*, in *The Unfortunate Traveller and Other Works*, ed. J. B. Steane (London: Penguin, 1972) 114.



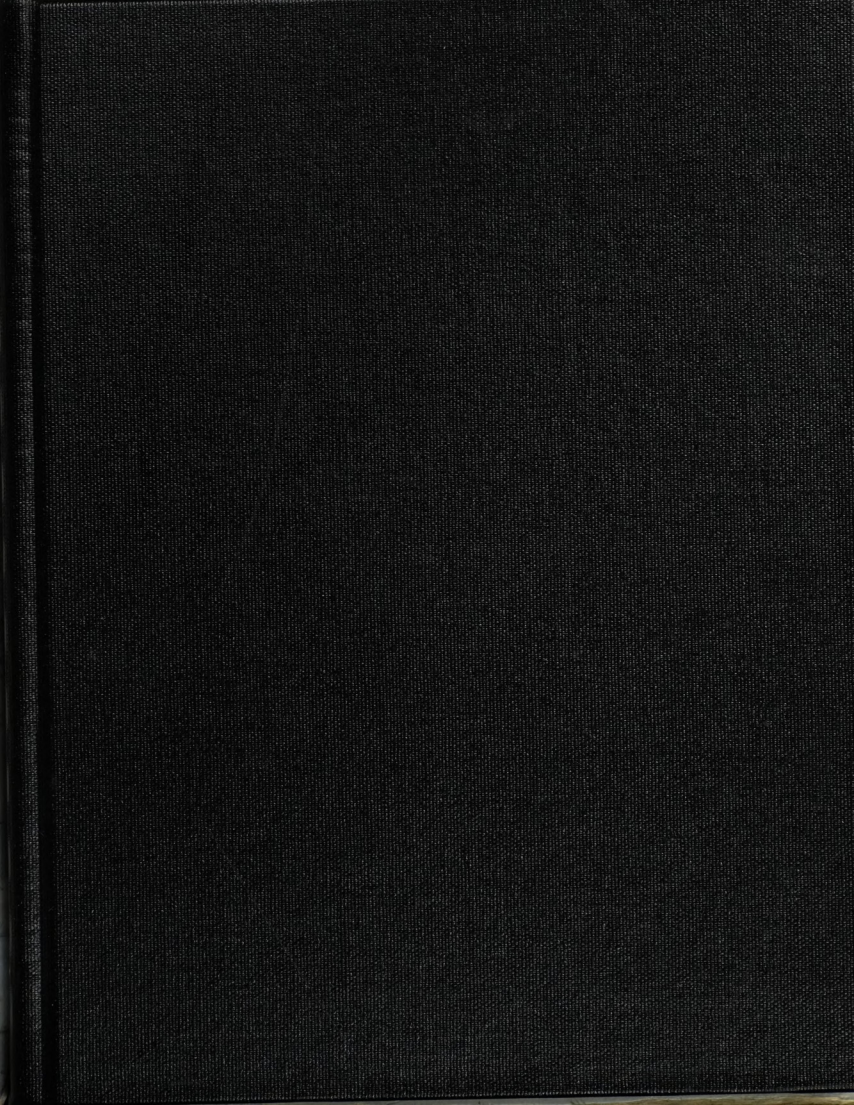




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STAGING ANATOMIES:
DISSECTION AND TRAGEDY IN THE EARLY STUART ERA

VOLUME II

By

Hillary M. Nunn

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1999

CHAPTER FOUR:
Believing Your Eyes:
Witnessing, Blindings, and Enactment of Stage Violence

One of the early modern period's most vivid portrayals of anatomy appears not in a medical treatise but in Thomas Nashe's picaresque proto-novel *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594). When the book's young hero Jack Wilton, on the run from an Italian jail, falls into a cellar, its owner, Zadoch, offers to sell the young man to a physician in need of a corpse for his college's annual anatomy. The young man, Zadoch claims, will make an excellent demonstration cadaver in such plague-ridden times, for he is "of stature tall, straight-limbd, [and] of cleare a complection as any Painters fancie can imagine" (348).¹ Convinced by this sales pitch, the anatomist has Jack delivered to his house and, after ensuring that the young man's blood runs well, leaves Jack locked up in a dark chamber with nothing to distract him but the thought of his own looming dissection:

O, the colde sweating cares which I conceived after I knewe I should be cut like a French summer dublet! Me thought already the blood began to gush out at my nose: if a flea on the arm had but bit me, I deemed the instrument had prickt me Not a drop of sweate trickled downe my breast and my sides, but I dreamt it was a smooth edged razer tenderly sliced downe my breast and sides. If anie knockt at doore, I supposd it was the Bedle of surgeons hal come for me. In the night I dreamd of nothing but phlebotomie, bloudie fluxes, incarnatives, running ulcers. I durst not let out a wheale for feare through it I should bleede to death.
(305)

Merely contemplating the dissection he is to undergo, Jack can already feel the anatomist at work upon his flesh. His anxiety produces bodily reactions that not only reinforce his nervousness but stimulate physical sensations that reify his worries as well. Jack, sweating at the thought of the scalpel running along his torso, feels something "tenderly [slice] downe [his] breast and sides"; though that something may not yet be the

anatomist's "smooth edged razer," Jack, in his darkened chamber, can envision it as nothing else. As laughable as his description may be for those who read it, Jack experiences no such merriment during his agonizing confinement. On the contrary, his words carefully – and painstakingly – open up his own flesh for the reader, transforming his body, shrouded in darkness, into a speaking illustration of his mental state as well as of his physical constitution. Jack's extended description of his own imagined dissection thus proves surprisingly reminiscent of the self-revealing anatomical images so common in the era's medical books discussed in Chapter Two (see, for example, Figure 11). During Jack's agonizing wait in the cellar, after all, his body's own functions threaten to turn on him and penetrate his skin from the outside, and the words he uses to describe his precarious position focus his readers' attention on his flesh while prompting them to imagine their own bodies undergoing similar transformations.

As amusing as this imagined self-torture may be, Nashe's description refuses to let readers distance themselves from Jack's farcical misery. Though they may laugh at the absurdity of Jack's thoughts, his vivid account of his body's prematurely conceived suffering pinpoints physical sensations that readers can easily imagine – and fear – for themselves. His readers, after all, could easily think of – and viscerally remember – the sensation of sweat trickling down their skin, and they could just as easily imagine that sensation's similarity to a slicing knife blade. Just as importantly, the description ensures that readers can envision Jack's body undergoing the trauma of anatomy. Like Jack, who is trapped in a dark room and deprived of sight, readers must rely on their imaginations, not their eyes, to perceive the torture that Nashe's hero undergoes. Jack, after all, cannot see his own flesh as it awaits the anatomist, and neither can the readers who take delight

in the descriptions of his body's intense awareness of its own vulnerability. Nashe's narrative offers the audience clues about Jack's appearance nonetheless, effectively allowing readers to make out his form, even in the dark. Zadoch's remark that Jack's face looks like one worthy of artistic attention, for instance, not only notes his body's health, it encourages readers to see the young man as resembling those they have seen rendered in paint; even more significantly, the physician's words invite comparisons between an artist's work and his own examination of the body through dissection. Jack's brief brush with the anatomist, as a result, thus foregrounds the similarities of artistic, painted representations of the human body and those representations of the flesh associated with anatomical dissection, calling on readers to interpret Jack's situation through both modes of understanding the body. Employing the visually – along with the physically – sensational, Nashe allows his audience to see Jack's body under threat, and to feel the fleshly danger that awaits him as well.

While Jack Wilton eventually avoids the anatomist's knife, characters in early Stuart dramas often have less luck escaping from similar threats to their bodily integrity. Instead, the era's theatrical performances present audiences with characters who narrate their own body's gradual violation in hopes of stirring sympathy among those who watch. Though plenty of early modern dramas feature scenes that result in bloodshed, most such injuries happen quickly, often as the result of a staged fight, an execution, or a suicide. Many characters die slow deaths in order to deliver memorable last words, yet the wounds that kill them usually take mere seconds to inflict. In a world full of such routinely sudden stage deaths, scenes where characters must endure a more extended, studied infliction of bodily pain provoke far more suspense – and sympathy – from those

who watch, especially when the bleeding body remains capable of speech to narrate its own pain. Such scenes, in effect, stage prolonged violence that theatre audiences must endure along with the suffering characters. Even though those undergoing such torment may not prove entirely sympathetic in the eyes of all audience members, witnessing the infliction of wounds as staged in plays like *The Revenger's Tragedy* escalates the spectators' compassion toward such suffering characters nonetheless. To rouse such feelings of connection, early Stuart dramatists simply direct their torturer's attentions to the very organs that viewers rely upon to perceive the play's action in the first place: the eyes. Brutally depriving characters of their sight, the companies and playwrights who set such plots into motion left their audiences not only to confront with their own eyes a world without vision, but to picture a world where their chief mode of perception could suddenly prove invalid and where their major means of evaluating their connection to the people and events taking shape around them could swiftly vanish.

The theatregoers of early Stuart London proved acutely aware of vision's fragile nature even as they used on their eyes to interpret the scenes played out before them. As new perspectivist habits of viewing introduced new levels of meaning – and confusion – to the process of watching plays in the theatre, dramatic plots increasingly called the eye's trustworthiness into question. The relative bareness of the era's stages, after all, required spectators to use spoken descriptions to help assign meaning to what their eyes saw, thus allowing living bodies to pass for corpses, feigned skirmishes to represent terrifying full-scale battles, and boy actors to look like women (not to mention female characters to successfully disguise themselves as boys). In the early Stuart era, however, staged dramas made the hazards inherently involved in interpreting visual information central to

their plays, basing entire plots of dramas like *Othello* on the tragic mistakes that supposedly straightforward "ocular proof" could precipitate. Yet tragedies also revealed the era's concerns about the reliability of vision more overtly, staging plots that explored the significance of vision by placing the eye itself under scrutiny. Both *King Lear* and the nearly-forgotten *Revenge for Honour*, in particular, feature scenes where vengeful characters inflict blinding as punishment, seemingly plucking out a victim's eyes while the playhouse audience looks on; in both cases, however, the changes in vision that result extend beyond the tormented body of the victim, forcing the surrounding characters and playhouse spectators not only to witness such horrific torment but to adjust their perceptions of the ensuing action and its meaning as well.

The prospect of such a violent loss of eyesight proves so horrifying that it could even gain sympathy for otherwise unlikable characters on the early Stuart stage. In John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, performed at the Cockpit theatre beginning in 1632, for example, the blinding of the nurse Putana carries the power to shock and disturb playhouse spectators despite the character's morally questionable encouragement of the incestuous affair between Annabella and Giovanni. Though the nurse's actions are no doubt problematic, her suffering invites new sympathy from the audience because of the cruelty involved in its infliction. Putana, after all, anticipates absolutely no physical torment from the flattering Vasques before he orders that her eyes be plucked out, and that is precisely why her suffering proves so potentially shocking. Rather than threaten Putana with bodily harm to gain information as a torturer would, Vasques lauds the nurse with compliments while promising that naming the father of Annabella's child will bring her "everlasting love and preferment" as well as relieve Annabella's "present discomforts"

(4.3.197-98); when she hesitates, he goes so far as to promise to protect her himself, guaranteeing "My life between you and danger" (202-3).² His geniality, however, vanishes the second he gets the information he seeks, for he calls in the banditti to "gag her instantly, and put out her eyes" (220). When she protests both verbally and physically, he urges the thugs to undertake their task more quickly, even striking physical blows of his own:

Gag her, I say. 'Sfoot, d'ee suffer her to prate? What d'ee fumble about? Let me come to her. – I'll help your old gums, you toad-bellied bitch! Sirs, carry her closely into the coal-house, and put out her eyes instantly. If she roars, slit her nose; d'ee hear, be speedy and sure. (4.3.223-27)

The drastic change in Vasques's tone and Putana's unprinted yet assuredly vocal struggle ("Sfoot, d'ee suffer to hear her prate?"), not to mention the sudden, unexplained presence of the banditti, combine to create a scene of chaotic, fearsome terror. Though the nurse remains far from guiltless, the extremity of her punishment – along with the sudden shift in the scene's tone – would conjure a sense of horror within the theatre. Putting out her eyes, after all, seems so poor a payment for her cooperation that even the ruthless banditti hesitate in carrying it out, leading Vasques to repeat his orders with even greater ferocity. In fact, Putana's punishment proves so potentially horrendous that the blinding need not be enacted on stage to provoke pity from the playhouse audience. Instead, the play leaves the threat of her punishment looming in the theatre, requiring that the nurse be dragged offstage never to appear again. Yet even though the audience never sees her after her eyes are put out, Putana's blindness acquires a presence in the theatre, for her fate is one that audience members must visualize on their own, or remain blind to themselves. Unable to witness the fate of Putana's eyes, the spectators suddenly find

their own vision limited just as the nurse faces her own impending sightlessness.

Deprived of any concrete vision of Putana's actual blinding, the playhouse spectators suddenly realize the fallibility, even vulnerability, of their own eyes. Such bloody punishment, the scene insists, can be hidden from its potential witnesses; given enough visual and aural clues, however, those observers may well remain haunted by the scene the drama's words prompt them to envision, leaving them to watch the scene's violence play out in their minds even though it remains hidden from their eyes.

As harrowing as Putana's blinding may be, her torment is far less theatrically horrifying than those taking place in *King Lear* and *Revenge for Honour*, where scenes in which characters' eyes are put out are enacted on stage. In presenting such brutality to the audience, after all, these plays not only transform their spectators into witnesses, they insist that audience members watch the gory action unfold – sometimes with surprising speed, other times with agonizing slowness – in front of their eyes. The audience members, as a result, find themselves sharing the victims' pain even as they participate in the tormenters' cruelty, for the playhouse spectators join the persecutors in watching as their victims are deprived of their eyesight. The playhouse spectators know, of course, that the actors are not being hurt in what transpires on stage, yet their willingness to suspend their disbelief even at such heights of cruelty makes them accomplices in the infliction of the very horror that leads them to recoil. Viewing, as a result, becomes an act of violence, one that implicates its early modern viewers in staged brutality.³ The blinded characters, meanwhile, like Nashe's self-revealing Jack Wilton, operate increasingly in the dark, communicating to spectators their thoughts and bodily sensations through their words and their screams, as well as through their supposedly

exposed flesh. Gloucester in *King Lear* and Abilqualit in *Revenge for Honour*, after all, can hear as accurately as the audience members who look upon them; they cannot, however, return the gazes directed at their sightless bodies by both on- and offstage spectators. Even as these characters undergo physical torment, however, they exhibit through words a profound willingness to allow others to gaze upon their unseeing bodies. They, in short, become speaking, struggling self-revealing anatomies, inviting audiences to examine them, to witness their physical pain and evaluate their character despite their inability to meet the eyes of those who look upon them.

Without the culturally recognized possibility of sympathetic connection between the eyes of two individuals, early modern theatrical performances would have proven largely empty of meaning, for effective acting, the era's writers concluded, stemmed from the onlookers' ability to read the emotions that actors worked to communicate through the eye. Though words and gestures could convey meaning to the audience, the actor's ability to control his "looks" – to make his eyes reflect the emotions and outlook of the character he strove to embody – proved as vital in his performance as his speech, at least according to critics of the day. As Thomas Wright notes in *The Passions of the Minde* (1604), the effective actor "by mouth ... telleth his mind; in countenance he speaketh with a silent voice to the eyes; with all the universall life and bodie he seemeth to say, Thus we move, because by the passion thus we are mooved, and as it hath wrought in us so it ought to work in you."⁴ For Wright, facial expressions thus convey meaning to the audience far more viscerally than words, for such an expression "speaketh" to the eyes of onlookers through a direct emotional appeal. Even more specifically, John Astington argues, the actor's efforts to create such a visually sympathetic character before the



audience depend on his ability to speak through his glances. Though many spectators' distance from the stage would prevent them from gazing directly into the actor's eyes, their visual expression nonetheless remained the center for his performance. "For the actor," Astington notes, "the face, and especially the eyes, formed the centre of visual communication: the hand was the follower or the agent of what flowed from that centre" (117). The hand and body, in other words, simply amplified what the eyes communicated, and gestures served merely as extensions of the eye – much as the murder weapons discussed in Chapter Two served as extensions of the criminal's hand.

The eye, then, served not only as the individual's chief means of interpreting the world that lay outside his body, it provided the world with its most effective means of gazing into another individual's interior – both physical and mental – to discern his inner nature. The physician Andreas Laurentius, for example, pinpoints the exact site of this intersection of the outer and inner world in what he and other anatomists called the crystalline humor of the eye. "This," he explains, "is the icelike humour, which is the principall unit of sight, the soule of the eye, the inward spectacle." This mirror-like humor thus allows individual bodies to see what lies outside them while also reflecting an image of their inner being to the world outside. Laurentius, like many early anatomists, verbally explains the function of the crystalline humor and its interactions with the eye's other structures by describing the eye as a fortified city, one where each element plays a specified role in the functioning of the whole. The eye, he explains, sends out its eye-beam messengers to survey actively the potentially hostile world surrounding it; the organ commands these beams from a protected position within the skull, where the bones of the brow, cheeks and nose shield it from invading external forces. Yet Laurentius

blends these martial metaphors with more domestic ones, painting the eye not just as a defensive installation but as a bustling home as well. Thus, though he asserts that all the eye's elements recognize the christalline humor as the organ's universal "soveraigne, and themselves the vassals thereof," he intently argues that the daily activities inside the kingdom can be glimpsed and perhaps influenced from outside the eye's barricaded walls.⁵ In his view, the eye's function depends on a highly organized division of labor, one that involves both aggressive actions according to Galenic theories of sight – which held that the eye sent forth penetrating beams into the world, and that these beams captured images of objects – and less active Aristotelian notions of vision as a process involving the passive reception of eyebeams in a more matrix-like eye.⁶ In Laurentius's formulation, not only do the eye's rays penetrate the outside world, they expose the eye itself to penetration from without, for when they open to allow their eyebeams to exit, they also allow the eyebeams of others to see within.

For George Hakewill, who had himself lost his sight as a young man and who wrote in hopes of consoling a noblewoman whose own eyes were failing, this process makes the eyes a site of vulnerability for the body rather than a place of fortification, for the eye's permeability provides others with access to aspects of the mind that an individual might rather keep hidden. The eyes, he argues in his treatise *The Vanitie of the Eie* (1608), offers a thoroughly revealing diagram of the mind's state, exposing the individual's secret thoughts to inspection:

by a fierce sparkling eie, we discover anger; by an open staring eie, unstaidnes; by a rowling unsettled eie wantonnesse; by a hollow wan eie, envie, and jelousie; by a hautie skornfull eie pride; by a narrow dejected eie, basenesse; by a dul fixed eie, heavines of spirit; many times to the shame, & sometimes to the disadvantage of him that is discovered; his enemies by this means gaining



advantage to worke upo[n] that passio[n], by which they see him Possessed, or to which they judge him most inclined89-90)⁷

And when the gaze of another enters the eyes, the beholder garners evidence that, once harnessed and processed by his inner humors, furnishes an image of the "inward light" that animates the body gazed upon. The christalline humor thus serves not only as the "soule" of sight but as an epitomized embodiment of the soul that spreads throughout and animates the remainder of the individual's body. The eyes, in short, provide more than windows to the soul, they open it to direct scrutiny by displaying, even projecting, its essence in action.

Hakewill's treatise thus argues that sight not only makes he who sees a threat to those who surround him, it leaves the beholder vulnerable to evil, tempting forces that might enter the body and mind through the eye. Hakewill attributes a litany of sins to the seeing eye, claiming that sight not just encourages but causes gluttony, lust, snooping, and covetousness; he even sees it as the root of humanity's downfall in the Garden of Eden. For Hakewill, the danger in seeing is the eye's direct connection to action. Citing Matthew 6.23, he declares that the eye and the hand prove "the two most offensive members of the body; the one as the counsaillour to the heart, & the other as the executioner whence" (35). The potential for evil, he argues, stems from "that excessive delight, which we naturally take, in beholding one beast cruelly to worry, & devour another. And which is worse, in seeing one man combating with an other; nay with wilde beasts, & that even to the powring out of blood, & sometimes the life it selfe, which among the ancient Romans was usuall ..." (36). Seeing, in other words, inspires within the individual not just pagan notions, but bestial ones, tempting him to act upon his base carnal instincts. Once such corrupting forces enter through the eye, the individual cannot

help translating them into his own actions. The beholder, in Hakewill's view, thus becomes nothing more than a tool of what he sees.

Even those who glorify the perceptive power of the eyes admit the validity of Hakewill's concerns, for their explanations of sight underscore the organs' penetrability and therefore their susceptibility to the seductive power of visual stimuli. Laurentius, who marvels at the eye's ability to process visual information, cautions that the eye's physical role in seeing often leaves the seer vulnerable to bodily lust. Like Hakewill, Laurentius asserts that the eye can indeed enslave the human body, leaving it powerless to overcome its lustful yearning to possess what it sees. "Yea tell me," he asks rhetorically,

how many soules have lost their libertie through the sight of the eyes? Doe not men say that that little wanton, that blind archer doth enter into our hearts by this doore, and that love is shaped by the glittering glimces which issue out of the eyes, or rather by certaine subtile and thin spirits, which passe from the heart to the eye through a straite and narrow way very secretly, and having deceived this porter, doe place love within, which by little and little doth make it selfe Lord of the house, and castest reason out of doores? (12)

The body's other senses may exercise similar effects, Laurentius admits, but sight wields its power to deprive humans of their reason most brutally, driving them to foolish actions despite the brain's cautions. Seeing, then, resonates with dangers even for those medical practitioners who rely on it and who seek to understand its functions, for what the body sees can conquer the flesh that sees it, leaving the individual perceiver subject to a power that lies without rather than the reason that lies within.

Such susceptibility to visual stimuli, Hakewill argues, makes theatregoing a particularly dangerous pastime for humans, for watching such spectacles leaves the

beholder vulnerable to the corruption of his fellow spectators as well as to the dissolution portrayed in the staged action. Again calling upon the violent practices of Rome for his examples, Hakewill recounts St. Augustine's story of his friend Alypius's attempts to resist the infectious corruption lurking in the sight of gladiatorial contests. Though Alypius had vowed, upon advice from Augustine, never to return to the coliseum, a group of his old compatriots joined to draw him to the arena once again. Alypius's attempts to remain blind to the spectacle, to avoid taking in its violence, however, ultimately fail, for its evil influences eventually pry their way into his consciousness through his suddenly-opened eye. According to Hakewill's retelling, Alypius resolves that his companions "might force his body thither, but his eies, they should not," yet his senses deceive him and his determination suddenly vanishes when

at lenth [sic], a grievous wou[n]d being given, [to] one of the Comabaters, a great shout was suddenly raised, through the theater; at which Alpius [(not able any longer to forbear) opened his eies, and seeing the bloud trickling downe, dranke in cruelty with the sight, receaving a greater wound in his soule, then the co[m]bater did in his heade, neither was he now the man that came thither, but one of the manie, unto whom he came; and a true companion, or rather Captaine, of those who drew him thither by force. (37-38)

The instant that Alypius opens his eyes, the scene's wounding power enters his body, causing irreparable damage to his soul. The simple act of beholding the unfolding battle transforms him from one who disavows such spectacle to one who joins – if not leads – the crowd in cheering it on. The visions beheld by the eye thus alter his interior nature, reducing him to a member of a crowd whose members experience a nearly-identical thrill as they watch the violent scene unfold, a group that he had scorned only moments before. Just as Alypius's sudden melding with the arena's audience signals his ultimate downfall,

Hakewill suggests, a spectator's viewing of theatrical productions can produce similar corruption in the soul. Calling upon St. Paul, Hakewill decries the corruption occasioned by "French Comedies and daunces; and sometimes in our common Mercenarie interludes here at home," claiming that those who watch such spectacles, "insensibly, & by degresses, [bid] adue to shame & modestie, though beginnest to entertaine and practise the same" (41). Once exposed through the eye to evil forces outside his own body, Hakewill argues, the individual becomes a subject of what he sees, for the images imprinted on the mind change the viewer's bodily behavior, stirring him to lust and prompting him to act identically to all others who perceive the same sights. In Hakewill's view, then, such corrupting visions create their own uniformly dissolute communities of seers. As a result, vision – the very function the eye is designed for – holds the greatest potential to damage the body and soul that uses it. Summing up his stance with a rhyme he claims to have borrowed from Walter Bailey's treatise on the preservation of eyesight, Hakewill concludes

Wine, women, bathes, by art or nature wrought,
Onions, garlike, mustard seed, fires and light,
Smoake, bruses, dust[,] peper to powder brought,
Beanes, lentiles, straines, winde, teares, and Phoebus bright.
And all sharpe things our eie sight doe molest,
Yet watching hurts them more than al the rest. (97)⁸

Just as gladiatorial contests created in Hakewill's view a mass of spectators unified in barbarity, critics of anatomical dissections argued that watching a corpse's gradual destruction spread insensitivity among its beholders. The spectacle of anatomy, they insisted, inspired callousness in all who observed, not just in those who physically cut into dead human flesh. While Nashe's Jack Wilton clearly illustrates the potential for public horror always lurking beneath the dissection's patina of scholarly exploration,

Cornelius Agrippa's *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum declamatio invectiva* (1584) reveals that anatomy could raise suspicion – even terror – among even the most respected of scholars. For Agrippa, anatomical dissection flourished from barbaric roots, ones that no veneer of scientific investigation could erase. The practice, he argues, originated as

a form of public execution in which at one time they used to cut up condemned criminals, still alive and breathing, with savage tortures. Today, on account of the Christian religion, they are made a little milder, and the man is first killed. Then with their own hand or that of the lecturer in the cadaver they proceed with these crimes, and tearing the human body in pieces they seek out and pry into the site, order, size, functions, nature, and hidden things of all the members. [They do this] in order to learn how and in what places [the body] should be cured by means of this cruel diligence and spectacle as impious as it is abhorrent and abominable.⁹

The action of dissection, in his view, illustrates above all the inhumanity of those who perform it. Those who behold the spectacle, moreover, find themselves infected with inhumanity, just as Alypius found himself the captain of the cheering crowds in the arena. The act of beholding such actions, as a result, creates an audience inhuman enough to bear the inhumanity of the actions performed there. In Agrippa's formulation, the formal detachment accompanying dissections not only robbed the corpse of whatever humanity it might have retained, but it also led some to see those who frequented anatomies, who grew to look at corpses as scientific objects rather than bodies of once vital citizens, as hard-hearted and dangerously dispassionate. John Earle shared such opinions, noting in his 1633 *Microcosmosgraphia* – a work that anatomized London just as Helkiah Crooke's similarly-named book anatomized the human body – the dehumanizing effects of habitually watching dissections. His characterization of "A Meere Dull Physician"

claims "Anatomies and other spectacles of Mortalitie have hardened him, and hee's no more struck with a Funerall than a Gravemaker" (54).¹⁰ For Earle, those who routinely witness the dehumanizing effects of dissection become immune to the social meaning that the rest of London attached to both the living and the dead human bodies that filled the city's streets.¹¹

Yet the practice of anatomy maintains that the very act of beholding the dissected body is vital for a medical practitioner's education, and that observing the anatomized eye is itself necessary for understanding vision. The organ that sees, like the rest of the human form, must be seen in order for its function to be comprehensible – and such seeing necessitates the cruel-looking cuts that anatomy requires. As Jacques Guillemeau asserts in the preface to his *A Worthy Treatise of the Eyes* (1632),

[W]hosoever will know the nature of the eyes, must first of all know and understande by little peeces all the partes whereof they are made, and by the same maner all their offices and functions, to what end they serve, and of what substance or matter they are made. (2-2v)¹²

Not only must the inquirer somehow behold the eye with his own sight, he must see it cut up in order to comprehend its function. Like most anatomists since Vesalius, Guillemeau thus insists that firsthand evidence of the body's interior serves the physician most thoroughly, and that only through such direct vision can the student of anatomy fully incorporate knowledge of the body's workings into his own mind. As Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky points out, however, the eye's power to see renders it strangely invisible to the anatomist's view because the organ can never direct its own beams to its own internal workings. Though sight leaves a viewer aware of the world around him, one who sees can never be precisely sure of how his own eyes appear to the outside world, for his eye

cannot share the perspective of those who gaze upon him. Lobanov-Rostovsky calls upon Philip Barrough's *The Method of Phisick* (1590) to show that early modern anatomists proved acutely aware of this conundrum; Barrough, he remarks, waxes philosophical on the eye's curious invisibility, commenting

But the eye which is wont with curious inspection to pry into all other things, and to find out the nature and order of them, hath bin unable to unfold his owne wonderfull constitution, and hath bene always blind in judging of its selfe, and in foreseeing the discommodities which attend upon it, or in curing them, when they have layed hold of it.¹³

In Barrough's view, then, the organ that allows humans to observe the world anatomized cannot accurately discern its own parts. His insights indeed reveal an anatomical enigma: why would scientists so willing to imagine corpses as performing such impossible acts as actively peeling back their skins, or, even more remarkable, pointing out their internal functions with their own hands, prove so resolute in declaring the eye's inability to dissect itself? For Lobanov-Rostovsky, the answer lies in the anatomist's understandable need to separate himself from the corpse's lifelessness. Calling upon Foucault's notion of the "speaking eye" – which gazes upon the body in hopes of transforming it into clinically legible signs of its status and function – Lobanov-Rostovsky asserts that "the eye makes the anatomist – at once – both less human and more," because the supposed objectivity of the gaze when focused on the eye paradoxically "affirms the anatomist's subjectivity, makes him a perceiving mind, not objectified flesh" (200).¹⁴

While Lobanov-Rostovsky may too readily accept early modern anatomists' claims to such emotionless handling of corpses, his argument nonetheless captures their vision of themselves – and their gazes – as bravely exploring the human body for the sake of their profession. The few illustrations that their texts offer of the human eye and its

parts, however, underscore the dissectors' anxiety about representing the organ upon which their own observations of the body depended. As a G. Wolf-Heidegger and Anna Maria Cetto's extensive collection of pre-nineteenth century illustrations of human dissection reveals, anatomists were rarely depicted as devoting any attention whatsoever to the eye. Such images, the plates in their collection suggest, did not appear until the late-seventeenth century; even more interestingly, when depictions of the eye's dissection did appear, they delivered scathing critiques of anatomy's supposed barbarity, as in the notable case of William Hogarth's *The Reward of Cruelty*, where an anatomist eagerly pries his knife into a corpse's eye socket (Figure 28).¹⁵ Drawings of the eye prove strangely absent from anatomical texts circulating in early Stuart London, even from those devoted exclusively to vision – Bailey, Laurentius, and Guillemeau, for instance, include no illustrations of the organ, even though its structure and function serve as their treatises' primary focus. The *Fabrica*, Andreas Vesalius's otherwise lavishly illustrated text, offers no diagrams of the dissected eye, and, although Paré includes one page that provides several diagrams of the organ, these illustrations depict the organ removed from the head and in isolation from the rest of the body, thus offering little indication of the relationship between the eye's structure and the flesh that surrounds it (Figure 29). Helkiah Crooke includes these very same illustrations in his *Microcosmographia*, adding two other sets of diagrams devoted to the eye; only these illustrations offer any exploration of the nerves and tendons so vital to the eye's operation while also indicating the organ's position in relation to the rest of the body (Figures 30 and 31). On the whole, however, these anatomical treatises' strange illustrated collections of disembodied – and oddly inscrutable – orbs offer little indication of the eye's workings. Largely overlooking

the connections between the eye and the nerves that power it, and with little glimpse into the organ's interior, these illustrations offer a curiously dim picture of sight's function, seemingly proclaiming that the processes involved in seeing cannot in fact be discerned.

The anatomists' words, on the other hand, compare their admittedly glancing, literally unincisive inspection of the human eye to the limits of religious exploration. As the part of the body most closely linked to the divine, anatomists argue, the eye cannot examine itself any more than it can look upon God himself. Barrough, in remarks preceding those quoted by Lobanov-Rostovsky, insists that the eye proves so marvelous that it cannot be examined in its entirety by any one human; the conclusions resulting from these limited observations result in what he admits is a distressingly, yet inevitably, incomplete picture of the eye:

God hath as it were packed and bestowed an infinite varieties of marvels in one little round subiect, which if it be consumed & distributed into his parts, & according to the dignitie of everie one sufficiently treated of (I suppose) it would fill a great volume, & require both an exquisite Philosopher to conceive a right of it, and an exellent Orator might seeme also necessarie to lay abroad at length such secreat and wonderfull notions. (49)

For Helkiah Crooke, the eye's complexity proves powerful enough to drive nonbelievers into religious reverence. In the opening section of his *Microcosmographia*, he considers the human head as a temple, one whose detail and beauty illustrate the marvelous workings of God. "Enter thou whosoever thou art (though thou be an Atheist, and acknowledgest no God at all)," he implores, "enter I beseech thee, into the Sacred Tower of *Pallas*, I meane the Braine of Man, and behold and admire the Pillars and arched Cloysters of that princely pallace, the huge greatnesse of that stately building."¹⁶ After inviting his readers to revel in the divine fleshly geography of the head, however, Crooke

drives home his message of the religious power inherent in exploring the human form by shifting his attention to the wonders of the human eye:

Form the braine, turne the Eye of thy Minde to the Gates of the Sun, and Windowes of the Soule, I meane the Eyes, and there behold the brightnesse of the glittering Cristall, the puritie and neat cleannesse of the watry and glasse humors, the delicate and fine texture of the Tunicles, and the wonderfull and admirable volubilitie of the Muscles, in turning and rowling the Eyes. (15)

As he ventures to describe viewing the eye, however, Crooke finds himself groping to name the means through which humans can discern the organ's nature. His words reveal his acute awareness that humans require some intermediary in order to view the physical eye – an intermediary which Crooke labels "the Eye of thy Minde." Crooke's formulation thus creates a part of the human body other than the physical eye that proves capable of vision. Yet even this powerful intermediary cannot see what lies on the other side of these "Windowes of the Soule," although it can describe the appearance of their structure. The mind's eye, able to cast its gaze on the organs that allow the anatomist to envision himself as somehow more discerning than other humans, as a subjectivity that imposes a gaze that comprehends the body's behavior, cannot discern the essential human spirit any more than Moses's eyes could gaze upon the face of God.

Crooke's means of offering his readers a glimpse of the eye in action thereby complicates rather than explains the relationship between the anatomist and the flesh he examines, for it provides little help in understanding why early modern anatomical drawings – of dissected hands, viscera, and even brains – place so much emphasis on the humanity, even locomotion, of the dismembered, opened body. If other parts of the violated body can move themselves to illustrate their function when laid open by the anatomist's knife, if these parts can even play a role in taking themselves apart, why then

cannot the eye see itself? Why can it never be depicted as it might look while engaging in the act of seeing? The answer may lie in part in the era's anxieties over how anatomy itself was to be performed. Crooke's treatise, as we have seen, accentuated the rivalries between London's College of Physicians and the Company of Barber-Surgeons, forcing him to simplify the differences between the ways that the two groups practiced medicine in hopes of remaining in the College's good graces. The physicians, he proclaimed, need not rely so heavily on their physical interactions with patients as the barber-surgeons. Instead, Crooke held that the physicians, "hauing most what better meanes by education to aduantage our wittes, apply them vnto the most abstruse part of the Art separated from the sense and consisting in contemplation and collection." Such practitioners, in his formulation, can rely upon rational faculties divorced from the senses to make their diagnoses. They, in other words, can call upon the "Mind's Eye" that he describes, while the barber-surgeons have no access to means of diagnosis and treatment other than those stemming from – and limited by – their physical body. "[T]he Chyrurgeon," Crooke concludes, "worketh by his eye and with his hand, and dwelleth as if were in the Confines of that Country whose inner part we inhabit."¹⁷ In his formulation, the barber-surgeons serve the physicians much as the eyes serve the body; positioned on the edges of the profession, they watch over the bodies of those who lie outside it, filtering information about patients to the physicians who avoid such physical contact in their practices. For Crooke, such a division of labor allows physicians to seek greater glory in their detachment from the physical, allowing them to gaze at the body through the "Eye of the Mind" to achieve more learned results than their surgeon counterparts. His words – appearing in a work that the College of Physicians saw as potentially allowing the barber-

surgeons too much access to the anatomical realms once exclusive to more educated practitioners – thus reaffirm rather than threaten the physician's enlightened subjectivity, claiming that the surgeons' dependence on their eyes and hands entrapped them in a physical world that prevented such theoretical contemplation. The surgeons, as a result, become nothing more than tools for the physicians, whose ability to look upon the world through a Mind's Eye allows them to hold within their gaze all those who base their practice of medicine on input from merely physical sensory perception.

Even for those physicians who proved expert enough to use this so-called Eye of the Mind in inspecting the human form, however, the sense of sight as perpetrated by bodily eyes proved the most reliable way of knowing both the physical and the spiritual world. Texts, whether written by physicians, surgeons, or laypeople, that dealt with the eye's power to discern properly its surroundings routinely glorified the sight over the body's other five senses, proclaiming it the body's most reliable means of perception. Laurentius, for example, called vision "the most infallible sence, and that which least deceiveth: according to that which me[n] are wont to say, when they will assuredly avouch any thing, namely, that they see it with their owne eyes" (17). A quick scan of Pollard and Redgrave's Short Title Catalog endorses Laurentius's observation, for it reveals more than a dozen early modern pamphlets and treatises claiming to convey reliable "eyewitness" accounts of phenomena – ranging from military campaigns to appalling conditions in orphanages to incidents of the dead arising from their graves – currently concerning the London population.¹⁸ Laurentius shares this prominent faith in the reliability of vision over the other senses, quoting the philosopher Thales to declare without regard to interplay among the senses that "there was as much difference between

sight and hearing; as betwixt true and false" (17). Indeed, many philosophers and medical practitioners placed so much faith in the eye's ability to discern properly its surroundings that, in their minds, seeing constituted the main function of humans on earth. Laurentius, quoting Anaxagoras, declares that "it seemeth that we were borne onely to see" (18); this act of viewing, moreover, carries immense spiritual implications, for the human ability to discern visually the wonders of the earth naturally leads to spiritual introspection. While the sun takes no pleasure in what its rays reveal, Laurentius argues,

The eye, that pettie Sunne, in representing unto us whatsoever coloured bodies that there are, doth therewithall see and acknowledge them all it selfe, yea it pleasantly delighteth it selfe therin together with the minde, and also perceiveth the fashion, greatnes, and distances of the things about which it is occupied, which no other of the instruments of sence can doe. (19)

For him, vision once processed by the mind not only furnishes the seer with information about her environment, it provides pleasure as well. More importantly, this pleasure in turn leads to an acknowledgement of God's glorious nature, for "The invisible of things of God (saith the Apostle) are manifested and made knowne unto us by the visible" (13). Sight, then, offers humans the raw material not just for appreciating God's works but also for exploring the divine structure and order of the natural world. Humans, Sir Francis Bacon argues in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), undertake these explorations naturally, for God has connected the eye and the mind in such a way that, as Solomon says, "the eye is never satisfied with seeing." Defending such inquiries into the natural world against charges of atheism, Bacon argues that such curiosity is in fact the divine purpose of the senses:

God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, capable of

the image of the universal world, and joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light; and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things and vicissitude of times, but raised also to find out and discern the ordinances and decrees which throughout all those changes are infallibly observed. (93)¹⁹

Such inquiry, he argues, forces humans to acknowledge the glory of God, for their exploration of the universe leads them to appreciate the ultimate mystery of the universe. Like Laurentius, Bacon claims that humans can only know God through his manifestations on earth; full inquiry into these manifestations – or "second causes," to use Bacon's term – ultimately glorifies God, for "when a man ... seeth the dependence of causes, and the works of Providence; then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of nature's chain much needs to be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair" (97).

The information that the eye presents to the brain, however, still proves little more than a spectacle for both Bacon and Laurentius. What the mind sees is what the eye "represents" to it, and this representation need not serve as an exact measure of the surroundings. Even sight, he implies, can be fallible. The preacher Ellis Bradshaw, for example, demands that true faith depends upon more than mere physical eyesight, which reveals only circumstantial evidence of God's work; it also requires a mind willing to interpret the visual proof gathered via these observations, one that relies upon the "eye of sense" to discern the meanings hidden within such evidence.²⁰ Yet even when anatomists and philosophers use such rhetorical phrases as "the mind's eye" and the "eye of the sense" to outline the process of seeing, the eye retains a sacred vitality. The eye and the hand, along with the capacity to reason, set humans apart from beasts, at least according to anatomists like Paré and Crooke. But unlike the hand, which, as we have seen, is often

labeled as an instrument for human use, the eye seems never to be referred to as a tool; on the contrary, the visions that the eye conveys prove so overwhelming that they can transform the entire body into a helpless enactor of external impulses. Such power, dangerous as it may be, leads writers to glorify the eye's centrality in both the human spiritual and physical form. Though it can provide only imperfect images of the world, the eye remains for early modern thinkers the most trustworthy means of knowing not only heaven and earth, but the souls of others as well.

As Lobanov-Rostovsky briefly observes, the eye's mingling of the inner and outer, of the seer's soul and the environment, makes the organ "a third realm, distinct from both world and soul, a realm much like London's liberties, which originated as a defensive barrier but became a site of spectacle and temptation" (202). In the section that follows, I will consider the immense importance that the violation of eyes – the place that marks the end of the individual and the beginning of the environment, and vice versa – comes to carry on the early Stuart stage, an institution that itself presented scenes of visual temptation for its audiences. As theatre companies themselves broached London's walls to perform in indoor theatres within the city proper, they added a new social element to the intramural environment while also changing the shape of the playhouses where their audiences viewed their performances. The staging of blindings in *King Lear* and *Revenge for Honour* offers their spectators drastically different interpretations of the trustworthiness of the eye, allowing their onlookers to judge the wounds inflicted to the characters' eyes from a comforting, knowledgeable distance – one that calls both upon the playgoers' awareness that all the spectacles staged before them proved illusory and upon their aloof, anatomist-like certainty that their more informed vision could more accurately

interpret such sights. Yet even as such dramas lull theatregoers into assuming such supposedly informed interpretations of the sights set before them, the scenes these plays stage to show the infliction of wounds to a character's eyes compel viewers to acknowledge not only their haste in assuming such knowledge but their own susceptibility to visual trickery, both in- and outside the theatre.

Talk of violence to the eyes proves extremely common on the early modern stage, so much so that it serves almost as a shorthand through which a character can express uncontrollable rage. When the Duke in *Measure for Measure* tells Isabella that her brother Claudio has been beheaded despite their schemes, rage leaves the supposedly gentle novice vowing revenge against Angelo, swearing, "O, I will to him and pluck out his eyes!" (4.3.111).²¹ *The White Devil's* loyal Isabella, meanwhile, threatens to blind Vittoria Corombona during a feigned fit of insanity, beginning her rant with a vow "To dig the strumpet's eyes out" (2.2.246).²² In the case of *Macbeth*, characters envision their own hands acting against the very eyes that guide them to perpetrate violent actions. While Macbeth had promised to avert his eyes while murdering Duncan, telling himself that "The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be / Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see," he nonetheless proves shocked when confronted by the visual evidence of his own murderous capabilities (1.4.2-53). Looking down at his own bloodied hand moments after killing the king, Macbeth's eyes refuse to reconcile the proof of his deeds with his previous vision of his character. "What hands are here!," he asks, appalled. "Ha, they pluck out mine eyes" (2.2.57). The actions of his hands thus contradict his previous conception of his character so thoroughly that they confound his sight; more importantly, his hands' ability to affect his own body supersedes that of the eyes, whose refusal to

accept Macbeth's changed character suddenly leave them vulnerable to the hand's attack. His wife, meanwhile, suffers from the sudden disjunction between what her eyes can accept and what her hand has done far more immediately, driving her to gaze upon her own hands as she sleepwalks with her eyes open and her senses shut.

The usually close connection between the brain and the eye – the very connection that the actions of the murdering couple in *Macbeth* force apart – also makes the eye one of the most powerful means of conveying a dramatic character's humanity. "Hath not a Jew eyes?" Shylock asks in *The Merchant of Venice*, hoping to force Salerio to recognize him as an actual person (3.1.49-50). Meanwhile, unseeing eyes often signal the absence of life-giving spirit from a body on stage. As the sprite Ariel sings in *The Tempest*, such sightlessness, though disarming, often signals the transformation of the body rather than its negation. Along with its emphasis on the sunken body's bones, Ariel's song "Full fathom five" in *The Tempest* also asserts that "Those are pearls that were his eyes," stressing the organ's now-opaque, unseeing glossiness (403). Such eyes, ones that prove impenetrable by either the individual's eye beams or the sun's rays, identify the body as unliving, yet the organs' pearliness nonetheless marks the corpse as a beautiful part of the all-encompassing sea.

Unseeing eyes on the early modern stage, however, usually lack such beauty, for they most often prove wounded eyes.²³ When a character's sight is lost through sudden violence, and when the eyes upon which the audience had gazed abruptly become obscured by stage blood and gore, those who observe the transformation find themselves invited to take up a similarly drastic change in perspective. The actions that invoke this abrupt shift in audience perception may take only seconds to perform, yet the struggles

and threats surrounding them prolong the agony of the blindings, both for the characters undergoing such punishment and the audience that watches the gory events unfold. In the cases of both Gloucester in *King Lear* and Abilqualit in *Revenge for Honour*, the reactions of other characters strive to ensure that blinding scenes prove difficult for the playhouse viewer to watch, for the responses of these onstage observers underscore the cruelty of the punishment. Their reactions, as a result, encourage the offstage spectators to accept the bloody scenes as enacted before them, reinforcing the horror of the blindings even though the presumably sightless characters' physical anguish is admittedly and implicitly feigned. Just as importantly, the words and actions of those characters present at the blinding, whether they be tormenters, horrified observers, or the victim himself, belabor the completion of the inevitable act, forcing the audience to endure an exhausting spectacle during which the descriptions of physical damage – whether threatened or already inflicted – combined with the gory evidence of wounding and the cries of the victim, encourage individual audience members not just to look upon the mangled body with sympathy, but to imagine their own flesh undergoing such bloody torment.

Although Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky, echoing Hakewill, asserts that early Stuart tragedy's bloodiest scenes succeeded in creating a uniform sense of Aristotelian pity and fear,²⁴ his desire to explore the sense of community he sees theatrical performances creating among playgoers prompts him to overlook the vast variations in wealth, education, and class standing that characterized the era's audience members, many of whom attended the theatre for reasons other than watching a play. In addition, both commentators disregard the wide-ranging performance conditions that factored into these

individuals' reactions to the events they beheld. Individual spectators, after all, watched the plays from a vast range of viewpoints determined by factors ranging from their personal experiences to their physical location within the theatre. Because each viewer occupied a different position in the playhouse – whether it be a seat in an indoor theatre gallery or a place to stand among the groundlings – each looked upon the scene from a unique angle that revealed and obscured different aspects of the action; similarly, the spectator's position could influence his perception of the words uttered on stage to explain the action. These visual and aural cues, moreover, would have provoked different reactions among those who watched, leading some to hide their eyes and others to cheer on characters who wielded the mutilating knives. While playwrights and actors may have designed such scenes of blinding in hopes of provoking particular reactions from their spectators, their efforts, even when successful, depended on their audience members' willingness to lend credence to the signals that the staged action provided for them. In scenes where blindings occur, however, acting companies accommodated this fundamental variety in playhouse perspectives to encourage their spectators to trust in their own visual perceptions, involving them in the creation of the dramatic actions – and horrible violence – played out before their eyes.

The scenes surrounding the staged blinding of Gloucester, for example, incorporate numerous conflicting clues to accommodate audience members' different interpretations of the action. Spectators view the evil traits of the aggressors manifested on stage through their actions; the man whom they see blinded, meanwhile, becomes paradoxically more human even as he insists that he has lost the organs that mark him as such. Even more ironically, it is Gloucester's own defiant declaration to Regan and

Cornwall that he has sent Lear to Dover that plants the notion of blinding in his tormenters' minds. Claiming to have sent Lear away so "I would not see thy cruel nails / Pluck our his poor old eyes," Gloucester pledges that he "shall see / The wingéd vengeance" overtake Lear's ungrateful children (3.7.57-58, 66-67).²⁵ But Gloucester's vow to serve as an eyewitness to his tormenters' downfall instead guarantees he will live to see nothing of the sort, indeed nothing more at all. "See't shalt thou never," Cornwall exclaims, swearing, "Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot" (68-69). Though the stage blood shed as Cornwall puts out Gloucester's first eye no doubt rouses pity among some in the audience, the old man's cries of desperation upon losing the second further invite those who observe from offstage to share his imagined pain. Gloucester's cries, after all, address those beyond the walls of the imagined chamber, whether in the rest of the castle or in the playhouse, as much (if not more) than those within the room. Directed at "He that will think to live till he be old" (70), the writhing victim's cries for help seek more than sympathy, they implore spectators both within the playhouse and in the world of the play to imagine themselves occupying an aged body not unlike his own.

The protesting cries of the onstage First Servant further implore the audience members to identify with Gloucester's pain, for the serving man's refusal to observe in silence as Cornwall puts out a second eye offers individual audience members a model upon which to shape their own responses to the scene. The servant's reactions illustrate a suggested response for those who watch the scene from the theatre's seats; his actions, in turn, bring the horror that the scene seeks to conjure into the scene itself, factoring it into the staged action. Reminding his master that he has always proven loyal, the First Servant pleads with Cornwall more articulately than Gloucester can but with near-equal

desperation. "I have served you ever since I was a child," he implores, "But better service have I never done you / Than now to bid you hold" (74-76). But the First Servant's words ultimately heighten the scene's horror rather than bring it to a close, for they inspire not only a battle with Cornwall but Regan's intervention – a move that brings her murderous impulses to the surface for the first time in the play. The First Servant's death at her hands thus raises Regan's status from sinister schemer to cold-blooded killer by allowing audience members to witness the death of the underling that had championed their cause within the dramatic action. The quarto text also furnishes Gloucester with two other sympathizing servants who plan to guide the blinded man to Poor Tom so that he might reach Dover safely; while these servants close the scene bemoaning the evil their masters' evil deed and promising to "fetch some flax and whites of eggs" to protect Gloucester's bleeding eyes (103-4), no such guardians appear in the play's folio version.²⁶ Depending on how the scene is staged, then, Gloucester may well remain largely unprotected – from his enemies and from the elements alike – once thrust out of the gates, in Regan's words, to "smell / His way to Dover" (96-97). Even more importantly, the intense violence of the scene offers the audience concrete visual evidence of the greed that permeates much of Lear's family, thereby fortifying the scene's demand that viewers take Gloucester's pain on as their own. The staging of such brutality thus seeks to conjure a physical revulsion among those who watch the scene unfold in the theatre, hoping to provoke from audience members a visceral response as the body they gaze upon seemingly begins to display more of its corporeal interior on the stage before them.

As difficult as watching this scene may prove for many members of the audience, whether in the Globe, the Blackfriars, or a twentieth-century theatre, the violence that



Gloucester endures ultimately proves his redemption, for his sudden blindness requires him to reexamine – even, paradoxically, to revise – his perceptions of his sons. Only when his body loses its power to see, that is, can Gloucester properly discern the dynamics at work within his family, and only after he comes to terms with his sightlessness can he decisively articulate – and act upon – his perceptions. In this sense, the brutality that Cornwall and his gang inflict upon Gloucester cannot be properly linked with torture, at least not in Elaine Scarry's view. In *The Body in Pain*, Scarry denies that torture's objective is to elicit information; instead, she argues, its main objective is "visibly to deconstruct the prisoner's voice" through the infliction of physical pain. Torture, she argues, consists of prolonged interrogation which systematically and graphically "objectifies the step-by-step movement along the path by which language comes into being," reversing the process to obliterate the victim's means of articulating the world surrounding him.²⁷ While Cornwall and Lear's daughters blind Gloucester for reasons other than extracting information – Regan's plucking of the old man's beard, after all, proves painful enough to prompt his confession that Lear has gone to Dover – they show no interest in obliterating the old man's voice; unlike Ford's Vasques, Gloucester's tormenters wish solely to cause him immediate physical harm. Even more importantly, their random brutality utterly fails to reduce Gloucester to speechlessness; on the contrary, their plucking out of his eyes ultimately helps clarify his perception – and articulation – of his surroundings. Gloucester falls silent (or at least inarticulate) for a time, yet he quickly regains his capacity to speak; the words that he utters, moreover, ultimately alter his worldview just as much as his tormenting blindness, for his cries for Edmund lead Regan to reveal that the son from whom he asks aid has in fact helped

cause his downfall. Goneril's news that Edmund had revealed Gloucester's role in Lear's escape in the first place signals a sudden shift in the father's thinking, driving him to declare, in words that reflect a new and clearly articulated perspective, "O my follies! Then Edgar was abused" (94). Sightlessness, then, brings Gloucester to a greater understanding of his family just as his blinding allows the playhouse audience incontrovertible evidence of the corrupt nature of Lear's older daughters, as well as of the scheming Cornwall and Edmund. Rather than obscure his vision, Gloucester's blindness opens his eyes in a disarmingly literal fashion, and his bleeding, bandaged face offers playhouse viewers a remarkably graphic indication of his changed outlook.

Though Gloucester himself ultimately recognizes that his sightlessness brings him a new clarity of vision, his blindness also marks the advent of a new breed of confusion for the play's spectators, for his subsequent interactions with Edgar, disguised as Poor Tom, include no third party to verify the nature of the terrain they gaze upon. Gloucester's initial denial that he possesses any power whatsoever to interpret unfolding events further complicates the audience's task of interpreting the scenes they witness, leaving spectators to believe Edgar without question or to endow the old man's observations with more credence than he does himself. Physically unable to make out what lies before him and now aware of his past misjudgments, Gloucester cannot imagine any existence outside of the present blackness that envelops his eyes. "I have no way," he tells his servant in despair, "and therefore want no eyes" (4.1.18-19). Gloucester's own evaluations of his flawed powers of perception, along with the audience's own inability to glimpse his eyes, thus encourage viewers to doubt the observations he makes through his remaining senses. What Edgar recounts, as a result, takes precedence in their

evaluation of the environment that surrounds the father-son duo; Gloucester's blindness thus grants the recently powerless loyal son the exclusive ability to shape both his father's and the spectators' visions of the scenes that follow. In short, Gloucester's blinding brings with it a sudden shift in dynamics that leaves Edgar wielding a torturer's power to reshape the vision of all those who hear him, for those who cannot make out the scene's setting for themselves have little choice but to accept his description of the landscape.

Acutely aware of his new abilities to determine these visions, Edgar toys with both his father and the audience, making them see what does not exist either on the stage or in the world of the play; the illusions he constructs, however, aim to restore rather than undermine Gloucester's faith in his own perceptions. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the perspectivist principles reflected in Edgar's description of the clifftop view at Dover invite not just Gloucester but the audience to envision the blind man as hovering at the edge of a steep cliff even though no such precipice breaks up the level ground upon which the characters stand – or the stage upon which the actors move. Posing as a senseless madman, Edgar effectively deprives others of their senses, for he tricks his father and the audience into believing in the presence of the cliff, even though Gloucester's observations about the environment prove more accurate. In enacting his ploy, Edgar fits Scarry's description of a torturer far more neatly than those who perpetrated the blinding, for he relentlessly deconstructs Gloucester's trust in his own perceptions, while Cornwall's brutality followed no such agenda. Using the power of suggestion, Edgar attempts to make his blind father picture himself teetering upon the edge of the cliff, yet even in his sightless state Gloucester hesitates to believe Edgar's reports, declaring that "Methinks the ground is even" even as Edgar calls the hill

"Horrible steep" (4.6.3). When Gloucester honestly reports that he cannot hear the sea, Edgar further undercuts the blind man's powers of observation, telling him that "your other senses grow imperfect / By your eyes' anguish" (5-6). Though Gloucester willingly grants the potential truth of this conclusion, he nonetheless reveals some suspicion about his guide's nature. "Methinks thy voice is altered," he admits, "and thou speakest / In better phrase and matter than thou didst" (7-8); this time, however, he accepts without comment Edgar's undermining of his sense's report, becoming, as a result, even more convinced of his inability to interpret his surroundings. Such a perceived inability to understand one's surroundings, Scarry argues, produces within the victim a sense of self-negation "so hugely felt throughout his own body that it overflows into the spaces before his eyes and in his ears and mouth; yet one which is unfelt, unsensed by anybody else" (37). In the playhouse, however, all those who watch Edgar's interactions with his father experience a similar negation of the senses; the scene's spectators, after all, may not bodily feel the pain that Gloucester exhibits, but their reliance on Edgar's description of the surroundings leaves them sharing in the old man's lack of vision nonetheless. Edgar, then, finds himself holding, like Scarry's torturers, a nearly boundless control over all those who will listen, an authority stemming from his intact powers of perception (37). Yet, as heartless as Edgar's ruse on the imaginary cliff-top may appear – and as much satisfaction as he may take in misleading his father – he ultimately deludes his father for the good, wiping away Gloucester's preconceptions, both lingering in his brain and newly-formed in his blindness, to provide the blind man with a new sense of his worth.

While Edgar's words to the audience – delivered after Gloucester swoons as he falls to what he thinks will be his death – make clear to the spectators that they have been

duped, that the duo has not climbed to the top of a cliff and that the fall should not have ended his father's life, Edgar admits that the ordeal, even though physically undamaging, may have been enough to kill Gloucester. Aware that believed illusions can exert real power in the physical world, Edgar continues to tell his father tales of the cliff's height, only this time he uses such stories to convince him of the miracle of his survival as well as to reinforce the accuracy of his perceptions. For an audience now aware that the cliff has never been a part of the characters' physical surroundings, moreover, the fabricated nature of the seaside scene Edgar describes grows increasingly transparent. Now passing himself off as a fisherman, Edgar first repeats his earlier perspectivist description of the precipitous cliff, only this time he pretends to gaze up at it rather than down at the sea. "Ten mast at each make not the altitude / Which thou hast perpendicularly fell," he declares, marveling that the summit is so tall "the shrill-gorged lark so far / Cannot be seen or heard" (53-54, 58-59). An instant later, however, Edgar contradicts his assertion of the clifftop's invisibility, telling Gloucester that he could make him and Poor Tom out on the summit from where he stood below. "Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that / Which parted from you?," he asks before embarking on a lavishly detailed description of the scene enacted in a location that he moments before denied he could make out:

As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelked and waved like the enridged sea:
It was some fiend. (69-72)

Suddenly, Edgar-as-fisherman not only can make out the top of the cliff, he declares that he could see into the eyes of Gloucester's companion well enough to discern his true nature. Gloucester's own wavering faith in his powers of perception – and his ingrained

trust in vision's power to properly evaluate an individual's nature – leaves him utterly convinced of the fisherman's story. Completely overlooking the contradictions in Edgar's tale, Gloucester reinterprets his own earlier conclusions about Poor Tom, announcing that "I do remember now" and admitting that he could easily have been duped. "That thing you speak of," he says, struggling to reinterpret what he instantly concludes to be his faulty observations, "I took it for a man; often't would say / 'The fiend, the fiend' – he led me to that place" (77-80). The beggar that had once been his trusted friend thus becomes, in his blind memory, a disguised and tempting devil that miraculously – and inadvertently – proved his life worth living.

The ruse, as a result, restores Gloucester's faith in his own remaining senses, prompting him to display a change within himself as well as in his physical abilities to those who look upon him. When Lear enters at the scene's end, talking distractedly of field mice and of his daughters, Gloucester immediately recognizes the king despite his own sightlessness, proclaiming, "I know that voice" (94). When Lear tells him "I remember thine eyes well enough" and asks him distractedly to "read" a paper (which Lear may or may not hold), Gloucester readily asserts that he can do no such thing, yet he agrees that he nonetheless perceives the harshness of the world acutely. "No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse?," Lear notes upon first noticing Gloucester's blindness; he quickly realizes, however, that Gloucester's senses remain sharp nonetheless, declaring, "Yet you see how the world goes" (142-3, 144). And Gloucester readily agrees, concluding, "I see it feelingly" (145). The outside world, both men realize, can look at Gloucester's injured body and dismiss it as both unseeing and unreadable, cut off from the rest of humanity. But Gloucester's words, though

doubtlessly expressing his intense physical and psychological pain, also carry resonances of hope, placing a new faith in the senses that he retains while simultaneously inviting the outside world to examine his entire body, not just look within his eyes, to detect his nature. Blinded though he may be, Gloucester nonetheless asserts his own place as an able interpreter of the world; more importantly, his words compel those who see to acknowledge his status as a thinking, feeling being, directing those who look upon him to seek indications of his character in places other than his eyes.

Gloucester's poignant admission of his own blindness – an admission that carries with it resonances of a confession, for Lear may not realize his old friend's condition until he speaks of it – leaves the playhouse audience gazing upon a sorely wounded man who lacks the power to meet their gaze. Though he walks and talks, Gloucester cannot look upon those with whom he converses, nor can he process visual information about his surroundings. He becomes, as a result, a vulnerable fleshly creature, one lacking the physical and psychological defenses that vision provides. The eyes that had served as the watchtowers of the body, taking in the sights that provided his chief awareness of the dangers surrounding him and that had led him to see himself as fully human, can offer him no more protection. Yet the sudden absence of his sight brings with it the realization that his eyes had indeed failed him all along. The events of the play, after all, consistently undermine his confident ability to measure his obligations to those surrounding him – and to assess the threats that others posed to his social status. Once blinded, however, Gloucester can effectively open his body, not just his eyes, to examination from those around him, demonstrating to them his new knowledge of his own interior nature by willingly offering his flesh up to inspection. While blindness may

lead Gloucester to a greater self-knowledge, it leaves his body in a physically mangled state that forces the audience to perform an active revision of his character. As sympathetic as observers may feel toward his character, Gloucester's words and physical appearance remind them that their looks in fact penetrate a man to whom they wish no harm. Looking, one of the fundamental acts that the spectators come to the theatre to perform, becomes an act of aggression in its own right, and those who perform it cannot simultaneously avoid implication in the violence and occupy their conventional role of the viewer. They, as a result, can escape only by choosing to look away, or to close their eyes, thereby making themselves as physically vulnerable as Gloucester while depriving themselves of the visual impulses that theatrical viewing relies upon. Or, they can interpret the pitifully but willingly displayed sight of his body to accept the lessons of humility Gloucester offers, learning from the predicament he endures but cannot himself see.

While the audience observes the putting out of Gloucester's eyes only to then realize the violence inherent in their gaze, the audiences who watched *Revenge for Honour* (?1640) play a far more active role in the infliction of Abilqualit's blinding; as in the case of *Lear*, these playhouse observers also find themselves tricked into lending credence to events they later learn never occurred. This obscure tragedy, variously and unsatisfactorily attributed to Henry Glapthorne and George Chapman, cannot confidently be assigned to any company's repertoire, and this very mystery about the play's authorship and performance history has earned the otherwise overlooked play its only critical attention.²⁸ In the view of Thomas Marc Parrott, one of its text's editors, "the play is so slight, so unreal, so devoid of high poetry, or true characterization, that it might well

pass unnoticed among the minor products of the decadent drama" if no respected playwrights were suspected of having produced its script. *Revenge for Honour*, he admits, boasts some similarities to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Cupid's Revenge* (1608) and Fulke Greville's *Alaham* (1600), yet Parrott sees little merit in the play; in fact, he reports with amusement J. LeGay Brereton's suggestion that the script in fact served as little more than a practical joke executed by Chapman upon an overly-ambitious young actor.²⁹ Despite such critical dismissal, however, *Revenge for Honour's* prologue and epilogue suggest that it had indeed been staged³⁰; the scenes that it presented in the playhouse, moreover, offer detailed, if not always eloquent, explorations of the eyes' ability to properly perceive the actions they witness. The scene in which Abilqualit's eyes are put out clearly echoes Gloucester's torment in *King Lear*; in *Revenge for Honour*, however, the words and actions that surround Abilqualit's blinding require the audience members to reevaluate continually the scenes played out before them. The observers' eyes, the play insists, often convey false information that leads to faulty conclusions regarding the unfolding plot; as a result, the play prompts those who view its action – whether they be spectators in the playhouse gallery or characters who watch from within the drama – to question their eyes' power to make out properly what lies before them.

The veiled struggle for political control in Arabia that forms the backdrop for *Revenge for Honour* leaves its characters ever-watchful, surveying the realm for threats to their positions as well as for opportunities to seize power. Almanzor, the aging caliph, and his younger son Abrahen both keep their eyes focused on Abilqualit, the caliph's heroic older son whom they fear will use his success in war to claim the throne prematurely. What both men see as brooding political ambition, however, proves to be

little more than Abilqualit's love melancholy. Abrahen in particular misinterprets his brother's willingness to surrender leadership of the armies, declaring upon Abilqualit's exit that "I see through thy intents, clear as thy soul / Were as transparent as thin air or crystal" (1.1.416-17). Claiming he can make out Abilqualit's motive, Abrahen concludes that his brother wants him out of the way so he might dethrone his father and seize control of the realm himself, when Abilqualit indeed only wishes to pursue his beloved, but unfortunately married, Caropia. Almanzor too insists upon his eyes' ability to discern the hidden, inner motivations of those surrounding him. For example, he tells Mura, Caropia's parasite husband, "I see / Into thy thoughts" to read fears of Abilqualit's popularity (2.1.80-81); Abrahen's and Mura's suspicions even prove powerful enough to alter the caliph's view of his older son, convincing him to "behold those actions" with suspicion that he once viewed "with delight" (156-57). As in *Lear*, then, the words used to describe viewed events in *Revenge for Honour* influence the interpretations characters and playgoers apply to what they subsequently perceive. The comments offered by his power-hungry younger son and a parasite, after all, drive the caliph to refocus his eyes to look upon Abilqualit with hostility rather than love. In the process, he admits the potential weakness of his own earlier observations, confessing his own lack of confidence in his previous evaluation of his son. His fear of failing eyes, in other words, leaves him sharing the blinded Gloucester's willingness to trust the observations of those around him.

The caliph's readiness to perceive Abilqualit as such a threat allows Abrahen the perfect avenue to set in motion his own thinly-veiled plot to gain political power. Reporting on Almanzor's growing suspicion, Abrahen tells Abilqualit that, in the eyes of their father,

The glorious shine of your illustrious virtues
Are grown too bright and dazzling for his eyes
To look on, as he ought, with admiration;
And he with fear beholds them, as it were,
Through a perspective where each brave action
Of yours survey'd though at remotest distance,
Appears far greater than it is. (2.1.241-48)

The caliph, Abrahen reports, cannot properly interpret the sight of the virtuous Abilqualit or the visual evidence of his deeds; rather than see the honor he brings to the family, Almanzor can only perceive how his son's bright glory obscures his own regal authority. Almanzor's warped vision – so skewed that he seems to gaze through a distorting lens – thus underscores for Abilqualit both his own dangerously powerful position and his aging father's vulnerability. While his heroics prove him worthy of occupying a place of authority, adopting the ruler's customary associations with the sun, his brother's warnings simultaneously shed light on the dangers of appearing so glorious to the public eye. Significantly, such words prepare Abilqualit to believe that his father has assigned Abrahen to watch his every move; what Abilqualit fails to perceive from within his melancholy, however, is his brother's role in setting such surveillance into action.

Abrahen's plot further relies upon his ability to shape public perceptions of Abilqualit's love for Caropia. Unbeknownst to Abilqualit, Abrahen secures the loyalty of the eunuch Mesithes, whom Abilqualit has used as a messenger to arrange a tryst with Caropia. Abrahen, as a result, can inform Mura of Abilqualit's encroachment upon the marriage while also goading both the cuckolded husband and his adulterous wife to label the young man's seduction a rape. The playhouse audience, which has witnessed the couple's passionate embraces, thus looks on as Abrahen twists visual evidence with his words to bolster his plan to seize power. Before Mura arrives, Abrahen reminds Caropia



that her husband can legally demand her death for allowing a man into her chambers at night, and her determination to remain loyal to Abilqualit fades upon witnessing Mura's rage. Convincing Mura of Abilqualit's guilt proves even easier. Step by step, Abrahen guides Mura in his interpretation of the events only recently enacted in the chamber, transforming Caropia's adultery into an opportunity for her husband to further his own greed. Mura's evaluation of the visual evidence, Abrahen insists, reflects the distortions of his jaundiced eye, resulting in an unfounded, harsh judgement of his suffering wife. "[Y]ou look upon her / With eyes of rage," Abrahen explains, "when you with grief and pity / Ought to survey her innocence" (3.1.150-52). After Caropia's exit, Mura also realizes the political benefits that perpetuating such perceptions could bring Abrahen and, by extension, himself, for, as the characters quickly reveal, rape routinely brings with it the sentence of blinding.³¹

This pairing of eyesight and sexual indiscretion brings the plot's unspoken link between visual perception and male potency to the surface, rendering it concrete upon the stage through the agonizing scene of Abilqualit's physical torment. The prolonged enactment of his staged blinding, after all, not only punishes him for giving in to his sexual urges (urges that Caropia clearly welcomed), but the loss of his eyesight also renders him incapable of wielding political power, at least according to established public perception. While Gloucester's blinding undoubtedly carried such resonances of impotency, *Revenge for Honour* brings such comparisons to the forefront, staging for its audiences a bloody, symbolic emasculation designed not only as a punishment ensuring he will never repeat the crime of rape for which he is held but also as a security measure meant to rein in what Almanzor and Abrahen see as Abilqualit's political ambition.

Abilqualit's willingness to plead guilty to charges of rape thus allows both his father and his brother to take on the roles of regretful, even shamed, punishers as they discipline him for political moves he never made but which they feel sure they have witnessed.

Almanzor, for example, proclaims that the heinousness of Abilqualit's crime deserves a punishment that will force him to realize, even to study, the full extent of his sins' ramifications. To Almanzor's mind, the only punishment that will make Abilqualit fully "sensible of [his] sins" is blinding (38). Depriving him of sight – a sense that his tormenters, perhaps even his admirers, might see as inspiring his supposed attack on Caropia in the first place – thus ensures that he can fall victim to no such temptation in the future even as it inflicts pain as retribution for the violation she has supposedly suffered. More importantly for the conniving caliph, however, blinding Abilqualit will deprive him of the physical powers required of a head of state. "The glory flowing from thy former actions," the caliph proclaims, will be

Stopp'd up for ever; and those lustful eyes
(By whose deprival thou'rt depriv'd of being
Capable of this Empire) to the law,
Which will exact them, forfeited. (42-46)

Eliminating Abilqualit's eyes thus renders him impotent, both as a ruler and as a man. In "stopping up" the "flow" of powerful impetuses and actions reflected in his son's "lustful" eyes, Almanzor renders Abilqualit powerless to look greedily upon either the realm or the sexual temptations within it while also obscuring the eyes that had rendered him such an overpowering sight to those who beheld him. At the same time, inflicting such punishment heals Almanzor's own damaged power as a ruler. The young man's supposed rape of Caropia, Almanzor astoundingly and forcefully argues, "'gainst me was acted; 'twas a rape / Upon my honour more than on her whiteness" (68-69). His only choice as a

ruler, he concludes, is to ignore family ties – a defiance that he no doubt relishes – to see the law's demands carried out. As Almanzor unforgettably proclaims, "If those on which his eyes hang were my heart-strings, / I'd cut them out rather than wound my justice" (64-65).

Such conclusions, however, only inspire further debate among the onstage observers, who shift their rhetoric away from Almanzor's power to the role that Abilqualit's eyes play in the future of the state. While the elderly counselor Tarifa's protests offer audience members a lone sympathetic view of Abilqualit's character, the scene allows playgoers to watch as others use the young man's body as an instrument through which to achieve personal gain. Mura, seeking increased power for himself as well as revenge for his wife's supposed violation, declares that dimming the offending eye is the only appropriate punishment for Abilqualit's acts. Even the Sun, he argues, clouds his rays when they "engender by too piercing fervence / Intemperate and infectious heats" (84-85). Tarifa, on the other hand, implores Almanzor to gaze into Abilqualit's eyes to discover his true and good character. Calling on the same notions of the eye's power to reflect the future as well as the present state of the beholder, the old man implore the caliph to

Look upon him, Great Almanzor;
And in his eyes (those volumes of all graces,
Which you like erring meteors would extinguish)
Read your own lively figure, the best story
Of your youth's noblest vigour ... (99-103)

Looking into his child's eyes, Almanzor should see himself as he was in his prime of youth; rather than a threat, then, the younger man's eyes should serve to preserve the memory of the caliph's effective and powerful rule. Abilqualit's eyes, then, become the



only hope of perpetuating the glory of his reign, for they reflect the legacy – both political and physical – of the man who engendered them.

Just as such punishment will presumably strip Abilqualit of his political and sexual power, the sentence of blinding provides Almanzor a rare opportunity to perform a spectacular demonstration of his own ruthlessly virile governing might; the scene that results, however, enables Abilqualit to create an enduring, if initially obscured, image of his innocence. Demanding that Abilqualit bear the full force of his "awful rod of justice" (34), Almanzor calls in his servants – a group of mutes and, notably, a surgeon – to perform the blinding.³² Abilqualit himself, however, actively refuses to interfere with his father's demonstrations of power, instead publicly insisting that the painful act proceed for both his own good and for the good of the country. At the same time, Abilqualit offers in an aside to Tarifa the stunning confession not of guilt but of relative innocence, telling him that "Caropia yielded without least constraint, / And I enjoy'd her freely" (130-31). His statement – supposedly issued to ensure that he will ultimately be remembered as a victim of unjustified torment – suddenly transforms him from helpless victim of ruthless punishment into a mastermind of a spectacle played out through the mutilation of his own body. Using his tormenters as tools in his dramatic production – a history play of his own making – Abilqualit not only stages a scene that purports to leave him powerless to return the onlookers' gazes, he also directs the enactment of his own murder, and his words to his tormenters goad them into performing the deeds that will ensure not only his fame but their own infamy. Abilqualit tauntingly assures his tormenters that the forbidden and seductive sight of Caropia's naked body – a vision that intrudes upon the sanctity of Mura's marriage while also inspiring envy in the lustful

Almanzor – can sustain him for a lifetime. In a statement that epitomizes the scene's confusions of rape and love, Abilqualit declares

my eyes have had
Delights sufficient in Caropia's beauties,
To serve my thoughts far after contemplations;
Nor can I ever covet a new object,
Since they can ne'er hope to encounter any
Of equal worth and sweetness. (119-24)

The living and violated Caropia thus becomes, through his formulation, an object startlingly similar to the painted female corpses discussed in the previous chapter. While the tint on these corpses allowed them to appear alive, Abilqualit speaks of his own eyes as destined to show him for all eternity Caropia's flesh as if it were a lifeless painting, something to be attacked and penetrated – both visually and carnally – without consideration for any consciousness that might occupy it. Even more appallingly, Abilqualit argues that once a person has so experienced the ultimate in beauty, sight proves useless, even frustrating, for every earthly vision would forever disappoint him in the future.

Though Tarifa and the playhouse audience know that Abilqualit has not in fact raped Caropia, the remaining onlookers have no reason to doubt the young prince's adherence to this defiantly expressed philosophy. Witnessing his willingness to suffer terrible physical pain for the sake of his supposed love, he no doubt becomes a martyr in the eyes of many despite his previous craftiness. Indeed, Abilqualit demands that his tormenters inflict the bodily injuries that will make him look valiant – and his bravado drives Almanzor to order the mutes to seize hold of him, thus placing Abilqualit's body squarely in the heroic position he yearns to occupy. His words, issuing from a body visibly manhandled, if not already cut into, instruct the audience on the proper mode of

interpreting what they see, expounding upon the meaning to be found in the blows delivered as they look on. For the playhouse audience, the wounds that result acquire dramatic significance even though they know that the actor on stage in fact sheds no blood; the words he speaks, with their intense focus on the larger meaning of his character's suffering, instead invite audience members to see the wounds as gory proof of his honor. Abilqualit's torment, as a result, places him in a position of power, for his willingness to have his body's interior exposed defiantly offers his audiences glimpses of the goodness and purity that pervades his flesh. Thus, though the playhouse viewers know that the wounds the actor displays are not real, their awareness of the suffering that they illustrate becomes even more profound.

The playtext's sparse stage directions, however, offer little indication of when and how the mutes and the surgeon deliver their injuries. Almost immediately after the mutes seize hold of Abilqualit, Tarifa proclaims that they should "stay [their] cruel hands" before they "further / Afflict his precious eye-sight" (139, 141-2). Tarifa's lines may signal that the mutes had inflicted their initial damage only seconds before, or they may hint that Abilqualit has appeared on stage in a gruesomely half-blinded state throughout his defiance. Almanzor's reference nearly a hundred lines earlier to the strings "on which [Abilqualit's] eyes hang" further complicates questions of staging, raising the possibility that the mutes' early brutality could have left the audiences confronting the prince's disfigured face even as he issued his eloquent speeches. The earlier that such bloody woundings occur, the more clearly Abilqualit fits the self-sacrificing role he yearns to take on, and the more time observers have to examine the blood and organs uncovered by the surgeon's and the mutes' violence. Tarifa's efforts to stay the punishment lead to a

confused debate that suspends the completion of Abilqualit's torture even further – his insistent protests that the young prince had indeed confessed his innocence of rape drive Mura, Almanzor, and even Abilqualit to reassert the young man's guilt so that the scene of torment might continue. For all three, then, such demonstration of the caliph's power to inflict pain become more meaningful than the question of Abilqualit's innocence or guilt; more importantly, each maintains that the exhibition alone can guarantee the potency demanded by their social position – whether as caliph, husband, or heir to the throne.

With so much riding on the successful blinding of Abilqualit, it comes as no surprise that the prince's torment continues even as Abrahen enters to proclaim that a greater threat to the caliph's power waits outside the palace walls. Upon his arrival, Abrahen assures us that Abilqualit still remains only half-blind, looking upon him and declaring, "O brother, / That I should ever live to enjoy my eyesight, / And see one half of your dear lights endanger'd" (184-86); the scheming younger brother also proclaims that inflicting such brutality may yet have more severe consequences, this time for the caliph himself. "My lord," he tells his father, "you've done an act which my just fears / Tells me will shake your sceptre!" before announcing that a mob of Abilqualit's supporters waits just beyond the walls, seeking revenge (187-88). Such warnings, however, only sharpen Almanzor's determination to eliminate Abilqualit; rather than looking to his own safety, the caliph turns to this half-blind son and declares "you shall not / Boast you have the Empire by our ruin" before ordering, "Mutes, strangle him immediately!" (197-99). Abrahen calls to the young prince's defenders while begging the mutes to stop their attack, yet Abilqualit falls, leaving the caliph to gloat at his victory

even as the armed crowd breaks into the room. "Why do you stare, traitors?" Almanzor asks hautilly, reveling in his newly-secure power as he announces, "'Twas I, your Emp'ror, that have done this act" (220); the force of words alone turns the rebels and sends Abrahen from the scene after dropping his handkerchief on his brother's body.

Almanzor's regal confidence, however, lasts only moments, for within twenty lines, his grief both for his son's death and for his own role in the killing overwhelms the caliph's once-almighty body so entirely that his senses seem to delude him. Tarifa immediately proclaims Almanzor's actions the ultimate unnatural act, more sinful and more gruesomely prolonged than suicide, yet imposing a similar wound upon the family and amounting not just to self-destruction but self-consumption. "[Y]ou're a tyrant," Abilqualit's ally bravely tells Almanzor, "One that delights to feed on your old bowels" (236-7). His words have a direct effect not just on the caliph's mind but upon his body as well, forcing him to confront viscerally the evil he has committed in executing his son, leading him to realize that "A sudden chillness ... Thrills our ag'd heart" (244-46). Viewing the evidence of Abilqualit's suffering as displayed on his body thus leaves the murderous father feeling physical pains of his own – ones that indeed prove to have lasting bodily effect. Like King Lear gazing upon the hanged Cordelia, Almanzor struggles against the deadly finality exhibited in the body before him, attempting to relieve his own pain by finding traces of liveliness in the flesh upon which he looks. Almanzor, however, admits his child's utter lifelessness more quickly, taking up the handkerchief resting on Abilqualit's body as a reminder of the young man's ultimate goodness:

He breathes, methinks; the over-hasty soul
Was too discourteous to forsake so fair

A lodging, without taking solemn leave
First of the owner. Ha, his handkercher!
Thou'rt lib'ral to thy father even in death,
Leav'st him a legacy to dry his tears,
Which are too slow; they should create a deluge. (258-64)

Almanzor's self-proclaimed frustration at the slowness of his own grief results in a stirring scene, one that doubtlessly inspired pity in at least some playhouse viewers. They, like Tarifa, who proclaims "My grief's divided, and I know not whether / I should lament you living, or him dead" (269-70), may view Almanzor's collapse as a heartfelt action of a father overcome by a powerful grief that will not leave his body despite his own desire to express it. The scene upon which audiences gaze – composed of a despondent, guilty father, fallen powerless over his child's bleeding body, yet being comforted by his son's conflicted and equally pitiful old ally – invites spectators to experience the pathos of the events for themselves, whatever their misgivings about the individual characters involved. Tarifa's discovery that Almanzor's collapse has left him not only psychologically "insensible" but physically dead, with "no motion / Left in his vital spirits," attaches an even greater emotional weight to the scene, asking the audience to witness his proclamation that "the excess / Of grief has stifled up his pow'rs, and crack'd / I fear, his ag'd heart's cordage" (272-75).

As soon as Tarifa calls for help, however, Abrahen enters to provoke once again the audience members' doubt in their own vision, for his words suddenly unveil for the playgoers a new set of causes underlying the scene's events. Just after proclaiming shock and surprise at his father's death, Abrahen notes in an aside that "The handkercher has wrought, I see" (278). With those words, he reminds playgoers that he himself had dropped the cloth on Abilqualit's body, having remarked to his mysterious, mute partner,

"we shall have no need now to employ your handkercher. Yet give it to me. You're sure 'tis right, Simanthes?" (230-32). This quickly-made suggestion of poison suddenly resonates through the theatre anew upon Abrahen's second entrance, revealing his role in Almanzor's death to those who had not realized his intent and further cementing his diabolical nature for those among the audience who had such suspicions. Even more importantly, his entrance forces playhouse spectators to realize the inaccuracy of Tarifa's interpretation of the caliph's collapse. While some playgoers no doubt refrained from sharing the old man's sympathy for Almanzor, it suddenly becomes clear to all in the playhouse that what Tarifa took as signs of the caliph's intense, physically-felt grief could in fact have been his body's involuntary reactions to poison. Abrahen's haste to seize power for himself, moreover, keeps up the scene's dizzying pace, denying the audience a full explanation of the poisoning until the new caliph is left alone on stage with the bodies. The handkerchief, Abrahen then reveals, had been so thoroughly poisoned that "Applied to th' eye or any other organ, / Can drink its poison in, to vanquish nature" (322-23). How Almanzor had touched the handkerchief remains uncertain, but Abrahen's explanation suggests that he imagined the poison entered through the eye, thus underscoring once again the caliph's sight as the source of his weakness. The vision of his son's lifeless body, after all, had initially stirred within Almanzor the grief that brought him into contact with the poison; as a result, the eye introduced him to the lethal substance whether or not the handkerchief ever wiped his tears. Abilqualit's body thus comes to reveal not only his own comparative justness, but his brother's heartlessness and his father's gullibility.

Just as the playhouse viewers reconcile Abrahen's perspective-shifting

explanation with the events that they themselves have witnessed, however, the scene offers them an even more stunning surprise as the seemingly dead and supposedly blinded Abilqualit arises from the stage upon Abrahen's exit. Staring at obvious signs of life in what they had come to see as a corpse, the playhouse viewers must completely reinterpret the significance of what they have witnessed. Abilqualit's subsequent words, after all, as enlightening as they may be, issue from a body that bears the marks of his enacted torment even as his voice suddenly and relentlessly denies the veracity of all the actions that the audience has witnessed and systematically casts doubt on the viewers' ability to comprehend the meaning of what they see. "'Twas well the Mutes prov'd faithful," he declares immediately upon rising (330), leaving the stunned audience struggling to reconcile his astonishing revival with his sudden explanation of liveliness. The stomach-turning interrogation of Abilqualit, they suddenly learn, never took place; instead, they discover, what they viewed was in fact Abilqualit's utterly fabricated show, a performance staged to test the characters of those around him. The young man thus suddenly seizes control of Almanzor's already-completed execution scene, revealing a sense of showmanship that exceeds even that of his scheming father and brother. Faced with Abilqualit's obvious liveliness, the playhouse viewers must quickly piece together a new narrative to explain what they have seen. Almanzor's insistence that his seemingly dead son "breathes, methinks" suddenly becomes not only a heart-wrenching revelation of his grief, but also an unknowingly accurate evaluation of the Abilqualit's supposed corpse as well; the old man, collapsing over his son's body, becomes in retrospect not only more sympathetic but also surpassingly observant, if pathetically misled. More immediately, Abilqualit's sudden thanks for the mutes' cooperation may prompt

particularly observant viewers to reevaluate the young man's enigmatic entrance in Act 3 Scene 2, where he arrived whispering, according to the stage direction, with the previously unseen mutes, who "*seem to make protestations*" before promptly leaving Abilqualit on stage (123). Such actions go unexplained, and may well prove forgettable in performance; the audience may not even realize that these men indeed cannot speak given the speed of their arrival and departure. The dialogue that ensues between Abilqualit and Tarifa after the mutes' exit in this earlier scene, moreover, offers the audience little evidence of the scheme underlying the enacted torment to come, for the young man closes the scene with an aside that appears to reflect an utter acceptance of his inevitable – and inevitably painful – death. "'Tis my fortune," he sighs, declaring that he will "let what / Happen that will, I'll stand it, and defend / Caropia's honour, though mine own I ruin" (141, 145-47). Exiting the stage with Tarifa, he underscores the point once again, insisting that "He dies / Glorious, that falls Love's innocent sacrifice" (150-51). His words, asserting a resignation regarding his own death, seemingly offer an explanation for his noble determination to bear the physical torments that ensue in the next scene, perhaps prompting the audience members to cease their efforts to comprehend the meaning of his interactions with the mutes by offering them a ready narrative through which to comprehend the events that they next witness.

But when Abilqualit's grotesque flesh suddenly proves conscious, insisting that the wounds he displays have never caused him pain and that the events that seemingly brought his death never actually threatened his life, the audience must quickly compose a new version of the torturous events that they as well as the young man have just endured. Still smeared with blood and still seeming to lack at least one eye, Abilqualit's body

continues to look like one that has undergone great torment even as his words deny that he has experienced any injury. Yet he congratulates himself on a ruse well executed, praising his own cautiousness in securing the cooperation of the mutes. He muses,

'twas wisely
Consider'd of me, to prepare those sure
Instruments of destruction: the suspicion
I had by Abrahen of my father's fears
O my unthought ambition, did instruct me
By making them mine to secure my safety. (333-38)

Abilqualit not only declares that he planned the torments that appeared to leave their (artfully produced) marks upon his body, he claims that he had orchestrated them all to test his brother's warnings. For him, the mutes were little more than tools in executing his plan, silent "instruments" that enabled him to put his foresight into action. Yet Abilqualit remains aware that such living tools could hinder his plan even if they are guaranteed not to speak of it; he expresses relief, even gratitude, that the mutes "proved faithful," after all, realizing that their noncooperation would have resulted in his certain blindness. On the other hand, the surgeon, he informs us, had not played a role in the ruse, and the danger of losing his eyes had in fact remained real, at least within the world of the drama. Regretting the slur to Caropia that his torture had produced, Abilqualit bemoans:

Would the inhuman surgeon had ta'en these
Blessed lights from me; that I had liv'd for ever
Doom'd to perpetual darkness, rather than
Tarifa's fears had so appeach'd her honour. (339-42)

The surgeon, he tells us, had posed a genuine threat – one in keeping with the perceived brutality of his practice – yet the more severe injury, the one to Caropia's honor, had in fact come to pass. Wounds to her reputation thus prove more damaging than the



elimination of his own eyesight, or at least he so concludes now that his blindness has in fact been averted.

When Abilqualit reappears to challenge Abrahen, the usurping younger brother's reactions reveal not only his own fundamental awareness of the value of bodies in establishing public truths but his own sudden doubt of his eyes' testimony as well. The sudden lively – and aggressive – appearance of the body he had seen blinded and strangled leaves Abrahen understandably baffled, yet even such sights have little impact on his determination to fight for either the throne or for Caropia's hand. Suspecting that Abilqualit's body may in fact be enlivened by an evil spirit, Abrahen counters with his newly-adopted royal mode of speech in hopes of intimidating the oncoming attackers. "Abrahen," he declares, "will stand you all, unmov'd as mountains," swearing that his sword will "disenchant" the spirits from their "borrow'd figures" (201-4). Abilqualit, however, not only claims his humanity, he uses kingly speech to claim his throne as well. Asserting that his brother is the true abomination, Abilqualit asserts his liveliness, telling Abrahen:

No, ill-natur'd monster,
We're all corporeal, and survive to take
Revenge on thy inhuman acts, at name
Of which the bashful elements do shake
As if they teem'd with prodigies. (204-8)

Abrahen's eyes, Abilqualit insists, tell him the truth, revealing a threatening lively spirit in a body once left for dead. And Abrahen readily concedes to his brother's regal tone, declaring that his one day as caliph brings him "Honour enough to eternize [his] big name / To all posterity" (221-22); he refuses, however, to abandon his lustful claim to Caropia so readily. Instead, she becomes, in essence, his last bargaining tool. Caropia, who had

convinced herself to accept Abrahen's proposals despite her initial determination to kill him, suddenly becomes the object of the brothers' struggle, and her body transforms once again into a trophy over which men fight. Yet for Abrahen, possessing Caropia serves a more immediate purpose, for he uses her flesh as armor to secure his own physical safety. Seconds after Abilqualit unexpectedly reappears, Abrahen grabs Caropia, placing her body between his brother's sword and his own flesh, declaring that "until this body be one wound" his own body will suffer no blows from Abilqualit's "rude hand" (212-13).

Abrahen's demonstration, however, fails to prevent Caropia from enacting an even more climactic show of her own. Opting to leave the crowd with a lasting image of his fortitude, Abrahen uses Caropia's body as his means of displaying this power, stabbing her while tauntingly insisting that his greatness, unlike his brother's, will endure forever. His soul, he tells Abilqualit, "does not die, but rather / Ceases to live" while Abilqualit, on the other hand, must live with the indelible results of the confrontation. "Enjoy in peace your Empire," Abrahen goads as he stabs Caropia and purposely breathes poison fumes from the suddenly-present handkerchief to bring his own life to a close (155). But even as he enacts his dastardly plot, the wounded Caropia takes center stage again. As Abilqualit screams for a surgeon (who, tellingly, never arrives and who, Selimithes declares, must be drunk), Caropia insists that Abilqualit's comforting embraces are enough to ease her transition to death. Her words, however, obscure her vengeful intent, which surfaces as she describes her unsuccessful plans to murder Abrahen. If his courtesy had not won her, she tells Abilqualit, she would have "struck him here about the heart" (289). However, as she speaks these words, she once again abruptly enacts the motions they describe, delivering a fatal blow to her supposedly true

love and leaving Tarifa to dispose of three bodies lying upon the stage.

While the closing scene of *Revenge for Honour* proves less bloody than many of its early Stuart counterparts, the trickery involved in its enactment offers an unusually clear example of the dramatic effects produced by characters' varying interpretations of the relationship between action and words. The playtext, after all, insists that its characters not only consistently misjudge what their own eyes see, it also requires that they remain supremely confident that their actions achieve their intended effects upon the perceptions of those who behold them. Abilqualit's staged blinding and death, for example, leave Abrahen suffering from a false sense of his own effectiveness in directing the actions of others, not to mention a lack of self-scrutiny on his own part, and his resulting overconfidence in his flair for the dramatic brings him to an end that underscores his weakness rather than his power as a ruler. While Caropia proves too willing to believe what she hears, she proves more successful at visual trickery, for she not only effectively obscures her murderous intent – toward Mura, Abrahen, and even Abilqualit – but she manages to hide successfully the evidence of her guilt by placing it squarely in the hands of others. And even Abilqualit, the mastermind behind the extended, successfully feigned scene of torture, proves unable to reconcile accurately what he sees with what he hears, falling victim to what the play insists is Caropia's ultimately murderous charm. In the *Revenge for Honour*, then, the lust inspired by the eye creates a vortex around the scheming character of Caropia, positing her beautiful body – the sight of which inspires lust and renders numerous men vulnerable – as the very center of the play. Even the most skilled of performers with the most thorough understanding of the workings of visual interpretation, the play's finale teaches us, cannot

survive the illusions perpetrated by a beautiful woman, for the lust she inspires deludes his eye – and penetrates his brain – more thoroughly than the most carefully plotted drama.

Vision, these plays insist, endangers those who rely upon it even as the eyes protect their bodies, for the eyes leave the seer vulnerable to violation from external forces even as the sight patrols the perimeter of his flesh. The scenes of visual trickery these plays stage thus endorse Hakewill's assertion that the eyes open a pathway to self-destruction, creating misperceptions of the outside world that eventually bring physical harm to those who almost inevitably misinterpret what they see. While early modern anatomists sought to use eyesight as a means of establishing a professional distance between themselves and the corpses they dissected, the acting companies of early Stuart London invited their spectators to cross the boundaries that distanced them from the actions they viewed. The blinding scenes in *Lear* and *Revenge for Honour*, after all, encouraged audience members to take up roles of their own in the drama, not just as eyewitnesses but as active contributors to the perpetration of staged violence. More than anything, these terrifying blindings asked that those in the theatre realize the importance of their own gaze – and therefore of their own eyes – in the process of creating the theatre's staged illusions. In watching as Gloucester's eyes are put out, playgoers may well have come to see vision itself as a privilege, and to understand themselves as privileged viewers. In the case of Abilqualit's staged blinding, on the other hand, those who watched from the playhouse seats may also have gained an awareness of their own susceptibility to visual trickery. Both scenes ultimately rely on the spectators' willingness to interpret what they see according to verbal cues delivered by actors. To comprehend

the impact of such blindings, after all, viewers need to hear as well as see the characters' response to their new limitations. Whether listening to Abilqualit's stoic reaction toward his feigned physical torment or Gloucester's gradual transformation from sightless despair to noble acceptance, audience members thus find themselves, like the blinded characters they watch, placing new dependence on their hearing to comprehend the action unfolding before them.

Yet the sight of these eyeless characters lends such scenes an even more immediate emotional power, profoundly illustrating both the vulnerability of the blind characters and the violence inherent in looking upon them. Gazing upon the sorely wounded Gloucester and the bloodied Abilqualit, the playhouse spectators become acutely aware that these characters do not return their gaze, that the characters they see in such comparative clarity lack what anatomists saw as humanity's most vital sense. Like Scarry's torture victims, Abilqualit and Gloucester seem to be deprived of humanity's chief means of "moving out into the world or moving the world into oneself," leaving them isolated from their surroundings but still overwhelmingly vulnerable to outside forces. Their remaining senses, ones often considered less reliable than eyesight, thus become the only means of delivering messages about the world beyond their flesh. Such limited contact with the outer world, Scarry argues, drives the body to turn back upon itself, thus "forcing the body to feed upon the body" (48). Her words thus lend new meaning to Tarifa's insistence that Almanzor acts as "One that delights to feed on [his] old bowels" in blinding his own son, for they transform the caliph into a cannibal whose violent jealousy drives him to devour his own flesh and blood.

Even for those who lack such a fleshly connection to the victim, the act of

viewing resonates with such physical, consumptive consequences. In *Measure for Measure*, for example, the lust that the sight of Isabella inspires leaves Angelo marveling at his own yearning "to hear her speak again, / And feast upon her eyes" (2.2.181-3). The eye itself often proves capable of such consumption when the rest of the body remains frustratingly isolated from its desired food, as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, where Enobarbus reports that, though Antony "goes to the feast," Cleopatra's refusals allow "his eyes only [to] eat" (2.2.230-32). Those who attended early Stuart theatrical performances often experienced limited second-hand reports of key scenes as they watched staged plots unfold; in a surprising number of cases, however, they watched characters as they portrayed such gluttonous feasting upon human flesh not just with their words but with their actions. Whether inspired by love or enacted as revenge, such bloody banquets became increasingly common – and increasingly graphic – on the early Stuart stage and, as we shall see in the following chapter, the act of watching these cannibalistic scenes unfold invited audience members to witness more and more explicit exhibitions of staged violence. Presented with such graphically taboo scenes of cannibalism, viewers in the early Stuart playhouse increasingly found themselves occupying a position akin to Alypius's in the coliseum, for the plays they watched increasingly invited them to join in such bloody feasts and "drink in cruelty" through their eyes.

Notes: Chapter Four

¹ *The Unfortunate Traveller* as published in volume 2 of *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958).

² *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* as published in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays*, ed. Marion Lomax (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995).

³ The violent, invasive nature of vision has been considered by a range of twentieth-century critics. Michel Foucault, for example, explores the violence of the examining eye in *The Birth of the Clinic*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973) and the all-encompassing, restricting gaze employed in prisons (*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan [New York: Vintage Books, 1977]); in addition, Laura Mulvey examines the restrictions that the male gaze places on women appearing on screen in modern cinema (*Visual and Other Pleasures* [Hampshire: Macmillan, 1989]).

⁴ *The Passions of the Minde* (London, 1604) 176. Quoted in John H. Astington, "Eye and Hand on Shakespeare's Stage," *Renaissance and Reformation* 10 (1986) 110.

⁵ M. Andreas Laurentius, "*A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight: of Melancholike Diseases; of Rheumes and Old Age*," translated by Richard Surphlet from the French (London 1599) 21.

⁶ For a more thorough explanation of these competing theories of vision and an account of their use in the Renaissance, see Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky, "Taming the Basilisk," *The Body in Parts*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York: Routledge, 1997) 195-217. Lobanov-Rostovsky refers to Laurentius by his non-Latinate name André Du Laurens, which does not appear in his *A Discourse of the Sight*; as Crooke and other anatomists consistently use the name Laurentius, I have as well.

⁷ George Hakewill, *The Vanitie of the Eie* (London, 1608).

⁸ Interestingly, the rhyme appears in no surviving version of Bailey's *A brief treatise teaching preservation of ey sight*. The Short Title Catalog lists two versions of the treatise, one published in 1602 (of which Pollard and Redgrave include two copies, labeled 1193 and 1195) and a second published in 1616 (numbered 1196). Hakewill claims the lines were borrowed from a translation done by Sir John Harrington, but a search of the STC reveals no works by Harrington, let alone any connection between Harrington and Bailey's treatise.

⁹ Quoted by Nancy Siraisi in her article "Medicine, Physiology and Anatomy in Early 16th Century Critiques of the Arts and Sciences," *New Perspectives on Renaissance Thought in Memory of Charles B. Schmitt*, ed. John Henry (London: Duckworth, 1990) 226.

¹⁰ John Earle, *Microcosmography* as edited by Alfred S. West (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1951).

¹¹ See Michael Neill's chapter "'Peremptory nullification': Tragedy and Macabre Art" in his book *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) for a more detailed discussion of the changing social significance of the dead body in plague-infested London.

¹² Jacques Guillemeau, *A Worthy Treatise of the Eyes*, trans. Anthony Hinton (London, 1622).

¹³ Quoted in Lobanov-Rostovsky; Barrough's work can be found in its entirety at Philip Barrough, *The Method of Phisick, Containing the Causes, Signs and Cures of Inward Diseases in Man's Bodie from the head to the foote* (London, 1590).

¹⁴ Lobanov-Rostovsky's interpretation of early modern anatomists' self-proclaimed power to view and describe human flesh suggests that they see – or at least wished to see – themselves as judicious, almost body-less inquirers rather than fallible fleshly beings; the warnings that anatomy lecturers issued to audiences, however, reveal that those attending dissections often looked upon the corpses at hand with less-than-scientific objectivity. In early seventeenth-century Germany, for example, lecturers had to remind their spectators to "contemplate everything with chaste eyes," especially during the demonstrations of the female genitalia. Giovanna Ferrari finds examples of such behavior reflected in B.B. Peterman's *Theses inaugurales medico-forenses de Anatomia publica* (Halle, 1703). See Ferrari's "Public Anatomy Lessons and the Carnival: The Anatomy Theatre of Bologna," *Past and Present* 117 (1987): 50-106, especially 99. Vesalius's obvious enjoyment of pilfering female corpses from graveyards for dissection further reveals that anatomists, despite Lobanov-Rostovsky's claim, occasionally experienced visceral reactions to the corpses they dissected, or at least recognized that others might interpret their interactions with the corpse as charged with physical, sexualized power. On Vesalius' graverobbing, see Katherine Park, "The Criminal and the Saintly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994).

¹⁵ See G. Wolf-Weidegger and Anna Maria Cetto, *Die anatomische Sektion in bildlicher Darstellung* (Basel: S. Karger, 1967). Many versions of the Hogarth's engraving survive, dating from c. 1750. My search through Wolf-Weidegger and Cetto's work reveals only two other illustrations that show anatomists devoting attention to the eye. The image of William Hunter at work (c. 1774) seems to be modeled on Hogarth's engraving (plate 321); the title page to Barend Beddevole's *Essais d'anatomie* (Leiden 1686) provides the earliest such illustration, showing anatomists beginning to cut into the eye of a corpse whose viscera is also exposed (plate 194).

¹⁶ Crooke, *Microcosmographia: a description of the body of man* (London, 1615)

15.

¹⁷ See Crooke's Preface to the Chirurgeons, and my discussion of it in Chapter One.

¹⁸ See, for example, *A fight at sea, famously fought by the Dolphin of London against fiue of the Turkes men of warre Written and set forth by one of the same voyage, that was then present and an eye witnes to all the proceedings* (1617), STC 6993; *The poore orphans court, or Orphans cry. By M.S. Being a wel-wisher for a speedy helpe of their misery, and an eye-witnesse of their present calamitie* (1636), STC 21509; and *Miraculous newes, from the cittie of Holdt, in the Lord-ship of Munster (in Germany) the twentieth of September last past. 1616. Where there were plainly beheld three dead bodyes rise out of their graues, admonishing the people of iudgements to come... with the names of diuers worthy persons and burgimasters of the same citty, who were eye-witnesses of this fearefull accident* (1616), STC 13567.

¹⁹ Sir Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning, The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath, vol. 6 (Boston: Houghton, 1890).

²⁰ Ellis Bradshaw, *A vweek-daies lecture, or, continued sermon to wit, the preaching of the heavens* (London, 1649).

²¹ All references to Shakespearean dramas refer to the playtexts as they appear in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997).

²² All citations refer to John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi, The Selected Plays of John Webster*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

²³ Skulls, after all, reveal only the sockets that once contained eyes.

²⁴ As we shall see in Chapter Five, Lobanov-Rostovsky argues in his dissertation that cannibal banquets unite playhouse viewers with the play's revenger by transforming those who eat human flesh into inhumane outsiders who enact, even if unknowingly, one of civilization's strongest taboos. Aware of opposition to the notion of such a unified audience, Lobanov-Rostovsky explains that theatrical performance creates the spectator as a dramatic trope, one that, in the case of cannibal banquets, functions as "a fiction that authorizes the theater's affective violence." He relegates his discussion to a footnote, largely adhering to both Aristotelian and psychoanalytic ideas of community in the body of his text. See Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky, "The Cannibal Banquet: Violence, Enactment, Tragedy in the English Renaissance," diss., Harvard 1993, 313.

²⁵ All citations to *King Lear* in this chapter, unless otherwise stated, refer to the conflated text as printed in *The Norton Shakespeare*.



²⁶ See the parallel editions of the quarto and folio texts of *Lear* as they appear in *The Norton Shakespeare*, 2414-15.

²⁷ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford, 1985) 20.

²⁸ In his massive work *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon UP, 1968), Gerald Eades Bentley offers an intricate account of the scholarly attempts to determine the play's authorship. Literary historians had long associated *Revenge for Honour* with a Glapthorne play called *The Parricide, or Revenge for Honour*, which was licensed for performance by Prince Charles' Company in 1624. Such an attribution would mean that *Revenge for Honour* played in the Red Bull theatre, and perhaps in the Cockpit, for Christopher Beeston began an association with the Prince Charles' Men by that year. Bentley, however, argues that *The Revenge for Honour* called heavily on an English compilation of histories published in 1634 and therefore could not have been identical to this 1624 Glapthorne play. Repeatedly calling Glapthorne "highly repetitious," Bentley suggests that the playwright may have written *Revenge for Honour* as a revision of his own earlier work. For Bentley's full account, see volume 4, 489-93. The play was first published in 1654; the title page unfortunately names no playwright, and the publisher provides no information about the play's performance history. The *Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* (1990) hesitantly assigns the play to Glapthorne and offers no speculations as to in which playhouse it might have been performed. Thomas Marc Parrott denies R. Marriot's 1653 claim that George Chapman could have written the play, but nonetheless includes the play in his collection of Chapman's works, though he clearly wishes he could omit it. All references to the playtext refer to his edition in *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman* (London: Dutton, 1910) vol. 1, 473-537.

²⁹ Parrott, 720.

³⁰ In fact, Frederick Gard Fleay asserts (overconfidently, to Bentley's mind) that the play's prologue makes reference to the Prince Charles' Company's move from the Curtain to the Red Bull playhouse. See Bentley, v. 1, 205-8.

³¹ For an extended consideration of the links between a cuckolded husband's acceptance of adultery and hopes of financial gain, see Douglas Bruster's chapter "Horns of Plenty: Cuckoldry and Capital" in *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge UP, 1992).

³² To be identified as a surgeon rather than simply another mute, the man would need to carry the tools of his trade, ones whose sharp edges would escalate the audience's uneasiness as well. Associating the surgeon with unnecessary torment thus serves as more than a simple slur on his profession, for it provides a means of furthering the viewers' sympathy for Abilqualit, who suddenly finds himself facing not only Almanzor's

rod of justice but the surgeon's knife as well.

CHAPTER FIVE:
Incorporating the Corpse:
Staging Cannibal Banquets in Early Stuart Theatre

Forbidden to leave his own estate, Michel de Montaigne never saw the inhabitants of the New World perform their rituals of war; upon seeing Caribs in Rouen and hearing accounts of their practices from a visitor who had eyewitnessed them, however, he confidently penned his authoritative and influential essay "Of the Cannibals" to describe his imagined vision of the tribes' hostile practices. Montaigne bases his claim to accuracy on the fact that his account is derived from the stories of his own long-time guest, who "for the space of ten or twelve years had dwelled in that other world which in our age was lately discovered" (69).¹ Despite this acknowledgment of the distance between himself and the Caribs, Montaigne writes as if he has seen the New World inhabitants for himself. "It is an admirable thing," Montaigne states with an eyewitness's confidence, "to see the constant resolution of their combats, which never end but by effusion of blood and murder; for they know not what fear or routs are" (75). In fact, the words he uses to portray the Caribs' treatment of their enemies' bodies as they are about to be killed and eaten could serve equally well to describe the plots of numerous early modern revenge tragedies. According to Montaigne's account, the bodies of the Caribs' living prisoners endure agonizingly slow deaths, ones that transform their flesh into centers of visual attention as their captors remind them that their bodies will be eaten after their execution. Such brutal cannibal feasting – which became the focal point for both visual and verbal representations of those who inhabited the New World – did not strike Montaigne as overly cruel. Instead, Montaigne imagines the Caribs in a far less damning, even "anthropological"² light, conjuring vivid images of the New World's inhabitants to point

out European cruelties. Echoing the then-common assumption that the peoples of America represented Europeans as they had been in the past,³ Montaigne notes that the Caribs abandoned their cannibalistic practices when they encountered the more developed habits of brutality found among the Portuguese, who buried their enemies to the waist in sand before shooting and then hanging them.

Invoking such supposedly more cruel methods of killing, Montaigne insists that his descriptions of the Caribs' gruesome practices allow readers a new glimpse not just of the much-maligned inhabitants of the New World but of Europeans as well. The Caribs' practice of consuming human flesh, he argues, should highlight rather than obscure for his audience the cruelty of the habits – both in and out of war – imbedded within their own supposedly more civilized cultures. In his determination, Montaigne defiantly asserts,

I am not sorry we note the barbarous horror of such action, but grieved that, prying so narrowly into their faults, we are so blinded in ours. I think there is more barbarism in eating men alive than to feed upon them being dead; to mangle by tortures and torments a body full of lively sense, to roast him in pieces, to make dogs and swine to gnaw and tear him in mammocks (as we have not only read but seen very lately, yea and [in] our own memory, not amongst ancient enemies but our neighbors and fellow-citizens; and which is worse, under pretense of piety and religion), than to roast and eat him after he is dead. (75-76)

The European proclivity of torturing the living, Montaigne concludes, proves far more barbaric than eating dead human flesh, and the habit of directing such narrow scrutiny onto the supposed inhumane cannibalism of the New World's inhabitants cannot excuse one's own unwillingness to direct such prying eyes onto oneself. The brutal acts of Europeans, he reminds readers, occur much closer to home – right in front of their eyes, not across a vast ocean – yet somehow escape notice.

Despite his insistence on the terrible nature of these local atrocities he imaginatively claims to have witnessed, however, Montaigne's description of these tortures proves scant in comparison to his lavish, completely second-hand account of the distant Caribs' ritual cannibalism. He, for example, confidently pens a song that he imagines a New World captive spitefully singing to his executioners. "[T]his flesh, and these veins, are your own," the doomed man sings tauntingly to those surrounding him, pointing out the history of captive-eating that binds his body to those of his captors. "[F]ond men as you are, know you not that the substance of your forefathers' limbs is yet tied unto ours?," he goads. "Taste them well, for in them shall you find the relish of your own flesh." Such a poetic "invention," whether on his or the captive's part, Montaigne concludes, "hath no show of barbarism" (78). While Montaigne's verdict comes as no surprise given that the song issues from his own cultured pen, his attribution of such arguments against self-consumption to a supposedly savage New World singer poses a more substantial comparison between Europeans and the Caribs. In presenting the singer's insistence that eating the flesh of one's own family is the ultimate abhorrent act, Montaigne not only praises the captive's brave use of rhetoric, he shows that even these supposedly uncivilized New World inhabitants understand the ability of the body, when consumed as food, to establish a bond between enemies, effectively reducing them to a single tribe composed of shared flesh. Yet even as his description points out the Caribs' own anxieties toward consuming the flesh of their own ancestors, Montaigne's final comments on the ritual of cannibalism pose even greater conundrums for his readers. "Surely," he sums up, "in respect of us these are very savage men; for either they must be in good sooth, or we must be so indeed"; though he declares with great certainty that

"[t]here is a wondrous distance between their form and ours," whom he judges the savage and whom the civilized man remains unclear.

While Montaigne's essay presents the Caribs as a mirror of European civilization, most accounts of cannibalism, as we will see, raise no such doubts about the civility of Old World customs. On the contrary, most early modern English writers dismissed those who ate human flesh – whether they did so as part of a ceremony or out of desperate hunger in the face of famine – as exhibiting an unquestionably brutal internal nature utterly alien to the English character. When political and economic disputes turned citizens against one another, however, English writers increasingly associated local individuals and upper-class businessmen with cannibalism. As enclosure left more working people unable to feed themselves, Mark Thornton Burnett points out, sermons and political tracts began to accuse the upper classes of feeding on the flesh of the less fortunate, "swallow[ing] up the needy of the land."⁴ The Royalist Sir Henry Slingsby, meanwhile, saw the increasingly violent suppression of political divisions among Britain's inhabitants as fostering a cannibalistic urge among its citizens that proved far less noble than that found in New World ceremonies. While Montaigne found much to admire in the Caribbean tribes' ferocious need to humiliate, destroy, and even consume one another, Slingsby saw the skirmishes along the Scottish border as an undeniably shameful sign of Britain's self-destructive tendencies. On 3 January 1638, Slingsby records in his diary a trip he makes to Bramham "out of curiosity to see ye spectacle of our publick death," and what he witnesses leaves him echoing Montaigne's indictment of European savagery. Such displays, Slingsby concludes, serve as portents of a looming self-destructive war:

These are strange, strange spectacles to this nation in this age, yt
have liv'd thus long peacably, w[i]th out noice of shot or drum &
after we have stood newtrals & in peace w[ith] all ye world besides
hath been in arms & wast'd with it; it is I say a thing most horrible
yt we should engage our self in a war one w[i]th another, & w[i]th
our own venom gnaw & consume ourself. (11)⁵

For Slingsby, the country's civil strife becomes literal self-consumption, leading its inhabitants to feed upon one another – in a way so concrete that he imagines it in cannibalistic terms – while they still live and breathe. Like the bodily extremities in the belly fable that Menenius recounts in *Coriolanus*, the warring parties that Slingsby observes threaten to disrupt the supposedly natural well-organized cooperation among citizens that he, if not the nation's people, envisioned as the country's basis. While Menenius, striving to calm the starving plebeians, insists that the belly eventually distributes food to all those who depend upon it, Slingsby imagines the discontented elements of Britain's body treating the belly itself as food, devouring in their rage the political organ designed to provide, not constitute, nourishment. It is important to note, however, that Menenius's thinking comes to resemble Slingsby's by the end of the play, for he abandons the logic of his own belly fable and instead holds both the nobles and the commoners responsible for Rome's growing unrest. Decrying that citizens of all ranks have become food for political forces bigger than themselves, the old councilor bemoans that the city of Rome, "like an unnatural dam / Should now eat up her own!" (3.1.294-95).⁶

In the tragedies of the early modern stage, however, such figures of speech dwelling on cannibalism often take on a far more tangible form in the long-established but increasingly graphic set-piece known as the banquet of blood. Usually orchestrated by a revenge-craved character, these scenes present – either through stage properties or

through lavish description – a sumptuous table, laden with the finest of dishes, inviting the audience to examine the fare put forth for one particular character to eat; at some point during the meal, however, the feasting character discovers that the meat he or she consumes is in fact the decimated remains of a human body. In the Tudor era, these eaten bodies generally proved those of the feaster's murdered children, killed and cooked by those who wished to retain or usurp political power, as in the case of John Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* and in the most infamous of Shakespearean tragedies, *Titus Andronicus*. Bringing their bloody banquets to the playhouse stage, these dramas enacted before the public eye a cannibal feast borrowed from Seneca's *Thyestes*, and perhaps from the schoolmaster Jasper Heywood's 1560 English translation of the play. The scenes' ritualistic exposure of the meat's nature, along with the killing sprees that followed such revelations, forged an inextricable link between insatiable physical hunger and the drive for political power, for, in the eyes of the revenger, his rival had already engaged in politically and personally greedy behavior akin to gluttony, the deadly sin associated with cannibalism.⁷ Forcing his political foe to eat the bodies of his own children, then, not only allows the revenger to present a concrete illustration of his rival's ravenous appetite for power, exposing his supposed misdeeds to public view, it cements the end of the dynasty his foe had so yearned to establish. In consuming his children, after all, the unknowing cannibal marks the end of his own political line, incorporating his heirs back into the very body they were meant to replace. When the rival who eats these heirs is a woman, as in *Titus Andronicus*, such cannibalism resonates even more harshly, forcing a mother to take into her body as nourishment the very children she had nurtured, if not nursed, before and after their birth.⁸

As Stuart dramatists adapted the bloody banquet for use in their tragedies, such associations between appetite and female fertility – as well as between political greed and bodily consumption – became increasingly prevalent on the commercial stage.

Revengeurs who staged such feasting scenes still sought to expose what they viewed as the secret, sinful appetites of those they served, yet they increasingly traced the roots of these hidden desires to the inner recesses of the female body. While the characters performing cannibal acts on the Tudor stage consume their children, those who dine at early Stuart bloody banquets prove more likely to ingest the bodies of their lovers. The Tyrant in *The Bloody Banquet*, for example, forces his wife to eat the cooked corpse of her lover, who also happened to be the Tyrant's main rival for the throne. But, as we shall see, this impulse to bury his rival's body within his adulterous wife's own flesh ultimately frustrates the Tyrant's efforts to erase their sexual transgressions against him, for his staged cannibal encounter allows the bodies of the two lovers to mingle even more intimately – and more secretly – than they had when both lived. Watching his wife's plate grow more and more empty, the Tyrant envisions an increasingly close-knit bond between the lovers forming within his wife's body. Driven, in his rage, to reveal this internal melding of flesh, the Tyrant cuts his wife open with murderous thrusts of his knife to expose the corruption growing within her. In doing so, he confuses his wife's appetites with her body's ability to nurture life, imagining her digesting stomach as performing the same nurturing functions as her womb. She, he imagines, can consume her lover's body, melding it with her own to create an even more complete embodiment of their love, while the men who ingest human flesh can only obliterate those they adore.

Early modern notions of cannibalism reflect not just images of New World savagery but an awareness of the human body's precarious vulnerability to consumption, both by other humans and by humanly-constructed social institutions. In many early Stuart accounts of urban life in London, for example, the city resembles a massive churning stomach, thriving on the human bodies that inhabit it while consuming them physically, leaving them suffering – and dying – from afflictions ranging from moral dissolution to crime to disease to starvation. A 1624 treatise on Psalm 26 entitled *Anthropophagus: The Man-Eater*, for example, warns its readers to beware parasitical flatterers who come to the city in search of wealthy friends whom they then bleed dry.⁹ Pamphlets devoted to describing the ravages of the plague underscored the consuming nature of city life as well, emphasizing the huge numbers of bodies necessary to appease the disease's hunger. The epidemic's ravages left Thomas Dekker for one yearning in *The wonderfull yeare* (1603) to "arme my trembling hand, that it may boldly rip up and Anatomize the ulcerous body of the Anthropophagized plague" (26).¹⁰ As Michael Neill points out, Dekker's pamphlet not only overtly sees the disease as consuming the bodies of London's inhabitants, it portrays human flesh as food for the earth as well. The large numbers of rotting corpses that Dekker's pamphlet describes, Neill argues, constantly reminded citydwellers that the social distinctions assigned to individuals did not stay with their bodies after death; instead, he concludes, the increasingly anthropomorphized Death "stands for all those natural forces that threaten to reduce the painstakingly constructed order of society to chaos, a mere tumbled heap" (14).¹¹ What Neill does not note, however, is that Dekker's writing frequently figures these corpses as having lost more than their external indications of social rank; they have also lost whatever special status

comes with being human as well, becoming nothing more than food for the earth. For Dekker, the number of dying and unburied bodies in the city made a night in London comparable to a night spent among the anonymous bones of a charnel house, and the morning brought with it little comfort. Though "Consolation rizes with the Sun," the epidemic denied even this relief to those who endured, for when "the Jewell of the morning be fully set in silver, a hundred hungry graves stand gaping, and every one of them (as at a breakfast) hath swallowed downe ten or eleven liveles carcasses: before dinner, in the same gulfe are twice so many more devoured" (28-29). The earth itself thus became a cannibal in Dekker's formation, claiming human flesh as its rightful food.

Yet associating such presences as the earth, Death, and the plague with the supposedly inhumane act of cannibalism simultaneously underscores the humanity of these man-eating forces. The horror of cannibalism, after all, stems from the terror of like-eating-like, of a self-consumption rather than a consumption and incorporation into a body that differs from one's own. Not just any animal of the forest that attacked and ate humans, after all, earned the label of cannibal; such an epithet was reserved for those who inhabited like bodies, those that were, in the oft-repeated phrase of the explorers of the New World, "well-formed." In this sense, the language of Dekker's pamphlets acknowledges the place of Death, the plague, and even the earth itself as a part of the human realm, even if they are admitted only on the terrifying fringes and as a fearful element in the food chain. What Neill argues as the plague's power to evoke fears of sameness thus extends past the limits of the London social world to incorporate Bakhtinian notions of the undeniable connections between the human and the earthly. Dekker's grimly witty approach to this hungry, hunting Death, after all, accords with

Bakhtin's descriptions of the carnivalesque's purposeful, if temporary, abandoning of social order. Such celebrations, with their emphasis on the body's uncontrollable urges and functions, Bakhtin concludes, underscore the essential earthiness common to all humans. The human body, he argues, swallows the world while it is itself swallowed by the world (317), and the opened body – a term he applies to any human form that suggests appetite, whether sexual or gastronomical – is "an incarnation of this world at the absolute lower stratus, as the swallowing up and generating principle, as the bodily grave and bosom, as a field which has been sown and in which new shoots are preparing to sprout" (27).¹² The open human form thus becomes the ultimate sign of death as well as an image pointing back to the site from which human life itself emerges: the mother's womb.

In Dekker's pamphlets – and, one can imagine, throughout plague-ridden London – the notion of the body as food to be consumed by the earth understandably remains the chief focus, for such decay proved horrifyingly relevant to the city's suffering human inhabitants. The open body, Dekker insists, thereby retains its nurturing power, actively providing sustenance for the cannibalizing forces that feed on it even when such feeding marks the flesh's own end. In fact, the lifeless human corpse itself maintains the power to play an active role in cannibalism, at least in Dekker's view, for even bodies in mass graves can contribute to the eating of human flesh. Prompting his readers to imagine their own lifeless corpses "to morrow ... tumbled into a Mucke-pit," Dekker lavishly describes the suffering – and maybe even vengeance – their corpses will endure under the weight of the other, perhaps less prestigious, dead bodies:

suffer thy body to be bruisde and preset with threescore dead men,
lying slovenly upon thee, and thou to be undermost of all! yea and

perhaps halfe of that number were thine enemies! (and see howe they may be revenged, for the wormes that breed out to their putrifying carcasses, shall crawl in huge swarmes from them, and quite devour thee) ... (29)

Corpses, he insists, may be powerless to feed, but they can ensure that others are cannibalized. As the dead increasingly become a part of the earth – as they lose the marks of individuality that made them distinct human beings in life – they participate in the devouring, revengeful flesh-eating activities of Death; their contributions to this decay, as a result, make Death itself more recognizable, giving it an increasingly bodily human form that living Londoners could see all around them in the city's plague pits.

Such a melding of visible lifelessness with equally powerful indications of the body's ability to endow foreign flesh with vitality lends the opened corpse a peculiarly enigmatic quality in the early modern anatomy theatre. The field of anatomy in early modern London, after all, came to rely on the opened corpse for its own sustenance, since without bodies its practitioners could make no new demonstrations or new explorations of the human form. Just as human bodies rely on food for their fuel, anatomists consumed human bodies in their continuing demonstrations – and while anatomists were rarely directly associated with cannibals, they were, as we have seen, often linked with graverobbing and even with murder in their quests to find suitable corpses to anatomize. While Vesalius boasted of his daring acquisition of corpses, other anatomists proved far more anxious about the links that others might perceive between their treatment of human bodies and the habits of supposedly savage cannibals. Helkiah Crooke, for example, condemns the practice of human vivisection in his *Microcosmographia*, labeling it an activity "fauoring of Caniball barbarisme." Such dissections, he argues, are a "friuiolous and vaine thing, beside the horror and inhumanity of the fact" even if they are performed

upon criminals (18).¹³ While the outlaw character of a corpse's former occupant permitted its dissection after death, no such social differentiation could legitimize cutting a body open when it still exhibits signs of life – that, in Crooke's view, would certainly qualify as like consuming like.

At the same time, however, Crooke remains aware that social differences among those who examine these bodies might affect the way viewers interpret the visual anatomical evidence they offer. And for Crooke, the process of learning about the human body proves akin to eating, for the student of anatomy must consume knowledge by watching or reading about dissections. Like many early modern authors, Crooke speaks of his book as a "banquet" – only in the case of the *Microcosmographia*, the food that is offered consists of carefully carved parts of the human body.¹⁴ The raw material of this repast, however prepared, remains the human corpse, which he painstakingly readies for the surgeons' consumption, hoping they will assimilate the body of knowledge and incorporate its lessons into their own practice. Learning, his words imply, always demands opening oneself physically as well as mentally so that the brain can accumulate knowledge – and when that knowledge centers upon the human flesh, this process echoes with the taboos of cannibalism.

In the early modern teaching of anatomy, the banquets of learning that Crooke describes had a more literal counterpart as well, for the Barber-Surgeons hosted large and luxurious feasts as a part of their lengthy anatomical demonstrations. The dinners that followed the premier dissection at the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre on 9 February 1638, for example, cost well over a hundred pounds, suggesting that the theatre was either full to capacity or the meal proved exceptionally lavish, or perhaps both.¹⁵ In

fact, the expenses involved in hosting these feasts grew so exorbitant that the Company had to eliminate them during times of financial hardship.¹⁶ As the records of the Barber-Surgeons' Company plainly reveal, a host of regulations surrounded these sumptuous banquets; their concern with ensuring order, however, not only suggests that the revelry at the feast occasionally obscured the solemnity of the dissection, it also reveals the Company's efforts to clearly delineate the boundary between the anatomy and the banquet that followed it – an understandable impulse, given that until 1638, the dissections took place in the hall's kitchen. While the process of dissection reduced the corpse to a mangled form obviously unable to sustain life, the Barber-Surgeons' anatomies nonetheless systematically blurred the divisions between the living and the dead by encouraging spectators to envision the body's lifeless parts in action. The most clearly effective way for spectators to assure the genuine, unimagined liveliness of their own bodies, then, was to actively – even voraciously – consume the food necessary to sustain their physical functions. At the company's feasts, as in the case with the funereal feasts Milad Doueïhi describes, "food, or the act of eating together, becomes a way of marking the difference between those who can eat and those who can no longer eat, between those who continue to eat and those eaten by the earth" (6).¹⁷ Such feasts, whether held as part of funereal or anatomical ceremonies, thus betray an innate awareness that the human body eventually loses its individuality, returning to the earth and becoming, in the common Renaissance trope, food for worms.

In the Barber-Surgeons' Hall, this ritual eating provided a particularly vivid juxtaposition between the living and the dead, for before the construction of the Anatomical Theatre in 1638, the Hall offered no place for dissections other than its

kitchen. In fact, the Company cited the mess that the dissected bodies created as the deciding factor in commissioning the theatre as the exclusive home for its anatomy demonstrations. Noting that "hitherto the bodies have been a great annoyance to the tables, dresser boards and utensils in the upper kitchen by reason of the blood, filth and entrails of these anatomies," the Company's Court set aside funds for the Anatomical Theatre's construction "for the better accommodating of these anatomical affairs and the preserving the kitchen to its own proper use."¹⁸ After almost one hundred years of dissecting human corpses in the same room where its feasts were prepared,¹⁹ the Barber-Surgeons suddenly grew nauseous at the thought of their food coming into such close contact with the remnants of human bodies. While it remains impossible to ascertain a direct cause for this move, the spectre of cannibalism certainly haunts the Court's wording. Their understandable decision to return the kitchen to its "proper use," after all, relies on their desire to eliminate traces of human remains from the knives and cutting boards used to prepare food – food which often needed to be ready to eat by the time the dissection ended. Dwelling on the proximity between the corpse and food, between anatomical instruments and cooking knives, the Court records reveal the Company's uneasiness toward such a thorough mixing of the living and the dead. The potential blending of a corpse's flesh with the repast meant to celebrate the movement of the living bodies performing and observing the dissection thus threatened to blur the easy separation between the lifeless anatomized criminal and those who actively, even vivaciously, studied the open body. Not only did the close proximity of food and corpse underscore the resemblances between feasting and the carving-at-table essential in anatomical dissection, it risked associating those who gathered at the demonstration with

the cannibalizing of the corpse taken apart for their observation. The Barber-Surgeons' methods of taking apart the human body – despite their attempts to endow them with an inviolable order and a sense of seriousness – thus find themselves on the verge of descending into cannibal mayhem, where the ceremony designed to put the body of an undesirable to good use suddenly threatens to perpetuate, rather than eliminate, his objectionable characteristics by allowing his flesh to be incorporated within that of his observers.

As the study of anatomy grew more established and as its practitioners strove to develop their interpretations of the body's workings, however, early modern writers reveal an increasing awareness of the inescapably cannibalistic character not just of their own demonstrations but of the human organism itself. Eating, some concluded, provided humans with their bodies, since without nourishment no physical growth could occur. As Jonathan Sawday points out, the physician and theorist Sir Thomas Browne sees this activity as inherently cannibal in nature, for, in the act of consuming, people eat what soon becomes their flesh.²⁰ In his *Religio de Medici*, Browne writes that

All flesh is grasse, is not onely metaphorically, but literally true, for all those creatures we behold, are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in our selves. Nay further, we are what we all abhorre, Anthropophagi and Cannibals, devoureres not onely of men, but of our selves; and that not in an allegory, but a positive truth; for all this masse of flesh which we behold, came in at our mouths: this frame we looke upon, hath beene upon our trenchers; In briefe, we have devoured our selves.

As Sawday points out, Browne's explanation announces that the body's functions often contradict the values of the individual whose consciousness it holds. In that sense, Sawday concludes, Browne's observations point to a new sense of the interrelationship



between the body's exterior and its interior, for his writings proclaim that what is inside the boundary formed by the skin had originated almost entirely from the world without. Digesting the world, the human body thus performs what Linda Woodbridge sees as a regenerative act of dismemberment, taking apart the elements of the earth to reassemble them within its flesh in an even more artful fashion.²¹ Browne's explanation, however, also assumes not only that all animals consume themselves in a like manner, but that people alone can consume people, for he mentions no inhuman creatures lurking about waiting to consume humans like animals consuming grass. Only humans, then, can so thoroughly devour humans, who, as a species, can devour everything else in the world, incorporating this material into the microcosm that is the human body.

Browne's findings of the human body's cannibalistic origins, however, overlook the biological processes that place the individual's consuming body on earth in the first place. While all human beings may consume what becomes their flesh, the ravenous infant mouth appears as the result of another process linked to cannibalism, that of human reproduction, specifically of gestation as it occurs within a mother's womb. Yet the interpretations that anatomists offer of female reproductive organs and their functions rely primarily upon a theory of inversion stunningly similar to Browne's ideas of human self-eating. Early modern anatomists, as Thomas Laqueur points out, constructed their visions of female reproductive organs – ones that they rarely had the chance to dissect – simply by inverting the structures of male genitalia, thereby creating for women's bodies the internal equivalents of male organs.²² Not only did such physical traits make a woman an imperfect man, the placement and structure that anatomists envisioned for these female organs encouraged stronger associations between women's bodies and

unspeakable acts of cannibalism. Concealing a uterus and birth canal within the body, the female body makes a part of its internal anatomy the structures that the idealized male body makes visible as testicles and penis. Encompassed within the female body, these organs in turn encompass other humans during the process of reproduction, transforming the woman's body into a visibly expanding container of another being's flesh. Ambroise Paré's account of conception, for example, figures the woman's body as eating, even digesting, her partner's sperm, concocting it along with her own seed in stomach-like fashion to create a human form. In Paré's words, the womb "drawes the masculine seed into itselfe by the mouth thereof, and it receives the womans seed by the hornes from the spermatick vessels, which come from the womans testicles into the hollownesse or concavity of the womb, that so it may be tempered by conjunction, commistion, & confusion with the mans seed, and so reduced or brought into a certain equality ..." (887).²³ While Crooke's view of conception avoids such overtly digestive metaphors, he suggests that the womb's structure resembles that of the stomach. His dissections show that the walls of the uterus consisted of two membranes "betweene which as betweene the coates of the stomacke there are placed fleshy fibres" (228).

Though Paré later modifies his view of conception by insisting that the male seed "eats" the female's within the womb (891), he and Crooke both describe and diagnose pregnancy in terms of appetites – both those that it stirs and those which had produced it. Crooke and Paré both note that women often lose their desire for food early in pregnancy; Paré, however, dwells on the abnormal cravings that later overtake a mother-to-be as her child grows within her, portraying pregnant women as monstrously consuming almost anything that will fit into their mouths.²⁴ Pregnant women, he asserts, "loath meats of

good juice, and long for and desire illaudable meates, and those that are contrary to nature, as coales, dirt, ashes, stinking salt-fish, sowre, austere and tart fruits, pepper, vinegar, and such acride things ..." (890). While Paré attributes such voracious consuming to the demands of pregnancy, Crooke traces pregnancy itself to the appetites lurking within both men and women. In the midst of an in-depth discussion of labor, Crooke abruptly veers into a philosophical discussion of the seemingly uncontrollable human urge to reproduce. Curiously phrasing his comments on pregnancy in terms of "men," Crooke muses that human births are "not tyed to any time or season, but left to the liberty of his appetite and guidance of his discretion," further observing that while

... other creatures in their coitions are gluted & more then satisfied; man (I know not how) hath his appetite increased even in the fruition of that which he affecteth. Other creatures use alwayes one and the same manner of dyet, which may be a bridle and restraint: Man wandreth wantonly through infinite varieties of viands and delicacies whereby he is goaded and provoked to intemperate lust. I forbear to speake of the power of those fancies, lustfull imaginations and passions whereby every houre as by so many furies he is wracked and tormented: all which we know are of great availe to alter the body of man. (269)

Though Crooke uses the term *men* inclusively, associating it with the laboring women he describes, the alterations he sees sexual appetite imposing upon the male prove largely psychological – his men, after all, undergo torment at the hands of "fancies" and "lustfull imaginations," while the women whose pregnancies and labors he explains undergo radical, sustained bodily change as a result of their sexual appetites. Through such effects on the mother's body, Gail Kern Paster notes, pregnancy proved "a rare type of bodily event knowable as to cause and desired effect but radically unknowable even in its visibility for the long months between." The processes of pregnancy, she observes, emphasized the female body's nature as a container through the attention it drew to the

"apparent concavity and expandability of the womb" (182). While the processes of pregnancy that Crooke outlines only incorporate a child temporarily into its mother's flesh, the presence of a living being inside another – visibly discernible in a place commonly thought of as a stomach – links these women more clearly not just with physical appetites but with the sorts of self-consumption that Browne describes. The woman's pregnant body, as a result, thus proved for these early modern thinkers capable of incorporating not only a child's flesh, but that of a man as well.

The pregnant body, then, is one that presents to the unpracticed as well as the anatomical eye physical evidence of its ability to incorporate human flesh. The womb's observable but nonetheless enigmatic nature – when considered alongside anatomical theories of the organ's power to function almost independently within a woman's body, controlling her desires while wandering from place to place inside her – left anatomists to imagine women as the helpless enactors of the womb's dangerous wishes. As Paster points out, such a characterization painted maternal powers in a threatening light, "representing the womb as a political entity, a potentially disorderly force needing pacification and colonization but capable of negotiating terms of control and negotiation" (175). Dissectors, moreover, rarely had the opportunity to view the inner structures of the female body, yet alone to examine those of a pregnant woman; their ideas of the female body's internal workings thus often went unchallenged, for they could not see its structures for themselves. Even such an experienced anatomist as Crooke had to derive his views of the human womb largely from comparative studies of dogs and sheep, relying on the works of Vesalius and Greek authorities while applying his own observations from animal dissection to human women. Thus, when a woman's body

became available for dissection, her flesh, whether pregnant or not, became the subject of an inspection that hungrily consumed her flesh and the secrets it held, for the men observing studied her with greedy gazes intent on incorporating knowledge of her body's functions. As we have seen, the metaphors that anatomists used to explain vision – the very process upon which their explorations depended – rendered the eye a voracious consumer of images, taking in with its light rays images that the brain then digested. Anatomy, both on a metaphoric and physical, fleshly level, thus became a study of the human body's power to incorporate, for its demonstrations sought first to expose the layers of a body that consumed the material of its own flesh – and, in the case of female corpses, the material bodies of other as well – and then to capture the sight of these layers, harnessing them for incorporation into another discerning human body. The activity itself consumed the flesh of the dead, rendering the body into progressively smaller pieces that fueled the intellectual processes of those who watched. Public anatomies, where amateurs and professionals alike could take in the sights of the human body's exposed viscera, thus became an institutionalized form of cannibalism within London's ever-expanding consumer culture.

While anatomical writings reveal a willingness to see women as enclosing more corporeal secrets than men, the popular literature of early Stuart London often portrayed women as powerless to control their physical urges to feed these mysterious inner processes. In pamphlets and poetry of the day, women proved far more likely to succumb to famine-induced desperation than men; as a result, the cannibals who appeared in stories that took place in Old World settings were almost without exception starvation-crazed women who often were described as eating their own children. Not

only did such writings rarely describe men as taking part in such desperate eating, they often incorporated men into their accounts to serve as horrified witnesses to these acts. Predictably, popular writings routinely downplayed the possibility that high food prices might drive people in England, let alone in London, to eat human flesh; the accounts that the hungry citydwellers read, however, reveal a peculiarly voyeuristic interest in the disassembly, preparation, and consumption of the flesh in other locales, often using such scenes to conjure pathos within their readers. In a rare 1597 account of cannibalism in England, for example, Nicolas Ling admits that starvation had at times reduced the hungry populace to such behavior, yet where he cannot associate such behavior with foreigners, he links it to women:

In the time of famine, mice, dogs, horses, asses, chaffe, pels, hides, sawdust, have been used for good sustenance, & at the last mans flesh; yea, that which is not to bee spoken without trembling, the mothers have been constrained (through hunger) to eate theyre own children; as in the siege of Samaria, in the first siege of Jerusalem under *Nabuchadnezzar*, and in the last, under the Emperour *Vespasian* and his sonne *Titus*.²⁵

With the mention of cannibalism, Ling abruptly shifts his focus from the English population's predicament, taking his readers back in time and across the Mediterranean to utterly dissociate his countrymen from the most desperate acts whose mere mention makes him tremble. Even with these distancing measures and the feigned reluctance to speak of such horrible deeds, his account still attributes this flesh-eating specifically to mothers, explicitly calling upon the tale of the widow Miriam's killing and consumption of her son during the siege of Jerusalem in 74 A.D. – a story that proved particularly popular in early Stuart London. John Taylor's *The Last and Most Lamentable Destruction of the Ancient, Famous, and Memorable City and Temple of Jerusalem*

(1630), for example, lovingly portrays the physical suffering inflicted upon the ancient city's inhabitants as well as Miriam's actions. His relentlessly rhyming couplets describe a personified Famine, who "like a Tyrant roames and rages" and "Makes faint (yet furious) havock of all ages," before concluding that "This was a plague of plagues, a woe of woes, / On every side their death did them inclose."²⁶ Narrowing his focus to Miriam, Taylor quickly but vividly records the brutality of her son's death and her preparation of his flesh with a hasty couplet: "She ripp'd him and dis-joynted *lim* from *lim*, / She *drest* him, she *boyld*, she *broyled*, and *rosted* him." Taylor's rushed account of the boy's demise clears space for his condemnations of Miriam's act; his rationale for such reprisals, however, dwells not on her murderous desperation or even on the consumption of her son's flesh, but on her denial of her violation of her motherly instincts. In illustrating his disgust, Taylor's focus takes up Miriam's own body, not the corpse of her son, as his subject, tracing her flesh's gradual reincorporation of the boy's body:

She ate him, she inter'd him in her wombe,
 She made his births place his untimely *tombe*.
 From her (by Nature) did his life proceed,
 On him (unnaturall) she her selfe did feed,
 He was her flesh, her sinews, bones and blood,
 She (eating him) herselfe, herselfe made food.

Eating her son thus marks Miriam as more than a cannibal, it reveals her true nature as an animalistic woman, one who denies her motherly instincts in favor of greedy self-preservation. But the very moves she makes to keep her own body alive, Taylor implies, mark the death of her own flesh, for the body she consumes not only had emerged from her own womb but had ensured the perpetuation of her own being. She, as a result, cannibalizes herself, and in a uniquely female way for which Browne would not account. Miriam, after all, takes into her body a distinct being that had resulted from her own

mysterious internal processes in the first place. Formed from parts of Miriam's own sinews, bones, and blood, the body of the son now meets its ultimate destruction within his mother's supposedly nurturing flesh, which now digests and incorporates the child that it had once given life.

In *Canaans Calamitie Jerusalems Misery* (1618), on the other hand, Miriam receives far more sympathetic treatment. The work's author – who, named only as T.D., shares his initials not only with Dekker the pamphleteer but also with the playwright behind *The Bloody Banquet* – devotes over four verse chapters to Miriam's story, constructing a dialogue between the mother and the son. Unlike Taylor, T.D. presents Miriam's actions as motherly love taken to a patriotic extreme, portraying Miriam as patiently explaining to her child

Wherefore my Sonne least ugly Ravens and Crows,
Should eate thy carcasees in the stincking streetes,
Thereby to be a scorne unto our foes,
And gaule to me, that gave thee many sweets:
I have prepared, this my unspotted wombe,
To be for thee an honourable Tombe.(D4v)²⁷

The child issues no protests; as a result, Miriam's plan to save her son from misery while preserving her own life retains a measure of dignity despite its reliance on a forbidden act of cannibalism. In T.D.'s eyes, Miriam's insistence on returning the child to her chaste womb proves primarily a marvelous act of motherhood, not an act of savage cannibalism; indeed, her loving if ravenous logic lends the scene a sentimental, if gruesome, glow.

Like the processes that gave birth to Miriam's son, the acts that lead to his bodily obliteration take place in secret, hidden deep within the mother's digesting flesh. In both T.D.'s and Taylor's accounts, Miriam's killing and cooking of her son too remain hidden, occurring in her secure home within a city tightly surrounded by enemy troops. Even

within this well-watched area, she manages to perform both taboo actions without ever being seen – instead, the male soldiers of the city discover her desperate moves only after they arrive at her door, drawn by the smell of cooking meat. Like Ling reporting on the cannibalism of hungry mothers during famine, both Taylor and T.D. insist that the soldiers can barely acknowledge what they see when they enter Miriam's house; both poets, however, lovingly recount the men's uniformly horrified reaction, offering vivid images of their stunned silence. Taylor, for example, devotes more space to the reaction of the soldiers than he did to Miriam's preparation of her son's flesh, writing that

The Soldiers smelte the meat and straight assemble,
Which whe[n] they saw (with horror) made the[m] tre[m]ble
Each one with staring haire, and ghastly looke,
Affrighted, and amaz'd, the house forsooke
This horride action quickly overcame
These men, whom force of man could never tame. (15)

Miriam's seeming lack of maternal instincts thus proves more dreadful for the soldiers than the everyday atrocities of battle they had experienced for so many months – and according to early modern renderings of the tale, her desperate act even stirred pathos within Titus, the besieging Roman emperor, compelling him to abandon his relentless punishment of Jerusalem's citizens. While Taylor's account emphasizes the effect that killing and cooking the boy has on those who stumble upon evidence of the cannibal act, T.D. presents a far more detailed description of the events occurring within the house, allowing Miriam to play the role of deranged but courteous hostess to the starving soldiers:

In massie silver platter brought she forth,
Her owne Sonnes flesh whom she did love so deere,
Saying my maisters take this well in worth,
I pray be merry: looke for no other cheere:
See here my childs white hand, most finely drest,

And here his foote, eat where it likes you best.

Like both a chef presenting a most extravagant culinary creation and a lecturing anatomist, Miriam points out the parts of her prepared son to T.D.'s stunned soldiers. The starving men, peering more closely at the meat upon the elaborate platter, suddenly recoil from their long-awaited feast, registering their revulsion and anger in a far more lengthy and elaborate manner than in Taylor's version. T.D.'s account, moreover, allows Miriam to speak once again on her own behalf, for she apologizes not only for the humble nature of the meal but for the actions that she realizes must look "unnatural" to her observers. For those reading T.D.'s graphic descriptions of the boy's dismembered body upon the platter, the scene thus takes on an undeniably vivid visual dimension, encouraging those who read or hear his story to envision the cooked flesh that the soldiers behold. Yet neither T.D.'s nor Taylor's texts offers illustrations of Miriam's horrible banquet, instead relying on their audiences to imagine such terrible scenes for themselves.

At least one account circulating in early Stuart London of the distinctly less fabulous starvation in Germany during the Thirty Years War, however, provided vivid illustrations of atrocious acts of cannibalism undertaken by citizens of the ravaged countryside. Rather than focus on one emblematic instance of maternal suffering, Philip Vincent's *The lamentations of Germany* (1638) – a treatise that included his own first-hand accounts of the war-torn, disease-ridden, and famine-stricken country along with letters from German churchmen – includes images of a wide variety of cannibal acts. Emphasizing that the German famine affected all citizens equally – whether Protestants or Papists and without "*any respect of persons, ages, sexes, or conditions*" (A4r)²⁸ – Vincent presents the German famine as a cautionary tale for his London readers, warning

them about the dangers that such civil war wreaks on innocent civilians. His treatise nevertheless allows its male readers to distance themselves from the most horrid cannibalistic tales, routinely associating the ingestion of human flesh with deranged mothers just as T.D. and Taylor had. While Vincent's account admits that German men too murdered and ate humans in their desperate quest for food, *The Lamentations* describes them as undertaking such cannibalistic actions not as crazed individuals but in groups, "gathering together by troopes" to murder travelers whose bodies they then cooperatively divided amongst themselves (45). In fact, Vincent offers only one account of an individual male eating human flesh, retelling the story of a young boy who consumed the bodies of his parents and sister. Even though Vincent insists that the child ate his family only after they died naturally from lack of food, his interpretation of such flesh-eating nonetheless resonates with anxieties about birth and the female body's ability to conceal growing living beings under its skin. Vincent, after all, ends the story of the starving boy on a strangely sexual note, revealing with repressed interest ("wee tremble in the very writing") that the boy "fed upon his sister, and devoured the thighes of his mother," thus situating the child's cannibalism as a hunger-driven reversal of birth; Vincent then immediately continues his narrative of German suffering, without even ending his sentence, with an attempt to adapt the womb/tomb analogy to men:

... in the Diocesse of *Blissoe Cappellana* the corpses of men starved, whose skin cleaved to their bones, so that whilst they were alive, we might truely have said, that their flesh did but infunerall their buried ghosts, yet they being dead, had their inwards, their hearts and lungs taken out, and devoured, and that which is more, they have laine in the waite to intercept passengers, and those whom they have taken, after they have killed them, they make their own bellies their graves. (a3r)

Through their desperate cannibalism, these men re-create themselves as containers of dead human flesh, transforming themselves into sepulchres that hold not only their own spirits but those of the travelers they consume. Vincent's account, however, attaches a far less weighty judgment to these starvation-induced mob attacks than to the violence performed secretly by solitary mothers against their own children. While his reasons for laying such heavy blame on his narrative's murdering mothers understandably stem from their violation of taboos against killing and cannibalism, Vincent condemns these women most harshly for their failure to embody the nurturing, self-sacrificing maternal instincts expected of them. In addition, Vincent's reports of male human-hunting parties cannot depict their cannibalism as an ironic contradiction to gestation. The men's belly's, after all, cannot nurture humans; they can only digest them once consumed. And though there may be some women included in Vincent's collective term *men*, the flesh-eating that these groups engage in proves fundamentally different from that undertaken by starving mothers, for these men take part in corporate, open-air cannibalism, not the furtive killing and eating of children that the women of his text enact.

The vivid illustrations in *The Lamentations* hence provide no image of men eating human flesh; instead, they concentrate on exposing the hidden deeds of the country's famished women, offering woodcuts to accompany the text's many stories of women eating their children and one another. As Burnett points out, even when the women consume the bodies of those who die naturally, the text of *The Lamentations* pictures them as committing more horrible deeds than the men who take up the same acts.

Vincent writes that "men have digged out of graves dead bodies, and have eaten them" (A8v), and the accompanying illustration shows men performing such an exhumation –

an act that the central man's lantern hints took place under the cover of darkness (Figure 32) – but even then the men fail to succumb to the demands of their hunger as easily as the women, who routinely appear eating human flesh straight from lively-looking corpses. Of the three living figures shown in his drawing entitled "Eatinge dead mens guts and Interalls" (Figure 33), only one is a man, and, while he prepares to split a corpse, presumably for eating, the two voracious women in the foreground capture the artist's – and viewers' – attention. Opening up the corpses with cuts that resemble those pictured in anatomy illustrations, the women greedily consume the men's raw entrails straight from the body, making the ax-wielding of the man in the background look comparatively civilized.

The numerous tales that Vincent recounts of women murdering both their children and each other for food also depict the female perpetrators as far more savage than the treatise's few desperate men. The text clearly portrays women posing a tremendous threat to their own children's livelihood, maintaining that "Mothers forgetting their naturall affections towards their owne children become butchers of them, and eate them up instead of food"; even German children, the minister Andreas Pilger claims, realize the evil streak in their mothers, reporting that "Wee do heare daily children crying about the streets, and lamenting that they dare not goe home, for feare of being killed" (A8r-v). Not surprisingly, Vincent includes a number of accounts that modify the Miriam story, transferring its location from Jerusalem to Germany. Two women, he reports, captured two children and cooked them; as in Miriam's tale, the smell of roasting flesh attracted a garrison of soldiers who searched the house until they found a "vessell full of humane grease, and a head that had been scalded in hot water, and so baked in an oven" (a7v). In

a second variation, Vincent recasts the Miriam story as a dialogue between a famished widow and her equally hungry daughter, described as being between eight and ten years old. Though their melodramatic conversation encourages readers to sympathize with the mother's plight, it achieves this effect by emphasizing the budding potential for female brutality lurking within the young girl. The daughter, Vincent recounts, begs to be killed, imploring her mother, "Oh! I would you make an end of mee, then should I goe from whence I came, or if I did kill you, you would be rid of your paine"; when the mother asks, with great resignation, what her daughter would do if she refused to commit such a cannibal act, the girl answers, "I then would eat you, for they say that mans flesh is very sweet." Faced with such an eat-or-be-eaten situation, the mother smothers her maternal instincts and kills her daughter, hews her to pieces with a shovel, eats part of her, and then sells some of the resulting meat to her neighbors for four stivers a pound (48-49). Though the neighbors eventually report the widow,²⁹ she receives a far lighter sentence than Vincent's other female cannibals, perhaps because of the extenuating circumstances that drove her to kill. Vincent by no means excuses the mother's actions, yet her daughter's age allows him to envision the woman as facing a female opponent as well as a crying child. The illustration that appears near the story, however, allows for no such sympathy, instead showing a mother holding the trunk of a dead child in her supposedly-maternal lap, knife poised over its head as she prepares to consume its flesh (Figure 34a).

On the same page, just above the illustration of the cannibal mother, Vincent includes an equally graphic drawing entitled "3 women killing and after eating each other" (Figure 34b); such a caption implies an even more bloody story, for it could indeed suggest that all three women consume one another yet remain oblivious to the fact that

they are being consumed themselves. Though the image itself shows one of the three women utterly prone, with her eye in danger of being carved out, the position of her legs could indeed suggest that she resists the two who kneel over her; whether her arm reaches up under its own power or whether she is being lifted remains a matter of debate as well. Her potentially lively body, and the circle of feeding it would create, bring notions of womanly gluttony to the forefront, providing a vivid illustration of the womb/tomb trope by showing eaten flesh as circulating through three female bodies. Yet the story that Vincent associates with this illustration stretches out this compacted narrative, transforming it into an epic tale of serial murder and cannibalism. Three maidens, he explains, had vowed to suffer through the famine together, "partak[ing] of sweet and sour all alike"; before long, however, two of the women conspired against the third, killing her "to dresse and eate her up." One of the remaining two then turned against the other, completing the second murder of the cycle, before proceeding to another town, where she murders an additional unpictured female friend for food. When the third victim's husband "espieth an hand to stick out of the pot, which hung upon the fire," the young murderess finds herself facing a horrified man much as Miriam had a thousand years earlier (45-47). The drawing, however, omits any reference to this discovery, instead dwelling on the carnage left in the murdering women's trail so that the viewer can act as a primary witness to the bloody events it represents. The drawing's caption, after all, attempts to account for all the women's brutal actions – a tale to which Vincent devotes three pages – by collapsing events from different times and geographical locations into eight brief words. In their storytelling, then, the caption and the image follow an impulse much like that found in Tudor paintings, seeking to encompass multiple places and points

in time; the other illustrations in *The Lamentations*, however, reflect a mode of perspectivist representation that requires images to present a single, unified moment. When viewed according to such perspectivist habits, then, the illustration creates a story of its own, an emblematic tale of utterly impossible circular consumption, universal bestial female greed, and womanly duplicity that exists separately from the story that Vincent tells of a lone murderer – and her female victims – in his accompanying narrative. In creating such a fantastic story, however, the illustration epitomizes the evils attributed to women throughout *The Lamentations*, exposing their inner weakness and submitting to the viewer tangible evidence of the cannibal urges lurking within such supposedly tender-hearted women.

Given these strong links between the dismembering and dissolution of the human body and the consumption of food – both in early modern London itself and in the accounts of cannibalism that circulated there – the near-simultaneous enactment of banqueting and bloody murder on the city's stages seems almost logical. Countless plays chose feasting as the backdrop for scenes in which characters confront the consequences of murder or, still more commonly, learn of a killing's occurrence, often through the shocking presentation of bodily evidence. Encountering blood-smeared bodies – and sometimes just parts of their corpses – the guests at such banquets find themselves confronted not only with incontrovertible evidence of a brutal crime but with evidence of the human body's utter susceptibility to physical annihilation as well. The displayed bodily remains – even when represented by wooden and waxen stage props – act as a nearly mesmerizing force when placed in such a central position upon the stage, for they directly contradict both the on- and offstage audiences' daily assumption of the natural,

concrete unity of the human body's parts. While, as we have seen, supposedly lifeless bodies at times serve as the focal point of the action in tragedies like *King Lear* and the *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, such scenes dare those who look upon these corpses to discern signs of life in nominally dead flesh. While the banquet scene in *Macbeth* revolves around the apparition of a blood-smeared but physically whole Banquo, thus closely associating murdered bodies with the consumption of food, most bloody banquet scenes feature distinctly less unified – and more obviously fleshy – parts of human corpses. In such scenes, where isolated body parts not only appear but appear upon tables typically filled with food, the utterly devastated state of the corpse nonetheless serves as the visual focus of the scene. Unlike Banquo, however, these dismembered bodies prove incapable of staring back. Instead, such banqueting scenes deny viewers either onstage or off any glimmer of hope for the body's liveliness, for the character who presents the corpse's prepared pieces proclaims them ready for eating, as lifeless as meat ready to be consumed and dissolved within the bodies of those who survive. As a result, the gory feasts set out in early modern plays like *Antonio's Revenge* and *The Bloody Banquet* frustrate the viewers' impulse to re-assemble – and reanimate – the dismembered body set out before them, instead challenging them to witness its consumption and incorporation into another character's flesh. While many bloody banquets dissolve in further bloodshed before such eating can take place, and while the banquet fare may go unrecognized as human for varying periods of time, the revenger's twofold purpose in setting such scenes remains the same: to force his banquet guest to commit a cannibal act that reveals what the revenger sees as a hidden, bestial internal nature while also submitting for consumption – and obliteration – the body of person that the revenger yearns to replace. When the revenger

is a jealous husband, Milad Doueihi points out, he stages such cannibal scenes to eliminate his romantic rival while simultaneously reasserting his claim to his wife's affections³⁰; a similar dynamic occurs in plays where the revenger stages a bloody banquet in hopes of gaining political power, for he often kills and cooks the bodies of the heirs whose place in the line of succession he wishes to usurp. Even when the character performing this eating is a man, such an act of cannibalism, of swallowing the flesh of another human being, associates the consumer's body with destructive female gluttony, thus exposing the cannibal woman's variation from the biological processes assigned to her and the cannibal man's inability to replace the children – or the rival lover – that he yearns to destroy.

Such cannibal scenes were not new to the Stuart era, nor were they particularly favored by its playwrights; in fact, most of the bloody banquet scenes that survive date from Elizabeth's reign. Yet, as early Stuart dramatists strove to make their plays even more remarkably violent than those of their predecessors, they capitalized on their audience's increasingly perspectivist modes of viewing to make their bloody banquets even more horrible to their spectators' eyes. In plays where stage properties representing cooked and mangled human flesh replaced the bodies of actors feigning death, the banquet presented the viewers with a new range of insistently corporeal images, ones that echoed with the resonances of anatomical demonstrations. In addition, while Tudor plays like *The Battle of Alcazar* and *A Warning for Fair Women* furnished their often-allegorical bloody banquets with parts from unidentified bodies, later Stuart dramas like *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* and *The Bloody Banquet* insisted that the remains displayed be associated with clearly-named characters. Even more importantly, later dramas ensured

that their cannibal banquets presented tables full of props at least resembling mangled bits of flesh that were both easily recognized as human and disconcertingly, even emphatically, removed from their natural position within the body. Showing the mess created by dissections and by revengers alike, literally disembodied parts like Annabella's excised heart in *'Tis Pity* underscored the absence of an intact corpse, which, even when lifeless, proved capable of fulfilling the desire early modern observers held to envision the dead body, whether on stage or in medical texts, as exhibiting signs of life.³¹ With its bones disconnected and viscera removed for cooking, however, the body in the last stages of dissection or served as a meal cannot hold within it any vital secrets; nor can it exhibit the accidental indicators of life that an audience must ignore when gazing upon a clearly breathing actor playing the supposedly breathless Cordelia. On the contrary, the bodies spread upon such banqueting tables prove utterly lifeless, mere meat, even when they are recognizably human in origin. For the audiences who look upon them, the bloody banquet's platters of meat frustrate any attempts – or temptations – to envision the characters who once owned them as alive. Such visions, in short, render powerless the spectators' usually life-giving gaze.

The language surrounding the presentation of such cooked human flesh, meanwhile, relentlessly emphasizes the onstage viewers' sudden powerlessness, for those who describe the dead bodies repeatedly bemoan the lingering visual horror of the scenes that have taken place in front of them. Not surprisingly, such descriptions prove most effective in Tudor plays where the action of killing, dismembering, cooking, and consuming human victims takes place furthest from the audience's eyes. For instance, in Jasper Heywood's 1560 translation of Seneca's *Thyestes*, an adaptation that probably



never reached the public stage, the messenger twice bemoans the relentless visual horror of the bloody sacrifice of Thyestes's three sons at the hands of his brother Atreus, who schemes to take over the throne. The messenger's initial words beg for a whirlwind to wrap in the "darkest cloud, whereby it might so heinous [a] thing / Take from mine eyes" (4.1-3); the shock, he declares, has imprinted the terrible scene so firmly upon his mind that, in his words, "But yet of such a cruel deed before mine eyes the fear / An image walks!" (13-14).³² The intensely visual memory haunts him in a form as seemingly corporeal as that of Banquo's ghost, and the description he offers his audience strives to ensure that it will affect them just as vividly even though they have not witnessed the acts. He begins his account with a lengthy, even loving, description of the landscape in which the boy's death takes place, leading his listeners from "Pelops' turret high" to a public "palace wide," through sundrenched "pillars grey of marble" and a "wood so dark" to a "privy palace" ensconced in an ominous landscape where "Eternal night doth hold the place" (19-60). Wandering from one location to another in a manner much like a Tudor painting's, the messenger's description prompts his listeners to envision each step for themselves. "And everything that dreadful is to hear / May there be seen," he concludes for his followers, assuring them that the images his words conjure match the sights they would have beheld had they been there themselves. The act of hearing his report, he thus insists, transforms his listeners into eyewitnesses, certifying their own efforts to picture the atrocities as accurate, despite their horrible – and essentially unseeable – nature.

Such an endorsement of his audience's imagined visions is of course crucial to the play's success, for the intense bloodiness of the executions and banquet he next describes

never take physical shape before those who hear the messenger's words. Instead, he offers detailed descriptions from which the audience can envision the horrors to come, making explicit mention of the heavily ritualized scene Atreus sets for the execution. He then explicitly describes all three murders: the body of the first son, Tantalus, he reveals, "upheld itself in doubtful stay / Which way to fall" before collapsing upon his murderous uncle, while the head of Thyestes's second son Phylisthenes "with murmur yet uncertain doth complain" even after Atreus severs it from his body (102-3, 107). The unnamed youngest son, meanwhile, suffers two wounds to the chest so dire that his blood "[quenches] the altars' sacred flame" (120). The chorus, predictably, offers its horrified reactions to the messengers' words, further encouraging audience members to imagine the terror of the scene for themselves. The messenger, however, has yet to reach the goriest part of his account, for the gruesomeness of his descriptions reaches its peak with his ensuing description of the cooking of the boys' bodies. Atreus begins preparing the corpses well before they are cold, perhaps even before death has fully taken them. "From bosoms yet alive outdrawn the trembling bowels shake / The veins yet breathe, the fearful heart doth yet both pant and shake" (133-34), the messenger tells us, and his subsequent words emphasize the methodical approach the butchering uncle takes toward cutting up his nephews. "To dress his brother's banquet now" (138), Atreus

...straight asunder cuts
The bodies into quarters all; and by the stumps anon
The shoulders wide, and brawns of arms he strikes off everichone
He lays abroad their naked limbs and cuts away the bones;
The only heads he keeps, and hands to him committed ones
Some of the guts and broach'd, and in the first that burn full slow
They drop; the boiling liquor some doth tumble to and fro
In mourning cauldron. (138-145)

The horror of Atreus's act thus stems not just from the cruelty of his murders and the

brutal dismembering of his nephews' bodies, but from the utterly heartless and systematic approach he takes in preparing and cooking the dismembered bodies. The changes that the bodies undergo, both at Atreus's hand and while in the flames, thus create a vivid, shifting image of the flesh's own mutability, as well as of the scheming mind behind the boys' destruction. The messenger's focus on the roasting bodies, after all, calls attention to Atreus's vengeful cruelty just as much as it stirs pity for the children, only one of whom has spoken in the play.

While the messenger relentlessly focuses his words upon the boys' bodies both in death and in the cauldron, his hasty ten-line account of Thyestes's consumption of their flesh receives surprisingly scant attention. As brief as his description may seem, however, it sets into motion a shift in the play's narrative, allowing the messenger to summarize the events before plunging the audience members back in time where they can watch the feast – and Atreus's secret enjoyment of the scene – unfold for themselves.

"Yet," the messenger explains, "shall the whole at length be seen; thy ills shall be spi'd" (166). His pronouncement magically moves the scene to the beginning of the banquet he has just described as having already occurred in the past. Suddenly, and seemingly single-handedly, changing the perspective through which the audience perceives the story, the messenger makes way for Atreus and Thyestes, who then enact the feast whose conclusion the audience already knows. Once this shift has occurred, then, the cannibalism becomes the scene's organizing principle, for the audience realizes not only the nature of the food Thyestes mysteriously cannot eat but the cruel comedy of Atreus's remarks to his brother as well. When Thyestes asks to see his children, for example, Atreus assures him that "even in thine arms, thy children present be," promising to "with



the heap of all his babes the father fully fill" (5.3.7, 10). He continues making such inside jokes even as Thyestes marvels at his own difficulty in consuming the food set out before him. Such vengeful goading encourages both Thyestes and the audience to remember the boys as lively children, ones whose cooked flesh now serves as proof of the horrible violation they have undergone. Even after revealing that Thyestes's sons are dead, Atreus continues his jokes, answering his brother's request to see the bodies that "Whatever part yet of thy children all / Remains, where shalt thou have: and what remaineth not, / thou hast" (62-64). While Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky associates such jokes with a serial killer's psyche,³³ it is important to note that they constitute an integral part of the playgoers' pleasure in these banquets as well, for they, like the killers, know the secret upon which the irony depends, and they too observe with relish as they witness the feaster incorporate the flesh of his loved ones.

Such access to secret jokes, however, need not produce the unified response that Lobanov-Rostovsky envisions overtaking those who watch a cannibal banquet from the audience. For many observers, such sly humor would no doubt prove more disgusting than appealing, bolstering their sympathies for Thyestes while alienating them from Atreus. They would, in short, avoid allying themselves with the revenger who, as Doueihi points out, is usually destined to reveal his own inability to achieve revenge even as he successfully dupes his victim into eating part of a human body. Yet, for Lobanov-Rostovsky, the audience's alliance with the revenger proves inevitable, for the character forced to act as a cannibal commits an act so heinous that all knowing observers, whether onstage or off, must reject him. "[T]he victim's defilement," he argues, "elicits revulsion, compelling an intimacy between spectator and revenger, a common horror" (312). While

Lobanov-Rostovsky insists that witnessing such consumption assures that all in the theatre share a common gaze that suppresses all differences and ultimately assures the integrity of the body politic, his conclusion that the cannibal banquet "consumes its spectator" (334) presupposes a remarkable uniformity not only in audience reaction but in the make-up of such banquet scenes, some of which erupt in violence before any flesh is actually swallowed. In other, more allegorical interpretations of the bloody banquet motif, for example, the human skulls and bones strewn upon the table appear mysteriously, with no character dying in the plot to furnish them. In such cases, as in more directly revengeful killings, the presentations of such bloody remains – ones that viewers cannot envision as a familiar, functioning body – could conjure a wide variety of responses within playgoers, who may despise the revenger more than the cannibal, sympathize with the dead child as well as the parent who unknowingly consumes him, or perhaps hold all the characters in equal contempt as a result of their greedy and brutal rivalry against one another.

In surviving late sixteenth-century plays, it is important to note, the bloody banquet often occurs within the buffering confines of a dumb show, where it commonly foreshadows tragic events to come. Such feasts interrupt the otherwise chronological unfolding of tragic plots, staging scenes where allegorical figures mix with characters from the larger action to illustrate, rather emphatically, the extreme bloodshed – and despicable scheming – to come. George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* (?1589), for example, features an elaborate bloody banquet at the beginning of Act 4 to prepare audiences for the terrible events about to unfold as Sebastian, the king of Portugal, engages – and eventually conquers – the moor Muly Mahamet in a bloody fight.³⁴ The

playtext requires a Presenter to explain to the audience that Mahamet "to a bloody banquet ... invites / The brave Sebastian and his noble peers" (4.1.6-7), while, according to the plats, "Sebastian: Muly mahamet Duke of Auero : & Stukely" enter to the banquet, itself composed of "Dead mens heads & bon<es>," where they are then joined by Death and three Furies, one of whom wears "bloody clothes" (36). The play *A Warning for Fair Women*, performed as early as 1589 by the Lord Chamberlain's Men at the Globe, incorporates an even more intensely allegorical bloody banquet in dumb show.³⁵ This dramatization of the infamous London murder of Mr. George Sanders – orchestrated by a Mr. Browne, with the help of a Mistress Drury, in hopes of winning over Sanders's wife – begins lightheartedly, with Mr. Browne issuing protestations that he suffers from a lovesickness that demands Mistress Sanders's surgical attentions; once Tragedie enters with a bowl of blood in her hands, however, the tone veers from such witty conceits to the gruesome enactment of the murder. Serving as the narrator of the dumb show, Tragedie frankly declares that the banquet marks the transition from mere plotting to bloody action. Though she insists that consuming the Furies' wine puts "Murther into al their hearts" (840), Tragedie's narration to this "Maske" makes no explicit mention of cannibalism; the playtext's careful notations of the banquet's actions, however, offer valuable hints as to how the scenes might have appeared in London's public playhouses. Throughout the opening scenes of the play, Tragedie proclaims, such schemes had "only been in words," but "now we have come to the dismall act / And in these sable curtains shut we up, / The Comicke entrance to our direful play" (777-79). Those sable curtains may well refer to the draperies obscuring the Globe's discovery space, where dumb shows often were staged. As she speaks, the bloody banquet is being assembled on the

stage behind the cover of the discovery space curtain. "This deadly banquet is preparede at hand," she tells the audience as she calls out her Furies, telling them to "spread the table to this bloody feast" (780, 789). Though it remains impossible to ascertain precisely when the Furies and the feast itself become visible to the audience, the stage directions note that "They come to cover" as she speaks this command, suggesting that the Furies pull the curtains to discover the banquet within, where "lustfull wine" is served up in "mazors made of dead mens sculles" (794-95).³⁶ The elaborate dance that ensues begins the Furies' ultimately successful seduction of all the human feasters, even Ann Sanders, who is symbolically lured away from the white-clad Chastity. The stage directions offer a detailed account of the feast's actions, choreographing a toast between Lust and Browne, followed by Mistress Sanders's embrace of Lust, and surrounding these significant motions with "strange solemne music like belles" (800, 803-814). Tragedie's ritual washing of all the human characters' hands in blood concludes the scene, painting them all as murderers.

The spectators at Tudor-era productions of *The Battle of Alcazar* and *A Warning for Fair Women* thus looked on as bloody banquets unfolded before their eyes; while both plays offered far more tangible glimpses at this horrific association between human remains and the ritual consumption of food than the closet drama *Thyestes*, neither *Alcazar* nor *A Warning* attaches such extensive verbal attention to the images of cannibalism as the earlier Senecan drama. Setting both scenes as dumb shows, commonly situated in the rear of the stage or in the discovery space, such productions distanced the playhouse spectators from the staged feast, insisting that the audience interpret the sights they behold according to the narrator's cues. In these early plays, the



feasters themselves could not verbally communicate with their audiences, for the narrator served as the lone speaker; his presence on stage thus ensured that his words – and the sight of his physical body – mediated the spectators' interpretation of these early banquets. Standing on the stage – whether at the edges nearest the audience, on the balcony, or even beside or behind the action – the presenter interjects himself into the visual field. His speaking body thus sets the dumb show apart from the play's other scenes, assuring that the wordless performance occurs within a frame of his making even if its actions should occur outside the recessed discovery space. The banquet – physically set apart from the playhouse audience and peopled with silent, often allegorical characters – thus becomes a highly stylized enactment, nestled within the body of the larger play, that illustrates the inner motives of the drama's characters, boldly presenting the spectators with vivid images of their minds' shifting workings. Staging bloody banquets in dumb show thus allows playhouse observers to see inside characters, opening them up to expose – and name – their motives while also permitting spectators to see the insides of human physical forms, laid out upon the table in dishes ready for anointing, if not feeding, the bodies of the characters undergoing transformation. Yet the spectators' inability to assign these skulls and bones to a particular character who has died in the course of the dramatic action prevents them from seeing any significance to their consumption other than as an illustration of a character's inner corruption. Such vagueness thus removes the cannibal feast even further from the larger plot – and, for some spectators, lessens the visceral horror of the bloody repast.

The earliest productions of *Titus Andronicus* (1591), on the other hand, insist that audience members associate the food consumed on stage with the bodies of particular

characters, ones whom they had not only seen alive but had observed both before and after their plotting of Lavinia's hideous rape. Like *Thyestes*, this early Shakespearean tragedy uses a cannibal banquet to take up this concern with the termination of family lines and, like *Alcazar* and *A Warning*, *Titus* confronts the audience with dead, and cooked, human remains. Unlike these earlier plays, however, *Titus* insists that the audience associate the shredded meat within the pie with the bodies of Tamora's sons Chiron and Demetrius, major characters whose bloody deaths are carried out on the playhouse stage, in front of the spectators' eyes. The banquet itself occurs not in a dumb show but as an integrated – and integral – part of the play's larger action. Its horror, however, stems more from the words that Titus utters than from the sight of the feast he prepares, for no bones and no blood are present at the banquet; therefore, the scene's efforts to conjure the audience's revulsion depend solely on Titus's insistence that the corpses are indeed ground within the pie.³⁷ While a mother orchestrates the feast in Ovid's tale of Procne's cooking and serving of her sons – a tale often named among Shakespeare's sources – the cannibal banquet in *Titus* makes Tamora, the queen of the Goths, its primary target, for she is the character forced to eat unknowingly the flesh of her own offspring. The scene containing her consumption of Chiron and Demetrius not only marks the end of her family line, it also marks the final step in Titus's and Tamora's methodical efforts to kill off each other's children – a pattern evident from the play's opening scene where Titus kills the Goth queen's son Alarbus to atone for the fatalities her soldiers had inflicted upon the Romans and upon Titus's own family. The revenge Titus plots against Chiron and Demetrius for their rape and maiming of Lavinia inextricably links the two families' bloody attempts to end one another's line with the

ingestion of food. In fact, Titus and his family plot their revenge while seated around a banquet table (3.2), and his plan centers around a second banquet, one where Chiron and Demetrius will serve as the repast. After apprehending his daughter's rapists, Titus tells Tamora's bound and gagged sons what will become of their bodies after their deaths, emphasizing with loving detail the physical transformation their flesh will inflict upon their mother's own body:

Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust,
And with your blood and it I'll make a paste,
And of the paste a coffin I will rear,
And make two pasties of your shameful heads,
And bid that strumpet, your unhallowed dam,
Like to the earth swallow her own increase. (5.3.185-90)

Tamora's body, in short, will no longer be the flesh that gave them life; it will instead be the tomb that, like the earth, digests their bodies, feeding off their bones rather than endowing them with nourishment as a mother's body should. Tamora's monstrous, if unwilling, consumption of her children becomes the center of the bloody banquet that Titus stages, and her body – one that harbors unnatural political ambitions and has just borne a child fathered by Aaron, the play's scheming moor – becomes the secret enemy which Titus is driven to expose.

While the audience at *Thyestes* heard the bloody banquet recounted twice, once through the messenger's words and a second time through the interactions of Thyestes and Atreus, *Titus* revels both in staging its bloodshed before its spectators' eyes, inviting them to watch throats slashed, limbs lopped off, and characters stabbed, and in showing playgoers the results of such violence, presenting them with a raped, bloodied, and silent Lavinia, whose bloody stumps and tongueless mouth offer a vivid illustration of her body's pain. Rather than dwell on the dismemberment, disemboweling, and cooking of



the corpses of his daughter's rapists with lavish descriptions, Titus transforms Tamora's sons more completely and more quickly, cutting up their bodies not just to illustrate the boys' internal corruption but to expose their mother's ravenous political and personal greed. After telling them what fate their corpses will meet, Titus slits the boys' throats in front of the audience's eyes; the playhouse viewers, as a result, not only see Chiron and Demetrius die an extremely bloody death, they witness the seemingly powerless Lavinia collecting their blood as Titus's recipe demands. After these preliminary cuts, however, the corpses vanish from the stage, never to be seen in recognizable form again, for Titus pulverizes their bodies, completely obliterating their human shape to make ground meat for his pies. While Atreus finds his ultimate revenge in watching Thyestes attempt to reassemble mentally the cooked body on the banquet before him into vivid visions of the his sons' living bodies, Titus's anger prevents him from such a luxurious savoring of Tamora's disgust and grief. Instead, Titus turns Tamora into a cannibal not just to horrify her but to expose what he sees as her mental and physical depravity. When Saturnius, shocked to see Titus kill Lavinia and to hear that his stepsons had indeed raped her, orders that Chiron and Demetrius be brought before him, Titus matter-of-factly replies:

Why, there they are, both bakèd in this pie,
Whereof their mother daintily hath fed,
Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred.
'Tis true, 'tis true, witness my knife's sharp point. (5.3.59-62)

Explicitly calling the spectators' attention to the blade, Titus then according to the stage directions "*stabs the Empress*." As his knife cuts into Tamora's flesh, the focal point of the scene thus shifts from the pie containing the men's bodies to the body that had given birth to them and which once again encompasses their flesh. Titus's demand that his viewers "witness" his knife to see proof that Tamora had consumed her sons suggests that

he stabs at her belly, opening up her stomach as a move to uncover the food she has made of the children whom she had once nurtured within her nearby womb. While Titus's violent thrusts no doubt lack an anatomist's precision, his words nonetheless encourage spectators – both at the banquet and within the playhouse audience – to gaze at, if not into, Tamora's bleeding body to discern evidence of her unnatural internal workings.³⁸ In doing so, Titus dissects, however hastily, a cannibal of his own creation, inviting audience members to see how her body has destroyed the very children it had once sustained.

Performing this impromptu dissection, Titus enacts gestures meant to render the depths of Tamora's body subject to vision. His actions not only heighten the play's dramatic confusion of banqueting and murder, of human flesh and human food, and of mothers and cannibals, they also conflate the actions of murderers and dissectors, showing these myriad violations of the human body's integrity within one theatre's central playing area. None of these events, after all, takes place as part of a dumb show, and there is no indication that they would have been staged within the discovery space or above the stage. On the contrary, the horrifying events of Titus's banquet occur squarely in front of the audience's eyes. Though Titus needs to tell the audience members that the pie is made of Chiron and Demetrius's remains, they witness Tamora's consumption of their bodies for themselves, knowing before she does that the pastry is made of her sons' flesh and blood. Thus, unlike its predecessors, the bloody banquet in *Titus Andronicus* achieves its horrific effects without ever removing its focus from the world that forms the play's reality. Its feast, as a result, resonates with tangible physical terror rather than mythical or allegorical significance.

The bloody banquet in *Antonio's Revenge* presents its audiences with a scene consisting of similar dynamics, for, as in *Titus*, the feast that its revenger organizes takes center stage; in the case of the John Marston play, however, the gruesome scene occurs in a small indoor theatre rather than in a large open-air playhouse like the Theatre. The final scene of Marston's drama, performed by Paul's boys at the indoor Blackfriars around 1600, focuses on a bloody banquet, yet much of the violence originates far from center stage, erupting from within a masque that takes place on the periphery of the celebratory feast. Piero, the Duke of Venice who hosts the banquet and quickly becomes its victim, had secretly murdered Antonio's father Andrugio to gain political power and also had dishonored Mellida, his own daughter, eventually causing her death, rather than see her married to Antonio. The playtext's stage directions indicate that the scene's multi-layered actions made thorough use of all the playing space the small theatre could provide, placing characters above as well as behind the main stage. The scene, after all, requires space to be set aside for a banquet as well as for three masquers to perform their dance; in addition, stage directions demand that a curtain, most likely that draped in front of the Blackfriars's small discovery space, be opened and closed over the area where Piero's body lies without interrupting the scene. Though the play's actions suggest that the masquers – Antonio's allies – occupy the rear of the stage, the location of the banquet table itself remains uncertain. The ghost of Andrugio, the Duke of Genoa, oversees the brutal scene as well, watching from aloft – "*betwixt the music-houses*" (5.3.s.d.49)³⁹ – as his son Antonio orchestrates his revenge plot against Piero. The final scene of this *Hamlet*-like plot consists of a masque performed by Antonio's accomplice Pandulpho and his aids, staged near, if not behind, a banquet table, where Piero sits surrounded by



courtiers; Antonio, meanwhile, paces around the scene, while his father's ghost ranges above. No stage directions require that the revenging performers occupy the small discovery space, yet Piero's message to the courtiers that "The maskers pray you to forbear the room / Till they have banqueted" hints that they indeed stand apart from those who look upon them (57-58). Immediately upon the courtiers' exit, however, the masquers break through this imaginary boundary that isolates their dance from the world of the court, for, as soon as Piero sits down to eat, the performers abandon their dancing to seize Piero and bind him to the banquet chair.

Even though the gruesome food on the banquet remains untouched, the meal soon turns bloody as the conspirators pluck out Piero's tongue, which Antonio claims for his own. "I have't, Pandulpho," he tells his accomplice, "the veins panting bleed, / Trickling fresh gore about my fist" (65-66). Suddenly exploding out of the speechless realm of the dance, the conspirators descend upon the banquet table where their violence renders Piero physically unable to speak, leaving him as silent as a dumb show, as helpless as Titus's raped and mangled daughter Lavinia. A different part of the stage thus falls quiet, yet its sole occupant still struggles to express himself as Antonio moves on to inflict even more severe mental torture. As the conspirators continue their jibes, Antonio turns his attentions once again to the banquet, one that the audience members have been told consists of human flesh, and then informs Piero that the food set before him is in fact the flesh of his own son Julio. "Fall to, good duke," Antonio orders, satirically bemoaning that

O these are worthless cates.
You have no stomach to them. Look, look here:
Here lies a dish to feast thy father's gorge
Here's flesh and blood which I am sure thou lov'st. (77-80)

If Antonio's enigmatic message fails to help Piero identify the meat as Julio's corpse, Pandulpho's query "Was he thy flesh, thy son, thy dearest son?" renders the dish's terrible nature undeniable (81). Piero, voiceless though he may be, makes his grief known, for, as the stage directions twice tell us, he "*seems to condole his son.*" Such notations, however, not only fail to tell us how Piero registers his grief, they offer us no indication as to where he sits as the conspirators revel in their torturous assertions of Piero's biological links to the food set out before him. As Pandulpho watches the injured father mourn over the platter on the banquet table, he asks his enemy

Thy son? True; and which is my most joy,
I hope no bastard, but thy very blood,
Thy true-begotten, most legitimate
And loved issue. (91-95)

Systematically underscoring that the flesh before Piero is indeed that of the beloved Julio, Pandulpho forces the usurping ruler to envision the horror of ingesting his own flesh while also conjuring well-rehearsed Renaissance insecurities about cuckoldry. The tongueless Piero, still bound to his banquet chair, cannot distance himself from the terrible food placed before him, nor can he scream out in protest or in hope of rescue. Instead, his revengers force him to confront the nauseating possibility of eating his son's cooked body, as well as of bringing his own short-lived dynasty to an end through such consumption. When the conspirators finally "*offer to run all at Piero, and on a sudden stop*" (s.d. 150) to bring the usurper to his death, they also bring to an end the bloody reign of terror just as Antonio's closing words announce his intentions to take religious vows so that he might better mourn his dead beloved Mellida. While the gore of the play disappears behind the discovery space curtain, with none of the heir Julio's body

explicitly consumed, no governor is named to take Piero's dukedom. The realm that Piero struggled to secure thus founders with no ruler, Antonio's love for the dead Mellida ends in infertile mourning, and the violence of the play renders the younger generation unable to take over the thrones of their elders.

While the conspirators in *Antonio's Revenge* break the masque's frame to torment Piero and proclaim the nature of the meat set out before him, Giovanni in John Ford's Stuart era play *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1632) enters to interrupt the banquet, transforming the celebratory dinner into a cannibal feast by displaying his sister's heart and promising to consume it. His sister Annabella, however, has not only been Giovanni's lover, she has also been visibly pregnant with Giovanni's child early in her marriage to Soranzo. In Giovanni's envious view, then, Soranzo's birthday dinner furnishes the perfect opportunity to present physical evidence of his complete mastery over Annabella, whose child is about to be born; rather than force a rival to consume her flesh, however, Giovanni threatens to indulge in such cannibalism himself. Interrupting the banquet, Giovanni enters brandishing his sister's excised heart impaled upon his dagger, forcing Soranzo to look upon the bloody organ along with the rest of the revelers. In his derangement, Giovanni tells Soranzo's disgusted dinner guests, "You came to feast, my lords, with dainty fare: / I came to feast, too; but I digged for food / In a much richer mine" (5.5.23-25).⁴⁰ Giovanni's demonstration thus brings to light the hidden incestuous affair he shared with his sister while also signaling the intensity of his need to secure ultimate control of Annabella's body. Speaking of his sister's heart as his food, Giovanni also reveals his yearning not just to savor the taste and feel of her skin but to incorporate her body into his own, making it a part of his internal being where no other

can enjoy the physical pleasures of her flesh. Giovanni's jealousy, we soon learn, proves so pervasive that he covets the place his own unborn child had held in Annabella's body. Gesturing to the knife on which his sister's heart is still impaled, Giovanni proclaims "this dagger's point ploughed up / Her fruitful womb" before explaining to his appalled father and Soranzo that "nine months I lived / A happy monarch to her heart and her" (31-32, 44-45). Annabella's body, Giovanni then explains, could not keep their secret long, however, "For her too fruitful womb too soon bewrayed / The happy passage of our sto'n delights, / And made her mother to a child unborn" (48-50). Though concealed within her flesh, the baby within Annabella's swollen womb had come to visible prominence too early in marriage, conjuring suspicions of infidelity within Soranzo earlier in the play but offering no clues to the identity of her secret lover. Giovanni's "ploughing up" of her womb thus wreaks his revenge against the child whose body melded more completely with Annabella's than his could and whose conception and growth interfered with their idyllic affair. Killing the child that he had in fact fathered as he murders his sister, the deranged Giovanni eliminates a baby that he sees as having ousted him from the sovereignty over Annabella's body and soul that he had so enjoyed.

The act of eating Annabella's heart, on the other hand, would once again cement his control over his sister, at least in Giovanni's eyes. Such a consumption of the lover's heart, Doueihi points out, alters the patterns of the funerary meal, isolating the cannibalizing individual from those who consume food as a means of certifying their membership in a society of living people. In the early modern continental literature Doueihi examines, a vengeful husband typically forces an adulterous wife to unknowingly consume a part of her dead lover's body. Not only does treating the heart as



food isolate the eating wife from others in her society, it also, in Doueihi's words, underscores the revenger's "undeterred will to occupy, albeit in somewhat different circumstances, the same position as the dead lover, before and after his death" (9). But in orchestrating such a forced feeding, the vengeful husband only strengthens the relationship he wishes to obliterate, for as he watches the gruesome spectacle he cannot but recall the affair that his actions have tried to conceal and instead realizes that he has allowed his rival's decimated body to "materialize inside another body, the body of the woman" (31). Giovanni, on the other hand, yearns to cement rather than obliterate his idealized memories of his affair with Annabella by incorporating her heart into his own flesh. He thus acts as both killer and consumer, positing himself as both the wronged husband who serves up the heart and as the adulterous wife who must eat it. His murderous actions, then, illustrate his all-encompassing desire to rule Annabella's body while also threatening to obscure within his own flesh all that he has revealed – their secret affair, his jealousy toward his own child, the secrets of his sister's body – by consuming the heart to which all his revelations are attached. Transforming himself into the container of his sister's body, offering to incorporate her flesh with his own as he digests her heart, Giovanni reveals that the strength of his jealous desire has rendered him willing to commit such a horrifying, even feminizing, act of ritual cannibalism.

But even as shocking as Giovanni's brandishing of Annabella's heart might appear in the theatre, his presentation of the impaled organ at the banquet stems from long-established, though far less bloody, theatrical practice. Since the days of performances in Tudor dining halls, players had routinely begun their performances by interrupting banquets, clearing the floor and calling attention to their playing space so that their



scenes could begin.⁴¹ The increasing popularity of the court masque, with its emphasis on erasing the boundaries between the audience and the players, the dining hall, and the stage, further normalized the inclusion – and interruption – of feasting scenes in the plays staged in commercial theatres. There, the incorporation of staged banquets proved a convenient device, allowing for a seemingly natural gathering of characters in situations where dumb shows and plays-within-plays might occur. For Cockpit plays like *'Tis Pity* and *The Bloody Banquet*, the scenes of cannibalism vividly interject themselves into the main action, and those who watch the play unfold cannot so easily isolate themselves from such brutal acts. For characters within the drama who take no part in the feasting, their proximity to such cannibalism shatters the notion that such man-eating occurs only in distant lands, and then only in times of famine or savage war. Putting such scenes at center stage, such tragedies instead insist that, at least within the world of the play, cannibalism, however nightmarish it may be, is in fact a domestic issue.

As the telescoping effects of the indoor playhouse stage moved what had been embedded set-piece scenes nearer the audience, the bloody spectacle of the dismembered body increasingly challenged the viewers' ability to reassemble mentally the character to whom it had belonged. As discussed in Chapter Three, the habits of perspectivist viewing called upon in indoor theatres tempted audience members at the *Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *The Duke of Milan* to imagine life beneath the poisoned, painted flesh of the supposedly female corpses; these same habits of viewing, when focused upon the food served during scenes of staged cannibalism, encourage playhouse viewers to imagine the often lavishly-prepared repasts of human flesh in relation to the bodies from which they had emerged. Though dramas increasingly brought the body's interior to the

surface through staged violence, the links between the human form's internal and external features grew increasingly obscure even as the body's supposed insides become more visible, for cannibal banquets not only disconnect the parts of individual bodies, they invite the spectator to witness as these severed, ground, and cooked body parts suddenly become re-incorporated into another human's flesh. The dead body's interior, then, becomes visible – in a bloody, messy melange upon a platter – only to disappear once again into the inner reaches of another human form.

While the revengers in *Antonio's Revenge* and *'Tis Pity* present human bodies for consumption to address matters of both romance and power, the cannibal feast that the Tyrant stages in *The Bloody Banquet* most clearly interweaves personal and political motives. Performed in the Cockpit in 1639, T.D.'s *The Bloody Banquet* centers on the usurping Tyrant's efforts to solidify his political power after sending the Old King into exile. The body he prepares for his cannibal feast, moreover, is that of Tymethes, the Old King's son who had not only hoped to win back the throne for his father but had succeeded in winning the love of the Tyrant's wife as well. The final scene of *The Bloody Banquet* requires the presence of two banquets, one to be served to the Tyrant's guests – who are in fact the Old King and his train, disguised as pilgrims – and another, prepared from Tymethes's flesh, to be served to the Tyrant's wife. Though the playtext insists that the Queene eat her gory meal apart from the other diners, her table seems to have been set on the mainstage along with the pilgrims' – indeed, the Cockpit entranceway that served as a discovery space hardly would have accommodated such a sizable prop. The Queene's actions, along with her silence, nonetheless set her banquet

apart from the larger scene, transforming her meal into a gruesome spectacle not just for the Cockpit audience but for the Tyrant's other guests.

While the early dialogue in previous plays that use cannibal feasts often includes oblique references linking violence and feasting, the very title of *The Bloody Banquet* proclaims that such an intertwining will occur; what remains unclear throughout the action, however, is how this link will manifest itself within the drama. The opening lines of the final scene underscore this lingering uncertainty, for as the Old King enters he and his fellow disguised travelers comment on the "inhumaine spectacle" of a quartered body they see hanging upon the wall (1881).⁴² Noticing the train's interest, the Tyrant cannot resist discussing the corpse with his guests even as he serves them dinner. "Sit," he tells his guests, explaining that religious pilgrims are "right welcome unto our Cates" before immediately turning his attention to the mangled corpse, explaining "You waste the vertue of your serious eye / Too much on such a worthlesse object as this" (1907). His words thus draw a verbal link between human flesh and the feasting – a link that some audience members expecting a bloody banquet might easily see as embodied in the food set before the Tyrant's guests. Playhouse spectators, after all, know that the pilgrim is the Tyrant's political rival in disguise; the Tyrant's dwelling on the food may well inspire them to imagine it as an indication of his ability to discern the Old King's true identity.

The gory scene that closes Act 4, moreover, assures that the play's spectators not only see the Tyrant as possessing the power to see through elaborate ruses but that they know of his plans to prepare Tymethes's body for eating as well. There, the Tyrant stumbles upon his Queene standing over Tymethes's corpse and quickly realizes that her tale of rape is in fact a hastily-concocted attempt to obscure her affair with – and

subsequent murder of – the younger man. Despite Tymethes's vow that he would rather "eat and nere be nourished" than reveal the affair he and the Queene had enjoyed, and which he had sought to end (1485), the Queene murders him – shooting him rather sensationally with two pistols (s.d.1512) to ensure that the relationship remains secret. Yet the Tyrant refuses to believe her explanations, goading her until she confesses her hidden adultery; her admission, however, only brings her more torment, for her husband immediately tells her while staring at the corpse, "Thou shalt not dye as long as this is meate, / Thou kill'dst a Bucke which thou thy selfe shalt eate" (1649). Demanding that the young man's body be drawn and quartered, the Tyrant issues his explicit instructions for preparing the corpse only after his men bring Tymethes's severed limbs back onto the stage. Then, after telling his men to "Before her eyes lay the divided limbes / Of her desired Paramour" (1718-19), the wronged husband's calculating, officious demands give way to a frenzy of jealousy and bloodthirstiness directed at his now-silent wife:

Lady you see your cheere, fine flesh, course fare,
Sweete was your lust, what can be bitter there?
By heaven, no other food thy taste shall have,
Till in thy bowels those Corpses finde a grave. (1720-23)

The Tyrant's words leave no doubt that Tymethes's limbs will soon become the Queene's meal; the usurper's orders that the quarters of his body be hung thus even more concretely link the first banquet with the young man's corpse, for it is upon uncooked parts of his body that they gaze as they prepare to eat. For at least some of the spectators in the playhouse, then, the words describing the suspended corpse would hang heavily around the sight of the banquet fare set out before the travelers, leaving them to wonder whether the Queene alone will endure the debasement of eating human flesh. The Tyrant's plea that his guests ignore the corpse and eat thus takes on a menacing tone. "Let hang, here's

to you, we are the oldest here, / Round let it goe, feed, if you like your cheere," the Tyrant proclaims, thoroughly interweaving talk of the corpse with talk of the meat in front of them.

When the Tyrant's servants bring in two separate banqueting tables, then, the audience knows that at least one platter on stage will contain supposedly human flesh. No specific descriptions accompany the first banquet, and whether the Old King and his company eat any of the food set before them remains a mystery as well, for soon after the Tyrant serves them he orders that a second stomach-turning banquet begin. The stage directions for the Queene's meal not only demand that the meat on her platter still resembles a human form, they orchestrate her arrival and feasting as if they were setting up a dumb show, requiring

Softe Musicke. Enter the Tyrant with the Queene, her haire loose, she makes a Curtsie to the Table. Sertorio brings in the flesh with a skull all bloody, they all wonder. (s.d. 1919-22).

The Queene, looking far less than regal, thus becomes a silent spectacle in her own right, occupying a place separate from the larger banqueting table; she even curtsies toward her onstage audience as an experienced entertainer might have. Her husband, meanwhile, takes up the role of narrator, explaining to his astonished dinner guests the meaning of the scene unfolding before them. In noting their fascinated, if appalled, glances, however, the tyrant once again calls attention to the nondescript food upon their own table. "I perceive strangers more desire to see / An object than the fare before them set," the Tyrant observes, once again returning their attentions to their own banquet (1923-24). Though they in no way minimize the gruesomeness of the feast set before his wife, his attentions call into question the nature of the food spread upon the main table once again.

Their meal may look perfectly common; the Tyrant's words, however, conjure suspicions that he may have set the stage for yet another act of revenge against his disguised rivals.

The Tyrant's account of his wife's treachery further emphasizes his overwhelming need to torment those who dare to interfere with his authority, for, according to the narration he supplies for his guests, the Queene's punishment stems more from her efforts to prevent the Tyrant's jealous rage against Tymethes than from her infidelity. Though she initially betrayed him through her affair with his "professed foe," the Tyrant assures the banqueters that her gruesome meal serves as retribution for killing her lover before he could extract the revenge due to him as a wronged husband. "Unnaturally she first abus'd my heart," he declares, "And then prevented my revenge by Art" (1942-43). She, in short, left the Tyrant with only one option – to "excercis[e] / New vengeance" on Tymethes's carcass and upon her own body at once by forcing her to eat him. Like the wronged Govianus of the *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, the Tyrant uses a corpse to enact his revenge; the Tyrant's rage, however, drives him to undertake a far less subtle – and far more gruesome – plot in his search for justice. Govianus, after all, sought to recreate life in his dead Lady so that her tormenter might kiss her poison-painted face; the Tyrant, on the other hand, flaunts his power to destroy the life of his rival, forcing his Queen to confront – and consume – proof of her husband's power to annihilate utterly the man she had loved. However, as Doueihi's work with romance banquets makes clear, the Tyrant falls into the age-old trap of temporarily reviving his rival's body even as he forces his wife to eat her lover's dead flesh, for in his efforts to explain the significance of the scene he stages the Tyrant must recognize the dead man's success as a lover, naming him "as if he were still alive, [and] acting through his name and the power of his organs" (31). In



recalling what he so longs to hide, the Tyrant, like Doueihy's revenging husbands, lends his defeated rival a new life, allowing him to re-materialize inside the flesh of the woman who consumes him.

In the case of *The Bloody Banquet*, however, the Tyrant not only comes to realize the ironic union he has created and the still-powerful nature of his rival's decimated body, his invocation of Tymethes's name hastens his own downfall as well. While the disguised pilgrims had already initiated their own scheme to reclaim the kingdom, the Tyrant's revelation that the body on the platter had belonged to the Old King's son adds a new urgency to their plan. When the disguised Old King asks if the man being consumed had been a Lydian, the Tyrant announces in triumph, "He was no lesse, sonne to mine Enemie, / A banisht King; *Tymethes* was his name" (1954-55). Once named, Tymethes's bodily presence suddenly takes on a new dimension, conjuring new feelings of protectiveness within his father and renewing the pangs of jealousy within the Tyrant. The shame of his rival's renewed presence drives the Tyrant into such despair that he delves into an even more frenzied, murderous rage against his wife even when the Old King and his men unmask themselves. In fact, when the Tyrant realizes that his guests are his enemies, he turns his sword not upon them but upon the Queene. "Breake vow, bleed Whore," he yells, announcing "there is my jealousie flowne" only after she has collapsed upon the stage (1987). Like Titus, then, the Tyrant now yearns to prevent the consumed body of his enemy from passing into – and thus assimilating with – the hidden inner regions of the woman he strives to punish. Realizing the failure of his dramatically staged poetic justice, the Tyrant resorts to more direct violence, ending his wife's life and

preventing her body from lending new vitality to his enemy. Only after completing his murder of the Queene can the Tyrant face his living rivals, declaring

tis more revenge to me
Then all your aymes, I have kill'd my jealousy.
I have nothing now to care for more than hell
'T had beene if you had stricke me ere she fell. (1988-91)

The Tyrant's insistence upon the Queene's death thus marks a shift in the play's focus, for her body and its consumption of Tymethes's flesh had formed the visual center of the scene since her entrance. Sitting apart from her husband's other guests, her hair disheveled and eating from a platter strewn with bloody, supposedly human bones, the Queene had constituted the focus of the action even though she uttered no words. She not only proved the subject of the Tyrant's narration, she served as the object of the guests' gaze as well, for their astonishment leaves them staring at her as she eats. Even for the King, whose son's corpse lies upon the plate, the Queene's forced cannibalistic feasting stirs horror and sympathy that transcends that conjured by the dismembered body; his final words before throwing off his disguise, after all, show pity for her as well as rage for his son's death. "Alas poore Lady," he utters, "it makes me weepe to see what foode she eats" (1973-74). Her active consumption of the flesh, not just the presence of the corpse itself, thus serves as the origin of the scene's horror. Once her eating ceases and her own body lies dead on the stage, the focus of the action shifts to the Tyrant, who comes to embody the play's evil as well as narrate it. His ability to control the physical actions of others halted, he finds himself powerless to evade the vengeful forces that surround him. Instead, he falls victim to his guests' many gunshots. Their decisive justice, delivered from a distance and without the contact that sword strokes require,

thereby allows the Old King to regain the central authority that the Tyrant had seized from him.

As the on- and offstage audiences at *The Bloody Banquet* watch Tymethes's flesh disappear within the Queene, her body becomes an object that both recreates and destroys the flesh of others within its mysterious inner regions. Her body, in effect, becomes a vanishing point in its own right, drawing the spectators' attention and lulling them into a mesmerized horror as she consumes the flesh of her lover. Once her jealous husband breaks open her body with his sword, however, the scene's unity dissolves into a melee of gunshots. The Tyrant's attempts to expose the active blending of living and dead within her fail to offer spectators any discernible illustration of such seemingly magical incorporation; instead, his anger only guarantees the cessation of those living processes and underscores the impossibility of interpreting, with any certainty, the motions that animate – and perpetuate – not just the nurturing female womb but the bodies of all humans. The unconsumed cooked bodily remains that constitute the fare at such dramatic cannibal feasts emphasize the futility of such efforts as well, for the dismembered corpses lying upon platters frustrate the audience's habitual urge to reassemble mentally the bodies upon which they gaze. This impossibility, moreover, is well-founded, even common-sensical, for the parts they see on the theatre stage never were part of living humans. Whether they be parts of once-living animals, wax figures molded to look like human limbs, or otherwise artistically formed stage properties, the body parts laid upon the playhouse table never cooperated as parts of a human organism. Yet the stories that tragic plots construct around these properties insist that such an envisioning be possible, just as the narratives constructed around the lifeless corpse in the

anatomy theatre depend upon the viewers to envision the body performing the functions it routinely had in life. Representations of the human body under dissection, however, successfully attributed a unity to the corpse that the commercial playhouse relished in destroying. In its dramatic efforts to underscore the ultimate disintegration of the body politic – and to create disgusted delight among those who watched from the audience – such dramatic plots presented bodies as utterly destroyed only then to insist that they be ingested by surviving characters, but never successfully reincorporated, to signify the utter dissolution of the social world of the play. Thus, while the anatomists disassembled cadavers to show the functions that enabled them to live, the city's acting companies tore apart the body to illustrate the impossibility of reassembling its parts.

Notes: Chapter Five

¹ All references are to John Florio's 1603 translation of Montaigne's essays. See "Of the Cannibals," *Selected Essays of Montaigne in the Translation of John Florio*, ed. Walter Kaiser (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954).

² For a reading that admirably evaluates and questions such assessments of Montaigne's "anthropological" tone, see Carla Freccero, "Cannibalism, Homophobia, Women: Montaigne's 'Des cannibales' and 'De l'amité,'" *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margo Hendrick and Patricia Parker (New York: Routledge, 1994).

³ Stephen Orgel, "Shakespeare and the Cannibals," *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*, Selected Papers from the English Institute, ed. Marjorie Garber (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987) 40-66.

⁴ Burnett quotes from Samuel Hieron, *A help unto devotion* (London, 1608) 209-10. Burnett's article "'Fill Gut and Pinch Belly': Writing Famine in the English Renaissance" appears in *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 21 (1995): 21-44.

⁵ Henry Slingsby, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, ed. Daniel Parsons (London: Longman, 1836).

⁶ All citations to Shakespearean plays will refer to *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997), unless otherwise noted.

⁷ See Michael Palencia-Roth, "Cannibalism and the New Man of Latin America in the 15th- and 16th-Century European Imagination," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 12 (1985) 17.

⁸ As Gail Kern Paster points out, most early modern European women breastfed their own babies; only the elite had the option of hiring wetnurses. See *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1993) 198-200.

⁹ E.S.B of D., *Anthropophagus: The Man-Eater or a caution for the credulous, being a Morall Discourse upon Prov. 26.25 and very necessary for these times* (London 1624).

¹⁰ See the text as reproduced in *The Plague Pamphlets of Thomas Dekker*, ed. F. P. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925).

¹¹ See his book *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), especially the first two chapters.

¹² Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge: MIT, 1968. Reprinted Indiana UP, 1984).

¹³ Helkiah Crooke, *Microcosmographia: a description of the body of man* (London, 1615).

¹⁴ As a physician writing for surgeons, Crooke maintains that a knowledgeable surgeon would know how to present anatomical information more effectively for such an audience, for a member of their own ranks would "haue set out this Banquet with greater variety and to haue Cooked it fitter for you as being better acquainted with your diet and appetites" (Preface to the Chirurgeons).

¹⁵ See Jessie Dobson and R. Milnes Walker, *Barbers and Barber-Surgeons of London*. (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979), 44-45.

¹⁶ Sidney Young in *The Annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (London, 1890) 327.

¹⁷ Milad Doueihi, *A Perverse History of the Human Heart* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997).

¹⁸ Court records of October 1631, quoted in Dobson 44.

¹⁹ The Barber-Surgeons, of course, may have been holding such dissections in the kitchen for an even longer period of time, though they were not officially granted the bodies on which to practice such anatomies until 1540.

²⁰ See *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 24

²¹ "Patchwork: Piecing the Early Modern Mind In England's First Century of Print Culture," *English Literary Renaissance* 23 (1993), 14-20.

²² Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990) 78-88. Interestingly, Crooke questions this theory, arguing that such inversion could not be possible because the number of male and female organs differed. The remainder of his work, however, does not differ significantly from that of those who hold such views, and his tone suggests that he stands alone in questioning this received knowledge.

²³ *The Workes of that famous Chirurgion Ambrose Parey, translated out of Latine and compared with the French by Tho. Johnson* (London: 1634).

²⁴ As Gail Kern Paster points out, anatomists commonly argued that women should follow most of these urges or risk causing a deformity to their children. At the

same time, however, the medical opinions of anatomists, midwives, and laypeople alike cautioned women from coming into contact with unpleasant or frightening sights, which could also cause damage to their unborn children. See Paster, 38, 180 and 168-71.

²⁵ Nicholas Ling, *Politeuphuia Wits Commonwealth* (London 1597).

²⁶ *Taylor's Urania*, in *All the Works of John Taylor, the Water-poet* (London 1630).

²⁷ T.D., *Canaans Calamitie Jerusalems Misery, or The dolefull destruction of fair Jerusalem by Titus, the Sonne of Vaspasian, Emperour of Rome, in the yeare of Christs Incarnation 74* (London 1618).

²⁸ Philip Vincent, *The lamentations of Germany. Wherein as in a Glasse, we may behold her miserable condition, and reade the woefull effects of sinne. Composed by Dr. Vincent. Theol and eyewitnesse thereof and illustrated by Pictures the more to affect the Readers* (London 1638). The numbering of the pages has a quire named "a" followed by another labeled "A."

²⁹ Whether they do so before or after they eat their purchase remains unclear.

³⁰ The jealous husbands in Doueihi's texts are those of early modern continental prose and poems; the situations and motivations they portray, however, bear a striking resemblance to the narratives performed on the Tudor and Stuart stage. Doueihi offers an extended reading of the thirteenth-century French language tale *Lai d'Ignaure* to illustrate the dynamics inherent in the forced cannibalism of the human heart in particular. Calling upon psychoanalytic theory, Doueihi attributes the husband's ultimate failure to achieve satisfactory revenge to the "phantasm of incorporation," which, as we shall see, promises obliteration of the rival but produces instead a strengthened bond between the wife and her dead lover. See Doueihi 25-45.

³¹ As shown in Chapter 2, for example, Vesalius's drastically reduced musclemen still struggle to support their own weight even reduced to near-skeletons (Figure 10), just as the painted bodies in *The Duke of Milan* and *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* still shine with lively beauty once a little poisoned paint is applied.

³² All references to *Thyestes* are to Heywood's 1560 translation as edited by Joost Daalder (London: Ernest Benn, 1982).

³³ Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky, "The Cannibal Banquet: Violence, Enactment, Tragedy in the English Renaissance," Diss. Harvard 1993; 54 no.6:2158A-59A.

³⁴ While the *Cambridge Companion* suggests that the play may have been performed by the Lord Admiral's Men at the Rose as early as 1589, plans for a revival of the drama somewhere between 1598 and 1602 offer a far more detailed description of the

dumb show's staging than the print version that circulated in London as early as 1594. W.W. Greg's edition of these plats appears, without the playtext, in *Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements: The Battle of Alcazar & Orlando Furioso* (London: Malone Society, 1922). The 1589 published playtext notes only that the dumb show's Presenter enters, followed by unnamed characters who approach a "bloody banquet." The text alone can be found in *The Works of George Peele*, ed. A. H. Bullen, vol. 1 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1888) 221-296.

³⁵ The play was originally printed in 1599. Citations refer to the playtext as it appears in *A Warning for Fair Women: A Critical Edition*, ed. Charles Dale Cannon (The Hague: Mouton, 1975).

³⁶ Such stage directions have led to a critical debate as to whether the printer of *A Warning* worked from an author's copy of the play or from a promptbook. While the dumb show's stage directions, including those describing the Furies' actions, appear to prepare actors for their cues as a promptbook would, the elaborate descriptions and complex sentences of the dumb show's choreography suggest that the printed version calls upon a fully annotated playwright's text. Cannon offers a lengthy discussion of the printed version's origins, ultimately deciding that the printed version relied more on a playwright's copy, though he admits that the printer might have consulted the promptbook; he offers no explicit explanation, however, for the stage directions that introduce the bloody banquet. See pages 16-23.

³⁷ While many editors assume that the heads are brought on stage, there is no indication in the text that this must happen. Titus declares he will cook their heads (5.2.199), but the First Folio text fails to mention that they indeed make an appearance in the following scene. Titus's spoken revelation that the pies are made of flesh is followed by talk of a son's staring eyes – Lucius asks, "Can the son's eye behold his father bleed?" (5.2.64) – but he reacts to his own father Titus's cruelty rather than any inflicted upon the sons, and the text offers no other indications that might suggest severed heads need be present.

³⁸ These internal workings, of course, are not present in any sense, since the actor is not truly cut open and since the boy who would have embodied Tamora would not contain any of the female organs Titus yearns to expose.

³⁹ Citations to *Antonio's Revenge* refer to the text as edited for the Regents Renaissance Drama Series by G.K. Hunter (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1965).

⁴⁰ All citations refer to *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* as edited by Marion Lomax for the Oxford Drama Library in John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995).

⁴¹ For an account of these early banquet performances, see Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300 to 1660*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

⁴² All citations to *The Bloody Banquet* refer to the play as edited by Samuel Schoenbaum for the Malone Society (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1961).

EPILOGUE:
Dramatic Anatomy in a New World

While early modern tales presented Europeans who ate human flesh as monstrous, unnatural brutes whose actions damaged the body politic as well as their own families, increasingly popular accounts of New World cannibalism proved far more willing to consider flesh-eating as a vital – even dramatic – part of civic culture for the American tribes who ceremoniously ate their prisoners of war. The accounts that circulated in Europe of their highly-scripted killing and consumption of human flesh, however, still remain firmly conscious of cannibalism's effects on the family line, for, as Montaigne tells us, the American tribes remained keenly aware that they consumed the flesh of their ancestors when they ate members of enemy groups who traditionally made feasts of their own captives. Nonetheless, the stories of New World cannibalism available in early Stuart London emphasized cannibalism as a group activity, one that resonated with more far-reaching cultural significance than the aberrant human-hunting parties reported in *The lamentations of Germany*. Most notably, these New World accounts portrayed men and women as equal participants in the preparation and eating of human flesh.¹ In fact, Donald Lupton's brief discussion of New World inhabitants in his massive work *Emblems of rarities, or choyce observations out of many worthy histories* (1636) simultaneously speaks of cannibalism and reproduction, associating both with the Caribs' war practices. When a group's battles with its enemies are finished, Lupton reports,

If they get or finde any children within the age of 14 yeares, they feede them, and cram them as we doe Capons, one those which are beyond 14 yeares of age, they kill them out of hand, devouring their hot guts immediately and the other parts of the bodies they salt, and lay up as we doe poudred flesh: they eat no women, but

keepe them onely for bearing of children, as we doe Hennes for
egges.²

Referring to those who eat simply as Caribs, making no mention of their gender, Lupton attributes cannibal characteristics equally to the men and women of the Americas. Their treatment of their prisoners, however, retains shades of European gender differentiation even as it unflinchingly reduces all the Caribs' captives to livestock. While captive men are immediately – and literally – incorporated into the group's social body, the women undergo a slower and less complete assimilation, for the Caribs continue to ostracize them even as they force them to bear children that are then raised as a part of their enemy's tribe. Rather than simply consume the women, the Caribs instead exploit their bodies' reproductive faculties, forcing them to create offspring that become a part of a foreign society and thereby relentlessly underscoring their positions as outsiders.

Descriptions and images of the New World cannibals' treatment of the corpses they eventually eat, moreover, stress that the act of preparing a human being for consumption – and of distributing the food after the body's roasting – involved a ceremony just as ordered and methodical, if perhaps more overtly festive, than those performed around the Barber-Surgeons' supposedly civilized dissections. In fact, as Europeans interpreted these ceremonies for Old World audiences, the cannibals' civic feasts came to look increasingly like theatrical performances, undertaken in arenas that resembled English cities and even London playhouses. In addition, the festivities – recounted in both words and pictures – placed relentless focus on the prisoner who was about to be executed and eaten, following his story with a murder pamphlet's interest as his enemies transformed his body from that of a living rival into a dismembered corpse, roasting over a fire so that it might be immediately devoured.

The sailor Hans Staden's *Wahrhaftige historia* (1557), an internationally popular account of his captivity among the Tupinamba of South America, offers a step-by-step description of the almost-theatrical rituals surrounding the natives' execution and cooking of their enemies, even including a detailed report of the village – and dramatic venue – where the killing and eating took place. Originally printed in Germany, Staden's story rapidly gained a following throughout Europe – in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, more than twenty-five editions were published in Holland alone, and the work was translated into at least eight European languages.³ While no English edition survives, Germany's de Bry family – publishers of the most lavishly illustrated editions of Staden's book – maintained close ties with the English and their markets, championing English protestants and their efforts at colonization in the New World, particularly lauding Raleigh's efforts in Virginia while attacking the violence of Catholic Spanish conquistadors.⁴ The earliest printings of Staden's account commonly contain six to eight graphic woodcuts illustrating the killing, cooking, and carving of the captive's body; their simplicity convinces William Sturtevant that Staden himself made the woodcuts or at least closely oversaw their creation.⁵ Four of the images dwell on the preparation of the flesh for cooking, offering a stark visual counterpart to the text's painstaking description of the process. The editions subsequently published by the de Bry family between 1590 and 1634, meanwhile, contain six such images, produced by expensive copper plates and offering more detailed views of the feast's steps.

The text's detailed verbal description of the captive's transition from living being to consumed flesh resonates with brutality, focusing attention on the tools used in the execution and presenting the Tupinamba surrounding the club used to kill the victim for

the reader's inspection (Figure 35), much as Henry Goodcole included a woodcut of the weapon used to kill victims in the pamphlet *The Crying Murther* discussed in Chapter Two (Figure 18). Staden's account of the cannibal feast begins with a description of the ceremonial preparations for the ritual about to be staged, recounting in great detail the painting of both the living captive and the club to be employed in his murder. The killing itself, however, involves strikingly little ritual, at least according to Staden's report. Instead, Staden describes the actual dispatching of the captive in three succinct sentences – in which the executioner tells the prisoner that he will be eaten and to which the captive responds with promises that the same fate awaits those who kill him – before launching into a sustained description of the systematic dismembering and cooking of the captive's flesh. Though the events that Staden describes systematically reduce the captive's body to a form that appears progressively less recognizable as human, the victim's supposedly savage body becomes paradoxically less alien to the ceremony's European observer. Immediately after the executioner delivers a single lethal blow, striking the captive "on the head from behind, so that his brains are dashed out," the prisoner completely transforms from a still active, if contained, enemy threat to a lifeless, though incredibly significant, delicacy – at least in the eyes of the Tupinamba who cook him.⁶ Seconds after the captive dies, Staden reports, "he is seized by the women, who drag him to the fire, scrape all his skin off, making him quite white, and stop up his posterior with a piece of wood, so that nothing of him may be lost" (158). Thus flayed, the executed prisoner suddenly looks more familiar to Staden, resembling white Europeans even more closely under the skin. Although blood no doubt would appear on the body, Staden overlooks it, reporting instead that the victim's flesh looks surprisingly pale. The resemblance

between his own body and the victim's, in other words, becomes more obvious to Staden after the execution; the South American's lifeless, well-formed corpse thus proves more familiar as its flesh undergoes a ritual that, for Staden, epitomizes the horrible, alien nature of New World culture.

The illustrations that accompany the various editions of Staden's text place a similar emphasis on the brutality of the women's actions throughout the cannibal feast, making them an overwhelming presence in depictions of the scene. Although some early modern editions of Staden's narrative – like some anatomy texts – omit illustrations altogether or rearrange their order, both the series of woodcuts appearing in the earliest printings and the copper plates of the de Bry editions generally offer a systematic, step-by-step account of the captive's progression from living prisoner to dismembered, consumed body. Though the woodcuts offer far less detail and often pay little attention to the preparations of the figures they portray, both series reveal their artists' awareness of the principles of perspective, showing figures in the background as smaller than those in the foreground. The illustrations to Staden's text, moreover, clearly manifest the European habit of representing New World inhabitants through established European artistic forms. As Stephen Orgel points out, as images of Americans made their way east, the figures they depicted came to resemble the classical figures typical of European art.⁷ Both the early woodcuts and de Bry copperplates portray the Tupinamba in this manner, giving them classical form to emphasize the essential sameness between their physique and that of Europeans. The resemblance proves so striking to Bernadette Bucher that she concludes in her study of the de Bry copperplates, "If it were not for a few items of dress

and ornamentation, and other exotic details, one would think the figures came from [a European] artist's anatomy plates" (32).⁸

While the artistic rendering of the live bodies in the illustrations strikes Bucher as "anatomical," the images' attentions to the brutalized body of the prisoner clearly invite comparisons to medical dissection as well. The two seemingly divergent brands of images, after all, both concentrate on portraying an idealized human body's gradual reduction from a unified whole to an alien-looking collection of parts. Both the title page of Vesalius's *Fabrica* (Figure 5) and the woodcuts and copper plates used to illustrate Staden's story surround the violated corpse with images of raucous people, all busy with activities that may or may not seem directly related to the cuts being made to the body. Despite such raging chaos, however, the bodies of both the cannibals' prisoner and Vesalius's specimen still occupy the center of the illustrations and serve as the immediate locus of attention. The woman's body in the *Fabrica* title page, for example, still serves as the focus for those who observe the woodcut even as some of the onlookers in the anatomy theatre appear to ignore her. In fact, the dark cavity in her abdomen has proven so powerful in fulfilling its role as the illustration's central focus that twentieth-century commentators ranging from Howard Marchitello to Michael Neill, as we have seen, have based their readings of the image on the womb – and the life force it presumably contains – that they see within the woman's body. In direct contrast to such depictions of the anatomy theatre, however, the illustrations accompanying Staden's text deny any sense of unity among the cadaver's parts. The complete separation of the body's parts in images of the Tupinamba ceremony instead offers a vivid illustration of the executed body's emptiness when left in the hands of these New World man-eaters. Detailing the

prisoner's passage from living being to barbecued flesh, the stories told by both the woodcuts and copper plates conclude explicitly by depicting the utter lack of connection between the body's parts, underscoring the permanent erasure of the prisoner's will with their relentless scattering of arms, legs, and head.

The illustrations concentrating on the post-execution preparations for the feast, for example, show the once-whole prisoner wrenched apart and scattered throughout the frame. The early woodcut illustrations of the body's preparations show a devastated human corpse, yet even its gruesome image allows a greater connection among the body's parts than the later de Bry plates. While the early woodcut shows a recognizable, and still-connected, head and torso roasting over flames (Figure 36), the copper plate shows only random body parts strewn on a roasting rack (Figure 37). In both cases, the corpse still occupies the center of the woodcuts' frame, and the cooking body proves very much the focal point of the ceremony for those who view the image as well as for those who attend the feast, for the Tupinamba encircle the enemy's remains, watching it cook as they indulge in their festivities. The corpses in these images, unlike the similarly devastated cadavers of Vesalius's musclemen (Figure 10), retain absolutely no signs of lingering locomotion. While the prisoner remains central to the image, his body proves the epitome of disunity, especially in later de Bry illustrations where its entrails are shown spread atop a plate and its head floating in a shallow pot. Such images of well-orchestrated American cannibalism, as a result, reflect the ultimate chaos at the center of Tupinamba civic life, for they posit bodily mutilation and human consumption as both the society's and the illustration's organizing principle.

The depictions of the Tupinamba village appearing in Staden's text, however, clearly link the chaotic events of the cannibal ceremony to the theatrical presentation of the body in Stuart England, for both the woodcuts and de Bry illustrations reveal that the ritual killing of prisoners takes place in a physical setting strikingly akin to the London locations – particularly the anatomical theatres and playhouses – where bodies were presented in dismembered form before an observing public. As a result, the changes in the illustrators' interpretation of Staden's text – and the variations in the images that result – reveal the European's increasing willingness to view the South Americans' civic cannibalism as resembling the rituals of their own supposedly more civilized cities. The execution of the prisoner and the roasting of his flesh, Staden writes, occur in the middle of the Tupinamba village, in a clearing surrounded by the tribe's huts. "They leave between their abodes a space wherein they kill their prisoners," Staden reports, offering no indication of the space's exact size but noting that it is rarely surrounded by more than seven huts (125). The angular inner compound created by this alignment is then rounded off by the town's fortifications, which Staden describes as follows:

... they plant a palisade, made out of split palm trees; this stockade may be about a fathom and a half high, and is so thick that no arrow can penetrate it ... And outside of the stockade they make yet another of great high rails; but they plant them not so close together, only so that a man cannot creep through. And some of them are wont to place the heads of those whom they have eaten on the rail, before the entrance to the huts. (126)

The walls encircling the angled huts that Staden describes offer his readers only the vaguest sense of the Tupinamba village, yet the details he does include echo descriptions of London as viewed from the suburbs. Both towns, after all, barricaded themselves from the surrounding land, raising tall fortifications on which the heads of executed prisoners

were displayed. Artists' depictions of the common area formed within these walls, moreover, increasingly resembled both London's outdoor public and indoor private playhouses and the city's anatomy theatres. The woodcut illustration of the Tupinamba village that appeared with the earlier versions of Staden's text, for example, shows four huts coming together at right angles, forming a perfect square within the circular fortress (Figure 38); when these woodcuts turn their attention to depicting the execution and dismembering of prisoners, however, they depict the business of the ceremonies taking place against a scenic landscape, as if such activities occurred outside of the village. The de Bry copper plates, on the other hand, firmly situate these rituals within the fortifications, showing and even carefully detailing the huts that formed the backdrop of all steps of the ceremony. In fact, the illustration that appears along with Staden's description of the village insists that the viewer see the Tupinamba's civic life as centering around the killing and eating of its prisoners, for the image places a scene from the execution ritual precisely at the middle of the common area formed by the huts (Figure 39).

De Bry's illustrator, moreover, modifies the shape of this central ritual space, adding a fifth hut to create a forum that remarkably resembles the playing areas of the early modern commercial stage. As Bucher notes, the village's arrangement "re-creates the view of the stage one might have had in London's Globe Theatre, either from the top of the galleries or from the wings" (28). The outdoor setting of the Tupinamba stage certainly strengthens such associations, but it is also important to note that the performance area also shares many characteristics with London's indoor playhouses as well. The addition of the fifth hut, for instance, not only opens up the village's middle to

create a playing area, it uses the lines created by the two angled huts at the side to strengthen the suggestion of a vanishing point on the horizon. Such lines of viewing guide the viewer's interpretation of the village's playing space and the rituals associated with it, inviting those who look upon the drawing to employ the same perspective modes of viewing that both indoor playhouses and anatomy theatres sought to encourage among their audiences. As the slanted lines formed by these angled huts move toward the horizon, they are interrupted by another hut that serves as a backdrop for the execution of the prisoner. Unlike the woodcut illustrations, the de Bry copper plates show three doorways visible on one side of the hut situated behind the action. While the artists of both the woodcut and the copper plates could call on Staden's words to support the accuracy of their images – Staden, after all, states merely that the huts "have commonly three entrances, one on each side, and one in the middle" (125) – the later artist's decision to stray from the earlier depictions and place all the entrances on a single side of the hut remains curious, especially when Staden himself may have overseen the early woodcuts' production. The placement of the doors in the copper plate, even more interestingly, results in an image that depicts the village common as a playing space startlingly reminiscent of early modern indoor theatres, where three doorways along the stage's back wall allowed players their entrances and exits (Figure 19). Whether or not the illustrator purposely wanted to suggest such similarities between the Tupinamba ritual ground and the early modern playhouse, those who attended such performances in early modern London would likely make such a connection when viewing the illustration, thus envisioning the Tupinamba's actions and villages according to modes of viewing familiar to them from their attendance of theatrical performance.

As we have seen, these habits of viewing were themselves a blend of representational codes culled from the newly-favored perspectivist modes of painting common in the Stuart court and the lingering willingness among audience members to imagine scenes on bare stages in accordance with verbal cues. In the commercial theatre, as we have also seen, performers often invited spectators to call upon these habits of viewing to associate their playing spaces with the anatomical theatre and thereby to heighten the dramatic effect of their presentation of corpses and body parts. But the playhouse presentations of violence done to the body – like the de Bry presentation of the cannibal feasts – violate the much-valued sense of order that anatomists sought to maintain in their dissecting theatres, even as their cuts transformed their cadavers into collections of parts that increasingly challenged the spectators' desire to find unity among the remains strewn before them. Because the anatomical theatre's systematic disassembly of the body sought to uncover complicated, systematic internal workings encased within the flesh, the corpse had to retain qualities of lively wholeness in the minds of those who performed – and watched – such dissections. What the anatomists sought to glean from their post-mortem study of the body's structure, after all, was greater understanding of the active relationship of its parts when alive. For the medical practitioners in the anatomy theatre, as a result, the usefulness of dissection depended on their willingness to constantly imagine the body as a functioning whole.

But for those who watched anatomical dissections out of curiosity rather than in search of knowledge – and for those who observed as the body underwent comparable destruction in the commercial playhouse or in images of the Tupinamba's civic feasts – such a sense of order proved untenable, if not undesirable. The illustrations of the New

World cannibal feast, and the early Stuart stage's representations of bloody banquets, instead challenged their audiences to recognize the danger of complete annihilation that human bodies faced as they confronted an expanding and increasingly violent world. While those who watched such bloody presentations no doubt enjoyed the sheer unabashed violence of the spectacle, dramatists also used such scenes to shape their spectators' views of the societies in which such bloodshed took place, whether in the New World or Old, thus inviting audiences to envision their political and social orders as founded on barely-suppressed chaos. Though the people who undertake such destructive action on the early modern stage bear little direct association with the New World tribes, the increasing appearance of cannibal feasts upon the early modern stage, and the intense focus placed on the human corpse and its parts, suggests that playwrights and acting companies of the early Stuart era envisioned the violence of the Tupinamba – who acted according to a supposedly primitive impulse that Europeans had allegedly outgrown – as still permeating the city that surrounded them. Their theatrical performances, as a result, called upon viewing habits nurtured by public dissections only to achieve an effect directly opposed to the organizing, systematizing goals of early modern anatomy, for in the playhouse dramas took apart individual bodies and – and by extension, the social corpus at large – to reveal that, underneath a veneer of unity and organization, an inevitable and unconquerable chaos always threatened to drive apart the limbs of the body politic. Such staged violence, as a result, actively questioned the illusion of order that allowed medical dissection to continue, making clear that not just cannibals, but civic bodies – and the anatomists and acting companies working within them – relied upon

human flesh for survival in the ever-growing urban world that threatened to overwhelm them all.

Notes: Epilogue

¹ John Smith, for example, reports some incidences of cannibalism among the starving at Jamestown, where men dug up the corpse of a native for food; another transplanted Englishman was executed for eating his wife. While Smith seems unoffended by his men's cannibalizing of a "Salvage," his nervous joking about eating wives reveals his uneasiness with the notion of consuming fellow Europeans. "[N]ow whether shee was better roasted, boyled or carbonado'd," he comments, "I know not, but of such a dish as powdered wife I never heard of." See Smith's *The Generall Historie of Virginia, new England, and the Summer Isles ...* (London, 1624) as it appears in *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631) in Three Volumes*, edited by Philip L. Barbour for Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Virginia (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1986) 233. In another account, Smith retells the story of a boatload of men lost at sea, where the one survivor consumed one of his fellows (after he had died a natural death). While Smith condemns the settlers for their improper, even low-class behavior, he clearly admires the sailor's bravery and sees him as glorified, rather than disgraced, by his resourcefulness. See p. 361.

² Donald Lupton, *Emblems of rarities, or choyce observations out of many worthy histories* (London, 1636) 394-95.

³ Karl Fouquet, "Nachwort," Hans Staden, *Zwei Reisen nach Brasilien, 1548-1555* (Marburg an der Lahn: Trautvetter und Fischer, 1963), pp. 157-70 as quoted in Michael Palencia-Roth, "Cannibalism and the new Man of Latin America in the 15th- and 16th-Century European Imagination," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 12 (1985) 14. All in all, Palencia-Roth notes, eighty edition of Staden's account have been published, though he offers no indications as to whether this figure includes modern editions.

⁴ The de Bry family published a lavish series of books, commonly called *Grand Discoveries* or *Grand Voyages* devoted to explorations of the New World, both the east and west of England. Notably, the first installment, Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, was written in English, designed to publicize English efforts at colonization in North America.

⁵ William C. Sturtevant, "First Visual Images of Native America," *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiapelli (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 417-454.

⁶ All citations of Staden's text refer to *The Captivity of Hans Stade of Hesse*, translated by Albert Tootal and annotated by Richard F. Burton for publication as volume 51 of the Hakluyt Society's collection of geographical treatises (London, 1874). This translation offers the most complete English version of the text; it, however, contains no images. The images cited above are reproduced from Malcolm Lett's translation, *Hans Staden: The True Story of his Captivity, 1557* (London: Routledge, 1928).

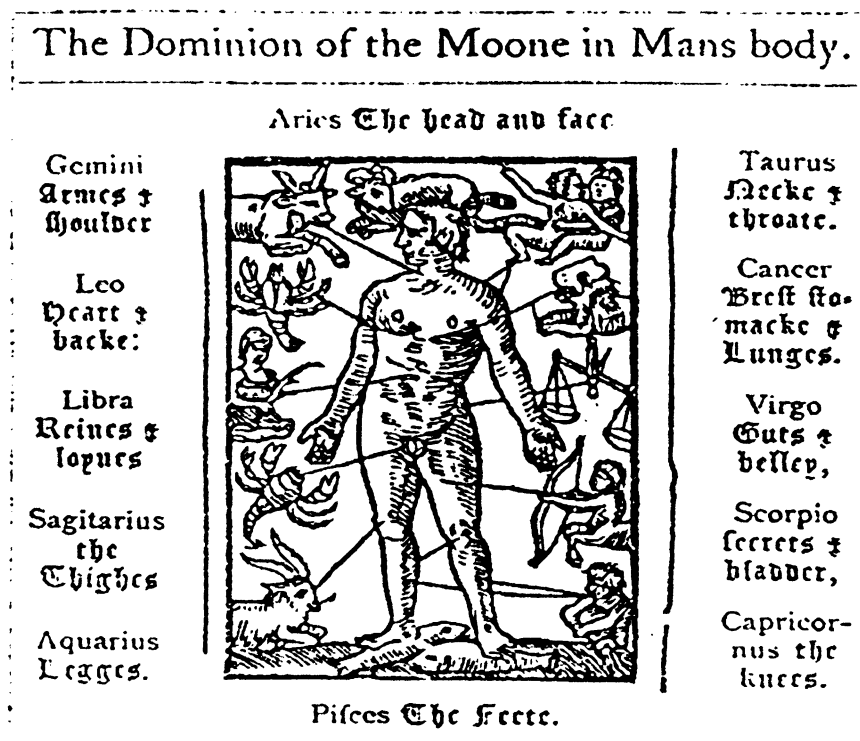
⁷ The illustrations that de Bry includes in his edition of Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, for example, depict Americans through the same conventions used to represent characters from Greek and Roman myth, while the Thomas Harriot watercolor – executed during his own stay in Virginia – does not. Stephen Orgel, "Shakespeare and the Cannibals," in *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*, ed. Marjorie Garber (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987).

⁸ See Bernadette Bucher, *Icon and Conquest: A Structural Analysis of the Illustrations of de Bry's Great Voyages*, trans. Basia Miller Gulati (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1981).

APPENDIX:
FIGURES



THE Rauens Almanacke.



T the beginning of euerie Alman-
 acke, it is the fashion to haue the
 body of a man drawne as you see,
 and not onely baited, but bitten
 and shot at by wilde beasts and
 monsters. And this fellow, they that lye all the

Figure 1: Dekker's Moon's Man, from the opening page of *The Rauens Almanacke*.

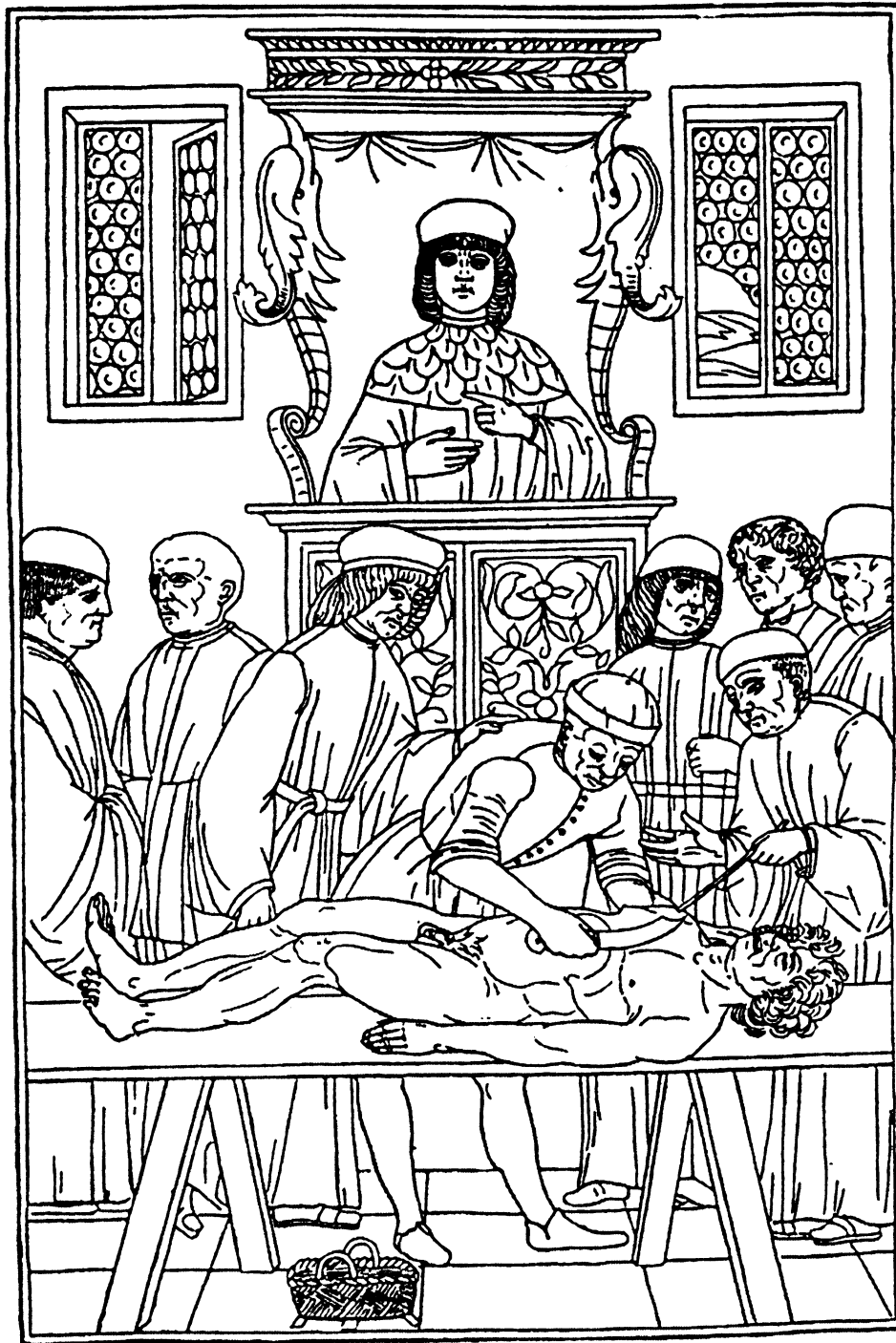


Figure 2: The physician, staring out from his elevated podium as in Johannes de Ketham's *Fasciculus de Medicina* (1493).



Figure 3: A physician staring at the words of his text as in the 1538 edition of Jacobus Berengarius de Carpi's *Isagogae breves*.



Figure 4: The title page of Martin Pollich of Mellerstadt's 1493 edition of Mondino's *Anatomy*, where the larger-than-life lecturer in his elevated chair still dominates the scene, he regards the corpse below more intently than his book.

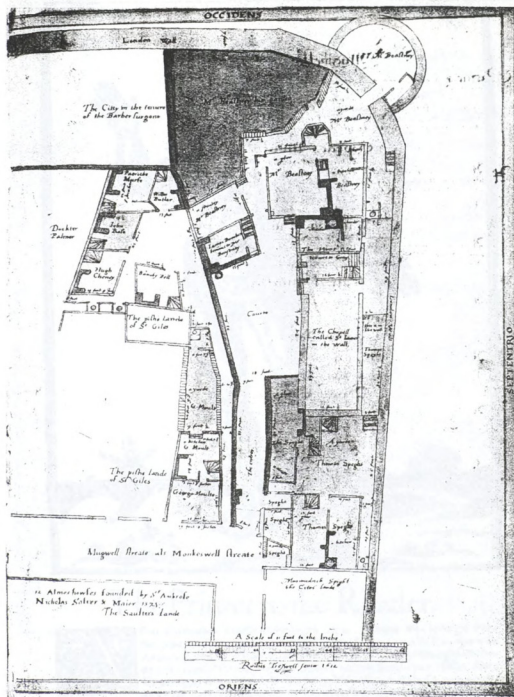


Figure 7: Ralph Treswell's survey of Monkwell Street, 1612. Though Treswell provides no drawing of the Barber-Surgeons' Hall, his survey illustrates the nearly marginal position of the Company's position within the City walls. From John Schofield's *The London Surveys of Ralph Treswell* (London: London Topographical Society, 1987) plate 9



The Printer to the Reader.



After Michaelmas Terme in the year 1629. A body was brought from the place of Execution to the Physitions Colledge to be Cut vp for an Anatomy, and by Chance, the officer of the Chollidge brought the body of a cruell Wretch, who had murdered the Son of one Master *Sent* a Chyrurgian of goodnote in this City. This Wrech was of a very truculent countenance and aspect, as the Almighty God would therein discover the cruelty of his heart. His haire was black & curled not very long, but thick & bushy, his forehead little above an inch high, his browes great and prominent, his eyes set deepe in their sockets, his nose crooked with a round knob or button at the end which also some-
what

Figure 8: The corpse of a deformed criminal brought to the anatomy theatre. From Helkiah Crooke's 1631 edition of *Microcosmographia*.

The crying Murther:

Contayning the cruell and most horrible Butcher
of Mr. T R A T, Curate of olde *Cleau*; who was first murther
as he trauailed vpon the high way, then was brought home to his hou
and there was quartered and imboweld: his quarters and bowels bein
terwards perboyld and salted vp, in a most strange and fearefull manner. For this
the Iudgement of my Lord chiefe Baron T A N F I E L D, young *Peter Smethwicke*, *A
drew Baker*, *Cyri'll Aussen*, and *Alice Walker*, were executed this last Summer
At *Alice*, the 24. of Iuly, at Stone Gallowes, neere Taunton
in Summerfet-thire.



AT LONDON:
Printed by *Edw. Allder* for *Nathaniell Butter*.
1 6 2 4

Figure 9: Title page of C.W.'s *The Crying Murther* (1624).

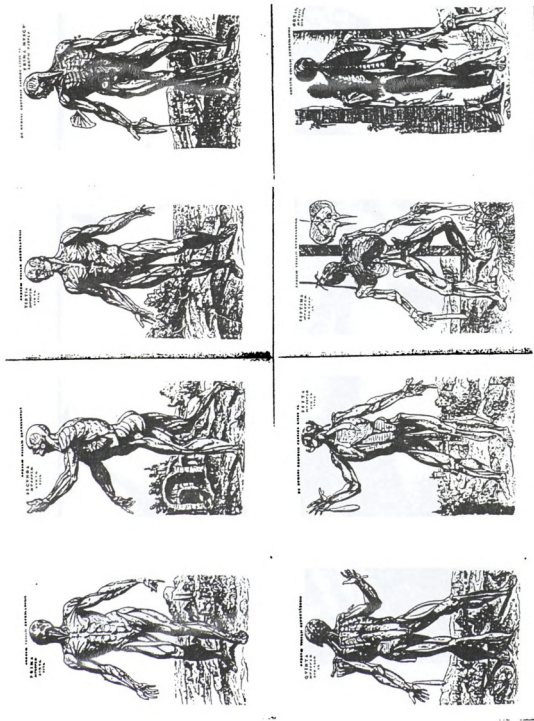


Figure 10: Musclemen from Vesalius's *Fabrica* (1543 edition).





Figure 11: Self-revealing anatomy from Spegelius's *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1627).

Figure 11: Self-revealing anatomy from Spegelius's *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1627).



Figure 12: Self-dissecting hand, from Govard Bidloo's *Anatomia Humani Corporis* (1685).

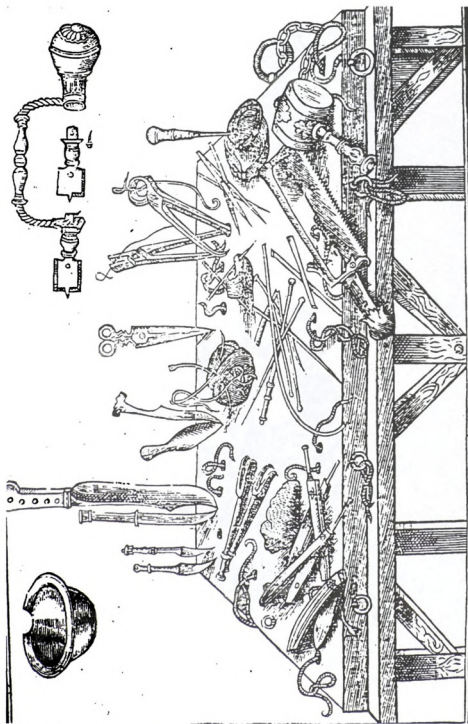


Figure 13: Surgical tools as illustrated in Crooke, 1631, under the title *An Explanation of the Fashion and vse of three and fifty Instruments of Chirurgery*, reproduced from Paré and appended to the *Microcosmographia*.

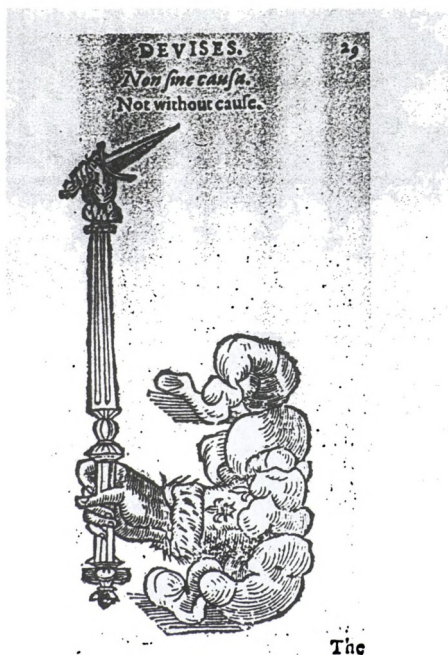


Figure 14: Katherine Rowe asks, "Where along the sequence of a hand holding a scepter shaped as a hand holding a sword should a reader locate the origin?"



Figure 15: Portrait of Vesalius following the title page in the *Fabrica*.



Figure 16: Rembrandt's painting, *Anatomy of Dr. Tulp*.



Murder upon Murder,

Committed by *Thomas Sherwood*, alias, *Countrey Tom*; and *Elizabeth Evans*, alias, *Canbury Bess*: The first upon *Liver*, The 2.^d of *M. George* 1.st of *Windsor*, whom inhumanely they kill neare *Islington* on the 22.^d day of *January* 1635. The last upon *M. Thomas Claxton* of *London*, whom meetely they murdered upon the second day of *Aprill* last past, neare unto *Lambes Conduit* on the backside of *Holborne*, with many other robberies and mischiefs by them committed from time to time since *Midsummer* last past, now revealed and confest by them, and now according to Judgement he is hanged neare to *Lambes Conduit* this 14. of *Aprill*, 1635. to the terror of all such offenders.

To the tune of *Briganday downe*, &c.



All Christians all unto my song,
I will move your hearts to pity,
but bloody murders have bene done,
of late about the City:
as late for the 22.^d of *Cal*,
and as late will remaine.
murder, lust and murder,
the foule sinke of sin.

It was scarce a month with in the yeare,
it was scarce a while are bene,
So, the 2.^d other murdereth,
either kills the Son,
or man and man there a such befalle,
rich in the end bying: most all hite
O murder, &c.

The mother loseth her deare life
cause she her childe doth kill.
as some men in their drunkennesse,
or beate or steele blood doth spill,
have more through greedie gain,
brother hate the brother slaine.
murder, &c.

as the deere now in hart,
truth it will declare,
as God teach man unto himselfe,
within thin beware,
as Thomas a French knave,
and murder bent his mind
do, &c.

A man of honest parentage,
trained up to husbandry,
But wearie of that honest life,
to London he doth hie:
at here to his small wastfull life,
he chose a Queene for his capitaine.
O murder, &c.

One Canbury Bess in Turnball street,
on him did cast an eye,
And prayd him to give her some drinke,
as he was passing by:
as too was he came content,
And for the same doth now repent.
O murder, &c.

For by allowing tempting wance,
he set on his minde,
That unto any villaine,
herce Sherwood was incline,
his come all spide he shall have more,
For to content his filthe (Canbury)
O murder, &c.

Such mischiefe then by them was done
in and about the City,
Let still the scape unpunished,
(and further) more was the pittie,
To deately sinne they then did fall,
first on to robbe but murder all.
O murder, lust and murder,
is the foule sinke of sin.

The first was Walter William Lee,
a Gentleman of note,
And errell Sherwood laid him low
with an infamous stroke:
as birth may blone they did regaine,
Yet deately for blood is their retaine
O murder, &c.

One Walter Hole of Winton towne,
a Spanish Jew was he,
Asking aduise to take the way,
felt next their backe,
For Sherwood with a fatal blow,
his common kill'd, his quene told so,
O murder, &c.

His cloath, but, ruse, from him they re-
steeuen grates also,
And were about his cloathes to stripe,
his shirt, shoes, hose thereto,
Not being scape away they flye,
he hath confest this villany.
O murder, &c.

A vile wofe life they still remain,
for wofe out their eye.
As beate hearts still bent to errery,
not minding so much,
They cannot of Southan the deuil,
That drags them into all this evil.
O murder, lust and murder,
is the foule sinke of sin.

Figure 17: *Murder upon Murder*, the ballad rendition of Country Tom and Canbury Bess's crimes (c. 1635).

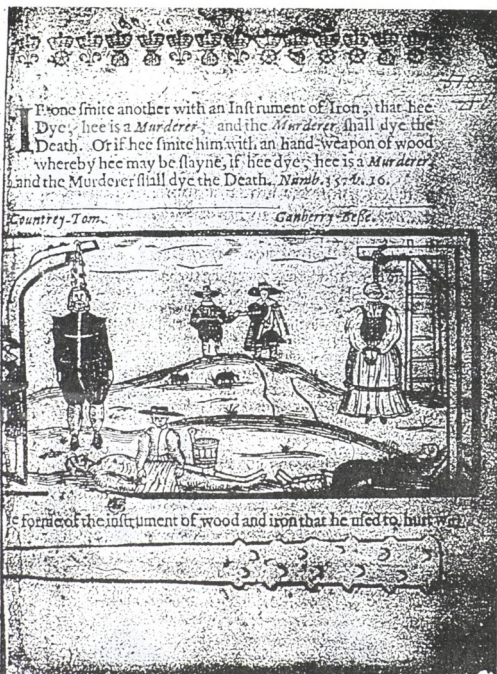


Figure 18: An illustration of the truncheon, complete with ominous spikes, in Goodcole's *Heavens Speedie Hue and Cry sent after Lust and Murther* (1635).

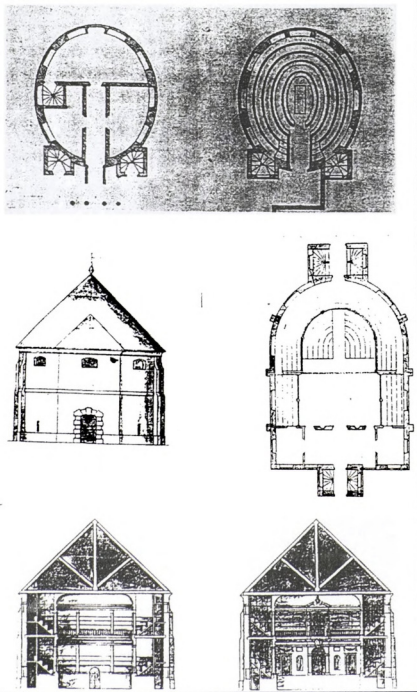


Figure 19 (top two images): Inigo Jones's plans for the Cockpit theatre in Drury Lane.
 Figure 20 (bottom four images): Jones's plans for the Barber-Surgeons' Anatomical Theatre

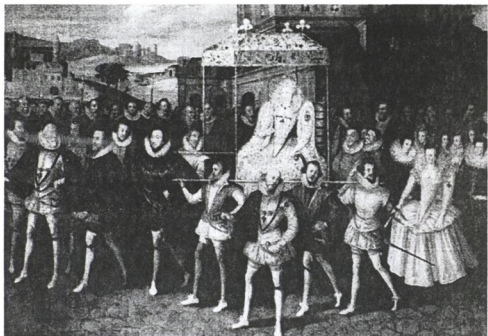


Figure 21: *Eliza Triumphans* (1600, also known as *Queen Elizabeth Going in Procession to Blackfriars*).



Figure 22: *Young Prince Henry Hunting with a Friend* (1603).



Figure 23: Title page to *Roxana* (1632).

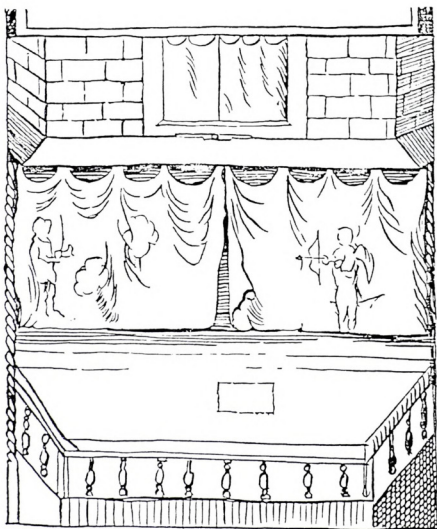


Figure 24: Title page to *Messallina* (1640).

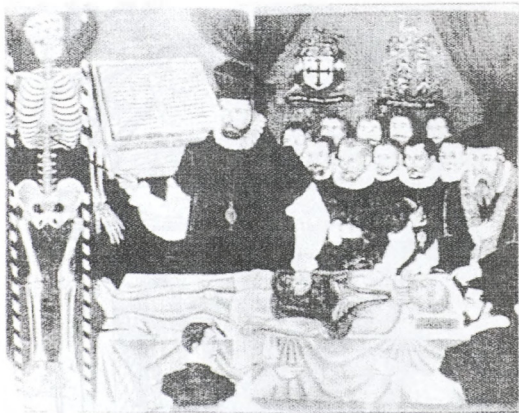


Figure 25: Depiction of John Banister at work on a corpse in the hall's kitchen, clearly showing a pair of scissors and a knife on the demonstration table.

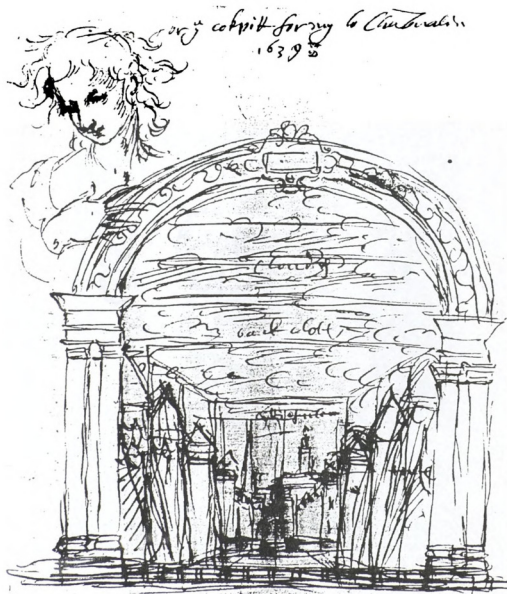


Figure 26: Drawings of perspectivist scenery in Jones's hand labeled "for ye cokpitt for my lord Chamberlain 1639."

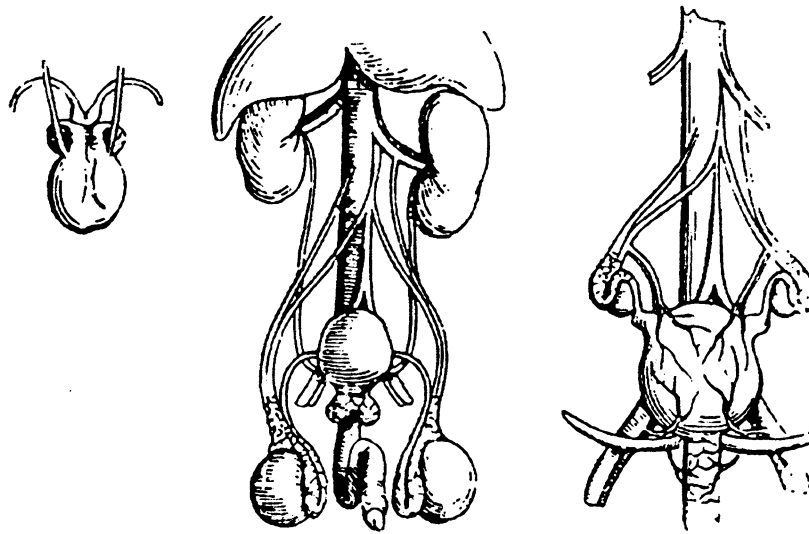
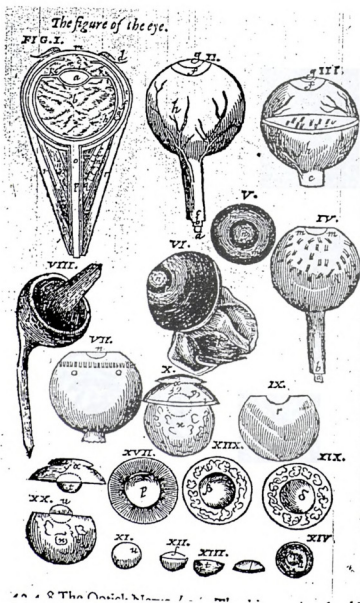


Figure 27: Male and female reproductive organs from Vesalius's *Fabrica*.



Figure 28: William Hogarth's *The Reward of Cruelty*, c. 1750.



The explication of the first Figure by it selfe.

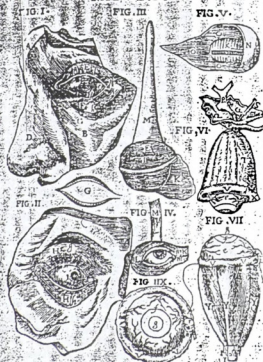
- a, The Christalline humor.
- b, The Glasse humor.
- c, The watery humor.
- d, The utmost coate called *Adnata*.
- e, The darke part of the horny Tunicle which is not transparent.
- f, The Grapy coate called *Veua*.
- g, The Net-like coate called *Retiformis*.
- h, The coate of the glassy humor cald *Hyaloides*.
- i, The coate of the Christalline.
- k k, The hairy processes cald *Processus ciliares*.
- l, The impression of the Grapy coate where it departeth from the thick coate.
- m, The horny coate, a part of the thick coate.
- n n, The fat betwixt the Muscles.
- o, The optick Nerve.
- p, The *Dura meninx*.
- q, The *Pia Mater* or thin Meninx.
- r r, The Muscles.

The explication of the other 19. figures together.

Figure 29: Vesalius's illustrations of the human eye.

Table 1. Fig. 1. sheweth the whole eye, not as all described, but
 bent, together with the eye-lids and the haires thereof.
 Fig. 2. sheweth the eye-lid having the skin taken away.
 Fig. 3. and 4. exhibiteth the muscles of the eye-lids.
 Fig. 5. sheweth the eye-lids separated and inverted.
 Fig. 6. and 7. sheweth the fig. of the whole eye with his muscles
 drawn out of the Skull and freed from the eye-lids.
 Fig. 8. The fore side of the globe of the eye.

TABULA I.



56, the moving nerve of the eye. 76, the fat between the muscles. U 6, 7, 8, A part of the coat called *Adnata* stretched under the eye-lids. X 6, Membranes going from the Skull-skin to the Tarsus or gristle of the eye-lids. Y 7, the muscle of the eye on the one side.

A 1, The forehead bone.
 B 2, The bone of the upper jaw.
 C 1, The nose bone.
 D 1, The Nose.
 E 1, The upper eye-lid.
 F 1, 3, The lower eye-lid.
 aa 1, The Tarsus or little gristle wherein the haires grow.
 bb 1, The haires of the eye-lid.
 c 1, 6, The greatest Canthus or corner of the eye.
 d 1, 6, The lesser Canthus or corner of the eye.
 e 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, The membrane called *Adnata* which in the 6, 7, and 8. fig. is interwoven or woven with veins.
 f 7, 8, The Raine bow called Iris.
 g 1, 2, The hollownes of the upper eye-lid and in the 7, and 8. the apple of the eye.
 h 1, 2, The vnder caue in the lower eye-lid.
 m = 4, 7, 8, Two holes in the greater angle or corner of the eye.
 n 7, The optike nerve.
 p 7, The *Pia mater* at p and the thicke at g, which do inuelt the optike nerve.
 r 7, 8, A Caruncle or little flesh in the inter or corner.
 G, The Cartilages or gristles of the eye-lids called *Tarsi*.
 H H 2, The orbicular or round muscle of the eye-lid without the skin.
 I 3, The leonic coat containing the Raine-bow and the apple of the eye.
 K 3, 4, The orbicular muscle of the eye-lid *external*, but in the 4. it is described compassing the whole eye-lid which *Psalms* diuided into two.
 L 4, In this place *Psalms* sit the second.
 M 3, 4, The right muscle of the eye-lid sit alone.
 N 5, The outward part of the eye-lid.
 O O 5, the epicauous and interior face of the eye-lid.
 P 6, the interior portion of the wedge-bony where-through the optike nerve doth passe.
 Q Q 6, A part of the thicke membrane or *Mucosa*.
 A 6, the contourse or meeting of the optike nerves.

Figure 30: Human eyes as shown in Crooke's *Microcosmographia*.

Table 2. Figure 3. Sheweth many muscles of the Eye in their own state.

Figure 2. Sheweth the Eye rowled upward whereby his muscles may be perceived.

Figure 3. and 4. Sheweth the muscles of the Eye, separated before and behind with their nerves.

Figure 5. Is the Eye of an Oxe, with his muscles severed as Vesalius doth shew it.

TABVLA II.

- A, The eye-lid.
 B, the *Tarsus* or gristle where the hairs grow.
 C, the muscle lifting up the eye-lid.
 D 1, 3, 4, the right upper muscle of the eye in 3, and 4. with the nerve.
 E 2, 3, 4, the right lower muscle of the eye, in 3, and 4. with the nerve.
 F 1, 3, 4, the right external muscle of the eye.
 G 1, 3, 4, the right internal muscle of the eye.
 H 1, 3, 4, the oblique superior muscle or the pulley, whose tendon is marked with a and the pulley with b.
 I 2, 3, 4, the oblique inferior muscle of the eye.
 K 1, 3, the opticke nerve.
 a 1, 3, the tendon of the oblique superior muscle.
 b 1, 3, the first pulley, a small gristle where-through the tendon doth pass, and in the 3 and 4 pulled from the bone.
 c c c c c 1, 4, the moving nerves of the eye.
 e 1, 3, the second muscle of the eye-lid lying in the cavity of the eye, whose broad tendon is inserted into the eye-lid.
 f 5, the hairs of the eye-browes.
 g 1, 5, two right muscles leading the eye upward and downward.
 h 1, 5, two right muscles moving into the right and left side. **2** 1, 5, two oblique muscles lightly turning the eye. **3** 5, the seventh muscle which may be divided into more. **4** 5, the opticke nerve.

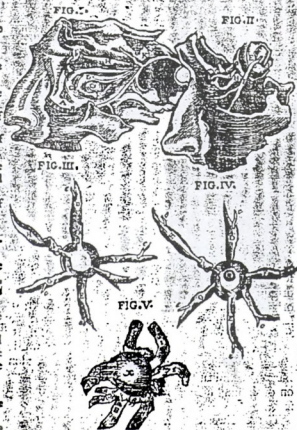


Figure 31: Human eyes as shown in Crooke's *Microcosmographia*.



Figure 32: Digging up corpses for food, from *The lamentations of Germany* (1638).



Figure 33: Eating corpses' entrails, from *The lamentations of Germany* (1638).

a.

3 women killinge and after eating
each other



b.

women Eat there owne Children



Figure 34: (a). A mother eating her child, from *The lamentations of Germany* (1638), along with ravenous women eating each other (b).



Figure 35: Early woodcut of the Tupinamba surrounding the club to be used in their cannibal ceremonies.



Figure 36: Woodcut rendition of a prisoner's torso roasting over open flames.



Figure 37: De Bry copperplate rendition of the prisoner's roasting, decimated body.

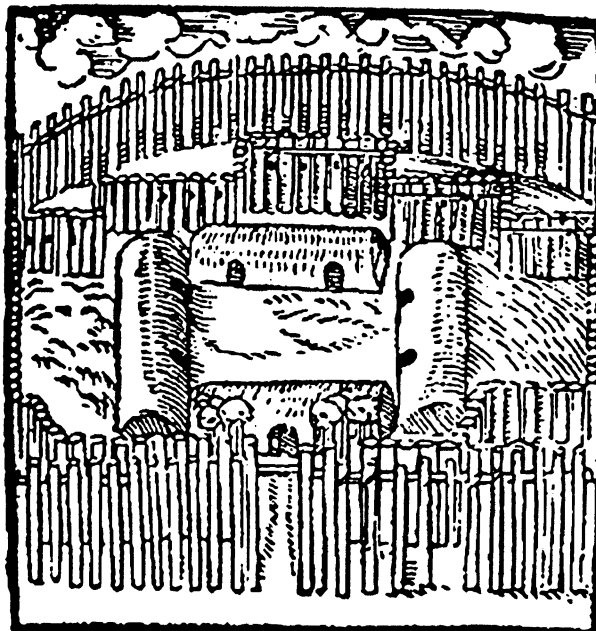


Figure 38: Woodcut of the Tupinamba village.

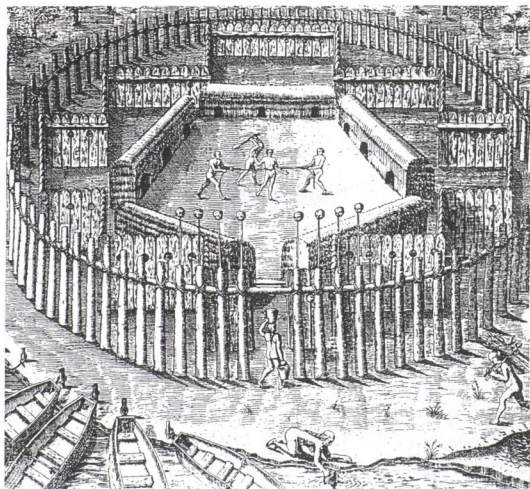


Figure 39: De Bry copperplate of the Tupinamba village.

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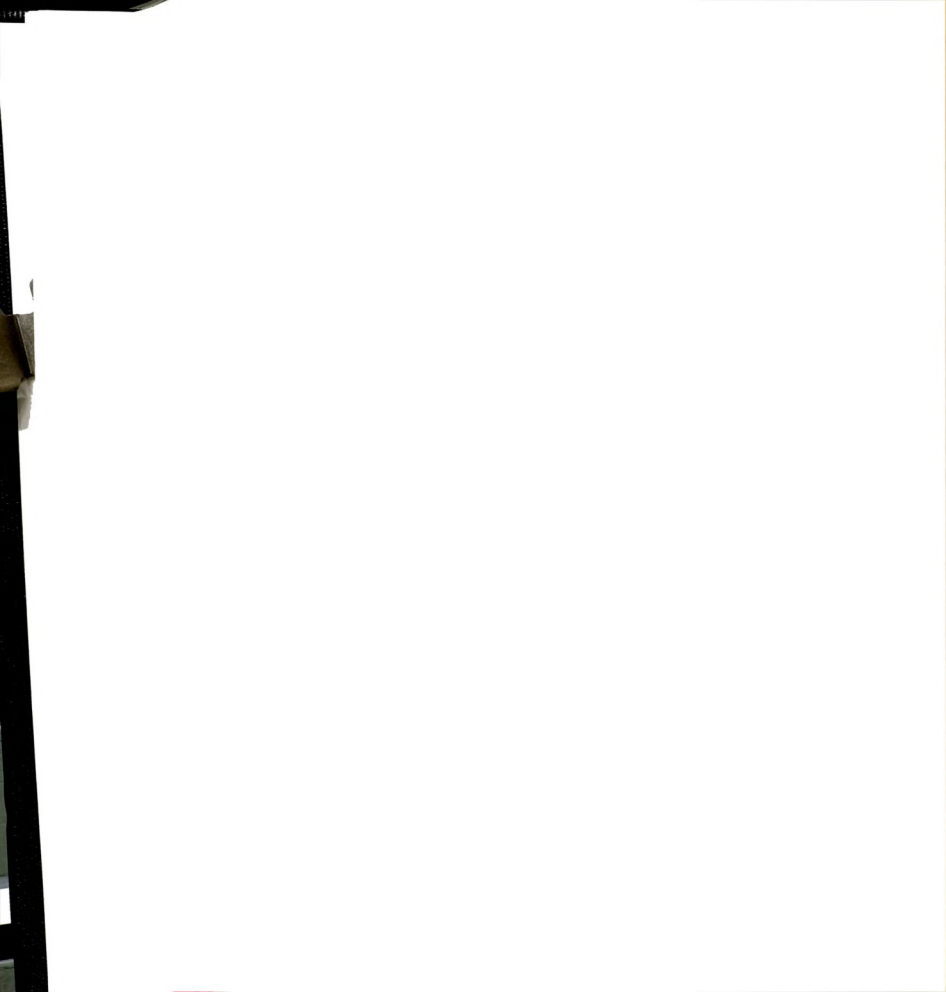
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