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"DISTRACTED INTO PARTS": CONSTRUCTING AND PERFORMING MELANCHOLY ON THE LATE ELIZABETHAN AND EARLY JACOBEAN STAGE

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ABSTRACT

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'DISTRACTED INTO PARTS': CONSTRUCTING AND PERFORMING MELANCHOLY ON THE LATE-ELIZABETHAN AND EARLY-JACOBEAN STAGE.

By Hugh Ian Charles Mackay

This thesis examines the role of melancholy as a representational strategy in late 16th and early 17th century English drama. The prominence of melancholy both on the page and on the stage in these years is a theme extensively discussed in earlier studies. Moreover, recent critical approaches have given renewed attention to the connections between the experience and portrayal of melancholy in English Renaissance culture and a contemporary emphasis on 'performance'. What has yet to be fully addressed is the extent to which these links between melancholy and performance helped shape the development of theatrical practice itself in this period.

The first chapter (ch.1) examines a number of specialist texts (including Ficino's De vita libri tres and Bright's Treatise of Melancholie) and identifies a specific trope – that of 'soul-loss' – as integral to the formation of a medical problematic about melancholy in this period. A subsequent chapter (ch.2) describes how this trope intersected with non-specialist discourses about melancholy in both a social and a theatrical context, establishing a link between melancholy and 'performance' which would find articulation in a later period of Elizabethan drama. Chapter 3 presents a theoretical discussion of the performing body, and suggests how a twentieth-century semiotics of performance can be historicized to describe the body's production of meaning on the early modern stage. A conclusion argues that slippage between constructions of the body-soul and body-speech relationships could implicate the trope of melancholic 'soul-loss' within an ideology of performance.

The final two chapters (chs.4 and 5) describe the emergence of a 'melancholic performativity' in the phase of theatrical production following the revival of the boy companies in 1599. Through the satiric comedies of John Marston, and via a second wave of revenge tragedies, tropes deriving from the specialist texts about melancholy were appropriated to a style of playing which was directly opposed to orthodox assumptions about the relationship between speech and action prevailing at the public theatres. This new development ultimately came to attain more narrative than performative influence in the drama. Nevertheless, it is suggested that the prominence of melancholy in the plays of this period can be conceptualised as part of an attempt to fashion a new mode of performance to suit a rapidly-changing theatrical environment.

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I have been fortunate in the number of people who have assisted me in the development of this thesis over the past few years. My supervisor, Professor Kate McLuskie, has overseen every stage of its writing with seemingly inexhaustible reserves of support, suggestions, stamina, vision and good humour. If at times in the progress of this thesis I appear to have trodden a slow and "sadde pac'd course" more often than might have been wished, one good reason will have been my reluctance to see the conclusion of so inspirational a working relationship...

Dr. Mishtooni Bose and Dr. Jonathan Peacock have both at various times offered advice and suggested directions for this thesis which I feel have added a scope and depth to its themes I could not otherwise have anticipated. I also owe a debt of thanks, both personal and professional, to Dr. Richard Sugg, who has been unstinting in his help and encouragement, and who has generously passed an anatomist's incisive gaze over portions of the present corpus. I remain deeply indebted to Patrick Haigh of Sherborne School, who has been instrumental in ensuring that many of the themes and interests outlined herein could be assayed at a postgraduate level.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Unless otherwise stated, the dating of plays follows that outlined in Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English drama, 975-1700: an analytical record of all plays, extant or lost, chronologically arranged and indexed by authors, titles, dramatic companies, &c*, 3rd edn. rev. by Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim (London: Routledge, 1989).

The title quotation is taken from Timothie Bright's *Treatise of Melancholy* (1586) ch.13 p.71.

INTRODUCTION

Melancholy's dual face.

The third act of John Ford's tragicomedy *The Lover's Melancholy* (1628) presents two scenes in close succession in each of which the play's physician-figure, Corax, ventures an informed definition of melancholy. In the first of these, III.1., the doctor responds to the enquiries of two learned courtiers about the cause of a disease which has Palador, the young prince of Cyprus, mysteriously in thrall:

> *Aretus*: since your skill can best discern the humours
> That are predominant in bodies subject
> To alteration, tell us, pray, what devil
> This melancholy is which can transform
> Men into monsters.
> *Corax*: [...] Melancholy
> Is not as you conceive, indisposition
> Of body, but the mind's disease. So ecstasy,
> Fantastic dotage, madness, phrenzy, rapture
> Of mere imagination, differ partly
> From melancholy, which is briefly this:
> A mere commotion of the mind, o'ercharged
> With fear and sorrow, first begot i'th'brain,
> The seat of reason, and from thence derived
> As suddenly into the heart, the seat
> Of our affection.[1]

Corax offers an aetiology for melancholy which, perhaps surprisingly for one of his profession, smacks more of the metaphysical than the physical. The passage appears unambiguous in denying the body any part either in the cause or the manifestation of the disease, clearly differentiating melancholy from "dotage, madness, phrenzy" which, the context suggests, partake of a crucial element of the corporeal in their origin. Yet this picture of the disease sketched out by Corax in III.1., whilst internally consistent in itself, differs from the one he gives two scenes later. As the court convenes for a "Masque of Melancholy" to be presented before Palador – a "Mousetrap" device by which Corax intends to bring the secret cause of the prince's sorrow to light – one of the courtiers from the previous dialogue avers "We must look for/Nothing but sadness here"

[1] John Ford, *The Lover's Melancholy*, ed. by R.F. Hill, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), III.i.103.

(*Lover's Melancholy*, III.3.12). Once again, however, the doctor contradicts the courtier's assessment:

> *Corax*: Madness rather,
> In several changes; melancholy is
> The root as well of every apish frenzy,
> Laughter and mirth, as dulness. (*Lover's Melancholy*, III.3.14)

This definition, however, amounts to a self-contradiction if consistency from the earlier scene is sought for. Where melancholy had been differentiated from madness and frenzy on the basis of a distinction between body and mind, here the respective categories are collapsed unproblematically. Moreover 'sadness', the defining characteristic of a disease which owes nothing to "indisposition/Of body", is now edged out at the expense of those symptoms which conventionally accompanied the derangement of the senses. By bringing melancholy back within the ambit of the physical, the bodily, and (by implication) the humoral, after the interval of only a scene, a gap in the play's representation of the concept is thus opened up.

This inconsistency in the play's representation of melancholy has failed to attract much attention from critics or commentators. The editor of the Revels edition is sufficiently struck by Corax's initial definition of melancholy to gloss the doctor's claims as "only half-right since [...] melancholy [...] was thought to have its roots in a physical condition".[2] Nevertheless, the shift between the mental and the physical which melancholy undergoes in its relation to diseases such as madness and frenzy is not remarked on. There are understandable reasons for this. It remains a critical truism that melancholy in the early modern period was a supremely convoluted concept, riven with precisely the kinds of contradictory claim about provenance, nature and symptom which I have instanced above.[3] Typically, this sense of confusion resolves itself into a critical

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[2] See the editor's footnote on this passage in the Introduction of the Revels edition of *The Lover's Melancholy*, p.97.

[3] The standard works on the development of the concept of melancholy in the early modern period are Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion and Art* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1964), esp. pp. 217-274; Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951); Bridget Gellert Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy: Studies in literary treatments of melancholy in Renaissance England* (London: Routledge, 1971). For more recent studies which include important overviews as part of their analyses see Juliana Schiesari, *The Gendering of Melancholia: Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Symbolics of Loss in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), esp. pp.96-159, and Lynn Enterline,

trope which identifies a duality within the concept of melancholy itself.[4] This might be constructed in medical terms as a distinction between 'natural' and 'unnatural' types of melancholy, or in intellectual terms as one between Galenic and Aristotelian interpretative strategies. The mental-physical dichotomy I have identified above within *The Lover's Melancholy* is commensurate with both of these traditions whilst reproducing neither of them exactly.[5]

Notwithstanding the importance of these entrenched critical oppositions, I want to suggest that the best way of addressing the play's two mutually contradictory but seemingly compatible modes of constructing melancholy is through an analysis of the way they are articulated in theatrical form. Corax's second description, it should be recalled, is offered in the context of a *performance*. In the "Masque of Melancholy" which unfolds before the ailing prince the members of the court temporarily abandon their established personae for the dramatisation of melancholic character-types drawn from the stock of medical lore. Thus Lycanthropia, Hydrophobia, Delirium, and Phrenitis are each given a physical appearance and segment of representative discourse

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The Tears of Narcissus: Melanchola and Masculinity in Early Modern Writing (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), esp. pp. 1-38. I will discuss many of the conclusions these works reach about melancholy both in remainder of this introductory section and elsewhere throughout the thesis. For claims about the complexity and contradictory theories of melancholy in this period see, for example, Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, pp.56-72. For the theme of 'diversity' which is associated with melancholy both in numerous primary and secondary sources see the helpful Introduction in Jennifer Radden (ed.), *The Nature of Melancholy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), esp. pp.8-9.

[4] The Galenic/Aristotelian distinction is widely adopted in critical discussions of early modern melancholy and I will describe it at more length below. In particular, however, see Klibansky et al., *Saturn and Melancholy*, pp.41-66, and Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, pp.58-67. The distinction between natural and unnatural (sometimes called 'adusted' or burnt) types of melancholy is conventional from classical writers onwards but has tended to attract less critical attention than the Aristotelian/Galenic problem. An exception is demonstrated by the use made of this distinction in David Houston Wood's discussion of melancholy in relation to dramatic constructions of the experience of time in "'He Something Seems Unsettled': Melancholy, Jealousy, and Subjective Temporality in *The Winter's Tale*", in *Renaissance Drama*, New Series, 31, "Performing Affect", 2002, pp.185-243.

[5] With respect to Corax's definition of melancholy in the above passage from *The Lover's Melancholy* there is a further and important consideration in the play's relationship to the recently-published *Anatomy of Melancholy* by Robert Burton. The scene in which Corax offers his description of melancholy as a purely mental phenomenon contains, in its printed version, a marginal note alluding to "*Democrit. Iunior.*" 'Democritus Junior' was the pseudonym of Burton himself in the satirical preface to his first book, and as such the name evoked a still further duality within the tradition of melancholy, opposing the sardonian laughter of the melancholic philospher Democritus to the tearfulness of his counterpart Heraclitus: see, for example, Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 3 vols, ed. by Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicholas K. Kiessling and Rhonda L. Blair (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989; 1992), vol. I, 32.31ff. (All further references to Burton will be to this edition and will give volume, followed by page and line numbers). It is certainly possible, therefore, that the extended definition in III.i., as well, perhaps, as the 'mirthful' melancholy of the subsequent masque, function within Ford's play less as contributions to a coherent dramatic picture of melancholy than as the foregrounding of an extra-dramatic relationship to a widely-available medical sourcebook on the ailment.

appropriate to their type, and then paraded before Palador as entertainments. So for example the Hydrophobic enters with a "*crown of feathers on, anticly rich*", declaring:

> I will hang 'em all, and burn my wife. Was I not an emperor? My hand was kissed and ladies lay down before me. In triumph did I ride with my nobles about me till the mad dog bit me. [...] Break all the looking-glasses, I will not see my horns. My wife cuckolds me; she is a whore, a whore, a whore, a whore! (*Lover's Melancholy*, III.3.27)

These symptoms of a madness which has a physical origin (in this instance the bite of a dog) are then interpreted by the doctor in a way that entangles medical with ethical meaning:[6]

> *Corax*: men possessed so shun all sight of water.
> Sometimes, if mixed with jealousy, it renders them
> Incurable, and oftentimes brings death. (III.3.36)

By re-inserting the actions of the mad folk into what resembles an updated version of a morality tradition, the sense of theatricality and show is heightened. But the promise of an hermetic retreat offered by the indulgence in a dramatic fiction disguises a surreptitious diagnostic act. Palador's conscience is subsequently caught and his malady exposed by a moment of *non*-representation that draws him unwittingly into the masqueing action. Querying an "empty space" in the "plot" or written schedule which Corax has given him, the prince is informed that:

> *Corax*: One kind of melancholy
> Is only left untouched; 'twas not in art
> To personate the shadow of that fancy.
> 'Tis named Love Melancholy. (III.3.92)

Love-melancholy is Palador's own affliction, as he demonstrates by forbidding all further utterance of the word "love" and abruptly fleeing the presence. The doctor's suspicions are thus triumphantly confirmed, but in terms of the play's construction of melancholy the scene has introduced yet another moment of dissonance. Having integrated the disease within a theatrical parade of folly it now presents a species of melancholy which exceeds signification "in art", especially the performative kind of art

[6] On Corax's moralising of the various species of melancholy on display in the masque, and the distance of this approach from anything in Burton, see the notes to each by R.F. Hill.

exemplified by the grotesque figures of the masque. In abandoning the company of revellers Palador resists the very idea that melancholy can be 'personated' in himself, and by implication that it can be embodied mimetically.[7]

The analysis I have given above suggests that the play is mapping a distinction between the 'theatrical' and the 'genuine' onto the physical and mental constructions of melancholy sanctioned via the figure of Corax. The doctor's initial non-corporeal definition of melancholy occurs in the context of a diagnosis for Palador, and serves to fix his melancholy as a disease appropriate to a prince. Melancholic affect in this case is associated with 'sadness' or (which Corax regards as synonymous) 'dullness' (see his direct address to Palador at II.1.61). Palador's behaviour throughout the first half of the play is consistent with the mournful profile outlined for him by one of the courtiers at the start:

> *Amethus*: He's the same melancholy man
> He was at's father's death; sometimes speaks sense,
> But seldom mirth; will smile, but seldom laugh;
> Will lend an ear to business, deal in none;
> Gaze upon revels, antic fopperies,
> But is not moved; will sparingly discourse,
> Hear music; but what most he takes delight in
> Are handsome pictures. (*Lover's Melancholy*, I.1.70)

Amethus' description of an inward, contemplative melancholy already hints at the contrast which will emerge with the actions performed by the melancholics in the masque. Not only is Palador's melancholy at odds with the frenetic, mirthful, *embodied* variety of the play-within-the-play, but he himself is portrayed as an observer, passively outside the business of performance and gazing upon it only with reluctance. Even his first entrance at II.i.47 "*with a book in his hand*" – a highly conventional stage means of indicating melancholy non-verbally – serves to deflect attention away from Palador's

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[7] The Elizabethan notion of 'personation' in stage acting is glossed in Andrew Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* as a "term first [coming] into use use in the 1590's, signalling not only the concept of a player pretending to be a real human being (as distinct from Magnificence or a king like Cambyses) but the arrival of stage heroes through whom many of the specators could identify themselves and their wants" (Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, 1996), p.141). For a particularly insightful discussion of the complexities and historically-specific meanings surrounding the terms 'person' and 'personation' in this period, see Anthony B. Dawson, "Performance and Participation: Desdemona, Foucault and the actor's body", in *Shakespeare, Theory, and Performance*, ed. by James C. Bulman (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.29-45, esp.pp.32-37.

body and actions and on to his interior thought-processes. The two melancholies which Corax defines in the play's central act, then, are constructed not so much through a medical or philosophical problematic, as a performative one. One version of the disease, associated with the body and with madness, is fully amenable to signification through the actor's art; the other, associated with the mind and with sadness, continually eludes theatrical representation.

I have introduced this thesis with a discussion of *The Lover's Melancholy* because the play represents a late, Caroline contribution to discourse about melancholy in early modern England, serving in many respects as a compendium of dramatic portrayals of the subject over the previous half century. The debt to Burton, explicitly acknowledged in the printed version and otherwise made evident throughout the play, can overshadow the extent to which Ford's tragicomedy reworks numerous theatrical conventions about melancholy which had in been in circulation for decades previously. Discussion of these conventions will form an important part of what follows, but *The Lover's Melancholy* also has a particular relevance to my thesis in the feature I have attempted to sketch out above: its constitution of melancholy at a complex intersection of ideas about body and soul, dramatic action and theatrical discourse. Few would contest the assertion that melancholy was represented with exceptional frequency on the late-Elizabethan and early-Jacobean stage. This thesis, however, aims to address a somewhat less remarked upon aspect of the phenomenon: the implication of melancholy in the very *mode* of representation which was most responsible for its cultural dissemination in early modern England. Through a discussion of key medical and social documents about melancholy and a subsequent analysis of how tropes from these texts were appropriated by different theatrical genres, I will argue that melancholy could itself constitute a distinct mode of performance in early modern theatrical practice. This performative mode was closely bound up, moreover, with a network of power relations which developed within the theatrical profession, particularly around the end of the sixteenth century when the commercial stasis enjoyed by established companies of actors was being challenged by a new breed of player and new forms of writing.

In teasing out the connections between 'melancholy' and 'performance' I am invoking a set of discursive relationships that have frequently been touched on in studies of melancholy but not always systematically worked out. One such relationship

emerges with the sense often found in early modern texts that sufferers of melancholy are somehow *enacting* their condition. Gail Kern Paster, for example, aptly identifies an "affective vogue of melancholy in early seventeenth-century courtly and literary coteries".[8] Her choice of phrase, moreover, underscores the possibility that the 'enactment' of melancholy in a social context is not always or necessarily a process of active dissimulation but may also be partially involuntary. In the light of much recent writing on the role of performance in the construction of subjectivity and embodiment, 'affectation' can open up a space for discussion of the reproduction of culturally-available tropes and narratives of melancholy as part of the actual experience of the disease. The work of Judith Butler on performativity, in particular, has deconstructed the conventional notion of the priority of original to copy, nature to art, and replaced it with highly suggestive paradigms about the production of psychological states through the very process of mimesis.[9]

Despite the current high critical profile of theories of performativity and their obvious applicability to the social enactment of melancholy, this thesis remains primarily concerned with 'performance' in a theatrical context. If, as I am suggesting, melancholy can be conceptualised not simply as an overdetermined *object* of theatrical representation but as contributing in some way to the various *modes* of representation available to the early modern stage, then my account will require a properly theorized approach to the production of meaning through the performing body of the actor. This will lead my discussion into an area of theoretical concern which has to some extent fallen out of recent critical favour, but which is well represented by the theatrical semiotics of the Prague School in the first half of the last century and its subsequent development by later theoreticians such as Keir Elam and Aston and Savona. Elam has

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[8] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in early Modern England* (Cornell U.P., 1993), p.6. Paster's formulation represents only one of many historicist readings of the performativity of early modern selfhood. Among those texts which have addressed the performance of melancholy specifically I have found particularly useful Julia Schiesari's *The Gendering of Melancholia* – especially ch.5 passim – and Karin S. Coddon, *"Suche Strange Desygns": Madness, Subjectivity and Treason in 'Hamlet' and Elizabethan Culture*, in *Renaissance Drama*, 1989; New Series: 20, 51-75.

[9] Judith Butler's influential but specialised usage of the terms performance/performativity are set out in Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), and reformulated in *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993), esp. pp.12-16. For important criticisms of the application of these concepts in a theatrical context see Loren Noveck, "Identity and the Subject in Performance", in *The Incorporated Self: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Embodiment*, ed. by Michael O' Donovan-Anderson (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), pp.65-74.

recently published an essay which combines rueful reflection on the demise of a semiotics of performance with a somewhat questioning approach to the theoretical concern which in his view has replaced it: the body in the aftermath of Foucault. Conceding the prevalence of what he calls the "corporeal turn" in much recent critical theory, he also identifies as its "privileged point of reference [...] the early modern body" since "the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries saw the codification of modern subjectivity and the consequent attempt to contain [...] bodily drives".[10]

Elam is cautious about attempts to recover the meanings of Shakespeare's bodies by over-reading the relationship between dramatic and medical texts, insisting that the rhetoricity of the stage and its conventions would have been prior to "any homogenizing homology with medical tracts".[11] There is justice in this claim, as in the further caveat that the "medicalizing" approach can work to "collapse the distinction between the 'two bodies', the represented body of the dramatis persona and the 'body natural' of the actor" – the very distinction which the 'old' semiotics had been instrumental in upholding.[12] To these objections I would like to add my own concern that the typically passive Foucauldian construction of the body-as-palimpsest often sorts uneasily with the mimesis of agency through which the stage negotiates (however precariously) its corporeal meanings. The semiotic and 'somatic' approaches need not be incompatible, however. Indeed, it is precisely the distinctions generated in the theatre which have provided some theorists of the body with a valuable metaphor for the construction of subjectivity. As Loren Noveck claims in a recent essay: "Theatre functions as a space to read the concrete structuring of the use of body in constructing subjectivity by providing a location for the analysis of a clear distinction between the body of the actor and the speaking subject-position of the text, each logically prior to the moment of their conjunction".[13]

The theoretical approach to performance that I will be sketching out in a later chapter, then, will attempt to reinstate the semiotic focus on the material body of the actor whilst complementing it with a grasp of the ideological relations in which that

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[10] Keir Elam, "'In what chapter of his bosom?': reading Shakespeare's bodies", in *Alternative Shakespeares*, vol.2, ed. by Terence Hawkes (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.140-163, p.143.
[11] Elam, "reading Shakespeare's bodies", p.152.
[12] Elam, "reading Shakespeare's bodies", p.153.
[13] Loren Noveck, "Identity and the Subject in Performance", p.67.

body was always implicated. It will do so for the purpose of obtaining a fully-historicised grasp of the relationship of action to text under the conditions of early modern theatrical production. What I will be subsequently formulating as a 'melancholic' mode of performance functions as a reconfiguration of this relationship, one which undermines normative constructions of the actor's craft by translating a religious and 'scientific' problematic about the body's relation to the soul into a theatrical one about the body's relation to the text. My argument will consequently follow the path taken by Elam's 'corporealists' in mapping the connections between medical and dramatic discursive fields, but will do so with the aim of emphasising specifically theatrical meanings over the wider ideological ones which have been privileged in recent discussions. I have already suggested how such an approach might work in my discussion of *The Lover's Melancholy*, with its foregrounding of the link between a melancholy of the body and 'theatricality', and the opposition of this dyad to the more 'interior' and discursive melancholy of prince Palador.

The structure of this thesis will thus correspond to three main areas of enquiry, split over five chapters. After concluding this introduction with a more detailed look at cultural-historical approaches to the 'dual' nature of melancholy, my first chapter will be devoted to a discussion of how melancholy was constructed in medical discourse. This first part of the argument will be aimed at establishing the importance of melancholy to early modern debates about the interaction of body and soul. It will suggest, with particular reference to Timothy Bright's *Treatise of Melancholy* of 1586, that 'melancholy' was produced as a concept within medical discourse precisely by the need to counter the materialist implications which discussions of the topic posed for the construction of subjectivity in post-Reformation England. Melancholy could function as a point at which contradictions between officially-sanctioned narratives of the subject – protestant Christian and secular Galenic – became overt. Texts like Bright's worked to construct melancholy in strictly physical terms: as a material thing – a humour – which should be differentiated from more figurative uses of the word describing the manners and symptoms of the melancholic, and even more so from the traumas of an afflicted conscience, which resembled but were not related to the aetiology of a corrupted excrement. Hence it is from medical discourse that we derive the trope of the melancholic body, a body necessarily at some distance from the idea of the 'self' as constructed through language, thought and religious practice.

My second chapter will shift to an examination of the representation of the melancholic body in the drama, showing how tropes derived from the medical texts were woven into an array of familiar theatrical figures, including the melancholy malcontent and the solitary scholar. It is within this complex of theatrical representations that the idea of melancholy as a social performance attains its greatest prominence. The melancholic body as the signifier of an interior absence or lack comes to embody a negative pole within melancholy's relationship to a number of social, and in particular courtly, modes of behaviour. This theme is articulated most clearly in the plays of John Lyly for the boy companies during the 1580s, and provides a platform for a subsequent theatrical emphasis on melancholy as an 'affectation', along with the various connotations of class distinction which this association involves. The theatrical representation of melancholy in this period also needs to be situated within a wider opposition between boy and adult styles of performance, in which the more discursive and 'interior' aspects of melancholy portrayed by the former can be distinguished from the greater emphasis on the physical and external aspects of the adult companies in the late 1580's and early 1590's. The chapter will conclude by suggesting that by the time of the development of the 'humours' comedies at the turn of the sixteenth century, an important set of discourses surrounding the links between melancholy and the theme of performance was firmly in place.

This discussion of the social performance of melancholy and its contribution to subsequent representations of melancholy in theatrical practice will introduce the third chapter on performance theory. Following an analysis of how theatrical semiotics can be used to formulate the relationship between body and discourse on stage, I will attempt to historicise this relationship through the tropes of early modern rhetorical theory. The importance of rhetorical theory for my argument lies in the way it encouraged slippage between the paired oppositions of body/speech and body/soul, allowing figures from medical and philosophical discourses associated with melancholy to be reworked into a specific mode of theatrical performance. These oppositions and the various ideological meanings they carried within theatrical discourse are contextualised through an examination of the construction of the actor's body through both anti-theatrical polemics and the developing corpus of theoretical writings about tragicomedy. The chapter concludes by suggesting that melancholy, which defines a

troublesome, liminal space in these texts no less than in medical discourse, provides the principle means of re-evaluating the status of the actor's body and its complex relationship to the written word in this period.

The final two chapters will then examine in detail how this 'melancholic' performative mode came to prominence in theatrical practice around the turn of the sixteenth century. They will chart its development initially through the influence of the dramatist John Marston and the revived boy companies, and subsequently through a number of distinct theatrical genres such as satire and revenge tragedy. This part of the discussion will give some attention to the phenomenon of the marked increase in the frequency of dramatic representations of melancholy around the turn of the century. This upsurge has been variously interpreted as reflecting the increased competition for places at court, the spread of French and Italian fashions, the disenfranchised status of the writer, the declining hold on power of Elizabeth and uncertainty over a new succession, and even the advent of the decay of the world and its attendant 'Jacobean gloom'.[14] My discussion, however, will focus on how this overplus of dramatic representations of melancholy went hand-in-hand with a dissociation of the performing body from the poetic text as part of a wider opposition to the hegemony of the professional player. I will argue that an understanding of the phenomenon of melancholy in this period benefits from its contextualisation within the complex theatrical 'wars' that took place from the late 1590's onwards and in particular with the disempowerment of the actor's signifying body which this conflict assayed.

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[14] For melancholy as a product of competition at court see the seminal discussion by L.C.Knights in his *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1937), Appendix B, 'Seventeenth Century Melancholy', pp.315-332 (esp.pp.324ff). The persistence of this theme can be measured by reference to James Biester's recent discussion of the rhetorical value of melancholy in *Lyric Wonder: Rhetoric and Wit in Renaissance English Poetry* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell U.P., 1997), chs 1-3, and the claim that "in the desperate competition for preferment in the 1590's [court poets and prospective courtiers] took the risk of appearing witty, melancholy, curious, malcontented, Italianate, Machiavellian, even traitorous", p.69. The general critical perception of a darkening mood at the close of the sixteenth century is encapsulated by Robert Weimann: "the foundations of the national compromise – so essential to Gascoigne, Sidney or Spenser – were crumbling away, and neither side proved really acceptable o the humanist imagination. Classically trained poets, even before the end of the century, turned to satire, and their writing reflected an attitude toward experience more sardonic , somber and savage than that of the earlier decade. The melancholy malcontent became a symbol of the disillusioned academic, and the Italian courtier – his affected imitator, the fashionable "gull" – was held up to ridicule, while the covetous Puritan was held up to equal scorn" Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, rev. by Robert Schwartz (Baltimore MA: John Hopkins University Press, 1978 (1987)), p.169.

The 'two traditions': contemporary critical narratives about melancholy

Cultural historians have traditionally been concerned to address two inter-related features of discourse about melancholy in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean culture: its special prominence as a concept in the early modern period and its complexity of usage as a term. During this period, it has been observed, medical tracts, philosophical treatises, plays and works of prose fiction all utilized the term and helped to extend the range of meanings it had accrued from classical and medieval physiology. Originating in the language of humoral theory, 'melancholy' by the late sixteenth century had come to escape its specific provenance in medical discourse and had begun to enjoy a range of applications in political, religious and artistic contexts. The 'melancholic' could be not merely the sufferer of a disease which caused morbid fear and sorrow, but could also – and without reference to the language of pathology – be the member of a politically disaffected class, a soul oppressed by feelings of guilt and imminent retribution at the hands of the Almighty, and the poet or painter in the grip of an inspiration which to others bordered on madness. As well as these divergent meanings, there arose during this period what commentators such as Gail Kern Paster have referred to as a fashion, discernable among the better-educated in society, for being seen to 'suffer' from melancholy.

In order to explain this complex of features – the multivalency of melancholy and its emergence as a fashionable talking-point – twentieth-century critics have often had recourse to the suggestion that the condition as received and understood in the early modern period was conceptualized through two distinct traditions. These comprised the orthodox position taken by Galenic physiology, that melancholy (being cold and dry) was the lowest and most pernicious of the four humours, and a famous conundrum attributed to Aristotle which associated the melancholic with exalted intellectual ability.[15] According to this latter (almost certainly pseudo-Aristotelian)

[15] For this part of the discussion I draw especially on Klibansky et al, *Saturn and Melancholy*, which remains the key text in tracing the long historical process gradually intertwining these two traditions. See especially the discussion of "Problem XXX, I" at pp.15-41. The 'Aristotelian' interpretation recognised and utilised the core tenets of Greek humoral theory, but it also deployed a rather different conceptual model for analysing their effects. Black bile, according to this model, was variously analogised either with the properties of wine, or those of iron or stone. Wine provided an example of an internalised substance which could work on the mind, generating sometimes extreme mental states which passed as quickly as they appeared. To this causal explanation of the symptoms of melancholy was added the physical analogy with iron or stone which helped to explain how a substance naturally

text, men whose achievements surpassed those of ordinary individuals typically showed signs of mental instability – madness, moodiness, solitude and so forth – which could be traced to the presence of black bile in the body.[16] In Renaissance Italy, this theory was revaluated via the commentaries of the Medicean philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433-99). Ficino's texts, more successfully than any that had gone before, married prevailing Galenic orthodoxies to the Aristotelian thesis about melancholy as an aspect of genius.[17] It was in Ficino's philosophy, moreover, that melancholy's connection with the planetary and mythological figure of Saturn achieved attained its fullest synthesis. Saturn's negative associations of age, earthiness, coldness and dryness were made compatible with intellectual attributes such as numerical ability, a profound memory and even, through the lens of Neo-Platonism, the highest regions of thought – those pertaining to 'mind' as opposed to mere 'soul'. The important point to grasp overall is that Ficino and the 'Saturnists' who followed him were not opposing the prevailing theoretical approach of Galen to melancholy, but showing how it could be circumvented by the addition of concepts from Aristotelian and Platonic philosophical traditions as well as classical mythology.

The importance of these twin influences in the minds of twentieth-century literary critics is especially noticeable in two of the key studies on melancholy in early modern England, Lawrence Babb's *The Elizabethan Malady* and Bridget Lyons' *Voices of Melancholy*. To these writers, the relationship between the traditions can account for both the complexity and the popularity of melancholy in this specific period. In the words of Babb, the two traditions are "hopelessly intertangled in Renaissance thought and literature [...] If there had been no Aristotelian problem, the melancholic attitude would never have won the popularity which it enjoyed during the

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cold (as black bile was held to be) could, on being heated, occupy divergent poles of temperature, and hence be productive of the extreme mental effects which were claimed for it.

[16] There is no recognition of extraordinary women in this argument. Cf. Schiesari's discussion of the very different conception of melancholy outlined by Hildegard von Bingen: "If melancholia helps men excel, its effects on women are completely debilitating", (*The Gendering of Melancholia*, p.151).

[17] It is persuasively argued by Klibansky et al. that the Aristotelian problem was adopted by Ficino for reasons which were as much personal as philosophical: he had been cast with a particularly ominous horoscope which condemned him to the baleful influence of a melancholic temperament all his life (*Saturn and Melancholy*, 254-74). For further biographical detail on this aspect of Ficino's life and thought see the editors' introduction to Marsilio Ficino, *Three Books on Life: A Critical Edition and Translation*, ed. by Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clarke, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies (Tempe, Arizona: The Renaissance Society of America, 1998), esp. pp.19-22.

Renaissance."[18] Most importantly for this thesis, Babb goes on to suggest how such a process of entanglement might have worked by pointing to "a popular conception of melancholy in which the two melancholic traditions are fused" in the person of the malcontent. In this ubiquitous figure, a set of clearly-defined external physical characteristics (black garb, atrabilious manner) concealed an Aristotelian 'interior' (high intellectual and artistic achievements).[19] Much of the evidence for Babb's discussion of Elizabethan malcontentism is derived, as he himself acknowledges, from research conducted by Zera S. Fink, which suggests an Italian origin for the phenomenon, transmitted to English life and letters by foreign travellers returning from the country, and who accordingly comprised a "primary malcontent type".[20] Correlating the Italian origins of melancholy in Ficinian philosophy with the conjectured Italian provenance of the discontented traveller, it is inevitable that Babb should soon be treating the two criteria as synonymous, so that the malcontent-figure becomes interchangeable with a general idea of the Elizabethan intellectual, albeit as its rather embittered and dishevelled counterpart. After a large survey of representations of melancholy in the drama, Babb returns to the theme of the two traditions in his closing chapter, once again specifying the popularity of melancholy in this period as being due to "the general acceptance of the idea that it was an attribute of superior minds, of genius."[21]

In her literary study *Voices of Melancholy* Lyons also makes the two divergent traditions a driving principle in her analysis, and goes further in seeing a fruitful tension developing between them which is exploited in the fiction of the period, so that the negative (Galenic) and positive (Aristotelian) aspects can be set off one against the other within a single character, creating the illusion of subjectivity. Two examples can illustrate her approach. In her discussion of the Proemium to John Marston's collection of satiric poems of 1599, *The Scourge of Villainy*, the opening authorial invocation to Melancholy is glossed as being of "the Aristotelian kind, the temperament of philosophers", which she distinguishes from that of the malcontent.[22]

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[18] Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, pp.66-7.
[19] Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, p.76.
[20] See Zera S. Fink, "Jaques and the Malcontent Traveler" in *Philological Quarterly*, 14 (1935), 237-252.
[21] Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady*, p.184.
[22] Bridget Gellert Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy: Studies in literary treatments of melancholy in Renaissance England* (London: Routledge, 1971), p.60.

Lyons goes on to equate the latter's melancholy with the kind expelled at the collection's close, the "Dull-sprighted melancholy" of Poem XI, which is "associated with mental sluggishness [...] hell and darkness".[23] A complex authorial voice thus emerges from her analysis, in which the speaker assumes a melancholy which is not native to him, only to reject it as being productive of a purely detrimental affective state. A similar line of reasoning emerges with her study of *Hamlet* and her claim that:

> [t]he two principle approaches to melancholy that were combined in the expository books are differentiated in *Hamlet*, not necessarily because Shakespeare made a conscious effort to distinguish between two kinds of language, but because such a differentiation followed naturally from the presentation of a melancholy hero whose subjective views and feelings about himself are markedly distinct from the attitudes of those around him.[24]

Although Lyons does not identify the two traditions by name in this instance, her argument does suggest how a sense of interaction between different views of melancholy helps to exemplify the hero's emotional and intellectual isolation. A final similarity between the approaches of Babb and Lyons emerges in the way they steer their exegesis towards such key texts of the later English Renaissance as Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and Milton's two lyric poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, in which the negotiation between the two traditions of melancholy and its relation to the notion of superior intellectual ability is seen to reach its apogee.

Although the thesis advanced by these authors has many attractive aspects as an explanation for the specific features of melancholy in Renaissance England, there are also a number of problems involved in sustaining it. The awareness which these twentieth-century critics display of the two divergent schools of thought about melancholy is less readily discernable in the literature of the period itself. As Babb himself points out several times, features from both traditions frequently appear to be fused without any attempt to achieve consistency, a fact he considers symptomatic of the Elizabethan habit of assimilating classical authority without question. Although the existence of a dualism in both classical and Ficinian thought about melancholy is

[23] Lyons, *Voices*, p.61.
[24] Lyons, *Voices*, p.90.

undeniable, the relative silence over the matter in early modern English texts does suggest that the kind of dialectical process discerned by Babb and Lyons is a later imposition of their own. One result is that their approach can often appear overly schematic, tracing the supposed trajectory of melancholy as a concept without always taking account of the immediate historical circumstances in which the term itself is circulating. When some of these circumstances are considered, as in the social origins of melancholy in late Elizabethan malcontentism, it often points up the shakiness of the typological scheme. The authors disagree, for example, about which tradition of melancholy the malcontent is to be affiliated to: Babb sees the malcontent as associated especially with the Aristotelian variety (although he accepts that both traditions are fused in the figure); Lyons, in her discussion of Marston, takes the opposite line, regarding malcontentism as Galenic.[25]

A further problem arises in their portrayal of the relationship between melancholy as it is discussed in the medical and philosophical texts and its representation in the world of fiction, since it is the latter which is perceived to develop most fully the complex relationship between the 'two traditions'. These studies are accordingly concerned with discussing the 'scientific' texts mainly as a background to melancholy as depicted on the page and on the stage, so that many of these expository books and philosophical treatises are often treated as little more than the base metal which the poets alchemize into representational gold. I would argue, however, that far from simply providing inert matter which reiterated classical precepts these texts were actively engaged in manufacturing 'stories' about melancholy, many with their own agenda in furnishing descriptions of it. Finally, and as a corollary to this, a danger is continually surfacing in their attempts to find an underlying coherence among these 'scientific' works themselves. Although both authors fully account for the entangled nature of the problem, it is always finally assumed that 'melancholy' refers to some anterior, unifying concept which can enable statements of the kind, 'melancholy is such-and-such'.[26] By reaching for such an

[25] Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, p.76; Lyons, *Voices*, p.p.59-60.

[26] Babb (p.37) contends that "in spite of [its] vague inclusiveness, the learned men of the Renaissance have a conception of melancholy within limits which, although hazy, are definable: melancholy is a psychosis caused by a bilious black humor and characterized by morbid depression, continuous or recurrent." Lyons, attempting to give greater prominence to social process (p.1), states that melancholy "was a physical and psychological condition that expressed an orientation towards the world and society".

overarching definition it becomes possible to discuss a difficult point in a work on the humours by Lemnius, for example, by referring to its occurence in Burton, despite the fact that nearly fifty years separate the two works. I would contend, however, that such an approach obviates the extent to which melancholy was not merely a complex but also a contested area in early modern England, closely tied to changing historical circumstances, in which many contingent factors associated with the conditions of production of the works could inflect meaning over and above specific medical definitions.

The objections which I have levelled above against the analyses offered above resolve themselves, then, into two main areas of criticism. The first of these involves their emphasis on a long-standing interplay between Galenic and Aristotelian traditions which, while in no way misguided, encourages an overly directional approach to an understanding of melancholy as constructed in early modern medical and philosophical discourse. 'Melancholy' accordingly takes its place within a conventional history-of-ideas narrative whose teleology is the birth of the modern sensibility, a narrative which sometimes excludes more historically-contingent factors guiding discourse about the subject in the period.[27] The second area of criticism involves the way representations of melancholy in general, and theatrical ones in particular, become unproblematic fictional counterparts to this history-of-ideas narrative, so that a sense of the interplay between dramatic and medical constructions of melancholy is sometimes lost. In what remains of this section I want to outline an approach which is slanted towards privileging a historical reading of melancholy in the early modern period over the diachronic one exemplified by the above. I want to focus initially on Michel Foucault's early work *Madness and Civilisation* and its implication of melancholy within the wider political structures of early modern Europe, in order to suggest how this text can at least provide a starting-point for a

[27] Similar objections to the kind I have made here are offered by Francis Yates in her discussion of Durër's *Melancholia I* – the engraving which Klibansky et al. claim embodies the new philosophy of melancholy after Ficino (see *Saturn and Melancholy*, p.284ff.; see also the earlier discussion in Erwin Panofsky *Albrecht Durër*, 2nd edn. rev., 2 vols, II (London: Oxford University Press, 1945), pp.156-165). Yates describes a version of the analysis offered by Panofsky as amounting to an attempt to "move Durër's image in a modern, or perhaps nineteenth-century direction" (Francis Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), pp.49-59; p.54). The image of the solitary, brooding genius, in other words – one which superficially fits the figure in the etching – is just as likely to be the product of Romantic invention, one which takes no account pf the more immediately pertinent references to the occult which in her view suffuse the details of the image.

materialist understanding of the circulation of a 'scientific' conception of melancholy between different discursive realms.

Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* was first published in 1961, some three years before Klibansky et al.'s *Saturn and Melancholy*. The approach Foucault takes to the development of the concept during the early modern period differs markedly from that of the authors of the later work. As the title makes clear, his discussion embraces much more than the affliction of melancholy, charting all the types of folly, derangement and dementia which, Foucault claims, formed the key elements over against which 'rationality' in the neo-classical usage constituted itself. Madness and the mad at this stage constituted for the Renaissance what Death had constituted for the Middle Ages, a kind of "eschatological figure" which symbolised both the absolute negation of humanity and at the same time humanity's very condition of possibility.[28] By the mid-seventeenth century, however, madness no longer occupied this free if strictly liminal status in early modern thought. The figure of the ship is now replaced by that of the hospital, and madness becomes the first and most necessary object of the neo-classical practice of confinement. On the one hand this process of confinement simply takes over from an earlier period a form of social structuring which was earlier directed against the figure of the leper. On the other hand, the hospitalisation of the mad (which Foucault dates from the foundation of the Hôpital Général in 1656) was an entirely mid-seventeenth century phenomenon, one which "had nothing to do with any medical concept" but provided "an instance of order, of the monarchical and bourgeois order being organised in France in this period".[29] Madness thus found itself absorbed into a new moral and economic imperative which aligned it with other forms of 'unreason': most specifically, the reluctance (or inability) to work.[30]

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[28] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (London: Routledge, 1979, 1999), p.35.
[29] Foucault, *Madness and Civilsation*, p.40.
[30] See Foucault, *Madness and Civilsation*, p.58: "In the classical age, for the first time, madness was perceived through a condemnation of idleness and in a social immanence guaranteed by the community of labor". Cf. also p.64: "The new meanings assigned to poverty, the importance given to the obligation to work, and all the ethical values that are linked to labor, ultimately determined the experience of madness and inflected its course". For indications of the influence of Foucault's argument see, for example, its citation in Stanley W. Jackson's "Acedia the Sin and Its Relationship to Sorrow and Melancholia" in *Culture and Depression: Studies in the Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Psychiatry of Affect and Disorder*, ed. by Arthur Kleinman and Byron Good (Berkely: University of California Press, 1985), pp.43-63 (56).

In this newly reconfigured idea of madness which Foucault finds attending the dawn of the bourgeois epoch, where and how did that most characteristic of Renaissance mental afflictions, melancholy, signify? As with madness as a whole, Foucault identifies a shift in the values put upon melancholy from an earlier, sixteenth-century construction to a later 'classical' one, whereby the transcendental meanings of the disease are replaced by purely negative ones against which the positivity of 'reason' can be defined. It is noticeable, however, that even before Foucault addresses the subject fully (in chapter 5: "Aspects of Madness") melancholy has already become important to him in the context of a discussion about the status of the passions. In Foucault's view, the passions formed an historically stable category located at "the meeting ground of body and soul".[31] This category was gradually redefined between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, from being part of a predominantly causal explanation for the interaction of body and soul via the theory of the four humours to a more symbolic process of exchange in which body and soul shared a common set of qualities:

> passion indicates, at a new, deeper level, that the soul and the body are in a perpetual metaphorical relation in which qualities have no need to be communicated because they are already common to both.[32]

Madness, which is really a disorder amongst the passions, formed part of this pre-existing reservoir of qualities, reproducing itself through the whole subject "according to figures, images which envelop segments of the body and ideas of the soul in a kind of absurd unity."[33] Foucault goes on to cite the case of a man suffering from the melancholic delusion that he has killed his son, whose symptoms follow a rigorous syntax or "delirious language" which articulates itself as the "determining principle of all its [i.e. melancholy's] manifestations, whether of the body or of the soul".[34]

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[31] Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.86.
[32] See Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.88.
[33] Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.93. Radden glosses Foucault's suggestion about a symbolic unity between "the humour and [...] melancholy subjectivity" thus: "[t]he ordinary notion of causality ('causality of substances') was replaced, at least during the seventeenth century, by a 'movement' or 'mechanics' of qualities, whereby one thing affects another merely because of the relationship between the qualities of each" (Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, p9.). For madness as a disorder amongst the passions cf. *Madness and Civilizatuion*, p.91: "Madness, which finds its first possibility in the phenomenon of passion [...] is at the same time suspension of passion, breach of causality, dissolution of the elements of this unity."
[34] Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, pp.95-7.

Although he also discusses other forms of unreason – for example, a case of nymphomania – it is thus melancholy which provides Foucault with his privileged example of the "perpetual metaphorical relation" of soul to body in the neo-classical construction of the subject.

When Foucault turns to a more specific discussion of melancholy, the terms in which he considers it are identical to those he has already used for madness as an aspect of the passions. Once again, a shift is discerned around the middle of the seventeenth century. 'Melancholy' changes from describing a physical substance which is the exclusive cause of the symptoms associated with the disease to a process of metaphoric exchange between body and soul similar to that which Foucault has outlined earlier. As he writes:

> [t]he causality of *substances* is increasingly replaced by a movement of *qualities*, which, without any vehicular means, are *immediately* transmitted from body to soul, from humor to ideas, from organs to conduct.[35]

Melancholy is no longer considered simply as the material basis for a set of symptoms to which it is somewhat arbitrarily attached (symptoms such as the delirious idea that one's body is made of glass). The relation between cause and symptom is now replaced by a "symbolic unity" through which the qualities begin to "play an organizing and integrating role in the notion of melancholia".[36] As an example of such a process Foucault describes how the symptomatology of melancholy came eventually – by the close of the eighteenth century – to comprise "a certain profile of sadness, of blackness, of slowness, of immobility": negative values which owe little or nothing to the physiology of the humours but which are translatable nonetheless between the movements of the blood and the motions of thought.

A number of objections have been directed at Foucault's thesis as set out in *Madness and Civilisation*, including complaints about a lack of consistency in its factual accuracy, a lack of historical specificity and a failure to recognize distinctions in the gendered experience of madness. Carol Thomas Neely, for example, finds in her study of madness and gender in Shakespearean drama that Foucault has neglected

[35] Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.119.
[36] Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.120.

to "historicize [his] own position and to distinguish it from earlier periods", and that in privileging the eighteenth century in his analysis he demonstrates "inadequate knowledge" of the preceding epochs.[37] It is certainly the case that in concerning himself with the *long durée* of madness Foucault is led to oversimplify many of his claims about melancholy in the early modern period. The most problematic from the perspective of this thesis is the tendency to perceive important historical shifts in meaning between constructions of melancholy which are in fact contemporaneous, and which are more likely to be evidence of contestation over the meaning of the term within a single period than of distinctively 'epistemic' structures of thought from different epochs. An example of this sort of claim occurs when Foucault cites Dufour's emphasis on "fear and sadness" in his definition of melancholy (rather than the symptoms of delirium) as typical of a classical construction of the disease.[38] Yet fear and sadness had long been part of a medical definition of melancholy, and were in many ways more characteristic of a Renaissance symptomatology than an eighteenth century one (cf. Corax's definition, above). Nor is it strictly accurate to suggest that a "symbolic unity" between body and soul was unfamiliar before the classical period. Indeed, in my examination of texts about melancholy from Elizabethan and Jacobean England I will be concerned to show how even before the broad changes Foucault associates with this period there existed a problematic about a 'metaphoric' exchange of terms within this relationship. All in all, then, the clearly-marked set of differentials claimed by Foucault for historically-separated constructions of melancholy does not emerge from these texts with the force his argument requires.

Despite these objections, the 'synchronic' approach taken by Foucault to discourse about melancholy in the early modern period is a suggestive one for my thesis. While he acknowledges, for example, an Aristotelian interpretation which existed alongside other traditions, he is less concerned to chart the historical intertwining of abstract, pre-given 'ideas' than to study the implication of a number of figurative constructions of melancholy within larger contexts of power. Hence, 'melancholy' is glimpsed in its relation to other discourses – that of the passions, for

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[37] Carol Thomas Neely, "'Documents in Madness': Reading Madness and Gender in Shakespeare's Tragedies and Early Modern Culture", in *Shakespeare Quaterly*, vo. 42, fall 1991, no.3, pp.315-338; 317-13. This critic also takes strong issue with Foucault's claim that the mad were to replace the social position occupied by the leper in the Middle Ages, see p.338.

[38] See Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.118.

example – in order to suggest how its status was fixed within a politically re-modelled notion of subjectivity. Perhaps more importantly for my thesis, Foucault's analysis directs attention towards the significance of melancholy for discussions of the soul-body relationship in this period, and in particular to its implication in discourse about the *dissociation* of soul from body. He suggests at one point, for example, that madness comprises "a movement of the nerves and muscles so violent that nothing in the course of images, ideas or wills seems to correspond to it".[39] He goes on to qualify this claim by arguing that:

> this dissociation between the external movements of the body and the course of ideas does not mean that the unity of body and soul is necessarily dissolved, nor that each recovers its autonomy in madness [...] For when melancholia fixes upon an aberrant idea, it is not only the soul which is involved [...] a whole segment of the unity of soul and body is [...] detached from the aggregate and especially the organs by which reality is perceived.

Foucault is ambivalent here about the suggestion that madness/melancholy can force a split in the "metaphoric relation" between body and soul because for him madness has in the classical period become a kind of language (the "delirious discourse" alluded to above) which encompasses the totality of the subject. The relevance of this theme of dissociation to constructions of melancholy in the period immediately *before* this one, however, is something I will want to enlarge on in what follows, specifically by applying Foucault's formulation about the sense of "autonomy" enjoyed by soul and body to a melancholy that in the Renaissance was still constructed to some extent as pre-discursive.

The kind of broad brush-stroke, historical analysis which I have been outlining so far might appear to ignore one crucial area of discussion about melancholy: that of the subjective experience of the condition in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. It needs to be acknowledged that neither of the two types of primary source I have made central to this thesis – medical tracts and commercial dramas – can be regarded as providing unproblematic access to the individual's experience of emotional and mental trauma. If, as I have suggested above, medical works are no less involved in narrativising the subject of melancholy than plays or other works of

[39] Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p.92.

fiction in this period, then apparently objective statements about the condition will always be mediated through the constructions of an already-figurative medical language. An obvious example is afforded by the use of 'case histories' in these texts which purport to provide precisely such kinds of insight into the subjective experience of melancholy, but which in fact rehearse examples familiar from Galenic and later canonical works of medical literature: classic delusions such as men who believe that their bodies are made of glass, that they are earthenware pots, or that they already occupy the land of the dead. Indeed, it is not through established works of humoral physiology such as these that allusions to contemporary cases of melancholy are to be found. Rather, it is in the unpublished jottings of practitioners who occupied the more marginal and dubious categories of empiric or astrologer that we find contemporary, reported instances of melancholy. Even here, however, it is by no means a straighforward process to discern unmediated experiential data beneath ideological constructions about mental illness.

In his study of madness and related conditions in early modern England, *Mystical Bedlam*, Michael MacDonald has tabulated the references to the various types of mental disturbance recorded in the notebooks of the celebrated astrologer-physican Richard Napier.[40] Melancholy looms large among these complaints, perhaps because what MacDonald describes as "[t]he modish preoccupation of gentlemen and gentlewomen with melancholy" was by now well-entrenched in English social discourse.[41] Indeed, his findings in many respects help to bear out long-standing theories about the class-inflected nature of diagnoses (or more properly, self-diagnoses) of the disease. Calculating, for example, that in Napier's case histories more than 40% of melancholy patients were "peers, knights and ladies, or masters and mistresses", MacDonald goes on to point out that while "[a]lmost two-thirds (65%) of the aristocrats complained of melancholy, about one-fifth (18%) were troubled in mind, and only four (6%) were called mopish".[42] The difference in social milieu is precisely constructed through a difference in terminology: for as MacDonald argues, 'mopishness' was used to describe symptoms which were identical to those of

[40] See Michael MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam: Madness, Anxiety, and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp.150-164.
[41] MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam*, p.112.
[42] MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam*, pp.151-2.

melancholy but exhibited at the poorer end of the social spectrum. They thus carried pejorative connotations about one's attitude to the responsibility to work. Among aristocrats, for example, idleness was "a cause and not a consequence of melancholy": with 'mopishness', the value-system was reversed.[43] Intriguingly, however, this coherent set of indicators for constructing melancholy along social lines was initially worked out not in case notes such as Napier's but in literary, and especially dramatic, texts.[44] Hence even the most objective evidence available to us about the first-hand experience of melancholy carries with it the suspicion that its sufferers are reproducing an *ideology* of the disease which has been formulated within non-medical discourse.

The historicised discussion of melancholy which I will set out in what follows will focus primarily on these discursive and ideological constructions, which gave melancholy its shape and meaning as a medical and theatrical concept in the early modern period. Yet this approach need not preclude a sense of the subjective and emotional aspects of melancholy if we are prepared to follow through the idea that the cultural meaning of melancholy is often prior to, and hence indissociable from, its experience as a disease. By way of substantiating this point I want to invoke an intriguing anthropological and cross-cultural analysis of depression, even though it might at first sight seem to pose only a rather general relation to melancholy in the early modern period. In his arrestingly-titled study "Menstrual Pollution, Soul Loss and the Comparative Study of Emotions", Richard Shweder outlines an approach to what he calls the 'semantic' aspects of depression: that area where the cultural meanings ascribed to the emotions and an individual's subjective experience of them overlap. "Emotions", claims Shweder, "have meanings and those meanings play a part in how we feel":

> What it means to feel angry, indeed what it feels like to feel angry, is not quite the same for the Ilongot, who believe that anger is so dangerous it can destroy society; for the Eskimo, who view anger as something that only children can

[43] MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam*, pp.161-2.
[44] MacDonald quotes John Lyly's *Midas* (1589) which at one point describes melancholy as "the crest of courtier's arms", and includes an exchange in which a barber is repudiated for diagnosing himself with the condition and advised to stick to such terms as "heavy, dull and doltish." *Mystical Bedlam*, p.151. For a more detailed discussion of Lyly's contribution to discourse about melancholy see chapter three of this thesis.

> experience; and for working class Americans, who believe that anger helps you overcome fear and attain independence...[45]

Shweder's account stresses throughout the necessary connection between 'meaning' and 'feeling' whilst carefully avoiding an elision between the two categories. More suggestively for this thesis, he goes on to make specific illustration of how this crucial semantic aspect of the emotions might operate in the case of depressive affect. Citing abundantly from a wide range of anthropological and psychological studies, Schweder suggests that to be depressed is to construct one's emotions in terms of having lost – or been emptied of – a soul:

> When you feel depressed you feel as though your soul has left your body. What you feel is empty, and a body emptied of its soul loses interest in things, except perhaps its own physical malfunctioning as a thing [...] During soul*ful* functioning there is a constant, even if barely noticed, perception of ourselves and others as "spirited", as a dynamic center of initiative and free will organized around an "I" (the observing ego) [...] When the soul is lost that changes. "Dispirited," all that remains is the body and the mind, and a body and a mind do not function very well without will and initiative.[46]

Shweder goes on to detail in compelling fashion the various spatial and mood metaphors which, however varied their expression in different cultures, coalesce around this single, organising idea of interior emptiness or soul loss. It is important to acknowledge that throughout his account Shweder is concerned with the *idea* of the soul within culture rather than the soul *qua* soul: an idea which is always carefully differentiated from any specific religious or theological definition. Nevertheless, belief in the soul, Shweder claims, "is not quite like believing in fairies", since even in the most secularised of cultures a defining idea of personhood which serves to distinguish ideational "subject" from material "object" is part of everday experience:

> Call it the soul, the spirit, the transcendental ego, the subjectivity, the free will, or the "atman," it connects the person with things beyond and with others, and

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[45] Shweder, Richard A., "Menstrual Pollution, Soul Loss and the Comparative Study of Emotions", in Arthur Kleinman and Byron Good, *Culture and Depression: Studies in the Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Psychiatry of Affect and Disorder* (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 1985), pp.182-215; p.186.

[46] Shweder, "Menstrual Pollution, Soul Loss and the Comparative Study of Emotions", pp.193-200.

> it is as real to each of us as it is immaterial. Lose it and you feel dead, cut off, alone, "dispirited" – depressed.[47]

To experience a fully functioning subjectivity and (by extension) its opposite in the form of depression, in other words, is not necessarily to 'have' or even to believe in a soul or its loss, but to be implicated in the network of cultural meanings which always tends to construct these states through the language of the soul and its operations.

There are some obvious dangers attending any attempt to integrate these broad, cross-cultural claims about depression with the kind of historically-oriented approach to melancholy demonstrated by Foucault. Not the least of these is the overly straightforward equivalence it would seem to imply between the states of 'melancholy' and 'depression' *per se*. Yet to claim an homology in the way the *meaning* of these affective states is constructed across different cultures and periods is not necessarily to de-historicize them. One important impetus behind much recent discussion of melancholy in specifically early modern formations has been the attempt to establish some middle ground between the 'universalist' claims of psychoanalytic theory and new historicist readings of subjectivity. Although there are few signs that the impasse between these two camps has been conclusively overcome, I would applaud the effort to address the ever-vexing question of how melancholy as a concept can be both historically-constituted on the one hand, and meaningful, familiar and powerfully evocative for subsequent epochs on the other. In her recent study of melancholia and masculinity, Lynn Enterline has vigorously defended a Lacanian psychoanalytic approach to the formation of melancholic subjectivities in the early modern period. She argues that "[a]ny simple division between two opposing alternatives – either historical or universal analysis – relies on a false problem, glossing over the unevenness of "the historical" and mistaking the critique of certain (oppressive) continuities between historical moments for an argument about a universal human nature beyond the reach of culture."[48]

Enterline's response to what she sees as mis-directed new historicist objections is to invoke the Althusserian concept of "survivals" in the development of a culture's

[47] Shweder, "Menstrual Pollution, Soul Loss and the Comparative Study of Emotions", p.198.
[48] Enterline, *Tears of Narcissus*, p.28.

belief systems: specific forms within a culture which constitute "economically, materially, or politically outmoded constructions that somehow manage to survive 'beyond their immediate life context'".[49] This notion of 'survivals' ultimately provides Enterline with little more than a suggestive counter-weight to the historicist charge of essentialism in her argument. Nevertheless, it does raise important considerations about the way such historical 'continuities' may be indicative less of stable, unchanging formations of selfhood than of a persistence at the deep-structural level of culture of certain dominant figurative constructions of melancholy. Shweder's discussion of the meaning of depression as 'soul-loss' – a figure which I propose as highly evocative of melancholy in the early modern period – can be assimilated to this kind of interpretation if we think of soul-loss itself as providing a comparatively stable 'tenor' to a variety of melancholic or depressive 'vehicles' which differ according to periods and cultures. Shweder addresses, for example, the social and ethnic variables encountered in the process of "somatization", or "perceived physcial consequences of emptiness", which attends the depressive state, claiming that "[o]ne is more likely to focus on [these] perceived consequences [...] if you are nonwhite, non-Protestant and nonmale. Catholic women somatize more than Protestant women. Somatization occurs more in West Africa than in Minnesota", etc. [50] As I interpret such claims, that which *carries* the meaning of depression/melancholia – in this case the body of the depressive – may show a substantial degree of variation and in some respects appear inaccessible to another culture, but the overall meaning suggested by the concept of 'interior emptiness' evidences greater tenacity.

What the foregoing reflections have aimed to suggest is that the effort to isolate a mode of constructing melancholy which has a discursive value beyond the specifics of a particular place and time should not be incompatible with an historical approach. What Enterline identifies as the 'uneveness' of history can be located (at least within the terms of my discussion) not in the existence of trans-historical 'universals' but in the composite manner through which such constructions take shape within a culture. Melancholy in the early modern period was produced at the intersection of a number of different signifying systems and could translate just as easily between a number of different discursive domains. Whilst some of these

[49] Enterline, *Tears of Narcissus*, p.27.
[50] Shweder, "Menstrual Pollution, Soul Loss and the Comparative Study of Emotions", p.196.

systems – those, for example, connected with the bodily signification of melancholia – were evidently specific to this period, others – such as the figure of soul-loss which I suggest constructs melancholic subjectivity at this time – show greater persistence across particular cultures and historical epochs. Yet it is essential to acknowledge that even here the figure of melancholy-as-soul-loss does not retain a genuinely stable meaning but is more properly the product of what may be termed an 'emptying out' of previously existing values and the incorporation of newer ones. In taking such an approach to the concept of early modern melancholy I am drawing on and partly adapting some suggestive introductory remarks made in the final critical work I wish to discuss here: Stephen Greenblatt's *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988).

Although not concerned with melancholy, and having less in general to say on the formation of early modern subjectivity than his earlier *Renaissance Self-fashioning*, Greenblatt's *Shakespearean Negotiations* is acutely aware of how certain cultural artefacts are produced and circulated in society. Greenblatt's introductory chapter, "The Circulation of Social Energy", identifies as its central problematic a concern I have already touched upon in the current debate about melancholy in the Renaissance: how particular (usually literary) texts come to be invested with such artistic and emotional power that they speak across the generations and even centuries.[51] The phrase Greenblatt applies to such power is that of "compelling force", an attribute he goes on to historicise by identifying it with a term adopted by early modern rhetoricians to describe this phenomenon: *energia*. The word suggests to Greenblatt the 'social energy' of his title, encompassing a recognition that the texts and practices in which he finds such energies embedded are collective and shared rather than authorial and original in their nature. Thus the aesthetic power exerted by the works of an apparently solitary genius such as Shakespeare is more properly the product of a set of transactions, negotiations and exchanges which intervene at every stage of the text's inscription. Similarly, this power is communicated beyond the historical moment by virtue of "an irregular chain of historical transactions that leads back to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries."[52] Although it quickly becomes clear that Greenblatt's notion of social energy itself is something of a catch-

[51] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp.1-20.
[52] Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, p.6.

all (he defines it inclusively as "[p]ower, charisma, sexual excitement, collective dreams, wonder, desire, anxiety, religious awe, free-floating tendencies", etc.), its value as an interpretive paradigm comes from the pluralistic nature of the process it envisages.[53]

How might the discussion of melancholy which occupies this thesis benefit from such a paradigm? In the first place, this study is concerned with texts produced in certain professional spheres – the medical and the theatrical – which were themselves of a highly institutional and collective order. In each case the works which address and utilise the concept of melancholy are offered not as the product of individual voices but as appeals to a shared and socially-ratified body of knowledge and belief about the condition. This does not mean, however, that they merely reproduce at all times an authoritative ideology on the theme. As I aim to show in my discussion of the medical texts, part of the process of negotiation and exchange which they demonstrate is between competing theories of the body and of the subject, a sense of contestation which helps to invest melancholy with a particular tension and multivalency in English medical discourse.

Secondly, the means by which figures from one discursive domain, the medical, were appropriated by another, the theatrical, can be well described by reference to the language of social transaction with which Greenblatt frames his argument. Both medical and theatrical texts, for example, make use of the idea of a socially performed melancholy, and this provides an area of potential meaning-exchanges between the two discursive fields. Similarly, the shifting relationship between different genres within the theatre, and even between different performative modes, can be conceptualised as a process of exchange between discourses. Finally, the figure of soul-loss which I have identified as central to the affective experience of melancholy can be shown to be unstable and subject to change if we think of it as one of the "repeatable forms of pleasure and interest" which in Greenblatt's argument provide a nexus for the concentration of social energy. While this figure initially appears to form a constant in the way melancholy is imitated and reproduced throughout Renaissance culture, it is in fact continually being reconfigured according

[53] Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, p.19.

to context and meaning. Hence, what in a medical discourse might be described as the destruction of reason undergone by the madman can be recuperated in a scholastic sense to suggest the expulsion of soul from the body towards the highest and most contemplative regions of thought.

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CHAPTER 1

"Diversity of Subject": body and soul in the medical problematic of melancholy.

In this chapter I want to sketch an outline for the development of the concept of melancholy in early modern medical discourse, primarily (but not exclusively) within modes of writing about the disease in England between the years 1580 to 1630. Such a strategy entails the risk of artificially separating out one particular strand of textual production from the broader exchanges of meaning which 'melancholy' could undergo within the whole of a given culture. Yet by concentrating on melancholy's shaping exclusively within medical discourse I hope to focus attention onto a key trope which becomes associated with the concept at an early stage in its formation within a specifically early modern context: that of a body which has been emptied of a soul. This trope (or mode of constructing melancholy) shows a degree of continuity over time and across different cultural milieux. Yet despite this consistency it also demonstrates a capacity to be reworked according to the various ideological and material contexts in which it becomes utilised. Moreover, it is transferable across distinct discursive fields, and hence could become available for re-contextualization in ways which facilitated exchange between medical and literary-theatrical modes of discourse.

A general axiom adhered to by critics such as Babb, Lyons and Klibansky is that an interest in melancholy arose on the continent, specifically in Italy, much earlier than it did in England, and that the late-sixteenth century upsurge of discourse about melancholy in English culture is the result of a process of diffusion from this source. Such a process seems to be evinced in medical tracts about the disease, which does not itself appear as a separate concern – distinct from generic accounts of the humours – until this period. It is then that texts devoted to melancholy appear both in the native English (Timothie Bright's *Treatise on Melancholy* in 1586, Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* in 1621) and in translation (Andrew Laurentius *Preservation of the Sight* of 1599). These texts consort, moreover, with broader discussions of the

humours (such as Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Mind* of 1601, Thomas Walkington's *An Opticke Glasse of Hvmours* of 1607) which despite their general applicability show a more sophisticated grasp of the special nature and problems surrounding melancholy than was in evidence previously. Nevertheless, a subsidiary aspect of this chapter will be to enquire how far this proliferation of medical writings about melancholy represented merely another example of a somewhat idiosyncratic English appropriation of a trend already established on the continent, and how far concerns particular to late-Elizabethan culture and politics were important in forming a discourse around melancholy that flourished for over fifty years.

Ficino and the scholar's melancholic body

The trope of the melancholic body which lacks, or has been emptied of, a soul first emerges not in England but in Italy, specifically with the texts of the fifteenth-century Italian philosopher Marsilio Ficino. It is possible to find discussions of melancholy scattered liberally throughout Ficino's published writings and private correspondence, but the most organised and influential of these occur in his well-known thesis about the relationship of melancholy to the intellectual life in the *De vita libri tres* or *Three Books on Life* (c. 1489). Ficino's argument takes up the opening chapters of the first of the three books which make up the overall work, *De vita sana* or "On a Healthy Life", and can be briefly summarised here. To enter into the service of the Muses, Ficino declares, it is requisite that one have nine guides constantly in attendance: three of them heavenly, three spiritual, and three earthly. All but one of these nine, he contends, are readily available to the scholar, for among the earthly triad of guides (who include a wise father and a good teacher) "a physician is as yet a desideratum for literary scholars".[1] Ficino therefore elects to fulfil this vocational lacuna with his own suggestions about the nature, diagnoses and regimens of scholarly ills, devoting the early chapters of the treatise to emphasising the hazards – as much physical as mental – that are associated with the practice of study.

[1] Marsilio Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, A Critical Edition and Translation with Introduction and Notes, by Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clarke, Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies (Arizona: Tempe, 1998), p.109.

Ficino's *a priori* treatment of learning as a physical activity, comparable to other physical activities such as running and athletics, arguably aligns his text with conventional approaches to the regimenting, disciplining and training of the body in the period.[2] He goes so far as to assign specific bodily parts to the labour of scholarship: the internal organs of brain, heart, liver and stomach. More importantly, however, Ficino singles out a specific 'instrument' upon which this form of labour depends for its proper execution:

> the spirit [...] is defined by doctors as a vapour of blood – pure, subtle hot and clear. After being generated by the heat of the heart out of the more subtle blood, it flies to the brain; and there the soul uses it continually for the exercise of the interior as well as the exterior senses (*Three Books on Life*, p.111).

In Ficino's view, however, it is an instrument to which literary scholars have been singularly unheeding in their capacity as artisans, even though its proper use would allow them, as he puts it, "in a way to measure and grasp the whole world". Care of the body can thus not only reinforce but provide an essentially *generative* role in the exercise of the mental faculties. For the optimum mode of psychic functioning, Ficino insists, an unbroken chain of association must exist between the lowest bodily substance (blood) and the highest regions of the soul (reason), since it is only by virtue of the mediating role of the spirit that the mind can conduct its contemplative as well as its corporeal acts. Chief among the hazards that can disrupt this balanced economy of body, spirit and soul are the negative powers exerted by two humours, phlegm and black bile, which while "inactive in the rest of the body [...] are busy in the brain and mind" (*Three Books on Life*, 113). It is notable that Ficino distinguishes between the respective realms of influence assigned to each humour. Phlegm, he claims, is secreted as a result of the activity of the *brain*, a process which eventually "suffocates the intelligence", while black bile is produced as a result of the activity of the *mind*, and which consequently "vexes the mind with continual care and frequent absurdities and unsettles the judgement." Although the reliance on humoral doctrine is conventional throughout, the qualitative distinction Ficino makes between the operations of 'brain' and 'mind' in the production of each humoral substance presents

[2] For a wide-ranging account of the development of these procedures in the early modern period see Georges Vigarello, "The Upward Training of the Body from the Age of Chivalry to the Courtly Civility", in *Fragments for a history of the human body: part two*, ed. by Michael Feher, Ramona Nadaff and Nadia Tazzi (New York: Zone Books, 1990), pp.149-197.

intriguing possibilities for much later emphasis on the non-corporeality of melancholy.[3]

In his discussion of how black bile disturbs the scholar Ficino cites a triad of causes which correspond to his earlier tri-partite categorization of aids to learning. There are celestial causes – the influence of the planets Saturn and Mercury – which "impart from birth to their followers" the cold and dry nature which promotes and prolongs the work of study (*Three Books on Life*, 113). Then there are 'natural' causes, which follow on the supposedly centripetal motion of the soul during the act of contemplation. This movement "from external things to internal as from the circumference to the center" is analogous to the earth, the element with which black bile has most affinity. Thus through contemplation of the hidden 'centres' of things, the soul reciprocally produces "a nature similar to black bile" – the nature of melancholy. Finally, there are the human causes of scholastic melancholy: strictly physiological phenomena which comprise the largest part of Ficino's discussion. In technical terms, these can be summarised as an adherence to an argument about the 'expense of spirit': through the activity of thought the brain's moisture is consumed, it's subtler spirits dispersed, the stock of blood required for their manufacture depleted, the faculty of digestion retarded and the body's excremental vapours harmfully retained.

Ficino concludes his litany of the causal factors of melancholy with the following assertion:

> All these things characteristically make the spirit melancholy and the soul sad and fearful – since, indeed interior darkness much more than exterior overcomes the soul with sadness and terrifies it. But of all learned people, those especially are oppressed by black bile, who being sedulously devoted to the study of philosophy, recall their mind from the body and corporeal things and apply it to incorporeal things. The cause is, first, that the more difficult the work, the greater concentration of mind it requires; and second, that the more they apply their mind to incorporeal truth, the more they are compelled to

[3] I.e., does the slippage between physical and mental constructions of the concept, which one sees so much of in later Renaissance texts and which I have already touched on in my discussion of *The Lover's Melancholy*, have its inception in this differentiation at the outset of the *De Vita*? Such considerations are not, however, to suggest that Ficino makes distinctions of this sort intentionally, and in any case, the importance of phlegm to the intellectual health of the scholar recedes somewhat in Ficino's analysis after its initial citation here, at least in comparison to black bile.

> disjoin it from the body. Hence their body is often rendered as if it were half-alive and often melancholic. (*Three Books on Life*, p.115)

I have quoted this passage at length because within it are intimated two particular features whose fortunes I want to trace through subsequent medical texts about melancholy. Firstly, the passage strives to reserve the term 'melancholy' for descriptions of a physical rather than an affective state; and secondly, it deploys an emphasis on the soul's separation from the body as an integral feature of the scholastic experience of the condition. Both of these features mark important contributions to what I want to go on to formulate as the discursive construction of the melancholic body in this period.

In these early chapters of the *De vita* 'melancholy' functions as a descriptive term which is applicable to the physical body of the scholar more than to his mental operations. This is not to say that the term cannot sometimes serve in this text for the mood or disposition associated with the activities of black bile: Ficino uses the term "habitum", for example, to characterize the doltish melancholy which follows upon the manic state arising from the burning of black bile.[4] Nevertheless, the consistency with which melancholy is retained for descriptions either of the humoral substance of black bile or a more general bodily condition is impressive, and suggests that a degree of precision in the use of medical terms is being adhered to. For example, it is noticeable that the faculty of the 'spirit' (which in Renaissance scientific thought traditionally has a corporeal nature) is designated 'melancholy' in the above passage, while the *symptoms* of sorrow and fear apply only to the experience of the soul. This sense of a distinction between the substance and the psychic (also symptomatological) condition is reinforced by the subsequent suggestion that, once the mind has separated itself from the body during the act of contemplation, the body is left "as if it were half-alive and often melancholic". Once again, 'melancholy' appears grounded in the language of the body (even if in this instance the context is one of *disembodiment*) since this particular 'melancholic body' describes the physical residue which is left after the soul has departed.

[4] Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, p.116 (1.27).

In his discussion of the management of scholastic health, then, Ficino demonstrates less interest in specifying melancholy as an affective state than as a physical substance which has variable and occasionally valuable properties. As he proceeds to describe how black bile affects the faculty of intelligence his discussion moves increasingly towards an objectification of the humour and a consequent treatment of it in terms which seem to separate it from the subject altogether. Although this part of Ficino's argument is the aspect most obviously attuned to an Aristotelian construction of melancholy (particularly in its use of the wine metaphor to describe the operations of black bile) his description of the humour's physical properties and his explanation for how it can conduce to intellectual brilliance is, as his editors point out, more original than he gives himself credit for.[5] Black bile should be mixed, Ficino claims, with the other humours in set proportions in order to ensure that its negative qualities are counterbalanced. Then, he advises, let it be "kindled a bit from these two others [i.e. yellow bile and blood], and having been kindled let it shine, but not burn". This composite body Ficino describes as having "much the appearance of gold, but somewhat inclining to purple", which on being heated "takes on in the burning heart various colours like a rainbow". The spirits which are generated from this process are especially subtle and provide a superior instrument for the soul to work with, but they also have their correlates in non-bodily substances, particularly with "that water which is called *aqua vitae*".

The second feature of the passage, the trope of the soul's separation from the body during the act of contemplation, represents another development of a key classical source – in this instance Plato's *Timaeus* – as well as a departure from it. Ficino supports his claim that the soul disjoins itself from the body during intense mental activity by citing *Timaeus* as follows:

> [Plato] said that the soul contemplating divine things assiduously and intently [...] becomes so powerful, that it overreaches its body above what the corporeal nature can endure; and sometimes in its too vehement agitation, it either in a way flies out of it or sometimes seems as if to disintegrate it. (*Three Books on Life*, p.115)

[5] See the editors' commentary notes on this passage in *Three Books on Life*, p.413. For a discussion of the use of the wine metaphor in Aristotle see Klibansky et al, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p.30ff.

Ficino's editors describe this claim as a conflation of two passages from the Platonic text, one of which stresses how an imbalance between the respective strengths of body and soul can lead to the dissolution of the former, the other describing how the bilious humour, if superheated, burns up "the mooring-ropes of the soul, as it were of a ship, and sets her free".[6] In *Timaeus* the two passages are not really connected: only the first pertains to the debilitating effects of philosophical thought on the body and even here there is no mention of the divine as an object of contemplation. Nonetheless, by linking them together Ficino is able to validate the scholar's intellectual labour as something which transcends the body whilst also predicating that transcendence upon a form of noble sacrifice – an exchange of the body's welfare for that of the soul's.

In Ficino's account of scholastic melancholy, then, a causal relationship is established between the soul's disjunction from the body during passages of intense thought and the consequent reduction of the body to a kind of melancholic residuum. Yet the physical substance of melancholy is also itself responsible for the more potent flights of thought since (in its compounded form) it generates precisely that type of bodily spirit which most assists the soul in actions of this kind. The complex nature of Ficino's claims about melancholy is summed up in a final passage from the *De vita* which I wish to quote here:

> the soul with an instrument or incitement of this kind [i.e. the spirits] – which is congruent in a way with the center of the cosmos, and [...] collects the soul into its own center – always seeks the center of all subjects and penetrates to their innermost core. It is congruent, moreover, with Mercury and Saturn, of whom the second, the highest of planets, carries the investigator to the highest subjects. From this come original philosophers, especially when their soul, hereby called away from external movements and from its own body, is made in the highest degree both a neighbour to the divine and an instrument of the divine. (*Three Books on Life*, p.123)

The two characteristic 'movements' of the soul which Ficino has canvassed throughout his discussion of melancholy are reprised again here: a withdrawal *towards* the body's centre (aided by the rarefied spirits of black bile) and a propulsion *away*

[6] Plato, *Works*, trans. by Rev.R.G.Bury, Loeb Classical Library, 8 vols. (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1952), vol.VII, p.233. For Ficino's re-reading of this passage see the commentary notes in Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, p.413.

from the body altogether.[7] Apparently no contradiction is registered in making both sorts of 'motion' endemic to the process of original philosophy, for the construction which underlies each is that of the soul's temporary *absence* from the body – whether this is figured as absence merely from the exterior part of the body, where the ordinary signs of motion and of communication are registered, or the soul's expulsion from the body altogether, leading to a suspension of all corporeal action. Thus, taking into account what has already been said above about the objectification of black bile to the extent of divorcing it from a holistic idea of subjectivity, I want to venture the suggestion here that the trope of the melancholic body as it constructed in the *De vita* coincides in many respects with the trope of a body which lacks a soul.[8]

In tracing the impact of these constructions of melancholy through the subsequent medical literature and into English discourse about the subject, two types of evidence are of particular importance for this thesis: a *general* acknowledgement of the Ficinian texts in English publications about melancholy, and *specific* survivals of those tropes about the melancholic body which I have singled out for attention. In the first instance, I stress the importance of acknowledgment of the texts because the *De vita libri tres* was not itself translated into English in this period and was only rarely known in its original Latin. The recent editors record the presence of an unspecified

[7] For an illuminating analysis of this apparently contradictory formulation see Shiesari: "center and circumference are – without further explanation – joined together in the concentrated understanding of the divinely gifted melancholic, thus closing the interpretive circle" (*Gendering Melancholia*, pp.129-30).

[8] A precise definition of the concept of 'lack' here is, of course, all-important. In this thesis I am using it to cover two historically-specific senses: the lack that figures positively within Ficinian discourse as the soul's release from the body in order to facilitate mental activity, and the lack that is constructed negatively in relation to the mind's capacity to be harmed by the melancholy humour, to the extent that it may even be destroyed through insanity. But a specialized sense of lack associated with Lacanian accounts of melancholic subjectivity needs to be acknowledged here, not least because of its bearing on recent critical readings of Ficino's texts. See especially Schiesari's discussion of Ficino's *De amore* in *Gendering Melancholia*, pp.111ff. Indicating "Ficino's privileging of the concept of loss as the sign of the philosopher's 'divine frenzy' in the positive Platonic sense", Schiesari specifies this loss as a desire for 'narcissistic' unity with the One which has been lost with the act of embodiment. She goes on to draw parallels with this interpretation of melancholy and Ficino's later formulation of it in the *De Vita*, although as she herself acknowledges Ficino never constructs his own melancholy in the neoplatonic terms of *De amore* (*Gendering Melancholia*, p.118). In giving specificity to the trope of soul-loss I am arguing for here, I have also found useful Gill Speak's discussion of melancholy in her article "*El Licenciado Vidriera* and the Glass Men of Early Modern Europe" in *Modern Language Review*, 1990 Oct,; 85(4): pp.850-865. Claiming that "[o]ne self-perception of the late sixteenth century was [...] that of a fragile container housing something ineffable and fundamental to being", Speak rehearses various medical formulations of melancholy in the period which described it both as a "disease of the soul" and either a "splitting" or a "liberation of the soul from the body" (pp.861-2). What such studies suggest for my account is that the signification melancholy-as-soul-loss was deep-rooted within early

work by Ficino, which they conjecture "could only be *De vita*", in a doctor's library list in 1570.[9] Apart from that, any assessment of the influence of the work on English writings about melancholy must be gauged by citation. Robert Burton predictably records the highest tally for references to "Ficinus", and is duly suggested by the editors as the principal English exponent of Ficino's theories on melancholy. It is curious, however, that the editors neglect to mention the much earlier citation of Ficino by Sir Thomas Elyot in his much-reprinted *The Castle of Health*, initially published in 1537 and still enjoying reissue as late as 1610. In his discussion of "*The diuision of melancoly; and the diete of persons melancolike*", Elyot qualifies his list of the detrimental effects of the melancholy complexion with the claim that:

> [t]he natural melancoly kepte in his temperance, profyteth moche to true iugement of the wyt, but yet if it be to thick, it darkeneth the spirites, maketh one timorous, and the wytte dulle.[10]

Alongside this passage the marginalia "Ex Marcilio ficino. de uita sana" has been inserted. This citation indicates both how early an awareness of the principal Ficinian text on melancholy was being registered in English medical discourse, and the precise nature of the claims which were associated with it. Long before the expansion of 'positive' readings about melancholy within late-Elizabethan culture, a correlation was being made between melancholy and the facile exercise of 'wit' (the term here encompassing both a sense of judgement and mental dexterity).

Melancholy as conducive to intellectual prowess was thus a demonstrable legacy of the *De vita* as it was received and circulated in English medical discourse. It remained, however, a relatively minor one, for whilst lip-service was frequently paid to the theme of the melancholic-as-wit in the non-specialist native literature, it never served as an important foundation for a typological construction of the melancholic

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modern thought however divergent were the values placed upon this signification within different systems of ideas.

[9] For this and the discussion of Burton see the editors' Introduction to Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, p.24.

[10] Sir Thomas Elyot, *The castel of helth gathered and made by Syr Thomas Elyot knyghte, out of the chiefe authors of physyke, wherby euery manne may knowe the state of his owne body, the preseruatio[n] of helthe, and how to instructe welle his physytion in syckenes that he be not deceyued.* (London, 1539), C3r.

subject in the medical texts themselves.[11] Instead, the majority of accounts remain focussed on the detrimental effects of black bile for the functions of the mind. More and more in English medical works, writing about melancholy attained its valency as a way of writing about the soul-body relation, to the extent that melancholy is seen as posing a special problem for this relation and often requiring a reformulation of the terms in which it is conceptualised. It is in this sense, I would argue, that the principle tropes which I have derived from the Ficinian construction of melancholy – those encompassing a particular sense of the physicality of melancholy and an emphasis on the separation of soul from body – survive into English medical discourse.

In what follows, I want to illustrate this claim by examining two medical texts which helped to promote the concept of melancholy in England: Thomas Newton's translation of Levinius Lemnius' *The Touchstone of Complexions* (1576) and Timothie Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholy* (1586). In the case of Lemnius' text we encounter a detailed account of the humoral body which emphasises the conventional Galenic theme of its interdependency with the soul. However, the text's deployment of a richly figurative medical language encourages sufficient slippage in its formulation of this relationship to have disquieting consequences for an orthodox protestant construction of the subject. This is especially the case in the context of its treatment of the melancholic body, since the suggestion that this most harmful of complexions could encroach on the well-being of the immortal soul posed a rhetorical and theological challenge which was subsequently taken up by Bright. In addressing this problem Bright's *Treatise* attempts subtly but insistently to underwrite ontological distinctions not only between melancholic symptoms and religious despair but also between the workings of body and mind – an important discursive reformulation, I will argue, of a motif first broached in the *De vita*'s linking of melancholy with the separation between soul and body.

[11] For the literary correlation between melancholy and wit see my discussion of the satriric texts of Jonson, Martson and others in ch.5 below. Even Robert Burton, who by the time of the publication of his first volume of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* had a vast range of non-specialist treatments of melancholy to draw on, only makes occasional reference to its connection with wit (cf. Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1.3.1.3).

The dangers of translation: 'nosce teipsum' and the rhetorical body in Lemnius' *The Touchstone of Complexions.*

The Touchstone of Complexions by Levinius Lemnius was first translated into English from the Dutch by Thomas Newton in 1576. The publisher Thomas Marsh brought out a second edition in 1581 and the work enjoyed a curious belated revival in 1633, when its profile must have appeared not a little diminished by proximity to Robert Burton's three-volume *Anatomy of Melancholy*, by now in its fourth edition (1632). On it's first publication, however, Lemnius' text would have offered one of the most comprehensive and approachable studies of the humours available throughout the late decades of the sixteenth century in England. These virtues are made apparent from the first, as the *Touchstone* advances its pre-eminent concern (and perhaps most prominent selling-point) through the familiar topos of "Nosce Teipsum": the classical admonishment towards self-knowledge. It prints the phrase on the title-page after a long sub-title which advertises:

> *easy rules & ready tokens, whereby euery one may perfectly try, and throughly knowe, aswell the exacte state, habite, disposition, and constitution, of his owne Body outwardly: as also the inclinations, affections, motions, and desires of his mynd inwardly.*[12]

The categories of body and mind, inner and outer, are thus brought together under the same aegis of self-knowledge, both apparently knowable by identical "*rules & tokens*". This theme provides a consistent thread throughout the tract, as in the assertion only a few pages later that "the mindes and Bodyes of men be in a maner as it were yong Sproutes & trees", thus emphasising their mutual capacity for growth and development (*Touchstone*, 3v).

The text's emphasis on the indissociability of body and mind should present no surprises in the context of an early modern treatise on the humours.[13] What makes the

[12] Lemnius, Levinus *The Touchstone of Complexions. Generallye appliable, expedient and profitable for all such, as be desirous & carefull of theyr bodylye health.* trans. by Thomas Newton (London, 1576). Title-page.

[13] This fundamental tenet of humoral theory is fully recognised in traditional critical accounts of melancholy in the early modern period, e.g. Babb's assertion that Renaissance psychology was a "physiological psychology" that "tends to explain mental conditions in terms of physical causes and vice versa" (*Elizabethan Malady*, p.1); cf. also Ruth Leila Anderson, *Elizabethan Psychology and Shakespeare's Plays* (Iowa Humanistic Studies, vol.3, no.4, 1927). More recent accounts, however,

Touchstone's handling of the matter interesting for this thesis are the quantity of rhetorical devices which are employed to make the point. The inter-relatedness of mental and corporeal states is frequently formulated as an unproblematic exchange of terms between the metaphoric and the literal, as in the following passage:

> When the body is refreshed with meate and drinck, all bitternes, sorrow and heauines is expelled, and banyshed. For the Spirites by moderate drinking of Wine are styred vp, and the mynde of man [...] is reuyued. And thys is the cause why a dead body is heauier than the lyuing, because all his Spirites are vanished and departed out of him: and so likewise is a fasting person heauier then one that hath filled his belly: and one that sleepeth waightier then one that watcheth. (*Touchstone*, 5v)

Here the mental quality of "heauines" (initially synonymous with "bitternes" and "sorrow") can subsequently be reified into something corporeal precisely because no distinction is recognized between the responsiveness of body or mind to the stimulus provided by nourishment. The apparent (to a modern reader) absurdity of the idea that a dead or starving body has greater weight than one which is lively and full obtains a perfect logic within a conceptual scheme in which metaphor is the master-trope and in which ethical categories appear naturally to adhere to physical ones.

The body's metaphoricity is therefore crucial to the *Touchstone*'s stated aim of *nosce teipsum*. The bodily signs of health and disease are seen as both meaningful in themselves and fully transferable to the 'inner' person represented by the mind or soul. This gives the humoral body a foundational role in the construction of the subject within medical discourse. It is the primary site of meaning not simply because it is

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have reviewed this commonplace to throw greater emphasis on the social and symbolic significance it would have entailed. Prominent among these is Gail Kern Paster's discussion of the humoral body in *The Body Embarrassed* (1993) which considers the impact of such a belief-system on the "subjective exeperience of being-in-the-body" in this period, most specifically in the social effects of shame (p.3). Paster's discussion, however, merely reinforces a large number of critical discussions most of which identify in humoral theory a characteristically materialist conception of the subject in Renaissance thought which is eventually challenged and replaced by Cartesian dualism. See for example Nancy Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Modern Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); the editors' Introduction (and many individual essays) in David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1997). On the supersedence of early modern paradigms of embodiment by Cartesian philosophy see in particular Francis Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1995); I have also found illuminating the essays in Michael O' Donovan-Anderson (ed.), *The Incorporated Self: Interdisciplanary Perspectives on Embodiment* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), as well as Philip A. Mellor, *Re-Forming the Body: Religion, Community and Modernity* (London: Sage Publications, 1997)

legible but also because it *determines* meanings which are otherwise inaccessible to view – meanings which are held to be 'interior'. On the one hand, this is to say no more than that the *Touchstone* deploys the familiar Galenic idea that where the humours led the mind and behaviour were expected to follow. Nevertheless, the *Touchstone* gives a particular emphasis to the extent to which such determinacy was effected through the *rhetoricity* of the body and its humours. At certain points in the course of its argument the *Touchstone* returns to the idea that the body functions within the constraints of language. In some instances this simply takes the form of indicating how the ideal of the body can be enshrined within the figure of metaphor, as in the following example about what constitutes the perfect (if ultimately unattainable) complexion:

> A body that is in eche respect perfect & sound, may be most aptly termed & called Polyclete's Rule [...] the Metaphore is taken of one Polycletus an excellent & faithfull Image maker [who] in his art of Imagery so artificially handled his worke, & finished the same with such excellent perfection, that al other Carvers & Statuartes in proportioning & framinge theyr Images, set hym before them as an absolute Patterne for imitation. This proverbial figure or phrase of speech, used Galen in his booke *De tued. valetud*...(Lemnius, *Touchstone*, 33v)

In this instance, the normative body-state to which all others are, as Lemnius describes it, to be "applied and leuelled" is itself acknowledged as a fiction, a thing existing outside nature which can only be grasped by metaphor, but towards which nature must nonetheless strive in its pursuit of perfection. A little further on, however, the same proposition about achieving the "best state of body" invites a recommendation of the sort of systematic training which Cicero advocated for the optimum orator and Erasmus for the optimum preacher:

> wee heere doe ascribe and set out a state and habyte of body after such a sorte, as Cicero & Fabius do, an Oratour, whom they would have to be imitated, & after such a sort as S. Chrisostome and Erasmus do describe and furnish out a Preacher...(Lemnius, *Touchstone*, 34r)

Bodily health, it is implied in this case, is analogous in its perfectibility to the verbal artistry striven for by the professional rhetoricians. Not only is the body an object whose fashioning is understood to be best grasped *through* language, but in a more

concrete sense its humours, habits and variegated complexions are as manipulable as the tropes and schemes with which orators and churchmen colour their discourses.

It is in this highly reified conception of the body-as-metaphor, I would suggest, that the *Touchstone*'s argument for the determination of the mental faculties by the humours is to be understood. Language functions not simply to describe and systemize the semeiotics of the humoral body, but to inform the very basis of its operations upon the mind. This much is suggested by a somewhat later passage when, during a discussion of the cold and moist complexion (which corresponds to the phlegmatic humour in the body), Lemnius claims:

> they whose noses bee stuffed with Phlegme & Sneuil, are likewise by the proverbe tearmed *Obese naris*, grosse Witted, applying by Translation, the faulte from the body to the mynde. (Lemnius, *Touchstone*, 114v)

"Translation", synonymous with the figure of metaphor, is evoked here partly in order to characterize the license of proverbial speech which allows a blocked nose to be substituted for a blocked mind. But a more than merely figurative sense is implied for the manner in which the "faulte" undergoes 'translation', as a subsequent suggestion about a remedy for the condition of mental dullness indicates:

> for the redresse of certayne diseases of the head, losse of right wittes, feeblenes of Brayne, dottry, phrensie, Bedlam madnesse, Melancholicke affections, fury and franticke fittes, Phisitions deemed it the best way to haue the hayre cleane shauen of. (Lemnius, *Touchstone*, 123v-124r)

The technique refers to the release of "grosse vapours" which have been blocked in by the excremental matter of the hair and which upon shaving are given "more scope and lyberty to euaporate and fume oute". The process of reification which allows for the transposition of the "faulte from the body to the mynde" here seems to have attained its most overt expression, and even Lemnius feels the need to defend a recommendation which he fears might be regarded as a "vayne or absurde fable". But it is no more than the logical outgrowth of a methodology pursued throughout the treatise, in which values are exchanged freely between humour and habit of mind, and the figures and tropes of rhetoric function as intermediaries between body and soul no less than do the corporeal spirits.

Thus far I have discussed the body and the humours as they are set out in general terms in the *Touchstone*. The passage quoted above on the cure of "Melancholicke affections", however, leads us much closer to the kind of religious and ethical problematic that could arise within a metaphorically-invested account such as that provided by Lemnius. For it is within the context of the melancholic humour that Lemnius' orthodox emphasis on the interdependency of body and mind is to generate its greatest tensions within the construction of the subject according to Christian doctrine. Already at an early stage in the *Touchstone* Lemnius has summed up the established Galenic standpoint on the importance of dietary regulation as follows:

> if the body do abounde and be full of ill humours if the Spirites be unpure & the brayne stuffed ful of thicke fumes, proceding of humours, the bodye and Soule consequently cannot but suffer hurte, and be thereby likewyse damnifyed. (Lemnius, *Touchstone*, 19v)

Disorders among the humours, in other words, are capable of a direct influence over the immortal and immaterial part of the subject, and this influence is not constructed in quasi-scientific terminology but more typically slides into a religious discourse – body and soul are together "damnifyed". As Lemnius immediately goes on to claim, moreover, reprobation of this kind is indistinguishable from insanity:

> Hence proceedeth (as from the very cause) such rauing dotage, and distraughtnes of right wits, hence issueth blockishnes, foolishnes, madnes, and fury, in so much that that they thinke sometymes to see those things that are not before our sences to see, and to heare such words as no man speaketh. (Lemnius, *Touchstone*, 19v)

These symptoms, and hence the attendant threat of 'damnification', are most especially encountered within the cold and dry complexion and its associated humour, melancholy. Characteristically, Lemnius begins the chapter by describing melancholy as a bodily state, but as his argument progresses he is soon speaking of the ways by which melancholy "affecteth both the body and the mynde of man"; of the "infirmity of the minde and reasonable part"; and of the "distemperaunces that infest aswell their bodyes, as theyr myndes" (*Touchstone*, 135r; 140v;145r.)

Lemnius describes the complexion of melancholy as "an extinction of the first qualities" and hence inimical to the very foundations of life, heat and moisture (*Touchstone*, 134v.). In a muted echo of the complex of ideas established in Ficino's *De vita*, the claim is made that "Magistrates and Officers in the Commonwealth, or Studentes which at unseasonable times sit at their Bookes & Studies" are the most predisposed to melancholy, due to the wasting of their spirits (*Touchstone*, 135v.). There is no mention in this passage of any countervailing benefit to accrue to the scholar from melancholy, however, although later on the obligatory nod is given to the general 'wittiness' that arises from the correct proportion of black bile, in this case with Aristotle's problem XXX and its attendant wine analogy explicitly cited. What does take up a large portion of the *Touchstone*'s description of melancholy, however, are typologies of those kinds of individual folly which overlapped with the cold and dry complexion. Drawing on a terminology which extends from a rhetorical tradition (via Cicero) down through a theological one (via Aquinas), Lemnius describes those whose temperaments deviated from the idealised figure of the "*Cordati*" (i.e. those of a good heart): men such as the "*Socordes*" who "nosle themselues in Slouth, ydlenesse, negligence, lazynesse & ease"; the more iniquitous "*Vecordes*" who "ymagine and deuise in their mind nothing but fraud, collusion, deceipt, murther, treachery, burninge, treason, spoyle of their fellow cytizens, destruction to their natiue Countrey"; and finally the "*Excordes*" who exhibit "defectes of the heart, and infirmity of the minde and reasonable part" and "in whom is resiaunte [sic] some parte of Melancholie" (*Touchstone*, 140r.-141r.).

The invocation of these types, in particular that of the excordes – literally, one who lacks a heart – seems to reprise in a new way the linking of melancholy with the idea of a body emptied of a soul. By bringing moral categories such as these under a discussion of the humours – literally introducing them in the middle of a quite technical discussion about the workings of the spleen – the *Touchstone* implicitly endorses a conflation of ethical with medical values. This conflation of values in turns works to support the theme running throughout the work that the corruption of the humours can harm or 'damnify' the soul itself. The *Touchstone*'s discussion of melancholy – the most dangerous and most apt to corruption of all the humours – reinforces the possibility that the soul itself is at hazard from the body, the "infirmity of mind" arising from the imbalance or burning of black bile a question as much

pertaining to the soul's 'destruction' in moral and religious terms as in medical ones. Among the unwritten theological implications for the construction of the subject would be the negation of God's sovereignty over that subject's immortal part and the reintroduction of human, or more specifically bodily, agency into the question of its eventual fate. To judge from the *Touchstone*'s adherence to a largely orthodox protestant theology, including its expressions of distaste over the proliferation of religious sects and a guarded opposition to manifestations of superstition in medical practice, such heretical ideas would be antipathetic to its explicit mode of discourse.[14] Yet *The Touchstone*'s very affinity for metaphor and the rhetorical elaboration of its conceits undermines many of these pronouncements, leaving the spectre of mortalism – the doctrine of the perishability of the soul – hanging over its construction of melancholy and the dangers of corrupted humours.[15] In the next part of this chapter I will suggest that it is this set of discourses around melancholy that serve to establish its meaningfulness for English medical writings about the disease, and examine in detail Timothie Bright's *Treatise of Melancholy* to show both how this problem is negotiated and the construction of the melancholic body given further specificity.

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[14] See the *Touchstone* at pp.25 and 124r.

[15] The sense in which I am using the term mortalism here requires some elucidation. For the standard critical discussion of mortalism in this period see Norman T. Burns, *Christian Mortalism from Tyndale to Milton* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972). One of the best known seventeenth-century expressions of the philosophy is Richard Overton's *Mans Mortalitie: or, A Treatise Wherein 'tis proved, both Theologically and Philosophically, that whole Man (as a* rationall Creature*) is a Compound wholly mortall, contrary to that common distinction of* Soule *and* Body, etc. Overton's title usefully illustrates the distinction which can be made between the religious and philosophical grounds of the heresy, as well as the overlap that tended to occur within this heresy between classical ideas of thnetopsychism – i.e. that the soul dies with the body – and the idea more commensurate with Old Testament theology which ignores the soul-body division altogether. See the editor's introduction for the claim that Overton's "'materialism' is not a sign of unbelief [...] it is rather a reaction from within the Judeo-Christian tradition against its Greek dualistic component", (*Man's Mortalitie*, ed. by Harold Frisch (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1968), p.xviii). The sense I am implying above for my discussion of the medical texts is not, of course, that of a systematically worked-out version of these philosophies but of a loophole within their entirely orthodox arguments about melancholy and madness which allow for the suggestion of the soul's destruction. Yet the extent to which such arguments about mental disease could be implicated in mortalism is indicated in the following passage from Overton: "If [the soul] be the *Rationall Facultie*, then all men are borne without *Soules*, and some die before they had *Soules*, as *Infants*; and some after their *Soules* are gone, as *Mad-men* that live and perish in their *madnesse*", etc (*Man's Mortalitie*, p.29).

God's providence and the physician's hand: rethinking the humoral body in Bright's *Sufficiencie of English Medicines* and the *The Treatise of Melancholy.*

Timothie Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholie* was the first full-length work devoted to the subject of melancholy in English. First printed by Thomas Vautrollier in 1586, it was a considerable publishing success: within six months the first edition had sold out, and it was sufficiently well-remembered to be reprinted in 1613, by which stage a plethora of new and translated works on the topic had passed through the presses. Bright himself was cited on the title-page as a "Doctor of Phisicke", having graduated as M.B. from Cambridge in 1574, and in addition to the *English Medicines* of 1580 had also had the two-part *Hygieina* (1582) and *Therapeutica* (1583) to his name.[16] By the time he came to compose his work on melancholy he was in line for, if not actually installed in, the post of physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, a position apparently alluded to in the dedication to the *Treatise*. The title-page of the *Treatise* presents the work as the product of a scholar and a professional, one who is concerned to ground his analysis of melancholy in a system of orderly scholastic reasoning: he aims, for example, to describe the "cavses thereof, & reasons of the strange effects it worketh in our minds and bodies", and to make subtle categorical distinctions between "an afflicted conscience" and melancholy itself.[17]

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[16] General information and publications on Bright are scarce. I am not aware of a critical edition of the *Treatise of Melancholie* or of any other medical work by Bright. The facsimile edition listed below remains the most widely available edition of the work. I have relied on two biographies of Bright for details of his professional life: *Timothie Bright Doctor of Phisicke. A Memoir of "The Father of Modern Shorthand*, by William J. Carlton (London, 1911); and Geoffrey Keynes, *Dr.Timothie 1550-1615: a survey of his life with a bibliography of his writings* (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1962). Such critical attention as Bright has received has been mainly excited by claims that his *Treatise of Melancholie* may have had some influence on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: see especially Mary Isabelle O'Sullivan, "*Hamlet* and Dr.Timothie Bright", in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* vol. XLI, no.3, pp.667-79; and the discussion in John Dover Wilson, *What Happens in 'Hamlet'*, 3rd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951, 1986), pp.309-20. For a review of the evidence see the editor's introduction to William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Harold Jenkins, Arden Shakespeare (London: Routledge, 1982), pp.106-8. Examples of recent citation and discussion of Bright include Radden's anthology *The Nature of Melancholy*, pp.119-128 and David Houston Wood, "'He Something Seems Unsettled'", *passim.*

[17] Bright, Timothie *A Treatise of Melancholie: containing the cavses thereof, & reasons of the strange effects it worketh in our minds and bodies: with the physicke cure, and spirituall consolation for such as haue thereto adioyned an afflicted conscience.* (London, 1586: Amsterdam, De Capo Press, 1969), title-page. See Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, for the claim that "Bright's confidence in reason is obvious in his entire critical method, which depends on syllogism, abstract logic and analogy" (p.144).

In "The Epistle Dedicatorie" to the work Bright gives the following justification for devoting a whole treatise to the subject of melancholy alone. Having described the efficacy of his profession in alleviating "phrensies, madnesse, lunacies, and melancholy", Bright goes on to assert that:

> The notable fruit and successe of which art in that kinde, hath caused some to iudge more basely of the soule, then agreeth with pietie or nature, & haue accompted all maner affection thereof, to be subiect to the phisicians hand, not considering herein any thing diuine, and aboue the ordinarie euents, and naturall course of thinges: but haue esteemed the vertues themselues, yea religion, no other thing but as the body hath ben tempered, and on the other side, vice, prophanenesse, & neglect of religion and honestie, to haue bene nought else but a fault of humour. (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholie*, iijr)

Bright's treatise, in other words, will comprise a defence of his profession, but one of a paradoxical kind: for it is the very success of this "art" of the body in curing the psychic as well as the corporeal aspects of the person which Bright claims has introduced a threat to the existing order of medical knowledge.[18] This threat is posed by an unidentified group who hold materialist opinions about the soul, and believe that all mental activity – good or bad – can be explained in terms of bodily 'temperature' and "humour". As Bright goes on to explain, his counter-argument to these claims will comprise two parts: a demonstration of "howe the bodie, and corporall things affect the soule, & howe the body is affected of it againe", which occupies the first 31 chapters of the treatise; and a discussion of "what the difference is betwixt naturall melancholie, and that heauy hande of God vpon the afflicted conscience" which occupies the remaining nine (*iij v). Through this later introduction of a debate about conscience, Bright can discuss a phenomenon which he believes exists wholly apart from the body's 'humoral' activities, and which can thus be utilized to push apart the corporeal and spiritual spheres which he believes are being collapsed by his opponents in the argument.

[18] For the perceived threat within medical philosophy of a "reduction of psychic phenomena to somatic states" – and the charge of atheism which this could entail – see John Henry, "The matter of souls: medical theory and theology in seventeenth-century England", in *The Medical Revolution of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. by Roger French and Andrew Wear (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.87-113 (90); cf. also David N. Harley, "Medical Metaphors in English Moral Theology, 1560-1660", in *The Journal of the History of Medicine Allied Sciences*, vol.48 (1993), pp.396-435.

There is, of course, no requirement to assume that Bright has any specific group of individuals in mind when he speaks of the "prophane obiections" of these materialists, or that their presence at this point in his discussion is anything more than a hook on which to hang the wider ramifications of his argument. As Bright demonstrates elsewhere in the dedication, he is not averse to using rhetorical strategies to facilitate acceptance of his argument, as in the overt acknowledgement that it has been constructed

> in a simple phrase without any cost, or port of words to a supposed frend *M.* not ignorant of good letters, that the discourse might be more familiar then if it had caried other direction it otherwise would be. Chaunge the letter, and it is indifferent to whome soeuer standeth in need, or shal make vse thereof. (*iiij).

The "supposed frend *M.*" raises the possibility of an equally supposed antagonistic party of materialists whose arguments need to be countered, and this is supported by Bright's failure to provide any specifics in the remainder of the treatise beyond a later reference to "a Stoicall prophanes of Atheisme" which sneers at religious awe (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholie*, p188). Yet by indicating at this early stage his opposition to such arguments, while rehearsing them under the aegis of a discussion of melancholy, Bright is able to draw attention to those very aspects of Galenic theory which were most vulnerable to the tropings and slippages of a metaphorically-rich medical language: namely, those pertaining to the status of the soul. In contrast to the kind of writing I have associated above with Lemnius, Bright's discussion will not elide the distinction between the "vertues" (and vices) exercised by the immortal soul, and the "fault of humour" which is independently responsible for some kinds of mental suffering.

Bright pursues this polemical objective by predicating his discussion of the humours and their interaction with the soul on a conceptual scheme which reads the body with a subtly different emphasis to that of the *Touchstone*. Specifically, where Lemnius had read the humoral body for its implication in language – for its rhetoricity – Bright reads the same body for its providential meanings. This does not mean that Bright eschews metaphor in his discussion of the body's operations or, indeed, in its processes of interaction with the soul. Indeed, the *Treatise* has even been praised for its 'poetic' qualities in such passages as the description of the soul's operations as

resembling a watch-piece, although this will not always be evident to the modern-day reader.[19] What is significant, however, is that Bright's use of rhetorical conceit is more cautious, more judiciously applied, and in particular is put to the service of a description of the immanence and agency of God in His creation. The 'providential' body as Bright constructs it, therefore, is no less an attempt to supply the body and its humours with meanings beyond its mere subsistence as crude matter, but these meanings are now there to act as safeguards for an ideology of God's operation as an ultimate cause in nature.[20] In order to get a clearer understanding of the relationship between the body and Providence it is helpful to look first at an earlier work in which Bright made a similar case in a more general manner. Six years prior to the *Treatise of Melancholie* Bright had composed his earliest surviving work, *A Treatise, wherein is declared the sufficiencie of English Medicines, for cure of all diseases, cured with Medicine*.[21] This little tract is not an easy one to categorize: Paul Slack in his study of medical works in English during this period places it in the most nebulous of his divisions, that dealing with "Reflections on theory and practice" and which comprises "books criticizing or defending the medical profession and its current treatments", although its detailed accounts of regimen and herbal remedies would make it equally attractive to readers looking for solely practical information.[22] What makes the work interesting for my argument, however, is the manner in which Bright stakes out his opposition to the use of foreign medicines on the religious and intellectual high ground, marking this out as a work in which providential and commercial agendas can both work to support one another.

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[19] See Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, pp.9-10.

[20] For a discussion of providential ideas in early modern medicine and the interweaving of medical and theological discourses see Harley, "Medical Metaphors", esp.pp.399-405. Cf. also Harley's conclusion that "an unsystematic medical morality based on the doctrine of providence was a by-product of [reformation preachers'] metaphors" in this period (p.434). For an insightful account of providential ideology in general in this period see Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, 2nd edn. (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), esp. pp.83-108.

[21] Although the dedication cites the author only as "T.B.", the STC lists it under Bright's works with the additional note "Also attributed to an (apparently non-existent) Thomas Bedford." As my analysis intends to bring out, parallels of style and argumentation are too close to leave the matter in serious doubt.

[22] See Paul Slack, "Mirrors of health and treasures of poor men: the uses of the vernacular medical literature of Tudor England" in *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* ed. by Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1979), 237-273 (243-5).

In terms of the intellectual basis of his argument, Bright takes the earliest opportunity to present himself as "a Philosopher by profession, & for the publike benefite".[23] For Bright the categories of philosopher and physician are in fact interchangeable, for the simple reason that the system of healing derived from Galen was grounded in certain universal principles which had to be grasped through philosophical training. Specifically these principles are those pertaining to the operations of temperature and moisture, but his argument also relies upon those which recognize the key scholastic distinctions between matter, form and function:

> Hearbes, Trees, stones, Mineralls and metalls, Earthes, Waters, and all Fruites, are matter onely, and not the very medicines them selues, for as Physicke it selfe is an art, and the action artificiall, and not of nature, so are the instruments of the same action artificiall, and not natural. (Bright, *English Medicines*, p.8)

The clear surmise to be drawn from Bright's contention that medicine is not medicine unless it is applied via "artificiall" action is that only the physician trained up in such principles can endow the herbs etc. with their healing properties. Apart from the obvious professional value of stressing this principle of indissociability between medical practice and theory, such remarks are important in preparing the ground for the main concern of the thesis: to show how such theory can 'prove' the incommensurability of foreign-grown medicines to native diseases.

Bright does this by transposing a teleological understanding of the workings of nature, which can again be traced to Galen, to a defence of "the Christian doctrine of God's prouidence" in supplying all the bodily needs of his creatures (p.9). Bright is explicit in directing his attack (as he would later do in the *Treatise of Melancholie*) against "the Atheist of this age" who sees in the workings of nature only "Fortune and Chaunce". Their arguments are grounded upon the observation that foreign nations supply remedies which have only come to light through navigation and trade, and hence which cannot have been pre-ordained for the native diseases they heal. To this Bright proffers the objection that such imports

[23] Bright, Timothie *A Treatise, wherein is declared the sufficiencie of English Medicines, for cure of all diseases, cured with Medicine*, p.7.

> might be proued to bring more harme to our countrie men, then commoditie: both in respect of the diuersitie of complexion of our bodies from those of straunge nations to whom they properly belong, the corruption of their outlandish wares, and selling of one thing for an other, and the withholding from vs the best of choyce. (Bright, *English Medicines*, p.11)

Several important features can be isolated in this objection. As Bright will go on to argue in more detail, the very fact of constitutional difference – especially as it is manifested in the bodily "complexion" – rules out *a priori* any possibility that these imports will benefit his countrymen, however much "superfluous pleasure" they initially bring. On pp.16-17 he does provide a number of examples of the different tolerance levels between Englishmen and other nationalities to foreign drugs in support of the teleological principle that "euery medicine hath a relation to the diseases of the inhabitant". From this, however, he goes on to assert tendentiously: "the question is not of the maner of vsing these thinges [...] but euen of the very nature, which no manner of vse can alter" (*English Medicines*, p.18).

This 'proof' of the exact relation of a part of the environment (in this case the drug) to an aspect of the body (in this case the disease) amounts to a vindication of the principle set out in Galen that nature is 'artistic' – that is, she employs foresight – in her disposing of the operations of nutrition. For Galen, the body itself had been a site of competing discourses, one of which stressed nature's artistry, the other – associated with the so-called Epicurean Atomists – which portrayed her as random, wasteful and chaotic. Central to Galen's teleological argument was his description of nutrition as a process of *assimilation* by the specific selection of a nutriment to its appropriate part in the body.[24] For Bright a similar discursive conflict is in play over the body's intake of substances, although that conflict's meaningfulness has now been revalued in terms of an opposition between 'atheism' and 'God's providence'. The 'humoral' body as Bright constructs it here thus operates as the sign of God's providential disposition of nature, since the humours are the direct product of those external nutriments which are taken into the body. The optimum state of health enjoyed by that body is not now the result (as in Lemnius) of adherence to a sanctioned rhetorical model – to the "state and habyte" of an orator or preacher – but of a properly-observed relationship to an

[24] See Galen *On the Natural Faculties*, trans. by A.J.Brock (London: William Heinemeann, 1916), p.43.

(explicitly national) environment. One advantage of such an approach is that Bright's support of a providential discourse of the body can now in turn be used to carry an argument for isolationism in trade, as the above quotation from p.11 of *English Medicines* shows: opening with the theoretical point about the "diuersitie of complexion of our bodies" from those of foreigners, the passage has soon moved to an objection about the quality of goods in exchange, and the duplicitous commercial practice of "withholding" from purchasers the "best of choyce."

The features I have isolated above from Bright's *English Medicines* highlight the extent to which a number of different agendas could be woven together into a single polemical tract, so that they become mutually supportive. Bright's equation between physician and philosopher, derived from Galenism, can supply him with a theoretical platform from which to promote his anti-foreign and anti-commercial arguments, which in turn imply the validity of his philosophical approach. These arguments were all amenable to an orthodox medical position (as exemplified, for example, by the Royal College of Physicians) and to that extent Bright's treatise appears to espouse a medically conservative ideology. There are, however, a number of passages in the *English Medicines* which also indicate support for a less rigidly Galenic form of medical practice, and suggest the deployment of secondary discourses which help to underwrite the providential argument. Towards the end of the treatise, for example, Bright is discussing the efficacy of English purgatives. This provides him with an important test case within his argument because of the particular reliance of English physicians on foreign simples in making these remedies: it represented a material, rather than a purely ideological, endorsement of the value of imported medicines.[25] Bright's response to this difficulty is to introduce a discussion of how a practice of "preparation" may help to optimise the purgative effect of native herbal produce (*English Medicines*, p.42). As Bright is using the term, this involved the separation, by heat or by solution, of a substance from its impurities, and its attraction for him lies in the way in which, he claims, "one nature may according to the varietie

[25] As he puts it, since "the greatest dout is of natures prouision in them, so they being supplied by our countrie soyle, the greatest part of this controuersie may seem to be decided", *English Medicines*, p.40.

thereof receiue diuerse, yea contrary vertues".[26] His enthusiasm for the technique becomes plain in the following passage as he describes how

> Diuerse and in a maner all the metals, and mineralles, being burnte and washed, giue ouer their freating nature, and quickesyluer (which of it selfe, is not sublimed, or precipitated) becommeth a vehement scouring medicine: so likewise Antimonie, before it be turned into glasse or oyle, is not knowne to purge the bodie, which beeing done is greatly commended against the dropsye, the French pockes, melancholie, and diuers other diseases, which it cureth by purging...

With these metal and mineral (rather than herbal) examples Bright indicates a willingness to countenance the practises and remedies of chemical medicine, although many of these (in particular Paracelsianism) were explicitly opposed by the practitioners of an orthodox Galenic methodology. For Bright, however, the two divergent and hostile schools of thought can be reconciled in his discussion through the revival of a concept he had introduced earlier; namely, the distinction between naturally occuring substances and their transformation via 'art' into medicine. For, as he goes on to argue:

> it seemeth art of preparation, as it maketh no nature (that being a worke of the vniuersall nature) so may it not only be a preparer, but euen a maker of medicines, which medicins are not natures as hath ben before declared, but qualities in natures, euen as health, and sicknes are not of the nature of man's body, but euen accidentes thereto. (Bright, *English Medicines*, p.43)

The passage recalls the earlier remarks on p.8 of the treatise on the conversion of herbs, trees and stones into "instruments" of healing, and the scholastic form/matter dichotomy it utilized to suggest how the physician's "action artificiall" was essential in creating this distinction. Through such modes of reasoning Bright can present these unorthodox techniques as an integral part of his defence of native remedies, as he demonstrates in the following passage by openly commending

> the industrie of *Alchmistes* [...] farre more excellent then the common *Pharmacopolia* rather so to be called then *Pharmacopoiya*, by the skil whereof

[26] For an example of the use of "preparation" in this context see I.W. *The copie of a letter sent by a learned physician to his friend, wherein are detected the manifold errors used hitherto of the apothecaries* (London, 1586), A2v-A5r, where substances such as Antimony and Mercury are described in the state of "perfect preparation [...] that is to separate him quite from his impurities".

> diuerse natures in one thing are so exactly seuered, euery one hauing a diuerse operation. (Bright, *English Medicines*, p.43)

As Charles Webster has pointed out, this praise of alchemy at the expense of the "*Pharmacopoiya*" comprises an attack on the "apothecaries' ignorance of botany" combined with an "advocacy of the demonstration of the medicinal properties of English herbs by chemical means".[27]

What emerges, then, from the seemingly straightforward argument of Bright's *English Medicines* is an unexpectedly complex structure in which theoretical, commercial and unorthodox medical interests can all gain footholds. The central concern of the tract, a defence of the providence of God against those who see foreign medicines as an indictment of His foresight, entails the promotion of an orthodox, Galenic construction of the body emphasising a relationship of dependency between itself and the native herbs belonging to a specifically national environment. This agenda is lent additional weight, however, through the introduction of an argument in favour of the chemical separation of the hidden properties of these herbs, implying that the revelation of providential meaning within nature could be best achieved by recourse to newer and more controversial scientific methods. The text's interweaving of providential ideology with an endorsement of these new methods was characteristic of a growing strain of dissent amongst medical practitioners. This strain included strong, radical Protestant affiliations and often set itself in opposition to the policy of elitism (both commercial and methodological) exercised by the College of Physicians. Indeed, Bright's often recourse to the ideology and language of Calvinism will become apparent in the examination of the *Treatise* to follow. It is within such an

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[27] Charles Webster, "Alchemical and Paracelsian medicine" in *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* ed. by Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1979) 301-334 (329). Such remarks help to identify the sorts of medical activity Bright was probably being prosecuted for by the College when he himself sought to practise in the capital. They also raise the question, however, of how far Bright's defence of native produce may be an expedient in support of chemical therapy rather than the other way around. As Bright shows elsewhere in the *English Medicines* he is not averse to modifying his providential beliefs about the relation of native herbs to English bodies, for example when he approves of those foreign simples "which receiue, as it were a taming, and are broken vnto vs by our owne soyle" (Bright, *English Medicines*, p.18). In this case the commercial interests which have facilitated this partial revision are allowed close to the surface, as Bright suggests: "Wherefore as there be many excellent Gardens in *England*, especially in London, replenished with store of straunge and outlandish simples, it were to bee wished such endeuours were of others followed, that so we might acquaint vs better with these straungers, and by *Vsu copiae* make them our owne" (Bright, *English Medicines*, p.21). A similar degree of expediency may be ascertained in the use of the defence-of-providence argument to commend a practise which was banned by the College-based monopoly.

oppositional tradition that Charles Webster places Bright when he groups him with some of the more outspoken radicals in sixteenth-century medicine who were gathered around the Paracelsian Thomas Mouffet, and whose shared features included disputes with the College, education abroad, and "associations with strongly Protestant circles."[28] In some cases this opposition went so far as a rejection of the entire groundwork of pagan philosophy (Galen, Aristotle) which underpinned established medical practice, although Bright himself is clearly adopting a more moderate stance of integration between newer and older ideologies. Although published in London, *The English Medicines* was written while Bright was practicing in Cambridge after his return from the continent, where he could afford to be more overt in voicing any tenets of medical eclecticism, as shown not merely by his remarks on alchemy but others which, had they been made in London, could well have been construed as a repudiation of College monopolies.[29]

Bright's preferment to the post of physician to London's St.Bartholomew's Hospital in 1585 finally brought him within the orbit of the College of Physicians. Antagonism between the two parties developed quickly, and the cause is widely conjectured to have been over unauthorized medical practice.[30] The College wanted to see a local candidate in the position, not the least in order to curb the freedoms enjoyed by the hospitals in their appointments: the post had just been vacated by Peter Turner,

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[28] Webster, "Alchemical and Paracelsian medicine", p.329 and fn.78.

[29] Bright's opposition to monopolies in medicine emerges with the many references in the *English Medicines* to the need for "publicke benefite" over "priuate gain" (p.46; see also pp.23, 32). At another point in the treatise Bright asks: "is Physicke only made for rich men? & not as wel for the poorer sort? doth it only waite vpon Princes palaces, & neuer stoope to the cottage of the poore? doth it onely receiue giftes of the king, and neuer thankes and prayers from him that hath but thankes and prayes to bestowe? or doth the Lords goodnesse passe ouer them of lowe degree?" These remarks are all developed out of the main discussion on the distribution of medicines, where they provide rhetorical support for the argument against the high prices asked for imported drugs. Their general applicability, however, to physicians who reserved themselves only for those customers who could reciprocate their attentions financially and intellectually (i.e. through a shared humanist education) is clear. On the élitism of the Fellows see C.Donald O'Malley, "English Medical Literature in the Sixteenth Century", in *Scientific Literature in Sixteenth & Seventeenth Century England: Papers delivered by C.Donald O'Malley and A.Rupert Hall at the Sixth Clark Library Seminar, 6 May 1961* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1961), p.8: "many of the best trained and most capable physicians deliberately [would] isolate themselves in the homes of the nobility and so deny their services to the mass of the people". As Paul Slack has cautioned, such calls for the 'popularization' of remedies (in this case via printed works) are often best viewed as "calculated advertisements" ("Mirrors of Health", p.237).

[30] For the following biographical details I am drawing on Keynes, *Dr.Timothie Bright*, pp.6ff. For a definition of what constituted unauthorized practice, see Pelling and Webster, "Medical Practitioners", pp.182ff. Technically referring to practitioners who operated without a license, the term need not

himself a Paracelsian sympathiser. In a pattern which was to become familiar in Bright's career, however, he relied for his recommendations on highly-placed contacts rather than the sanction of medical colleagues – in this case, Sir Francis Walsingham, who as ambassador in Paris had sheltered Bright and other Englishmen fleeing the St.Bartholomew's Day massacres.[31] Once the dispute came to a head it was through the intervention of no less a body than the Privy Council that Bright's position was eventually secured. It was nevertheless some two years before any attempt was made by the College to move against Bright, when he was brought before the College Censors in late 1587 on an unrecorded charge.[32] It was against this background of protracted official hostility from the College that Bright composed his most important work, a work which both reprised and extended some of the key discourses I have discussed above. Where, however, the *English Medicines* had made the body's relationship to its physical surroundings the core problematic in testing and re-affirming Bright's providential theology – and was not concerned with similar problems which may have arisen from the construction of the soul-body relationship – the *Treatise of Melancholy* shifts the emphasis decisively into this latter arena.

Two of the opening strategies voiced in the *Treatise* are already anticipated in the earlier *English Medicines*: the opening rebuttal of "the atheist of this age" which finds a corollary in the comments on a materialist doctrine of nature in the *Treatise of Melancholy*'s "Epistle Dedicatorie"; and Bright's insistence on the indissociability of the categories of physician and philosopher. The latter is made evident by the announcement on the title-page that the treatise will contain "*diuerse philosophicall discourses touching actions, and affections of the soule, spirit, and body*", and its reiteration in the "Epistle Dedicatorie" as an additional selling-point:

> I haue enterlaced my treatise besides with disputes of Philosophie that the learned sort of them, and such as are of quicke conceit, & delited in discourse of reason in naturall things, may find to passe their time with...

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imply the use of unorthodox techniques. Typical epithets used by College members, however, tend to focus on their 'ignorance' and 'boldness', suggesting infringements at an ideological level.

[31] Keynes, *Dr.Timothie Bright*, p.6. For Walsingham's assistance during the St.Bartholomew's Day massacres see Keynes' account on p.3.

[32] Keynes, *Dr.Timothie Bright*, p.7.

In the earlier tract the stress on the physician's philosopher status had been an important plank in Bright's defence of providence. Here, however, this theme is seemingly shifted to the margins of the main argument, announced almost as a leisurely adjunct to the theological position Bright has set out to defend. What emerges more prominently at this introductory stage of the *Treatise* is Bright's recourse to another kind of discourse to support the providential argument. In the address "To His Melancholicke friend: M" which follows the "Epistle Dedicatorie", Bright suggests that "*the gracious prouidence of our God, and the manifold graces of his bountifull hand vnto men*" will ensure that M.'s sufferings represent "*your raising vp againe and more high aduauncement into the assurance of Gods loue and fauour*". Bright follows this claim with an extended metaphor of the purification of metals which serves to give further definition to the role of God's providential action:

> For as of all mettalls gold is tried with most vehement heate, and abideth the oftenest hamering of workemen for the refyning [...] so now euen that heauenly refiner, holdeth you in this hote flame for a time, till being purified and cleared from that drosse of sinne which cleaveth so fast, to our degenerat nature, you may make hereafter a more glorious vessel.

This passage, I would suggest, works to introduce at an early stage of the treatise the 'chemical' language of burning and separation: techniques which Bright had explicitly praised in the earlier tract. Indeed, a close link between chemistry and the purification of gold is made in the second chapter of the *Treatise*, where both techniques are used as similes for describing the 'concoction' of food in the body. In this instance the "artificiall Chymist [...] in his laboratorie" is equated with the "naturall Chymist" of the digestive system, and both praised as exemplary practitioners of the art of preparation.[33] Thus the providential action of God – the "heauenly refiner" of Bright's first passage – in trying the individual by spiritual fire is seen to intervene in the mental and emotional traumas of the subject no less than it does in the physical body.

[33] "as we see gold or siluer, before it be proued with fire appeareth no other then all alike: but afterward is discouered by the burning crucible to be much otherwise; so fareth it with nourishments, whose diuerse partes are layd open by so manifold concoctions, and cleansings, and strainings, as are continually without intermission practized of nature in euerie mans bodie: no gold finer, more busie at the mine, or artificiall Chymist halfe so industrious in his laboratorie, as this naturall Chymist is in such preparations of all nourishment: be it meat, or drinke, of what sort so euer" (Bright, *Treatise*, p.4).

My point here is that where the *English Medicines* supported its main argument by endorsing the *techniques* of chemical separation as a tool for manifesting God's providence, these opening passages in the *Treatise of Melancholy* do the same by deploying chemistry as a metaphor – as *discourse*. This explicit use of the chemical metaphor is local and particular: it does not recur in the remainder of the treatise. What it nonetheless bequeaths to the larger argument, I would suggest, is a key figure for constructing both melancholy and the soul-body relationship: that of 'diversity' and the complex of secondary meanings and connotations that surrounded this term. 'Diversity' in the application of herbs, it will be recalled, was one of the principal benefits to accrue from the chemical process of 'separating' a substance from its impurities. 'Diversity' is now to be applied to the discussion of melancholy, only here with greater emphasis on the *rhetorical* force of separation: of definitions, one from the other; and subsequently (and even more importantly) of soul from body. Bright devotes his first chapter of the thesis proper to discussing the "diuerse maners of takinge the name of melancholie", separating out the numerous connotations which develop from the basic dichotomy with which he begins:

> It signifieth in all, either a certayne fearefull disposition of the mind altered from reason, or else an humour of the body, commonly taken to be the only cause of reason by feare in such sort depraued. (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.1.)

From this there follow definitions of the natural and unnatural forms of the humour; the humoral or excremental manifestations of the natural type, and its normal and corrupted aspects; the 'adusted', or burnt, manifestations of the unnatural type, and its origin in the other humours; and finally the separate designation of "melancholie passion" to distinguish it from melancholy humour, with which it nevertheless originates. To these are added the promised distinction between melancholy and the "conscience oppressed with sence of sinne", thus ensuring that an etymological difference has been established between the humour and the passion, and a causal difference between the passion and afflicted conscience. This ramification of meanings fully supports Bright's insistence throughout the chapter on the key motif of

diversity in his account: the words "diuerse", "diuerslie" and "diuersitie" occur eight times altogether in the opening chapter, excluding the title.[34]

Since the treatise as a whole will be concerned with distinguishing afflictions of the body from afflictions of the soul, the latter being sent by God, the bulk of its earlier chapters are concerned with grounding the thesis in a theory of the body and its nutritional operations before proceeding to an understanding of the soul's operations. The basic conceptual scheme is once again overtly Galenic, locating the origins of melancholy among the humours, and the humours in turn among the body's intake of substances. The exposition of this scheme near the start of the treatise ensures that all subsequent pronouncements on melancholy are underpinned by this central idea of the humour as an internal nutriment itself derived from external nutriments.[35] As in the *English Medicines*, the argument about the relation of food to the body is explicitly teleological, and works to underpin the notion of the body's function as ordered by (and in turn demonstrating) God's direct intervention in nature. Where the earlier treatise had adapted this argument to the workings of the body politic, however, stressing the appropriateness of native substances to the natives themselves, the *Treatise of Melancholy* remains concerned primarily with what goes on within the body itself:

> The bodie containeth partes linked notwithstanding in one communitie, of diuerse natures, which drawe out of the masse of nourishment that which is meete ech one for it self: which though it in apparance, & shew, semeth vniforme, yet containeth it diuersity, as the sundrie parts require: which diuersity being distinct in nature, & confused as it appeareth in one by the cloke & garment of an vniuersal forme; by natures Mechanical operation (the very patern of all arts, both liberall and seruile) is discouered & brought into an actuall substance consisting of his single & proper nature, which before had only a potentiall subsistence as members and parts haue in the whole. Which producing I vnderstand not a discouerie only, as by withdrawing a vaile, to shew that which lay behind it, but a generation and coupling of matter with the forme; which forme it bringeth not with it, but receaueth it as it were an impression from the part. (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.12)

[34] Emphasis on 'diversity' in discussions of melancholy is a theme much noted by commentators: see most recently Radden, *Nature of Melancholy*, Introduction p.8ff.
[35] See Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, chs. 1 and 2, where melancholy is described as both "the grosser part of the bloud ordained for nourishment" (pp.1-2) and as one of the "naturall humours" which "rise of nourishment" (p.4).

A number of important features emerge from this passage which bear further scrutiny. The reference to "natures Mechanical operation" harks back to the earlier image of the body as an "artificiall Chymist" under the guidance of God the "heauanly refiner", and helps to reinforce the providential argument. Perhaps more important, however, is Bright's emphasis on the body's divisibility and plurality; a standard Galenic concept, but one which accrues additional meaning here since this bodily 'diversity' can be placed in opposition to assertions about the soul's essential unity. Indeed, this strategy is deployed uppermost to counter the claims of those materialists who see the habits of the mind as the products merely of the "fault of humour", and hence the soul itself as an entity coterminous with the body's activities.

This problem is addressed in two key chapters of the *Treatise* (chapters 9 and 10) which follow upon the familiar description of the body's humoral and nutritional operations. In order to understand in what manner a bodily humour such as melancholy may afflict the mind, Bright suggests, we must first obtain a general understanding of the relationship between body and soul. The two are not only distinct in provenance – "the bodie of earth [...] & the soule inspired from God, a nature eternall and divine" (*Treatise*, p.47) – but are differentiated by their very modes of composition, since 'division' is held to be a characteristic of corporeality itself. Countering objections that the soul is either "not of such excellency, as in truth it is; or else that our nature consisteth of three soules, to which severall faculties, and actions are allotted", Bright instead argues that the soul's multifarious capabilities represent the operation of "one vniuersall, and simple facultie" whereby with an "instinct science" it utilises the body as an instrument which can perform the variety of tasks required of it (*Treatise*, p.42).[36] For as he goes on to argue,

> if we plant so many faculties in the soule, as there be outward, and inward actions performed by vs, it certainely could not be simple, but needes must receiue varietie of composition...

[36] I take Bright's objection here to the existence of three souls to be an allusion to the Aristotelian tenet that the soul consists of three major divisions: the nutritive (vegetable), sensitive (animal) and rational parts. It will be noted that Bright is collapsing the distinction in this passage between the generally-received idea of three 'faculties' and the rarer claim about three individual 'souls' in his argument. In doing so I believe that Bright is polemically opposing a general orthodoxy about the tripartite nature of the soul which was part of his culture's medieval and Aquinian inheritance and which was still being accepted by Burton (see *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1.1.2.5).

Such simplicity of faculty contrasts entirely with the body's own "varietie of composition", which "resembleth the matter whereof it was made: and is distinct into diuerse members, and diuerse parts" (*Treatise*, p.47).

How then, being of such distinct natures, can body and soul communicate with one another at all? In line with the majority of medical thinkers at this time, Bright suggests that an intermediary force is supplied by the 'spirit', a corporeal substance which is nonetheless more excellent than that of which the body is composed.[37] Just as Bright has opposed the conventional scholastic tripartite division of the soul, so too does he set himself in opposition to "certaine Philosophers" who believe that the soul is "fettered" to the body rather than merely "handfasted therewith" by this median zone or "meane" of the spirit (*Treatise*, p.37). Yet being of a corporeal nature these spirits can inevitably be depraved by the body's action, and the interaction between body and mind which they facilitate necessarily becomes complicated. When this happens,

> the bodie and spirits affected, partly by disorder, and partly through outward occasions, minister discontentment as it were to the mind: and in the end breake that bande of fellowship, wherewith they were both linked together. (*Treatise*, p.38)

One consequence of this, Bright argues, is that "the minde seemeth to be blame worthy: wherein it is blamelesse: and fault of certaine actions imputed thereunto: wherein the bodie and spirite are rather to be charged" (*Treatise*, 35). This emphasis on mediation is crucial, for all harms suffered by the thinking and feeling subject which apparently arise by the body's action are now understood to be communicated only indirectly to the mind. In those instances where "the bodie seemeth to offer violence to the soule", Bright suggests, we should rather suppose that:

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[37] For the nature and role of the spirit in the early modern subject see, for example, Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, ch.1 *passim*; for a recent reappraisal of the dynamic and circulatory metaphors attending ideas about the functioning of the spirits see Gail Kern Paster, "Nervous Tension: Networks of Blood and Spirit in the Early Modern Body", in Hillman and Mazzio, *Body in Parts*, pp.107-125. It is interesting to note that this doctrine of the spirit's corporeality does not also entail an emphasis on division within them in Bright's account. Here again, as in his discussion of the soul, Bright opposes orthodox theory and makes of them a single nature with diverse applications: "I know commonly there are accompted three spirits: animal, vitall and naturall: but these are in deede, rather distinctions of diuerse offices of one spirit; then diuersity of nature." (*Treatise*, pp.46-7). The median role of the spirits is maintained by making their nature on the one hand corporeal, while in their composition they are brought closer to the soul's singularity.

> no alteration of substance, or nature, can rise there from, nor anie blemish of naturall facultie, or decaye of such qualities, as are essentiall vnto the soule: otherwise might it in the end perish, and destroy that immortall nature; which can not by anie meanes decaie, but by the same power which created it. (*Treatise*, p.39)

Against the materialist supposition that the soul is made perishable by its community with earthly things, Bright opposes a Calvinist certainty in the indestructible nature bestowed upon it by God's providence. Decay of the body cannot represent a corresponding decay of the soul, for it is impossible that any symptom manifested in the mind could be the direct result of the "fault of humour" exhibited in the body. The idea of "applying by Translation", as Lemnius does, "the faulte from the body to the mynde" is implicitly refuted by carefully drawn distinctions between the functions of each component part of the subject.

"[A]ll an eye, all an eare, all nose, tast and sinewe": affirming the soul's excellency in the *The Treatise of Melancholie*

Bright's systematic efforts to distinguish between the respective natures of body, soul and spirit are forcibly made in these early chapters of the *Treatise*. Such theoretical points require elaboration and articulation if they are to be effective as part of the larger argument, however, and in the remainder of this chapter I want to illustrate how Bright employs rhetorical as well as analytical means for upholding his central concern with the soul's freedom from interference by the humours. Indeed, in what follows I hope to show how the *Treatise*'s manipulation of the motif of 'diversity' works to reinforce this idea of the soul's independence by enacting a rhetorical separation between the melancholic body and the immortal and spiritual subject. This process can be well illustrated by considering a key aspect of Bright's emphasis on 'diversity' in melancholy: the differentiation between its natural and unnatural types. This went to the heart of his argument about the independence of the mind from the body, since melancholy 'adust' was associated with the most egregious of all the symptoms of mental disorder. Bright attempts to make a distinction between the psychic effects of natural melancholy and those of its unnatural counterpart in the following terms:

> Besides the former kindes, there are sortes of vnnaturall melancholie: which I call so rather than the other, bicause the other offendeth onely in qualitie, or quantitie: these are of another nature farre disagreeing from the other [...] This sort raiseth the greatest tempest of perturbations and most of all destroyeth the braine with all his faculties, and disposition of action, and maketh both it, & the hart cheere more vncomfortably... (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.110).

In fact this distinction is not rigidly upheld in Bright's account. Although each humour has a different aetiology, the basic physiological process by which they disrupt the workings of brain and heart is the same, the main difference being one of degree. In the case of natural melancholy this process occurs by "vapours" emanating out of the spleen, so that:

> "the instrument of discretion is depraued by these melancholic spirites, and a darknes & cloudes of melancholie vapours rising from that pudle of the splene obscure the clearnes, which our spirites are endued with...". (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.101)

The account is thus explicitly physicalist: it is the 'blackness' of the melancholic fumes which, as Bright goes on to argue, darken the "internall light" of the senses and prompt the kind of "fansies [...] vayne, false, and voide of ground" which accompany true darkness. In the case of melancholy adust:

> the passion whereof the humour ministereth occasion by this vnkindly heate aduaunceth it selfe into greater extremities. For becoming more subtile by heate, both in substance, & spirit, it passeth more deeply into all the parts of the instrument it selfe... (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.111)

The more pernicious effects of unnatural melancholy thus turn out to be mainly due to its greater incursion into the internal organs rather than any difference of "nature". In a subsequent chapter, an analogous process by which the organs of the body are darkened and obscured also points up the similarity of symptoms between the two types of disease: Bright describes how "all the natural actions [...] are become weaker, & as it were smothered with this soote of melancholie" (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.127). Nevertheless, it is through his account of melancholy adust that Bright raises perhaps the central question of his treatise, "whether reason it selfe be not impaired by these corporall alterations, and the immortall & impatible mind hereby suffreth not violence" (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.112). His answer to the contrary involves him in a mode of reasoning which to the modern reader seems to foreshadow a Cartesian division between the mind and its sensory instruments:

> For the mad man, of what kinde soeuer he be of, as truly concludeth of that which fantasie ministereth of conceit, as the wisest: onely therein lieth the abuse and defect, that the organicall parts which are ordained embassadours, & notaries vnto the mind in these cases, falsifie the report, and deliuer corrupt recordes.

This argument, tendentious as it might appear in isolation, has been prepared for during the previous chapters when Bright enlarge upon the question of the relationship between body and mind, and by what means the former can affect the latter. These chapters involve various discursive constructions of this relationship,

which as the above metaphor suggests include the familiar analogy of the soul as Prince within the body. It is perhaps significant, however, that this passage portrays the "ordained embassadours, & notaries" – that is, the senses – as not merely deficient in delivering their false report to the mind, but as actively misleading. Such a portrayal needs to be seen in the context of a wider debate conducted in the earlier chapters which examines the origin "without externall obiect, or outward cause" of the "perturbations" or passions of the soul, and the extent to which the bodily organs and the humours themselves have an active or a passive role in this process (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.100). The question is an important one for Bright because it represents a contested area in the field of subjectivity. As he remarks:

> not onely the common opinion so taketh it but these affections are accompted of the Phisitians for tokens of such complexions, & such humours raigning in the bodie. (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.8)

It is against this notion of the humours as determinants of the individual subject that Bright directs his argument. This involves him in a detailed account of how the passions are aroused which succeeds in relegating to a wholly subsidiary influence the role of the humours. Bright is adamant that the passions and the humours are entirely distinct, both in terms of their numbers and their locations in the body.[38] He is particularly concerned to stress that the affections "rise of the frame alone of the hart", thus giving them an origin significantly at variance with that which involves the vicissitudes of heat and moisture.[39] Indeed, this distinction between the heart and the blood which passes through it leads to a subsequent formulation which negates the latter's status as an aspect of subjectivity:

> it were verie contrarie to reason, to attribute an action of so necessary use as are the perturbations vnto that, which is no organe of our bodies, but onely matter of food and nourishment... (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.87).

[38] Bright argues that all perturbations derive from two simple passions, love and hate. Therefore, these "being but two primitiue passions, howe may we with reason referre them to the humours, which are foure" (p.84). He subsequently goes on to suggest that "if they rise of humour, then should those parts wherein humours most abound, be instruments of passions, and so the gall of anger, and the splene of sadnesse, and not the hart, which is the seate of all those affections" (p.85).

[39] Bright does concede that "temper" may be "ioyned" with the frame of the heart in generating passion, but states that "the humours haue so small force in making temper [...] that them selues are all thereof framed" (p.85).

In flat contradiction to those who treat the humours as determinants of character, this passage works to locate them outside the boundries not merely of the mind but of the body itself. The contested area of 'nutrition' allows for this through its ambivalent signification as both internal and external "matter". Taken into the body and transformed into its substance, nutriments still cannot partake of the *idea* of the body which, for the purposes of this passage at least, becomes reified in its 'organs'. This way of constituting the subject by placing body and mind in opposition to the extra-subjective humours is expanded in a subsequent chapter, which maps onto this dichotomy a further opposition between activity and passivity. As Bright describes it:

> the mind is the sole mouer in the body, and [...] the rest of the parts fare as instrumentes, and ministers: whereby in naturall affections the humors are excluded from cheefe doers, and being no organicall partes serue for no instrumentes. For whatsoeuer hath any constant and firme action in our bodies, the state of health remayning firme, is done either by the soule, or by the partes of the bodie: of which the humours are neither, and so vtterly secluded of nature from any peculiar action to any vse of the body. For that they are said to nourish, it signifieth only a passiue disposition, by which through our nourishing power, they receiue the Character of our nature, and are altered into the substance of the same, they themselues giuing ouer their priuate action, and submitting to the naturall concoctiue vertue... (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, pp.91-2).

In this passage, the defining characteristic of the subject is expressly that of activity, a property bestowed upon both the mind and the bodily "parts" or organs. The initial description of these organs as "instrumentes", a potentially ambivalent designation, immediately re-evaluates them as "ministers", ensuring that a relative autonomy of action is maintained for them. It is noticable, however, that the formula slips somewhat towards the end: the "passiue disposition" of the humours does not exclude a prior notion of "priuate action", so that the relationship between them and the body is more than one of form imposed on "matter of food and nourishment", but requires an element of 'submission' on their part. This anticipates the ensuing description of the body in a state of sickness, where the political metaphor becomes overt:

> while the body is in health, the humours bear no sway of priuate action, but it being once altered, and they euill disposed, and breaking from that regiment

> whereunto they should be subiect, are so farre of from subiection to the disposition of our bodies, and strength of our partes, that they oppresse them and [...] despise that gouernment, whereto by natures law they stand bound.

In order to reconcile this apparent contradiction between the notions of the humours as passive purveyors of nourishment and active disruptors of bodily stability, Bright reinforces the idea of their essential alieneity from the body when describing them in their active state. The unruly humour, he argues, can affect the "orderly actions" of the body by means of "a spirit which it possesseth, either contrary altogether, or diuerse at the least from ours". These humoral spirits become "intermixed with ours", generating internal strife and disfunction:

> our spirit (of a quieter and more stable disposition,) [...] striuing as it were to subdue this bastard spirite and vnwelcome ghest, can not giue that attendance vpon his proper duety, which naturally it should. (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p.95).

Since, as I have argued above, the text always constructs the humours as something extraneous to the subject, the distinction here is really between two sorts of "ghest". The first is designated "ours" and is welcome in the body due to its passive and obedient disposition. The second, active and in need of subjection, is constructed as the alien other and correspondingly abhorred. At the same time, the text's imagery has shifted implicitly from that of a rebellion in the state to that of a discordant household. This latter construction works to support meanings suggested by the earlier notion of "priuate action" among the humours. In its initial use as part of the political metaphor the phrase emphasised the submission of autonomous, individual action to a higher form of activity – the "constant and firme action" of the mind and the organs. 'Privateness' in this earlier context, however, increasingly drifts towards the notion of enclosure, of the distinction between what is 'outside' and what belongs within the private domain. The disease of humoral imbalance is thus depicted, I would suggest, as the resumption of "priuate action" within this domain: the body's stability is threatened by a source of autonomous activity which resides within itself, but is necessarily constructed as an 'outsider'.

Thus far Bright has been talking in general terms about the extent to which perturbations are 'caused' by the humours, and has not yet made special

mention of melancholy. His basic concern has been to lay down a model of subjectivity by which the humours can be clearly differentiated from the truly 'active' categories of body and mind. When they do take on active status it is not as "cheefe doers" of action in the body, but as outsiders or foreign invaders. The text utilizes the unstable position of nutrition at the edge of subjectivity to grant the humours only provisional status within the body's conceptual boundary. Once they corrupt and pursue their own "priuate action" they are in effect expelled from this 'community' of parts. Bright continues to stress that such "priuate action" does not imply any "power" in the humour concerned, by which he means that its effect in the body remains purely physiological and does not reflect that humour's 'innate qualities'. It disrupts the body's organs through the emission of vapour or heat, but does not bestow the 'character' of (for example) anger upon them. Nevertheless, by denying the humours any role in determining subjectivity, the account opens up a space for the construction of the humorally-imbalanced body itself as increasingly alienated from the subject. This construction works especially well in the case of melancholy, which thus represents the apogee of the sense of alienation created by humoral disorder.

Having given his general account of the disorders generated by the humours, Bright returns his debate to melancholy itself. Its effect on the body's organs is consistent with the rest of the account, since it works in the same fashion as "the former humours, giuing occasion, and false matter of these passions, and not by disposition as of instrument" (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.101). Its principle difference, apart from the specifically dark and foggy spirits it produces, is the one which has been maintained throughout the treatise:

> Of all the other humours melancholie is fullest of varietie of passion, both according to the diuersitie of place where it setleth, as brayne, splene, mesaraicke vaines, hart, womb, and stomach; as also through the diuerse kinds, as naturall, vnnaturall [...] These diuerse sorts hauing diuerse matter, cause mo straunge symptomes of fancie and affection to melancholike persons, then their humour to such as are sanguine, cholericke, or flegmaticke...

This reintroduction of the theme of "diuersitie", however, following the previous discussion about humoral alienation from the body, helps to broaden out the term's conceptual range. Additional meaning has accrued to it via the earlier remarks about the production of a humoral spirit which is "contrary altogether, or diuerse at the

least from ours." The term's usual connotations of plurality now absorb this further suggestion of 'difference', or 'strangeness', as the passage underscores by linking the "diuerse sorts" and "diuerse matter" of melancholy with the production of symptoms which are "mo straunge" than those of its fellow humours. It is this emphasis on melancholy's 'strangeness' which the following chapters increasingly pursue. It emerges partly in the description of the outlandishness of its symptoms, for example in the range of emotional responses it produces from extreme depression to "a kinde of Sardonian, and false laughter". 'Strangeness' also emerges, however, in the manner in which the body is increasingly rendered as an unfamiliar landscape. The spleen which produces the melancholy fumes, for example, ceases to resemble a body part and becomes instead a "pudle", an "hidious lake" from which the "mist of blackenes" arises (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.102; 106).

More significantly, this same quality of unfamiliarity is procured to the principal organs of the brain and heart in their relationship to the external world. After the brain, for example, "hath plentifully drunke of that spleneticke fogge", its spirits are corrupted and "their indifferency alike to all sensible thinges, is now drawen to a partiality, and inclination, as by melancholy they are inforced" (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.103). Such "partiality" gives rise to the delusions associated with melancholy, and the transformation of the known and familiar into the hostile and fearful. Bright's analogy for this process is of the creation of an "internall darknes" which mirrors the external darkness in leading astray the imagination. It is noticeable, however, that such an analogy seems to threaten Bright's governing principle that the humour's effects are only ever physiological, as in his remark that this "internall darknes" represents "not an absence of light only, but [...] a presence of substantiall obscurity, which is possessed with an actuall power of operation". Bright reiterates the point that such effects are not "in the nature of the humor, but as it disturbeth the actiue instrumentes", but the text itself continually seems to want to construct it otherwise (*Treatise of Melancholy*, 109).

The most important sense in which melancholy involves the quality of strangeness, however, emerges in the relationship between soul and body itself. Bright's very attempt to demonstrate that this disease affects the organs of the body but not the soul or mind which they serve, inevitably leads to the two categories being

pushed further apart. This emerges in such metaphors as that of the deceptive servants with which I began this account. Here the erstwhile "ministers", now "surcharged" with melancholy, are recast in the role of "embassadours, & notaries", and later as corrupt "officers" and "importunate and furious solicitors". The shift in emphasis is thus towards roles with contingent or doubtful loyalties, and particularly in the case of the "embassadours" towards those which admit contact with what is foreign, extraneous. The result, I would suggest, is to lend the organs of sense increasingly doubtful status as part of the subject itself. This suggestion gains support from subsequent chapters, such as that which immediately follows on "*Howe sickenesse and yeares seeme to alter the minde...*". Bright's interest in the "alteration of defect" which the mind seemingly undergoes in these circumstances leads him into a discussion of its ability to function under conditions of separation from the body, in order to prove the mind's fundamental independency of the organs of sense. Since this cannot, of course, be ascertained in the case of "soules departed", Bright takes the case of the mind's experiences during sleep, a condition which he regards as ontologically the same as death (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.116). In sleep, it is Bright's contention that the soul remains:

> all an eye, all an eare, all nose, tast and sinewe, without distinction, as these seuerall instruments which nowe it employeth make shew of.

He supports his claim by insisting on the sensory awareness of the mind in dreams, and dismisses the obvious objection – that dreams are merely sense-impressions derived from the memory – by emphasising the strangeness of dreams from everyday experience, and their possibly divine origin. This seems to be proof enough of the fact that "soules haue sense of thinges without organicall senses." What interests me here, however, is the way in which the above passage, in keeping with the wider argument, works to appropriate the body's faculties away from it. The use of the term "sinewe", for example, has the effect of reduplicating in the soul not merely the faculty of touch but the body's very quality of instrumentality. There is the further suggestion that this transposition to the soul of the body's sensory functions actually improves on them, since it exercises them "without distinction"; that is, wholly and completely and not as parts of what he calls the body's "compounded substance". So while the argument is rehearsing traditional suppositions about the respective roles of

soul and body in the act of sensation, the text itself increasingly marginalizes the body's contribution to this aspect of subjectivity. What is true of the body's contribution in health is equally true of it in disease, as Bright is now at liberty to claim: "all those which seeme to be faculties altered in sicknesses, be only organicall dispositions, which the soule vseth as she findeth them" (*Treatise of Melancholy*, 119).

The subsequent chapter on "*The accidentes which befall melancholicke persons*" demonstrates how the *Treatise of Melancholy* displaces the diseased body in general, and the melancholic body in particular, from its definition of the subject. The chapter opens with the assertion:

> As all other states of bodie, so the melancholick sheweth it self, either in the qualities of the body, or in the deeds. (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, 123)

There follows a list of the symptoms which belong with each of these categories. The qualities of the melancholic's body are given as coldness and dryness, swarthiness of skin, hardness and leanness of flesh, and "vnchearefulnes of countenance". The "deeds" of the melancholic's body encompass both actions which are "animall" (voluntary) and "naturall" (involuntary), and "certayne workes and effects" of the natural actions which comprise the lowly products of nutrition. In describing the "animall" actions, however, Bright is mainly concerned with "actions of the brayne" and related attributes which seem as much part of the psychic make-up as "states of bodie". He treats, for example, of the melancholic's powerful memory, firm opinion, doubts, suspicions, "terrible dreames", sad and fearful affections, and their prediliction towards "solitarines, morning, weeping" etc. The point, of course, is that Bright is indeed regarding all these melancholy symptoms as actions of the body rather than of the soul, to be treated alongside the natural actions of "appetite [...] concoction, digestion [...] excretion" etc. to which his account proceeds. On the one hand, then, the chapter works to ensure that all symptoms of melancholy are treated solely as aspects of the body: on the other hand, by including within a single discussion of the body's "deeds" both the actions of its organs and the products of nutrition, it elides the distinction between the two categories which had been made earlier in the *Treatise*. The body, which had previously been brought within the compass of the subject, is

now pushed into the same extra-subjective area as the humour which is surcharging its organs.

What emerges from the rhetorical strategies used in these central chapters of the *Treatise*, then, is an attempt to construct the melancholic body as alienated from the thinking and feeling subject. This process amounts to yet another reconfiguration of the trope I have been tracing throughout this history of medical texts about melancholy, one which portrays the melancholic body as being emptied of a soul. Where Ficino had deployed this trope as a literal description of the thinking activity of the scholar – so that the soul's separation from the body left it "half-alive and, as it were, melancholic" – and where Lemnius had integrated this motif into a set of moral and social typologies, what we see in Bright's *Treatise* is an emptying of subjectivity from the melancholic body which is by contrast *discursively* performed. Through the rhetorical expulsion of the melancholic body to the margins of the subject a very specific agenda is assayed: the reinforcement of a Calvinist emphasis upon the supremacy of God's agency and a corresponding denial of the body's influence in all matters relating to the fate of the soul. Melancholy as it was constructed through the system of the four humours posed a particular problem within Calvinist ideology since it appeared to reduplicate the effects of coldness, blackness and decay in the very innermost, immortal part of the subject. Through a painstaking analysis of the processes of articulation between body, soul and spirit, however, coupled with a description of the melancholic humour which places it on the peripheries of the 'active' nature which defines subjectivity, the dangerous translation of physical into mental qualities is circumvented. Nonetheless, both the form and mode of this argument is open to complication and moments of self-contradiction. Carol Thomas Neely, in her brief discussion of the *Treatise*, finds that Bright's "careful distinctions between spiritual and physiological melancholy repeatedly collapse" as symptoms ascribed to the one state too closely parallel those associated with the other .[40] So much can be illustrated by looking briefly at Bright's discussion of the difference between melancholy and the afflictions of conscience in chapters 32-5.

[40] Neely, "Documents in Madness", p.319.

Bright's account characteristically labours hard and at length to make clear distinctions between these states, so that all doubt is dispelled over the possibility that anything other than a divine influence could procure harm to the human soul.[41] Comparison with parallel remarks by Lemnius in the *Touchstone* on the causes of melancholy is once again instructive, for Lemnius's tendency to argue from a position of rhetorical unity between body and soul leads him to cite the afflictions of conscience as the last in an ascending series which begins with the "staying of [the] Hemorrhoides" and "stopping of [the] naturall Purgations", moves through excessive sorrow and "Study at unseasonable houres", and culminates in the assertion that "Many through conscience of their former misdeeds [...] have plunged into these Melancholicke affects, driving themselves many times into [...] fury, madnesse, and want of right minde".[42] For Bright, however, the assertion that "the affliction of the soule through the conscience of sinne is quite another thing then melancholy" is fundamental in underpinning his argument over the mind's integrity. In chapter 33 of the *Treatise* he produces a long list of comparisons between the two states, which devolve upon the distinction between the presence of "fancy", or imagination, in melancholy and its absence in the case of afflicted conscience. It is true that Bright, like Lemnius, recognizes a link between afflicted conscience (visited by God) and the symptoms of melancholy which may result from it. His argument, however, is much more sophisticated in its discussion of the causal processes involved, once again stressing the intermediary role of the spirits in helping to bring about the natural infirmity, which in turn perpetuates the spiritual one.[43]

Addressing his correspondent M's particular case at last, Bright suggests that he is suffering from precisely such an instance of melancholy caused by and in turn exacerbating a genuine affliction of conscience sent by God. Whilst for the reprobate

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[41] See for example Bright, *Treatise of Melancholie*, p.194: "the minde as it is impatible of anie thing but of God onely that made it, so standeth it in awe of none but of him, neither admitteth it any other violence then from him, into whose handes it is most terrible and fearefull to fall."

[42] Lemnius, *Touchstone*, pp.228-9. It should also be noted that Lemnius allows for both a divine and a human provenance for afflicted conscience: in the passage quoted above it is the sufferers who 'drive themselves' into melancholy, but immediately afterwards he is describing how "God putteth the wicked in feare" etc.

[43] " whatsoeuer is besides conscience of sinne in this case, it is melancholie: which conscience terrified, is of such nature [...] that it easilie wasteth the pure spirit, congeleth the liuely bloud, and striketh out nature in such sort, that it soone becommeth melancholicke [...] whelpes of that melancholicke litter [...] are bred of the corrupted state of the body altered in spirit, in bloud, in substance and complexion [...] This increaseth the terrour of the afflicted minde..." (*Treatise*, pp.195-6)

this would signify a first step on the road to "eternall destruction", for M it represents no more than a "fatherly frowning [...] to correct that which in you is to be reformed" (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.190). That which must be reformed, it transpires, is a condition peculiar to those predisposed towards the cold and dry complexion:

> melancholiks [are] most disposed, by reason of the euill temper of their bodies to this affliction [i.e. of conscience], not by power of the humor, which resteth in their bodies, & toucheth not the minde, but by reason they are more curious & distrustfull then other complexions... (Bright, *Treatise of Melancholy*, p205).

This denial to the melancholic humour of any power over the mind is of a piece with Bright's strategy for displacing the melancholic body from his definition of the subject. Yet this passage begs the question as to what kind of 'humoral' activity the faculties of curiosity and doubt can represent here? Although Bright had earlier treated these symptoms as mere physical effects arising from the corrupted organ of the brain, in this instance such activities seem to belong more truly to the realm of the mind, the more so given that they render the sufferer:

> doubtful, & ielous of his estate, not only of this life, but also of the life to come; this maketh him fall into debate with him selfe, & to be more then curious [and] desirous to know more then is revealed in the word of truth... (*Treatise of Melancholy*, p.199).

Deep contemplation of matters pertaining to the other world, a debate within the "selfe" about things divine and unknowable, threatens at this crucial moment in Bright's argument to bring melancholy – and thus the body itself – back within the realm of the subject: to elide once more the distinction between melancholy and the conscience of sin which the *Treatise* has laboured so hard to uphold.

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In this chapter I have outlined the trajectory of a specific trope associated with melancholy which I believe can be traced in a number of early modern medical texts. Beginning with Ficino's development of Platonic ideas about the physical state of the scholar in moments of extraordinary cerebration, I have suggested that this core motif of a body which has been emptied of a soul comes to be revalued in specific ways and

within specific cultural formations, often in the service of distinct ideological agendas. I have spent some time discussing Timothie Bright's *Treatise of Melancholy* because I believe this text provides a good example of the kinds of revaluation such a trope could undergo. Against the literal interpretation of the soul's absence from the melancholic body as a kind of internal death, exemplified by the "excordes" of Lemnius' *Touchstone* and supported by that text's predilection for a translation of qualities between physical and mental states, Bright's *Treatise* enacts (not altogether successfully) a rhetorical separation of soul and melancholic body into distinct ontological realms. In each case the trope subtending both of these constructions is the same, but the meanings they carry and the textual strategies used to implement them are radically divergent. Just as importantly, Bright's *Treatise* illustrates how other forms of discourse could be integrated into a discussion of melancholy, so that for example an interest in unorthodox chemical methods could be used indirectly as a way of introducing the emphasis on 'separation' and 'diversity' throughout the text.

There is another benefit in focussing on Bright's *Treatise*, however, which lies in the recognition it has been afforded as the only key English medical work on melancholy prior to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* over forty years later. As such it has been the subject of several attempts to link its discussion to some of the major literary treatments of melancholy in the late-Elizabethan and early-Jacobean periods. Perhaps the most persistent of these has been the question of how far Bright's delineation of the melancholic sufferer can have influenced Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Those looking for a 'key' to the idiosyncratic acts and speeches of the melancholy Prince have invariably come away from the *Treatise* disappointed, and even the oft-cited 'verbal parallels' argument has been found by editors to be greatly overstated. Another suggested instance of Bright's presence in a theatrical text is more interesting, however, and its suggestions of verbal indebtedness more convincing: John Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (1599). I will consider this play at greater length in the chapters that follow, but it can be noted here that a (notoriously corrupt) passage from one of Antonio's soliloquies, in which he describes himself as in the grip of a "speckling Melancholy/That morphews the tender-skinned", is illuminated by comparison with Bright's assertion that the many impurities retained by this complexion "causeth that morphewe, which ofte staineth melancholicke bodies, and bespeckleth their skin here and there with blacke staines of this humour" (*Treatise*, p.177). The transposition of

this clutch of symptoms to a class context, in which the primary sufferers are those with 'tender skins', is all Marston's own. Nonetheless, the resonance in phrasing and ideas is indicative of how far the medical texts I have discussed were instrumental in constructing the idea of the melancholic body, one which could be introduced into cultural, and more particularly theatrical, discourse. Moreover, this passage is not simply a case, as has been claimed, of how Marston "the physician's grandson, intended to flaunt his medical knowledge" of recondite medical terms and concepts.[44] As I will go on to argue, the dramatic context in which it is uttered strongly suggests the reworking in performative terms of the trope I have located at the deep structure of Bright's text: that of a melancholic body separated, or alienated, from the soul.

[44] See "Morphew, leprosy, and the date of Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*", Michael Neill and Macdonald P. Jackson, *N&Q*, September 1998, pp.358-360 (359).

CHAPTER 2

Performing Melancholy: the transmission of medical tropes into the drama.

Men "onely in shew": the social performance of melancholy.

In my discussion of the medical works of Timothie Bright, Levinius Lemnius and others I attempted to foreground the importance of melancholy to the way these texts understood the humoral body. In particular, I have focussed on the kinds of problems that melancholy posed to a mode of discourse which constructed the body's health and sickness in rhetorical terms. For where a fluid exchange of meaning was held to subsist between soul and body, there always remained the possibility that the body's material ills – of which melancholy was accounted the most pernicious – could be 'translated' over into those of the immaterial soul. For medical discourse to be commensurate with a normative Calvinist ideology in which the soul's fate could be influenced only by God, it became necessary to shift constructions of the soul-body relationship outside the rhetorical register typically deployed in these texts. In my discussion of Bright's *Treatise of Melancholy* I have tried to show how this key English text on melancholy negotiates as a central concern this challenge to the idea of the soul's immortality. In its sketching out of a mode of operation for the soul which recognises no dependency upon the body and which exercises many of its faculties in separation from it, Bright's *Treatise* enforces a subtle rhetorical move by which the properties of the soul are divorced from those of the humoral body. Neither body nor soul are distanced from the tropings of a metaphorically-rich medical language, but the web of metaphors which connected each in a mutually-determining relation is carefully unwoven. Bright's discussion of melancholy can thus be seen to have perpetuated in discursive terms what earlier texts such as Ficino's had done in literal terms – separating the immaterial self from the body, and thus rendering the melancholic body in some way 'soulless'.

In this chapter I want to begin by looking at how the tropes I have isolated in my discussion of the medical texts filtered into non-specialist discourses such as

polemical tracts, verse satires and plays, before moving on to consider how melancholy became from a very early stage in the drama part of a wider ideology of performance. One example which usefully illustrates a continuity in the development of the key trope of my previous discussion – the idea of the soulless melancholic body – occurs in Sir Thomas Overbury's sketch of a "A Melancholy Man" in his *Characters* of 1615. Since this trope takes its place within a wider complex of 'melancholic' figures, many of which can be traced to the medical texts, I will quote the passage in full as a way of introducing the delineation of the melancholy persona in non-specialist texts. Overbury's sketch begins by asserting that the melancholy man is:

> A strayer from the drove: one that nature made sociable, because she made him man, and a crazed disposition hath altered. Impleasing to all, as all to him; stragling thoughts are his content, they make him dreame waking, there's his pleasure. His imagination is never idle, it keepes his minde in a continuall motion, as the poise the clocke: hee windes up his thoughtes often, and as often un-windes them, *Penelopes* webb thrives faster. Hee'le seldome bee found without the shade of some grove in whose bottome a riuer dwels. He carries a cloud in his face, never faire weather: his outside is framed to his inside, in that he keepes a *Decorum*, both unseemly. Speake to him, he heares with his eyes, eares follow his minde, and that's not at leasure. He thinks busines, but never does any: he is all contemplation no action. Hee hewes and fashions his thoughtes as if hee meant them to some purpose, but they prove unprofitable; as a piece of wrought timber to no use. His spirits and the sunne are enemies, the sun bright and warme, his humor blacke and cold; varietie of foolish apparitions people his head, they suffer him not to breath, according to the necessities of nature; which makes him sup up a draught of as much aire at once, as would serve thrice. Hee denies nature her due in sleep, and overpaies her with watchfulnes; nothing pleaseth him long, but that which pleaseth his own fantasies; they are the consuming evils and evill consumptions, that consumes him alive. Lastly, he is a man onely in shew, but comes short of the better part; a whole reasonable soule, which is mans chiefe preheminence, and sole mark from creatures senceable.[1]

This final charge of soullessness sits oddly (from the modern perpective) with the conventional emphasis expressed earlier in the piece on the melancholic's interiority, one which describes him as "all contemplation no action". In part this serves to illustrate a tendency among these non-specialist descriptions of melancholy for combining themes from the medical texts in such a way as to erase categorical distinctions. The contemplative faculty of a certain kind of melancholy can be

[1] Thomas Overbury, *The Overburian Characters*, ed. by W.J.Paylor for The Percy Reprints, vol.13 (Oxford: Balckwell, 1936), pp.21-2.

conjoined without any sense of contradiction to the distinct and more pejorative notion of unreason, explicitly associating an acknowledgement of the melancholic's rich interior mental life with the sub-human qualities of madness and bestiality which followed upon the idea of the soul's actual destruction. What is happening, I would suggest, is that in the absence of any explicit referencing of the diagnostic criteria that underpinned medical discussions of melancholy as a disease, a character sketch such as this can subsume the elaborate typologies of medicine within a single *moral* category, one which orders all its features according to the opening claim that the melancholy man is temperamentally asocial. 'Soullessness' is thus appropriated to a normative idea of social behaviour, one in which ordinary human intercourse is elevated to the supreme distinction between man and beast and in which the "strayer from the drove" is defined by a certain kind of lack. While this lack is constructed in philosophical terms which appear to make the soul a "reasonable" or intellectual part of the subject, in insisting on the distinction between humanity and animality the close of the passage links back to its opening remarks to define the soul pre-eminently as a product of social relations.

For the melancholic to lack a soul in the Overburian construction, then, is neither to be mad in the sense of having a mind destroyed, nor is it to be in a state of enraptured contemplation on matters philosophical, in which the soul is temporarily absented from a body that, "half-alive" (in the Ficinian phrase), awaits its return. It is to be found wanting in the performance of those crucial discursive exchanges – those which ordinarily went under the name of 'conversation' in this period – that consolidated membership of a social whole. This social construction of soul-loss, it may be seen, is more comfortable with its own metaphorical use of language than a medical text such as Bright's. It evidently sees no need to qualify its terms with assertions that a *literal* annihilation of the soul is only possible through the agency of God since its deployment as a trope is fixed securely within an ethical framework. While this passage marks a key reworking of the theme of soullessness which derived from the medical texts, it is important to realise that this general process of appropriation went hand-in-hand with the development of the medical concept of melancholy in England over several decades rather than deriving belatedly from it. I want to suggest here that it is possible to trace this mode of constructing melancholy – and hence soul-loss – back to the introduction into English discourse of a key text from Italy, Stephan Guazzo's *The Civile Conversation*. Translated by George Pettie between

1581 and 1586, Guazzo's text straddled both medical and social contingencies whilst also providing early modern Europe with one of its key expressions of the ideology of 'courtesy' literature. Most pertinently for my argument, the text deploys as its framing narrative the dialogue between a melancholy gentleman (nominally the author's brother) who has withdrawn from all social interaction, or "conversation", and a physician who urges the necessity of rejoining it for the attainment of full health and happiness.

The dialogue begins with the afflicted gentleman, Guazzo, complaining of 'oppression' at the hands of "so great melancholie" that he has begun to believe that he "is perhaps incurable".[2] Significantly the physician (Annibal), whilst listening to and accepting Guazzo's description of his symptoms, nonetheless chooses not to deploy the same humoral language as his patient in his self-diagnosis, asking him simply to recall those things that "have "increased or diminished this your anguish of mind, or melancholie, as you please to terme it" (p.17). By putting this non-humoral reference to an "anguish of mind" into the mouth of the physican, a number of potential oppositions between himself and the patient are set up. On the one hand, the doctor may simply be retaining his sole right to diagnose the physical disorder which (potentially) underlies the patient's mental "anguish", politely but insistently undermining the gentleman's pretention to a knowledge of humoral physiology which is the province of the trained physician. Yet it was a feature of the inter-subjective relationship between doctor and patient in this period that a common ground of knowledge about the body and its humours should be sought in the initial act of reporting and defining symptoms. Indeed, in many ways the business of diagnosing illness was understood more as a rhetorical procedure demanding the communicative skills of two parties than an observational one in which the patient conceded all authority over his body to the physician. That, at any rate, is the ideal position, endorsed by the frontspiece to Sir Thomas Elyot's *The Castel of Helth* which announces its aim that "euerye man maye knowe the state of his owne body, the preseruation of helthe, and how to instructe wel his physytion in skynes [sic], that he be not deceyued."[3] This normative construction of a relationship based on a shared knowledge of the body's workings (if not of the cures necessary for it) meshes

[2] George Pettie *The Civile Conversation of M. Steeven Guazzo*, 2 vols., ed. by Edward Sullivan, (London: Constable and Co. Ltd, 1925), vol.1, p.16.
[3] Sir Thomas Elyot, *The castel of helth gathered and made by Syr Thomas Elyot knyghte, out of the chiefe authors of physyke,* etc. (London, 1539).

well into a scenario such as that outlined in *The Civile Conversation*, where social precedence – and hence the prerogative of 'instruction' – is affliliated to the gentleman patient. In its reference to a potential for 'deceit' in the patient's reportage of symptoms, however, Elyot's frontspiece also hints at another discourse which could overlap with that of medical diagnosis – that surrounding confessional practice.[4]

It is through precisely such a discourse of confession, I would suggest, that Annibal's initial redefinition of Guazzo's melancholy as an "anguish of mind" operates, shifting the terms of the dialogue away from the exclusively medical and into those areas where medical, ethical and religious categories overlap. Both the diagnosis and the prescribed remedy which follow upon this 'confession' of symptoms are secular rather than religious in tone, but both work to underscore the doctor's claim to be able to distinguish true counsel from false. Reversing the value of Guazzo's self-imposed regimen of seclusion as a means of 'diminishing' his melancholy, Annibal instead insists that

> thinking to receive solace by meanes of a solitarie life, you fill yourself full of ill humors, which take roote in you, and there lie in waite readie to search out secrete and solitarie places conformable to their nature, and to flie all mirth and company: and as hidden flames by force kept downe are most ardent, so these corrupt humours, covertly lurking, with more force consume, and destroy the faire pallace of your minde (*Civile Conversation*, p.18).

The introduction of humoral terminology at this point in the discussion has only occured once the abnegation from social intercourse has been linked to the *inception* of melancholy rather than its cure, making the 'corruption' of the humours a moral and social process rather than (in orthodox medical terms) a material or dietary one. These

[4] Recent critical awareness of the importance of confession as a discourse in this period (rather than simply as a practice) can take as its starting point Michel Foucault's highly influential *The History of Sexuality*, 3 vols., trans. by Robert Hurley (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1990), vol. I., esp. pp.57-67. New Historicist extensions of Foucault's thesis beyond the field of sexuality and into other modes of power and power formation have been one of its principle legacies in Renaissance cultural history. Richard Wilson provides a pithy summary of its development: "The 'talking cure' was paradigmatic, in [Foucault's] account, of the 'formidable materiality' of all discourse, as, imagining we are liberated or absolved, we manacle ourselves in words. This was the 'discourse theory' that allowed New Historicism to equate the transactions of language with those of capitalism, by conflating verbal with market forces, as Greenblatt did in his book *Shakespearean Negotiations*" (see the editor's introduction to *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Richard Wilson and Richard Dutton (London: Longman, 1992), p.9). It will be seen that the exchanges I am interested in here are those operating between patient and practitioner, but these are no less readily assimilated to a mode of truth-production

corrupt humours are constructed as the products of a move towards private as opposed to public action, and the terminus of such a move is the familiar trope of the destruction of the "the faire pallace" of the mind. Once again, however, the *Civile Conversation*'s easy negotiation between medical and ethical discourses allows for this trope to be interrogated both metaphorically (as Annibal deploys it) and literally, as Guazzo subsequently does. In response to the doctor's remonstration against solitude on ethical grounds Guazzo attempts to draw the discourse back into the morally-neutral arena of medical 'psychology', protesting against his inclusion amongst those melancholics "which have their wit so breeched, that they cannot discerne sweete from sowre [for] I have a whole minde within my crasy body, and my pleasure is common to men of good taste" (p.19).

With this final claim by Guazzo that his predilection for solitude is a mark of gentlemanly "good taste" the opposition between the doctor's and patient's constructions of melancholy is most fully displayed. For the gentleman, solitude is the proper response to a world which has begun to weary him and (the implication is) to instil in him corrupt and melancholic humours. These humours are, as he sees them, largely physical ailments which, although they affect his interior self (he speaks, for example, of the need to "cleanse [his] wretched soul" of them) are not strictly speaking properties of that immaterial self. For the physician, by contrast, this act of withdrawal is the very source of his distemper, a process which manifests itself in the appearance of melancholy 'humours' which transcend the merely physical and which only become meaningful in terms of social intercourse. Despite the weight of authority which the text gives to the doctor, both via his 'confessor' role and by his assumption of the higher ethical line, the contest over the value both of melancholy and its attendant trope of soul-death persists between the two principles in the dialogue. While Annibal maintains his position that "man, being a compagnable creature, loveth naturally the conversation of other men, and doing the contrarie, he doth offend nature herself", Guazzo counters with the objection that:

> a man can not turne his eyes aside, but that he shalbe forced to beholde some evil thing or other, which entereth and insinuateth it selfe by a broade way unto the heart, where afterwarde are planted those venimous graftes, which growe to

which, while apparently offering the confessant full parity in terms of status and knowledge with the confessor, in actuality seeks to structure that person's discourse through its potential for 'deceit'.

> the destruction of the soule. The which never happeneth to the solitarie, who being safe from all inticements, intanglinges, and surprises, being altogether out of love with the worlde, is whollie raised up to the contemplation of his originall and happie state. (*Civile Conversation*, p.24)

With this additional reversal of values, Guazzo reinterprets Annibal's admonitory discourse about the (metaphoric) destruction of the soul as the *product* of continual "conversation" with society, where this 'conversation' includes not merely the interchange of words but the very business of walking abroad with eyes open, exposing the heart to the mischiefs that could be avoided by renouncing the "inticements" and "intanglinges" of the world. Although this does not entail any explicit revaluation of melancholy as such in the text, it is noteworthy that Guazzo validates his scopophobia by insisting that dissociation from the world elevates the solitary individual into the "contemplation of his originall and happie state". The form of words unmistakably parallels that of Ficino's endorsement of the melancholy scholar's transformation into an "original philosopher" through black bile's capacity (in its mixed and heated state) to refine the animal spirits and assist the workings of the mind.

What the above discussion has attempted to do is to trace out the development of a particular discourse which related melancholy to the theme of 'soul-loss' in social terms, a discourse which I have suggested is theorized in the form of a courtesy text such as Pettie's translation of the *Civile Conversation* but which is subsequently taken up in looser and more quasi-satirical modes such as Overbury's character sketches. As both texts indicate, an awareness of the Ficinian ideology of a recuperated melancholia, one which empties the melancholic body of its soul only to revalue that soul as freed for the higher work of contemplation, does not preclude a fundamentally negative reading of the relationship between melancholy and an asocial interiority in which the melancholic subject "comes short", in Overbury's words, "of a whole reasonable soule". This discourse, however, also combines with another equally well-established mode of constructing melancholy which is hinted at in the same concluding sentence of the character sketch – that he "is a man onely in shew". Overbury's emphasis on the exterior "shew" of melancholy over the melancholic's claim to a privileged interiority constructs that melancholy's reception in social terms as something 'put on', as a mere performance. While this aspect of the construction of melancholy is less obviously derived from the medical and philosophical approaches, its amenability to combination

with the trope of the soulless melancholic body is borne out both by passages such as that quoted above and more importantly, as I will argue shortly, by the ubiquitous figure of the melancholy malcontent in Elizabethan social discourse. I want to preface my discussion of the primary sources in which this idea of a performative melancholy appears with a brief assessment of how the theatrical metaphor has been discussed in contemporary readings of melancholic subjectivity.

Dissevering estates: *enter* the malcontent

The near association and occasional equivalence of the terms 'melancholy' and 'malcontent' in early modern texts has exerted a powerful hold on theories about the development of melancholy in the period. Critics like Babb and Lyons, for example, have drawn on accounts of malcontentism to augment their own studies, even if these accounts do not always make specific mention of 'melancholy'. A shared tendency of these critics is to conflate the two categories unproblematically, usually treating malcontentism as the social (as opposed to the medical) face of melancholy which is then transposed to the fictional sphere. Babb, for example, sees both categories as part of a single trend, ultimately imported from Italy, which was subsequently widely adopted in various social spheres.[5] For Lyons the malcontent likewise represented a social aspect of melancholy, albeit one which expressed an ethos of political disaffection that encompassed religious dissension, competition for court patronage, and the fate of underemployed university graduates.[6] Reacting against this policy of equivalence in his recent discussion of the malcontent in English literary texts *Princes, Soldiers and Rogues*, James R. Keller has underscored the necessity of maintaining a distinction between the two terms. Indeed, such has been the elision between them, in the opinion of Keller, that a form of "identity crisis" afflicts the historical category of the malcontent, one which works to "deprive this figure of its own unique characteristics".[7] These distinguishing characteristics which separate the melancholic

[5] See Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, ch.4. *passim*.
[6] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, pp.17-21. Her interpretation derives from an early citation of the term in the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, where it replaced that of "Rebels" in the 1577 edition. Lyons thus emphasises the topicality of the term to fears of social disruption at the expense of the foreign connotations stressed by Babb.
[7] James R. Keller, *Princes, Soldiers and Rogues: The Politic Malcontent of Renaissance Drama*, American University Studies, Series 4, vol.153, (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), pp.1-5. For an earlier

from the malcontent devolve upon the latter's "unwillingness to adjust to his social class", leading to the kind of social disaffection which was earlier identified by Lyons. Rather than providing melancholy's political face, however, the malcontent in Keller's analysis merges more closely with the figure of the Machiavel in the early modern imagination, reducing melancholy to a mere pejorative term occasionally associated with the tendency towards self-serving political machinations.

Keller's cautionary advice about the conflation of these two key Elizabethan cultural categories is clearly important in resisting the tendency to homogenise constructions of melancholy in this period. However, the observation that malcontentism can occupy a discrete set of political meanings does not help to explain why the two concepts are so often brought together in texts traversing several different discourses. To address this problem, I want to look first at the social tract which is usually taken as the starting-point for the introduction of the concept of malcontentism into Elizabethan culture, William Rankin's *The English Ape* of 1588.[8] The text is useful not merely because it is often cited as the first deployment of the term 'malcontent' in England, but also because its usage occurs in the absence of any reference to or surrounding context of melancholy. It thus provides a way of interrogating the concept of malcontentism independently of melancholy, prior to suggesting how the two can overlap. Published in the same year as a revised proclamation on sumptuary laws, and dedicated to the then Lord Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton, *The English Ape* ostensibly comprises a polemic against the spread of Italian and other French fashions for dress.[9] However, it also shades into a much wider medley of complaints about social transgressions in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign in the manner of previous 'abuses' documents such as Philip Stubbes' *Anatomy*. All these transgressions are,

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but highly influential discussion of the malcontent figure see O.J.Campbell, *Shakespeare's Satire* (New York: Gordian Press, 1971), ch.8 *passim*.

[8] Campbell, *Shakespeare's Satire*, p.142; Fink, "Jaques and the Malcontent Traveller", 239ff.

[9] See the Proclamation Enforcing Statutes of Apparel, 1588: "The Queen's Majesty hath considered into what extremities a great number of her subjects are fallen by the inordinate excess in apparel, contrary both to the good laws of the realm and to her majesty's former admonitions by her proclamations, and to the confusion of degrees of all estates, amongst whom diversity of apparel hath always been a special and laudable mark, and finally to the impoverishing of the realm by daily bringing into the same of superfluity of foreign and unnecessary commodities not able to be answered with the natural merchandise of the realm, as in all former times well governed hath been used, and in all other kingdoms and countries is politically observed." On the social rather than economic imperative of these laws – and on their generally negligable effect – see N.B.Harte, "State Control of Dress and Social Change in Pre-Industrial England" in *Trade, Court & Economy in Pre-Industrial England* by D.C. Coleman and A.H. John (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1976), 132-164.

nonetheless, clearly traceable to a single moral source: the English predilection for "*Choyce* of *change*" and its manifestation in the adoption of foreign goods.[10]

Echoes of the kind of teleological argument about the relationship of the body to native produce which we have already encountered in Timothy Bright's *The English Medicine* can be heard in *The English Ape*, with its opening accusation that "(imitating the Ape) the Englishmen killeth his owne with culling, and prefers the corruption of a foraine Nation, before the perfection of his owne profession" (*English Ape*, p.2). This use of a providential and religious discourse to support social and commercial arguments further emerges in the text's location of the primordial sin of pride as a central concern in the polity, with its insistence that "secrete ambition" encourages the desire for "outwarde ostentation". This trait of ambition which leads to excess in apparel and other forms of conspicuous consumption is especially associated with those who, in the tract's words:

> appeare now neuer content (either with what fortune hath lent them) or their estate holdeth aboue their deserte (according to the newe found name, wherein a generall price is taken) (*Male-contents*). (*English Ape*, pp.8-9)

These discontented individuals, who are never affliliated to any particular social milieu and are simply defined negatively in the tract, are described from the outset as being at odds not merely with social convention but with the actual laws of the land (presumably in this instance the widely-ignored sumptuary ones). Their breach of legality is seen as a wilful and even malicious strategy to draw attention to themselves, but one so flagrant and self-destructive as to call into doubt their sanity:

> Would we not deeme him mad that hauing (of purpose) offended the law to the intent he might be punished, would come to the Magsitrate and boaste of his injurious artes...

[10] William Rankins, *The English Ape, the Italian imitation, the Footesteppes of Fraunce.* (London, 1588), p.5. On the supposed English predilection for change Sara Warnecke "A Taste for Newfangledness: The Destructive Potential of Novelty in Early Modern England", in *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26.4 (1995), 881-896.

As if to reinforce this point, as well as lampoon the term's unwelcome novelty in the language, *The English Ape* goes on to make the 'malcontent' the subject of a rather strenuous pun:

> These madde contenders, rather than *Male-contents* May serve as glasses for us to gaze in, to behold the deformitie of the like shape in our selues. When no doubt some Narcissus not respecting the perill of the prospecte, will not sticke to fall into daunger to imbrace the same.

The device of the 'mad contender' is primarily an alliterative one, but it serves to focus attention onto the precise nature of the "deformitie" at issue – that of 'contention', or social competition between those of unequal estates. But, as the conceit of Narcissus before the mirror goes on to suggest, this deformity is seen, like pride, to be a universal flaw resident in one and all which, far from being repellent to many observers, is highly attractive to the unwary or untutored. Hence, presumably, the "generall price" which is accorded this "newe found" appellation.

The aggressively ostentatious behaviour of the malcontents, then, is not merely 'imitative' in itself: it is also a *producer* of a tendency towards social imitation in others. The usage of the word "*Male-content*" in *The English Ape* is thus fixed from the outset within a network of meanings that construct the concept, at least in part, *performatively*, involving both a social actor and a gullible social audience. Upheaval within the received order of the estates is traced not to any great schism in religious or secular ideologies of governance, but to the copying and circulation of a 'foreign' influence at the level of social behaviour and material produce. Rankin's attack, moreover, is quite prepared to use the trope of performativity against itself when it declares that such ostentation is merely an example of "imitating the Ape": that it is, in other words, redoubly imitative – the representation of an already representational kind of behaviour associated with the vanity of foreigners and hence even further beneath the contempt of the English observer.[11] In collapsing the malcontent's claims to privileged status into the mere imitation of an imitation, and in making it the basis for an anti-foreign, and specifically anti-Italian, polemic, *The English Ape* seems to endorse the influential claim made by Zera S. Fink that the malcontent figure originated as an import from Italy

[11] For a discussion of some of the problems with this argument see Schiesari, *Gendering Melancholia*, pp.233-236.

by returning English travellers. As far as Lawrence Babb was concerned, it was a small step from here to making the whole Elizabethan cult of melancholy the product of an affectation of Italianate ways, given the linkage of the two terms which became apparent subsequently. I want to suggest here, however, that this reading of *The English Ape* cannot give us an originary moment for the idea of malcontentism in Elizabethan culture, nor indeed does its portrayal as the imitation of a foreign vogue exhaust the performative meanings with which it becomes imbued in English discourse.

One should begin by noting that *The English Ape* does not in fact contain the first use of the term 'malcontent' in English. Indeed, the OED cites two instances from Guazzo's *The Civile Conversation*, already discussed above as a key text in delineating the social aspects of melancholy, which predate *The English Ape*. One of these, from the first volume published in 1581, runs as follows:

> I thinke they haue iust cause to bee mal contents, who knowing themselues to be sufficient men [...] are [...] used by their father like children.[12]

Although such a reference helps to underscore malcontentism's link with Italian culture and to bring it broadly within the discursive limits of melancholy, there is no sense within this little scenario of patriarchal strife of a modish form of behaviour which was acquiring a social cachet. It is, however, in another work by Rankins himself, written the year prior to *The English Ape*, that a different way of constructing malcontentism from that suggested by Fink and Babb most strikingly appears, and which links the concept much more suggestively both to melancholy and to a discourse of performance. Rankins' first recorded publication, *The Mirrour of Monsters* (1587), was an anti-theatrical tract levelled, as the subtitle puts it, "at the manifold vices, & spotted enormities, that are caused by the infectious sight of Playes".[13] Although the texts's invective encompasses both the players and the audiences who flocked to see them, it is tilted far more heavily towards the latter, and utilises a number of figures and tropes about performance which are subsequently carried over into *The English Ape*. One such figure is that by which players are described as "Apes of Aegypt, whose golden cotes,

[12] Pettie, *Civile Conversation*, vol.2, p.65.
[13] William Rankins, *The Mirrovr of Monsters*, (London, 1587), title-page.

could not couer their brutish states" (*Mirrovr of Monsters*, fol.2r). In the later tract this construction is shifted specifically onto women who,

> deforme themselues with such prodigious spectacles, & deformed practises whose coates not beseeming the lownesse of many of their estates, shew themselues to be Apes of Aegyt [sic]. (*English Ape*, p.21)

Thus a term of abuse which originates in an anti-theatrical context is subsequently deployed against competitive social codes amongst women. The suspicion arises that the theatrical metaphor which is used to organise much of *The English Ape* may derive less from recorded social behaviour in the matter of clothing than from the figurative language of an earlier diatribe against the players.

When the *Mirrour of Monsters* makes use of the malcontent trope itself, however, it does so not as a way of constructing mimetic action as in the later tract, but as a way of encompassing the 'unnaturalness' of both players and their audiences. The playhouse itself is referred to as a

> Laborinth, where lodged these monstrous Minotaures, [which] had many winds, and turnes fit for a mind (as they terme it) Malecontent, to walke neuer content. (*Mirrovr of Monsters*, fol.3v)

The same formulation which will subsequently appear in *The English Ape* – a sarcastic rumination upon the novelty of the "terme [...] Malecontent" – is utilised here, but unlike the later reference there is no possibility of ascribing its provenance to a foreign country such as Italy. Malcontentism is more evidently a term used to describe a subjective relationship to those kinds of commodified pleasure such as the theatre that were still in the process of being worked out discursively. Whether applied to the actor or (as is more probably the case here) to the paying customer at the public theatre, it is as the restless and insatiable pursuer of the stimuli provided by this novel institution that the affect of 'discontent' is assigned. The trope of pleasures which are endlessly sought but endlessly deferred resurfaces towards the end of the tract, where it is now explicitly linked to the experience of melancholy:

> Why then should the nature of man be so blinded with error, as to runne desperately into the damnable sincke of sinne, (or as they terme it) in seeking to

> expell the mischiefe of Melancholy, doo runne into a thousand miseryes, and whatsoeuer he be that feeleth himselfe surprised with thys passion, shall find that pleasure doth increase the same, and Playes rather enflame the fury therof, then quench the flame by any rest. But whatsoeuer he be that feeleth thys passion of melancholy, to haue fast holde of his hart, shall by no meanes sooner expell the same, then by reading of the Scriptures... (*Mirrovr of Monsters*, fol.24r)

Again, the qualifying formula "as they terme it" is used to undermine the validity of the claim to melancholy, implicitly placing the term alongside malcontentism in an area outside the boundaries of a normative discourse. Both melancholy and malcontentism are handled in the same wry manner as modish terms with little claim to substance. At the same time neither is treated as a having any 'foreign' connotation, their novelty instead being used to impose a sense of emptiness upon the recently-commercialized relationship between player and auditor. In such a relationship it was always possible to paint the paying customer's side of the bargain as an ultimately fruitless venture, devoid of material gain. Moreover, the rationale offered for attending public plays in the first place – the dispelling of melancholy – is revealed to be bogus inasmuch as the superficial "pleasure" offered by the playhouse acts as means of augmenting rather than allaying the despondency brought into the theatre.[14] Again, there are subtle parallels with the scenario of the melancholic's mismanagement of his own condition which I have discussed above in Guazzo's *The Civile Conversation*. In that instance, the melancholic who withdrew to the privacy of his own study was unknowingly fanning the flames of his distemper, for as the doctor cautioned Guazzo's brother, "as hidden flames by force kept downe are most ardent, so these corrupt humours, covertly lurking, with more force consume, and destroy the faire pallace of your minde". A similar sense of the covert nurturing of an inward affliction is evident from *The Mirrour of Monsters*, although here the suggested remedy lies not in the return to social intercourse but in pursuit of the more substantial 'pleasures' offered in recourse to the scriptures. *The Mirrour of Monsters* was not the first and would not be the last anti-theatrical tract to set playgoing in direct opposition to the demands of prayerbook and pulpit.

[14] The trope which constructs the theatre as a breeding-ground for melancholy and other kinds of 'contagion' has been explored recently by, in particular, Lynn Enterline, *Tears of Narcissus*, pp.267-283. I will return to this theme in more detail in the final chapter of this thesis.

In my discussion of these two tracts by Rankins I have tried to suggest an alternative approach to understanding the discursive links between melancholy and malcontentism to that provided by an earlier criticism. The 'performative' dimension of the malcontent figure as it appears in *The English Ape* – a dimension explicitly linked to the imitation of foreign fashions – is typically made the basis for reading a strategy of imitation into the cultural performance of melancholy. Malcontents imitate vogues amongst the Italians, malcontents are always melancholy, therefore melancholy derives from an Italian source (this notwithstanding the notable absence of melancholy itself from the text of *The English Ape*). But the 'theatrical' associations of malcontentism, I have argued, are already laid down in an earlier text – *The Mirrour of Monsters* – and partly appropriated from it, a tract which condemns plays and playgoing and which constructs the malcontent not so much as an imitator of fashion as the morbid pursuer of commodified pleasures such as those offered up by a burgeoning entertainment industry. It is in this prior sense that melancholy becomes explicitly linked to the figure of the malcontent, since both concepts are used to signify the same restless desire for fulfilment, one which finds itself drawn towards the false promise offered by the delights of the theatre. What Rankins' two tracts ultimately serve to introduce via the figure of the malcontent is an embodiment of that supposedly native English addiction to novelty and change, one which manifests itself in the desire for goods and services which sometimes fail to satisfy, sometimes cause dissension among the estates, but which always point towards an inward 'deformity' or lack glossed in social terms as 'discontent'. The melancholy malcontent as it appears in these social tracts of late Elizabethan culture thus represents one more extension of that idea of the soulless melancholic body which I have been tracing through the medical and courtly texts: a subjectivity hollowed out by its predilection for gaudy show and superficial pleasure, reducing itself in the eyes of hostile observers to nothing more than a set of empty signs.

While it is important to realise that the modes of constructing melancholy in these courtly and social texts have an impact on the representation of melancholy in the plays, the links between them are not causal or derivative. Instead, there is a separate way of writing about melancholy and indeed malcontentism in the plays which, while it certainly appropriates figures and tropes from a different set of discourses, also has its own distinct representational agenda. In the remainder of this chapter I want to discuss the portrayal of melancholy in a series of plays leading up to the years around the turn

of the century, when as I will argue in subsequent chapters, a number of important shifts occur both in the frequency and in the meaning of melancholy on the stage. While the plays to be discussed in this section traverse a variety of genres and playing companies I want to focus my analysis onto a particular representational feature which is shared by many of them and which facilitates melancholy's implementation amongst actual performing styles in the later theatrical period. Beginning with the plays of John Lyly for the boy actors and developing through the 'humours' plays towards the close of the century, melancholy is positioned dramatically with striking consistency as an oppositional element within a set of 'performative' values. Although this can and does mean that melancholy (as has long been recognised) is often constructed as a 'pose', it is too simplistic to restrict the performance of melancholy in these plays to the mere dissimulation of a certain kind of interiority. As I argued earlier on, performativity and enactment need to be given a broader set of meanings than are ordinarily allowed in critical discourse. While the 'fashion' for melancholy is indeed a persistent feature of the plays in this period, concentration on this aspect alone divorces melancholy from other kinds of performative contexts, for example those in which melancholy is made a crucial component in defining an ideology of social competence. Beginning with the plays of John Lyly, I want to show in the remainder of this chapter how this early phase of theatrical production implicates melancholy in strategies of performance which are of a specifically social rather than theatrical kind, but which nonetheless work to make the trope of melancholy integral to the theatrical oppositions which emerged at the turn of the century.

Lylyian melancholy: the discourses of social competence in *Sappho & Phao* and *Midas*

John Lyly's *Sappho and Phao* contains the earliest significant reference to melancholy in an Elizabethan play.[15] It occurs in a satiric exchange between the women of Sappho's court at Syracuse (a thinly-veiled allegory for Elizabeth's court) and a scholar

[15] See Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951), p.75, fn.8. By 'significant' I am attempting to reproduce his claim on p.73 that: "references to melancholy are rare in the literature of the earlier English Renaissance, and there is virtually no representation of melancholy persons." I give Harbage's 1583 date for *Sappho and Phao* here, making it contemporaneous with the same author's *Campaspe* which paints a more conventional picture of love-melancholy, but it is worth noting that Babb thinks it belongs to a year earlier.

named Pandion, as they discuss the Queen's sudden decline of health. Quarrelling over a diagnosis and apparently dividing along Galenic or Paracelsian lines, the exchange turns personal:[16]

> *Pandion*: Indeed, lady, I have no more physic than will purge choler, and that, if it please you, I will practice upon you. It is good for women that be waspish.
> *Ismena*: Faith, sir, no, you are best purge your own melancholy. Belike you are a male-content.
> *Pandion*: Is it true, and are not you a female content?
> *Trachismus*: Soft, I am not content that a male and female content should go together.
> [...]
> *Trachinus*: I am sorry for Sappho, because she will take no physic, like you, Pandion, who, being sick of the sullens, will seek no friend. *(Sappho and Phao*, III.1.9;25)

From its earliest representation in the drama of this period, then, and at a significantly earlier date than the Rankins' texts, we find one of the key claims made about melancholy endorsed by this passage: that the condition was often associated or even coterminous with the concept of 'malcontentism'.[17] Once again, the contexts are worth noting: melancholy malcontentism is medical and scholastic, but there is no suggestion that it is a condition imported from Italy or elsewhere on the continent.[18] Instead, the key feature isolated for this characterisation of melancholy is the opposition between courtship and melancholy as Pandion, newly arrived from the university, is shown attempting to adapt to the values of life in Sappho's Syracuse. In a play suffused with anxieties about dissembling, narcissism and the insidious practise of flattery, Pandion is initially positioned within the narrative as an opponent of courtly values. An early exchange with a courtier, Trachinus, shows him confessing that as a scholar he finds it "harder to shape a life to dissemble than to go forward with the liberty of truth". Yet

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[16] I am following the conjecture here of the Revels editor David Bevington, who glosses a remark made by Mileta that Pandion's "physic [...] be of the second sort" (III.1.6) as "perhaps referring to Paracelsan (homeopathic) medicine as against the Galenic", (John Lyly, *Campaspe/Sappho and Phao*, ed. by G.K.Hunter/David Bevington, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), p.251, fn.

[17] Cf. Babb, ch.4 *passim*; Lyons, ch.2 *passim*.

[18] The claim made by Zera S. Fink in "Jaques and the Malcontent Traveler" in *Philological Quarterly*, 14 (1935), 237-252, and endorsed by Babb throughout. I find the Pandion reference too important to be relegated to a footnote, as it is in *Elizabethan Malady*. Babb's claim that the "disgruntled or seditious traveller [...] was the original melancholy malcontent" (p.75) rests otherwise on Greene's recollection in *The Repentance of Robert Greene* that he returned from his continental tour affecting the melancholy of foreign travel. But this was written shortly before his death in 1592, and by that time the associations had become part of literary convention.

the dialogue constantly works to revalue Pandion's self-styled opposition to artifice in terms not of philosophical "truth" but of bad versus good mimesis. The courtier suggests, for example, that "[i]n universities virtues and vices are but shadowed in colours white and black, in courts showed to life good and bad." I would suggest that this distinction between shadowing and showing goes beyond mere alliteration within a neoplatonic debate about the active and contemplative lives. It defines a set of performative values which differentiate scholar and courtier in the symbolic exchanges which are *de rigueur* within a court environment. The solitary melancholic is not, as Pandion would have it, outside the business of court performance but rather an unwitting foil in its production of a successful vs. an unsuccessful ideology of behaviour.

To illustrate what I mean by melancholy's 'performativity' in this context I want to return briefly to the character typologies of Lemnius' *Touchstone of Complexions*, in particular to an aspect of melancholy intimately bound up with the Renaissance idea of the attributes of 'great men' – the severity of demeanour which accompanies high office. Lemnius' prescriptive measure for those "Melancholike persons" afflicted with "severity and Stoycall precisenesse" is to:

> moisten and whittle themselves with Wine: who (although otherwise in dealings they be naturally sterne and surly, and outwardly in countenance and manner of gate, pretending a kinde of severity:) Yet being somewhat heated with Wine, and lighting in the company of amorous and beautifull Damosels, they [...] shake away from them all their former grimnesse, and wayward manners, and become as merry as the merriest. (*Touchstone of Complexions*, 138v.-139r.)

The passage goes on to detail the repertoire of gestures which were expected from such individuals – a "face and countenance grim and severe [...] browes knit together and frowning [...] eyes sullen, sterne, terrible, glancing aside and eskanted". What is most striking about this account is the manner in which the values of performance are impressed into the 'outward' symptomatology of melancholy from the start. The stern demeanour to which these melancholics lay claim is construed as a mode of "pretending", a sense reinforced towards the close of the account when they are urged to "acquaint themselves with courtesie & familiar humanity, discontinuing and abandoning that their former counterfeit and disguised severity". Crucially, however, this sense of 'feigning' is not set in opposition to a pre-existing or 'natural' state of melancholy.

Rather, the discourse of performance reduplicates in the body's external signs something which is conceived as "naturally sterne and surly" within. The transition from inner state to outward expression is construed – apparently without any sense of contradiction – in terms of a movement from the natural to the artificial: almost as if the condition of being melancholic obliges one to feign the nature one already has. Whilst the remedy of "courtesie & familiar humanity" suggests a parallel counter-measure for melancholy to that set out in Guazzo's *Civile Conversation*, it is, I would suggest, another and even more widely-known 'courtesy' text which can most usefully illuminate the *Touchstone*'s construction of a performed melancholy: Baldassare's Castiglione's *The Courtier.*

Castiglione's text elevated to the courtier's supreme accomplishment an ideal of *sprezzatura* or 'grace'. This quality is defined in *The Courtier* as "a verie arte, that appeareth not to be arte": a learned behaviour which is indistinguishable from the natural, and to which the possessor must in any case be 'apt'.[19] As Frank Whigham has argued, the suggestion of 'innateness' in possession of this faculty – of an "identity that by definition cannot be achieved by human effort" – was crucial in the work of controlling social fluidity.[20] Nonetheless, the true provenance of the courtier's grace in "diligence or studie" had to be made apparent to the skilful observer, since the function of having a seemingly natural exterior was to "declare the knowledge of him" that performed the activities required of the courtier – riding, fencing, dancing or discoursing. The danger associated with such an exhibition, of course, is that of lapsing into "curiousnesse" or affectation; but it is a danger posed not by the exercise of artifice itself but merely by the "arte" of the body becoming excessive, and hence no longer capable of signifying as the natural. This courtly discourse of an outward naturalness which both conceals and hints at an inward command of art finds its structural obverse in the asocial and graceless figure of the melancholic, who betrays an ingrained and unpractised 'nature' which is nonetheless condemned to signify in the body as an all-too-evident mimesis. Hence in *Sappho and Phao*, Pandion's 'misliking' or 'disgracing'

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[19] Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (London: J.M.Dent & Sons, 1928), pp.44-46. On the vast impact and pervasive influence of this text on many aspects of early modern thought see Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione's "Cortegiano"* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

[20] Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p.33.

of the beauty of the court ladies is interpreted by Trachinus as a mode of 'seeming', but one which refers not to an artful deception behind the stereotypically "severe" attitude of the humanist at court but to a failure to translate that attitude into a rhetorically-effective mode of behaviour. In a later scene the court ladies themselves locate the source of Pandion's rhetorical failings – of his 'seemingness', for want of a better word – in his diseased body. Pandion "would fain seem wise", according to Ismena, in offering to purge the women of their choleric 'waspishness', but he would show far better wisdom in purging his own melancholy malcontentism. Ismena's witty diagnosis exemplifies the manner in which I would suggest medical terminology is appropriated for these plays. Linking the internal operations of a melancholy humour with the outward and performative signs of a malcontent, diagnosis serves to make the cultural point about the rhetorical deficiencies of the melancholic as the necessary 'Other' in court ideology.

The ideological positioning of melancholy malcontentism in *Sappho & Phao* as a 'nature' which appears enacted against an enactment which appears natural can be differentiated from a later mode of linking melancholy to performativity in Lyly's *Midas* for the Paul's boys in 1589. In this later play, the theme of melancholy as social imitation is brought to the fore with wide-ranging satirical implications. The play as a whole demonstrates a more in-depth handling of melancholy and a renewed tendency to deploy it as part of an anti-foreign agenda, largely due to the Armada events which only the previous year had such impact on the nation-state.[21] In narrative terms, Midas, the King of Phrygia, twice transgresses the gods and suffers accordingly: first in asking Bacchus to have all he touches made of gold, and second in judging against Apollo in a musical competition between the god and Pan. For the latter misdemeanour Apollo curses him with ass's ears whereupon the king sinks into a melancholy. He is only relieved when he vows to manifest better judgement and to cease his aggression against smaller states, particularly the island 'Lesbos'. It is this acquisitive desire for gold and foreign territory which exposes Midas' status as an allegorical representation of Philip II of Spain in the aftermath of the failed Armada expedition to England. Historically the

[21] For the identification of Midas with Philip II of Spain see the editor's introduction in John Lyly, *Gallathea and Midas*, ed. by Anne Begor Lancashire (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), pp.xxii-xxiii. For further discussion of the unusual nature of this political allegory see Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp.99-100.

Spanish king was notorious as a melancholic, and this condition is used in the play not merely as a suitable punishment but as an organising metaphor for his various demonstrations of folly throughout.[22] The covetousness in which his advisors urge him on is, as we have seen, an associated trait of melancholy but, as so often with melancholy, its symptoms can describe both cause and effect, so that when the inevitable happens and Midas turns even his food and water to gold, he can exclaim "O unquenchable thirst of gold, which turneth men's heads to lead and makest them blockish" (III.1.4-5). The 'blockishness' or 'dullness' of Midas' melancholy is its primary affective associate in the play, so that even when the king is relieved of his golden touch his "discontent" persists, clouding his judgement and leading him to prefer the disharmony of Pan to the sweetness of Apollo's music (cf. V.3.49-53). His ass's ears thus become emblematic of the various negative tropes which surround the condition – folly, dullness, bestiality, timidity:

> Ah, foolish Midas, a just reward, for thy pride to wax poor, for thy overweening to wax dull, for thy ambition to wax humble [...] I must seek to cover my shame by art, lest being once discovered [...] all join to add to mine ass's ears, of all the beasts the dullest, a sheep's heart, of all the beasts the fearfullest" (IV.1.189-198).

It is this emphasis on the purely negative aspects of melancholy which allows for its satiric handling as social mimesis, as subsequent events illustrate. Midas succeeds in hiding his ears but his melancholy becomes the talk of the court: to his virtuous daughter Sophronia her father's condition is a "trance [...] where nature cannot move, nor counsel, nor music, nor physic, nor danger, nor death, nor all" (IV.4.47-9). This refrain of melancholy's incurability – the play will resolve it only through divine sanction at the end – has a comic aspect in the attentions of Midas' barber Motto, who alone "hath access to him [...] as though melancholy were to be shav'n with a razor, not cur'd with a medicine" (52-4).[23] Melancholy's usefulness as a way of distinguishing

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[22] A recent historical biography of Philip II, whilst registering the frequency of 'legends' about his melancholy and their ascription to his "subdued nature", nonetheless avers that "the king seems not to have suffered serious melancholy or depression", with the Armada defeat providing one of only two exceptions to this (Henry Kamen, *Philip of Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp.221-6). Instead, Kamen implies that these legends seem to have proliferated around his usual preference for a solemn or even black-coloured clothing style.

[23] It is possible that there may be a wider joke here at the divisions emerging in medical practice in London in the 1580's, with the Physicians of the Royal College reacting against encroachments on their trade by other classes of practitioner, especially the Barber-Surgeons. Phlebotomy, which the surgeons were licensed to perform, was as we have seen one of the physical remedies for humoral imbalance and

between classes of practitioner is also translated into a wider discourse of social performance via the figure of Motto. A running joke throughout the play is the inability of the clownish characters to cope with courtly language and its decorum. In III.2, for example, Motto acquires the term "rheum", a courtly term for catarrh (see below), and is upbraided by one of the pages: "*Deus bone*, is that word come into the barber's basin?" (57-8). The pages themselves grapple unsuccessfully with hunting terms and are lambasted by the Huntsman (IV.3.). When Midas descends into melancholy Mellacrites indicates how the term is demarcated by courtly discourse: "[i]t is a good word in Midas, otherwise I should term it in another blockishness." Motto duly catches the disease, claiming to be "as melancholy as a cat", and is reprimanded by his companions:

> *Licio*: Melancholy? marry gup, is melancholy a word for a barber's mouth? Thou shouldst say, heavy, dull, and doltish. Melancholy is the crest of courtiers' arms, and now every base companion, being in his mubble-fubbles, says he is melancholy.
> *Petulus*: Motto, thou shouldst say thou art lumpish. If thou encroach upon our courtly terms, we'll trounce thee. Belike if thou shouldst spit often, thou wouldst call it the rheum. Motto, in men of reputation and credit it is the rheum; in such mechanical mushrooms it is a catarrh, a pose, the water-evil. (V.2.102-113)

On the one hand, the reversal of values from an earlier situation in which melancholy provides the foil to proper courtly behaviour has been spectacularly underlined. Now melancholy provides the desired object of imitation within a court environment, its distinctive phraseology to be policed and controlled by an intermediate stratum of court officials like Licio and Pentulus. But in fact this arrangement simply puts a new slant on the root association of melancholy with bad mimesis, balancing the trope of the inept performer (this time the pretender to melancholic status) with a thoroughly disintegrative handling of melancholy's cultural cachet in the court of a major Continental power. The satire thus works against both the affectation of courtly mores

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was subject to unfavourable comparison with the dietary cures progressively being monopolised by the physicians. But Motto's razor is explicitly wielded as an instrument for depilation, and the passage perhaps suggests a satirical allusion to the practice outlined by Lemnius in *The Touchstone of Complexions*: "for the redresse of certayne diseases of the head, losse of right wittes, feeblenes of Brayne, dottry, phrensie, Bedlam madnesse, Melancholicke affections, fury and franticke fittes, Phisitions deemed it the best way to haue the hayre cleane shauen of" (*Touchstone*, p.124r). The barber's surgical capacity as a phlebotomist is thus collapsed into his more menial task as a head-shaver in a manner which demeans the profession's claim on this most complex and elusive of the humoral disorders. In III.2. Motto demonstrates his capacity for dentistry – one of the barber's surplus trades – and his boy Dello claims "[m]y master is a barber and a surgeon", which would give him higher status still.

manifested by Motto and those specious discourses of embodiment by which the court legitimated its superiority. If the play occupies a position in this mini-debate it is the stance of the learned humanist versed in medical knowledge who can glance slightingly at both camps: at the ignorant social imitator on the one hand, but also at a court which mystified its bodies through a terminology which, in the tradition of Castiglione's *sprezzatura*, stressed their innate differences to those of lower social rank. Melancholy thus acquires a certain bathos here through being equated with a courtly identity founded on a distinction of snot.

These early plays by Lyly are suggestive of the potential variety which the representation of melancholy could offer the stage. Many of the key types which will become standard dramatic fare over the next fifty years – the love melancholic, the melancholy scholar, the malcontent – are already visible here, and with them their associated affects: solitariness, sorrow and decay. This variety helps to bear out Babb's claim that Lyly was the originating influence in depictions of melancholy on stage, whom other dramatists went on to copy. What needs to be stressed in terms of the Lylyian mode of representing melancholy types is that their portrayal on stage tends towards the discursive rather than performative.[24] The kinds of attitudes melancholics harbour and express are well delineated, but there is no sign here of the attendant physical appearance or gestures which were to become common subsequently.

This situation can be contrasted with the depiction of melancholy in a cluster of plays from the public theatres in the same period around the late 1580's. 1587 was the year of Marlowe's and Kyd's initial efforts for the adult companies, and although melancholy is less organised than in its delineation for Lyly's boy players there is more emphasis on its physical dimension in these plays. In *1Tamburlaine*, for example, we are given the stage direction "[Enter] *Tamburlaine* [...] *with others*: *Tamburlaine all in black, and very melancholy*".[25] The striking theatrical effect is achieved entirely through performance: nowhere in the scene is Tamburlaine described as melancholy, and we must therefore presume that in addition to the black garb a system of gestures

[24] For an overview of the diversity of playing styles conjectured to be practised by the boy players, both before and after their revival, see Michael Shapiro, *Children of the Revels: the Boy Companies of Shakespeare's Time and their Plays*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), esp. pp.103-138.
[25] Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*, The Revels Plays, ed. by J.S.Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981); *Tamburlaine the Great , Part One*, V.1.63 SD.

was employed which would be familiar to the audience as significations of melancholy. The whole effect has a compelling dramatic symmetry: Tamburlaine has changed his tents encamped around the walls of Damascus to a "coal-black" hue following the city's refusal to surrender to his more merciful white and red colours (V.1.9). His own disposition towards mercy thus shadows the changing colours of his camp, with black representing the last in his spectrum of emotions – the harbinger of death. This is not the melancholy of sorrow or solitude but that of malevolence: a device for augmenting the "tyranny, and terrour" of the leading figure.

In Greene's *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* – an underpowered but witty response to *Tamburlaine* in the same year – the conqueror-hero's attitude to dispossession of the crown is similarly given vivid physical emphasis:

> hanging downe thy head as malcontent,
> Thy youthfull dayes in mourning haue bene spent.
> Tell me, *Alphonsus*, what might be the cause
> That makes thee thus to pine away with care?[26]

The trope of the vengeful malcontent is here crossed with the equally common image of youth blasted with melancholy (the link between sorrow and hanging the head has already been made in the Prologue to the play where the muse Calliope:

> coming last and hanging downe her head,
> Doth plainly shewe by outward actions
> What secret sorrow doth torment her heart. (47-9)

In Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, the performance of melancholy is even more explicitly linked to a lexicon of physical gestures. In I.3 the Viceroy of Portugal, in "sable weed", commiserates with his nobles over the apparent loss of Balthazar his son:

> rest we here awhile in our unrest,
> And feed our sorrows with some inward sighs
> [...]
> *Falls to the ground...*
> [...]
> Ay, ay, this earth, image of melancholy,

[26] Robert Greene, *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926), I.1.120.

Seeks him whom fates adjudge to misery:
Here let me lie, now am I at the lowest.[27]

In this familiar construction of melancholy the condition is exteriorised, displaced onto the surrounding landscape.[28] The action of falling to the ground exploits the trope which links microcosm and macrocosm in a community of distress, since melancholy is conventionally the humour with most affinity to earth. Late in the third act of the play Hieronimo is at the height of his madness, and much is made of the link between the passion of melancholy and self-destruction (see III.11). Again, this is given a striking gestural figuration, as in Hieronimo's entry "*with a poniard in one hand and a rope in the other*" in the following scene. In his quest for justice Hieronimo is subsequently shown digging at the earth with his dagger (III.12.71). The King interprets this "fury" as a symptom of melancholy (80;99), but also of interest is the interpretation given by Lorenzo, Hieronimo's enemy:

he is with extreme pride,
Conceived of young Horatio his son,
And covetous of having to himself
The ransom of the young prince Balthazar,
Distract, and in a manner lunatic. (III.12.85)

Hieronimo's distracted digging at the earth for his son's corpse is thus re-interpreted according to a rather different construction of melancholy which assigned to it covetous or acquisitive modes of behaviour.[29] This is an early hint that, given their availability to such a wide range of discourses, the gestures associated with melancholy are subject to a particular multi-valency. Although this is most plainly visible in the case of Hieronimo, whose melancholy is the most frequently represented example of the condition during the play, Bel-Imperia's melancholy is also notable for the attention given to its external manifestations (here by her suitor Balthazaar):

Disperse those clouds and melancholy looks,
And clear them up with those thy sun-bright eyes. (III.14.98)

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[27] *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. by J.R.Mulryne, New Mermaids (London: A&C Black Ltd, 1989), I.3.5-14.
[28] According to Raymond Klibansky, increasingly in "modern European liteature the expression "melancholy" (when not in a scientific context) lost the meaning of a quality and acquired the meaning of a "mood" which could forthwith be transferred to inanimate objects", *Saturn and Melancholy*, p.220.
[29] Klibansky, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p.120.

For a full decade after 1587 melancholy enjoyed frequent representation in both private and the public theatres. The sort of distinctions hinted at above between the two venues persist (although in the case of the boys' companies only up until the enforced closure of their playhouses in 1589). Melancholy retained a specifically medical slant in the plays of the child actors; melancholy continued in its malcontented guise and with a greater emphasis on its physical characteristics among the adults. In the plays of John Lyly (written exclusively for the boys' companies whether they were performed at court or at Paul's) the conventional depiction of love-melancholy is complemented by an effort to display some understanding of the underlying physiological concepts. This tends to take the form of jokes or allusions to medical debates rather than an accurate depiction of symptoms, and the emphasis throughout remains on the allegorical and satiric uses to which melancholy can be put. Wedded to this need for a display of humanist learning is an awareness of the increasing appropriation of melancholy as a courtly ailment: from the ridicule of the poor scholar Pandion in his solitary "sullens" in *Sappho and Phao* to the mockery of an affectation which has now reached epidemic proportions among the courtiers, a shift in values is clearly being registered. While one could speculate about such a shift from a number of viewpoints a not unimportant factor would be melancholy's special status as an ailment with extra-mundane, mystical qualities which eluded the kind of physical curative methods becoming ever more widely available to the general population. These qualities appear less important for the writers at the public theatres such as Kyd and Marlowe: indeed, they are particularly concerned to make use of the various physical traits associated with melancholy, working them into their more violent and spectacular theatrical tapestries. This is not to suggest that Lyly's dramas for the boy actors were not aware of the powerful performative valency of melancholy on stage. Their own approach to melancholy, however, hinges much more on an awareness of its implication in an ideology of *social* performance, alternately allowing reflections upon the oppositions underlying the reproduction of the courtly ideals of graceful and spontaneous behaviour, and upon the frenetic imitative strategies which followed elitist behaviours. Nonetheless, as I aim to show in what follows, both adult and boy player modes of representation would increasingly be brought together by a new generation of playwrights who employed these established theatrical tropes in the service of a fresh artistic and commercial agenda.

The humours of melancholy: Chapman, Jonson and the splitting of stage melancholia

In the next part of this chapter I want to shift attention to the dramatic representation of melancholy in the years approaching the turn of the century. Although there was no decrease in the frequency of melancholy on stage during the 1590's, it is nonetheless true that the decade between the late 1580's and late 1590's lacked the stimulus of a dichotomy between coterie and public theatre styles of representation enjoyed previously, since the boy companies were temporarily disbanded in 1589 after their part in fanning the flames of the Marprelate controversy. Although the anti-Martinist plays are now lost, the whole affair deserves a passing mention here as an example of how tropes current on the stage such as melancholy malcontentism, theatricality, and 'apishness' could be translated into a discourse dealing with urgent questions of religious and social reform and employed to devastating satiric effect. The Martinists in particular played with the notion that "the seekers of reformation/ are a sort of Malcontents/ and enemies vnto the state", and scored a number of points against the bishops by depicting them as Tarletonesque clowns.[30] Francis Bacon at the time expressed the sense of travesty felt by many that "matters of religion are handled in the style of the stage".[31] Although the affair saw the collapse of a theatrical tradition it was a major contributor to the emergence of dramatic satire, and encouraged the discursive connections between malcontentism and the satiric urge which featured among the boy companies when they re-opened a decade later.

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[30] See 'Martin Marprelate' *Oh read ouer D. John Bridges/ for it is a worthy worke*...etc. (1588), pp.2;30. For general discussions of the impact of the Marprelate saga see Edward Arber, *An Introductory Sketch to the Martin Marprelate Controversy, 1588-1590*, The English Scholars Library (New York, 1895); Neil Rhodes, *Elizabethan Grotesque* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980). For the relationship of the Marprelacy saga to the satiric "nastiness of the nineties" see Patrick Collinson, "Ellesiastical vitriol: religious satire in the 1590's and the invention of puritanism", in *The reign of Elizabeth I: Court and culture in the last decade*, ed. by John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 150-170 (p.154). For the role of Martin Marprelate in exemplifying the "duality as satirist and object of satire" see Kristen Poole, "Saints Alive! Falstaff, Martin Marprelate, and the Staging of Puritanism" in Shakespeare Quarterly, 1995 Spring, (46:1), 44-75 (71).

[31] For cition and discussion see Joseph Black, "The Rhetoric of Reaction: The Martin Marprelate Tracts (1588-89), Anti-Martinism, and the Uses of Print in Early Modern England" in *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 28.3 (1997), 707-725 (722-723).

The upsurge in theatrical representations of melancholy in the late 1590's is at least partly attributable to the advent of the so-called 'humours' comedy at this time. Traditionally this is associated with Jonson's two comedies which utilise the contemporary catch-phrase, but this ignores the earlier contributions of Chapman, whose introduction of 'humours' as a dramatic trope is not dissimilar in influence to Lyly's deployment of melancholy over a decade earlier. As with many of the writers who began their stage careers working for the Admiral's Men, Chapman's first effort for Henslowe's company was in the Marlovian vein, the protagonist of *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1596) reprising the 'hero of amoral force' formula which had been introduced with Tamburlaine. The inconsistency in presentation, however, signals an awareness of the retrograde nature of the project, and some of the more Marlovian passages verge on self-mockery. Instead, the presiding motif is the hero's protean capacity for disguise, and his adoption of different personae is constructed as a shifting into different 'humours'.[32] The term is re-introduced in *An Humourous Day's Mirth* the next year, with an even greater emphasis on its comic potential, as the central trickster figure of Lemot exploits the 'humours' or behavioural anomalies of the play's secondary figures. Initially it seems that a specifically physiological usage of the term is being ventured in the play, as an early comic exchange appears to link it to theories of climate and bodily disposition:

> *Lemot*: How like you this morning, Colinet? What, shall we have a fair day?
> *Colinet*: The sky hangs full of humour, and I think we shall have rain.
> *Lemot*: Why, rain is fair weather when the ground is dry and barren, especially when it rains humour, for then do men, like hot sparrows and pigeons, open all their wings ready to receive them.
> *Colinet*: Why, then, we may chance to have a fair day, for we shall spend it with so humourous acquaintance as rains nothing but humour all their lifetime.[33]

The attempt made here, however, to relate these dramatic 'humours' to a properly technical discourse about heat and moisture from medical theory does not alter their basically non-specialist and metaphorical deployment throughout the play.

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[32] See especially the soliloquy in *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, in *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman*, 2 vols, ed. by Thomas Marc Parrott, vol.2: The Comedies (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1914), sc.1, 325ff.. The term is used five times in this short speech, during which it undergoes redefinition from its strict usage as a mood or disposition to that of a more general character trait..
[33] *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, sc.2.1 in *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman*, vol.2.

Among the 'humours' represented in *An Humourous Day's Mirth* we encounter an apparently quite detailed construction of a melancholy character in Dowsecer, son of the Count Labervele. Notable here is the more favourable presentation of the melancholic's solitary habits and transcendent qualities of thought which were raised earlier in Lyly's plays largely in order to be debunked.[34] Comic treatment is not abandoned: a woman's picture, a hose and codpiece, and a sword are strategically placed and the company hidden in order to overhear what morbid deliberations the items can prompt in the melancholic. Dowsecer is to some extent consistent with the other characters in being the involuntary creature of his humour, but in this instance the king describes it as "no humour [...] but perfit judgment" and "of a holy frenzy, not a fury" (*Humourous Day's Mirth*, sc.7.88;197). This latter remark betrays an awareness of the revival under Ficino of the Aristotelian interpretation of melancholy as an aspect of individual genius, one which takes the condition to the opposite extreme to that of the 'blockish' and 'dull' construction insisted on by Lyly. It might appear from this that a 'realistic' depiction of melancholic symptoms is being assayed. Yet the majority of Dowsecer's deliberations are in fact derived as tropes from other discursive domains. In content they utilise tropes such as the decay of the world, the vanity of fine apparel and the aping of fashions, the 'painting' of women and the unmanly behaviour of enamoured courtiers – all themes familiar from the enumeration of abuses of a decade earlier by writers such as Stubbes and Rankins. In his morbid longing for bodily dissolution as a substitute for natural generation, however, Dowsecer does appear to find a discourse richly evocative of melancholic affect, although even here its articulation has affinities with the standard Christian maxim that all flesh is grass:

> father, if you long to have some fruit of me,
> See, father, I will creep into this stubborn earth
> And mix my flesh with it, and they shall breed grass
> To fat oxen, asses, and such-like,

[34] For an insightful discussion of the Dowsecer scenes see Edward Burns, *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage* (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp.163ff. Burns argues of the dramatic 'humours' in general that they provide an "internalized discourse, opposed to the external discourse of character; acting in contradiction to, even imperilling, the ordered model of the self [...] 'humour' provides an accessible and fashionable way of accounting for the individuated and the anti-social" (Burns, *Character*, p.162). Melancholy thus provides a particularly good example of an internalised discourse in its provision of a "private space, limitingly but also expansively individual" (p.159). It is oversimplification to argue as Burns does, however, that the "black bile is a notional humour" which is "not observable in the body". The idea of melancholy as a "kind of 'madness in discourse'" needs to be balanced with the richly embodied aspects of the disease which sometimes coincide with, and sometimes contradict, its articulation as a discourse.

[...]
Then comes the fruit of this my body forth (sc.7.173-9)

In a compelling fashion the speech concentrates themes of self-destruction, an affinity with the earth and a loathing of sex that were associated with representations of the stage melancholic prior to this (cf. *Sappho and Phao*, *Endymion* and *The Spanish Tragedy* above).[35] Nonetheless, the speaker's point of view is not upheld since as soon as it is delivered he falls in love with the play's most attractive female character (sc.7.207-16).

We might characterise the contribution thus made by Dowsecer to contemporary theatrical discourse about melancholy as the compression of tropes from a variety of available discourses into a critical mass from which they could explode outwards into circulation, newly configured, over the next few years. One discursive link which undergoes reconfiguration is that between melancholy and the discourse of social performativity, as evidenced by the distinction the play goes on to draw between the genuine melancholy of Dowsecer and the false, mimetic melancholy of the gull Labesha. Towards the end of the play Labesha has "grown marvellous malcontent upon some amorous disposition of his mistress" and has "taken on him the humour of the young lord Dowsecer" (sc.7.19-23). In order to expose him the other characters imitate the procedure adopted with Dowsecer and leave in his path "a mess of cream, a spice-cake, and a spoon". Confounded by the opportunity, Labesha attempts a melancholic's monologue while descending on the food:

Choke I, or burst I, mistress, for thy sake,
To end my life eat I this cream and cake. (sc.8.51-2)

There are of course affinities with *Midas* of eight years previously: the division between Labesha and Labervele, imitator and imitated, is on a par with that between Motto and the king. However, where Lyly's play noted the purely social distinctions which

[35] In her astute discussion of this scene Lynn Antonia DeGerenday interprets Dowsecer's speech in terms which admirably bring out its intersections with a Ficinian discourse of soul-body dissociation: "Because the world has divided soul from body, splitting mind from matter, intellect from emotion, spirit from nature, Dowsecer rejects the possibility of procreation, seeing the only hope for generation in blending his flesh with the earth in death" (Lynn Antonia DeGerenday, "The Word as Actor: Chapman's Lemot" in *Cahiers Elizabethians: Lat eMedieval and Renaissance Studies*, 1987 October (32), 3-11; 8).

constructed the same behaviour as either dull and blockish on the one hand or melancholy on the other, the trope of performativity in *An Humourous Day's Mirth* now ensures that melancholy itself undergoes an internal division. This is facilitated to some extent by the special and insufficiently-integrated relationship that melancholy enjoys with the other humours in this play of humorists. Labesha's imitation of Dowsecer's condition is consistent with the new doctrine of 'humoralism' in the latter term's multivalent sense of 'affectation'. On the one hand, his own melancholy is a fraud, a pose. On the other, his weakness for the cream and cake is of a piece with the sensual indulgences of other 'affected' or addicted figures: e.g. the sexual misdemeanours of Florilla, the puritan wife of Count Labervele. By contrast, Dowsecer's melancholy is treated sometimes as an example of such irregular behaviour, sometimes as a quite separate commentary on it, as the King's remarks about his "perfit judgment" suggest. *An Humourous Day's Mirth* thus helped to put into circulation the motif of a 'split' melancholy, one which resolves in this case into a distinction between philosophical (genuine) and humoral (affected) types of the condition. Dowsecer is both set off against the gull's bad version of his own rarefied ailment, but is also shown to contain this opposition within himself.

The 'affectation' of melancholy comes to represent a complex and contested area in these later humoral texts, one which is always problematically linked to notions of agency. In the earliest of Jonson's surviving works for the stage *The Case is Altered* (a play which may in fact be prior to *An Humourous Day's Mirth*) this newer problematic about the feigning of melancholy for strategic purposes combines with the earlier discourse opposing melancholy to the courtly performances of *sprezzatura*. In the first act the court of Milan is shown in mourning for the death of Count Ferneze's wife. In an address levelled at one of the Count's daughters, Phoenixella, a courtier endeavours to wean her from her grief by suggesting:

> Thus to disclaim in all the affects of pleasure,
> May make your sadness seem too much affected;
> And then the proper grace of it is lost. (*The Case is Altered*, I.9.41)[36]

[36] *Ben Jonson*, ed. by C.H.Herford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-1952), vol.3.

The accusation here is not, of course, that Phoenixella's grief is actively feigned.[37] The courtier is not interested in what emotions might lie within her, merely with the sorts of construction they can invite through the manner of their display: specifically through the eschewal of all external signs of pleasure. Even in the loss of her mother, it seems, Phoenixella is bound to exhibit that paradoxical quality of an innate 'grace' which distinguished the true courtier from the imitating social climber, but which also had to be learnt and performed as a courtly art. If sorrow can be properly balanced with the correct gestures towards pleasure, then it will be accepted as both 'natural' and as the felicitous product of a skilled practitioner.[38] Phoenixella's reply, however, mis-takes the tenor of the courtier's advice and equates affectation with 'feigning' in its strictest sense:

> if I did put on this sadness
> Only abroad, and in society,
> And were in private merry, and quick humour'd,
> Then might it seem affected, and abhorr'd:
> But, as my looks appear, such is my spirit,
> Drown'd up with confluence of grief and melancholy;
> That, like to rivers, run through all my veins,
> Quenching the pride and fervour of my blood. (*The Case is Altered*, I.9.44)

Responding to the perception that her behaviour betrays a gap between an inward desire for pleasure and an outward, hypocritical display of grief, Phoenixella diagnoses her own affective state – her "sadness" – as melancholy. Yet by opposing the inward determinacy of the humours to the graceful surfaces of the courtly body, precisely the opposite effect of the affirmation she desires is achieved. An initial problematic about mere surface display is shifted into one about the relation of interior and exterior, and her display of mourning can be read through the trope of rhetorical deficiency. A later

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[37] For the complex set of associations between melancholy, female mourning and feigning or self-display, see Schiesari, *Gendering of Melancholia*, esp. ch.5 *passim*. Schiesari finds in general that the signs of feminine mourning are appropriated by a male discourse of melancholy which subsequently valorizes them as aspects of 'genius'. Female mourning is thus a "less glorious double" to an ideology of melancholy which nonetheless depends upon that double for its signifiers (p.xi). Phoenixella's predicament might seem to suggest an interesting exception to this thesis, since her mourning is interpreted (at least by herself) through a discourse of melancholic interiority. Since her behaviour is constantly being repudiated as 'excessive' or scrutinized for its performative aspects (not least by her own sister), however, it seems the play is careful to undermine the claim to interiority it initially grants to one of its principle female fugures.

[38] For insightful discussions of the discourses of both courtly *sprezzatura* and the feigning of melancholy see Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege*, esp. pp.33ff, and Biester, *Lyric Wonder*, pp.74ff.

exchange between Phoenixella and her vivacious sister Aurelia underlines the point. Phoenixella admonishes her sister when the latter begins to show signs of levity:

> our virtuous mother's death
> Should print more deep effects of sorrow in us
> Than may be worn out in so little time. (*The Case is Altered*, II.3.10).

Her sister responds, however, in a speech which superficially recalls the courtier's argument above, but which is also far removed from any concern with courtly grace:

> Will you be bound to customs and to rites?
> Shed profitable tears, weep for advantage,
> Or else do all things as you are inclined:
> Eat when your stomach serves, saieth the physician,
> Not at eleven or six. So if your humour
> Be now affected with this heaviness,
> Give it the reins, and spare not, as I do
> In this my pleasurable appetite.
> [...]
> Let the mind go still with the body's stature,
> Judgment is fit for judges, give me nature. (*The Case is Altered*, II.3.18;36)

Aurelia's speech plays with the running theme of 'affectation' by allowing the overt claim that her sister's humour is "affected with [...] heaviness" to carry the hint that it is also being 'put on' for profit, for an "advantage" which accrues in social terms. If such an accusation seems wilfully to deny the "heaviness" to which Phoenixella has consistently laid claim, it nonetheless points up her failure to translate that heaviness into a rhetorically-persuasive set of signs, to "[g]ive it the reins" in a manner which would make her body a symbol of natural feeling. At the same time, Aurelia's own approach eschews the courtier's deliberate policy of management whereby the display of mourning is tempered by the "effects of pleasure". She instead marks out a position for herself outside the mutually-determining opposition between courtly and melancholic values in which her sister finds herself trapped, suggesting a conduct of grief which, in following the inner dictates of the humours and subscribing exclusively to "the body's stature", recognizes no mode of signification at all.

In *The Case is Altered* Phoenixella's melancholy of mourning could only be successfully performed through negotiation with the sort of practised nonchalance that defines the true courtier. Any attempt by her to insist on a true and natural inward state of grief condemned her instead to the circular logic of affectation. In the first of Jonson's 'humour' plays proper, *Every Man in His Humour*, the emphasis is shifted to give the problematic about the affectation of melancholy more overt class connotations: in effect, it becomes the best medium *for* the expression of gentle origins. For much of the early part of the play the 'country gull' Stephen "affect[s]/ To make a blaze of gentry to the world", aping such mannerisms as the "hawking and hunting languages" and control of serving-men which he associates with gentrified behaviour, much to the disgust of the true gentleman elder Kno'well and the amusement of his son.[39] When the latter introduces him to gallant society, Stephen, who has already determined to be "more proud, and melancholy, and gentleman-like than I have been" I.ii.114-5), attempts to establish his gentlemanly bearing by remaining silent, prompting Wellbred to ask "what a drowsy humour is this now? Why dost thou not speak?" and "what strange piece of silence is this? The sign of the dumb man?" (III.i.26-7; 55-6). When he eventually introduces himself he tries to convey the requisite nonchalance in the tone of his speech, attempting a sort of artfully unmeasured style:

> My name is Master Stephen, sir, I am this gentleman's cousin, sir, his father is mine uncle, sir, I am somewhat melancholy, but you shall command me, sir, in whatever is incident to a gentleman. (*Every Man In*, III.1.69-71).

This protestation serves to excite the interest of the 'town gull' and poetaster Matthew, who interprets his melancholy not, however, as an aspect of courtly aloofness but as an essential accompaniment of *furor poeticus*, or poetic inspiration (see lines 80-4). Offered the use of Matthew's study, Stephen attempts a bad imitation of the scholar's melancholy by asking "have you a stool there, to be melancholy upon?" (90-1).

Unlike *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, Jonson's comedy does not include a portrayal of genuine melancholy to set alongside Stephen's affected version.[40] Instead,

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[39] Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*, ed. by Martin Seymour-Smith, New Mermaids (London: A&C Black, 1979 (1966), I.1.39-40; 74-5).

[40] The play perhaps comes closest with Kitely's fantasies of his wife's infidelity and soliloquy about the "black poison of suspect" which "infect[s]/ The houses of the brain" (II.i.219-231). Although

there is a more general opposition between courtly graciousness and 'humourous' behaviour. The merchant Kitely employs such an opposition when eliciting Downright's aid in removing his imagined rival Wellbred from his house. He recalls his initial impressions of the young gallant who is now turning his house into a "public receptacle/For giddy humour and diseased riot" (II.i.57-8):

> Methought he bare himself in such a fashion,
> So full of man, and sweetness in his carriage,
> And, what was chief, it showed not borrowed in him,
> But all he did became him as his own
> [...]
> But now his course is so irregular,
> So loose, affected, and deprived of grace (42-9)

Kitely's insistence that Wellbred's erstwhile accomplishments were "not borrowed" but "became him as his own" serves partly to summarise the essential prerequisite of courtly grace. But it also discloses fears about the gallant's possible interest in his own goods: specifically, his young, fair wife. The courtly fantasy of an autonomous inner quality which which never reveals its debt to imitation is now re-interpreted within the terms of a commercial discourse which constructs borrowing not as social appropriation but as an outrage against property. It is notable that Kitely's account of Wellbred's 'falling off' describes a movement *away* from authenticity and *towards* affectation. 'Affect' as Kitely uses it here is ambiguous: if it carries the sense of imitation then it seems to reverse the usual logic by which emulation provides the means to social advancement. As the young gallant becomes increasingly dissolute his 'innate' qualities lapse into self-parody, into fraught imitations of themselves, lowering him to the level of social climbers such as Stephen. The performative strategies which lie behind the display of courtly grace become more and more evident as such qualities begin to dissipate. But "affected" here may also carry the sense of 'inclined', especially where this implies excess or over-indulgence in some activity. Forms of pleasure which are required to round out the gentlemanly persona become involuntary fixations and begin to furnish the means of that persona's undoing. A later exchange between two serving men helps to develop this sense, and also recalls the pages' forays into courtly language in *Midas*:

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strictly speaking a representation of jealousy, the terms recall some of the medical expositions of the effects of melancholy adust on the brain, and jealousy was a recognised symptom of melancholy.

Cob: Nay, I have my rheum, and I can be angry as well as another.
Cash: Thy rheum, Cob? Thy humour, thy humour? Thou mistak'st.
Cob: Humour? Mack, I think it be so, indeed: what is that humour? Some rare thing, I warrant.
Cash: Marry, I'll tell thee, Cob: it is a gentleman-like monster, bred, in the special gallantry of our time, by affectation; and fed by folly. (III.2.158-167)

Although this claim belies the fact that the merchant and soldiering classes (exemplified by Kitely and Bobadill) are equally prone to 'humour', it does reinforce the opposition between the expected accomplishments of the gentry and the derangement of these accomplishments through overly addicted behaviour.

It can be noted here that, like *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, the treatment of humours in *Every Man In* lacks any genuine medical specificity. Care has been taken to employ a valid terminology, but this terminology has been largely emptied of its physiological meaning and replaced by a social one. This problematic about a balance between the technical understanding of humoralism and its metaphorical application in the drama becomes explicit in Jonson's next play for the Chamberlain's Men, *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599). The Induction contains a long speech in which Asper offers to nail down a definition of the term, electing to :

giue these ignorant well-spoken dayes
Some taste of their abuse of this word Humour.
[...]
Humour (as 'tis *ens*) we thus define it,
To be a quality of aire or water,
And in it selfe holds these two properties,
Moisture and fluxure: As, for demonstration,
Powre water on this floore, 'twill wet and runne:
Likewise the aire (forc't through a horne, or trumpet)
Flowes instantly away, and leaues behind
A kind of dew; and hence we doe conclude,
That what soe'er hath flexure, and humiditie,
As wanting power to containe it selfe,
Is Humour. So in euery humane body,
The choller, melancholy, flegme, and bloud,
By reason that they flow continually
In some one part, and are not continent,
Receiue the name of Humours. Now thus farre
It may, by *Metaphore*, apply it selfe
Vnto the generall disposition:

As when some one peculiar quality
Doth so possesse a man, that it doth draw
All his affects, his spirits, and his powers,
In their confluctions, all to runne one way,
This may be truly said to be a Humour. [41]

The definition impresses with its apparent rigour, but once again it operates at some distance from its medical origins. The usual description of humour emphasised the twin constituents of moisture and heat, and built up the system of oppositions on which the doctrine depended by classifying humours according to the greater or lesser extent to which these qualities were present in the body. The additional concept which Jonson introduces here, "fluxure," is really superfluous, and one might even argue that the whole combination is misleading since neither choler nor melancholy, being 'dry' humours, could have the ability to "wet and run" as Asper's definition demands. But once again, it is the discursive and not the medical value of the definition which is being promoted here, most visibly in that phrase "wanting power to contain itself", a formula which neatly traverses 'incontinence' both in its physiological and ideological senses.

In addition to adding theoretical weight to the representation of 'humour' in the earlier plays, Asper's speech intimates a newer concern with the increasing abuse of the term in social discourse. Asper has entered assuming the voice of the late-1590's satirist, a figure recently transferred from the pages of the verse satires to the stages, and he includes the misuse of the term 'humour' among his catalogue of enormities which are apt for castigation. As he goes on to suggest, moreover, this linguistic misuse is inseparable from the behavioural affectation of 'humours':

But that a rooke, by wearing a pyed feather,
The cable hat-band, or the three-pyed ruffe,
A yard of shooetye, or the *Switzers* knot
On his *French* garters, should affect a Humour!
O, 'tis more then most ridiculous. (Induction, 110)

Asper's speech thus positions his (and by implication Jonson's) apparently informed definition against that of the gallant for whom 'humour' is little more than another fashionable commodity, ordained for external use and of a social rather than somatic

[41] *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Induction, 79;88 in *Ben Jonson*, ed. by C.H.Herford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-1952), vol.3.

derivation. The affectation of the humours was a theme already familiar from the earlier plays, with melancholy singled out as the prime candidate for emulation among would-be gallants. I argued above that it was through its capacity to link with other, courtly discourses that melancholy was able to develop such a pre-eminence among the humours. With the transfer of satiric discourse to the stage, a further set of associations became available for exchange with melancholy which augmented its unique status: dramatic melancholy now became fused with the harsh voice of the satirist.[42]

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[42] In one of the fullest accounts of the development of the Elizabethan and Jacobean satirist-figure, Alvin Kernan discusses the extent to which melancholy provided one of the "standard Elizabethan medical explanations for such characteristics [as sadism and envy] applied to him" (see Alvin Kernan, *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp.110-113). Kernan argues that the recourse among Elizabethan writers to such an explanation "no doubt resulted from the slashing brutality which was judged the distinguishing mark of satire", and hence that melancholy was one aspect of "the creation of the satyr personality, which was ultimately formed [...] by the very nature of satiric expression." Allusions to an origin for the satiric mood in a corrupted humour tend to emerge more from prose and poetic productions rather than the 'medical' works themselves, however. Kernan quotes an abundance of such references in the works of Thomas Nashe, for example in *Pierce Penilesse His Supplication to the Divell* (1592): "Whereupon (in a malecontent humor) I accused my fortune, raild on my patrones, bit my pen, rent my papers, and ragde in all points like a mad man...I resolved in verse to paint forth my passion." The description here of a "malecontent" rather than a specifically melancholic humour seems to refer the origins of the satiric mood here to social causes rather than to a 'mental abnormality', as Kernan would argue. Bridget Lyons gives rather more substantiation to the medical argument by citing the link established in classical physiology between melancholy (or black bile) and choleric anger (or yellow bile) and its issue in the kind of verbal aggressiveness associated with satire. An important physiological link is also provided by the organ of the spleen, seat both of melancholy and of a particular kind of mirthless or "Sardonion" laughter (Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.62; for further discussion of this theme see Dustin Griffin, "Venting Spleen" in *Essays in Criticism*, 1990, 40 (2), pp.124-135). Finally, both authors quote an etymological link between satire and melancholy which had been mooted as far back 1566 by Thomas Drant, which placed satire under the auspices of Saturn, the patron planet of melancholy: "Satyre of writhled waspish Saturne may be namde,/ The Satyrist must be a waspe in moode" (Kernan, *Cankered Muse*, p.112). Yet perhaps the most striking instance of the connection between satire and melancholy is provided by Marston himself, and gives a rather different perspective on the problem. In the "Proemium", or prelude, to *The Scourge of Villainy* (1598) the speaker rejects the current fashion for love poetry and insists:

> [...] as for me, my vexed thoughtfull soule,
> Takes pleasure, in displeasing sharp controule.
> *Thou nursing Mother of faire wisedom's lore,*
> *Ingenuous Melancholy*, I implore
> Thy graue assistance, take thy gloomie seate,
> Inthrone thee in my blood; Let me intreate
> Stay his quicke iocund skips, and force him runne
> A sadde pac'd course, vntill my whips be done. (*Scourge*, Proemium, 7-14)

Kernan incongruously includes this passage under his discussion of the pathological state of mind attributed to the satirist (Kernan, *Cankererd Muse*, pp.110-11). Yet these lines more obviously suggest a positive link between satire and melancholy, one which identifies Melancholy as a muse and which has affinities with a Ficinian rhetoric of poetic inspiration. As Lyons percipiently recognises in her discussion of the passage, moreover, the device of invoking melancholy works "to separate literature from life" inasmuch as it divorces the speaker from the charge of intrinsic melancholy (Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.60). The speaker indicates that he possesses by nature an overly "iocund" or sanguine disposition which is inapt for the task of castigation, and which therefore requires the intervention of melancholy to generate the necessary 'dark mood'. Some support for the idea that Marston is drawing

I suggested earlier that the figure of Dowsecer anticipated such a fusion in his deployment of tropes taken from the literature dealing with social abuses. What differentiates Dowsecer from Asper (and his subsequent manifestation as Macilente) is that while the former enumerates the enormities of society he does not set out to castigate them – the expected task of the Elizabethan satirist. This latter function came to new prominence with the publication of English verse satires in imitation of the classical writers Juvenal, Martial, Horace and Persius: first by Joseph Hall in the collection entitled *Virgedemiarum* (1597), and then by John Marston with the *Certaine Satyrs* (1598) and *The Scourge of Villainy* (1599). These works performed their task of whipping society's ills with sufficient vigour to prompt an order for the banning of future satiric productions and the burning of those already extant, issued by Bishop Bancroft on 1st of June 1599.[43] Although there was no concerted move into the theatre among these verse satirists after the ban – Marston was the only important name to embrace the stage and satire formed only a single element in his highly eclectic dramaturgy – the emergence of a new domain of satiric tropes and social targets proved opportune for a commercial theatre at the turn of the century in which changes in the construction of audience tastes were already taking place.[44] The most important of these changes in providing a performative platform for satire was the revival of the boy companies in the latter half of 1599. I will want to touch on this subject again when considering the contribution of Marston to reinforcing the link between satire and melancholy. Here, however, it is worth registering the unexpected nature of such a revival coming so soon after the Order of Conflagration, since these companies operated as the available signs of an earlier instance of the suppression of satire.

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on a Ficinian discourse about poetic inspiration is suggested by his probable dramatisation in *2 Return from Parnassus* as the figure "Furor Poeticus": for discussion see the editor's introduction in *The Three Parnassus Plays (1598-1601)*, ed. by J.B.Leishmann (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson Ltd., 1949), pp.82-92).

[43] For the document itself see *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London; 1554-1640*, ed. by Edward Arber, 5 vols. (London, 1875-94), *Register C*, fols. 316a, 316b. A useful overview of issues surrounding the ban – including the debate over whether satrire or pornography was its target – can be found in Richard A. McCabe, "Elizabethan Satire and the Bishop's Ban of 1599" in *Yearbook of English Studies*, 11 (1981), pp.188-94. For a discussion which treats these two issues as coextensive, see Lynda E. Boose, "The Bishop's Ban, Elizabethan Pornography and the Sexualization of the Jacobean Stage", in *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, ed. by Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1994), pp.185-200.

[44] The thesis that the Bishop's Ban of 1599 led to the invention of a new kind of dramatic satire is outlined in Oscar James Campbell, *Comicall satyre and Shakespeare's Trolius and Cressida* (San Marino, CA: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1938). For important criticisms of this

The play represents Asper and Macilente as two aspects of a bifurcated character, and this allowed for an interrogation of the nature and function of the satirist in a dramatic format. According to Bridget Lyons, one problem which emerged with the transposition of the satirist to the stage was the gap which constantly opened up between his assumption of moral and temperamental superiority to his targets and the persona it was necessary for him to adopt in order to effect their punishment.[45] This difficulty is seemingly resolved in *Every Man Out* by the restriction of all speeches of righteous indignation and corrective zeal to Asper during the Induction which precedes the play proper. The language of these passages is firmly aligned with what Mary Claire Randolph has called the medical function of the Elizabethan satirist:[46]

> who they be,
> That eyther will, or can except against me.
> None, but a sort of fooles, so sicke in taste,
> That they contemne all phisicke of the mind.
> [...]
> my strict hand
> Was made to ceaze on vice, and with a gripe
> Squeeze out the humour of such spongie natures,
> As licke vp euery idle vanitie. (Induction, 129; 143)

Such language, it is true, meshes with that of the public flogger, as when Asper threatens to:

> strip the ragged follies of the time
> Naked, as at their birth:
> [...]
> and with a whip of steele,
> Print wounding lashes in their yron ribs. (Induction, 17; 19)

In a familiar trope, the medical and the punitive functions are elided in the figure of the satirist. However, it is only through Asper's *alter ego* of Macilente, who takes his place

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theory see, for example, Janet Clare, *'Art made tongue-tied by authority': Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship*, 2nd edn. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990; 1999), p.96.

[45] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, pp.29-30.

[46] See Mary Claire Randolph, "The Medical Concept in English Satiric Theory: Its Possible Relationships and Implications", *Studies in Philology*, 38 (1941), 125-57 *passim*. Cf. also the claim by Neil Rhodes that Elizabethan satire is "concerned not so much with moral correction as by rational means as with physical purgation", and the grouping together of Marston and Hall as purveyors of a

among the other 'humorists' (i.e. unbalanced characters), that the work of castigation can begin to take an active form. Jonson's character sketches at the beginning of the published version of the play describe Macilente (whose name means 'emaciated') as follows:

> A Man well parted, a sufficient Schollar, and trauail'd; who (wanting that place in the world's account which he thinks his merit capable of) falls into such an enuious apoplexie, with which his iudgement is so dazeled, and distasted, that he growes violently impatient of any opposite happinesse in another. (The Names of the Actors, 7-13)

In his discussion of the Asper-Macilente personae David Riggs suggestively refers the motif of a split satirist-figure to Jonson's own artistic and financial situation:

> Macilente, who is consumed by envy of his well-fed neighbors, corresponds to the "private" Jonson – the displaced intellectual who has recently lost all of his property and commenced a rigorous program of self-education. Where Asper, the classicizing poet, symbolizes the creative pole of Jonson's imagination, Macilente, the malcontent scholar, evokes its destructive capacities, and it is he who does the dirty work of bringing the poet's *betes noires* out of their humors.[47]

This sort of biographical approach works well in the case of Jonson, who at the time *Every Man Out* was written was casting himself into the role of an oppositional figure dangerously disposed towards all those whose claim on a position at court was based on the material advantages of wealth and property rather than on merit in the field of learning. As Riggs suggests, when taken together with the Epilogue delivered at the first Globe performance, in which Macilente encounters the figure of Queen Elizabeth and exclaims "Enuie is fled my soule, at sight of her,/ And shee hath chac'd all black thoughts from my bosome" etc., the whole play appears to amount to a bid for royal patronage which leaves little room for ambiguity or misconstruction (Epilogue, 4). However, emphasis on biography – on Asper-Macilente as Jonson – can obscure the manner in which the play's satirist figures operate as types implicated in the formal processes of splitting and exchange, processes which were largely geared towards ensuring satire's convincing embodiment on stage. Dividing the satirist in two is what

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"characteristically violent" satiric mode (Neil Rhodes, *Elizabethan Grotesque* (London: Routledge, & Kegan Paul, 1980).

[47] David Riggs, *Ben Jonson: A Life* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989), p.60.

allows satire to become a mode of dramatic action: the ethical justification for the act of reform offered in the prelude is separated from the harsh pleasures of castigation which drive the narrative process. At the same time the active satirist, Macilente, undergoes exchange with the very process of humoral imbalance he has set out to expel. As his alter ego Asper leaves the stage towards the close of the Introduction he announces "Now gentlemen, I goe/To turne an actor, and a Humorist" (Induction, 213). His subsequent behaviour as Macilente enacts his envy within the terms of humoral incontinence set out in the introduction.

The representation of Macilente's humour, then, is (*pace* Riggs) best regarded as a formal rather than a mimetic process. Macilente is less a depiction of the effects of envy in the social world – whether the author's or anyone else's – than he is the product of intersecting discourses which combine to make up the stage-image of the satirist. Particularly significant in this respect is the process of theatrical exchange negotiated through Macilente between the discourses of envy and melancholy. Cast into the mould of the malcontent scholar, he deploys a number of the key visual emblems associated with that scholar's melancholic disposition. At the very beginning of the play, for example, he enters carrying a book, a gesture which would become, as Lyons observes, "[t]he most distinctive mark of the studious stage-melancholic".[48] The entrance recalls Dowsecer's first appearance in *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, and Macilente furthers the parallel by entering into a dialogue with its "Stoic" author. The trajectory of his speech, however, is differentiated from the one taken by Chapman's hero:

> *Viri est, fortunae coecitatem facilè ferre.*
> 'Tis true; but, Stoique, where (in the vast world)
> Doth that man breathe, that can so much command
> His bloud and his affection? well: I see,
> I striue in vaine to cure my wounded soule;
> For euery cordiall that my thoughts apply,
> Turnes to a cor'siue and doth eat it farder. (I.1.1)

Instead of reproducing what Lyons calls "Dowsecer's affected ruminations about the decay of the world" Macilente's speech draws on a lexicon of terms associated with envy: metaphors of decay are superseded by metaphors of corrosion, of gnawing

[48] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.26.

consumption.[49] This establishes a general trend in the portrayal of the character whereby attributes and gestures which would link him to melancholy – his "blackness", for example, or his desiccated physique – are verbally interpreted as signs of envy. Such a process was facilitated by the similarity of visual indicators associated with each. The iconographic connections between envy and blackness will recur at the beginning of *Poetaster*, for example, when the figure of Envy appears in the Induction calling for "pitchy darkness" to replace the "golden splendour" of the scene, and who later manifests the ability to physically darken the stage.[50] There was, more importantly, a precedent for linking the two conditions medically, as in Bright's description of the melancholic as "enuious, and ielous, apt to take occasions in the worst part".[51] However, in Macilente's case we do not find that the physical signs of melancholy are made to carry the secondary meanings of envy: melancholy here, I would suggest, is entirely evacuated from its signifiers and replaced by a different set of signifieds. Given the abundance of verbal allusions to melancholy elsewhere in the play the absence of any description of Macilente as melancholic is striking.[52] It can be noted, however, that all such allusions are aligned with melancholy in its 'affected' guise. For example, the "essential clown" Sogliardo, engaged in purchasing the name of a gentleman, is advised by Carlo Buffone:

> if you affect to be a gentleman indeede, you must obserue all the rare qualities, humours, and complements of a gentleman [...] You must endeauour to feede cleanly at your Ordinarie, sit melancholy, and picke your teeth when you cannot speake: (I.2.21; 55).

The theme here of affectation as a mode of social imitation, with melancholy one of the external "humours [...] of a gentleman", has its analogue in the familiar distinction between a true and affected melancholy subsequently acknowledged by Fungoso:

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[49] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.27.
[50] Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*, ed. by Tom Cain, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), Induction, l.2;11-13.
[51] Bright, *Treatise*, p.124: also quoted in Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.30. A subsequent passage in Bright explains the melancholic's envy in terms which seem even closer to Macilente: "Enuious they are, because of their owne false conceiued want, whereby their estate, seeminge in their owne fantasie much worse then it is, or then the condition of other men, maketh them desire that they see other to enioy, to better their estate" (*Treatise*, p.133).
[52] Some descriptions of Macilente portray him as being of an element quite opposed to that associated with the cold and sluggish melancholic, e.g. Buffone's: "O, dam' mee! *Immortalitie*! I'le not meddle

> if a man had any true melancholy in him, it would make him melancholy, to see his yeomanly father cut his neighbours throats, to make his sonne a gentleman: and yet, when he has cut 'hem, he will see his sonnes throat cut too, ere he make him a true gentleman indeed, before death cut his owne throat. I must bee the first head of our house, and yet he will not giue me the head till I bee made so. Is any man term'd a gentleman, that is not alwayes i' the fashion? I would know but that. (IV.1.6).

In the latter example it is hinted that 'true' melancholy would emerge as a Dowsecer-like response to social injustice, the injustice in this case being the hoarding of grain by Fungoso's father Sordido during a period of "lean dearth". And yet, in a manner redolent of *Every Man in His Humour*, the play never provides such an example of genuine melancholy to balance its false counterpart.[53] In the one area in which the physical signs of melancholy appear to have a genuine rather than an imitative nature (the portrayal of Macilente) their meaning is displaced onto the 'humour' of envy. The omission cannot simply be referred to a question of genre, for while it is true that *Every Man Out*, defining itself in Old Comedy terms, achieved its satiric ends through the use of castigation rather than a contrast between good and bad moral states, the earlier play was closer to Chapman's comic method in allowing genuine affectivity to expose its dissimulation elsewhere (true belligerence, for example, in the form of Downright is responsible for exploding Bobadill's pretended valour). Such an elision of melancholy proper from the 'humours' plays raises interesting if finally unanswerable questions about the status of this privileged affliction in Jonson's depiction of a courtly milieu. Is melancholy becoming, in his portrayal, the visible sign of courtly pretence, of the inescapable logic of performance such a world demanded?[54] By insistently showing only the imitation of melancholy whilst evacuating the original, is the validity of that original being called into question?[55] In terms, however, of the construction of a satiric

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with him; the pure element of fire, all spirit, extraction [...] A scholler [...] a lanke raw-bon'd anatomie, he walks vp and downe like a charg'd musket, no man dares encounter him" (IV.4.21;24).

[53] The closest instance we can cite to any depiction of melancholy proper in the play would be the final act's "exceeding melancholy supper" among the gallants after Puntarvolo's dog has been poisoned. Even here, however, the broad theme of affectation is maintained: Puntarvolo's melancholy for a dog is treated as excessive and laughable, and his co-sufferers are either feigning melancholy or depressed solely for the loss of a return on Puntarvolo's foreign venture.

[54] Cf. Lyons assertion that "Jonson regarded melancholy both as an affectation and an affection, part of the lower function of the mind that comedy should hold up to ridicule and that reason should control", *Voices of Melancholy*, p.27.

[55] I take this suggestion from Judith Butler's discussion of the performativity of gender in "Imitation and Gender Subordination": see the excerpt in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp.722-730). Her deployment of a general critique of mimesis and imitation as initiated by Derrida gives her discussion a wide applicability outside her specifically gender-oriented concerns.

persona for the stage we can simply note the following: that the correction of follies and vices which characterised Jonsonian satire, being conducted through an explicitly envious rather than an explicitly melancholic response from its satirist-figure, allowed for a tougher handling of the themes involved but at the same time preserved the performative aspects of the melancholy satirist inherited via Dowsecer.

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In this chapter I have been concerned to trace the implication of melancholy (and, latterly, the 'humours' in general) within an ideology of performance. I have attempted to show that whilst a 'performative' component has long been acknowledged in critical discussions of Elizabethan melancholy, not enough attention has been given to the breadth of meaning and complexity of discourses which worked to structure this feature. Although the familiar theme of melancholy as a fashionable pose – or rather, as an imitation of a pose originating in a foreign country – is an important part of the overall picture, other discourses such as those surrounding the performance of courtly grace and the commercialization of theatrical performance itself also made significant contributions. It is through this enlarged range of meanings surrounding the performance of melancholy, I would argue, that the principle source of exchange between medical and theatrical discourses becomes visible. The figure of the soulless melancholic body which attains articulation in various forms in the medical works is precipitated into other kinds of text such as the courtly and social documents discussed in the first part of the chapter. 'Soullessness' elides sometimes with the figure of the solitary melancholic, sometimes with that of the perennially-dissatisfied malcontent. In each case, however, it is a signifier of a certain kind of lack which serves to instate the melancholy malcontent as the 'hollow man' within early modern texts on manners, mores and abuses – as the proverbial "man onely in shew". In my discussion hitherto, however, I have been dealing with 'performance' only in terms of its social meaning, and this includes what I had have to say about the representation of the social performance of melancholy in this pre-1600 phase of plays. In the next chapter I want to outline a more fully theorised approach to dramatic performance proper – to the interrelationship of action and text in the production and reception of theatrical meaning in early modern England. This chapter will provide a preliminary discussion for the final part of this thesis, which will argue that in the phase of theatrical production which

succeeds the one discussed here, the trope of the soulless melancholic body becomes incorporated as a mode of performance on the late-Elizabethan/early-Jacobean stage.

CHAPTER 3

Reading the Early Modern Performing Body

In this chapter I want to outline a methodology for discussing the performing body on the early modern stage. A persistent difficulty with many recent attempts to provide an ideological analysis of the body in Renaissance drama is a tendency either to disregard the performative element as a part of the meaning-making process or to consider it simply as a concrete expression of that ideology. Gail Kern Paster, for example, while acknowledging the actor beneath the role on a number of occasions in her discussion of the humoral body, never develops these remarks into a systematic account of performance since for her the actor's body is unproblematically the "material body's fictional embodiment".[1] The position I want to take here, however, is that the relationship between an idea of the body which is shared by a particular culture and its reproduction on stage is always a complex and mediated one. The performing body is not simply 'standing-in' for a character's body which wholly subsumes the physical presence of the actor. The actor's body will become meaningful in ways other than by reference to its fictional role, for example by entering into certain agreed conventions of performance which will constitute a system of communication in their own right as well as a separate source of pleasure for the audience. Just as importantly, these very conventions can work to inflect or problematize the ideological meanings which are being constructed through the dramatic text. The body as constructed through discourse is obliged to encounter an irreducibly real and present body in the form of the player who embodies it on stage. Ideally this player's body is committed to its own effacement in order to achieve the goal of representation, but just as frequently it is capable of signalling its own presence and drawing attention to the strategies involved in attaining that goal.

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[1] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1993) p.20.

My starting point will be a review of those 20th century discussions of performance which have addressed most assiduously the relationship between the actor and the fictional being that actor represents. The theoretical approach most closely associated with this mode of enquiry is theatre semiotics, a body of work initiated by the Prague School theorists in the 1930's and 40's but not widely adopted in theatre criticism until the 1960's and 70's. These contributions are mainly important for providing a general theory of theatrical signification – of the process by which the performing body is able to *represent* on stage. One important strand of this theory involves the separation of the physical and linguistic aspects of performance into distinct *sign-systems*. This approach might seem to offer a clear basis for analysing the body as it acts and moves on the stage, but as I intend to show, even here an ambiguity over the distinction between performing and represented bodies can enter the discussion. While an identity between actor and role is an accepted facet of the mimetic process, any critical discussion of their respective *meanings* must be prepared to separate out and give specificity to each. One aim of this chapter, therefore, is to obtain a more accurate sense of how the performing body and its conventions can be located beneath the narrative. On this basis – the actor's body as conceptualized in its performance milieu – it will be possible to mount a discussion of the various factors which *overdetermined* that body, bestowing upon it its narrative as well as its wider cultural significations. The first and most obvious of these is dramatic discourse itself. Through the rhetoricity of dialogue and soliloquy the actor's body and its gestures are constructed as a part of the fictional world. This represented body inevitably carries ideological 'meaning' – moral and political significance which is read onto the body through a culture's discourses: medical, pedagogic, theological and other. However, we must also consider this process alongside other, extra-mimetic factors which overdetermined the body's meaning on stage: for example, the conceptualization of performance from within a framework of rhetorical theory as well as wider debates about the morality of impersonation and theatrical representation.

The problem of the performing body: an outline of theoretical approaches.

That an actor should be physically present before an audience is a requisite – perhaps *the* requisite – of theatre.[2] This perception is reflected in critical definitions of drama and performance from widely-separated historical periods. In Aristotle's *Poetics*, for example, the tragic mode of poetry is distinguished from the epic primarily on the basis of enactment: representation is effected "by people acting and not narrating".[3] For Philip Sidney in 1595, reading Aristotle through the distorting glass of sixteenth-century Italian neo-classical theory, English tragedies such as *Gorboduc* could be criticised as "faulty both in place and time, the two necessary companions of all corporal actions".[4] Dramatic 'action' for Sidney is thus rooted in the individual body, its representation on stage circumscribed by the limits – defined through 'place' and 'time' – of what is corporeally possible. Statements like these functioned as assumptions about the nature of drama, self-evident enough to provide starting-points for critical discussion without needing further elucidation. However, they also served to initiate a long-standing ambiguity over the line between representation and the medium which achieved it – the actor's body. As Edward Burns has persuasively argued, Aristotle's "refusal to account for the relation between the representation and the thing represented is implicit in the lack of a clear terminological distinction between the action on stage and the action to which that can be said to refer."[5] Paradoxically, then, there is in traditional criticism both an acknowledgement and an effacement of the actor's physicality. The performing body serves on the one hand as the organising principle for all the other elements of the drama – action, speech, character, story – but on the other hand it is also in some way exchanged for those elements.

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[2] 20th-century experimental theatre has of course managed to dispense with even this: see Colin Counsell, *Signs of Performance: An Introduction to Twentieth-Century Theatre* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), Introduction, for a brief overview of contemporary assaults on traditional definitions of theatricality. Counsell cites Samuel Beckett's *Breath* as an exemplum of performance-without-a-player.

[3] Aristotle *Poetics*, trans. by Richard Janko (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), 3.1:28.

[4] Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. by Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), p.134.

[5] Edward Burns, *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1990), p.19.

Among twentieth-century contributions to dramatic criticism the science of theatrical 'semiotics', associated initially with the writers of the Prague School of the 1930's and 40's such as Petr Bogatyrev, Jiri Veltrusky and Jindrich Honzl, was the first to treat the body in performance as a problem in its own right. Although cited less and less frequently in contemporary performance theory, the semiotic approach remains important for introducing to theatrical criticism a theory of signification – of the production of meaning through signs – which had already made headway in linguistics.[6] It was thus able to pose in a new way the question of how the body should be interpreted or 'read' on the stage. Its key proposition was that the physical component of performance – the actor's body itself – always signified within its own code of communication, according to what has come to be called a 'language of gesture'.[7] The idea that gesture could constitute a separate 'signifying system' is by now so well-established in contemporary critical discourse that it borders on a truism, but it is well worth rehearsing some of its core principles in order to assess their relevance to contemporary interest in the body in performance. The Prague School writers, whilst often expressing widely differing opinions about the nature of theatre, all concurred in attempting to examine performance from the point of view of the signs produced on stage. Honzl provided a concise formulation of the theatrical semiotician's *a priori* at the start of his essay "Dynamics of the Sign in the Theatre":

> Everything that makes up reality on the stage – the playwright's text, the actor's acting, the stage lighting – all these things in every case stand for other things. In other words, dramatic performance is a set of signs.[8]

In asserting the priority of signification in the process of theatrical representation Honzl's paper and others like it were drawing on theories which had been formulated earlier in the century: in particular, the 'semiotics' of Charles Sanders Peirce and the

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[6] For a well-written and only occasionally rueful account of the current eclipse of semiotic theory see Keir Elam "'In what chapter of his bosom?': reading Shakespeare's bodies" in *Alternative Shakespeares*, vol.2, ed. by Terence Hawkes (London and New York: Routledge, 1996). The essay is notable for arguing that the demise of semiotics has entailed a disregard for performativity and for making some imaginative suggestions about its revival as a complement to current readings of the body (see esp. pp.159-63).

[7] A phrase most often used in discussions of Shakespeare: see for example Harold Fisch's "Shakespeare and the Language of Gesture", *Shakespeare Studies*, 1987, 19, 239-51; and David Bevington, below.

[8] Jindrich Honzl, "Dynamics of the Sign in the Theatre", in *Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions* ed. by Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1976), pp.74-93 (74).

'semiology' propounded by Ferdinand de Saussure.[9] Peirce's semiotics provided a typological scheme of signs aimed at distinguishing among those founded on resemblance (icons), those linked to their object causally (indices) and those of a wholly conventional order (exemplified by the linguistic sign).[10] The decisive insight emerging from this scheme, as Jonathan Culler describes it, was the recognition that "social and cultural phenomena are not simply material objects or events but objects or events with meaning", a principle clearly reflected in Honzl's suggestion that all objects and actions on stage are 'standing in' for something else.[11] On its own, however, this Peircean typology was not sufficient to explain the fully dynamic process of signification in performance, where signs work cumulatively and in combination in order to communicate meaning. For this reason the second of the key theoretical paradigms, Saussurian semiology, was utilised in order to grasp the role of the individual sign within the communicative whole, or 'system of signs', which made up the performance. It is through this adaptation of the Saussurian model that the body's implication in a 'language of gesture' on stage can be best conceptualised. Moreover, because of its foundational role in all structuralist and post-structuralist theory and its subsequent intersection with theories of the body, the usage of the Saussurian model can be regarded as the more important for my own discussion of the gestural sign on stage.

Saussurian theory itself, in contradistinction to its Peircean counterpart, was concerned pre-eminently with the linguistic sign. It took as its "primordial principle" the arbitrary and conventional character of that sign.[12] This in itself was hardly an original doctrine: Saussure himself stresses that it was universally conceded, and observations of a similar nature can be discerned as far back as Plato's *Cratylus*. Saussure's analysis, however, added two refinements to this orthodoxy. The first was to show that the semiotician's proper object of study was the relation of a sound-image (or signifier) to a *concept* of something in the world (or signified) and not to that thing itself. The unity of these two elements constituted the linguistic sign, a unity that was

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[9] See the Preface to Matejka and Titunik, pp.ix-xxi, for a résumé of the intellectual background to the Prague School.
[10] For a good critique of this typology and some of its problems see the remarks in Jonathan Culler's *Saussure*, 2nd edn. (London, Hammersmith: Fontana Press, 1986), pp.96-9), although any acknowledgement of Pierce's contribution itself is oddly absent.
[11] See Jonathan Culler's essay on the "Linguistic Foundation" in *Literary Theory: An Anthology* ed. by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1998), pp.73-5.
[12] See Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p.68.

based on social agreement rather than a natural relationship that could be universally determined. The second was to emphasise the equally important role played by the *value* of a sign – its differentiation from other neighbouring signs – in fixing its meaning. The monetary analogy which Saussure provided to illustrate these two concepts remains the most suggestive: a single coin can be *exchanged* for a quite different object (an item for purchase), but must also be *compared* to other coins in order to fix its value on a scale.[13] Applied to the terms of language, the first of these criteria would correspond to the process of signification, while the second would correspond to the internal logic or rules governing language itself. It is when both are taken into account that the importance of the idea of the 'system' in generating meaning begins to emerge. For not only were signifier and signified arbitrarily assigned to one another, but neither could be regarded as comprising discrete, pre-given entities. Each existed as part of a continuum, in the one case of undifferentiated sound, in the other of undifferentiated thought. Their distinctiveness could be posited only by virtue of their *difference* from other sounds or concepts. Once signifier was attached to signified the resultant sign did attain a certain value, but this value could only be fixed through comparison with related signs in the system. From these dual considerations of the arbitrary and relative nature of the linguistic sign the inescapable conclusion arose that signification, or 'meaning', could never be regarded as a property innate to the individual terms of language. Meaning was always dependent upon the system of relations holding between signs (or, as structuralist theory went on to formulate it, of the binary oppositions between them): it had, as it were, no 'essence'.

What were the implications of these findings for the generation and communication of meaning in the theatre? Saussure's methodology may have had an irresistible logic to it when applied to the linguistic sign, but did the same principles of arbitrariness and relativity hold good for the physical and gestural aspects of stage performance? Initially the suggestion seemed counter-intuitive: gesture, action and the other physical aspects of performance such as vocal delivery had for long been associated with the accurate *imitation* of the individual rather than with a process of signification. At various times rendered as 'mimesis', 'representation', and 'personation', the key tenets of a general theory of imitation had been in theoretical

[13] Saussure, p.115.

currency since their largely hostile evaluation in Plato's *Republic*, and had received their most influential formulation in Aristotle's *Poetics*.[14] Whilst such a scheme was not incompatible with the idea that an actor's body 'stood in' for another body that was not itself, and was thereby involved in signification, that sign-function appeared wholly oriented towards a relationship of *resemblance* with its object. If the actor constituted a sign at all, it was of a 'natural' order, to be grouped with the carved or painted image as 'iconic' (in Peircean terminology) to the exclusion of any arbitrary or relative element. Yet Saussure himself, in considering the wider implications of his semiological project, had made inevitable the inclusion of 'natural' signs given his emphasis on the conventional or rule-governed basis of *all* modes of communication in society. Gesture afforded a decisive example: for while a "certain natural expressiveness" always obtained in polite formulas such as those used in greetings, their "intrinsic value" remained less important than the rules which constructed them as socially significant.[15]

Saussure did not elaborate on these examples, but the codification of the military salute can provide a general instance of how the conventional function of gesture superseded that of the natural. The putative origin of the salute in the display of an empty palm to a comrade (it is a sign of being unarmed) quickly becomes formalized to the point at which this expressive purpose is no longer recognizable. The action is performed instead as a seemingly arbitrary signifier of submission or obedience. In becoming so, moreover, it must maintain its formal distinctiveness solely through opposition to what it is not: a tap on the forehead, a tug of the forelock or, within its specific type of code, an American style of salute or a Nazi 'sieg heil'. With its 'natural' function thus obscured the action is now only an element within a 'system' of signs which serves both to isolate it from the others and to give it definition. In the light of the above example it may be useful at this point to emphasise the distinction between 'code' and 'system'. The former, synonymous with 'convention', refers to the

[14] Both Plato and Aristotle accept the centrality of imitation to art, but there are differences in their interpretations. Plato in *Republic* classifies various forms of poetry according to the degree of imitation (or 'representation') they employ, with the drama entirely imitative and epic poetry mixed: see *Republic*, ed. by Robin Waterfield (Oxford: O.U.P., 1993), pp.87-95. In the same work Plato also puts forward his theory that poetry (and other forms of representaion) are imitations at two removes from reality (*Republic*, pp.344-62). In both instances, however, imitation is always held to be a type of pretence and therefore dangerously misleading. Aristotle's *Poetics* in part comprises a reply to this charge, relying especially on the assertion that imitation is instructive as well as pleasurable because it enables individuals to grasp the essences or 'universals' of things: see Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Richard Janko (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), pp.4-5; 12-13).

[15] Saussure, p.68.

correlational rules which are adopted by a society to establish the link between signifier and signified. They are thus imposed 'from without', and should not be confused with the 'system' which relies on the differences between the signifying elements and is therefore internal to the production of meaning. An acknowledgement of the latter is thus important for assessing the inter-relation between the physical and linguistic aspects of performance, while reference to the 'code' is most valuable when we need to determine what forces are working to fix and control meaning within a given historical period.

In their attempts to integrate actions into their semiological analysis of theatre the Prague school theorists were concerned to do more than simply describe the transposition of specific gestural codes from society onto the stage. A key element of their theory was the heightening or 'semiotising' capacity of the stage itself: the supposition that it "radically transforms all objects and bodies defined within it, bestowing upon them an overriding signifying power which they lack – or which at least is less evident – in their normal social function".[16] "Metaphorical quotation marks" were placed around all that occurred visually on stage, allowing gestural and other physical signs to be described on the basis of a Saussurian model rather than a traditional 'mimetic' one. For rather than treating stage objects as straightforward copies of things in the world the linguistic model suggested that they operated as 'signifieds' – that is, as instances of the conceptual component of the sign – and hence tended to indicate a *class* or *category* of objects rather than any specific object itself. When an actor appears on stage with a particular stage object – with 'skull in hand', to evoke a commonplace of Jacobean drama – we do not so much register the material fact as the acknowledged category of 'skulls' to which it belongs. A number of important consequences follow from this theory.

On one level the 'semiotising' process suggests that the relation of the stage object to the represented object need not be a precise one: a stage skull would be equally cognisable constructed out of paper or wood. But whether or not resemblance plays a part in its representation, it is the translation of these material components into signs which renders them aspects of a fictional, *de-realised* world. This process is rarely an

[16] Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London, 1980), p.7.

isolated one: the dramatic text also constructs objects and bodies as aspects of a fictional world and in most theatrical performance is the principle means of doing so. Indeed, dramatic discourse gives specificity to an object initially grasped only at the categorical level, informing us for example that it is Yorick's skull, or that of Vindice's beloved. But as the non-verbal instances of mime and dance attest, without the initial impulsion to 'read' performing bodies for signification the creation of a separate dramatic world could not occur. This principle has to be set alongside another important aspect of the semiotising process: the manner in which it actuates the already-constituted signifying features of objects. In real life, for example, the skull might be constructed through a separate discourse as (for example) part of the *memento mori* tradition. Transposed to the stage, this signifying function would be evoked even if the immediate context did not demand it. There are resonances here with Bogatyrev's key statement that the stage object is the "sign of a sign, and not the sign of a material thing": the skull now stands in for the acknowledged sign-function of the death's head tradition, retaining but at the same time submerging its own physical specificity.[17]

Thus far I have attempted to sketch the contribution made by a semiotic analysis to an understanding of the body's role as a producer of meaning in the theatre. The key features which can be isolated as integral for such an analysis are those which derive from the linguistic model: principally, that the body-as-signifier will always evoke the body-as-concept rather than the body-as-given. There are clear implications here for the problem of the performing body with which I began. Foremost among these is the manner in which the physical body can become elided through such an analysis. The semiotisation of gesture and movement in performance demands that as signs they link up with other signs operating within a self-contained system. Although this physical sign-system is differentiated from dramatic speech, it is no less a 'language' in the dependency of each element on the others for its meaning. The military salute cited earlier, for example, will denote 'obedience' primarily as a general category. Its value will thus tend to be inflected by other signifiers of obedience surrounding it in the fictional world of the play, and with which it can be set in – possibly ironic – contrast.

[17] See Bogatyrev, "Semiotics in the Folk Theatre", in Matejka and Titunik, pp.33-50 (33): "What exactly is a theatrical costume or a set that represents a house on stage? When used in a play both the theatrical costume and the house-set are often signs that point to one of the signs characterising the costume or the house of a certain personage in the play. In fact, each is a sign of a sign and not the sign of a material thing."

One objection against such a model is that the mimetic possibilities of the performance – its evocation of a physically present body – can be underplayed. Semiotics did not, of course, attempt to obviate all suggestion of a mimetic element in performance: it could hardly deny the high status given to the resemblance between representation and thing represented which has dominated the development of Western theatre for the past 500 years. As Elam carefully formulates it, audiences traditionally "expect the signified *class* to be represented by a vehicle in some way recognisable as a member of it".[18] Nevertheless, semiology accounted for this fact by asserting that "the actor's body acquires its mimetic and representational powers by becoming something other than itself, more and less than individual".[19] Elam's statement seems valid insofar as it applies to the strict logic of theatrical *communication*: as long as the conventions of performance are known and accepted by an audience then meaning can be exchanged without ambiguity whatever indicators are used. Nevertheless we need to ask if the body – whether considered figuratively (i.e. as a stage object) or as the locus of gesture and movement – is doing anything more than providing a 'sign-vehicle' which points towards an immaterial, readable 'meaning'.

On those occasions when theatrical semiotics addressed the body-as-given on stage it usually worked to recuperate that body back into the kind of abstract process of signification discussed above. One of the most influential of the Prague School essays, Jiri Veltrusky's "Dramatic Text as a Component of Theatre", can be usefully cited in this respect. Considering all the possible signifying systems operating in the theatre (language, music, scenery, action) Veltrusky ultimately rejected all but dialogue and action as essential to the production of meaning. In describing the relationship between the two, moreover, Veltrusky emphasised the potential of the physical sign-system to conflict with its linguistic counterpart. For Veltrusky, alive to the contingent factors generated by performance, the body was a highly unstable medium of communication:

> In theatre, the linguistic sign system, which intervenes through the dramatic text, always combines and conflicts with acting, which belongs to an entirely different sign-system [...] the material bearer of the meaning – the actor's body in the most general sense – absolutely predominates over the immaterial meaning. In theatre, the sign created by the actor tends, because of its overwhelming reality, to monopolise the attention of the audience at the expense

[18] Elam, *Semiotics*, p.13.
[19] Elam, *Semiotics*, p.9.

> of the immaterial meanings conveyed by the linguistic sign; it tends to divert attention from the text to the voice performance, from speeches to physical actions and even to the physical appearance of the stage figure...[20]

There are some ambiguities in this passage which are worth pausing over. One of these is precisely what Veltrusky means by 'acting'. Although he is clearly thinking of a physical sign-system differentiated from that of language, he does not appear to make any clear distinction between 'acting' in the sense of action, gesture, bodily movement, etc. and 'acting' as 'impersonation'. This is a consistent omission on Veltrusky's part and can be regarded as symptomatic of his bias towards the literary text as producer of meaning, for which he has been criticised.[21] A related difficulty arises out what Veltrusky means by the "sign created by the actor": clearly this cannot be the actor's *role*, for the passage is concerned with the strictly physical, extra-diegetic elements of performance – voice, movement, etc. This, however, begs the question as to how these extraneous physical elements can still be implicated in a process of signification. Subsequent semiotic theory attempted to account for this problem by drawing attention to the role of unintentional signs in the production of meaning. Elam, for example, held it as axiomatic that the actor's body is always meaningful "to the extent that even purely contingent factors, such as physiologically determined reflexes, are accepted as signifying units."[22] The actor's body could thus provide the locus of potential narratives which originated with the audience rather than the dramatic fiction, and in support of this thesis any number of anecdotes could be found detailing instances of audiences embarking on misconstructions which, once realised, served to explode the dramatic fiction.[23] This approach, however, only served to absorb the unstable physical aspects of performance back into the work of narrative, without considering how and in what ways the actor's body might have meaning outside that narrative.

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[20] Veltrusky, Jiri, "Dramatic Text as a Component of Theatre", in *Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions* ed. by Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1976).
[21] Earlier in the piece, for example, he speaks of the "various types of relations among stage figures (and characters)", evidently collapsing the two categories of actor and role into one physical unit and evincing a certain lack of interest in the problematic around the creation of character. See Veltrusky, pp.96-7. For criticisms see, for example, Aston and Savona, p.74.
[22] Elam, *Semiotics*, p.9.
[23] Elam, *Semiotics*, p.9, quotes Groucho Marx on the scratches on the legs of an actress which failed to become significant as aspects of the narrative: "we waited for these scratches to come to life. But [...] we finally came to the conclusion that that either she'd been shaving too close or she'd been kicked around in the dressing room by her boyfriend."

Rhetorical theory and anti-theatricality: Renaissance ideologies of performance.

In the next part of this chapter I want to suggest how a fuller understanding of the early modern physical conventions of performance, especially those surrounding the use of rhetorical theory on stage, can help to historicize some of the theoretical positions set out above.[24] B.L.Joseph's important study *Elizabethan Acting* claimed over half a century ago that stage performance in the early modern period was largely conceived within a rhetorical framework, and recent commentators are generally agreed that playing was regarded as the natural relation of the orator's art.[25] The skills of the rhetorician or orator had of course formed an essential component of humanist education well before the period of the English professional stage.[26] They were drawn both from a Ciceronian ideal of eloquence as the means to persuasion and from the more technical discussions of Aristotle relating the demonstration of proofs to the disposition of the speaker and the audience. Guidance in the rhetorical art was circulated through the many practical manuals and theoretical discussions which appeared in England throughout the sixteenth century. Some, such as Thomas Wilson's

[24] My use of Veltrusky and the possibility of applying a general semiotics of performance to the Elizabethan stage has been suggested by recent ideological readings of the body in early modern drama. In particular, see Sue Wiseman, "'Tis Pity She's a Whore': Representing the Incestuous Body", which invokes Veltrusky's thesis in order to explore the body's relationship to the "containing and naturalising function of sexual discourse in early modern society (Sue Wiseman, "'Tis Pity She's a Whore': Representing the Incestuous Body" in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c.1540-1660*, ed. by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (Reaktion Books, 1990), pp.180-197 (181)). Wiseman suggestively discusses the conflicting messages sent out by the transgressive sexual acts of the protagonists (their incestuous kisses and embraces) and the almost conventionalised love-rhetoric with which these are surrounded. The distinction I am making from this particular adaptation of Veltrusky's semiotic argument, however, is in placing greater emphasis on a *performative* (i.e. actor-originated) conflict between body and speech rather than a narrative or fictional one (cf. for example Wiseman's central claim that the incestuous body in this play is always and exclusively a construction of language (p.195)).

[25] See B.L.Joseph, *Elizabethan Acting*, (Oxford U.P., 1951), *passim*. For a recent approach (more disposed to balance the rhetorical with other available styles) see Peter Thompson, "Rogues and Rhetoricians: Acting Styles in Early English Drama", in Cox and Kastan, pp.321-335. Edward Burns in his study has warned against the critical fallacy that seeks the "non-existent object [of] Elizabethan acting theory" or attempts to construct it as separate from the rhetorical art, and insists that "the dramatic traditions of the universities, the Inns of Court, and the choir schools had long explored acting and rhetoric as, essentially, the same." (Burns, pp.9-10).

[26] For a general discussion of the central role of rhetoric in humanist thought and education see Brian P. Copenhaven and Charles B. Schmitt *Renaissance Philosophy*, A History of Western Philosophy vol. 3 (Oxford, O.U.P, 1992), pp.25-30.

Art of Rhetorique (1553), became classic works in their own right and exerted great influence in law, politics, poetry and preaching.

The importance of rhetorical training lay, as Richard J. Schoek observes, in its widespread perception as "an art that uniquely leads to action in others", to be achieved through a mixture of reasoned argument, graceful exposition and the emotive power of amplification.[27] Much energy was expended, however, in the debate as to which of these elements was paramount in achieving the desired end of moving an audience. Bacon's objection to the claim that 'action' was the "chief part of an orator", is well known:[28]

> A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high, above those other noble parts of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay almost alone, as if it were all in all.

The term 'action' as Bacon uses it here denotes not merely gesture but the whole physical repertoire of oratorical skills, those usually referred to as 'pronunciation' and comprising the fifth and hierarchically lowest aspect of the art.[29] As Bacon's remarks make explicit, the link between this physical aspect of rhetoric and theatrical performance was by now well-established, even if it was usually invoked (as here) to the detriment of 'delivery'. As David Bevington notes in his study of stage action in the plays of Shakespeare "the notion of illustrating emotion through suitable gesture [...] accorded with prevailing views of rhetoric".[30]

The discussion of 'delivery' in Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Mind* (1604) at first sight presents a more favourable analysis of the body's role in rhetoric than the one offered by Bacon. Wright's account defines oratorical 'action' as "an eloquence of the body" or an "external image of an internal mind" through which "the

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[27] Richard J. Schoek, "Lawyers and Rhetoric in Sixteenth-century England", in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric* ed. by James J. Murphy (Berkeley, L.A: University of California Press, 1983), pp.274-291 (274).
[28] Francis Bacon, "Of Boldness", in *The Essays or Counsels Civil and Moral*, ed. by Brian Vickers, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: O.U.P., 1999), pp.26-8 (26).
[29] For a useful account of the importance of rhetorical 'delivery' to the development of a mimetic style of performance via the drama of the later Middle Ages, see Jody Enders *Rhetoric and the Origins of Medieval Drama* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992), esp. pp.19-44 and 54-68.
[30] David Bevington, *Action is Eloquence: Shakespeare's Language of Gesture* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Uni. Press, 1984), p.70.

affection poureth forth itself by all means possible to discover unto the present beholders and auditors how the actor is affected".[31] The signs made by the orator's body thus communicate naturally and by force of sympathy the emotion within, and this power extends beyond the speaker's body to the bodies of the audience, so that Wright can urge "if we intend to imprint a passion in another it is requisite first it be stamped in our hearts".[32] The art of rhetoric could thus partly be constructed as the ability to stir up the appropriate passion in oneself as a means of 'impressing' its likeness in others.[33] However, Wright also suggests that the instrument of the body may benefit from a certain fine-tuning in order to render the passion more persuasive: "[the orator] ought to endeavor that every part of action imitate as lively as may be the nature of the passion."[34] To understand the proper expression of passion, he goes on to suggest, the orator should:

> look upon other men appasionate [...] and then leave the excess and exorbitant levity or other defects and keep the manner, corrected with prudent mediocrity; and this the best may be marked in stage players who act excellently, for as the perfection of their exercise consisteth in imitation of others, so they that imitate best act best. And in the substance of external action for most part orators and stage-players agree; and only they differ in this, that these act feignedly, those really; these only to delight, those to stir up all sorts of passions according to the exigency of the matter...[35]

The closing remarks drawing a distinction between the authenticity of player and orator cannot obscure the slippage in Wright's argument between the two senses of 'imitation' implied in his account. Initially the 'imitation' he advocates is one of inner feeling by outer form: he sees no difficulty in the notion that the body's exterior can reduplicate in gesture the thoughts and emotions that lie 'within'. Illustration of this precept, however, immediately compels him to look to an external model of imitation; to the signs of passion conveyed by others, but above all to those who imitate passion without

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[31] Thomas Wright *The Passions of the Mind in General*, ed. by William Webster Newbold, The Renaissance Imagination vol.15, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986), Book.5, ch.3, 134-6..3, lines 148-54. The fifth book is concerned with "the means to move Passions" (p.195) and draws heavily on classical theories of rhetoric. The chapter was entirely absent from the first edition (1601), being added to the second (1604) evidently as an elaboration of themes sketched out in scattered form in the first (see Newbold's comments at pp.44-7 of his General Introduction to the text).

[32] Wright, Book.5, ch.3, 64-6.

[33] Cf. Wright, Book 5, ch.3, 179-83. For a discussion of the importance of the 'stamping' metaphor in the rhetorical construction of 'character' see Burns, esp. pp.3-8.

[34] Wright, Book 5, ch.3, 222-4.

[35] Wright, Book 5, ch.3, 232-46.

experiencing it – the players. An interesting set of tensions are revealed in such a formulation. On the one hand, Wright accepts without demur the fundamental rhetorical trope of the body as book, an instrument through which the content or interiority of a person is rendered transparent, and it is in this sense that imitation is correlated with ideas of agency and truth. On the other hand, the admission that actors are the best imitators, despite the fact that they deal exclusively in "the substance of external action", seems like a concession to the primacy of the physical sign in the process of moving and persuading.

Wright's treatise on the passions of the mind, combining as it does an epitome of medical learning on the emotions with a detailed manual on rhetorical procedure, seems to hint at a mirrored relation between the two discursive fields. Just as the orthodox acceptance of the interdependency of body and soul in medicine concealed a hidden threat in the capacity of a delinquent humour such as melancholy to overpower the soul, so acceptance of the transparency of the inner self to the communicative medium of the body seems to lead inexorably to that body's instantiation as the primary *determinant* of meaning. The sense conveyed in these passages of a continual slippage between notions of the soul-body relationship and rhetorical constructions of imitation is not confined to Wright's treatise, but can be glimpsed in other works on rhetorical procedure, notably Thomas Wilson's earlier *Arte of Rhetorique* (1553). Wilson's section on pronunciation is strikingly brief and situated at the very end of his final book on elocution, suggesting that he holds a conventional view of its minor status in comparison with the other parts of rhetoric. At the same time, however, he reports without Bacon's dissaprobation the claim made by Demosthenes that "the chiefest point in al Oratorie" is pronunciation, and apparently concurs with the view that "Arte without utteraunce can do nothing, utteraunce without Arte can dooe right muche".[36] Dividing pronunciation into its vocal and gestural components, Wilson glosses the latter as

> a certaine comely moderacion of the countenaunce, and al other partes of mans bodie, aptely agreeyng to those thynges whiche are spoken [...] Tullie saith well: the gesture of man is the speache of his bodie, and therfore reason it is, that lyke as the speache must agree to the matter, so must also the gesture agree to the mynde. For, the iyes are not geven to man onely to se, but also to shewe and set forth the meanyng of his mynde. (Wilson, *Arte*, pp.436-438:21;24)

[36] Thomas Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique*, ed. by Thomas J.Derrick, The Renaissance Imagination series, vol.1 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1982), p.432: l.4;10.

What begins as a relationship of correspondence between word and gesture is subsequently reformulated, through the familiar Renaissance trope of sympathy, as a relationship of agreement between "gesture" and "the minde". In this instance, elision between the two kinds of 'correspondence' is made possible by reference to Tully's claim that the "gesture of man is the speache of his bodie", a claim which once again threatens to locate the body itself as the primary determinant of meaning. However, Wilson's text does not record the anxiety found in later texts such as Wright's about the performing body's capacity to swamp or distort other forms of meaning. That concern was to emerge only with the ascendancy of the actor's profession, and the anti-theatrical reaction it provoked.

In Steven Gosson's *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* (1582) the deceptive power of the body on stage is repeatedly urged as a counter-argument against those who defended plays on the grounds that their subject matter could provide a moral or didactic function. Paul Whitfield White in his essay on the "Theatre and Religious Culture" observes how Gosson's larger argument slides from a specific attack on playing as a purely commercial activity to the more inclusive objection that all playing is a form of falsehood, and therefore antipathetic to instruction.[37] In the third 'action' of his tract, for example, Gosson elaborates on the charge that playing is a form of lying by defining a lie as an "acte" consisting of "outward signes" by which we "declare our selues by wordes or by gestures to be otherwise than we are".[38] Gosson ascribes the work of deception firmly to the performing body, going on to insist that:

> in Stage Playes for a boy to put one the attyre, the gesture, the passions of a woman; for a meane person to take upon him the title of a Prince with counterfeit porte, and traine, is by outwarde signes to shewe them selves otherwise then they are, and so within the compasse of a lye.

On one level we have the familiar arguments about the immorality of crossing-dressing and the dissevering of estates, arguments which, in common with similar passages in

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[37] See Paul Whitfield White, "Theatre and Religious Culture" in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan, pp.133-151 (140).

[38] Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in fiue Actions, Prouing that they are not to be suffered in a Christian common weale, by the waye both the Cauils of* Thomas Lodge, *and the* Play of Playes, *written in their defence, and other obiections of Players frendes, are truly set downe and directly aunswered* (London: 1582), E5r.

Phillip Stubbes and William Rankins, relentlessly confounded impersonation for a narrative purpose with active dissimulation in a social context.[39] In pursuing this argument, however, it is noticable that Gosson all but elides the category of words among the "outward signes" which are perverted through performance. 'Falsehood' becomes associated almost exclusively with the physical signs of playing, leaving untouched those verbal signs by which players also declare themselves to be "otherwise then they are". A reformed playwright himself, this approach allows Gosson to preserve the truth-value of poetry at the expense of the meanings produced by the body in performance.[40] When Gosson comes to the important objection that great authors wrote plays, for example, he can exempt them from the charge of dissimulation on the grounds that they, "according to the true use of Poetrie, penned these bookes in numbers with interloquutions dialoguewise, as Plato and Tullie did their Philosophy, to be reade, not to be played".[41] Similarly, while Gosson never explicitly addresses the link between acting and rhetorical 'delivery', he implicitly dismisses it by objecting to those authors who claim that "action, pronunciation, agility of body are the good gifts of God" and therefore worthy accompaniments of the written text.[42]

On the one hand, then, Gosson can assert that all performance is a lie, drawing on two arguments that could easily be conflated: established Platonic precepts about 'good' and 'bad' mimesis, and their radical Protestant analogue in the accusation that on stage "some base fellowe that plaide Christe, should bring the person of Christ into contempt".[43] In practice these moral and aesthetic objections are indissociable from one another, and Gosson makes no attempt to apply them differentially in the course of his polemic. Indeed, by entangling them together the anti-theatricalist can depict the stage as a place where the body becomes the principle focus not just of meaning but of affect

[39] See, for example, Phillip Stubbes, *Phillip Stubbes's Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth, A.D. 1583*, pt.1, ed. by Frederick J. Furnivall for The New Shakespeare Society (London: N. Trübner & Co, 1877-9), pp.28-9; 73, and William Rankins, *The English Ape*, pp.7-8.
[40] Gosson's early ventures as both playwright and actor are discussed in William Ringler, *Stephen Gosson: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942), pp.18ff. According to Ringler, although in his later career Gosson "was not at all averse to talking about his work as a playwright; in fact, he rather boasted of it" he nonetheless "maintained a discreet silence" about "his personal appearance on the boards" (p.23).
[41] Gosson, E5v.
[42] Gosson, E6v-E7r.
[43] Gosson, E6r. For an overview of the history of the Platonic distinction between good and bad forms of mimesis see Mihau Spariosu's introduction to *Mimesis in Contemporary Theory*, Vol.1: The Literary and Philosophical Debate (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1984), pp.i-xxix.

and desire too. This is suggested throughout the piece by Gosson's frequent descriptions of the purely visual and sensory aspects of theatrical pleasure and of the "carnally minded" playgoers who pursue them. The language he uses here draws on entrenched Reformation arguments about idolatry, the vanity of "outward spectacles" and 'the world and the flesh', which in twentieth-century criticism has often earned Gosson the soubriquet of a 'Puritan'.[44] What is distinctive about Gosson's tract, however, is less its subscription to any particular religious ideology than the expression of a more general problematic over the power of theatrical gesture. This emerges most strongly when Gosson concludes his final 'action' with an anecdote of a performance of "Bacchus and Ariadne" – borrowed not from the world of contemporary playing but from classical authority – to illustrate "what force there is in the gestures of Players".[45] Describing the moment at which Bacchus, "expressing in his daunce the passions of loue", woos and wins Ariadne, Gosson relates the effect of this representation of desire upon the audience:

> At this the beholders beganne to shoute, when Bacchus rose up, tenderly lifting Ariadne from her seate, no small store of curtesie passing betweene them, the beholders rose up, every man stoode on tippe toe, and seemed to hover over the playe, when they sware, the company sware, when they departed to bedde; the company was presently set on fire, they that were married posted home to theire wives; they that were single, vowed very solemnly, to be wedded. (*Playes Confuted*, G4r).

Through this depiction of a sexualised audience Gosson constructs an ideology of performance which appropriates traditional rhetorical arguments about the role of mimesis in the production of emotion, only to reverse their moral emphasis completely. Sympathy and correspondence now become the means by which the actor's dangerously affective body can exceed the limits of theatrical representation and penetrate into a wider social world.

To the rhetorician's objection that the performing body posed a problem in its capacity to inflect or overpower *meaning*, then, we can add the anti-theatricalist's fear that it was too potent a generator of *affect* in audiences. Those who wished to defend the theatre and the kinds of emotion it was responsible for arousing were compelled to

[44] See, for example, Gurr, *Playgoing* p.202.
[45] Gosson, G4r.

address these issues and provide counter-arguments. In conection with this theme, it is worth attending to the way melancholy was implicated in both sides of the debate, where it could be located at the receptive, as well as the representational, pole of theatrical exchange. We have already seen in the previous chapter how melancholy was constructed as an especially harmful by-product of play-going. In William Rankins' *The Mirrovr of Monsters* melancholic affect was placed within a closed and self-perpetuating loop: a diseased emotion brought into the theatre in order that it may be expelled, only to be returned with a vengeance to the unwary sufferer.[46] In this instance the 'purgation' argument about the relationship between melancholy and newly-commodified theatrical pleasures is uncompromisingly mocked. It was possible, however, to assign to melancholy a more complex role within discussions of audience affect, and to give the 'purgation' analogy a genuinely sustainable theoretical groundwork. In this regard it is helpful to look at Guarini's *Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry*, which was first published in Italy in 1601, and which represented a fusion of two earlier defences of the new genre of tragicomedy published by Guarini along with the text of his play *Il Pastor Fido* in 1590 and 1593. Although the *Compendium* was not translated into English in the first decades of the sixteenth century, its diffusion into English theatrical discourse is nonetheless strongly suggested by the defences and expositions which begin to accompany the publication of tragicomedies in this period.[47]

Melancholy as an audience response occupies a key position in Guarini's *Compendium*, both as an emotion associated specifically with the tragicomic genre he

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[46] For the role of melancholy in anti-theatrical discourse I have found particularly suggestive Lynn Enterline's analysis of the masquing scene in John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (*Tears of Narcissus*, pp.267-283, 'Border Disputes'). Arguing that anti-theatrical discourse provides an informing element in Webster's play, she suggests that "In Webster's exploration of the limits of theatrical representation, melancholia designates a force that erodes the minimal differences [i.e. between audience and actor] necessary for mimetic activity" (p.272). Her account makes substantial use of Gosson's *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* to illustrate the entanglement of moral with mimetic values typical of antitheatrical polemics. Enterline goes on to link their supposition of a 'mental contagion' which was transmitted between actor and audience with the melancholic Ferdinand's representation before the imprisoned Duchess of wax corpses of her family. It is curious that so astute and wide-ranging an account of this theatrical dynamic should omit William Rankin's *Mirrovr of Monsters*. Nevertheless, Enterline's endorsement of the critical position that the "Jacobean drama [...] tends to incorporate into itself the specific terms of contemporary complaints about the possible ill effects of theatrical representation" is an important one for the later stages of this thesis, and I will return to this theme at the close of this chapter.

[47] Most famous of these is, of course, the note "To the Reader" added by John Fletcher to the 1609-10 edition of *The Faithful Shepherdess*. For discussion of close parallels with Guarini's theoretical defence of tragicomedy see the discussion in Robert Henke, *Pastoral Transformations: Italian Tragicomedy in Shakespeare's Late Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997), p.51ff.

was defending and more widely in connection with the emotions aroused by tragedy. In analysing the nature of tragicomedy Guarini followed the distinction which he found in Aristotle between the instrumental and architectonic ends of theatrical representation. The former pertained to the type of *action* imitated – serious and public as in tragedy, mirthful and private as in comedy – and the latter to their purgative *effect* on the audience.

> the end of tragicomedy [...] is to imitate with the resources of the stage an action that is feigned and in which are mingled all the tragic and comic parts that can coexist in verisimilitude and decorum, properly arranged in a single dramatic form, with the end of purging with pleasure, the sadness of the hearers. This is done in such a way that the imitation, which is the instrumental end, is that which is mixed, and represents a mingling of both tragic and comic events. But the purging, which is the architectonic end, exists only as a single principle, which unites two qualities in one purpose, that of freeing the hearers from melancholy. [48]

Although the instrumental ends of tragicomedy were necessarily "mixed" – the product of a "mingling" of types of action – they thus combine to create a single architectonic end which is correlated only with the comic part of the synthesis. Comedy's function in "freeing the hearers from melancholy" is a point which Guarini makes more than once in his defence. Moreover, he clothes it in an explicitly medical terminology which outdoes Aristotle in extending the 'humoral' metaphor, as for example when he discusses its central importance in:

> purging men's minds of those passions that are caused in us by labours both private and public. It purges melancholy, an emotion so injurious that often it leads a man to grow mad and to inflict death on himself [...] As a breeze is wont to drive away the thickened air, comedy by moving us to laughter shakes off that gloomy and foggy humour, generated in us by too much mental concentration, which often renders us slow and obtuse in our activities.[49]

Guarini has a certain amount of latitude in making this claim since, as he himself acknowledges, discussion of the 'architectonic' end of comedy is not extant in Aristotle, and hence can be supplied from conjecture. This insistence on melancholy as the purged element is nonetheless striking, and seems almost to have been derived from

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[48] Giambattista Guarini, "The Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry", in Allan H. Gilbert, *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden* (New York: American Book co, 1940), 504-533; 524.
[49] Guarini, *Compendium*, p.514.

another discursive domain, most obviously that surrounding the management of academic health. A Ficinian slant, for example, is provided by the claim that melancholy is produced through "too much mental concentration", and a further gesture towards medical specificity is implied by the shift from the earlier description of melancholy as a "passion" to that of a "gloomy and foggy humour". In any case, melancholy is depicted here as an emotion capable of being suffered by all, having its provenance in a universal of world of work, and aptly alleviated through the laughter generated by both comedy and tragicomedy on the stage.

Elsewhere in the *Compendium*, by contrast, Guarini speaks of melancholy not as something to be taken into the theatre for the purposes of purgation, but as something taken out of it as one of the possible *products* of theatrical representation. Just prior to his discussion of the purgative virtue of comedy, Guarini puts forward his case for tragicomedy as the highest of all dramatic forms, suggesting that

> the mingling of tragic and comic pleasure [...] does not allow hearers to fall into excessive tragic melancholy or comic relaxation.[50]

In this instance, melancholy – conventionally a composite of fear and sorrow – stands in for the canonical set of emotions aroused by tragedy: pity and fear. One important result of making melancholy synonymous with these two responses is that Guarini can introduce into his discussion an analogy with humoural psychology, so constructing tragicomedy as a healthy mean between the dangerous affective extremes charted by tragedy and comedy:

> From this results a poem of the most excellent form and composition [...] fully corresponding to the mixture of the human body, which consists entirely in the tempering of the four humours...

Melancholy, along with its binary opposite laughter, represents excess in this somatic-cum-theatrical economy. However, as the previous passage implies, it is an excess produced not by mental concentration but by a particular kind of aesthetic pleasure. A wholly different set of values from those surrounding the notion of academic melancholy can be introduced as a consequence, with the pejorative connotations of

[50] Guarini, *Compendium*, p.512.

'melancholy' helping to bolster the argument that the dark pleasures of tragedy have no beneficial place in a Christian polity. In a subsequent passage Guarini goes on to ask, polemically:

> what need have we today to purge terror and pity with tragic sights, since we have the precepts of our most holy religion, which teaches us with the word of the gospel? Hence these horrible and savage spectacles are superfluous, nor does it seem to me that today we should introduce a tragic action for any other reason than to get delight in it.[51]

It is noticeable that while the 'delights' of tragedy are not gainsaid, they are nevertheless divorced from the business of purgation which provided their ancient rationale. One reason for this is the centrality of both these emotions – compassion for the weak, terror before God – to Christian belief, and hence a resistance to any threat of their removal.[52] There is the suggestion, however, that Guarini can both allow and disavow his purgation argument at the same time, specifically by letting 'melancholy' occupy the place of tragic terror in the appropriate part of the discussion. Terror and pity are to be retained as emotions essential to the Christian subject, but melancholy (terror's equivalent as the earlier remark about "tragic melancholy" shows) can be treated as excessive, redundant, apt for expulsion buy virtue of its conceptualisation within the system of the four humours. In fact, Guarini would go on to develop a better and subtler way of justifying adherence to the purgation argument, one which I will discuss in depth when I come to consider the relationship between these theoretical defences of tragicomedy and John Marston's *The Malcontent.* In terms of positioning melancholy within a general problematic about audience affect, however, it can be noted here that the development of new genres such as tragicomedy yielded new ways of addressing the closed-loop dynamic which anti-theatrical discourse had identified as intrinsic to the theatrical experience, most specifically by identifying and negotiating between melancholy's different roles within tragic and comic genres.

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[51] Guarini. *Compendium*, p.523.

[52] For discussion of the problems posed by the theory of catharsis to Christian (and particularly Counter-Reformation) thought see the discussion in Baxter Hathaway, *The Age of Criticism: The Late Renaissance in Italy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp.214-224. But as Guarini was to argue at length, 'purgation' need to not imply such a process: see my discussion of his theory of tragic purgation below.

These normative (i.e. rhetorical) and pejorative (i.e. anti-theatrical) constructions of the orator's and player's physical 'action' clearly have implications for my discussion of the processes of exchange between medical and performing bodies. The question that still needs to be asked, however, is what kind of evidence is available from the early modern dramatic texts themselves about the way the relationship between body and speech was conceptualised? The question is important in its bearing on the key problematic I have identified above within a rhetorical scheme of performance: that the integral (if notionally subordinate) role of the actor's body always allowed it to eclipse other systems involved in the production of meaning and affect on stage. Yet this argument seems to run against the grain of some important latter-day critical preconceptions regarding the interpretation of performance on the Renaissance stage: namely, that stage action in this period was determined primarily by the speeches and dialogue of the characters.

This view is set out in Elaine Aston and George Savona's study *Theatre as Sign-System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance*. Drawing on a distinction formulated by Ingaarden in his 1973 paper "The Literary Work of Art" between the written work's 'main text' ("Haupttext") and its 'side text' ("Nebentext") – that is, between the dialogue and the stage directions respectively –Aston and Savona reformulate this dichotomy as one between directions which are distinct from the dialogue, or 'extra-dialogic' (synonymous with the "Nebentext"), and those which are *implied* in the dialogue, or 'intra-dialogic'.[53] These authors then go on to show how an utilization of these categories could provide the basis for an important historical distinction:

> The 'classic' text operates at the level of the *Haupttext*. It consists almost wholly of dialogue. The dialogue simultaneously performs the work of stage directions and [...] the extrapolation of an intra-dialogic *Nebentext* is a logical and straightforward undertaking.[54]

[53] See Ingaarden, *The Literary Work of Art*, 3rd edn. trans. G.G.Grabowicz (Evanston: North-Western Uni. Press, 1973 (1931)), pp.208-10.
[54] Aston and Savona, p.94.

This feature was fundamental in differentiating 'classical' texts (i.e. both ancient and early modern plays) from 'bourgeois' texts ('realistic' works exemplified in Ibsen and Chekhov, and the melodrama) and later modern or 'radical' texts (Pirandello, Brecht, Beckett). In these latter cases the preponderance of stage directions was evidently far greater and far more central in terms of detailing the action and providing descriptions of the fictional world of the play. Action in the earlier class of drama is by contrast seen to be almost wholly bound up with – and indeed the effect *of* – dramatic discourse.

The scheme provided by Aston and Savona for discussing stage action is in many respects a helpful one because it offers a way of talking about the relationship between the two semiotically-defined 'texts' (action and discourse) without losing sight of the performative or the historical dimensions. At the same time, I would like to enlarge on some of their key concepts to provide a more detailed account of the problems surrounding the representation of action in early modern drama than is covered in their brief account. Although these authors are right to emphasise a degree of commensurability between 'stage directions' – that is, prompts to action – within and without the dialogue, there is still a requirement to determine how these categories operate at the critical level (they are, after all, constructs), the dramatic level (i.e. stage directions as a literary product) and at the theatrical level (i.e. how they work in performance). As can be seen from the above passage, while the authors retain a use of the terms "Haupttext/Nebentext" they do not emphasise an opposition between the two, envisaging instead the often silent presence of one – the Nebentext – within the other. But while the correlation between 'Nebentext' and 'extra-dialogic' is straightforward enough, the notion of an 'intra-dialogic Nebentext' seems more problematic. To what extent can the speeches of the characters usefully be construed as 'directions'? Can we ever be certain about the reading of action from speech, and is there a more precise way of defining what we mean by 'action'? On this last point, while I am concerned here mainly with gesture on the stage it is obvious that a thorough enquiry into the interdependence of language and action in performance could extend the parameters of a definition of 'action' beyond the merely gestural.[55]

[55] While the centrality of 'action' to a discussion of the nature of drama has been axiomatic since Aristotle, the *Poetics* never indicates exactly what 'praxis' denotes, making it difficult to establish a clear dividing-line between action-as-movement and (for example) performative speech.

If we nevertheless confine ourselves to those gestures and movements which emerge out of the dialogue, we still encounter the problem as to how far a simple cause-to-effect relationship between word and deed can be established. Unlike extra-dialogic directions, which whether couched in a 'theatrical' or a 'literary' form unambiguously denote some kind of movement about the stage, the speeches and dialogue of dramatic characters invariably occur in a fictional space (I am excluding 'extra-mimetic' moments), so that suggestions of activity in them may not necessarily issue in the movements of the performer.[56] A number of Hieronimo's soliloquies in *The Spanish Tragedy*, for example, are held to present excellent instances of a kind of speech – new at that time to the English stage – in which specific actions, occurring at specific places and times, are made implicit.[57] The famous passage which leads to the discovery of Hieronimo's murdered son appears especially to endorse Wolfgang Clemen's opinion that "it is a speech which accurately reflects what Hieronimo is experiencing, at the same time indicating his actions by means of internal stage-directions."[58] The speech as a whole does have one stage direction proper, indicating the moment when Hieronimo cuts down the body ("*he cuts him down*").[59] In the other cases, however, it is ultimately impossible to determine whether the lines should be accompanied by movement or merely declaimed. The forceful use of deixis in the speech, the verbal gesturing towards an apparently real and present environment through the abundant use of 'here's and 'this's, might seem to imply an attendant system of physical gestures.[60] But apart from the moment indicated above, there is nothing in the speech which could not be communicated through the traditional vocal and rhetorical resources available to the actor, however inadequate this may be construed by present-day suppositions about verisimilitude.

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[56] On the 'theatrical' and 'literary' distinction see my discussion of the account provided by Dessen below.

[57] For a masterly account (albeit one heavily indebted to Clemen) of how a "new sense of the interdependence of character and society, and a fully responsive interplay between dramatic speech and dramatic action in reproducing the cause and effect of human behaviour [...] defines realism in the Renaissance theater" see Robert Weimann's section on "Renaissance Poetics and Elizabethan Realism: Vision and Experience" in *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition*, pp.196-207 (197).

[58] Wolfgang Clemen, *English Tragedy before Shakespeare* (London, 1961), 109.

[59] Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. by J.R.Mulryne, New Mermaids (London: A&C Black Ltd, 1989), 2.5.12.

[60] 'Deixis' can imply both a physical mode of indication and, as I am using it here, a grammatical one. My analysis is indebted to Elam's discussion of "the role of verbal indices in 'actualizing' the dramatic world" in Elam, *Semiotics*, p.113; 138-48.

Another instance from *The Spanish Tragedy*, Isabella's distracted assault on the bower where Horatio was hung up, perhaps provides a better example of dramatic discourse developing in tandem with its own "internal stage directions" (4.2.). Not only is action signified extra-dialogically at the start and finish of the soliloquy ("*She cuts down the arbour*", l.5; "*She stabs herself*", l.7), but gesture seems compelled through the deictic force of such lines as,

> Ay, here he died, and here I him embrace:
> See where his ghost solicits with his wounds...(4.2.23)

Here, the fictional space in which the speech occurs is marked by the very absence of the body to which the words of a mother, now insane, are directed. My supposition is that such an absence would have enhanced rather than diminished the impact of any accompanying gestures. The effect of such gestures may even have been necessary in order to set off Isabella's 'interiority' – her own disordered inner space – from the fictional space which surrounds her: an emphatic 'deixis' which points within rather than without the character. A later echo of the above device in a scene from Marston's *Jack Drum's Entertainment* may hint at the degree of physical movement which could have accompanied Isabella's soliloquy:

> Here seemes to be the pressure of his truncke
> ...
> Oh thou sweet print, stampt by the fairest limbes
> ...
> First drinke my teares, and next sucke up my blood.[61]

Nevertheless, it remains impossible to determine from the text alone if action would have been continuous throughout Isabella's soliloquy or would merely have served to punctuate it. Many passages in her speech, for example, are highly rhetorical, evoking the underworld and the moral imperitive of revenge (26-31). It might further be urged that the identification of Isabella's womb with the arbour which she is cursing into barrenness (made explicit with her suicide at the end of the soliloquy) would be given an implicit force throughout the speech by a more static form of delivery. Thus the

[61] John Marston, *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, F1r.

earlier rhetorical passages of the curse would not merely be directed outwards towards the scene and its properties but would also encompass the visible body of their speaker.

Much of the discussion about 'internal stage directions' is conducted with an eye to what will eventually be practised on the Shakespearean stage, where the integration of gesture and spoken verse is held to reach its apogee of subtlety and economic expression.[62] The result is sometimes seen as entailing a reduced emphasis on external directions, so that the dramatic action is enabled literally to speak for itself. In Anne Pasternak Slater's words, the extra-dialogic directions "are far outshadowed by the even richer mass of Shakespeare's indirect stage directions – the oblique imperatives of the dialogue."[63] A comparison of passages in *The Spanish Tragedy* with Shakespeare's earliest venture in the revenge genre *Titus Andronicus* suggests how far such a claim can be endorsed. Kyd's use of the visual conventions of grief, for example, are occasionally conveyed by the text, as when Balthazar and Castile admonish Bel-Imperia: "Disperse those clouds and melancholy looks" and ask "Why coms't thou sadly to salute us thus?" (3.14.98;108). Here, however, the image of Bel-Imperia's state which their words conjure up lacks any immediate physical specificity, as if the signs which are used to communicate these conventions are intent on remaining verbal. This contrasts with the representation of grief in Shakespeare's work where the communicative capacity of a single signifying agent – the hand – is expanded into a motif which is worked out through each of the characters in turn:

> *Titus*: Marcus, unknit that sorrow-wreathen knot:
> Thy niece and I, poor creatures, want our hands
> And cannot passionate our ten-fold grief
> With folded arms. This poor right hand of mine
> Is left to tyrannize upon my breast
> Who when my heart, all mad with misery
> Beats in this hollow prison of my flesh
> Then thus I thump it down.
> [*To Lavinia*] Thou map of woe, that thus dost talk in signs,
> When thy poor heart beats with outrageous beating
> Thou canst not strike it thus to make it still.[64]

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[62] Clemen, for example, appends his discussion of Horatio's 'acted' soliloquy in the garden with the reflection: "We still find this technique used by Shakepeare, though by him it is as a rule more subtly and more covertly managed." (Clemen, p.109).
[63] Ann Pasternak Slater, *Shakespeare the Director* (Harvester Press, 1982), p.1.
[64] William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. by J.C.Maxwell, New Arden (London: Routledge, 1991 (1953)), 3.2.4.

The expressions of sorrow are no less conventional than those found in Kyd: the folded arms, for example, are emblematic of melancholy, and the hand striking the breast is an equally recognizable commonplace. Here however the familiar gestural conventions become amplified and enriched through their relationship to a dramatic discourse which is constantly drawing new meanings out of them through word-play: the "folded arms" become inadequate to the representation of a "ten-fold grief", and in a later notorious line Titus exclaims "O, handle not the theme, to talk of hands" (29). Similarly, the hand which beats upon the breast is developed into an agent of oppression which 'tyrannizes' over the confined lunatic "beating" at the walls within. The point about such 'internal stage directions' in the Shakespearean passage is that they successfully sustain the link between gestural convention and dramatic speech by allowing those gestures to direct the development of the discourse whilst at the same time obliging their meanings to be reworked in and through language. On the page the various games with words which such a strategy involves may often appear gratuitous or laboured. In theatrical terms, however, I would suggest that it successfully contrasts with those instances in Kyd where intra-dialogic action is used merely to exemplify or condense the themes and debates being worked out in the speeches without becoming a fully dynamic element within them.

When Kyd does generate complex effects through the relation of speech to action, this is usually done with the support of extra-dialogic directions, as in Hieronimo's soliloquy at 3.12 while holding a dagger and halter, or Isabella's soliloquy in the arbour discussed above. A final comparison may help to show further how the Shakespearean use of word-play can deepen the theatrical value of gesture. The love scene in *The Spanish Tragedy* between Bel-Imperia and Horatio in the arbour includes a passage of verse dialogue which indisputably carries its own directions:

> *Bel-Imperia*: If I be Venus, thou must needs be Mars
> And where Mars reigneth, there must needs be wars.
> *Horatio*: Then thus begins our wars: put forth thy hand
> That it may combat with my ruder hand.
> *Bel-Imperia*: Set forth thy foot to try the push of mine.
> *Horatio*: But first my looks shall combat against thine.
> *Bel-Imperia*: Then ward thyself: I dart this kiss at thee.
> *Horatio*: Thus I retort the dart thou threw'st at me.

Bel-Imperia: Nay then, to gain the glory of the field
My twining arms shall yoke and make thee yield.
Horatio: Nay then, my arms are large and strong withal:
Thus elms by vines are compassed til they fall. (2.4.34-45).

Although some of the individual speeches are couplets, the general sense is of an appropriation of Senecan stichomythia directed not, however, towards the conduct of a debate but towards the representation of activity which accelerates towards its disastrous conclusion – the brutal murder which irrupts suddenly into the private act of love-making. The sequence gains its power from this rapid accumulation of brief, distinctive acts which increasingly bring the lovers closer together, but the acts themselves do not signify beyond helping to sustain the allegorical Mars-Venus relationship being pursued in the dialogue. What emerges from such comparisons of Kyd with even the earliest of Shakespearean pieces is not the greater quantity of physical actions conveyed in the speeches of the latter, but the greater dramatic capital extracted from a single gesture.

It should also be pointed out that discussions of intra-dialogic action have provided fertile ground for the dispute between proponents of the 'formalist' and 'naturalist' theories of Elizabethan playing. The former emphasise the less obviously stageable aspects of the narrative (descriptions of the blushing of a character and so forth), and infer from this a significant gap between the 'acts' of the fictional persona and their subsequent figuration on the stage. The latter school of thought points towards the many injunctions in theatrical texts for the unforced use of gesture, for example works by Heywood and Rymer, and the well-known comments to the players in *Hamlet*. I do not wish to rehearse the details of a debate which has by now largely been superseded, except to show how it has touched on the business of reading action from the dialogue. Anne Slater, for example, a supporter of the 'naturalist' possibilities of the Shakespearean stage, compares the 'good quarto' texts of a number of plays with external directions from the 'bad quartos' to suggest that the "evidence [...] tilts heavily in favour of a theatre that carried out the directions of the dialogue, and was, therefore, generally realistic."[65] Even more crucially, a study of internal directions can be used to

[65] Ann Slater, p.14. In order not to misrepresent her even-handed approach to the evidence, Slater's eventual conclusion should be noted: "Elizabethan and Jacobean drama exploited both kinds of action, depending on the type of drama, just as it used colloquial prose and the heroic line, just as it turned to

register the presence and intentions of the author: to quote Slater again, they "ensure that [Shakespeare] can control the actions and expressions of his players, precisely and permanently, for as long as his words are obeyed."[66] And yet, as with the case of Clemen's discussion of the internal stage directions in *The Spanish Tragedy*, such a claim will rely heavily for proof on what can be established about such obedience of the players to the text, and this primarily involves a comparison of the relevant passages of dialogue with external directions from bad quarto and prompt-book copies.

There are a number of questions surrounding the provenance of extra-dialogic directions in the printed versions of plays which make comparisons of the above nature difficult, and which could further problematize the historical claim of Aston and Savona that action in 'classical' plays is largely dependent on the dialogue. Most pertinent of all for the plays of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods is the question as to how far this type of direction originated with the author and how far with the subsequent intervention of the theatre workers. In the majority of cases from the professional drama of this period the script used for performance will have been taken out of the author's (or authors') control at an early period in the production, and will have been worked over by other hands – principally the actors' and the prompters' – before reaching a 'finished' stage deemed fit for performance. This finished stage would be represented by the 'allowed book' which provided the company's production copy. If the company then chose to allow the play to be printed, there would thus theoretically be more than one 'authoritative' text which could be used for such a purpose.[67] The printer's copy may have been either the author's own final draft prior to production (the so-called "foul papers") or the prompt-book used by the company for the performance itself, which the actors would have adapted to a greater or lesser degree from the author's manuscript. The text which the printer finally produced may also have been mediated by reference to an earlier version of the play which had been illicitly copied down during attendance at a performance and subsequently sold and printed – one of the familiar 'bad quartos'. (Some texts have versions deriving from all three categories: in

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comedy and tragedy in a single play [...] Why then can we not accept a theatre that demands lively, realistic action at one moment, the stately and formal the next?" (p.17).

[66] Ann Slater, p.33.

[67] For an invaluable discussion of the difficulties surrounding identification of the printer's copy see Peter Blayney's "The Publication of Playbooks", in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia U.P., 1997), pp.383-422. I am drawing especially on his section on "*The Varieties of Manuscript*", pp.392-4.

the case of *Hamlet*, for example, the second Quarto, the Folio version, and the first Quarto are assumed to correspond to each of the categories above). The important point, however, is that in the majority of cases the author's control over the fate of the copy will have decreased with every stage of the development from quill to stage to printed page. (I am obviously discounting special instances of authors' influence over printed versions of their works, exemplified by Jonson, Marston and Webster – see below).

If the copy of a play which has come down to us in print can be reliably shown to have derived from the prompt-book, then there are important implications for the precise origins of actions of an intra-dialogic and an extra-dialogic type respectively. It seems reasonable to suppose that whatever actions and gestures emerge out of the dialogue can be located with greater security in the author's own contribution to the performance text. This by no means equates with a certainty, since additions and interpolations from actors obviously may have carried their own passages of action with them, for example in the comedic routines of clowns. However, inserted passages of text usually have a greater chance of detection by editors, who can make assessments on the basis of style and dramatic relevance, even if few would now introduce a spurious notion of 'dramatic logic' into their argument. (Even here, however, one can see how in a collaborative work the line between 'authorial' and 'playhouse' input will become very thin indeed). But the case is clearly the opposite with extra-dialogic directions in prompt-book copies, where the primary business was in fixing exits and entries and detailing properties. Even if an 'authorial' copy is available for comparison with the prompt-book the difficulty, although considerably lessened, is not eliminated. As Harold Jenkins has pointed out, even the "foul papers" would have been slightly the less foul for carrying some likely emendations from the book-keeper prior to transcription, most of which will have been in the area of extra-dialogic directions.[68] In no other area of the text, it seems, will the authorial voice be harder to recover than here. This may no longer seem a cause for alarm to contemporary criticism, disinclined as it is to attempt the recovery of a single, stable text on which authoritative meaning can be stamped. A procedure by which stage directions can be subjected to close reading, for

[68] See Jenkins' section on "Playhouse marking of the manuscript" in the intro. to *Hamlet*, ed. by Harold Jenkins, New Arden (London: Routledge, 1982), pp.42-44. The examples he gives all pertain to entrances/exits, and amplifications of names and actions.

example, in order to gauge authorial attitudes to the characters – as followed by Margaret Munkelt in her paper on Shakespearean directions – has increasingly fallen from favour.[69]

As Antony Hammond has pointed out, however, there are some surprising repercussions for those who would prefer to see the performance text – with its collaborative status better reflecting the pluralistic endeavour of play-making – given priority. Dividing stage directions into three basic kinds – exits/entrances, properties, and directions for acting – Hammond overturns the axiom that a prompt-book copy must give a truer sense of what occurred under performance conditions by pointing out its almost exclusive concern with the details of the first and second kinds of direction.[70] His conclusion that the authorial manuscript, more replete with the 'performative' directions, must be "more likely to assist a reader to visualize a play" might be dismissed as ultimately inadmissable of proof.[71] But neither can one discount the possibility that many of these third-kind directions could indeed have been realized in performance whether or not they survived into the prompter's copy. Hammond's observations chime with the distinction cited earlier which is often drawn between extra-dialogic directions of a 'theatrical' and a 'literary' type. First formulated by W.W.Greg in his discussion of playhouse manuscripts, the very point for this scholar in drawing such a distinction was to show how frequently the prompt-books themselves were capable of eliding it.[72] Others who have elaborated on this formulation have questioned the assumption held by critics such as T.J.King that all such 'literary' directions represent the largely fictional jottings of the author and would not have been translated into stage practice. Richard Hosley, for example, argues that the fictional and the purely technical, stage-bound aspects of these descriptions of the action were often entangled together, reflecting the role of imaginative participation frequently asked of audiences by their dramatists.[73]

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[69] See Margaret Munkelt, "Stage Directions as Part of the Text", in *Shakespeare Studies* (1987), 19, 253-72.
[70] This general rule can be found articulated most fully in T.J.King's *Shakespearean Staging, 1599-1642* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).
[71] Anthony Hammond, "Encounters of the Third kind in Stage-Directions in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama", in *Studies in Philology*, 1992 (Winter), 89:1, 71-99 (80).
[72] See the discussion of Greg's distinction in Alan Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1984), p.27.
[73] See Dessen, pp.27-8.

While the ultimate indeterminacy over the provenance of stage directions, perhaps for any of the versions that survive, quarto, folio, manuscript or printed, may have pessimistic implications for the process of recovering a true 'performance text', it nonetheless forcefully underscores a general observation made by Anthony Hammond that "action on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage was much more elaborate than can be directly demonstrated from virtually any of the surviving texts".[74] To treat extra-dialogic directions as reliable guides to the *quantity* of action that took place separately from the dialogue is to ignore the sometimes capricious processes of selection they underwent before being commited to print. This is a problem Hammond elsewhere characterizes as the "submerged iceberg of those directions that did not get written down in either manuscript [i.e. foul-papers or prompt-book]".[75] Indeed, because he is specially concerned with the case of John Webster, this critic is able to draw on a curious feature of the dramatist's printed work which seems to offer a partial glimpse into the hidden richness of Jacobean stage action. Webster's own additions to later printed versions of his plays introduce a number of marginalia comprising involved descriptions of the action, although these can only have served to illuminate the action for the reader, their theatrical usefulness having passed. Hammond does not address the two questions which loom largest in this case – the actual source of these additions (which may not of course have been Webster), and their retrospective fidelity to the play as performed. Nevertheless, similarities of phrasing between these marginalia and the directions within the text support the notion that they are authorial and are complementing the latter with gestural and other features recalled from the performance itself. Considerations of this sort seem ultimately to problematize the distinctions drawn by Aston and Savona between 'classical' and subsequent 'bourgeois' dramas which suggest a homology in the representation of action among ancient and early modern styles. Instead, a case may have to be made out for our own construction of a dynamically frugal Renaissance stage which rests on nothing more than our own reception of the conventional and other adventitious circumstances of early modern print culture.

If we can accept the conclusions of Hammond and others that the early modern stage enjoyed a fecundity of extra-dialogic gesture and movement that is now no longer

[74] Hammond, p.81.
[75] Hammond, p.89.

accessible to us, then it becomes possible to regard performances in this period as being less closely determined by the "Hauptext" than Aston and Savona's formulation allows. Much of the burden of what has been said above encourages the opinion that in the majority of cases what went on (as opposed to what was merely said) on the early modern stage emerged as input from a variety of sources, perhaps filtering in through a relationship with earlier stage practices within and without the company, perhaps as the result of the acquisition of new actors or properties, or through an attempt to broaden commercial appeal by emphasising the elements of music and dance within the performance. All such contingent elements might well be incidental to the maintenance of a coherent relationship between word and action, gesture and discourse, within the main text of the play. "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action", as Hamlet's famous dictum runs, has always been read as privileging the verbal element in this relationship. Nevertheless, as the above discussion has attempted to show, the performing body – the human figure itself – was foregrounded on the early modern stage to a greater degree than in any subsequent period before the last half-century of theatrical innovation.

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In this chapter I have discussed a contemporary semiotics of performance and suggested how it can be historicised to provide a critical language for discussing the relationship of spoken text to performing body on the early modern stage. I have focussed attention onto the key conventions which constructed this relationship but which also allowed ideas of performance to become enmeshed with wider ideologies about the body in this period. Chief among these conventions is what can be identified as a 'rhetorical' mode of performance which provided a normative and hierarchical scheme for situating the body's role in stage playing, a scheme which was nonetheless constantly undermined by by the performing body's troubling excesses of meaning on stage.[76] It is at such a point, I would suggest, that anxieties about the performing body become overt in the texts of the period, anxieties which sometimes intersect with the discourse of melancholy which pervades anti-theatrical tracts. In the remainder of this thesis I want to show how these

[76] For the idea of rhetoric as not just a set of widely-available precepts for actors but as a whole mode for conceptualising performance in this period I am particularly influenced by the discussion in Edward Burns, *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, esp. ch.4 *passim*.

performative and anti-theatrical problematics become intertwined in the restless and innovative years of late Elizabethan theatrical production. To some extent, this new combination of discourses bears out what Peter Stallybrass has claimed as "one of the most striking features of Renaissance drama in England [...] the way in which it foregrounds that which is most hostile to it."[77] More specifically, I will suggest that, through the influence of John Marston and his satirical plays for the newly-revived boy companies, accepted rhetorical tenets about the relationship of speech to action which had been in operation for decades previously began to be questioned and dismantled. Of central importance to this process, I will argue, was the gallery of melancholic character types released onto the stages by the boys' experimental comedies and tragicomedies, characters who signalled an approach to performance radically inflected by the discourses of soul and body which surrounded the construction of melancholy in the medical texts.

[77] Peter Stallybrass, "Reading the Body: *The Revenger's Tragedy* and the Jacobean Theater of Consumption" in *Renaissance Drama* 18 (New Series), 1987, pp.121-48 (p.128).

CHAPTER 4

Satire and Melancholic Performativity

Melancholy and theatrical divisions in the early satiric plays of John Marston.

At the close of chapter three I drew attention to the way the discursive links between medical and theatrical tropes about melancholy were modified to incorporate a turn-of-the-century emphasis on satire, including the actual representation of the satirist (for example in the case of Macilente in *Every Man Out of His Humour*). In this next chapter, I want to build on that part of the discussion as well as draw on the theoretical approach to performance outlined in the previous chapter to suggest that these melancholic tropes hardened into a way of defining the relationship between speech and action on stage in turn-of-the-century theatrical practice. What is at issue in this latter part of the thesis is not so much the representation *of* melancholy as melancholy's provision of a number of key figures about embodiment which could be deployed to articulate commercial and artistic tensions about the status of the performing body. Inevitably, however, it was with the onstage representation of melancholy that these figures attained their greatest prominence. It is important therefore in the course of this discussion to maintain an awareness of the distinction between melancholy as it was represented and performed and what I am addressing here as a kind of 'melancholic performativity'. The two are continually bound up in a way which I suggest can throw light on both the volume and variety of representations of melancholy which becomes notable in the drama around the turn of the century. Starting with a discussion of the plays of John Marston and their introduction of a gallery of melancholic character-types onto the stages, I will attempt to bring out the links between melancholic embodiment and satiric performance before moving on in the final chapter to show how these satiric figures and tropes were absorbed into the later wave of revenge tragedies.

I want to begin this chapter by contrasting the kind of satiric stance which I associated with *Every Man Out* for Chamberlain's Men in 1598-9 with the one developed in the plays of John Marston for the revived children's company of St.Paul's

over the same period. Marston's entire theatrical career was spent writing for one or other of the two newly-re-opened 'private' theatre companies.[1] Initially he wrote for the Paul's boys – whom he may well have been instrumental in reviving after their ten-year closure following the Marprelate Controversy – and then subsequently for the Children of the Chapel who were based at the Blackfriars. From the start these two theatre companies directed their efforts at nurturing an exclusive clientele: a learned and gentlemanly audience which had received its education within the familiar environment of the universities and the Inns of Court.[2] Early Paul's plays such as *Antonio and Mellida*, *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, and *What You Will* make this process of audience construction overt through the use of Prologues and Inductions which idealise audience composition and their distinction from those attending the amphitheatres. The Prologue to *Antonio and Mellida*, for example, addresses itself to "the gentle front of this fair troop" and speaks of them as "Select and most respected auditors", before shifting into the authorial voice and courteously disavowing the author's powers of invention.[3] *Jack Drum* follows a similar strategy by directing an attack against the kind of plays it considers unfit for such an audience – "mouldy fopperies of stale Poetry/Unpossible drie mustie fictions" – and even extends it into the body of the play by including an intra-diegetic reference to the audience as a company where "A man shall not be choakte/ With the stench of Garlicke, nor be pasted/ To the barmy Jacket of a Beer-brewer".[4]

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[1] For discussions of Marston's career in the theatre (albeit frequently divergent in their dating and chronology of the plays) see the editor's introduction to John Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, ed. by W. Reavley Gair, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991); Reavley Gair, *The Children of Paul's: the story of a theatre company, 1553-1608* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp.113-146; Anthony Caputi, *John Marston, Satirist* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1961), p.78ff; Philip J.Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple: An Elizabethan Dramatist in His Social Setting* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1969), p.125ff.; Michael Scott, *John Marston's Plays: Theme, Structure and Performance* (London: Macmillan Press, 1978). For a comprehensive overview of the numerous critical readings of Marston's plays which have built up over recent years see T.F.Wharton, *The Critical Fall and Rise of John Marston* (Columbia: Camden House, 1994), esp. pp.61-90 on debates about his theatrical technique.

[2] For the social and literary culture of the Inns of Court see Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple*, pp.3-44. For the importance of the revived boy player companies in developing a socially exclusive audience see Alfred Harbage, *Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions* (Indiana University Press, 1952), esp.29-89.

[3] *Antonio and Mellida*, Prologue, ll.2-3, in *The Malcontent and Other Plays*, ed. by Keith Sturgess, The World's Classics (Oxford: O.U.P., 1997).

[4] John Marston, *Jack Drums Entertainment: or The Comedie of Pasquill and Katherine* (London: 1601), Prologue A2v.; H3v.

It is not clear whether satiric barbs such as these referred to an earlier repertoire of boy company plays such as those penned by Lyly in the 1580's, or to the current stock of plays at the public theatres. In either case they accurately signal the new dramatic mood at the private theatres, which offered their plays up less as coherent works of fiction than as patchworks of the kind of literary and social material which formed the daily consumption of its gentlemanly audience. However 'unpossible' a plot synopsis of *Antonio and Mellida* or *Jack Drum* might make these narratives appear, they worked primarily as self-conscious references to Sidney's *Arcadia* or Shakespeare's tragedies as these texts were circulated and received among their audiences and not as attempts to reproduce their worlds in kind.[5] To these appropriations were added realistic and highly localised depictions of London's courtly, civic and country environments: the estate of Sir Edward Fortune in Jack drum, for example, is apparently modelled closely on that of the contemporary Sir William Cornwallis.[6] This mix of literary and social elements was compounded haphazardly and served up among its audience at disorientating speed by the young performers, with the result that any possibility of genuine affective engagement with the material was negated. Where this new performative style encroached on literature the result was parody or burlesque; where it encroached on familiar individuals or social types, the result was satire.[7]

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[5] For discussion of the references to Sidney's *Arcadia*, amongst numerous other literary sources and theatrical allusions in the play, see the editor's introduction to John Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, ed. by Reavley Gair (Machester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp.15-21. Marston's allusions to the *Arcadia* are not confined to *Antonio and Mellida*: for another instance see the discussion in Michael C. Andrews "*Jack Drum's Entertainment* as Burlesque" in Renaissance Quarterly, 1971 (24) 226-231.

[6] See the account given in Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple*, p.127ff.

[7] The long-running debate about the parodic style and/or content of the plays can take as its starting point the arguments offered by R.A. Foakes in his "John Marston's Fantasticall Plays: *Antonio and Mellida* and *Antonio's Revenge*", in *Philological Quarterly* 1962 (41), 229-39. The argument was taken up and extended in increasingly subtle ways by various commentators (including G.K. Hunter) in the decade that followed, but was also firmly opposed by Richard Levin in "The New *New Inn* and the Proliferation of Good Bad Drama" in *Essays in Criticism* 1972 (22), 41-47. The enjoyable critical spat that followed may have had an immediate winner in Levin, who made some acute objections about the nature of the evidence involved, but the insights afforded by the 'parodic' readings have proved more durable since they have been more suggestive in theatrical and commercial terms. A helpful overview of the entire debate and its repercussions can be found in T.F. Wharton *Critical Fall and Rise*, pp.66-90. As in many other cases of the afterlife of revisionist readings, their value depends on the capacity of later critics to broaden out some initially rather reductive claims and combine them with other kinds of interpretation, and this has ensured that the majority of subsequent studies (including this thesis) recognize the relevance (although not the exclusive claim) of the parodic component to the overall effect of the plays. Particular mention should be made here of Shapiro's identification of distinct kinds of acting style amongst the boy actors which, in his view, could be successfully articulated within a single performance: the 'natural' and the 'formal', which latter he subdivides into 'declamatory' and 'parodic' elements (Shapiro, *Children of the Revels*, pp.113-116). Shapiro suggests that the parodic aspect of performance could useful both thematically (e.g. for indicating the collapse of philosophical positions under stress) and theatrically in revealing the inadequacies of certain "conventionalized representations of life" in various genres (pp.136-8). For suggestions about the burlesque effects of the

The goal of satire was achieved in Marston's plays not solely by deploying the unique performative characteristics of the boy actors, however. Self-consciously drawing on his background in the formal satires Marston was, like Jonson, at pains to introduce a satirist-figure into as many as possible of his early plays for the Paul's company. The 'satiric-commentator', as this figure has been called, represented a key departure from the earlier mode of satiric drama among the boy companies and served as a defining feature of stage satire after its revival.[8] Through the introduction of this figure it became possible to give satire a subjective voice to discourse upon the manifold follies and crimes depicted on stage, and hence to replicate – albeit in the loosest and most informal fashion – views and stances which had been canvassed via the more direct medium of verse satire. As we saw in the case of Jonson's satirist-figure in *Every Man Out*, however, this voice was rendered problematic to the extent that it could not be portrayed as *truly* subjective: there was no one coherent 'I' from whom satiric discourse could proceed. His satirist-figure underwent bifurcation into distinct individuals radically opposed in their temperaments as part of a theatrical trope which dissociated the curative impulse from the instrument it deployed on a diseased society. The respective attitudes of Asper and Macilente were never allowed to converge in performative terms, so that Macilente does not personally extend the kind of medical rationale proposed by Asper into the rest of the play. He purges the other humorists unintentionally and as a direct result of his own envy: a practice all the more strikingly divorced from Asper's given Macilente's characterisation in the play as a scholar – one whose knowledge would conventionally have extended to medical matters. A gradual divergence of this approach from that taken by the boy's companies now becomes evident, for where Jonson's plays largely worked to dissociate the melancholic's condition from the stage satirist those of Marston involved them ever more closely together.

Marston's earliest portrayal of the satirist in his drama, the character of Felice in *Antonio and Mellida*, addresses a similar problematic about giving the satirist a coherent

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pacing of plays such as *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, see Michael C. Andrews' comments on how the "rapidity of the action is farcical rather than dramatically convincing" ("*Jack Drum's Entertainment* as Burlesque", p.231).

[8] For discussion of the satiric-commentator figure see in particular O.J.Campbell, *Comicall Satyre*, p.55ff.

stage persona. Felice is introduced to us in the play's Induction in a manner which recalls our first encounter with Asper. The young actor who is to play him idealises his character as that of the supremely temperate man, describing his nature as one which:

> "must seem so impregnably fortressed with his own content that no envious thought could ever invade his spirit; never surveying any man so unmeasuredly happy whom I thought not justly hateful for some true impoverishment [...] as far from envying any man as he valued all men infinitely distant from accomplished beatitude." (*Antonio and Mellida*, Induction, l.100-107)

'Content' as Felice expounds it here is thus not incompatible with the expressions of hatred and pity which fill most of his discourse with other characters in the play, but it is starkly at odds with envy. This is made clear in a central scene in which Felice walks through the court at night to ascertain "if their nocturnal court delights/ Could force me envy their felicity" and concludes of the "glistering copper spangs/ That glisten in the tire of the court": "I either hate or pity them" (*Antonio and Mellida*, III.2.5-19). Since Felice is associated in this very speech with the expression of a satiric motive – when he seriocomically identifies with candlelight ("O, if that candlelight were made a poet/ He would prove a rare firking satirist/ And draw the core forth of impostumed sin") – the affective dimensions of the ideal satirist appear to have been laid out. Immediately, however, his disavowals of envy are undercut by his behaviour on encountering the foppish courtier Castilio, when the latter's boast of being endlessly importuned by the ladies of the court elicits from Felice a torrent of bitter discontent:

> Confusion seize me, but I think thou liest.
> Why should I not be sought to then as well?
> Fut! Methinks I am as like a man.
> Troth, I have a good head of hair, a cheek
> Not as yet waned, a leg I'faith, in the full.
> I ha' not a red beard, take not tobacco much... (III.2.68)

The exchange concludes with the exposure of Castilio's claims as pure fabrication and his subsequent thrashing at the hands of Felice – who thus furthers his satiric remit by administering harsh chastisement to the courtier. So great, however, is the dissonance between this outbreak of discontented envy and Felice's earlier protestations against that emotion that it damages the vision of coherent characterisation implied by the

Induction.[9] One possibility is that the exchange is using the trope of the satirist satirised: a trope which would become increasingly deployed as the 'poetomachia' developed over the next two years. But the most telling feature of Felice's speech is the sudden switch into authorial self-reference. The inverse of the characteristics enumerated by Felice – the full leg and the absence of a red beard – were those associated with Marston himself, who made as much of his own perceived physical inadequacies as any of his opponents.[10] Thus at the moment of greatest contradiction in the presentation of the subjective voice of the satirist, when 'content' gives way to envy, we are also made aware of the authorial component in the production of the satiric comedy.

For all the emphasis on satiric discontent in the play, *Antonio and Mellida* lacks any explicit association of the satirist with melancholia. This absence is more unexpected than in the case of Jonson's *Every Man Out* given Marston's linkage of the two concepts in the *Scourge*. It would be easier to argue, by contrast, that the melancholy type is itself satirised in the figure of the play's protagonist, Antonio, by enumerating the many occasions when symptoms resembling melancholy – excessive passion, weeping, an incapacity to act – are shown in a detrimental light by the boy actor's performance of them. But the play's most explicit evocation of melancholy shows the figure being utilised in a rather more complex light, one which posits an alternative relationship of melancholy to satire. At the end of 3.2. Antonio flees in disguise from Piero's court, calling out his own name to throw his pursuers off his scent. At the beginning of the next scene, 4.1., this stratagem is elaborated into a rhetorical conceit in which Antonio plays upon the notion of being estranged from himself:

> [*Calling aloud*] Stop, stop Antonio! Stay Antonio! –
> [*To himself*] Vain breath, vain breath; Antonio is lost.
> He cannot find himself, not seize himself.
> Alas, this that you see is not Antonio;
> His spirit hovers in Piero's court,
> Hurling about his agile faculties

[9] The problem of coherent subjectivity is not confined to the presentation of the satirist in this play or its sequel, *Antonio and Mellida*. See Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy*, pp.29-40 for his comments on the portrayal of Stoicism in both plays.

[10] For discussion of these allusions see The Revels edn. of *Antonio and Mellida*, ed. by Reavley Gair, p.113, fn.74.

To apprehend the sight of Mellida.
But poor, poor soul, wanting apt instruments
To speak or see, stands dumb and blind; sad spirit,
Rolled up in gloomy clouds as black as air,
Through which the rusty coat of night is drawn. (IV.1.1)

His body may be present, Antonio claims, but his spirit is still in Piero's court casting about for what it sees as the true, extra-corporeal guarantor of his identity: Mellida. Initially this works in a non-satiric context as a conventional trope about the soul of a lover living (or in this case desiring to live) in another's body.[11] As the soliloquy develops, however, it hardens into the form of a scholastic disputation, as the speaker attempts to justify how his utterances can still issue from the emptied shell of his body:

'Tis so, I'll give you instance that 'tis so.
Conceit you me, as, having clasped a rose
Within my palm, the rose being ta'en away,
My hand retains a little breath of sweet;
So may man's trunk, his spirit slipped away
Hold still a faint perfume of his sweet guest. (IV.1.12)

Antonio continues to expand upon this argument about the divorce between body and soul, shifting the terms of his debate to the soul's free movement through the cosmos during sleep, before suddenly arresting the stream-of-consciousness monologue with a moment of self-diagnosis:

'Tis so; for when discursive powers fly out,
And roam in progress through the bounds of heaven,
The soul itself gallops along with them,
As chieftain of this wingèd troop of thought,
Whilst the dull lodge of spirit standeth waste,
Until the soul return from... What was't I said?
O, this is nought but speckling Melancholy
That morphews the tender-skinned. (*Antonio and Mellida*, IV.1.18)[12]

[11] For citation of this trope and its derivation from Plutarch see Cynthia Marshall, "Man of Steel Done Got the Blues: Melancholic Subversion of Presence in Anthony and Cleopatra", in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 1993 Winter; 44 (4): 385-408 (387-389).

[12] The final lines are notoriously corrupt and constitute a major crux in the play. For the most recent discussion see "Morphew, leprosy, and the date of Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*", Michael Neill and Macdonald P. Jackson, although I find the author's case against the passage's indebtedness to Bright's *Treatise* to be an overstated one.

Having exhausted his contemplative turn, Antonio then lapses back into the type of conventional impassioned behaviour he has manifested throughout the play, hurling himself to the earth and declaiming on Fortune. Despite this return to the comic idiom, however, the soliloquy succeeds in providing a mode of discourse which is characteristic of melancholy and which is handled with some degree of seriousness. It fixes for us a specific kind of activity – 'thinking about the soul' – which is made exemplary of the melancholic's thought-processes. This kind of thinking is conventionally aligned with the melancholy of scholars, however inappropriately it is inserted here into a character and a situation with which it has no obvious connection (Marston will use the trope again in a more evidently scholastic context in *What You Will*). Its usage in *Antonio and Mellida*, however, now serves to supply the play with a form of melancholy that is purely verbal and which lacks any physical performative correlates.

This disjunction in the handling of the physical embodiment of melancholy on stage and its discursive manifestation functions, I would suggest, as a kind of performative reworking of the trope of the soulless melancholic body which I have traced through earlier medical and non-medical texts. In narrative terms the trope reinforces the sense of alienation and helplessness built up around the play's central protagonist as he reflects upon an identity which (as Jonathan Dollimore has argued) reveals itself to be contingent upon others.[13] The idea of a body emptied out of its identity and thus rendered melancholic through its enforced asociality is pressed into service as part of the play's broader anti-stoic agenda, in which the notion of the self-possessed individual is continually negated. But while the physical specifications of melancholy in this speech are impressive (the idea that melancholy "morphews" the skin may even be explicitly invoking Bright's *Treatise*) it is notable that they need not be directed solely towards the body. Antonio's diagnosis of melancholy is also applicable to his discourse – "What was't I *said*?" he demands of himself – so that the remarks about "speckling melancholy" serve figuratively to trace *in his very words* the settled tinctures of a natural melancholic complexion. When subsequently he does resort to melancholic stage gestures, those gestures function not as counterparts to his words but as parodic references to an outmoded tradition of action deriving from the

[13] Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy*, pp.30-36.

public theatre: his gratuitous prostration on the ground especially evoking the theatrical excesses of the melancholy Viceroy and Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy*. This arresting moment of self-division in *Antonio & Mellida*, then, hints at the beginnings of a new problematic about performance and performance styles. Through the trope of a disjunction of soul from body, melancholic affect is split into a *discourse* of melancholy involving serious reflections upon the soul, and a set of melancholic *actions* which are handled in a strictly comic idiom.

From this dramatic deployment of the trope of the soulless melancholic body in *Antonio and Mellida*, then, a theatrical problematic is developed about the disjunction between speech and gesture, one which can be set in opposition to the traditional emphasis in a rhetorical scheme of performance upon the suiting of the word to the action. In the very year that Hamlet was to make his famous defence of the received wisdom about the proper style of playing another melancholy character in a newer and altogether more abrasive theatrical tradition, Antonio, was helping to introduce a kind of anti-type to the familiar rhetorical argument.[14] The extent to which this anti-type was to develop into what I have called a melancholic mode of performance becomes evident in subsequent productions for the boys of St. Paul's. Although I will want to consider the play again and in more detail in the next chapter, Marston's follow-up to *Antonio and Mellida*, *Antonio's Revenge* (1600) can be briefly cited in this regard. The play recasts the characters it takes from the original play into revenge stereotypes which are clearly derived from earlier pieces such as Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but in whom the elements of action and speech are so fragmented and re-ordered that the effect is to interrogate the conventions of the genre itself and subject it to parody. The key difference in *Antonio's Revenge*, however, is that the same meta-theatrical device of splitting a melancholic discourse from a melancholic body which signifies outside the narrative is allowed to encompass child as well as adult player conventions.

The play's extra-dialogic actions are in general exceptionally abundant and remarkable for the extent to which they stand apart from the main text, operating not as

[14] For the dating of *Hamlet* to the latter end of 1599 I am following the discussion in Harold Jenkins introduction to *Hamlet*, pp.1-13. For a recent discussion which also places *Hamlet* in 1599 see Charles Cathcart "*Hamlet*: Date and Early Afterlife", in *Review of English Studies* 2001 Aug; 52 (207): 341-59, although I cannot agree with claims (made primarily on the supposition of textual echoes) for the indebtedness of *Antonio and Mellida* to Shakespeare's tragedy.

part of an unified dramatic scheme but as clusters of signs which find their referents outside the narrative world of the play – in the works of earlier writers, or in the figures of the boy players who are doing the acting. The opening moment of the play, for example, shows us Piero entering "*unbraced, his arms bare, smeared in blood, a poniard in one hand, bloody, and a torch in the other, Strozzo following him with a cord*".[15] This generates a striking theatrical image in itself, but more importantly recalls a moment familiar from *The Spanish Tragedy* when Hieronimo enters "*with a poniard in one hand, and a rope in the other*" (III.12.1). In the latter play the items brought on stage unambiguously denote suicide, and the ensuing debate over which of these 'paths' Hieronimo is to turn down opens into an imaginative account of the underworld (7-11). In Marston's transposition, however, the objects have ostensibly become the instruments of murder, although even here their status as signifiers is remarkably slippery: initially Strozzo's cord is for the purpose of lashing two corpses together (*Antonio's Revenge*, I.i.1-2), but then subsequent references to the strangling of Felice seem to link it again to a function closer to that found in Kyd's source (15-17; 71-4). Narrative consistency, however, is irrelevent to an appreciation of the moment's effectiveness: the act of bringing cord and dagger on stage serves not to compel imaginative absorption in the diegesis but to prompt audience recollection of the earlier work, re-presenting the actions of an older dramatic tradition as pieces of a now-debased theatrical currency. Similar examples from *Antonio's Revenge* could be multiplied, many of which, like Maria's entry with "*her hair about her ears*" (III.2.51) and the sight of "*the body of Felice, stabbed thick with wounds* [...] *hung up*" (I.2.192), gesture overtly towards more recent tragedies with revenge elements (Ophelia's disordered appearance in the fourth act of *Hamlet*; the corpse of Caesar shown to the people in *Julius Caesar*).

Antonio's Revenge also adopts the strategy deployed in the earlier play of using prologues and tableaux which are designed to capitalize on the revived appeal of their young performers, as seen in the following passage of intra-dialogic action:

> *Maria*: Dost nought but weep, weep?
> *Antonio*: Yes, mother, I do sigh and wring my hands,
> Beat my poor breast and wreathe my tender arms. (2.2.140-2)

[15] John Marston, *Antonio's Revenge* (1.1.1.), ed. by Keith Sturgess in *The Malcontent and Other Plays*, World Classics, (Oxford: O.U.P., 1997).

With the wreathing of Antonio's arms we encounter an iconic gesture not merely of grief but also of melancholy, and its introduction here becomes significant both at the narrative and meta-theatrical levels of meaning. Once again, it becomes possible to read in such a gesture a reflection upon the stylised and excessive displays of emotion associated with the rhetorical mode of the public theatres. At the same time, however, it also possible to sense a movement away from an association of Antonio's melancholic body merely with 'affected' playing styles and towards its signification as physical inadequacy. This sense of inadequacy, moreover, increasingly elides with the image of the boy player himself. The scene which marks the turning-point of the play begins with Antonio lying on his back exclaiming "I am a poor, poor orphan; a weak, weak child", a measure subsequently taken up by Pandulfo when, his stoic mask finally slipping, he reveals:

> all this while I ha' but played a part
> Like to some boy that acts a tragedy
> Speaks burly words and raves out passion;
> But when he thinks upon his infant weakness,
> He droops his eye. (IV.2.70)

Pandulfo's self-reflexive attention to his own bodily state momentarily recalls that of Antonio's at the close of his soliloquy on his soul's absence in the first play. This later meta-theatrical moment, however, also suggests a way in which the melancholic performativity I have been describing can be recovered for narrative meaning. The boy actor's body retains a signifying agency outside the fictional world of the play, but rather than functioning as a parodic model of adult playing styles it now encompasses a more serious consideration of the nature and conditions of its own performativity. Chief among these is the mismatch between the child actor's physical immaturity and the larger discursive roles – the "burly words" – he is required to assume. In this case, however, the 'melancholic' alienation of language from the actor's body is fully re-absorbed into the play's narrative world, allowing the trope of "infant weakness" to stand both for the characters' specific predicament in the face of Piero's evil as well as a more generalised sense of human helplessness in a world devoid of philosophical comfort.

"Phantasticall and sociable": refashioning scholastic melancholy in Marston's *What You Will.*

It is not simply via the satiric representation of the melancholic body that the play achieves what I have been describing as a melancholic performativity, however. One of the more felicitous theatrical outcomes of dissociating language from the system of gestures with which it is aligned is made evident in the way in which the physical aspects of melancholy can exist as a coherent complex of signifiers which support distinctive discourses such as the rhetoric of satiric discontent, *without consigning them to a relationship of cause to effect.* The scholar's melancholic body is thus made available as a platform for other modes of dramatic speech which are interchangeable with one another. We have already seen how in the figure of Macilente the bodily aspects of the scholar conventionally ascribed to melancholy – his emaciation and poor clothing – were available for reinterpretation as the symptoms of envy, and how this in turn became explicitly associated with the satiric impulse. Marston also made use of such a complex of signs, albeit in support of a more generalised discourse of 'discontent', as suggested in what was probably his second play for the Paul's boys, *Jack Drum's Entertainment.* In *Jack Drum's Entertainment* the outward signs of scholastic melancholy become more closely integrated with satiric discourse than in *Antonio and Mellida* via the 'commentator' figure of Ned Planet. His scholarly credentials are established, for example, when his friend Brabant Junior, responding to Planet's caustic summary of his mistress Camelia's worth, describes him as being of a "hatefull humor [...] buried in Philosophie,/And there intombd in supernaturalls", as well as of being "dead to natiue pleasures life."[16] For the most part, however, these conventional scholarly characteristics provide only a superficial dimension to his character: they form, that is, no part of his discourse in the play. That discourse is instead made up of purely satirical utterances, and these of a primarily misogynistic cast, as his repeated tirades against Camelia throughout the play underline. At the same time, Planet's satiric mode of speech is opposed to other and older forms of discourse which once served to define the kind of rhetoric appropriate to Marston's social milieu but which are now held to be outmoded. These discourses include the presumptive

[16] Marston, *Jacke Drums Entertainment*, B3v.

'wit' of the play's self-appointed intellectual and eventual cuckold, Brabant Senior, and even the affected (as opposed to satiric) melancholy of the ostentatiously lovesick John Ellis.[17]

By the time of Marston's subsequent comedy for the Paul's boys *What You Will*, however, the satiric target has shifted to the very type of scholarly and philosophical melancholic who had previously been employed to mete out castigation to lesser wits. The trope invoked here is that of the satirist satirized, and this new development benefits from being contextualised in terms of the so-called "War of the Theatres" then raging between rival satirists and theatre companies at the beginning of the century.[18] Although it is hazardous to try and assign a definite sequence to any of the plays outside the canonical *Histriomastix*, *Poetaster* and *Satiromastix*, *What You Will* has been persuasively urged as a response to Jonson's spectacular lampooning of Marston in the

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[17] On the ideal of the witty young gentleman, which had become common currency at the Inns of Court by the time John Marston took up residence in the Middle Temple, see Finkepearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple*, pp.68-9. It was an ideal exemplified in such figures as John Donne, John Hoskins and John Davies, all of whom studied there during the 1590's fully involving themselves in the social and literary life of the Inns. 'Wit' among individuals such as these, and the circles of followers which grew up around them, was associated with both 'learning' and 'living': it manifested itself both in the literary productions of students and in their day-to-day life. In a literary sense it was associated with the development of poetic writing away from the older, Petrarchan tradition of the love sonnet and towards the tougher poetic idiom which would later to be known as 'metaphysical'. But it was also, as Finkelpearl notes, the "highest honorific term" among gallants at the Inns, "referring not merely to a faculty of the mind or to a way with words but to a whole style of life" (p.68). Wit and 'license' were coterminous in this style of life, an unbridled tongue and able pen frequently providing the counterpart to loose behaviour. This much is suggested by a description of John Donne, furnished by one of his contemporaries Richard Baker, and describing him as "not dissolute, but very neat, a great visiter of Ladies, a great frequenter of Playes, a great writer of conceited verses" (quoted in Finkepearl, p.29). It is important to note the implicit distinction made between license and dissolution in this revealing description, for it was only through exercise of the former that true affiliation with the ethos of 'wit' was achieved. A dissolute lifestyle was the stereotypical danger which awaited the young gentleman arriving in London from the country and encountering for the first time its fashions, whores, theatres and arenas of drinking and dicing. The 'gulls' or 'coneys' of innumerable pamphlet accounts were those young gentlemen who walked with eyes dazzled into this inferno and quickly found themselves advancing towards financial perdition. The astute young gentleman, by contrast, found ways to enjoy the manifold distractions of the metropolis without squandering his estate, exercising license but remaining detached from addicted behaviour by virtue of his superior intellect and breeding. For a recent account of the how dangers of the metropolis were constructed and negotiated in late Elizabethan discourse see John Twyning, *London Dispossessed: Literature and Social Space in the Early Modern City* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), ch.3 *passim*.

[18] The literature on the 'War of the Theatres' is large and the attempts at an accurate reconstruction of events within the quarrel are often labrynthine. The standard work on the topic is by R.A.Small, *The Stage Quarrel Between Ben Jonson and the So-Called Poetasters* (Breslau: Verlag von M. & H.Marcus, 1899); other important discussions can be found in Harbage, *Rival Traditions*, pp.90-119 and, with specific reference to Marston, Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple*, p.162ff. For a more recent analysis which is impressive both for its abundant citation and its deft handling of the intertextuality of the principle plays, see James P.Bednarz "Marston's Subversion of Shakespeare and Jonson: *Histriomastix* and the War of the Theaters" in *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 1993; 6; 103-128.

second of these works.[19] *What You Will* is in many ways suggestive of an interesting development from the attitudes established in *Histriomastix* which – whatever the degree of satire directed against Jonson and whoever, indeed, the play was composed by – can at least be seen as inaugurating the ideological breach between poet-scholar and professional player which *Antonio* and the private theatre plays subsequently take up.[20] *What You Will* is at pains to define the nature and purpose of the dramatic fare offered up to its select audience, with particular emphasis given to the primacy of audience opinion over authorial meaning – a theme stressed from the very start through the title of the piece. An Induction introduces two 'friends of the author' who debate the probable reception of the play, one of whom, Phylomuse, defends the author as immune from the harsh criticism expected from the wits in the audience, insisting:

> Shall he be creast-falne, if some looser braine,
> In flux of witte uncively befilth
> His slight composures? [21]

He is rebuked by his colleague Doricus, however, who exercises a lively apprehension at the prospect of audience dislike and suggests that it is no place of the author

> to give stiffe counter-buffes,

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[19] See Gair, *Children of Paul's*, pp.138-42.

[20] The authorship, context and exact role of *Histriomastix* within the 'poetomachia' (comprising the internecine quarrel between playwrights within the wider company divisions of the 'War of the Theatres') is the subject of much dispute. That Marston authored the play to some extent has usually been assumed on the basis of Jonson's allusions to its title and 'Marstonian' language in *Every Man Out* (III.iv.21-30), and most of the debate has thus revolved around (a) whether Marston was wholly responsible for the text or merely involved in revising an older text, and (b) whether the play's auspices were either the new company at Paul's (most recently endorsed by Bednarz, "Marston's Subversion of Shakespeare and Jonson", p.104) or the Inns of Court (see Philip J.Finkelpearl's highly influential "John Marston's Histrio-Mastix as an Inns of Court Play: A Hypothesis", in *The Huntingdon Library Quarterly* 29 (1966), 223-34. A recent twist to what was a stable if unresolved dispute has been offered in Roslyn Lander Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), with her claim that *Histriomastix* is not by Marston at all (see esp. pp. 75-102). Knutson's scepticism towards the over-elaborate reconstructions of an earlier critical approach and her drawing up of a 'trendiness index' to ascertain common as opposed to particular usages of satiric tropes are both impressive, although it should be recognised that her thesis is strongly inflected (perhaps too strongly?) by her desire to replace traditional narratives of company rivalry with an emphasis on a more co-operative theatrical environment. Given the extent and nature of the disagreements, it seems best to exclude *Histriomastix* from my own discussion of Marston and the boy player oppositions to adult playing styles, even if (as I suggest above) it could well have served as a prototype for them.

[21] All references to John Marston's *What You Will* are taken from *The Plays of John Marston, in Three Volumes*, ed. by H. Harvey Wood, 3 vols., (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1934-39), vol. II. Because the texts of this edition lack line numbers I will be giving the page number to this work and volume rather than act and scene divisions.

To crack rude skorne even on the very face
Of better audience... (*What You Will*, p.232)

In a long defence of this view he outlines what he sees as the correct authorial position that:

rules of Art
Were shapt to pleasure, not pleasure to your rules.
Thinke you if that his sceanes took stampe in mint
Of three or four deem'd most juditious,
It must inforce the world to currant them? (*What You Will*, p.232)

He then piles up the standard epithets used by satiric authors in their defence against detraction – "squinting *Critics*, drunken *Censure*, splay-footed *Opinion*", etc. – and asks rhetorically if "any such unsanctified stuffe could finde a beeing monge these ingenuous breasts" (*What You Will*, p.233)? Once again, an appropriate mode of reception is being mooted for a gentlemanly audience, but that audience is now treated not as the repository of superior judgement but of diversity in critical response. Opinion, usually the prime target of the satirist, is now embraced as a licensed aspect of literary pleasure among those of the optimum social standing.

Only an insensitive reading would fail to detect in this defence a considered rebuke to Jonsonian dramaturgical practice, despite the lack of overt references in the text (cf. for example Jonson's censure of audience criticism and their "abuse of the word humour" in the Induction to *Every Man Out*). The inference is that Marston is dealing with his crushing personal treatment at Jonson's hands by suggesting that the kind of approach it entailed constituted more of a slight to the audience's sensibilities than his own. Beginning his play with what looks like the formulaic pre-emptive strike against detraction, he suddenly returns the issue of reception to the audience itself, insisting that no author may presume to dictate its dimensions to the "ingenuous breasts" he sees before him. *What You Will* marks out a new and distinctive position in the shifting set of values between author, performer and audience which characterised this period of satiric drama. On the one hand Marston, like Jonson, continued to endorse the general move away from the hegemony of the common player towards the semblance of authorial control provided by private theatre production utilising boy actors. As I have suggested in this chapter, in Marston's case this process took the form

of opposing a melancholic separation of discourse from action against public theatre rhetorical constructions of performance. Unlike Jonson, however, Marston's satiric project now takes pains to ensure that this aggrandisement of authorial status does not extend to an attempt to dictate terms of aeshetic appreciation to the select and "ingenuous" audiences who frequent those playhouses.

What, then, of the role of satirist in Marston's newly-remodelled satiric landscape? Initially this appears to be taken by the figure of Quadratus, a name implying the kind of balance or even-temper claimed earlier by figures such as Planet. Brought on at the beginning of the play to cure the love-madness of Iacomo, Quadratus sets about his task by employing the language of the archetypal discontented railer:

> Love? Hang love,
> It is the abject outcast of he world,
> Hate all things, hate the world, thy selfe, all men,
> Hate knowledge, strive not to be over-wise,
> "It drew destruction into Paradise", etc. (*What You Will*, p.238-9)

Within a scene, however, he is paired with the scholar Lampatho Doria, and it is the latter who assumes the mantle of satiric commentator, with Quadratus providing a kind of meta-commentary upon him.[22] Introduced to the preposterous French knight Laverdure, Lampatho makes a show of obsequiousness – praising his affected dress, etc. – whilst surreptitiously nurturing his contempt for him and urging his colleagues to join in the mockery. Lampatho's trick of disintegrating others through shows of flattery is publicly exposed by Quadratus and a war of railing begins between them. Lampatho cautions his colleague:

> So *Phoebus* warme my braine, Ile rime thee dead,
> Looke for the Satyre... (*What You Will*, p.248)

Quadratus, however, dismisses his threats by claiming a kind of immunity from satire bestowed upon those who, like himself, enjoy 'free-born' status:

> Thou Canker eaten rusty curre, thou snaffle

[22] Lampatho is properly revealed to be a scholar mid-way through the play: Quadratus hints at this at his introduction, however, by describing him as "a fustie caske,/ Devote to mouldy customes of hoary eld", p.246.

To freer spirits –
Think'st thou a libertine, an ungiv'd breast
Skornes not the shackles of thy envious clogges?
...
Shall a free-borne that holdes *Antypathy*
(...)
A native hate unto the curse of man, bare-pated servitude,
Quake at the frownes of a ragg'd *Satyrist*, (*What You Will*, p.248)

At one level Quadratus' ripostes are simply extending into the body of the play the opposition set up in the Induction: the gentleman-born can exercise a prerogative in matters of taste which is denied to the scholar-satirist by virtue of his meaner origins. The gentleman can range freely in such matters, and is at liberty to show either good or poor taste: Laverdure, for example, despite his absurdly excessive dress-sense, is nonetheless embraced by Quadratus as "[m]y rich free-bloud [...] my deere libertine". The scholar, by contrast, labours under limitations imposed by the fact of his "bare-pated servitude". He is constrained by a need for personal gain which renders him a

"blushles fore-head [who] only out of scence
Of his owne wants, baules in malignant questing
At others meanes of waving gallantry. (*What You Will*, p.250)

It is notable, however, that in the midst of this broad social stereotyping a moment of personal satire is introduced when Quadratus calls Lampatho a "*Don Kynsayder*" – Marston's pen-name in the formal satires. If we assume, given Marston's tendency to control the printed output of his work, that the joke is his own then it generates a more complex picture of his satiric strategy than we might have expected: Lampatho is not 'Jonson' despite all the references to scholastic penury which are allowed to adhere to him. Rather, he is a representative of the kind of satiric author-figure which Marston was instrumental in constructing but is now deliberately throwing off, much as he would a cast garment. The discontented, satire-spouting intellectual, who had proved so useful in the initial hunt for a form of discourse which could outdo the familiar rhetoric of 'wit', was now itself in danger of becoming unfashionable and was in need of replacement. A search for the new form of rhetoric through which to define status may even be broached in Quadratus' subsequent defence of "Phantasticknesse":

Phantasticknesse,
That which the naturall *Sophysters* tearme

Phantusia incomplexa, is a function
Even of the bright immortal part of man.
It is the common passe, the sacred dore,
Unto the prive chamber of the soule:
That bar'd: nought passeth past the baser Court
Of outward scence: by it th'inamorate
Most lively thinkes he sees the absent beauties
Of his lov'd mistres.
By it we shape a new creation,
Of things as yet unborne, by it we feede
Our ravenous memory, our intention feast:
Slid he that's not Phantasticall's a beast. (*What You Will*, p.250)

From its starting point as the standard charge levelled by satirists against affectation in fashions of dress and behaviour (not least by Marston himself) "phantasticknesse" is elaborated into a kind of metaphor for the imaginative powers in general. While it largely comprises a mock-defence – Quadratus later goes on to aver he would even be hanged phantastically – the terms in which it is conducted suggest a parallel to those deployed in discussions of melancholy: it has a sacred and mystical quality; it haunts the private, interior recesses of the subject; it paints castles in the air; it nourishes the other mental faculties. The impression thus created, especially given its opposition to Lampatho's own malcontentism, is that "phantasticknesse" is being introduced here to edge out the discourse of melancholy just as melancholy had earlier edged out the discourse of wit. Indeed, "phantasticknesse" emerges both as a return to that earlier discourse – when Quadratus concludes by saying "So't be phantasticall tis wits life bloud" – as well as a singular antidote to melancholy – when he entreats Lampatho, "[w]hen thou hast meanes be Phantasticall and sociable".

In view of the claims I have made above it is ironic that *What You Will* should provide Marston's most coherent depiction of the scholastic melancholy subject in the figure of Lampatho Doria. After his chastisement at the hands of Quadratus we next see him in the company of the gallants at a school where the gull Simplicius Faber is soliciting one of the boys to be his page. In these all-too familiar pedagogic surroundings Lampatho's mood darkens predictably and he claims:

I relish not this mirth, my spirit is untwist,
My heart is raveld out in discontents,
I am deepe thoughtfull, and I shoote my soule
Through all creation of omnipotence. (*What You Will*, p.256)

Quadratus at once detects his melancholy and resolves to feed his humour, launching him on a speech which, like Antonio's in *Antonio and Mellida*, utilises the trope of reflection upon the soul to exemplify melancholic thought-processes:

> seaven use-full springs
> Did I defloure in quotations
> Of crossd oppinions boute the soule of man;
> The more I learnt the more I learnt to doubt,
> ...
> Still went on went I, first *an sit anima*,
> Then and it were mortall, O hold! Hold!
> ...
> Then whether twere Corporeall, Local, fixt,
> Extraduce, but whether't had free will
> Or no
> ...
> I staggerd, knew not which was firmer part.
> But thought, quoted, reade, observ'd and pried,
> Stufft noting bookes, and still my spaniell slept.
> At length he wakt and yawned, and by yon sky,
> For aught I know he knew as much as I. (*What You Will*, pp.257-8)

Here, however, Marston achieves decorum by having these reflections issue from a genuine scholar in a suitable context. All the physical characteristics which have been associated with Lampatho – he is a "sullene black", he tends towards leanness and desiccation – here combine with a discourse which can construct for them a personal history in intellectual labour.[23] At this point in the play, however, this form of labour is being exposed as worthless and inimical to the attainment of the desired social status. This can only be achieved now by embracing the kind of Epicurean stance favoured by Quadratus, and this Lampatho reluctantly proceeds to do when he is introduced to the ladies of the court in the play's closing scenes. To Quadratus' delight Lampatho is captivated by the acerbically witty Meletza, and his friend urges him to renounce all scholastic dispute about the soul for courtly devotion to the body:

> O who would staggering doubt
> The soules eternity, seeing it hath
> Of heavenly beauty, but to case it up,
> Who would distrust a supreame existence,

[23] See Meletza's remarks in Act 4, sc.1. (p.277).

> Able to confound when it can create,
> Such heaven on earth able to intrance,
> Amaze...(*What You Will*, p.279)

Lampatho still has difficulty in adopting the appropriate form of address for his new-found life, and stumbles badly when he slips into an archaic mode of Petrarchan courtship, to the derision of both Meletza and Quadratus:

> Uds fut thou gull, thou inkie scholler, ha, thou whoreson fop,
> Wilt not thou clappe into our fashion'd gallantry,
> Couldst not be proud and skornfull, lofe and vaine? (*What You Will*, p.281)

The play holds out hope that Lampatho can eventually discard his habitual scholar's melancholy and emulate the newly-fashionable stance of the gallants, but the overall impression left by Marston's composition of this stance is that he once again achieves novelty at the expense of cohesiveness. The discourse he formulated for it earlier on in the play – that of "phantasticknesse" – makes no appearance in these later scenes, suggesting that it cannot be fully integrated with the various actions they portray.

Thus far in this chapter I have addressed Marston's introduction of a number of melancholy characters onto the stages of the boys of St.Paul's in the early plays following their revival. I have attempted to show how the representation of melancholy in figures such as Antonio in the *Antonio* plays and Planet and Lampatho in the satirical comedies was implicated in the development of a theatrical mode which separated performative from discursive values. An idea of the melancholic performing body (whether articulated through the weakness of the child actor's body or the stage-figure of the satirist) could be set in opposition to a conventional emphasis at the adult theatres on the rhetoricity of the actor's body, where word and action were ideally held to be suited. In this way the classic medical trope of melancholy, which circumvented the threat which that humour posed to the well-being of the soul by making melancholy the condition of their separation, could be translated into the relationship between the material and immaterial sign-systems on stage. The 'melancholic performativity' of these boy dramas thus provided the means to mount a challenge to the oft-lamented dominance of the physical over the verbal component of acting by alienating that body from the discourses it was required to utter on stage. The particular type of melancholic

which consistently provided the set of physical signs for melancholy in these plays is that of the scholar, whose theatrical presence I have traced in an earlier chapter as far back as *Sappho & Phao* and whose embodiment on the stages of Marston's boy actors could work variously as an object and a subject of satire, but which only fully came together as a rounded-out stage figure in the person of Lampatho in *What You Will.* In the final part of this chapter I want to look at the depiction of the scholastic figure in a dramatic environment far removed from the commercial oppositions which were being played out in the paying theatrical venues of London. Shifting my focus to the representation of the scholar's melancholy body in its 'natural' scholastic context (rather than as a multivalent theatrical trope), I want to examine in the case of the *Parnassus* plays how scholastic discourse constructed its own idea of the melancholic scholar's body, and how it appropriated the idea of the scholar's alienation from an appropriate form of language which was first floated in a variety of forms in the satiric plays.

Running through every trade, thriving by none: the profession of melancholy in *The Parnassus Plays*

The three *Parnassus* plays were written and performed by the undergraduates of Cambridge University over the period 1599-1603, thus making them roughly contemporaneous with the 'poetomachia' which gave plays like *What You Will* their particular theatrical context. All three plays deal with the problems and distractions which were supposed to imperil scholars in their journey to and from 'Parnassus', or the fabled hill of the Muses who presided over learning in the arts, and all present their theme in a quasi-allegorical form which serves to frame the plays as cautionary tales. The first of them, *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* (1599), is the most true to the allegorical format, showing its two student protagonists, Philomusus and Studioso, successfully resisting the numerous temptations – drinking, amorous pursuits and religious sectarianism (all represented in personified form) – which threaten to deflect the scholar from his goal of knowledge. They finally arrive at Parnassus, having matriculated with their BA's, and prepare to scale the 'hill' in earnest by seeking employment in some sphere which can utilise their learning in the arts. Despite the cautionary tone and some instances of the kind of internal satire expected in university

drama, the *Pilgrimage* is optimistic about the scholars' prospects and remains largely dogmatic in its insistence on the benefits of a university education throughout.

This optimism distinguishes the first play from the second and third in the trilogy, the two parts of *The Return from Parnassus* (1600, 1603). Charting the attempts of the two protagonists to gain worthy employment outside the world of the academy, the plays show them suffering one rebuttal after another at the hands of an increasingly mercantile society in which the kind of intellectual labour they have to offer is no longer valued, or shown to be eminently replaceable by those unqualified but willing to pay for the office. In painting this dismal scenario both plays have recourse to the trope of scholastic melancholy (a trope which is absent from the first play), but one which turns out to be formally and functionally very different from that depicted in *What You Will* and the other satirical comedies. In the *Parnassus* plays melancholy signifies less as the inevitable condition of learning (as in the case of Lampatho Doria), than as the condition of the alienated intellectual in society at large. A set of associations which had been long-established in theatrical convention as indicators of the seclusion and solitude of intellectual labour is now transported to the outside world and linked causally to social rather than psychological factors. The distinction between melancholy as a result of learning's disenfranchisement rather than as a by-product of learning becomes most apparent in the play's deployment of a specific discourse of melancholy for its protagonists, one which serves throughout as a register of the scholars' distress as they fail to find advancement. For the most part this discourse is indistinguishable from the conventional rhetoric of discontent at the world which we found in the satirical comedies for the boys' companies.

By and large the later two *Parnassus* plays differ from the first in showing a responsiveness to the current vogue for satire and a willingness to appropriate the malcontent's voice. A Prologue to part one, for example, interrupts the formal speech of welcome as it is about to be delivered in order to berate the prologue and audience alike in the now-fashionable railing terms:

> Sirra be gone, you play no prologue here,
> Call noe rude hearer *gentle, debonaire.*
> Wele spende no flatteringe on this carpinge croude,

Nor with gold tearmes make each rude dullard proude.[24]

Despite this evidence of immersion in contemporary satirical discourse, however, the melancholy scholar in the two parts of *The Return from Parnassus* rarely becomes a satirist as well as a malcontent: his rhetoric of discontent is carefully differentiated from the satiric barbs against society shot off by a number of the specifically 'witty' characters (Ingenioso, for example) and is allowed to fester and debilitate without finding an external release. Indeed, as I will argue later in this discussion, over the course of the two plays melancholy and satire increasingly stand for alternative possible responses to the plight of the disadvantaged graduate.

At the very beginning of *1Return from Parnassus* the scholar's melancholy enjoys an ambivalent status, since it is manifested both as a reaction to the need to abandon Parnassus for the workaday world as well as a more familiar symptom of intellectual labour. The scholars' woes begin when they find that they are to be recalled from the university by their father before completing their studies (which have now reached their seventh year), prompting Philomusus to lament along with Studioso that:

> *Philomusus*: Dissemblinge artes lookt smoothlie on our youth.
> *Studioso*: But loade our age with discontent and ruthe. (*1 Return*, 117-8).

The formal lament of which this couplet forms a part provides a rhetorical device which is repeated throughout the play whenever the scholars suffer rejection or disappointment. It also fixes the general tone of "discontent" which is associated specifically with Philomusus and Studioso but which is meant to encompass scholars as a whole. Despite individually varying responses (Philomusus is the radical pessimist, Studioso the would-be stoic) both are distraught at their untimely exit from the university and anticipate the harshest possible dealing from the outside world. Some consolation arrives when they meet with another scholar (Ingenioso, a character taken over from the *Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, who has been plausibly suggested as a disguised caricature of Thomas Nashe) who is already attempting to make his way in

[24] *1Return from Parnassus*, ll.14-17, in *The Three Parnassus Plays (1598-1601)*, ed. by J.B.Leishman (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson Ltd, 1949).

the marketplace for graduates solely through the exercise of his wit.[25] Blessed with his company, they claim, "This duller discontent woulde quicklie die", and on hearing that he is a writer of pamphlets they implore him: "drincke of a sentence to vs, to the healthe of mirth and the confusion of Melancholye" (140-1; 212-12). This melancholy lament at their enforced departure from their studies is balanced, however, by the arrival of Luxurio, who has "serued here an apprentishood of some seauen yeares" and is eager to leave Parnassus:

> Here is nothing but leuelinge of colons, squaringe of periods, by the monthe. My sanguin scorns all such base premeditation, Ile haue my pen run like a spigot & my inuention answerr it as quick as a drawer. Melancholick art, put downe thy hose, here is a suddaine wit, that will lashe thee in the time to come. (*1 Return*, 423-8.)

In insisting on the lack of agreement between his own "sanguin" constitution and the scholar's lifestyle Luxurio provides a hint that Parnassus has already made the two protagonists melancholy through study in a way that he himself has managed to avoid. His claims reinforce, moreover, the opposition between wit and melancholy which we have already encountered as a recurrent theme in Marstonian satire, and gives further specificity to it by characterising the scholar's "Melancholick art" as "premeditation" and hence inferior to the speed and dexterity of his "suddaine wit". The opposition is an important one since it anticipates the unfitness of the scholastic constitution for a world in which "inuention" rather than adeptness in philosophical argument will be at a premium. Despite his comments Luxurio emerges as something of a buffoon whose point of view is too simplistic to be upheld during the play. As the two scholars acknowledge, his principle dramatic function is the immediate provision of light relief: "Thy mirth helps to drowne that Melancholicke, that our departure from Parnassus doth create." The encounter with Ingenioso, moreover, has forewarned them that 'wit' itself is a less readily exchangeable commodity than Luxurio implies. As Ingenioso ruefully informs them of his own fabled powers of invention:

> I had rather haue more in my purse, and less in my heade. I see wit is but a phantasme and an Idea, a quareling shadowe, that will seldome dwell in the same room with a full purse, but commonly is the idle follower of a forlorne creature. Nay it is a deuill that will neuer leaue a man till it hath brought him to

[25] For the attribution of specific characters to individuals in the literary scene, see the introductory material in *The Three Parnassus Plays* at pp.61ff.

> beggarie, a malicious spirit that delightes in a close libell or an open Satyre. (*1 Return*, 165-171)

Advised by Studioso to "husbande thy witt [...] its all the goodes and cattels thy father lefte thee", Ingenioso retorts that the best employment of wit in the current marketplace is through direct cozenage rather than any form of literary production (ll.185-202). Ingenioso's disenchantment then gets immediate illustration when he attempts to seek the patronage of a wealthy 'Maecenas'. He finds his hoped-for beneficiary ensconced at a "Pharmacopola", a "seller of dregges & potions", and offers him a pamphlet containing a dedication immortalising his famous 'bounty' to scholars. The patron reads through and approves of the praises sung in his honour, but admits to Ingenioso: "in my dayes I haue bene a great fauorer of schollers; but surelie of late th'*vtensilia* of potions & purges haue beene verie costile to vnto mee". He then bestows two groats and the "sunshine of his fauoure" upon Ingenioso before returning to his "Phisicke". The incident neatly points up the thriving nature of the medical marketplace over the ailing condition of the literary one, and by extension society's greater concern with affairs of the body than with those of the mind, or (which was often bracketed with the latter) the report of future fame. The value of these more intangible commodities is a persistent theme in the two parts of the Return from Parnassus, with the final scenes of the second part ending with the following lament delivered by Studioso:

> Fond world that nere thinkes on that aged man,
> That *Ariostoes* old swift-paced man,
> Whose name is Tyme, who neuer lins to run,
> Loaden with bundles of decayed names,
> The which in Lethes lake he doth intombe,
> Saue only those which swan-like schollers take,
> And doe deliuer from that greedy lake. (*2 Return*, 1867-1873)

Fame is represented consistently throughout the play as the one commodity which the scholar has to offer, and one which they can threaten to translate into its obverse as a last resort:

> If for faire fame they hope not when they dye,
> Yet let them feare graue stayning Infamy. (*2 Return*, 1878-9.)

Both plays depend for their theatrical effect on this kind of static, unchanging presentation of the protagonists in relation to their social world. The characteristics traditionally associated with the scholars are simply translated from one environment into another without allowing them any suggestion of development, heightening the sense of their inability to adapt to the demands of professions which are unsuited to their training in the arts. Immediately after the departure from Parnassus in *1 Return*, for example, we encounter Philomusus now employed as a sexton, entering "*with a black frise coate solus*" and delivering the following monologue:

> Come black frise coat, become my sable minde,
> Helpe me to painte forth blacke faced discontente;
> Come keys and spade, the ensigns of my state
> That treads the ragged stepps of fortuns race. (*1 Return*, 567-70.)

The conventional physical signs suited to the melancholy scholar fit neatly into this new scenario, but are at the same time mocked through association with the humbler demands of physical labour. In the company of Studioso, who has now taken the role of tutor to a citizen's son, Philomusus continues his lament at the devaluation of those qualities which he had nurtured at the university:

> A faire age, when a scholler must come to liue vpon carions, and a voice that was made to pronounce a poet or an oratour be imploied like a belman in the inquirie of a strayed beaste. (*1 Return*, 654-7.)

The well-worn comedic trope opposing the scholar's command of the spoken word to the townsman's lack of articulacy – at one point Philomusus lambastes his employers for their "want of [...] Rhetorique" – now takes on an added piquancy given the kind of social inversions the plays portray. Philomusus is soon expelled from his sexton's post for allowing the town's stray dogs to piss on the church pews, and when Studioso next encounters him he detects "the oulde characters of Melancholy in his face" and resolves to try and "put him out of his dumps" (1280-2). Philomusus thus retains essentially the same characteristics throughout the play, but his melancholy is shifted from forming part of the stereotypical make-up of the scholar to standing in as his response to the world's rejection of his worth. Towards the end of the play the impression that it is the world that has failed to adapt to the needs of the scholars rather than the other way around is precipitated into the increasing number of references to the iniquity of the

English climate. The recourse to so-called 'climate theory' is begun by the scholar's father Consiliodorus, who avers that:[26]

> learning needs must leaue this duller clime
> To be possest by rude simplicitie... (*1 Return*, 1075-6)

The theme is subsequently taken up by the scholars themselves as they prepare to leave and seek better fortune in a foreign country, Luxurio specifically linking the illiberal disposition of his countrymen to the effects of an "impecunious clyme" (1530).

Thus, although the plays never make the link explicit, much of the harsh humour to be mined from the presentation of Philomusus comes from allowing his melancholy to appear as the product of manual rather than intellectual labour. Again, this does not proceed from the establishment of a causal link but from dramatic sleight of hand: the rhetoric of "blacke faced discontente" is simply rehearsed in a different context and allowed to measure the distance between Philomusus' present occupation and his erstwhile surroundings. Both plays repeatedly underscore the more general point that in the marketplace in which the scholars are forced to negotiate, work of the body – or work *upon* the body – is the kind of labour valued uppermost. Ingenioso's encounter with his patron at the apothecary's exposed this at a very early stage in the narrative, but the medical theme is picked up again in the second play when the two scholars, having returned to England after a disastrous sojourn on the continent, resolve to cozen their way into better fortunes by posing as foreign doctors:

> with those shredds of French, that we gathered vp in our hostes house in *Paris*, wee'l gull the world, that hath in estimation forraine Phisitians, & if any of the hidebound bretheren of Cambridge and Oxforde, or any of those Stigmaticke masters of Artes, that abused vs in times past, leaue their owne Phisitians, and become our patients, wee'l alter quite the stile of them, for they shall neuer hereafter write, your Lordships most bounden, but, your Lordships most laxatiue. (*2 Return*, 428-36)

The last part of this speech may be hinting that, by way of revenging themselves on wealthy, erstwhile colleagues who have since ignored their petitions for employment,

[26] For an introduction to some of the themes of early modern 'climate theory' (which intersects in a number of respects with humoral theory) see A.J.Hoenselaars, *Images of Englishmen and foreigners in*

the two intend to introduce some of the fringe empirical techniques which were currently being frowned upon among established English practitioners. Nevertheless, when we next encounter them they have selected the town Burgess as their victim, and are parroting Galenic aphorisms about the "crasis and symptoma" of his disease and insisting that "it is requisite that the French Phisition be learned and carefull, your Anglish veluet cap is malignant and dangerous" (*2 Return*, 539; 548). The Burgess is convinced and gives them the physician's standard fee of four pence, as well as a "bounty" of eight pence.[27] This is received by the scholars as a derisory gesture, however, who after the Burgess leaves break into the formulaic lament that they must continue to run "through euery trade, yet thriue by none" (*2 Return*, 560). One reason for the attenuation of their despair is the hope they appear to cling to of gaining patronage in their chosen trade and thus avoiding the problem of having to compete in the marketplace. The desirability of having a kind of retinue of medical experts is held out by the Burgess himself when he remarks fatuously of his new position as a "publike magistrate":

> for the countenancing of the place I must go oftener to the stoole, for as a great gentleman told me of good experience, it was the chiefe note of a magistrate, not to go the stoole without a phisition. (*2 Return*, 530-33)

It is a consistent feature of the newly-affluent individuals in the play, however, that the very concept of awarding place and privilege to such an entourage in the ancient manner of the patron is beyond them. By this stage in the narrative, the responses of the scholars to adversity are beginning to wear a rather gratuitous aspect, emerging ever more clearly from the conventions of dramatic satire rather than a convincingly-shaped rhetoric of social grievance. The play itself seems at this point to recognise its implication in such conventions by having the characters lament their predicament in meta-theatrical terms:

> *Studioso*: More must we act in this liues Tragedy.
> *Philomusus*: Sad is the plott, sad the Catastrophe.
>
> *Studioso*: Sighs are the Chorus in our Tragedy.

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the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries: a study of stage characters and national identity in English Renaissance drama, 1558-1642 (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1992), p.18ff.

[27] According to Leishman four pence – or a groat – was the "physician's usual fee": see the footnote for *2 Return*, l.550.

[...]
Studioso: Woe is the subiect:
Philomusus: Earth the loathed stage,
Whereon we act this fained personage, etc. (*2 Return*, 561ff.)

This latter exchange ushers in the second rude encounter the scholars undergo with a labour market prizing physical capabilities over those of the mind, when they are taken up and employed by the professional actors Burbage and Kemp (*2 Return*, 4.3. *passim*). Theatrical allusions are deployed throughout the two parts of *The Return from Parnassus*, almost always with pejorative connotations to reinforce the sense of the devaluation of rhetoric through its commercialisation at the hands of professional players. Ingenioso, for example, bidding for his patron's favour at the start of *1 Return*, mutters in an aside to the audience:

> O fustie world, were there anie comendable passage to Styx and Acharon, I would go liue with Tarleton, and neuer more [b]less this dull age with a good line. (*1 Return*, 269-71)

While this remark appears to include Tarleton among the company of 'wits', it also functions as an arch acknowledgement of the success enjoyed by the latter's much-read collection of jests (in print before 1600), and the kind of literary status it was possible for a player to garner. Again, at the exit from Parnassus Luxurio rounds off the series of farewells to the Muses with the remark: "Why heres poetrie hath a foote of the twelues, why I cannot abide these scipiake blanke verses" (449-50). References to English writers in general and those for the theatres in particular abound in the Parnassus plays to an unprecedented degree. In an exchange recalling themes from the verse satires, for example, Ingenioso is compelled to listen to the inamorato Gullio's sonnets, insisting to the audience, ""We shall haue nothinge but pure Shakespeare, and shreds of poetrie that he hath gathered at the theators" (986-7). By the time the destitute scholars consent to find employment with the players, then, the latter's profession has come to stand in for the debasement of those rhetorical arts nurtured at the universities. The meeting with Burbage and Kemp, moreover, reveals that the literary skills of the scholars are at a far lower premium than their adeptness in 'pronunciation' – the performative and least commended aspect of the orator's art. Prior to hiring the scholars the players compare the rhetorically-based approach of the universities unfavourably to the commercial actors' greater insistence on mimesis:

> *Burbage*: Now *Will Kempe*, if we can intertaine these scholers at a low rate, it will be well, they haue oftentimes a good conceite in a part.
> *Kempe*: Its true indeed, honest *Dick*, but the slaues are somewhat proud, and besides, tis good sporte in a part, to see them neuer speake in their walke, but at the end of the stage, iust as though in walking with a fellow we should neuer speake but at a stile, a gate, or a ditch, where a man can go no further. I was once at a Comedie in Cambridge, and there I saw a parasite make faces and mouths of all sorts on this fashion.
> *Burbage*: A little teaching will mend these faults, and it may bee besides they will be able to pen a part. (*2 Return*, 1753-65).

With the last comment delivered almost as an afterthought, the players commence an audition of each scholar in turn in order to "be iudge of your actions". In a hilariously mortifying sequence Burbage first asks Studioso to rehearse for him one of the best-known speeches from the *Spanish Tragedy* on the suspicion that his "voice would serue for *Hieronimo*" (the speech at 2.5. of Kyd's play, misquoted here as "Who calls *Ieronimo* from his naked bedd", etc.). Subsequently, Kemp requests of Philomusus the repetition of a piece of comic cant on the grounds that "your face me thinkes would be good for a foolish Mayre or a foolish iustice of peace" (*2 Return*, 1800-31). Both players subsequently damn the scholars' efforts with faint praise – "You will do well after a while", etc. – before Burbage singles out Philomusus for a specific tragic part:

> *Burbage*: I like your face and the proportion of your body for *Richard* the 3., I pray [you] M. *Philomusus* let me see you act a little of it.
> *Philomusus*: Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by the sonne of Yorke, [&c.] (*2 Return*, 1835-39).

In his discussion of the sequence in *The Elizabethan Player* David Mann suggests that "the final choice should alert us to the possibilities of satire here. Of all parts, Richard III is surely the last you would want to be offered because of 'the proportion of your body'!"[28] But there is, I think, a further dimension to the black humour invoked here in inserting the malcontented Philomusus into a part which so aptly reproduces those characteristics which have defined him throughout the play, in particular the saturnine demeanour and the familiar rhetoric of "discontent". As with his earlier employment as a sexton in *1 Return*, the scholar's ineligibility for a world of manual employment is

[28] See David Mann, *The Elizabethan Player: Contemporary Stage Representation* (London: Routledge, 1991), p.143.

both mocked and rendered pitiable by translating his conventional melancholy – his intellectual's badge of office – into a lower-status context.

I suggested at the beginning of this discussion that melancholy and satire would themselves emerge as distinctive responses to the worldly disappointments of the scholars. By the conclusion of the second part, the two main protagonists, having utterly failed to find any settled vocation, agree to retreat into a "shepheards poore secure contented life" and live as "happy swaines in plaine of *Arcady*" (2037; 2045). Their attitude to Parnassus has become one of deep disillusionment and regret that ever they studied in the arts, and hence their acceptance of a pastoral existence is as much a retreat from learning as it is from the world. Although they anticipate that such a lifestyle will bring them "fearelesse merriment", the tone of bleak withdrawal is sustained in Studioso's promise to:

> teach each tree, euen of the hardest kind,
> To keepe our woefull name[s] within their rinde;
> [...]
> Weele tune our sorrowes to the waters fall:
> The woods and rockes with our shrill songs weele blesse, etc. (*1 Return*, 2100ff.)

This attitude is of a piece with that manifested by Academico, another disappointed graduate who after his inability to secure patronage resolves to return to the university, despite the caveat that:

> I thinke the Vniversity is a melancholik life, for there a good fellow cannot sit two howres in his chamber, but he shall be troubled with the bill of a Draper or a Vintner: but the point is, I know not how to better my selfe, and so I am fayne to take it. (*2 Return*, 2069-74)

His resolution operates as a kind of closing of the circular process I have described going on throughout the two parts of the *Parnassus* plays, whereby the scholars who are released into society retain the same melancholy characteristics with which they began, only their stated cause has been referred externally to society – to the drapers and vintners who are their economic tormentors – rather than internally to the rigours of philosophy. Both responses contrast with those of Ingenioso and his entourage – which includes the character of "Furor Poeticus", a probable caricature of Marston – who

having failed either to cajole or threaten their way into the favours of a patron are now in sufficient trouble as a result of their satires and libels to be "bound for the Ile of doggs":

> There shall engoared venom be my inke,
> My pen a sharper quill of porcupine,
> My stayned paper, this sin loaden earth:
> There will I write, in lines shall neuer die,
> Our feared Lordinges crying villany. (*2 Return*, 2066; 2114-8)

Ingenioso's withdrawal is thus held up not so much as a melancholy response to the demise of learning as a combative response to the defeat of wit. The play's closing lines, however, show both melancholic and satiric withdrawal being brought within the same arc of discontent: one which, through a self-conscious violation of dramatic decorum, necessarily encompasses its audience of scholars as well:

> Nay stay awhile and helpe me to content
> So many gentle witts attention,
> Who kenne the lawes of euery comick stage,
> And wonder that our scene ends discontent.
> [...]
> When that your fortunes are content,
> Then shall our scene end here in merriment. (*2 Return*, 2200ff.)

CHAPTER 5

The Revenger's Melancholy

Old characters and new departures: the revival of revenge drama on the early seventeenth-century stage.

In 1602 the printer Thomas Pavier issued a new edition of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* which added over three hundred lines of hitherto unpublished text to this most influential of all Elizabethan works for the theatre. In the same year, the theatrical entrepreneur Philip Henslowe entered into his *Diary* records of payment to Ben Jonson (now back in employment with the Admiral's Men after his tenure with the Chapel Children) for certain projected "adicians in geronymo" or "new adicyons for/ Jeronymo" (some variant of the term "Jeronimo" was the usual shorthand for Kyd's play in the period).[1] Whether print and payment can be squared, and Jonson reliably cited as the author of the Pavier additions, is a matter of some dispute.[2] The majority of commentators rule out the possibility, partly because of the tightness of the chronology but also because the style of the additions is alien to Jonson or, indeed, to any other playwright known to be working at the time. But whether or not the records indicate that Jonson, by now one of the foremost poets writing for the theatre, was the author of this additional material, or whether they suggest two quite separate commissions, the simple fact of their existence provides evidence both of the abiding theatrical value of Kyd's revenge tragedy and, more importantly, of emerging trends in the public theatres at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The revival of revenge tragedy at the turn of the century can be seen as a symptom of the complex literary and commercial environment of the London theatres

[1] Quoted in Thomas Kyd, *The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. by Andrew S. Cairncross (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1967), p.xxi.

[2] The Malone Society editor argues that while "[i]t has usually and naturally been assumed that these additions are in fact those which first appear in print in the quarto of 1602 [...] The identification [...] is hardly even conceivably correct" (Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy with Additions, 1602*, Malone Society Reprints, 1925). Whilst also disputing the attribution, Cairncross finds by contrast that "there has been almost universal objection to his authorship", p.xxi.

after the re-opening of the boys' companies and the return to the classical roots of revenge drama which this new development entailed. How far do the 1602 additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* provide a register of this shifting theatrical landscape? As audience taste was manoeuvred away from national themes and back towards Seneca and 'foreign' settings, an old play which was the primary example of its genre could now, through the inclusion of new material, be held up to act as a kind of mirror to the convulsions that genre was undergoing in revival. This is evident above all in the principal content of the new material: its elaboration of those scenes in which Hieronimo grieves for the death of his son, and in particular its expansion upon his 'mad' or 'melancholy' speeches. The scenes in the original had shown Hieronimo's mental disarray setting in at a late stage of the plot, once he had been apprised of the identities of Horatio's murderers but was still hindered by circumstance from enacting revenge. The additions, by contrast, show his ravings beginning almost as soon as he discovers the body. In the well-known scene in which Horatio's body is cut down and Isabella takes up the lamentation alongside him, Hieronimo unexpectedly sends for his servants and, seemingly incapable of accepting his son's death, asks them to seek him out while he muses as to how the corpse could have come by Horatio's clothes. Asking another servant to identify the body at their feet, which the servant does as Horatio, Hieronimo exclaims:

> Ha, ha! Saint James but this doth make me laugh,
> That there are more deluded than myself.[3]

Isabella quickly restores him to perspicacity, asking him to "cast a more serious eye upon your grief", but by fixing Hieronimo's capacity for 'delusion' at this early stage the additional material succeeds in shifting his 'madness' away from being the symptom of a mind which buckles under cumulative pressures, towards a mind which appears unstable from the very beginning. This strategy might simply be an attempt to capitalise on the lunacy of Hieronimo, which had by now become the play's most notorious feature, as attested to in later editions of the play, which gave it the sub-title "Hieronimo is mad againe". But it also suggests a relaxing of the need to represent madness *causally* as part of the narrative process. Madness by now carries sufficient

[3] Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. by J.R.Mulryne, Mew Mermaids Series, 2nd edn. (London: A&C Black, 1989), 1602 Additions, 1st addition, ll.25-6.

theatrical value to be used in exchange for more conventional responses to the murder of a loved one: anger, rage, grief, and so forth. This abandonment of decorum in favour of the amplification of madness in discursive terms registers one response, as I hope to show subsequently, to the representation of madness and melancholy in post-1599 revenge tragedies.[4]

The 1602 interpolations, then, help to encapsulate distinctions between the ways melancholy signified within the earlier and the later examples of the revenge tragedy genre. To a significant extent these distinctions involve a shift in the causal relations between melancholy and revenge as part of the narrative process.[5] In Kyd's 1587

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[4] The longest of the 1602 additions, the so-called 'Painter' scene which is inserted before the sequence in which Hieronimo commiserates with other petitioners for justice, reinforces the impression that the revenger's madness is now more likely to be represented through discourse rather than action. In my earlier discussion of melancholy in *The Spanish Tragedy* I pointed out how the gestural sign was hugely important in carrying the burden of Hieronimo's grief: his entry with rope and poniard, his frantic digging at the earth in a delusory pursuit of justice, his tearing of the petitioners bonds with his teeth, all provided striking performative counterparts to the distress being figured in verse. In the 1602 addition, however, we find a preponderance of reported action, which begins when Hieronimo ushers the painter – who has also lost his son – into the orchard where Horatio was hung by his assassins, and asks him: "Canst paint me a tear, or a wound, a groan, or a sigh? Canst paint me a tree such as this?" Hieronimo then goes on to rehearse the details of his son's murder, entreating the painter to "paint me a youth run through and through with villains' swords, hanging upon this tree." Not only the specifics of the murder, however, but those of his subsequent grief are commissioned:

> There you may show a passion, there you may show a passion. Draw me like old Priam of Troy, crying "The house is a-fire, the house is afire as the torch over my head!" make me curse, make me cry, make me rave, make me mad, make me well again, make me curse hell, invocate heaven, and in the end leave me in a trance (*Spanish Tragedy*, 4th addition, 151-7).

Recapitulating the details of one of the play's most famous scenes may on the one hand have made sound theatrical sense, a strategic recycling of dramatic capital which remained among the company's most valuable commodities. This strategy takes the form, however, not of a re-enactment of Hieronimo's grief but of the representation of a representation: an almost literal 'framing' of the original gestures of melancholy and distraction.

[5] This kind of distinction is not the only one, however. Another of the 1602 additions demonstrates a sensitivity to a key aspect of the changing dramatic climate at the start of early-seventeenth century: its emphasis on satire and complaint. Inserted into a scene where Hieronimo meets two "Portingales" who ask him directions is a long discourse in which, unprompted, the grieving father expatiates on the worth of generation:

> what's a son? A thing begot
> Within a pair of minutes, thereabout:
> A lump bred up in darkness, and doth serve
> To ballace these light creatures we call women
> And at nine moneths end, creeps forth to light.
> [...]
> The more he grows in stature and in years,
> The more unsquared, unbevelled he appears,
> Reckons his parents among the rank of fools
> Strikes care upon their head with his mad riots
> [...]

drama the trope of revenge worked to structure the performance of melancholy, so that the spectrum of represented affects ranging from Bel-imperia's initial vengeful melancholy to Isabella's full-blown madness were all linked to revenge as the controlling element, emanating clearly out of its narrative logic. With the re-emergence of revenge drama in the 1600's, however, we find this process reversed, and the trope of melancholy itself made responsible for structuring the syntagm of revenge.[6] One important means by which this was achieved after the revival was through the translation of those melancholic tropes conventionally found in *comedy* (particularly the early 'humoral' comedies) into the tragic form of revenge drama. Equally important, however, is the increased privileging of the discursive over the performative aspects of melancholy: the representation of melancholic sorrow and grief through dramatic language begins to supersede its delineation in gestural forms. This does not, however, entail any less emphasis on the physical performance of melancholy: what we see instead is a disjunction between the physical and discursive aspects of melancholy on stage which is constructed as an opposition between theatrical – and particularly generic – modes. Illustrating these interrelated points will be the burden of the discussion that follows, although I will also give attention to the intertwining of the discourses of melancholy and satire which the 1602 additions likewise register.

Oh, but my Horatio
Grew out of reach of these insatiate humours... (*Spanish Tragedy*, 3rd addition, 1ff).

Both in tone and in content these sentiments are quite different from those uttered in the dialogue with the Portingales which dates from the earlier version, where Hieronimo gives allegorical directions leading to his son's murderer, who will be found "bathing [...] In boiling lead and blood of innocents". Instead of a pseudo-religious discourse which sharpens focus on the sufferings awaiting in the afterlife, we are given a distillation of the satiric, discontented and misogynistic voices which had come to prominence at the end of the 1590's. Even the reference to "insatiate humours" at the end of the additional speech (itself perhaps prompted by the "baleful humours" of the original) reveals its indebtedness to the then-current discourse of humoralism amongst theatre poets.

[6] For this part of the discussion I am adapting some of the suggestive comments made in Karin S. Coddon, "'Suche Strange Desygns': Madness, Subjectivity, and Treason in *Hamlet* and Elizabethan Culture", in *Renaissance Drama*, New Series 20, 1989, 51-75. See, for example, p.59: "What will distinguish madness in such plays as *Hamlet* (1601) and *King Lear* (1605) from its depictions in the equally pathologically fixated tragedy of the late 1580's and early 1590's is the subordination to which it will subject other plot elements: madness does not serve narrative so much as narrative serves madness."

Suiting function to form: melancholy and the shaping of the revenge narrative in *Hamlet* and the *Antonio* Plays.

Melancholy first emerges as a controlling metaphor in revenge drama with *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's next tragedy for the Chamberlain's Men after *Julius Caesar*. Here many of the revenge tropes made familiar to audiences via *The Spanish Tragedy* are re-used: including an opening encounter with a Ghost (which, in distinction from that of Senecan tragedy, is active in the narrative); a revenging hero who is compelled to adopt some sort of disguise to effect his task; and a denouement in which an elaborate entertainment becomes the pretext for a final bloodbath in which revenger and victim alike are destroyed. Even particular details of characterisation are taken directly from the Kydian stable, including a hero who is dressed in black, and who enters at one point *solus* with a book. And, most importantly for my discussion, the protagonist is described both by himself and by others in the play as 'melancholy'. The crucial distinction, however, is that Hamlet's melancholy is established at a very early stage of the play, well before the initial injunction to revenge is given. By introducing melancholy at such an early juncture in the play, *Hamlet* inverts a set of relations canonised in a prior tradition of revenge drama, and radically determines all future articulations of those relations within the play.

At our first introduction to Hamlet we find him dressed in mourning black and (according to one interpretation of the Q2 stage directions) isolated from the remainder of the courtly retinue.[7] These features by themselves embody physical conventions of melancholy familiarised in comedies such as Jonson's *The Case is Altered* and Shakespeare's own *Twelfth Night*, where mourning became diagnosable as melancholy once it was seen to flout a society's normative standards of grief and to tend towards excess. A parallel interpretation is invited here when Hamlet is reprehended by Claudius for his "unmanly grief", and for his persistence in "obstinate condolement" through adherence to the visible signs of mourning blazoned via his "nighted colour".[8]

[7] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Harold Jenkins (London: Routledge, 1982), I.ii.1SD. In Q2 Hamlet is listed last in the order of entry instead of the earlier position his rank would dictate. For problems with this reading, however, see Jenkins' discussion in his Longer Note on p.432-3.
[8] *Hamlet*, I.ii.87ff.

Subsequently, in Hamlet's first soliloquy, the performative resources of action and costume give way to the discursive, as he entreats his "too, too sullied flesh" to "melt, thaw and resolve itself into a dew".[9] These expressions of self-abnegation have in turn been familiarised through the utterances of the more explicitly melancholy Dowsecer of Chapman's comedy *An Humorous Day's Mirth* (1597): it was Dowsecer, it will be recalled, who desired to return his body to the elements: to "creep into this stubborn earth, and mix my flesh with it [...] To fat oxen, asses, and such like".[10] A weary philosopher-prince whose Ficinian melancholy is remarked on by all, Dowsecer is perhaps the clearest of all comedy precursors to Hamlet; more so even than Jaques in *As You Like It*, whose melancholy sentiments are more evidently those of the malcontent.

Such parallels suggest that we should abandon the attempt to present the play as the working out of a coherent narrative of revenge and treat it instead as an enlargement of the discursive strategies established in humoral comedy. The manner in which a convention from one genre is put to work in the service of another thus becomes more evident. In formal terms, for example, Hamlet's notoriously unmotivated "antic disposition" recalls the plaintive utterances of Dowsecer or Jacques in their speeches censuring the follies of the age, speeches that were frequently at the edge of true satire and which fitfully crossed over into it. Hamlet makes the affinity of his 'madness' with satiric discourse evident from the first when, quizzed by Polonius about the book he is reading, he refers to its author as a "satirical rogue".[11] His subsequent girds at the old man, as well as those aimed at Ophelia, the King, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, articulate a strategy of abuse which has a clear indebtedness to contemporary satiric tropes. His startling outburst against Ophelia in III.1. is composed of conventional tirades against face-painting among women, while his censure of Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's loyalty to the King in III.2. and IV.3. is constructed out of a familiar rhetoric against flattery at court. All these satiric sentiments are foreshadowed in Dowsecer's litany of complaints, only here they are more fully dramatised by virtue of their implication in revenge tragedy conventions. Indeed, the shift from the melancholy of Dowsecer into the pseudo-madness of Hamlet – an upping of the ante, as it were, in

[9] *Hamlet*, I.ii.129ff.
[10] *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, vii.173-9.
[11] *Hamlet*, II.ii.196. The author himself is not identifiable but is often supposed to be Juvenal – the archetype of the classical satirists for all Elizabethans working in the genre.

terms of the representation of mental instability – really describes nothing more than an increase in the strength of the satire, which in the mouth of Hamlet is more harshly phrased and has far more destructive consequences.

Given what I have been arguing about the translation of comedic tropes about melancholy into a tragic context in *Hamlet*, it is especially pertinent that the play demonstrates its awareness of a differentiation between what I have described as 'rhetorical' and 'melancholic' theatrical styles. In particular, the soliloquy which closes the long "Player" scene of II.2 shows how a reworking into performative terms of the 'medical' trope of a melancholic separation of soul from body could serve to map out these distinctions in tragedy as well as they had been in Marstonian satiric comedy. Left alone to reflect upon the First Player's impassioned response to the well-worn tale of Hecuba's lament over Priam, Hamlet delivers the following outburst:

> O what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
> Is it not monstrous that this player here,
> But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
> Could force his soul so to his own conceit
> That from her working all his visage wann'd
> Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
> A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
> With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing! (II.2.543-551)

Comparison between the player's capacity to signify emotion and that of his own in the circumstances of a recently-murdered father has led to a detailed anatomisation of the actor's craft. Most importantly, it is the rhetorical facility of a direct communication between the actor's "soul" and his bodily "function" and "forms" which occupies Hamlet's analysis. The soul's untrammelled "working" in the body is responsible for the reproduction of persuasive (perhaps even genuine?) signs of grief in a situation that is otherwise fictional, but it is important that the soul is not herself the true mistress of the actor's body here, being rather controlled by the player's "conceit", or imaginative faculty. Any sense that it is admiration which provides the tenor of Hamlet's description is deferred, moreover, by that use of the term "monstrous" in the second line, which can ambiguously indicate either Hamlet's own apparent shortcomings in the display of emotion or the Player's rhetorical facility itself. Indeed, a sense of 'monstrosity' behind the actor's representation of excessive grief is enlarged upon when

Hamlet goes on to describe what the Player *would* do given his own, more palpable motive for passion:

> He would drown the stage with tears,
> And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
> Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
> Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
> The very faculties of eyes and ears. (II.2.556-560)

To the physical signs which should accompany the Herod-like raging of the traditional mode of impassioned action is now added the suggestion of a fluent and appropriate discourse in the utterance of "horrid speech". Thus in this imagined scenario of the actor's response to King Hamlet's murder all the important binaries of rhetorical action – those involving a 'translation' between body and soul and between body and discourse – are seen to be united. By contrast, Hamlet's own alienation of physical being both from the soul's "working" and from impassioned speech is encapsulated in his subsequent assertion that he "can say nothing" (564). Use of the term 'saying' here allows for further ambiguity, encompassing the senses of both 'uttering' and 'doing' which have been illustrated in the example of the player. Yet the irony, of course, is that, on the latter reading at least, Hamlet has 'said' a great deal, and will continue to do so for another 36 lines in which futile curses eventually give way to productive ratiocination. The distinction, however, between the player's rhetorically-proficient mode of speech and Hamlet's own less *embodied* monologue has been forcibly underlined by the events of the scene, and the contrast between the Prince and the Player now works to privilege the former's 'interiority' at the expense of the latter's heightened theatricality. It is significant in view of what I have argued above, therefore, that Hamlet should end this soliloquy by applying to himself, for the one and only time in the play, the epithet of "melancholy" (see l.597). Whatever the function of the many signifiers of melancholy displayed by Hamlet earlier in the play, this moment of explicit self-diagnosis within a scene abounding with meta-theatrical values strongly suggests an appropriation of the kind of melancholic performativity I have described deriving from the boy company plays. Mapping a failure of communication between body and soul onto a moment of alienation between dramatic discourse and theatrical action, the Chamberlain's Men's *Hamlet* recovers for the purposes of narrative and characterization

what the boy's satiric comedies had ranged against established adult company performing styles.

Roughly contemporary with *Hamlet* were Marston's two *Antonio* plays for the newly-reopened Paul's boys. There are some grounds for treating the two parts as a loosely-constructed whole, and doing so can bring out with greater clarity the sort of reciprocal relationship they enjoyed with Shakespeare's revenge tragedy at the Globe. In the revenge narrative which comprises the second of the two plays, *Antonio's Revenge*, there are numerous glances at *Hamlet*, as well as a similar positioning of melancholy at an early stage of the play, before it becomes incident to the action of revenge. Equally striking is the play's adoption of an identical strategy of translating a protagonist from a comic environment into a tragic one. In this case, however, the sense of continuity is far more pronounced because the comedy in question is the play's immediate predecessor, *Antonio and Mellida*. The characters – almost all of them – deriving from the one dramatic form are transposed into the other, and since many of these characters, including Antonio himself, were originally constructed as melancholy types, the emergence of melancholy as the dominant structural device in revenge narratives is forcefully underlined.

Antonio as he is portrayed in *Antonio and Mellida* is a sophisticated literary joke rather than the sort of coherently-drawn character favoured in public theatre productions. He frequently functions as a kind of pastiche of contemporary literary and theatrical fads, put together with pointed disregard for any narrative consistency or concessions to verisimilitude. His first appearance, for example, disguised as an Amazon, is aimed as much at the delight of an audience immersed in the courtly romance of Sidney's *Arcadia* and the conventions of boy acting as at the delineation of a traditional hero-in-disguise motif. Nevertheless, some kind of consistency in presentation emerges in Antonio's constant recourse to the plaintive language of the melancholy lover. This is usually reproduced for comic effect, to heighten the sense of the hero's ineptitude when faced with a challenge. I have discussed at an earlier point in this thesis his long exposition of "speckling melancholy", in which the Petrarchan conceit of a lover whose soul achieves embodiment only in the presence of his loved one is intellectualised into a scholastic disquisition. The context in which this speech is delivered, however, is one repeated many times in the play: Antonio's resort to a

fatalistic despair instead of a practical effort to regain control over the circumstances separating him from his beloved. His laments at Mellida's absence – semi-parodic in themselves – are accompanied by gestures parodied from the melancholy Viceroy of *The Spanish Tragedy*, especially in the frequent act of hurling himself to the ground.

The stage-figure of Antonio thus embodies the type of the melancholy lover, a type perhaps somewhat partially drawn when compared with the philosopher-prince Dowsecer, but just as amenable to transference between comic and tragic contexts. Initially, *Antonio's Revenge* represents melancholy as an aspect of tone rather than character: the Prologue sets the mood by making the play's shift into a different genre explicit, calling for a "sullen tragic scene" to "suit the time with pleasing congruence".[12] Not long afterwards, Antonio's mother Maria appears with her train, having travelled from Genoa to celebrate the reconciliation of the two dukes at the close of the first play and her son's imminent marriage to Mellida. Despite the nominally happy circumstances, the darker tone of the second piece is skilfully sustained via Maria's unprompted expressions of foreboding, which an attendant lord attempts to dispel – insisting he himself has seen "all clouds cleared of threat'ning discontent" at the Venetian court (*Antonio's Revenge*, I.2.28).

Precisely the same tone is evoked, again without any initial rationale, when we first encounter Antonio (I.2.65ff.). Reprising his stereotyped role of impassioned lover, he approaches Mellida's window, but unexpectedly shows signs of apprehension. These are interpreted by his entourage as indications of pre-nuptial anxiety: when Antonio gives a start, they assume it is at the sight of "a hornèd devil" – an ominous sight for a bridegroom – and when the joke is exhausted to everyone's satisfaction they attempt to rally him: "Young prince, look sprightly. Fie, a bridegroom sad!" Having built up the conventional scenario of a young groom's fears of sexual inadequacy, the play suddenly reveals that his melancholy emanates from a quite different source, as Antonio confesses:

> My spirit's heavy, and the juice of life
> Creeps slowly through my stiffened arteries.
> Last sleep my sense was steeped in horrid dreams;

[12] John Marston, *Antonio's Revenge*, Prologue, 7-8; in *The Malcontent and Other Plays*, ed. by Keith Sturgess (Oxford: OUP, 1997).

Three parts of night were swallowed in the gulf
Of ravenous time, when to my slumb'ring powers
Two meagre ghosts made apparition.
[...]
Both cried 'Revenge!' (I.2.100ff.)

Thus the revenge motif is introduced, swiftly displacing the romantic one. But while the audience has been made privy in the opening scene to the circumstances of the double-murder committed by Piero, revenge itself can as yet gather no independent momentum in the narrative. Whatever the forebodings of the principals, none of them has been appraised of the atrocity: hence their expressions of melancholy at this prior stage tend to forestall the causal development of the emotion once the discovery of the crime has taken place. Robbed of its traditional trajectory in the revenge narrative, Antonio's melancholy remains an extension of 'character' rather than of story, a pre-ordained response to circumstances which ultimately controls the operations of his revenge rather than emanating out of it.

To illustrate this latter point, it is worth focussing attention onto the binary opposition the play articulates between the poles of a passionate and a stoic reaction to the trauma of loss and the compunction to revenge. Although the malice of Piero is taken for granted, his part in the murders of Felice and Andrugio and the calumny of Mellida at first remains concealed, so that the protagonists are forced into an initial period of endurance. Consequently, they split into two distinct modes of affective response. Antonio, Andrugio's son and Mellida's lover, elects to expend his anguish in passionate action:

What, whom, whither, which shall I first lament?
[...]
Methinks I feel the frame of nature shake.
Cracks not the joints of earth to bear my woes? (I.2.264-5.)

His companion Alberto encourages him to take solace from the stoic principle that "'Tis reason's glory to command affects". Antonio, however, scorns such sentiments as the preserve of those untouched by suffering, and invites his companions to unite in the traditional pose of melancholic surrender to the vagaries of fortune:

come; let's sit and weep and wreathe our arms (I.2.280)

Pandulfo, by contrast, firmly embraces the stoic pose from the outset, subscribing to the belief that:

> The grip of chance is weak to wring a tear
> From him that knows what fortitude should bear. (I.2.320-1.)

His sentiments are forcefully underlined by their delivery from beneath the hoist and mutilated body of his son, to whom at the scene's close he delivers the salute "Good morrow, son; thou bidd'st a fig for cold." What the play has thus achieved within a single scene is a striking and economical synopsis of a dramatic opposition which was part of the complex of revenge tragedy motifs from *The Spanish Tragedy* onwards. However, Hieronimo's debate in III.13. on whether to exercise forbearance in the face of evil or to follow the prompting of the passions and quit a life for a life took a rather different form, setting the Christian injunction that vengeance was reserved for God alone against the Senecan maxim that crimes multiply in the face of acquiescence. *Antonio's Revenge*, by contrast, reprises an opposition established in its predecessor, *Antonio and Mellida*, which put Seneca on the side of stoic sufferance, and which went to some lengths to expose the inadequacy of its philosophy as a remedy for the extremes of passion.

It is this dyad which is imported into the revenge sequel and which once more drives the narrative, with Antonio again embodying a state of excessive passion and Pandulfo replacing Andrugio as the "doting stoic". The structuring principle of love-melancholy vs. *apathia* is retained, since for the first part of the play Antonio's main cause of anguish is Mellida's defaming and incarceration. At II.2. he enters "*with a book*" of Senecan maxims which he recites and dismisses one by one as inadequate "physic" for his grief, but unlike other examples of the genre employing a debate with Seneca this sequence contains no interrogation of the revenge ethic. Subsequently he encounters Mellida "*at a grating*" and the two share a moment of tenderness before she warns him of the threat to his life posed by Piero. Even then, however, his responses remain conditioned by his prior dramatic persona, as he grovels on the turf to

> sigh and wring my hands,
> Beat my poor breast and wreathe my tender arms. (II.2.141-2)

Where the stoic/melancholic opposition described above eventually departs from formula is in the eventual collapse of its components into one another as the revenge narrative comes to the foreground. Commiserating together over the body of Felice after the full villainy of Piero has been revealed, they discover their respective responses to be mere performances – theatrical roles inherited from an earlier and outmoded repertoire which they are now given the opportunity to cast off:

> Why, all this while I ha' but played a part
> Like to some boy that acts a tragedy
> Speaks burly words and raves out passion;
> But when he thinks upon his infant weakness,
> He droops his eye. (IV.2.70-4)

At an earlier point in the play Pandulfo had justified his stoic's impassivity by rejecting the "player-like" displays of emotion which convention required of misfortune (I.2.315), and even Antonio had insisted he would not

> swell like a tragedian
> In forcèd passion of affected strains. (II.2.105-6)

What both these latter sentiments had in common was an endorsement of inaction – whether from a melancholic or a stoic rationale – and an adherence to certain formal expressions of grief which, however stereotyped by the boy players, were at least distinct from the violent excesses held to inhere in public theatre styles of acting. But with the shift of focus onto the child performer himself, a modest appreciation of the gap between "infant weakness" and inflated rhetoric serves to loosen the hold of these conventions. Both are now seen as equally inadequate for the narrative to which they have been applied and are summarily thrown aside for the roles of revenging father, lover, son. In a dazzling reworking of the gesture which has hitherto epitomised the melancholic's solitary anguish – the wreathing of his arms – the protagonists exit the stage to prosecute their vengeance, "*their arms wreathed*" together (IV.2.119).

"The heart's disquiet is revenge most deep": melancholy and the reforming revenger in *The Malcontent.*

Thus far I have attempted to illustrate the structuring virtue of the theatrical master-trope of melancholy in turn-of-the-century revenge tragedy in my discussion of *Hamlet* and *Antonio's Revenge*. In *Hamlet* the introduction of melancholy at an early stage of the narrative ensures that the ensuing revenge action is subordinated to its shaping influence, so that Hamlet's 'revenge' ultimately takes the form of a malcontent's railings against selected social targets. Although the play has become notorious for subsuming its revenge action beneath extraneous interests, this is an accusation that could apply with equal weight to *Antonio's Revenge*, where vengeance is for a substantial period elided by the countervailing influence of love-melancholy. The contemporaneity of these plays and their adoption of identical representational strategies suggests a commercial relationship: if not exactly "mighty opposites" in the competitive arena of the theatres they were nonetheless oriented towards each other with a closeness born of the rivalry between public and private theatre companies which burgeoned after 1599. In appropriating the strategies it found in *Hamlet*, *Antonio's Revenge* was partly indulging a boy company tradition of satire. It was, however, also employing those strategies to articulate in a new way motifs long since established in its own dramatic repertoire: for example, love-melancholy and the debate between reason and passion. In the final part of this chapter, I want to turn my attention to the play which perhaps demonstrates the most radical reshaping of the conventions of melancholy within revenge drama, John Marston's *The Malcontent.*[13]

The Malcontent was written for performance at the Blackfriars by the Chapel Children in 1604, but subsequently stolen by the King's Men in an illuminating piece of commercial tit-for-tat which transformed the play into a commodity adapted for adult players. The title supplies its own provocative hint about the aspect of melancholy which will most strongly inflect the play's narrative of revenge: the discourse of 'discontent'. Throughout this thesis I have tried to maintain a sense of the way in which the individual terms 'melancholy' and 'malcontent', whilst closely inter-connected and often used interchangeably, retained the capacity to *construct* meanings differentially.

[13] For arguments in favour of treating *The Malcontent* as a revenge tragedy see Fredson Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959), pp.130-2.

An appreciation of this point is nowhere more important than in *The Malcontent*, where 'discontent' is given plenty of rhetorical outlets but 'melancholy' itself is only alluded to elliptically. Malcontentism thus fulfils the role hitherto taken by melancholy in driving the play's narrative of revenge. In a further departure from many of the formal properties of revenge drama *The Malcontent* eschews the vistas of carnage and death conjured up by its predecessors (which include Marston's own *Antonio's Revenge*) and ends with a dukedom restored and the penitence of the transgressors. As I will argue at more length below, while *The Malcontent* adopted many of the representational strategies of the revenge dramas I have discussed above (the protagonist in disguise, the denoument during a masque) it worked them into its own distinctive blend of comic and tragic elements. It has often been supposed as a result that Marston must therefore have 'set out' to write in the tragicomic genre, but it is equally possible his reconfiguration of the various revenge tropes being shaped and circulated around him simply led him to a newly-available dramatic format that proved amenable to it.[14]

Malevole is of a piece with the other revenge protagonists I have described in this chapter by being imported directly from a comic genre into that of revenge. Immediately before his first entrance the Duke Pietro furnished the following description of him:

> This Malevole is one of the most prodigious affections that ever conversed with nature, a man, or rather a monster, more discontent than Lucifer when he was thrust out of the presence; his appetite is unsatiable as the grave, as far from any content as from heaven. His highest delight is to procure others vexation, and therein he thinks he truly serves heaven; for 'tis his position, whosoever in this earth can be contented is a slave and damned; therefore does he afflict all in that to which they are most affected. The elements struggle within him; his own soul is at variance with herself; his speech is halter-worthy at all hours. I like him, faith... (*The Malcontent*, I.2.17-28.)

It is notable that Malevole is described not merely as having but as *being* the "prodigious affection" he manifests. Such a mode of representation is primarily a product of humoral comedy, where specific characters, such as Dowsecer, Kitely and

[14] See in particular the editor's introduction to John Marston, *The Malcontent*, ed. by G.K. Hunter, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975; repr. 1999), p.lxi-lxxiv. See also the same critic's discussion in "Italian tragicomedy on the English stage" in G.K. Hunter, *Dramatic Identities and Cultural Tradition: Studies in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Liverpool:

Buffone represented specific humours which have grown to excess and require to be expelled. In contrast to the development of Hamlet out of Dowsecer, however, Malevole does not undergo any further process of adaptation. Instead, Pietro simply fixes discontent in humoral terms as Malevole's presiding "affection" and, rather as Jonson did with Macilente's envy in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, leaves silent any connection with melancholy that might have been suggested by Malevole's bodily deportment or behaviour. His discontent is manifested through a railing mode of speech that develops to the fullest extent the connections between satire and malcontentism that Marston had drawn on in his earlier comedies for the St. Paul's boys. This satiric discourse is no mere peripheral device in *The Malcontent*, however, but as Pietro suggests, part of a strategy whereby Malevole aims to "afflict all in that to which they are most affected." This mode of action represents something of a departure from the style of earlier humoural comedies, where heaping contempt upon the selected target usually sufficed to drive the offender out of their addictions. Here, however, outright aggression is combined with a desire to augment the victim's error until it reaches a kind of crisis of containment, a method developed and re-used subsequently in *The Fawn*.[15]

Malevole's strategy gets prompt demonstration soon after his first appearance when, having railed in straightforward terms at the Duke's senior officials, he sequesters Pietro alone and reveals to him his cuckolding by a lowly but ambitious courtier, Mendoza. The manner in which Malevole aggravates Pietro's distress by conjuring up vivid fantasies of Mendoza's assignations with the Duke's wife Aurelia may owe something to the recent similar exchanges between Iago and Othello at the Globe, even to the extent of appropriating one of the Moor's oaths, "Death and damnation!" Malevole, however, goes further than Iago in tormenting his victim by elaborating these

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Liverpool University Press, 1978), pp.133-156. The suggestion is taken up by, among others, Henke in *Pastoral Transformations*, pp.50-1.

[15] Cf. Hercules/Faunus' vow at the close of act I in John Marston, *The Fawn*, ed. by David A. Blostein (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978) to spend his sojourn in the court of urbin:

> in flattering all
> In all of their extremest viciousness,
> Till in their own loved race they fall most lame,
> And meet full butt the close of vice's shame. (I.2.347)

fantasies into a nightmare vision of the dynastic consequences of Aurelia's adultery: an incestuous, bastard race formed by the unwitting union of her legitimate and illegitimate progeny. At this point it seems from the success of Malevole's malcontent strategy that the Duke's particular addiction is a kind of jealous uxoriousness – itself an import from humoral comedy, with its doting citizen representatives such as Kitely and Deliro from *Every Man In* and *Every Man Out* respectively. The difference here, however, is that the revenge to which Malevole urges Pietro must now have serious (i.e. potentially tragic) consequences since it is aimed at redressing an offence committed against a power in the state.

As Pietro leaves to plot Mendoza's death, 'Malevole' reveals himself in soliloquy to be Altofront, the deposed Duke of Genoa haunting his erstwhile court in disguise, whose machinations against Pietro constitute his own form of revenge on the man who usurped his place. Accordingly, Malevole now reveals a darker imperative in tormenting the Duke:

> Lean thoughtfulness, a sallow meditation,
> Suck thy veins dry, distemperance rob thy sleep!
> The heart's disquiet is revenge most deep:
> He that gets blood the life of flesh but spills,
> But he that breaks heart's piece, the dear soul kills
> Well, this disguise doth yet afford me that
> Which kings do seldom hear or great men use –
> Free speech; and though my state's usurped,
> Yet this affected strain gives me a tongue
> As fetterless as is an emperor's. (I.3.156-65.)

The opening two lines make explicit the kind of "affection" Malevole really wishes to promote in Pietro: the dessicating, life-threatening effects of a full-blown melancholy. A sense in which Pietro is already given to melancholy – and hence that Malevole is consistent in his strategy – has been generated via the contemplative tenor of the Duke's language in the opening scenes. Pietro now finds himself afflicted in the 'affection' to which he is most beholden, with Malevole exacerbating his melancholy to a degree that threatens subjective peril of a kind which I have suggested is broached in several of the medical texts about melancholy: the perishability of the soul. Although Malevole

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Cf. also G.K. Hunter's comments on pp.lxvi-lxvii of his Introduction to *The Malcontent*: "by encouraging the subversion of men by their own passions [Malevole] facilitates the self-destruction of

explicitly eschews bloodshed, he nonetheless suggests a potentially terrifying outcome via his expressed intention of doing evil to the Duke's soul. The whole emphasis of the play shifts accordingly towards revenge.[16] While the form of action pursued by Malevole remains the same as that outlined for him in Pietro's opening speech, the rationale for it has now changed from the satiric correction of folly and vice to the outright destruction of the victim. The movement between the two theatrical idioms may be compared to that undertaken in *Hamlet*, where the deployment of satiric discourse in a revenge context had results which were no less deadly.

In what sense, then, does Malevole's discontent – the narrative equivalent, I am suggesting here, of Hamlet's philosophical melancholy and Antonio's love-melancholy – inform the process of revenge in *The Malcontent*? Clearly, the satiric aspect I have touched on above is important, since it establishes the discourse which provides the means of revenge as well as the mode of disguise needed to prosecute it. But I would suggest that discontent also co-ordinates the play at a more fundamental level. This can be illustrated by looking more closely at a particularly striking feature of these opening scenes: the problematic which they generate around the notion of 'affectivity'. It can be noted that Malevole's malcontentism is at the centre of this problematic from the first: from Pietro's initial description of him as an embodiment of the "prodigious affection" of discontent; to its manifestation as an intention to "afflict all in that to which they are most affected"; to Malevole's own admission that his persona is merely the product of an "affected strain". In each case the precise meaning of 'affect' shifts a little, progressively teasing out the performative connotations of Malevole's discontent. What was initially represented as a 'humoral' condition is now revealed to be a pose, a point

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greedy individualists."

[16] For a helpful discussion of the 'psychological' nature of the revenge action in *The Malcontent* and of the complex relationship of the play to tragicomedy as a whole, see Lee Bliss, "Pastiche, burlesque, tragicomedy" in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by A.R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.237-261: "Early on Malevole tells us his desired revenge is not death but the 'heart's disquiet' [...] Psychological torment more than punishes Pietro; by the end of Act 4 it convinces him to renounce power and enact in deed his holy hermit disguise. But these cues for a non-tragic ending are strained by what goes on between them, and *The Malcontent* severely tests its tragicomic struture. Mendoza's intentions are murderous, and this Senecan villain seems a natural product of the world Marston anatomizes" (p.246). Cf. also Robert Henke's discussion of Guarinian tragicomedy (which also has implications for my analysis of the theatrical metaphor in *The Malcontent* below) in "'Gentleman-like Tears': Affective Response in Italian Tragicomedy and Shakespeare's Late Plays", in *Comparative Literature Studies*, vol.33, no.4, (1996), pp.327-349: "Tragicomedy does not discard but sublimates the historically-prior genre of tragedy, replacing the violent external actions of Senecan tragedy with various internal responses on

Malevole re-iterates when he exclaims to his confidant Celso, "What, play I well the free-breath'd discontent?" (I.4.31). The problematic I have described linking discontent to 'affect' is thus a *theatrical* one first and foremost, and its most important consequence is that Malevole/Alofront's revenge is effected through a number of long-standing discourses about mimesis – about the process of 'acting'.

One of these discourses crystallises out of the numerous texts, both social and satirical in provenance, which portray melancholy malcontentism as a feigned activity. I have discussed at an earlier point in this thesis those polemics which shared an agenda in exposing 'discontent' as either a self-serving pose or somehow related to the act of imitation. William Rankins' *The English Ape* (1588), for example, censured what it saw as a growing class of individuals who adopted Italian and other continental fashions.[17] Although nominally an anti-foreign tract, it was in fact closely concerned with more local anxieties about social imitation, or what the text described as the role of "secrete ambition" in promoting a desire for "outwarde ostentation". What emerged primarily from the tract was the sense of 'discontent' as a social performance, and other pamphlet writers of the period were quick to take up these associations and develop them. These could indeed involve a more overt deployment of an anti-foreign discourse, as in Robert Greene's well-known *Repentance* of 1592. "At my return into England," Greene writes, after relating his sojourns in Italy and France,

> I ruffeled out in my silks, in the habit of *Malcontent*, and seemed so discontent that no place would please me to abide in, nor no vocation cause mee to stay my selfe in.[18]

The key problematic here – one which appears to sidle into the text almost as an afterthought – is the admission of a practised 'seeming' in the author's manifestation of "discontent".[19] By the time Marston came to write *The Malcontent*, then, there was

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the part of the 'internall audience': characters within a play who function as audience members to other characters and actions" (p.334).

[17] William Rankins, *The English Ape*, p.9.

[18] Quoted in Zera S. Fink, "Jaques and the Malcontent Traveler" in *Philological Quarterly*, 14 (1935), 237-252; 245.

[19] Marston himself made use of similar language in his portrayal of an Italianated traveller in the 1598 volume of *Satires*:

> Look, look, with what a discontented grace
> Bruto the traveller doth sadly pace
> 'Long Westminster! O civil-seeming shade,

already a well-established discourse which constructed 'discontent' through the rhetoric of surface 'seeming', and denied to it anything more than the status of a pose. This discourse did not feature very prominently in *theatrical* representations up to that time: as my discussion of academic and satirical drama has suggested, 'discontent' was deployed in the plays more usually as a characteristic of the scholar- or philosopher-satirist, and as such could be used to represent a legitimately-motivated grievance against the world. But with the growth of humoral comedy in the first decade of the 1600's and its availability for crossing with a revitalised genre of revenge, established tropes such as the revenger's melancholy and the adoption of disguise could be re-drawn as aspects of the 'posed' discontent portrayed by the satirists.

One important dramatic consequence of representing Malevole's discontent as performative is the opposition which is opened up between itself and a genuine (i.e. unfeigned) *melancholy*. The Duke Pietro's melancholy comprises an aspect of this opposition, one which I will discuss in more detail below, but it gets its principal manifestation in the scenes in which Malevole speaks in his alter ego, the deposed Duke Altofront. At the mid-point of the play, as the intrigue of Mendoza reaches its acme and the destitution of Genoa's dukedom appears irreversible, Altofront enters and delivers a soliloquy (albeit not quite *solus* – the machinery of state continues to hum in the background as the seasoned courtier Bilioso "*reads his patent*"):

> I cannot sleep; my eyes' ill-neighbouring lids
> Will hold no fellowship. O thou pale sober night,
> Thou that in sluggish fumes all sense dost steep,
> Thou that gives all the world full leave to play,
> Unbend'st the feebled veins of sweaty labour;
> The galley-slave, that all the toilsome day
> Tugs at his oar against the stubborn wave,
> Straining his rugged veins, snores fast;
> The stooping scythe-man, that doth barb the field,
> Thou mak'st wink sure. In night all creatures sleep;
> Only the malcontent, that 'gainst his fate
> Repines and quarrels, alas! he's goodman tell-clock;
> His sallow jaw-bones sink with wasting moan;

Mark his sad colours! – how demurely clad!
[...]
What art thou but black clothes? Sad Bruto, say,
Art anything but only sad array? (quoted in Fink, "Jaques", pp.245-6).

Whilst others' beds are down, his pillow's stone.[20]

The speech seems almost consciously to reprise the weary prince motif by evoking in form, tone, and even surrounding stage-business the King's speech at a similar dramatic locus in *2 Henry IV*.[21] In Altofront's version, however, the princely insomnia is evoked in language which carries more physiological than moral weight. Perhaps most strikingly, many of the key terms which are utilised recall Malevole's own imprecations upon Pietro in the opening act of the play. The reference to the malcontent's "sallow jaw-bones" and wasting frame, the assault which is registered on the very possibilities of sleep, all serve to bring Altofront within the same ambit of bodily desiccation and spiritual exhaustion that he himself has inflicted on the usurping Duke. What has thus been achieved in terms of the representation of Altofront's real and feigned personas, I would argue, is a sharply-drawn theatrical distinction between a satiric discourse of 'discontent' and a medically-inflected discourse of melancholia. Melancholy is accordingly fixed as the one emotion in the play which truly subsists outside the notion of 'affectation' and which represents a private, interior state of person-hood set off from all the other performed affects in the play.[22]

If melancholy serves to define a 'true' Malevole distinct from his dissembled persona, it also serves to characterise the play's principle victim of the dissembling practices of others, Duke Pietro. As I have suggested above, Pietro's melancholy is produced through Malevole's agency as a requisite of the latter's vengeance upon the man who dispossessed him of his dukedom. As the plot unfolds, Malevole's recovery of that dukedom is increasingly foregrounded as a positive objective, but at the outset only the negative one of the torture and destruction of the Duke's soul is offered:

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[20] *The Malcontent*, III.ii.1-14.

[21] See *2 Henry IV*, ed. by A.R. Humphreys, Arden (London: Routledge, 1966; 1996), III.1.4-31. Henry's speech is preceded by the delivery of letters to a page, an act which may have provided the dramatic progenitor to Bilioso's peripheral letter-reading.

[22] The fact that melancholy is not explicitly cited in the speech, and its symptoms referred only to "the malcontent", does not, I think, prejudice this reading, since 'malcontentism' encompasses both Malevole/Altofront's real and performed discourses whilst at the same time maintaining their separation. As soon as he has delivered his melancholy soliloquy, for example, Malevole notices Bilioso and is compelled, just as he had been in an earlier exchange, to 'shift' his discourse into another, affected mode of discontented railing: *The Malcontent*, I.4.44 SD: "*Bilioso entering, Malevole shifteth his speech.*" It is also noticeable that while the early text of *The Malcontent*, which was performed exclusively by the boy's company, carefully differentiates between melancholy and discontent, the additional scenes supplied for the Chamberlain's Company collapse them together unproblematically: they twice refer to Duke Pietro as "discontented", for example, on the second

Duke, I'll torment thee; now my just revenge
From thee than crown a richer gem shall part:
Beneath God, naught's so dear as a calm heart. (I.3.170-2.)

The dramatic opposition this scenario generates between protagonist and antagonist is an unusual one within the revenge genre. For while the melancholy revenger was a common enough theatrical trope – and one through which Malevole/Altofront himself was constructed – the linking of melancholy with the revenge *victim* has less obvious precedents.[23]

This distinctive mode of revenge represents, I would suggest, *The Malcontent*'s special contribution to the genre, the particular 'turn' it gives to the existing configuration of revenge tropes. Such a claim can best be supported by comparing the conduct of Malevole's revenge to that of the other revenge actions which make up the play's web of intrigues. Fredson Bowers speaks of the plot of *The Malcontent* as the development of a "dramatic complication by a multiplicity of revenges working against one another", in which "the central situation [...] is likely to be lost in the whirl of largely extraneous intrigue".[24] It may be more profitable, however, to see the "extraneous" revenge actions of Pietro and Mendoza as working to set off the one which is pursued by Malevole. Pietro's revenge against Ferneze (which supplants his initial action against Mendoza) dominates the first half of the play, and ends with the Duchess' new favourite being cut down by her old – Mendoza – as he is pursued from her

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occasion following this with the analogy "and more melancholic than a usurer having all his money out at the death of a Prince." See *The Malcontent*, I.8.11-12; III.1.133-4.

[23] One might point to the recent *Hamlet* as a possible precursor, where the hero's actions in staging *The Mousetrap* and in slaying Polonius eventually drive the King into a state of "discord and dismay". In another suggestive parallel between the plays, when Hamlet finds Claudius attempting to purge his soul at prayer in the aftermath of the staged play, he refuses to despatch his victim, preferring to wait for a less hallowed occasion when the King's soul can be sent to its destruction in Hell. But there are important differences between *The Malcontent* and *Hamlet* in the way these figures are integrated into the wider revenge narrative. In *Hamlet*, the affliction of the King with melancholy is an inadvertent by-product of Hamlet's revenge: it provides an ironic counterpart to the protagonist's melancholy – the translation of a subjective state of pain onto the character who in narrative terms is ultimately responsible for it – but it does nothing more than that. (In this, again, there are parallels with the even more recent *Othello*, where the jealousy inflicted on the protagonist by Iago reproduces the sufferings which Iago blames on Othello for inflicting on him). In *The Malcontent*, by contrast, the production of melancholy in Pietro is the expressed intent of Malevole and provides the principle focus of his revenge. Similarly, the later play makes a direct link between this production of melancholy and the destruction of the antagonist's soul, a link which is never articulated in *Hamlet*. In *Hamlet*, revenge remains a primarily physical act, to be achieved by the sword first and damnation after.

[24] See Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, p.131.

bedchamber. The activity represented on stage is of a savagely physical quality which successfully generates the sense of terror required for a fully tragic response through its combination of a night-time setting, the victim's vulnerability as he enters "*in his shirt*", and the cruelty of the trap into which he is driven. Such physicality is sustained even after the murder is committed: Ferneze's fallen body remains centre stage throughout, guarded by Mendoza as part of his scheme to regain the Duchess' favour. The scene's brutal assault on the body is partly necessitated as an exaction of power upon the errant subject, the price demanded of the petty courtier in exchange for his adultery in high places. But it also reflects upon the quality of the revenger himself: Pietro is distinguished from Malevole precisely by the grosser, more sensual character of his vengeance, one directed at erasing the physical traces of his rival rather than correcting moral enormities in the state.

The Duke indicates in a speech before the murder that his revenge will be ordered along the twin axes of "death and shame", to be inflicted upon Ferneze and Aurelia respectively. It is noticeable from this formulation that while the demise of Ferneze is to be written in blood, Pietro shrinks from physical retribution against his wife, embracing instead a mode of revenge which operates by inflicting sorrow, and which thus echoes the strategy used upon himself by Malevole. As the context makes clear, however, this course is chosen not out of any desire for the spiritual reformation of Aurelia but out of a continued sensual attachment towards her from which the Duke is unable to wrest himself free. The play works hard to underline the point that a revenge so motivated can bring Pietro little satisfaction. Indeed, in the same speech which prefixes the assault on Ferneze he articulates a heavy melancholy engendered by his own sense of implication in the disgrace he is about to bring upon her:

> I strike; but yet, like him that 'gainst stone walls
> Directs his shafts, rebounds in his own face,
> My lady's shame is mine, O God, 'tis mine! (II.3.57-9.)

Thus, although Pietro's revenge has none of the Machiavellian quality of Mendoza's covert but vastly more destructive impulses against Duke, Duchess and Ferneze together (see the latter's speech at II.1.13ff.), it is of a piece with it in manifesting a merely personal satisfaction as its rationale. The difference between a revenge that touches the body and one which touches the soul is implicitly reinforced through a speech by

Malevole at the scene's close. As Ferneze unexpectedly revives and groans for a surgeon – at once transforming a perceived tragic scenario into a platform for tragicomic sentiment – Malevole delivers the following homily to him:

> Thy shame more than thy wounds do grieve me far:
> "Thy wounds but leave upon thy flesh some scar;
> "But fame ne'er heals, still rankles worse and worse;
> "Such is of uncontrollèd lust the curse.
> [...]
> "Then, thou that shame respects, O, fly converse
> "With women's eyes and lisping wantonness!
> [...]
> Come, I'll convey thee to a happy port,
> Where thou shalt live (O happy man) from court. (II.v.146ff.)

Despite the moralising strain of this *contemptus mundi* lecture I think it is possible to suggest that the play's distinctive privileging of a spiritual over a bodily revenge owed less to an ethical than to a theatrical problematic – or at least that the former category was subordinate to a set of discourses, currently in circulation, which were associated with the latter. This set of discourses drew on a mixture of familiar, native anti-theatrical polemics and foreign theoretical defences of the new genre of tragicomedy – especially those by the writer who took most credit for its development in the early modern period, Giambattista Guarini. I suggested above that the traditional designation of *The Malcontent* as a tragicomedy (one which begins with the listing of the play in the Stationer's Register as "An Enterlude called *the Malecontent Tragiecomedia*") probably reflects the expedient adoption of an available classificatory scheme rather than an intentional generic move on the author's part. The play's formal qualities, I would maintain, are primarily those of the revenge narrative, with the tragicomic elements interlaced in the form of sentiments taken from Guarini's own *Il pastor fido* (translated into English by John(?) Dymock in 1602, but available in the Italian considerably earlier). But a further and, I would suggest, more important contribution to the play's deep-structure of meaning is that made by tragicomic *theory*. This is manifested by the translation into performative terms of two separate theoretical discourses concerned with *audience response*: one dealing with the purgation of melancholy through comedy,

the other with the production through tragedy of a laudable terror of the soul's death and its differentiation from an ignoble fear of the body's.[25]

I have spoken in an earlier chapter about the problematic which existed within both tragicomic theory and anti-theatrical discourse about the production of melancholy in a mimetic context (see the discussion on Guarini in ch.4). Although in the examples I have quoted here the notion of a 'produced' melancholy signified only within discourse about *audiences*, it could, in combination with another strand of argument taken from Guarini's *Compendium*, be pressed into the kind of *narrative* service I described earlier in *The Malcontent*, where the production of melancholy became an aspect of revenge within the fiction itself. This second strand of argument emerges with the substantial efforts made in the *Compendium* to provide a definition for the troublesome concept of tragic purgation in Aristotle's *Poetics* (a curious investment of argumentative energy given Guarini's overall dismissal of this concept's relevance). As indicated above, the idea of 'purging' – in the sense of removing – the emotions of pity and fear was inimical to Christian philosophy, and many ingenious suggestions were put forward in Italian sixteenth-century literary criticism in order to square this particular theoretical circle.[26] Guarini's own solution was to resort once more to the rhetoric of humoral theory and to read tragic purgation in the context of a 'cleansing' of internal states. The physician did not, as Guarini argued, attempt to remove an unruly humour from the subject altogether, but aimed rather to bring it back to its proper proportion within the body.[27] In medical terms this was simply a case of drawing off the excessive humour, either by phlebotomy or the administration of an emetic, but how could this principle be articulated in the case of the tragic emotions, fear and pity?

Guarini provided a unique solution to this question: the emotion of terror, he suggested, could be 'cleansed' by tragedy only if our ignoble fears of the *body's* destruction are driven out by those fears of the *soul's* destruction which are aroused in us by the fiction:

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[25] In the terms adopted from Aristotle by Guarini, these would correspond to the architectonic (i.e. audience-related) and the instrumental (i.e. representational) modes. See the discussion of these terms in chapter 4, above.
[26] See the summary provided by Hathaway in *Age of Criticism*, pt.3 "Catharsis: A New Implement".
[27] Guarini, "Compendium", in Gilbert, *Literary Criticism*, p.516.

> What is, then, the purging terror of tragedy? It is terror of internal death, which, excited in the spirit of the spectator by the image of what is represented, interprets the injurious evil tendency because of the likeness that one fear has with another. Then reason, which is the nature and first principle of the life of the spirit, abhorring the bad tendency as its capital enemy and opponent, drives it out, leaving behind only the beneficial fear of infamy and internal death, which is the foundation of virtue [...] In this, then, consists all the business of tragedy, which, presenting before us the terrible as it may appear in the death of the spirit, teaches us to have no fear of that of the body, and makes us perceive within ourselves the force of justice, because of which we see that the persons of tragedy, when they are tormented in spirit, are unaware of the torments of the body and have no fear of death.[28]

This idea of an "internal death" is not made specific in Guarini's argument and is for the most part used metaphorically, variously encompassing the threats of social infamy, spiritual torment and (in a subsequent, suggestive passage) madness. He only gives one substantial example from the classics to support his contention: the sorrow of Oedipus in Sophocles' tragedy, a sorrow which is directed not at the loss of worldly goods – kingdom, royal estate, etc. – but at the "horror" and "infamy" of his parricide and incest. There is little need for Guarini to prove his own theory too rigorously, however, since his discussion of tragedy largely represents a detour en route to his discussion of tragicomedy. Nor does he make any attempt to correlate his claims about tragic purgation with those he has already suggested for tragicomedy. Indeed, 'purgation' as a whole drops out of his argument somewhat, with the effects of tragicomedy referred solely to the delight produced by the narrative rather than to any return on emotional investment. Nonetheless, we should not underestimate the importance of the theoretical move made by Guarini in making "internal death" the object of tragic terror. It helped bring about a shift in the value attached to the sufferings undergone by the physical body in the tragic narrative, de-emphasising them in favour of an idea of subjective destruction brought about through such intangibles as infamy and grief.

These two discourses, one revolving around the production of melancholy, the other around the affliction of internal death, formed independent aspects of Guarini's theory of audience response at the end of the sixteenth century. With the exception of a single allusion to Sophocles' *Ajax*, when Guarini speaks of the protagonist as being "tormented by infamy alone, into which he appears to have fallen by a madness that is

[28] Guarini, "Compendium", in Gilbert, *Literary Criticism*, pp.517-8.

the death of the spirit", a link between the two discourses, where melancholy would be described in the language of internal death or vice versa, is never hinted at.[29] And yet it is precisely such a link, I would suggest, that is made through the revenge narrative of *The Malcontent*. Appropriating these discourses and reworking them in performative terms, the play also combines them in its depiction of the relationship between the revenger Malevole and his victim Pietro. Malevole's first soliloquy begins by explicitly predicating his revenge on the production of a soul-killing melancholy in the Duke (see I.3.156ff). These first five lines of the soliloquy make a clear connection between melancholy and the breaking of heart's peace which Malevole seeks. This strategy retains, moreover, some flavour of its origins in an anti-theatrical discourse about the melancholic effects of mimesis, since Malevole attributes its success to the license afforded him by the use of an "affected strain" (I.3.170ff.). In other words Malevole (who is in any case the disguised Duke Altofront) takes the part of the tragic actor in setting out to generate a response of melancholy in his hearer. At this early stage of the narrative Malevole appears as an alarming and amoral figure in the familiar tradition of the classic revenger, except that the mode of revenge he operates favours the destruction of the spirit rather than the body. It is only in later scenes that Malevole displays his desire to reform Pietro's soul rather than bring the process of its annihilation to conclusion. In a development which again echoes the trajectory taken by the discourse of theatrical melancholy in Guarini and Rankins, Malevole urges Pietro and subsequently Aurelia to alleviate their woes through the adoption of a life of prayer and sequestration from the vanities of the world.

It is this latter turn towards a comic rather than a tragic ending, whereby the revenge narrative ends in a combination of the expulsion of the primary antagonist (Mendoza), reformation of the sinful (Pietro and Aurelia), and restoration of the dukedom, which most suggests that *The Malcontent* represents, in G.K. Hunter's words, "Marston's programmatic attempt to reconstruct [the] genre [of tragicomedy] in English".[30] What I have attempted to argue here, however, is that the play represents less an effortful *application* of tragicomic theory than an appropriation of its discourses about melancholic affect for narrative ends. The tragic aspect of the spectacle may still arouse melancholy, but that process of arousal is no longer oriented towards the

[29] Guarini, "Compendium", in Gilbert, *Literary Criticism*, p.518.
[30] See G.K. Hunter's intro. to *The Malcontent*, p.lxii.

audience. Rather, it is absorbed within the narrative itself: melancholy is shown to be valuable in exciting the fear of 'internal death' amongst the weak and the wicked characters of the play. When we next see Pietro after his attempted revenge upon Ferneze, for example, his desire for withdrawal and physical death have deepened, being voiced through such recognisable melancholic similes as that of the wounded deer in flight. His melancholy even extends to a desire to rid himself of his onerous emotional state by surfeiting on it, a way of troping his disease which (although the form of words is taken directly from *Il Pastor Fido*) carries a similar cast to Orsino's opening speech in *Twelfth Night*:

> I am not much unlike to some sick man
> That long desirèd hurtful drink; at last
> Swills in and drinks his last, ending at once
> Both life and thirst. (III.1.11)

In this case, it is not love that supplies the "hurtful drink" but the knowledge of his wife's infidelity impressed upon him by Malevole at the start of the play. In thus linking back to the origin of Pietro's melancholy in a revenge action instituted against his own soul, the play's primary problematic about the greater risk posed by the threat of 'internal death' is reinforced. As Pietro goes on to lament:

> would I had ne'er known
> My own dishonour! Good God, that men should
> Desire to search out that which, being found, kills all
> Their joy of life! to taste the tree of knowledge,
> And then be driven from out Paradise! (III.1.14)

Layered onto this post-Lapsarian emphasis on the acknowledgement of sin and moral choice, however, there is a further rejection of the traditional solace offered by the philosophy of Seneca, who in Pietro's view "writ of Temperance and Fortitude, yet lived like a voluptuous epicure, and died like an effeminate coward" (III.1.26). While the sentiment expressed here is explicitly anti-stoic, I would suggest that it also introduces – in theatrical terms – an anti-tragic emphasis as well. A volume of Seneca was a favoured prop in staging the scene of the melancholy revenger debating weighty themes, the prime example being Hieronimo's quotation of a hodgepodge of Senecan maxims from the "*book*" he brings on the stage in III.13 of *The Spanish Tragedy*. To have Seneca himself so roundly rejected in the context of a discussion with Bilioso

about the books (or "Lozenges") prescribed for the melancholy heart is to undermine not just Seneca's philosophy (the accepted practice in revenge narratives) but the specific theatrical discourse which allied him to tragedy in the first place. Along with his increased recognition of the spiritual decay which has taken hold over him, Pietro now also initiates a wider turning away from the trajectory of the tragic genre.

That trajectory is now geared instead towards the expulsion of those melancholic affects which are responsible for the 'internal deaths' of the key characters. Again, this process mirrors in narrative terms the management of audience affect which is described in Guarini's writings on dramatic theory. Having generated in Pietro one of the powerful emotions associated with tragedy, Malevole repositions himself in the latter half of the play as an expunger of melancholy from the diseased souls in the court of Genoa. This process is achieved not by propelling the narrative towards the traditionally destructive terminus of tragedy but by achieving its desired end in terms of audience response – a purgation of baser affections by higher ones – through encouraging a rejection of the life of the body amongst the wicked and the weak in his erstwhile dukedom. From the central turning point of Ferneze's recovery the play's central characters display a range of actions and responses which highlight the necessity of attending to the welfare of their souls above all other considerations. Pietro's is the earliest and most pronounced articulation of this problem, but it is manifested later in the case of Aurelia after her betrayal and banishment at the hands of Mendoza. Aurelia's later expressions of remorse mingled with absolute despair of future redemption in IV.5. seem disconcertingly swift given the obvious contrast with her levity during the news of her husband's 'suicide' earlier in the scene. It is possible to argue, however, that her despair is merely the obverse of her repeated calls for music and dancing as the announcement of the Duke's death is made – the 'manic' pole of a behavioural complex which could be constructed as the product of melancholy.[31] Aurelia's swing from levity into the utter despair of the social outcast thus describes the replacement of one melancholic state by another, at which point she is reunited (unknowingly) with her outcast and equally melancholic husband. Not only does she, in

[31] A specific form of melancholy – the St. Vitus' Dance – was recognised in the period as being productive of wild and incessant dancing, and was discussed by Burton in his *Anatomy* as the "lascivious" dance (1.1.1.4). Although not restricted to women, female examples of the disease are the only ones cited by Burton, so it seems likely that a set of associations had become available uniting

the manner of the penitent, address her thoughts solely to the spotted condition of her soul (5-6), but this pressing concern now provides the defining metaphor for her relationship with the husband she thinks dead:

> As the soul loves the body, so loved he;
> 'Twas death to him to part my presence,
> Heaven to see me pleased.
> Yet I, like to a wretch given o'er to hell,
> Brake all the sacred rites of marriage,
> To clip a base ungentle faithless villain,
> [...]
> For whom I lost soul, body, fame and honour. (IV.5.32)

This strongly-gendered image of a disjunction between the (masculine) soul and the (feminine) wanton body sets up a complex and resonant theatrical moment. On the one hand, that process of divorce may be said to have had its issue in the melancholic sufferings manifested by both characters on stage: a powerful performative reworking of that particular trope of soul and body disunited which I have been concerned to trace throughout this thesis. On the other hand, the fact that both parties are reunited here, even if they cannot make themselves fully known to one another, points towards an overcoming of their internally-diseased states by the conclusion of the play. This again, however, depends on the ability of Malevole, the "pitiful surgeon", to extract a key confession from Pietro about the injustice of his usurpation, which he begins to do as soon as Aurelia leaves the stage. Confronted by an image of the world which is the "only grave and Golgotha wherein all things that live must rot", Pietro renounces all further claim to the dukedom he stole from Altofront and commits himself to the life of a solitary, before Malevole finally reveals himself to be Altofront and gathers all parties together for the final revenge action.

Although with this scene Altofront now steps out of the theatrical persona of Malevole which he has employed to exacerbate the melancholy of the principle characters, the organising trope of theatricality is retained for the final part of the play which sees the expulsion of Mendoza along with the sorrows suffered by the chief characters. *The Malcontent* fulfils its revenge narrative trajectory by concluding with a masque in which the disguised revengers set upon the antagonist, although in this

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discourses about the frenetic (and strictly physical) aspects of melancholy, dancing and morbid female

instance the spectacular bloodshed which characterised the fully tragic examples of the genre (including Marston's own *Antonio's Revenge*) is averted. Immediately prior to this act of deposition and restoration, however, the masque is used to reunite Pietro and Altofront with their sorrowing wives (who at this point long only for death). The men indicate their identities to the women from behind their masks, thus ensuring that the driving out of grief in favour of joy is effected within a strictly performative context. The play therefore draws towards its conclusion on a note which goes some way towards countervailing the anti-theatrical connotations of Malevole's 'affected' persona and its function in generating melancholy in others. As the tragic possibilities of visiting death and revenge upon Mendoza are gainsaid so too are those darker associations which have been allowed to proliferate around the general practice of playing. At the same time, however, this partial recovery of theatrical performance from an association with melancholy must be made consistent with the play's construction of a value-system which depends upon a rejection not only of the life of the body but also of the popular addiction to the surfaces, or mere appearances of power. Altofront's concluding speech over the prone figure of Mendoza emphasises the dangers attendant upon the theatricality of rule, and the necessity of the prince's ability to maintain a clear division between self and role:

> O, they that are as great as be their sins,
> Let them remember that th'inconstant people
> Love many princes merely for their faces
> And outward shows; and they do covet more
> To have a sight of these than of their virtues.
> Yet thus much let the great ones still conceit
> When they observe not Heaven's imposed conditions,
> They are no kings, but forfeit their commissions. (V.6.142)

The concluding lines, with their potentially dangerous repudiation of claims to a divinely ordained and unassailable kingship, appear to accept the notion that the abuses of power which its gorgeous shows often functioned to conceal are beyond human capacity to discern. Only heaven can penetrate the truth which lies beneath them, and hence theatricality itself must be accepted as an unavoidable feature of earthly power. The danger such theatricality poses, therefore, lies more in the threat of the prince's subsumption beneath his own role rather than any challenge it might invite from an

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sexuality.

earthly source of redress. If this negation of the idea of resistance from a human source seems to contradict much of what has transpired in the development of the plot, with its joining of aggrieved revengers with a populace increasingly hostile to Mendoza's rule, it is worth remembering that the play has in fact de-prioritised the role of human agency in its story of revenge and restoration. At several key reversals in the narrative, when events begin to turn in favour of Altofront's campaign to regain his dukedom, it is made clear that their impetus for change has come *from without.* At III.3 Celso arrives with news that the "staggering multitude" already begins to loathe their favouritism of Pietro, while at the revelation of everyone's true identities after Pietro's renunciation of regency, Altofront explicitly attributes the turn of events to the operation of "Providence". On the one hand this delineation of a divine rather than a human ordering of revenge underwrites the world-view repeatedly stressed via Malevole's descriptions of it as "the only region of death, the greatest shop of the devil" – as a place, that is, where only cruel and petty actions and motives can be expected from its human inhabitants. On another level, however, this emphasis on a divinely-guided revenge action acts as a riposte to those more fully-mimetic theatrical modes which worked out their narratives of revenge according to the interplay of specifically human desires and deeds. Just as *The Malcontent* opposes itself to other examples of its genre by emphasising a spiritual over a physical form of revenge action, so too does it prioritise a divine and externally-driven narrative logic over a humanly-ordered one.

It is in this latter sense of a repudiation of theatrical mimesis that I would suggest *The Malcontent*'s complex interweaving of discourses about melancholy and performance can be most usefully conceptualised. I have suggested at an earlier point in this section that melancholy serves as the one emotion in this play which subsists outside the demarcations of 'affect'. It provides a veridical emotion, painful and privately articulated, against which the falsified emotions of the other characters – including Malevole's own discontent – can be set. Yet it is also this one emotion which is ultimately to be purged from the play's characters as inimical to the life of the individual soul and the wider health of the polity. The spiritual malaise which has infected the court and which by the end of the play has become endemic is finally driven out through a moment of performance, but it is especially important that this performance is not so much Malevole's successful mimesis of a malcontent, but the communal performance of a masque – a medium far more concerned with symbolic

than with mimetic modes of representation. In making the masque the setting for the final expulsion of all negative affects *The Malcontent* is not just unthinkingly following the revenge template: it is also privileging a particular (and highly artificial) mode of representation over one which stressed the subsumption of the actor beneath the role and the demands of realism.

In many respects this sums up a general representational strategy deployed throughout the play. Critics have noted its frequently insouciant attitude to decorum in terms of action and of character, and the play's concern to "distance or 'place' poetic effects by the self-conscious mode of presentation, which draws attention to manner rather than matter".[32] Such strategies mesh not just with the satiric components in the verse and dialogue, but with a wider sense of cultural difference between modes of playing and of playhouse which I have described above as having been articulated by Marston and the boy companies. This is not to say that the masque in *The Malcontent* is in any degree representative of a boy player repertoire (although it may quite accurately characterise Marston's membership of that coterie circle of writers – including Jonson and Chapman – who wrote for these court entertainments). It does, however, point up a shared adherence to an allegorical, artificial and self-referential style of performance which could be usefully distinguished from the mimeticism associated with the public companies. The play's dismissive attitude towards maintaining the fiction is evident throughout, as key dramatic moments are often undermined by the use of a verbal or physical flourish which highlights the worn theatricality underlying them. Indeed, this attitude survives to the very end, as Altofront finally dismisses the company with the injunction "[t]he rest of idle actors idly part". This, I would suggest, is no mere winding up of theatrical proceedings with a formulaic attempt to ingratiate the performers with the audience by breaking through the fiction and making each aware of the other. It includes a wry value-judgement on the "idle" business of playing itself, most specifically as that adjective qualifies the "actors" or professional performers who supplied the familiar target of boy player satire, and whom the performers of *The Malcontent* are momentarily allowed to become. Moreover, in providing one of the many available synonyms for madness in this period, the term "idle" can encompass more than just a comment about the productive worth of the actor's profession: it can

[32] *The Malcontent*, intro, p.lxxix.

also help to reinforce these implied distinctions between professional (i.e. adult player) and pseudo-amateur (i.e. child actor) modes of performance. Melancholy is expelled from the play along with the idle (perhaps even idolatrous?) actors whose elaborate deceptions of one another within the narrative have ultimately failed to bring about their much-anticipated internal deaths, although many of course have been brought near to them.

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General Conclusion

A discussion of *The Malcontent* provides a fitting end-piece to this thesis, since the play can be seen as drawing together many of those disparate threads of theatrical practice which I have claimed were integral to the formation of a counter-mimetic mode on the early modern stage in England. This mode, I have suggested, can be associated especially (but not exclusively) with the early plays of John Marston, and can be described in terms of a specifically 'melancholic' performativity. That is, it utilises tropes derived from a specialist medical and philosophical literature about melancholy to promote a new construction of the performing body in a rapidly-changing theatrical environment. *The Malcontent* registers both the contours of this new construction of the body and the changes in theatrical practice which contributed to that body's consolidation on the early modern stage. Those changes, as I have described them above, included the revival of the boy companies after a decade's absence and an increased emphasis on satiric and revenge themes in the drama of both adult and child actor performance milieus. In the instance of *The Malcontent* it can be seen that these genre-specific themes were brought together to particularly potent dramatic effect, and that the commercial transposition of the play from a child actors' to an adult company stage indicates a successful accomodation of the new theatrical context across two different dramatic idioms.

The Malcontent also indicates, however, that the newly-developed approach to the performing body which I have outlined in this thesis underwent a shift as the counter-mimetic mode became adopted in the plays of the private theatres. In the early phase of plays for the Paul's boys the array of melancholic character-types served as the backdrop to a dissociation of the performing body from the plays' dramatic and poetic discourse, most strikingly instanced in the figure of the melancholy Antonio from the *Antonio* plays. Bound up with such a process of dissociation were allusions to specific gestural codes associated with then-current amphitheatre performing styles and a barrage of meta-theatrical references to the young performers themselves. These allusions served both to foreground the company's principal performative assets and to render in harsher tones the acting style of the adult players. By the time of *The*

Malcontent, however, this specifically theatrical, performer-oriented use of the body-soul trope had become more thematically integrated into the play. The discourse of melancholy now works not as a means of alienating the body in performance terms but of privileging a particular kind of revenge action over the physicality of an earlier, outmoded tradition. To this extent, and following a pattern generally visible in the private theatre plays of this period, the early experimental works of the boy companies increasingly give way to a less pointedly self-referential theatrical form, so that by the time of later writers such as Middleton the presence of the boys themselves beneath their roles is barely if ever registered.[1] This process, however, had not yet been fully consolidated in Marston's *The Malcontent*, so that while the physical presence of the boy actors is understated throughout, the linking of a discourse of melancholy to a boy player interrogation of mimesis is nonetheless retained as part of the play's thematic structure.

In this concluding section I want to touch briefly on the possibility that this linkage of melancholy to a revaluation of mimesis is the principal legacy of the 'melancholic' performativity I have been tracing hitherto. If the strictly formal properties associated with the theatrical articulation of this mode are gradually subsumed beneath the poetic and thematic aspects of the plays, then there remain numerous instances in the later Jacobean drama where the discourse of melancholy serves to problematize the performing body. Lynn Enterline's discussion of anti-theatrical discourse in *The Duchess of Malfi* and its construction of melancholy as a form of playhouse contagion is a case in point. Such an association of ideas would not, I suggest, have been a fully meaningful one without the innovations of Marston and his company of young actors in the early years after their revival. Their drawing together of an already substantial body of discourses about the social and medical construction of melancholy, and their integration of these discourses into a theatrical stance which often stridently opposed the status of the professional actor, constituted a way of appropriating anti-playhouse rhetoric for theatrical ends. The difference between Marstonian and Websterian examples, I would argue, is that in the case of Marston's new company a specifically commercial rationale can be identified which is lacking in the case of Webster's later play.

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[1] See Reavley Gair, *The Children of Paul's: the Story of a Theatre Company, 1553-1608* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.154.

It is also worth considering how far the legacy of a melancholic performativity may have impacted upon the *representation* of melancholy, both within the drama and more widely within medical discourse itself. To take the second of these contingencies first, one can point to a general increase in what might be termed the theatricalization of medical works in the years subsequent to 1599, as the modish attention to the forms of 'humoral' behaviour canvassed on stage were absorbed into the specialist texts. A case in point is provided by Thomas Walkington's *The Optick Glasse of Hvmors*, published in 1607. The text makes unabashed use of theatrical metaphors, for example in the acknowledgement in "The Epistle to the Reader" that "*the* Paracelsian *will utterly condemne my endeauour for bringing the foure Humours on the stage again, they hauing hist them off so long ago*".[2] Such an admission seems to hint intriguingly that what is current on the stage is no longer *de rigueur* in medical theory, almost allowing that humoral theory now attains its primary cultural capital as an entertainment form. The recourse to theatre analogy, moreover, is given additional edge by the incorporation of a satiric idiom into the preface. The title-page itself, for example, promises to show the canonical four temperaments "*succinctly painted forth, and their externall intimates laide open to the purblinde eye of ignorance it selfe*": a personification and vilification of 'ignorance' which is reminiscent of turn-of-the-century satire. The satiric tone is sustained in the "Epistle to the Reader" when the author anticipates the censure his work will undergo by the general "Criticke eye" and warns against "misconstruing my meaning", etc: a technique adopted by the stage satirists Marston and Jonson in prefacing their latest plays. In thus adapting the tropes of satire to its medical theme I would suggest that, in addition to employing a theatrical discourse, the text is drawing even more closely on the *counter-mimetic* tradition which I have associated with the boy player drama of the early seventeenth century.[3]

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[2] Thomas Walkington, *The Optick Glasse of Hvmors. Or The touchstone of a golden temperature, or the Philosophers stone to make a golden temper, Wherein the foure complections Sanguine, Cholericke, Phlegmaticke, Melancholicke are succinctly painted forth, and their externall intimates laid open to the purblind eye of ignorance it selfe, by which euery one may judge of what complection he is, and answerably lerne what is most sutable to his nature.* (London, 1607).

[3] The recourse to the anatomical metaphor in the first example – where the humours are to be "*laide open*" – further hints at the recursive, renewable nature of the exchange between medical and poetic discourses, since satire both on page and stage had itself drawn heavily from the rhetoric of dissection. The interplay between the two discursive fields has in a sense become a circular one, since medical discourse now receives back into its stock of tropes a construction of the body which it had itself helped to promote.

If *The Opticke Glasse*'s general discussion of the humours registers the impact of a counter-mimetic theatrical discourse, it also shows awareness of the body-soul problematic which I have foregrounded in my analysis of medical discussions of melancholy. On the one hand, *The Opticke Glasse* demonstrates a strong continuity with earlier works such as Lemnius' *The Touchstone of Complexions* (a continuity emphasised in Walkington's subtitle, *The touchstone of a golden temperature*, etc.). An orthodox Galenic philosophy stressing the close interconnection of body and soul, and the nutritional basis of their mutual disordering, is made evident throughout.[4] This even extends to the slipperiness of a metaphorical language which I identified in Lemnius: thus, humoral imbalance can threaten to "disable all the faculties both of soule and body", while ignorance of proper diet can render its sufferers "deade vnto the world, and their soules dead vnto themselues" and "bring dammagement both to [the body] and to the heauenly infused soule" (*The Opticke Glasse*, pp.4v-6r). In subsequent chapters, by contrast, a more scrupulous emphasis is placed on the argument that the soul is "impatible in regard of her substance" and that "beeing altogether immateriall" it is only affected (in a phrase reminiscent of Bright) "in respect of the instruments which are the hand-maids of the soule" (*The Opticke Glasse*, pp.9v-13r).

When the discussion turns to melancholy proper, *The Opticke Glasse* registers its awareness of the cult of philosophical originality around melancholy but also displays a marked scepticism towards such attempts at recuperation. Reviewing various arguments in favour of melancholics having "the most aspiring wits of all" *The Opticke Glasse* rejects such reasoning as "shallow" and insists that although "the melancholicke man by his contemplatiue facultie by his assiduitie of sad and serious meditation is a brocher of dangerous matchiauellisme, an inventor of stratagems, quirks, and pollicies" etc., true wit and brilliance ultimately belong with the sanguine complexion (*The Opticke Glasse*, 66r-66v.). The latter is defined as having "extemporary inuention [...] a pleasant conceit, a comicall jeast, a witty bourd [...] delightsome sentences, vernished phrases, quaint and gorgeous eloquution [...] an astounding Rhetoricall veine [...] a liuely grace in deliuery" etc. To some extent this opposition serves to uphold the strict logic of Galenic theory in which melancholy is required to occupy the lowest and most

[4] See for example, the discussion on p.2v of *The Opticke Glasse* onwards, and its insistence that "Nosce Teipsum" refers equally to body and soul, etc.

dangerous position amongst the four humours. At the same time, however it also works to translate the psychic discordances associated with the melancholic complexion into the kind of problematic about the relationship between body and discourse which I have suggested was being worked out on the boy player stages during the early 1600s. Melancholy is now set against precisely that rhetorical facility – extemporal wit, elegant pronunciation, matchless grace in delivery – which was characteristic of the body of the successful professional player.

Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621-) elaborates upon the strategy of beginning with a satirical preface which utilises the trope of *theatrum mundi.* The opening lines of "Democritus Junior to the Reader" request a pardon for this "antic or personate actor [...] that so insolently intrudes upon this common theatre to the world's view, arrogating another man's name".[5] The distinction here, of course, is that the satiric speaker now claims complete identification with the melancholy humorist who sometimes castigates, sometimes embodies the errors of a melancholic complexion. In her discussion of *The Anatomy* Bridget Lyons has drawn attention to Burton's extensive knowledge of the satiric works of the late 1590's and his ownership of a library containing both Marston and Joseph Hall's verse satires, as well as many plays by contemporary authors – among them Marston's *The Fawn.*[6] Indeed, Lyons sees strong affinities between aspects of Burton's own 'Democritus' persona and "Marston's type of satiric outlook" which embodies "the melancholy and disgusted man inveighing against evils that he knows cannot possibly be cured."[7] Her argument goes on to claim that Burton's satirical preface gives explicit shape and meaning to hints about the link between the satirist and mental imbalance that are only vaguely suggested in such Marstonian figures as Lampatho Doria. Hence in her view, Burton not only draws upon the works of Marston for those aspects of "the dramatic malcontent literature" which provided a complex, self-contradictory and multivalent satirical voice: he actually improves upon them.[8]

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[5] Burton, *Anatomy*, vol. I, p.1, ll.2-3.
[6] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.114-5.
[7] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.116-7.
[8] Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy*, p.121.

While it is tempting to agree with Lyons about a direct literary relationship between Marston and Burton, it needs to said that a work as inclusive as Burton's – in which all facets of human behaviour are ultimately construed as 'melancholy mad' – will inevitably throw up parallels with this or that type of individual satiric style. And there is of course much more to Burton's *Anatomy* than just the satirical preface (however pre-eminent that may have become in discussions of the literary value of the work). I find it preferable to view the larger impetus behind *The Anatomy* in terms of the remit adhered to by other medical works I have cited in this thesis: the admonishment to self-knowledge. The difference here, however, is that Burton inverts the trope, and produces a work of monumental and apparently indefinite scope to record the inevitable collapse of the 'nosce teipsum' project. Satire, melancholy and anatomy provide variable discourses which can function separately or in combination to articulate this theme. So to look in such a project for an influence from the stage is to ask how the process of mimesis is implicated in this disintegration of the effort to know the self. While *The Anatomy's* use of theatrical metaphor is as varied as anything else in the text, I think it is possible to point to a larger counter-mimetic than mimetic emphasis in the work, even allowing for the overt adoption of a theatrical persona at the start. Hence, for example, in reviewing the enormities which would drive a present-day Democritus to splenetic laughter, the Preface can cite the Protean or shape-changing habits of those who, seeking for self-advancement, make the self unknowable:

> To see so much difference betwixt words & deeds, so many parasanges betwixt tongue and heart, men like Stage-players act variety of parts, give good precepts to others, sore aloft, whilst they themselves grovell on the ground.[9]

The melancholy satirist here sets himself in opposition to a conception of playing which is comprehensively informed by the subtle anti-theatrical negotiations of the previous two decades. Not only is the rhetorical facility of the player now viewed as a medium for distortion and abuse, but (in a formula reminiscent of boy player constructions of performance) both word and deed, lofty ideal and material fact, have become irrevocably severed from one another.

[9] Burton, *Anatomy*, vol. I, p.52, ll.18-21.

I began this thesis with a discussion of John Ford's homage to Burton's *Anatomy* in *The Lover's Melancholy* of 1628, and I want to conclude by returning to the issue of the relationship between these two texts. By the time of the play's composition the set of exchanges between medical and theatrical discourses about melancholy might appear to have become an endlessly reciprocal one. Ford provides a marginal notation of Burton in the text of his play, Burton in turn finds a place for *The Lover's Melancholy* in his library, which thus itself becomes available as an additional textual source for the next edition of *The Anatomy*.[10] I argued in my introduction, however, that the play's seemingly contradictory constructions of melancholy – melancholy as exclusive to the mind on the one hand, melancholy as richly embodied on the other – owed as much to a theatrical as to a Burtonian problematic about the variegated nature of the disease. Over the course of this thesis I have attempted to trace this theatrical problematic back to divisions which were developing within the profession of playing itself, divisions which found their optimum mode of articulation in the master trope of a body which has undergone separation from the soul. The extent to which it is a purely theatrical criterion which constructs Palador's melancholy as "the mind's disease" and not "indisposition/Of body" is suggested by the specious nature of the attribution of this claim to "Democritus Junior". The Preface to Burton's *Anatomy*, whilst indeed describing melancholy as "a disease of the soule", rigorously upholds the essentially embodied character of this affliction throughout:

> Now this being a common infirmitie of Body and Soule, and such a one that hath as much need of Spirituall as a Corporall cure, I could not find a fitter taske to busy my selfe about, a more apposite Theame, so necessary, so commodious, and generally concerning all sorts of men, that should so equally participate of both, and require a whole Physitian.[11]

Such a confidently holistic, integrative conception of the suffering melancholic subject seems strikingly at odds with the sense of exclusivity claimed by Corax for his patient, and marks the point at which the close-knit exchanges I have traced between medical and theatrical discourse begin to unravel. The very moment in which playhouse fantasy and medical epitome acknowledge their rootedness in a shared cultural mythology about

[10] For the presence of Ford's play in Burton's library see Lyons, *Voices*, pp.114-5.
[11] Burton, *Anatomy*, vol. I, p.22, ll.20-1; 31ff.

melancholy is also the moment in which their respective ideologies of the self are shown to be furthest apart.

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