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The Repertory of the Rose: A Contribution to an Historical Materialist Critique of Early Modern English Drama

by

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ABSTRACT

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THE REPERTORY OF THE ROSE: A CONTRIBUTION TO AN HISTORICAL MATERIALIST CRITIQUE OF EARLY MODERN ENGLISH DRAMA

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Using the extant canon of the Rose theatre as its data set, this study proposes that early modern English drama articulated a contemporary consciousness of the social and economic changes taking place as a consequence of the transition to the nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production. In its analyses of those changes, this work draws attention to the ways in which early modern English drama let it be understood that the foundations of the emergent mode of production lay in social relations rather than market forces.

Having identified that conventional literary methodologies are unable to give a full account of the significance and influence of contemporary social and economic transformations, this inquiry turns to historical materialism as an explanatory force. Historical materialism recognises social being's determination of consciousness, and understands that changes in the means of production produce concomitant changes in social relations. This study argues that it is therefore the methodology best equipped to convey the full complexity of a shift in the mode of cultural as well as economic production in early modern England.

The work supports these contentions through its analysis of the representation of work, the money function, alcohol use, beggary, violence and class relations on the stage of the Rose theatre.

Contents

Acknowledgement

> You would do better, at least no worse, to obliterate texts than to blacken margins, to fill in the holes of words till all is blank and flat and the whole ghastly business looks like what it is, senseless, speechless, issueless misery.[1]

Some of the materials included in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 have appeared in a modified form in *Critical Survey*, *New Theatre Quarterly*, *The English Review*, and *The European English Messenger*. Elements of several of the chapters were presented at conferences in Athens, Durham, Leeds, London and Sheffield during the mid-1990s. I would like to thank the British Academy for its assistance during the early stages of the composition of this work. Dr. Sharon Monteith, Dr. Nahem Yousaf, and the members of the reading groups I have participated in over a number of years in Oxford, Aldenham and elsewhere have encouraged, enlightened, and inspired me in equal measure. More recently, Prof. Kathleen McLuskie has given generously of both her insights and her time as supervisor to this thesis. Over and above all others, however, I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Louise Spong, to whom I dedicate this work.

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[1] Samuel Beckett, *Molloy,* in *The Beckett Trilogy* (1950; London: Picador, 1979), p. 14.

Abbreviations

Since many passages quoted are cited from early printed books, or from diplomatic editions such as the Malone Society Reprints or Tudor Facsimile Texts, the following procedures have been adopted. Contracted speech headings have been silently expanded throughout, as have printers' contractions and abbreviations so that, for instance, 'the~' becomes 'them'. J, i, y, s, v and u have been modernised for ease of reading. Where appropriate, the first direct quotation from an early printed book, or a microfilm copy of one, is given with the entry number from *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640*, eds. A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, 2nd revised edition (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1976-86). Where two dates precede the publication details of those plays cited, the former refers to the date or estimated date of performance, the latter (italicised) to the date or estimated date of the publication of Q1. All dates are given in the new style. I refer throughout the thesis to J.C. Jeaffreson's *Middlesex County Records*, Vol. 1 (1886; London: Greater London Council, 1972) in order to support my observations about the contingency of life in early modern London to the drama produced within it. The materials cited fall between 29 Eliz. I (i.e. 1587, being the 29th year of Elizabeth's reign) and 45 Eliz. I (1603). These dates correspond to the approximate working life of the Rose theatre, the extant canon of which forms the basis of this thesis, and serves as the control against which my hypotheses are tested. The following abbreviations are used to designate particular records and rolls cited within the Middlesex County Records:

GDR	*Gaol Delivery Records*
GSPR	*General Session of the Peace Rolls*
SSOTR	*Special Session of Oyer and Terminer Rolls*
IR	*Inquest Rolls*
CR	*Composite Rolls*

Other abbreviations used:

CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*
MCR	*Middlesex County Records*, Vol. 1, ed. J.C. Jeaffreson (1886; London: Greater London Council, 1972).
SOED	*The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd edn., ed. C.T. Onions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973).
STC	Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640, ed. A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave (2nd rev. edn., 1976-86).

1 Introduction

1.1 Establishing a data set

The following study uses those plays which are believed to constitute the extant canon of the Rose theatre between 1587 and 1603 as its data set (see Appendix A). Where appropriate, it also attempts to consider the significance of the subject matter (from the titles) and popularity (from existing receipts, and evidence of revivals) of those plays from the amphitheatre's canon which are now lost. The Rose canon is utilised as the data set for this thesis solely on the basis that more information regarding its operations has survived than for any other theatrical enterprise of the era, and its plays have been selected for this reason alone.

Whilst no especial claim is made in what follows that the plays considered should be deemed any more or less paradigmatic than others surviving from the period in question, the thesis does consider the residual form in which early modern English drama still exists (namely, the texts) to be exemplary in so far as that it argues for their having dramatised examples of contemporary social, economic and cultural behaviour which, when considered collectively, can be grouped together to form epistemic patterns. In deference to the theoretical debate surrounding editing and de-editing, this observation should not be construed to infer that the original quartos of the plays are in some way preferable to other editions.[1] Marlowe, Kyd and Greene

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[1] See G. Thomas Tanselle, *A Rationale of Textual Criticism* (Philadelphia: U. Pennsylvania P.,1989); Grace Ioppolo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard U.P., 1991); Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago: U. Chicago P., 1983); Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol (eds.), *Print, Manuscript, and Performance: the Changing Relations of the Media in Early Modern England* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State U. P., 2000); Stephen Orgel, 'What is a Text?' and 'What is an Editor?', in *The Authentic Shakespeare and Other Problems on the Early Modern Stage* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 1-5, 15-20. Andrew Murphy, *The Renaissance Text: Theory, Editing, Textuality* (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 2003).

aside, modern editors appear to have taken the view that very few of the plays discussed contain material of sufficient interest to merit the commissioning of new editions, the Malone Society imprints notwithstanding (although these could hardly be called 'popular' imprints). The quartos themselves contain numerous and obvious errors, misprints and inconsistencies. I have nevertheless chosen to read them in this format wherever possible on the grounds that their textual indeterminacy can be an intellectual spur to a study attempting to investigate how ideas about the changing nature of contemporary social, economic and cultural life developed on the stage of an early modern English amphitheatre.

Beyond the presentation of data regarding the canon of the Rose and the companies which performed there in the three appendices, production details and performance histories have no intrinsic utility to this study and are not discussed. This study does not discriminate between companies which played at the theatre on the basis that it sees no especial value in ranking them in a hierarchy of significance. This thesis is more interested in theorising about the ways in which the Rose plays may have acted on their contemporary audiences than studying their reaction to them, but it does on occasion make recourse to such scant evidence as exists in this regard.[2]

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[2] Surveys of such materials of interest as remain may be found in 'Appendix 1: Playgoers 1567-1642' (pp. 191-204) and 'Appendix 2: References to playgoing' (pp. 205-51) in Andrew Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1987).

1.2 'Of things that alter in the change of times': Discerning a consciousness of social and economic change on the stage of the Rose

> King: I see plain men, by observation
> Of things that alter in the change of times,
> Do gather knowledge.[3]

Early modern English theatrical texts are an intriguing form of historical record. Whilst plays seldom address contemporary social and economic transformations directly, they are crammed with referents and signifiers indicating an awareness of and an interest in such changes. In order to close in on the research proposition put forward at the end of this section, I would like to begin with certain general remarks regarding the nature of theatrical experience, before moving on to some specific observations concerning the inspiration the canon of the Rose appears to have drawn from contemporary social and economic relations. These ideas are then assimilated in a consideration of the impact the plays may have had upon their contemporary observers.

The instinctive role of an audience is to interpret. In a dynamic process of exchange, individual spectators select and exclude signifieds as they please. Each individual's interpretations of the social, economic, historical and cultural practices and events represented on, for example, a stage are carried out into the world at the end of the performance to be duly disseminated and re-encoded. In this way, what Patrice Pavis called the 'ideotext' is constantly in flux, being developed by, but also

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[3] Thomas Heywood, *1 King Edward IV*, ed. Barron Field (1599?,1600; London: Shakespeare Society, 1842), III.i.266-8.

reinscribing, 'the ideology which, in a given historical epoch, organises the theatre as a social as well as an aesthetic event'.[4]

The construction, as well as the location, of a playhouse serves in part to condition the experience of attending a performance. Buildings enact expressive, conative, phatic and meta-codal functions in addition to their aesthetic function.[5] Whilst a play in performance possesses a variety of semiotic codes unique to itself, in the last instance it relies largely upon those real-world conventions which 'overlap, and also pre-exist the performance situation' to make itself understood.[6] Plays may also reverse this principle by holding up the ontology of the real world for examination in the dramatic world. On occasion, they may expose the wholly arbitrary nature of the economic, social, cultural and moral constraints which bind the two together. In such circumstances as these, drama is less a mimesis of the lived than a dissection of the material nature of a reality whose signs achieve their vitality 'not simply by signifying the world but by being of it.'[7]

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[4] Patrice Pavis, 'Socio-criticism', *Theatre* 15.1 (Winter 1983), p. 8.

[5] The expressive function is that which may be said to communicate the personal style of the builder or by extension its occupants; the conative function suggests use-orientations to its user. The Rose's near-circular yard, for instance, would have invited spectators to stand in the middle of it, which as Christine Eccles describes in *The Rose Theatre* (London: Nick Hern Books, 1990) is just what many actors hurried to do when the Rose was uncovered, some doffing shoes and socks in the process. A building's phatic function is fulfilled in the 'environmental framing of interpersonal interactions, the aspect of architectural "territoriality"' (Winfried Nöth, *Handbook of Semiotics* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana U.P., 1990), p. 436). Meta-codal functions are discerned through historical reference, allusion and quotation, for instance: 'Perswade me to a play, I'le to the Rose, / Or Curtain, one of Plautus Comedies / Or the Patheticke Spaniards Tragedies' (Everard Guilpin, 'Satire V', *Skialethia* (1598), quoted in Julian Bowsher, *The Rose Theatre*, (London: Museum of London, 1998), p. 25. The aesthetic function sees a building only as an object, representing nothing but itself.

[6] Michael Hays, 'Suggestions about the social origins of semiotic practice in the theatre', *Modern Drama* 24.3 (1981), p. 368. Were this not the case, *all* referents on the stage would have to be defined.

[7] Bert O. States, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms*, (Berkeley, CA: U. California P., 1985), p. 20.

The extant canon of the Rose theatre lends some credibility to this suggestion. Tales are told on the stage of the Rose, both directly and indirectly, about the changing nature of contemporary social and economic life in order to better understand it. In some plays, the nature of the changes in question are foregrounded as a consequence of their being the focus of the plot, or a driver of the actions of their protagonists. Some of these stories are principally comic, others predominantly tragic, yet most intriguing of all are those which lack generic determinacy and confound expectation. These are plays in which social observation breaks through dramatic custom. In other plays, the significance of social and economic change is obscured or hindered by the construction of rationales or the engendering of myths which deny or contradict the forces of societal development. By means of their very obsessions, however, these plays also serve to amplify rather than to negate the sense that significant transformations were taking place.

Established theatrical forms, familiar folkloric structures, quasi-mythical historical figures and popular national cultural icons are all encountered within the repertory of the Rose theatre. Whilst it cannot be posited that they were deployed either intentionally or incidentally by their authors, they nevertheless served in part to test whether that which passed as common knowledge of social, economic, cultural and political forms remained current, or was instead found to be no longer serviceable.

Such appraisals were neither linear, logical, nor comprehensively conducted within individual dramas. However, when grouped together and examined collectively, the data set constituted by the canon of the Rose theatre verifies that social and economic changes were understood to have been occurring, were examined with reference to the habits of the past and the present, and were interrogated by their protagonists in order to ascertain what they may signify for the future.

Such syntheses may have appealed to contemporary audiences. Carol Chillington Rutter has suggested that the Rose's 'constantly changing repertoire' implies 'a regular audience' which attended the playhouse habitually.[8] Observers familiar with the theatre's layout and attuned to a cast's techniques (particularly during the Admiral's Men's unbroken tenure between 1594-9) may have been capable of undertaking a greater amount of conceptual work during the course of a performance than a casual attendee. The impact of a given play upon them may also have been heightened as a consequence.

Early modern English drama undertook to depict the operations of the emergent mode of production and its accompanying social, economic and cultural practices because they were making a tangible, significant impact upon contemporary life which was recognised and understood by an audience conscious of its implications. The theatrical representation of the relationship between social and economic change informed 'every aspect in its simple and sober ordinariness, but only consciousness

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[8] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, 2nd edn. (Manchester and New York: Manchester U.P., 1999), p. 58.

ma[de] it real', fusing perception and comprehension together as it 'elevate[d] mere existence to reality'.[9]

As Henry S. Turner has noted, 'the "transition to capitalism" was... also a transition in *knowledge about* capital and in the forms in which this knowledge took expression'.[10] The form of early modern English drama was both an influence on and was influenced by the content of the cultural artefacts it created. Correspondingly, the Rose canon addressed issues which concerned its spectators. Among other things, the plays considered the nature of the money-function, the alterations which had occurred in the workplace as a result of the development of the wage relation, and the challenges the emergent mode of production brought to class relations. In this manner, over and above the 'basic function of providing a space for a public to watch a performance', the Rose theatre and its contemporary counterparts also provided 'additional connotative meanings' to the culture of which they were a part.[11]

Contemporary literature suggests that early modern English commentators were in no doubt as to the impact of the theatrical experience upon its observers. Presumably referring to Shakespeare's *1 Henry VI*, Thomas Nashe marvels in *Pierce Penniless* at how 'ten thousand spectators at least (at several times)' have been reduced to tears at the death of Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury as they 'imagine they behold him fresh

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[9] Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (1968; London: Merlin Press, 1971), p. 22.

[10] Henry S. Turner, 'The culture of capital' in Henry S. Turner (ed.) *The Culture of Capital: Property, Cities, and Knowledge in Early Modern England* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), p. 6.

[11] Marvin Carlson, *Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 43.

bleeding'. Maintaining that 'shew[n]' actions 'are most lively anatomised' on the stage, Nashe deems the influence of the drama upon its audiences self-evident and unworthy of further needless explication:

> And to prove every one of these allegations, could I propound the circumstances of this play and that play, if I meant to handle this theme other than *obiter*. What should I say more?[12]

Plays performed in the early modern English amphitheatres 'transported' their audiences not in a physical or romantic sense but by stimulating their awareness of the possibilities of participating in the creation of their culture, reminding the audience that societal evolution is not over, and that new modes of being can and will emerge in time. Whilst the dramas doubtless accustomed audiences to the idea that the sights and sounds of spectacle need not be limited to occasions organised by and on behalf of the church or state, they may also have led to an understanding of their capacity to participate in the society in which they lived. Within the residual textual presence of these plays we can discern the possibility of an applied rather than an abstract influence on contemporary audiences, distinguishing the potential affect of the various meditations on economic, social and cultural themes on an individual observer's emotional engagement with the fate of the characters they beheld. An awareness of social and economic change was instantiated by and inhesive within these plays, and their narratives were imbued with the potential to serve as a means of analysis beyond the realm of performance.

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[12] Thomas Nashe, *Pierce Penniless: his supplication to the Devil*, in *The Unfortunate Traveller and Other Works*, ed. J.B. Steane (1592; Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1972), pp. 113, 114. *1 Henry VI* may have premiered at the Rose theatre. *Obiter*: 'in passing'. Cf. Thomas Heywood's account in his *Apology for Actors* (1608) of how the representation of the murder of a husband by his wife in *Friar Francis* by Sussex's Men whilst on tour in Norfolk precipitated a member of the audience to confess to the same crime during the performance. Now lost, *Friar Francis* was performed three times at the Rose by Sussex's Men during their brief residency at the theatre from December 1593 to February 1594. Cited in Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, op. cit., p. 78.

Using the extant canon of the Rose theatre as its data set, this study proposes that early modern English drama articulated a contemporary consciousness of the social and economic changes taking place as a consequence of the transition to a new mode of production. In its analyses of those changes, early modern English drama let it be understood that the foundations of the emergent mode of production lay in social relations rather than market forces.

Conventional criticism has proved incapable of harnessing its response to the specificity and form of early modern English drama to a corresponding understanding of the full significance and influence of contemporary social and economic transformations. I will identify some of the shortcomings of the literary critical enterprise over time in support of this assertion before introducing a theoretical paradigm better suited to the task.

1.3 The idealist tradition

A residual idealism within literary criticism hostile to the acknowledgement of the influence of materialism may be traced to the Platonic influence which buttresses Sir Philip Sidney's *A Defence of Poetry*. In one of the definitive early modern English accounts of the conflict between an idealist and a materialist world-view, Sidney declares:

> There is no art delivered to mankind that hath not the works of nature for his principle object, without which they could not consist, and on which they so depend, as they become actors and players, as it were, of what nature will have set forth.

The historian, he contends, writes merely of 'what men have done', whilst the poet, 'disdaining to be tied to any such subjection, lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature'.[13] Unlike the sanctified figure of the poet, Sidney suggests that all those whose disciplines purport to give a true account of the ways in which humanity interacts with the world are in fact cut off from the very subject of their inquiry due to their observation *of* rather than their 'interaction' *with* nature. It is 'especially the historian', Sidney later remarks, who 'affirming many things, can, in the cloudy knowledge of mankind, hardly escape from many lies', weighed down as he is by his inability to 'commune' with nature in the same way that the poet does. The reward for the poet, Sidney concludes, is an induction into 'the sacred mysteries of poesy', with its 'many mysteries... which of purpose were written darkly, lest by profane wits it should be abused'.[14] The cabalistic quality of Sidney's definition of early

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[13] Sir Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, ed. J.A. Van Dorsten (1579-80?; Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1966), p. 23.
[14] Ibid., pp. 52, 74, 75.

modern poetic discourse is striking, particularly in view of his having embraced the poet's fideistic, mystical aestheticism and correspondingly rejected any concession to what he sees as the spiritless, materialist disciplines of history, geometry, arithmetic, music, logic, rhetoric, grammar, astronomy, law, medicine and natural and moral philosophy. In failing to immerse themselves in nature, he argues, the practitioners of these disciplines deny themselves the chance either to accurately describe it or to profit from it.

Despite the chiastic relationship between the textuality of history and the historicity of texts having become a critical commonplace over the past twenty years, the history of the vacillation between idealist and materialist accounts of early modern English drama's production and reproduction has not received a corresponding amount of attention. Little progress has been made towards resolving its contradictions.[15] In reviewing how such critical oversights have remained unchecked, I will offer a brief account of fluctuations between idealism and materialism in Anglo-American criticism of early modern English drama since the early twentieth century. In recognising the consequences of neglecting to acknowledge the ways in which the drama was historically situated in a specific economic and cultural context, this study will endeavour to avoid similar omissions.

The founders of 'English Literature' as an academic discipline were content to undertake ahistorical, exegetical analyses of the newly-forged canon's dominant figures and dispute their relative merits within the realm of the subjective. 'Research, though toilsome, is easy; imaginative vision, though delightful, is

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[15] See Louis Montrose, 'Renaissance literary studies and the subject of history', *ELR* 16 (1986), p. 8. Cf. Jean Howards's observation in 'The New Historicism in Renaissance studies', *ELR* 16 (1986) that 'the very binarism we casually reinforce every time we speak of literature and history... [disguises the fact that literature] is *part* of history' (p. 25).

difficult', A.C. Bradley advised in a lecture entitled 'Shakespeare's theatre and audience':

> And if [the audience has] enjoyed without fully understanding, it was for want of imagination and of knowledge of human nature, and not from ignorance of the conditions under which [Shakespeare's] plays were produced.[16]

Walter Raleigh similarly observed that in his texts alone is 'the mind of Shakespeare... to be seen at work', and that 'the indispensable preliminary for judging and enjoying Shakespeare is not knowledge of his history, not even knowledge of his works, but knowledge of his theme, a wide acquaintance with human life and human passion as they are reflected in a sensitive and independent mind'.[17]

Transcendental idealism within the subject was at a high point during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The critical work of the three decades that followed left this position largely unchallenged. The overall impression made by literary criticism from the 1930s to the mid-1960s is that the study of literature was justified by dint of its very existence, and for that reason alone, no additional justification was required to 'further' the discipline's teleological project.[18] Closure of the critical endeavour would by definition be perpetually deferred by the imprecise and

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[16] A.C. Bradley, 'Shakespeare's theatre and audience', *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1909), pp. 362, 361.

[17] Walter Raleigh, *Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan, 1911), pp. 28, 3.

[18] On F.R. Leavis, Q.D. Leavis and I.A. Richards, see Francis Mulhern, *The Moment of Scrutiny* (London: Verso, 1981); on William Empson, see Christopher Norris, *William Empson and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism* (London: Athlone Press, 1978); on the American 'New Criticism' (John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, W.K. Wimsatt, Monroe Beardsley et al), see John Fekete, *The Critical Twilight* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1978), Frank Lentricchia, *After the New Criticism* (Chicago: U. Chicago P., 1980). The best single study of the dramatic criticism of the period is Hugh Grady's *The Modernist Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). The significant exception to this roll-call is L.C. Knights, who contended in *Drama & Society in the Age of Shakespeare* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1937) that 'the essential life of a period is best understood through its literature; not because of what that literature describes, but because of what it embodies' (p. 177).

therefore unachievable nature of its goal as each generation, standing on its critical forbears' shoulders, would believe itself capable of producing 'better' criticism. The entirely subjective nature of the criteria by which the criticism produced was judged ensured that this circle could never be broken from within.

1.4 The materialist tradition

The literary materialist tradition in both its historical and contemporary forms has also struggled to perceive of the significance of the historical in any contexts other than those which manifest themselves in power relations and political ideas. In light of Marx's conclusion that civil rather than political society is 'the true source and theatre of all history', it is ironic that E.M.W Tillyard's hybrid of ideological idealism and methodological materialism should have introduced English studies to the concept of historical process, albeit in an inverted form.[19]

Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1943) and *Shakespeare's History Plays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1944) focus on precisely the sort of 'high-sounding dramas of princes and states' which are the antithesis of materialist history's subject matter.[20] These works, with their orthodox analysis of, respectively, the Tudor dynasty and Shakespeare's English histories, reinforced the so-called 'Tudor myth's' demonstration that the power of the monarchy stemmed from an immutable natural order. However, what needs to be stressed just as vigorously is the way in which Tillyard's stance went against the Leavisite *zeitgeist* in defending this idealised ideological position from a materialist perspective, positioning the plays 'firmly within a context in which the terms history, historical

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[19] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. C.J. Arthur (1845-6; London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1974), p. 57

[20] Ibid., p. 57.

evidence, [and] historiography must be regarded as indispensable theoretical factors in the activity of interpretation'.[21]

The so-called 'linguistic turn' of the late 1960s destabilised the debate between idealism and materialism by problematising its terms of reference.[22] Retrospectively, three critics stand out as having had a significant influence on not just the content but also the form of literary criticism. Fernand Braudel insisted on focusing the critical eye on *longue durée* or 'long span' history rather than historical 'snap-shots'. Michel Foucault critiqued the history of ideas and investigated the problems inherent within any attempt to define the systematicity of discursive practices. Louis Althusser disclosed the ideological determination of reading practices. Each offered a radical position from which to critique the authority of the leading proponents of the majority of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, and introduced

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[21] Graham Holderness (ed.), *Shakespeare's History Plays* (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 3, 6. The influence of the sort of materialist history to be found in Tillyard's work can be seen variously in Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's Histories: Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (San Marino, CA: Huntingdon Library Press, 1947); G. Wilson Knight, *The Olive and the Sword* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1944); M.M. Reese, *The Cease of Majesty: A Study of Shakespeare's History Plays* (London: Edward Arnold, 1961); D.A. Traversi, *Shakespeare from 'Richard II' to 'Henry V'* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1957); J. Dover Wilson, *The Fortunes of Falstaff* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1964). Those critics who favoured a reading of the histories from the idealist stance include Moody E. Prior, *The Drama of Power* (Evanston, IL.: Northwestern U.P., 1973), Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton U.P., 1957); A.P. Rossiter, *Angel with Horns and other Shakespeare Lectures*, ed. Graham Storey (London: Longmans Green, 1961); Wilbur Sanders, *The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1968).

[22] See Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature: An Introduction* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1974); Peter Dews, *Logics of Disintegration: Post-Structuralist Thought and the Claims of Critical Theory* (London: New Left Books, 1987); Robert Young (ed.), *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, op. cit.; Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington, Robert Young (eds.), *Post-Structuralism and the Question of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1987).

novel theoretical standpoints to developing literary-critical agendas.[23] These critical impulses converged within early modern English studies in two theoretical movements which emerged in the 1980s, namely New Historicism and cultural materialism. The influence of both schools continues to be felt, but their residual idealism has never been eradicated.

Stephen Greenblatt, the foremost exponent of the historicisation of discourse in Anglo-American studies of the English Renaissance and the figurehead of New Historicism, declared that he was motivated to write *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988) by his 'desire to speak with the dead'. Whilst admitting that he had 'not cease[d] to believe that Renaissance society was totalising in intention', Greenblatt confessed to having grown 'increasingly uneasy with the monolithic entities' he had identified in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980).[24] By 1988 Greenblatt had decided that 'there is no escape from contingency', and was seeking to adopt in his work a field of 'vision... necessarily more fragmentary' in the hope of offering 'insight[s] into the half-hidden cultural transactions through which great works of art are empowered'.[25]

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[23] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, 2 vols., trans. Siân Reynolds (1949, 1966; Glasgow: Collins, 1972, 1975); *On History*, trans. Sarah Matthews (1969; Chicago: U. Chicago P., 1980). See also Peter Burke, *French Historical Revolution: The Annales School, 1929-89* (Stanford, CA: Stanford U.P., 1990). Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, translated from the French (1966; London: Tavistock, 1970); *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (1969; London: Tavistock, 1972); Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (1965; : Penguin, 1969); *Reading Capital* (with Etienne Balibar), trans. Ben Brewster (1968; London: New Left Books, 1975); *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, op. cit.. See also Alex Callinicos, *Althusser's Marxism* (London: Pluto, 1976), Gregory Elliott, *Althusser: the Detour of Theory* (London: Verso, 1987).

[24] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 1, 2.

[25] Ibid., p. 4.

Applying carefully crafted evaluations of expertly quarried historical narratives, Greenblatt attempted to generate enough resolution in his readers to persuade them to vault with him from the anecdotal periphery to the medial cultural position occupied by Shakespeare's plays. However, New Historicism's fragmented methodology has struggled to substantiate the legitimacy of the mechanisms of cultural transmission it purports to expose.

The elision structurally inherent within the concept of circulation, as outlined by Marx in its relation to the movement of capital in bourgeois society, throws light on the procedural sleight-of-hand Greenblatt has employed throughout his work. Marx concluded that the process of the circulation of capital is merely 'the phenomenon of a process taking place behind it', which 'has to be mediated not only in each of its moments, but as a whole of mediation, as a total process itself'.[26] The 'circulation' of cultural energy in Greenblatt's fragmentary analysis is just such a phenomenon, but functioning outside the materialist conception of history, it can by definition find no place in a framework of total process. It cannot refer to the society which generated the drama it ultimately wishes to cast new light upon, because it has surrendered its claim to it. Greenblatt may admit to being 'conversational in [his] tastes', but in the final analysis he is doing no more than having a conversation with his own intellect and influences.[27]

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[26] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft*, trans. M. Nicolaus (1857-58; : Penguin, 1973), p. 255.

[27] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, op. cit., p. 1.

Walter Benjamin observed that 'to articulate the past historically does not mean to recognise it "the way it really was"'.[28] This is a recognition that cultural materialism has pursued in its attempts to disclose the ideological determination of the representation of gender, sexuality and race in analyses which have taken its proponents beyond the study of early modern English literature into more obviously political writings, but which have also led to theoretical problems in both spheres. Like New Historicism, cultural materialism's account of early modern English literature abandoned the historical *grand récit*, within which it perceived a legitimation of the effacing of 'the fact of social contradiction, dissent and struggle', and sought instead to reclaim the 'subordinate, repressed and marginal' histories of gender, sexuality and race from multiple and fragmented sources.[29] However, despite maintaining that any expression of 'the need to disclose the effectiveness and complexity of the ideological process of containment... by no means implies a fatalistic acceptance that it is somehow inevitable and that all opposition is hopeless', in their political writings cultural materialist critics have often chosen to write for a 'constituencist' audience.[30]

This critical gesture is politically supine, rather than emancipatory. Cultural materialism has chosen to situate its work outside the operations of the forces and relations of production and class-relations, ignoring the fiscal relations which ultimately determine every aspect of the superstructure, and which invest gender, sexuality and race with their real political meaning. In so doing, it has relinquished its right to challenge the true nature of the oppression its subjects have struggled

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[28] Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the philosophy of history', *Illuminations*, ed. H. Arrendt, trans. H. Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 255.

[29] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Introduction: Shakespeare, cultural materialism and the new historicism', *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, op. cit., pp. 7, 6.

[30] Ibid., p. 15. Alan Sinfield, 'Sexuality and subcultures in the wake of welfare capitalism', *Radical Philosophy* 66 (Spring 1994), p. 43.

under. Its methodology signifies an act of compliance with capitalism rather than a gesture of defiance against it.

That such interpretative strategies should have been utilised at all in literary studies points to a tension between criticism's defence of its diversity and the fact that the deployment of non-literary methodologies discloses the inability of the discipline to detach itself from teleological idealism. The implicit motive behind the utilisation of these critical methods is the familiar idealistic belief in an ability to undertake 'better' analysis. The recourse of English as an academic discipline to other fields for methodological inspiration underlines the structural deficiencies inherent within a subject grounded in idealism. The practice of employing non-literary methodologies in English studies points not to the subject's diversity, but to its weakness. An analysis of such developments within the social sciences in the 1970s concluded that 'fields with strong and expanding academic bases tend to export their paradigms to fields which have weak academic markets':

> Fields which undergo a crisis in their material base become intellectual 'soft spots'; their practitioners lose confidence in their own intellectual capital and import ideas from other apparently more successful fields... Fields which are rapidly growing tend to become idea-exporters, imperialistically designing to take over the intellectual turfs of 'softer' fields.[31]

One explanation, therefore, of the significant incursion critical theory has made into literary criticism in the last three decades is the fact that the discipline has not been able to defend itself from colonisation by other subjects. Literary studies' demise in its traditional form has been hastened by the eagerness of those undertaking research within the discipline to show that they are at the vanguard of their subject by

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[31] Randall Collins and David Waller, 'Did social science break down in the 1970s?', in J, Hage (ed.), *Formal Theory in Sociology: Opportunity or Pitfall?*' (Albany, N.Y.: State U. New York P., 1994), pp. 34, 30-31.

publishing work whose methodological basis is not what would formerly have been considered 'literary' but is instead overtly theoretical. Entropy increases: the transition from positivism to anti-positivism in the discipline hastens ever onward.

1.5 Neo-materialist criticism

As the phrase 'nascent workshop-capitalism' is used freely throughout what follows, I shall offer a definition of what I understand by the expression prior to my deploying it for the first time. In an attempt to reconcile the problem of theoretical specificity with historical periodisation, I deploy the term 'nascent' in relation to early modern English capitalism in order to draw attention to the fact that 'the economic structure of capitalist society... [grew] out of the economic structure of feudal society'. I also utilise it in order to discriminate between what came before this period (the laying of 'the foundation[s] of the capitalist mode of production... in the last third of the fifteenth century and the first few decades of the sixteenth') and what was to come after it, namely the era of 'primitive accumulation' which 'forms the pre-history of capital'.[32]

The use of the term 'capitalism' in relation to the late sixteenth century is less problematic. Whilst feudalism, capitalism, or any other mode of production 'by no means begins only at the point where one can speak of it *as such*', the production and circulation of commodities 'do not at all imply the existence of the capitalist mode of production' as 'they may be found even in "pre-bourgeois modes of

[32] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (1867; Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1976), pp. 875, 878.

production"'. As such, they 'constitute the *historical premise* of the capitalist mode of production'.[33]

An alternative to viewing the literary text as an end in itself is to view it as the product of larger cultural and economic processes. In the case of early modern English drama, this requires the critical focus to shift away from the aesthetic, symbolic and 'literary' towards a consideration of the relation of the market to the theatre, and the role of the playhouses themselves as the producers of commodities. There have been a number of attempts to incorporate some of these ideas into criticism of early modern English literature over the last twenty-five years. I term such criticism 'neo-materialist'. Neo-materialism lacks both a figurehead and a unified methodology, and cannot really be termed a 'critical movement'. However, as the influence of neo-materialism is perceptible in what follows, I will offer a review of its core concepts at this point.

Robert Weimann has drawn attention to the 'drastic social changes' brought about during the last quarter of the sixteenth century as a consequence of the ongoing transition from feudalism to a nascent workshop-capitalism, and the effect that these

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[33] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 106. Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 949-50. It is impossible to definitively distinguish the point where one mode of production ends and another begins. Whilst Alan Macfarlane has written 'we could describe thirteenth-century England as a capitalist-market economy without factories', the utility of his conclusion that economic individualism, 'however defined, predates sixteenth-century changes and can be said to shape them all' in *The Origins of English Individualism: the Family, Property and Social Transition* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978) is undermined by his conclusion that the explanation of its origins 'must lie elsewhere... [and] will remain obscure until we trace the origins even further' (pp. 196, 199, 197). More progressively, István Mészáros has remarked that 'it is the task of a theory of transition to articulate the specific concerns of the ongoing social process, identifying with precision their temporal limitations, in the broad framework of the most comprehensive principles that guide the evaluation of all detail' (*Beyond Capital* (London: Merlin Press, 1995), p. 424). See also Ian Forbes, *Marx and the New Individual* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), pp. 98-111; Mark Gould, *Revolution in the Development of Capitalism: The Coming of the English Revolution* (Berkeley, CA.: U. California P., 1987), pp. 113-84; Frederic Jameson, 'Marxism and historicism', *The Ideologies of Theory*, Vol. 2 (1979; London: Routledge, 1988), p. 155.

changes had upon 'traditional communal life and popular culture on the one hand, and the changing experience of contemporary life of the other'. 'More than any other social institution', he contends, 'the theatre still resembled a "laboratory in which the various elements of society were... mixed and worked" on'.[34] In the same way, Weimann has remarked that the production of literature, 'when seen in terms of both its creation and reception, is functionally, significantly, and historically part of the social activity of its creators and recipients'.[35]

Jean-Christophe Agnew's *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750* attempted 'to reconstruct some of the cultural conditions and consequences of market development during the transition to capitalism' in order to begin to discern how 'those conditions and consequences were understood or misunderstood at the time'. To recover those understandings and misunderstandings, Agnew suggested, it is imperative to establish 'how the market was made meaningful at the very moment that meaning itself was becoming marketable'.[36] Douglas Bruster's *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* advanced Agnew's argument by suggesting that faced with a relatively unfamiliar but expanding network of commercial exchange, 'playwrights fastened on to a variety of strategies to understand the dynamics of the market... from within it', for as he reminds us, 'the theatre was, *a priori*, a market'.

Bruster suggests that early modern English drama, 'face to face with the complexities of the material world', absorbed and theatrically refigured 'the ability

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[34] Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, ed. Robert Schwartz (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins U.P., 1978), pp. 164, 169.
[35] Robert Weimann, *Structure and Society in Literary History: Studies in the History and Theory of Historical Criticism* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1977), p. 178.
[36] Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1986), p. 12.

of economic forces to shape urban society'.[37] Lawrence Manley's *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* also attempted to elicit from literature its representation of the collective experiences of social transformations. Manley draws on literary accounts of the continuing effects of the transition from one mode of production to another, contemporary literary meditations upon the consequences of the demographic shift during the sixteenth century, and representations of the struggle between order and reform, and justice and criminality.[38]

Richard Halpern's *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation* purported to 'locate those regions within English Renaissance culture where the elements of a specifically capitalist culture begins to emerge in nascent or anticipatory forms from within the context of a late feudal society'. However, his reconfiguration of capital as 'an historically unprecedented form of social power which is opaque to analysis by models derived from the political, legal or... economic sphere' was hampered by his focusing on 'top-down' superstructural power relations which overlooked the significance of broader, deeper social and economic changes taking place within the economic base in the realms of civil rather than political society.[39]

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[37] Douglas Bruster, *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1992), pp. xi, xiii, 10.

[38] Lawrence Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1995). Other accounts of the relationship between the theatre and the market include Michael Bristol's *Carnival and Theater: Plebeian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England* (New York and London: Routledge, 1985), a Bakhtinian account of 'the critical intensification of collective life [as] represented and experienced' (p. 3) in early modern English theatre, and Steven Mullaney's *The Place of the Stage* (Chicago: U. Chicago P., 1988), a Foucauldian reading of the significance of early modern English drama's function on the margins of London society, which is prone to regard the effect of the developing socio-economic relations as less important than the 'symbolic topology of London and its Liberties'. Finally, in a book heavily influenced by Richard Rorty, Lars Engle's *Shakespearean Pragmatism: Market of his Time* (Chicago and London: U. Chicago P., 1993) argues that the theatrical market offered not a representation of the pros and cons of capitalist enterprise but an interactive model of how humans decide whether something is true; that life, as he put it, 'like theatre, may consist of nothing more solid than human descriptions and human assessments of those descriptions' (p. 1).

[39] Richard Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell U.P., 1991), pp. 13, 3-4.

William Ingram has been more willing to acknowledge the influence of the economic base on the superstructure. Ingram has observed that the role of *homo economicus* on early modern London's economic stage was 'not a minor or negligible' one. Depending, he muses, 'on one's sense of the script, such a role might be variously seen as motivated by materialist concerns or shaped by their absence, governed either by abhorrence or acceptance of poverty, a compassion for others or a selfish need to exploit, a varying level of involvement in a market economy, the presence or absence of entrepreneurial proclivities, or simply an interest in the acquisition of, or the benefits of, wealth'.[40]

Michael Bristol has taken an interest in the contemporary popular culture's understanding of the money function, and has drawn attention to the fact that contemporary theatrical entrepreneurs and the companies they worked with had to 'assume that their potential customers would understand the basic idea behind what they proposed to offer', namely the 'exchange of equivalents', a cultural service for money. 'Even more basic than any of the purposes of playing in this context', he argues, 'was the elementary notion of purchasing a commodity'. Bristol concludes that 'in a sense... the abstract, socially undifferentiated consumer of cultural services was the most important "invention" of the early modern theatre'.[41]

With an equal sensitivity to the influence of the operations of the marketplace, Paul Yachnin has argued that 'commercialism altered the dynamics of performance'. He

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[40] William Ingram, *The Business of Playing: the Beginnings of the Adult Professional Theatre in Elizabethan London* (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1992), p. 49. On the alterations in the framework of social relations within early modern London, see Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1991), pp. 74-9.

[41] Michael D. Bristol, 'Theatre and popular culture', in John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (eds.), *An New History of Early English Drama* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1997), pp. 248, 245.

contends that the establishment of the London amphitheatres reduced the theatrical companies' financial dependence upon their aristocratic sponsors, thereby 'freeing them to address a variety of topics in an objective spirit, and... diminishing the power of the theatre to influence the political issues about which it was now free to speak'.[42] Whether or not the companies possessed such powers in the first place is far from certain, but perhaps more significant is Yachnin's observation that in attempting to meet 'the demand for topicality in the commercial theatre' (p. 16), the players were 'obliged to surrender the substance of their words; they were content to speak but to say nothing' (p. 24). Yachnin steps away from his argument at this point rather than pursuing it to a more robust conclusion, namely that as they began to dissociate themselves from their former mentors, the theatrical companies were now free to discourse on the power and influence of everyone's new master: capital.

In a similar vein, Theodore B. Leinwand's *Theatre, Finance and Society in Early Modern England*, has offered a number of useful caveats in relation to the use of 'master tropes' such as 'the market' and 'commodification'. Leinwand has noted that these tropes can 'obscure the extent to which the early modern English economy (at the level of custom or practice) and the law were still emerging from medieval antecedents', and alerts us to the fact that 'generalised talk about "exchange" fails to register just how far from modern were early modern procedures'.[43]

My having isolated a selection of insights from the works described above perhaps makes neo-materialism appear to be a recognised critical movement working towards the production of a uniform methodological agenda, which in reality it is

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[42] Paul Yachnin, *Stage-Wrights: Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton and the Making of Theatrical Value* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), pp. 12.

[43] Theodore B. Leinwand, *Theatre, Finance and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1999), pp. 5-6

not. The impact of the neo-materialists' insights have been dissipated by the formal procedures of literary criticism.[44] Furthermore, and more importantly for the purposes of the present study, although the neo-materialists collectively recognise a significant change to have been taking place in the production of the drama towards the end of the sixteenth century and acknowledge the significance of commerce and the marketplace, they fail to connect such changes to wider transformations in the means and modes of production in culture as a whole. They may be on the verge of perceiving a dynamic and interdependent relationship between production and consumption, but they do not explicitly address the implications of such a realisation. Their recourse to the insights of materialism are frequently confined to their introductions and conclusions, and fail to percolate through entire works. All of these shortcomings are symptomatic of the fact that in the last instance, as contributions to literary criticism their imperative is to protect the status of drama-as-literature rather than acknowledge its primary, commodity-based characteristics.

The neo-materialists have not developed methodological procedures adequate to the task of defining the economic, social and cultural significance of the early modern English theatrical enterprise. They are of limited utility to a study wishing to link a coming-to-consciousness of social and economic change in early modern English drama to a contemporary recognition of the nascent workshop-capitalism's foundations in social relations rather than market forces. In what follows, I will

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[44] The obvious omission from this brief review of monographs is Walter Cohen's *Drama of a Nation: Public Theatre in Renaissance England and Spain* (Ithaca and London: Cornell U.P., 1985). Cohen offers some thought-provoking interpretations of, amongst other themes, the early modern theatrical entrepreneurs as landowners extracting ground-rent from the companies with which they were associated (pp. 163-65), the subordination of contemporary playwrights and players to capital (pp. 173-75), commodity fetishism (p. 186), and the ideology of form in Marxist cultural theory (pp. 35, 62, 68, 186, 206, 238), although not, it should be noted, in its strict relation to early modern English drama. Ultimately, however, I would wish to distance myself from Cohen's project, less as a result of his uneasy defence of historical materialism as a totalising discourse (cf. pp. 21, 25) than for his insistence both that 'the stage posed genuine problems for the English monarchy', and that it was an 'institutional battleground' (p. 161).

explain how an historical materialist reading of early modern English drama offers a solution to many of the critical paradoxes identified above by overturning the foundations upon which they are established.

1.6 The explanatory force of historical materialism

Alex Callinicos has observed how the Marxist theory of history

> holds that concepts such as those of the capitalist and feudal modes of production are not simply mental constructs which may be of heuristic value in helping us to understand concrete historical situations... but have referents, actual social formations, which exist independently of our thinking and talking about them.[45]

The re-conceptualisation of early modern English drama as a referent of social formations rather than a locus for literary debate has wide-ranging implications. An analysis of the representation of the specific nature of emergent economic, social and cultural practices on the early modern English stage can help to disclose how 'the transformation of the mode of production... which results from the subordination of labour to capital' served to replace the transitional forms 'behind which the dominion of capital [was] still partially hidden' under feudalism 'with a dominion which [was] direct and unconcealed' under nascent workshop-capitalism.[46]

Historical materialism recognises that social being determines consciousness. It also understands that changes in the means of production produce concomitant changes in social relations. Historical materialism is therefore capable of articulating the complexity of a shift in the mode of cultural as well as economic production. For these reasons, it is the methodology best adopted by a study seeking to communicate the ways in which early modern English drama expressed a contemporary consciousness of the social and economic transformations taking place as a consequence of the transition to a new mode of production.

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[45] Alex Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives: Reflections of the Philosophy of History* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), pp. 128-29.

[46] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 291, 635. Cf. *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 225.

In this section, I will explain how the formal qualities of historical materialism's methodology can augment our understanding of the ways in which the impact of the themes examined on the early modern English stages may have been amplified by the contexts within which they were delivered. To this end, I will identify key correspondences between the production and consumption of cultural commodities in the theatre, the use and exchange values of the commodity-form within the early modern English amphitheatres, and the engendering of a contemporary awareness of the correlation between social being and the social form of labour.

The production and consumption of the cultural commodity

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, London had grown to such a size as to enable it to support a durable 'culture industry' for the first time.[47] The Rose theatre was a part of this enterprise: a permanent, purpose-built commercial playhouse, run for profit by the entrepreneur Philip Henslowe who rented his playing space to the various companies described in Appendix B for a share of the door receipts.[48]

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[47] J.A. Sharpe estimates that the population of London had grown from 120,000 in 1550 to 200,000 by 1600 (see *Early Modern England: A Social History 1550-1760* (London: Edward Arnold, 1987), p. 85). For an outline of the 'Frankfurt School's' conceptualisation of the 'culture industry', see Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J.M. Bernstein (London: Routledge, 1991). On the social and economic development of London in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London*, op. cit.; Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1987); Steve Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1989).

[48] See Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642*, 3rd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1980), pp. 27-79; Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time 1590-1642* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton U.P., 1984), pp. 12-24. In a sense, the various companies who performed at the Rose could be said to have rented a space to produce a commodity in much the same way as, for example, a cobbler may have hired a workshop to make shoes.

From the perspective of classical historical materialism, the production of cultural commodities within Henslowe's amphitheatre was a symbiotic procedure, instantiating the tripartite process whereby production produces consumption by providing the *material* of consumption, determining the *mode* of consumption, and by creating in the consumer a need for the commodity which it presents whilst at the same time furnishing the consumer with that commodity. In this way, the production and consumption of the cultural commodity are

> not only simultaneously the other, and not merely the cause of the other, but each of them by being carried through creates the other,... creat[ing] itself as the other.[49]

This dense concept needs to be unpacked within the wider context of the historical materialist canon in order to clarify the social, as well as the economic, status of early modern English drama as cultural commodity. A useful starting point is Marx's expression in the *Grundrisse* of the way in which the cultural commodity is not somehow automatously fashioned as a *sui generis* response to the aesthetic 'needs' of the society in which it is produced, but is instead the means by which the forces and relations of production are reproduced in a cultural context. Fashioned by the society in which the same commodity is consumed,

> The need which consumption feels for the object is created by the perception of it. The object of art – like every other product – creates a public which is sensitive to art and enjoys beauty. Production thus not only creates an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object.[50]

The literal and figurative relationships between the Rose theatre and the other businesses which operated on Bankside in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-centuries demonstrates that as these enterprises' interests overlapped, so work on

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[49] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 133. See also p. 125 passim.
[50] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 92.

Bankside came to assume a social form which transformed every product of labour into a social hieroglyph.[51] Subsequent to this transformation, as Marx observes in *1 Capital*,

> men tr[ied] to decipher the hieroglyphic, to get behind the secret of their own social product: for the characteristic which objects of utility have of being values is as much men's social product as is their language.[52]

'Production', Marx and Engels insist, 'is simultaneously consumption as well. It is consumption in a dual form – subjective and objective consumption'. 'Consumption is simultaneously also production, just as in nature the production of a plant involves the consumption of elemental forces and chemical materials... this type of production that is identical with consumption is a secondary phase arising from the *destruction* of the first product. In the first type of production the producer assumes an objective aspect, in the second type the objects created by him assume a personal aspect'.[53]

The crucial idea contained in this observation is that what is *destroyed* in the above paradigm in terms of its application to early modern English drama is its 'literariness', and what remains is its commodity-form.[54] As it is watched, the 'objective aspect' of the play-as-cultural commodity is transformed by its observer

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[51] On art's ability to foreground 'the radical contradiction between capitalism and man as a creative being' (p. 102), see Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez's 'Art as creative labour' in *Art and Society: Essays in Marxist Aesthetics* (London: Merlin Press, 1973), pp. 102-5.

[52] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 167.

[53] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., pp. 130-31.

[54] Whilst never deviating from the conclusion that 'the weapon of criticism cannot replace the criticism of weapons', Marx viewed criticism as a revolutionary tool, which he described 'not [as] a passion of the head but the head of passion. It is not a scalpel but a weapon. Its object is its *enemy*, which it aims not to refute, but to *destroy*'. With admirable enthusiasm, Marx depicts critics as being 'involved in a *hand-to-hand fight*, and in such fights it does not matter what the opponent's rank is, or whether he is noble or *interesting*: what matters is to *hit* him'. Karl Marx, 'A contribution to the critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Introduction', in *Early Writings*, transs. Rodney Livingstone, Gregor Benton (1843-45; : Penguin, 1975), pp. 251, 246-7).

into the second form of production Marx and Engels identify above, namely the 'personal aspect'.[55] In a theatrical context this corresponds to a member of the audience's coming-to-consciousness of a given play's communication of an 'objective aspect' of the social, economic, political or historical issue represented. Such consciousness is, then, 'from the very beginning a social product', created within the framework of definite social relations.[56] At every level, men's social being is constituted by the totality of their objective social relations, so that their social consciousness *is* such because it is constituted by their social being: 'it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness'.[57]

As this study will go on to discuss, in accordance with historical materialism's expectation that changes in the economic base lead to changes in the superstructure, the extant canon of the Rose theatre suggests that there was a contemporary consciousness in late sixteenth popular culture of social and economic changes having been brought about by the transition from the late feudal to the nascent

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[55] In terms of this model, the cultural commodity's 'objective aspect' is what gives the commodity's authorship a substantive function, rather than reducing the author's role to that of a cipher, or positing that the commodity is self-generating, or providing a conduit through which criticism may undertake its retrospective appropriation.

[56] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 51.

[57] Karl Marx, 'Preface' to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 425.

capitalist mode of production.[58] In studying such modifications, this study will endeavour 'to distinguish between the material transformations of the economic conditions of production' and the 'ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out'.[59]

Having demonstrated that production leads to consumption, Marx and Engels establish how 'consumption also leads to production by providing for its products the subject for whom they *are* products'.[60] Two separate instances of this condition are defined. Firstly, 'a product becomes a *real* product only through consumption' (pp. 131-32). Thus a play is a cultural commodity when it is performed, when people pay money to consume it, but also when actors are paid to rehearse it, or when the play is purchased from its author, or even at the point when a down payment is made in expectation of its completion, a category of transaction frequently recorded in Henslowe's *Diary*. In the interim the play has a liminal, discontinuous existence, its actuality as the 'objective aspect' of the author who produced it having been destroyed and the 'personal aspect' or coming-to-

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[58] The general nature of the problem of transition between forms of production is economically expressed in *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, trans. J. Cohen, ed. E. Hobsbawm (1857-8; London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1964) in Marx's examination of 'the *reproduction of the individual* in certain definite relationships to his community' in conjunction with an assessment of the liminal space between feudalism and nascent capitalism (pp. 80-81). The modern debate concerning the social and economic consequences of the transition from feudalism to capitalism in England has its origins in Maurice Dobb's *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*. A conference of the British Communist Party Historians' Group entitled 'the Development of British Capitalism' followed in July 1946, with many of the papers contributed being subsequently collected in *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*. A series of exchanges between Dobb and Paul Sweezy in the 1950s led to the development of three distinct approaches to the transition: the 'exchange relations' and 'property relations' perspectives, and Perry Anderson's ambitious synthesis of the two positions. Significant contributions to the debate followed in the 1970s, including a notable series of exchanges between Immanuel Wallerstein, Paul Sweezy and Robert Brenner. Further works were published in the 1980s by Colin Barker, Jean Baechler, and Philip Corrigan. Cf. Robert Brenner's *Merchants and Revolution* (1993). All of the above are cited in this study's bibliography. See also 'British Marxist historians' and 'Transition from feudalism to capitalism' in Tom Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, op. cit., pp. 58-61, 540-42.

[59] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 426.

[60] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p.131. Bracketed page numbers over the next two pages refer to this work.

consciousness of the reader or observer who will consume it having yet to be created. Thus 'the product [continues to be] a product, not because it is materialised activity, but only in so far as it is an object for the active subject' (p. 132).

The second way in which consumption produces production is as a result of the consumption of the theatrical artefact creating 'the need for *new* production and therefore provid[ing] production with the conceptual, intrinsically actuating reason' or 'precondition for production'. Thus, 'consumption furnishes the impulse to produce, as well as providing the object which acts as the determining purpose of production' (p. 132). It not only consumes that which has already been produced but also provides the producer with 'the impulse to produce' and 'the determining purpose of production'(p. 118). 'There is', to summarise, 'no production without a need, but consumption re-creates the need' perpetually (p. 132).

Marx and Engels go on to define three distinctive ways in which production maintains consumption, firstly 'by the fact that production supplies the material, the object of consumption. Consumption without an object is no consumption, in this respect therefore, production creates, produces consumption' (p. 132). In a theatrical context, one cannot observe a play if it is not performed. Secondly, 'production provides not only the object of consumption but also gives consumption a distinct form, *a character*, *a finish*. Just as consumption puts the finishing touch to a product as a product, so production [be it the rhetorical flourish of Edward Alleyn as Barabas in the 1590s, or the lustrous cover of an edition of *The Jew of Malta* from the 1990s] puts the finishing touch to consumption' (p. 132). Thus production 'produces not only the object of consumption but also the *mode* of consumption, not only objectively but also subjectively' (p. 132). A play performed by the Admiral's Men

at court would not have been consumed in the same way as when it was performed at the Rose.

This contention is closely linked to the third way in which Marx and Engels perceive production producing consumption, namely that 'production not only provides the material to satisfy a need, but *it also provides the need for the material*'. They argue that the 'need felt for the object is induced by the perception of the object', and that the creation of a cultural commodity 'creates a public that has artistic taste and is able to enjoy beauty', at least by its own account of itself. Accordingly, production 'produces not only an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object' (pp. 132-3).[61]

The use value and exchange value of the cultural commodity

The ideas characteristically associated with classical historical materialism's conceptualisation of art's expression of life-processes correspond to such concepts as are conveyed in the writings of Marx and Engels up to and including *The German*

[61] The earlier, politically engaged works of Jean Baudrillard deploy this idea in a number of productive contexts. In particular, see *Le Système des objets* (Paris: Denöel, 1968); *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. C. Levin (1972; St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981), pp. 29-87; *The Mirror of Production*, trans. M. Poster (1975; St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981), pp. 25-41.

Ideology, and have formed the basis of a well-documented critical tradition.[62] Despite his penchant for illustrating ideas with literary quotations, Marx had little time for those commodities which 'really represented something without representing something real' such as drama, considering them to be of 'microscopic significance' to historical materialism's function as a revolutionary theory.[63] This does not mean that historical materialism is incapable of explaining the status of works of art in relation to the society which generated them.

In their early writings, Marx and Engels maintained that 'neither thoughts nor language in themselves form a realm of their own' on the basis that 'they are only *manifestations* of actual life'.[64] Their later writings moved away from simple notions of reflection to incorporate the aesthetic into a sophisticated account of how the commodity-form functions at all levels and in all social and economic configurations. The twin concepts of use-value and exchange-value were axial to these developments, and provide further theoretical resources for the present study's methodology.

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[62] Key documents include Georg Lukács, 'On Socialist Realism', *International Literature* 4 (1939), pp. 87-96; Maxim Gorki, *On Literature*, transs. Julius Katzer, Ivy Litvinov (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960); Georgy Plekhanov, *Art and Social Life* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1953); Roger Garaudy, *D'un réalisme sans rivages* (Paris: Plon, 1963); Ernst Fischer, *The Necessity of Art: A Marxist Approach*, trans. Anna Bostock (: Penguin Books, 1963); Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, ed. John Willett (London: Methuen, 1964); Christopher Caudwell, *Illusion and Reality* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1937); Sidney Finkelstein, *Art and Society* (New York: International Publishers, 1965); Ralph Fox, *The Novel and the People* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1937); Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, trans. W. Boelhower, eds. D. Forgacs, G. Nowell-Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1985); Nikita Krushchev, *The Great Mission of Literature and Art* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964); Anatoly Lunacharsky, *On Literature and Art* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965); Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1957); Andrey Zhdanov, *Essays on Literature, Philosophy, and Music* (New York: International Publishers, 1950). Both Tony Bennett's *Outside Literature* (London: Routledge, 1990) and Francis Mulhern's 'Introduction' to *Contemporary Marxist Literary Criticism* (London: Longman, 1992), pp. 1-33, offer excellent accounts of the development of the Marxist theorisation of art.

[63] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 1044.

[64] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 118.

There are two necessarily different features of the exchange of the cultural commodity (or any other commodity), namely its 'usefulness to some agent, which is what permits the commodity to come into exchange at all', and 'its power to command certain quantities of other commodities in exchange'. The former corresponds to the commodity's use-value, the latter to its exchange-value.[65] 'Use-values', Marx observed, 'are only realized in use or in consumption', and the exchange-value of drama to late sixteenth century playwrights, theatrical entrepreneurs, actors and stage-hands lay in its sale and subsequent performance for money.

The use-value of the cultural commodity to its early modern English consumers is more difficult to define as a singularity. For the audiences of the early modern London amphitheatres, as for any audience today, the use-value of the theatrical cultural commodity had a 'double form', namely a 'natural form' and a 'value form'. The 'natural form' was (and is) constituted for the audience by 'the agency of the social process' in which they participated as consumers of a play, whilst the 'value form' was exactly equivalent to, and constitutive of, the theatrical process's 'specific social function'. Marx suggests that

> all new capital, in the first instance, steps on to the stage – i.e. the market, whether it is the commodity-market, the labour-market, or the money-market – in the shape of money, money which has to be transformed into capital by definite processes.[66]

By way of an example of the above, the gatherers at the door having taken exactly two pounds and three shillings, the Admiral's Men stepped on to the stage of the Rose on 12 October 1597 to perform *An Humorous Day's Mirth* for the first time, in

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[65] See Duncan Foley's entry on 'use value' in Tom Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 561.
[66] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 126, 138, 180, 248.

so doing realising the exchange-value of Chapman's manuscript (for which he received three pounds in part payment).[67] Exchange-values are seldom equivalent, however, and the difference between them invariably constitutes a profit for one party and a loss for the other. The example cited appears to have fallen into the later category for the Admiral's Men, for according to Henslowe's *Diary*, Chapman's play was only performed on one other occasion (4 November 1597), and may never have recouped the money spent on it.

In the production and exchange of the cultural commodity in theatrical performance, during the course of the labour process 'use-values undergo a *genuine transformation*' for the audience, as the play is fashioned by means of the 'living labour' of all those involved in converting the product from page to stage, 'one term in the series of metamorphoses of the commodity world as a whole'. Bearing these criteria in mind, it is only ultimately in its *performance* that the theatrical cultural commodity achieves its 'real form':

> this real form, the form of the objective use-values in which *capital is incorporated*, its material substratum, is necessarily the form assumed by the means of production – the means and objects of labour – which are required for the creation of new products.[68]

It could quite reasonably be argued that the only 'historically accurate' way in which to discuss early modern English drama is in terms of 'its capitalist birth-mark', its contemporary commercial situatedness.[69] The inspiration behind the authorship and production of early modern drama was financial, and, as Marx points out, where 'production has a capitalist form, so will reproduction', for it is 'only an historically

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[67] Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), p. 100; W.W. Greg (ed.), *Henslowe's Diary*, Vol. 2 (London: A.H. Bullen, 1908), pp. 341, 345.

[68] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 980, 981. Cf. Karl Marx, *2 Capital*, trans. David Fernbach (1885; Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1978), p. 427.

[69] Karl Marx, *2 Capital*, op. cit., p. 123. See also p. 190.

specific epoch of development which presents the labour expended in the production of [a given commodity]... as an "objective" property of that article, i.e. as its value'. As well as the considerable changes to the form a commodity such as drama may take over time (witness the unending editorial quarrels over the provenance of Shakespearean quartos), the method of its consumption will also vary greatly, from, say, an apprentice watching a play for a penny at a Bankside amphitheatre in the 1590s to the same play being taught as an e-book on an internet-driven distance learning course at a university in the present day.[70]

In the very system of economic relations within which early modern English drama existed, in the trading of the theatrical cultural commodity's use and exchange-values in every performance, drama then (as now) 'los[t] all the characteristics of art', and became 'a merely *formal* activity, or, what is the same, a merely *material* activity'.[71] In short, the conceptualisation of early modern English drama's use and exchange-value begins not in the analysis of such aesthetic qualities as it may be assumed to contain immanently but 'where [such] speculation ends – in real life', in 'the representation of the practical activity, of the practical process of the development of men'.[72]

During the last decade of the sixteenth century, the use-value of the dramatic cultural commodity for the audience of the Rose and the other London amphitheatres lay at

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[70] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 711, 153-54; Karl Marx, *2 Capital*, op. cit., p. 114.

[71] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 296. The commodification of all art produced for the purposes of making money is not a universal quality of the artefact itself, but a consequence of the homogenising tendency of capital, to which all professions and trades are subject under the capitalist mode of production, a tendency which 'has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers' (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, in *Political Writings Volume 1: The Revolutions of 1848*, ed. David Fernbach (1847-50; : Penguin, 1973), p. 70).

[72] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 48. Cf. Frederic Jameson, *Late Marxism: Adorno, or the Persistence of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 1990), p. 152.

least in part in their representation of the new economic and social practices, tracing in their acting 'the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of... real life-process[es]', palpably illustrating the fact that 'life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life'. Accompanying these necessary conditions for the 'successful' exchange of the cultural commodity was the additional possibility that during the course of the production, the previously mentioned 'social [and economic] hieroglyphic' may be partially deciphered by the audience. As a consequence, the 'antagonism between the productive powers and the social relations' developing during the era of nascent workshop-capitalism may have begun to have been understood, and a glimpse given to contemporary observers of men 'not in their given social connection, no[r] under their existing conditions of life', but instead coming to a consciousness of a potential to change the organisation of the productive forces which 'slumbered in the lap of social labour'.[73] It is to a consideration of early modern English drama as the product of social labour that I would finally like to turn.

Social being and the social form of labour

Marx noted that 'the real value of a commodity... is not its individual but its social value'.[74] Following on from the above, the potential significance of any contemporary coming-to-consciousness of the dramatic cultural commodity as a social form of labour rests upon this observation. During the course of a performance, the cultural commodity produced by a given theatrical company – the

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[73] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., pp. 47, 64; Karl Marx, 'Articles on India and China', *Surveys from Exile: Political Writings Volume 2*, ed. David Fernbach (1850-63; : Penguin, 1973), p. 299; Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, op. cit., p. 72; cf. p. 86: 'Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views and conceptions, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?'. See also Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., pp. 639, 652, 706.

[74] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 434.

'living mechanism of manufacture' – reproduces 'the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves'. As workshop-capitalism developed during the late sixteenth century, so the contradictions between the forces and relations of production were explored in another socialised sphere of production.[75]

Early modern English drama was a social product in the sense that the cultural commodity created by a play in performance was the sum of the many different forms of social labour undertaken by the playwright, actor, tiring-house hand, gatherer, and so on. It was also a social product in so far as the symbiotic relationship between the world inside and outside of the playhouse walls relied on socialised activity in a variety of contexts for much of its material, accenting the 'specific relation of capital to the communal, general conditions of social production'.[76] As I will demonstrate in the following three chapters, being a product of the very social and economic conditions it was examining, early modern English drama reproduced 'certain *specific social relations of production between people* [which] appear[ed] as *relations of things to people*', whilst at the same time interrogating those 'social relations [which] appear[ed] as the *natural properties of things in society*'.[77]

Gramsci observed of the Politeama Chiarella variety shows in 1917 that 'if tomorrow it is proved to be more expedient to use the theatres to retail peanuts and iced drinks, the theatre industry will not hesitate [for] an instant to become an outlet for peanuts and drinks, while keeping the adjective 'theatrical' in the firm's title'.[78]

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[75] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 458, 165. See also pp. 951, 990.
[76] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 533.
[77] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 1005.
[78] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

Similarly, foregrounding the theatrical product's commodity-form emphasises the fact that the permanent, purpose-built playhouses built in London in the last quarter of the sixteenth century to turn a profit did not appear by chance. Their emergence was in part a consequence of the transition from the feudal to the nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production, for 'as individuals express their life, so they are', both in '*what* they produce and *how* they produce' it:

> These *social productive forces of labour*, or *productive forces of social labour*, came into being historically only with the advent of the specifically capitalist mode of production. That is to say, they appeared as something intrinsic to the relations of capitalism and inseparable from them.[79]

Early modern English drama's social form implicitly and explicitly invited its audience to participate in the interrogation of emergent social, economic (and to a lesser extent, political) practices in its acknowledgement of (to use Thomas Nashe's expression) 'the experience of our time'.[80] Tracing all of the implicit interventions which may be discerned within the social form of early modern English drama is an enterprise without theoretical boundaries, but the exhortational titles of many of the Rose plays are revealing in themselves: *Look About You*; *Bear a Brain*; *Looking Glass for London and England*; *All Fools*; *All is not Gold that Glisters*; *Truth's Supplication*; *A Knack to Know a Knave*, and so on.[81]

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[79] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 42; Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 1052. Cf. pp. 1056, 1064; Karl Marx, *2 Capital*, pp. 120, 121, 420. Terry Eagleton remarks in *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1976) that 'drama is not just a collection of literary texts; it is a capitalist business which employs certain men (authors, directors, actors, stagehands) to produce a commodity to be consumed by an audience at a profit' (p. 59).

[80] Thomas Nashe, *Pierce Penniless: his Supplication to the Devil*, op. cit., p. 116

[81] See Appendix C.

Conclusion

Theodor Adorno has observed that 'what has become alien to men is the human component of culture, its closest part, which upholds them against the world'.[82] However, far from being alien to the producers and consumers of early modern English drama, the common bond formed by the 'human component[s] of culture' which they shared, such as the social form of labour, imbued Elizabethan popular theatre in its historical moment with an ability to participate in an analysis of the development of the underlying contradictions between the forces and relations of the workshop-era of the capitalist mode of production. The 'human component of culture' was at the very centre of early modern English art, overdetermining it. At the same time as it reconstituted this contradiction within the theatre walls, early modern English drama drew attention to the nature of its development in the world outside them, a contradiction 'inseparable from the total structure of the social body in which it is found, inseparable from its formal *conditions* of existence... it is radically *affected by them*, determining, but also determined in one and the same movement'.[83]

Historical materialism enables us to appreciate that the awareness of social change we perceive in early modern English drama may have manifested itself in its contemporary observers' coming-to-consciousness of capitalism's foundation in

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[82] Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life* (1951; London: New Left Books, 1974), p. 96. See also Georg Lukács, 'Realism in the balance' in Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Bertolt Brecht, and Georg Lukács, *Aesthetics and Politics* (London: New Left Books, 1977), pp. 28-59.

[83] Louis Althusser, 'Contradiction and overdetermination: notes for an investigation', *Lenin and Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 101.

social relations rather than the workings of the market. With the individual playgoer's observation and concurrent coming-to-consciousness of these oppositions as they were represented on the stage may have come a realisation that they could 'only occur because existing social relations ha[d] come into contradiction with existing forces of production' where social consciousness came into conflict with social reality.[84] In coming to a common understanding of 'the growing incompatibility between the productive development of society and its hitherto existing relations of production', the individual may have come to a consciousness of the fact that those conditions which he thought previously to pertain to his social being no longer applied. On perceiving the gap between 'his real and ideal relations', he 'grasp[ed].... his own history as a *process*'.[85]

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[84] Frederick Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* in *Marx and Engels: Selected Works in One Volume* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1968), p. 417.
[85] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., pp. 749, 542.

2 'But how am I fallen from the market into the alehouse?': Correspondences between work, money and alcohol in the Rose plays

Whilst those fortunate enough to find regular work within the workshop-capitalist marketplace of early modern London may also have experienced a corresponding alienation as keenly as any contemporary worker, they were at least to some degree solvent. The dramatisation of financial transactions and the reckonings of accounts which are presented in those plays performed at the Rose which have survived suggest that the operations of the money-function held a fascination for its playwrights, and hence presumably also for their audiences.

In order to have been able to attend a performance, those members of the Rose's audiences drawn from the artisanal class must have had sufficient surplus income to afford their entry to the theatre, and possessed enough leisure time to spend it. Those who lacked a regular income may have considered such funds as they could avail themselves of better employed in the alehouse. Whether seeking solace from alienation or impoverishment, this chapter explores the ways in which both groups could be said to have resorted to their respective diversions in order to effect a fantastic, if temporary, escape from their circumstances in spheres where alienation did not take place, suspending the potentially debilitating consequences of workshop-capitalism in the pursuit of pleasure.

In what follows, an analysis of money's medial position in such a system of exchange is framed by a review of the presentation of work in the canon of the Rose, and an examination of the consumption of alcohol both on the amphitheatre's stage and outside its walls. This chapter will also consider the liminal function money played within the extant canon of the Rose as the facilitator of pleasure for those who possessed it in sufficiency, and the deferrer of distress for those who lacked the same.

Contemporary entries from the Middlesex County Records are footnoted throughout the following chapters in order to underline the fact that there are compelling reasons to suggest that there was a dynamic relationship between real life, dramatic texts and economic analysis in London in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. In their articulation of a contemporary consciousness of the social and economic changes taking place as a consequence of the transition to the nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production, the plays of the Rose served to mediate social existence.

2.1 The realisation of alienation: work in the Rose plays

> The history of manufacture proper shows how the division of labour which is peculiar to it acquires the most appropriate form at first by experience, as it were behind the backs of the actors, and then, like the guild handicrafts, strives to hold fast to that form when once it has been found.[1]

In its representation of the ways in which the reorganisation of labour power facilitated the more efficient extraction of surplus-labour, early modern English drama, in its meditations on the changing nature of work, went some way towards illustrating how changes in occupational practices were taking place 'behind the backs' of the artisanal classes. The majority of the Rose plays which are not set in an historical or mythical context feature at least one character who is a member of a trade which would have been familiar to the artisanal elements of the audiences. Several other plays go so far as to represent on stage the sort of workshop-industries that these audience members may have participated in, utilising either an allegorical setting or, rather more often, a semi-fictional contemporary London in an attempt to make sense of how working practices in the early modern capital were being modified by the incursion of workshop-capitalism into everyday working life. In so doing, they let it be understood that the basis of the new mode of production was in social relations, not market forces.

Marx contends that because labour 'does not belong to [the worker's] essential being' and is external to him:

> He... does not confirm himself in his work, but denies himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh and ruins his mind. Hence the worker feels himself

[1] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 485.

> only when he is not working... [Work] is therefore not the satisfaction of a need, but a mere *means* to satisfy needs outside itself.[2]

For Marx, labour in this form 'estranges man from his own body, from nature as it exists outside him, from his spiritual essence, his *human* essence', or what he refers to elsewhere as his '*species-being*'. This is a dilemma compounded by the fact that 'the *worker* has the misfortune to be a *living* capital, and hence a capital *with needs*, which forfeits its interest and hence its existence every moment it is not working'.[3]

Whilst it lacks historical materialism's theoretical resources to draw upon, there are many provoking commentaries within the extant Rose canon on the character of labour in the era of workshop-capitalism and its alienating tendencies. Considered collectively, they suggest that the early modern English amphitheatres were liminal spaces within which work was undertaken to demonstrate a coming-to-consciousness of 'the contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation' at the level of social being.[4]

To begin with an allegorical example, the comical confrontation between Miles and the devil in Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* unites the themes of work, play, punishment and reward to intriguing effect, concluding with the apprentice choosing to ride off to hell on the devil's back with the intention of setting up in business. Recently dismissed from service, Miles clearly perceives unemployment and poverty to pose a greater present threat to his person than the compromising of

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2 Karl Marx, 'Economic and philosophical manuscripts', in *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 326.
3 Ibid., pp. 329, 335.
4 Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 706; Frederick Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, op. cit., p. 417.

his immortal soul. His pact with his new master, satirically echoing that of Marlowe's Faustus within the same theatre's walls, is presented as a commercial agreement rather than an act of apostasy:

Miles: But I pray you, sir,
do you come lately from hell?
Devil: Ay, marry: how then?
Miles: Faith, 'tis a place I have desired long to see: have you not good tippling-houses there? May not a man have a lusty fire there, a pot of good ale, a pair of cards, a swinging piece of chalk, and a brown toast that will clap a white waistcoat on a cup of good drink?
Devil: All this you may have there.
Miles: You are for me, friend, and I am for you. But I pray you, may I not have an office there?
Devil: Yes, a thousand: what would'st thou be?
Miles: By my troth, sir, in a place where I may profit myself. I know hell is a hot place, and men are marvellous dry, and much drink is spent there; I would be a tapster.
Devil: Thou shalt.[5]

In the rather more prosaic setting of a decidedly London-like Italy, Chettle, Dekker and Haughton's *Patient Grissil* features a scene in which Janicola, a basket-maker, Grisill, his daughter, and Babulo his employee are discovered at work:

Babulo: Olde Master heeres a morning able to make us worke tooth and naile (marrie then we must have victuals) the Sun hath plaid boe peep in the element anie time these two houres, as I doe some mornings when you cal
...
and then I start up, and see the Sunne, and then sneeze, and then shake mine eares, and then rise, and then get my breakfast, and then fal to worke, and then wash my hands, and by this time I am ready: heers your

[5] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, in *Minor Elizabethan Drama*, Vol. 2, ed. Ashley Thorndike (c.1589-90, *1594*; London: Dent, 1910), ll. 2008-23. The 'swinging / piece of chalk' refers to the marking up of credit on the alehouse wall. Cf. Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, ed. W.W.Greg (1587-91?, *1594*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1932), ll. 1700-17, 1725-35; Anon., *Mucedorus*, ed. John S. Farmer (1590, *1598*; London: Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1910), sig. $C3_V$.

basket, and Grissill heers yours.
Janicola: Fetch thine own, Babulo, lets ply our busines.[6]

Janicola's call to work breaks Babulo's bucolic reverie, a sharp reminder to his employee that there is nothing idyllic about having to fall to work, as the reality of Babulo's working environment usurps his romanticised vision of it. Babulo knows well enough that the reason he is at his workbench two hours after dawn is that business is hard:

Babulo: basket making as all other trades runs to decay, and shortly we shall not be worth a butten, for none in this cutting age sowe true stitches, but taylers, and shoomakers, and yet now and then they tread their shooes a wrie too.[7]

The work-song that the three subsequently break into ('that our labour may not seem so long', l. 91) offers an insight into the way that participants in the early modern workplace may have struggled to come to terms with the fact that nasecent workshop-capitalism's wage relation would keep them in structural dependency so that they no longer worked to live but lived to work, regardless of whether they profited from the surplus value generated by their labours or not:

Song: *Art thou poore yet hast thou golden Slumbers:*
Oh sweet content!
Art thou rich yet is thy minde perplexed?
Oh punnishment!
To ad to golden numbers, golden numbers.
O sweet content, O sweet content.
...
Work apace, apace, apace, apace:
Honest labour beares a lovely face.[8]

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[6] Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, in *Thomas Dekker: Works*, Vol. 1, ed. F. Bowers (1600, *1603*; Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1953), II.i.1-4, 7-12. Agricultural labour remained as hard as it had always been; see Mucedorus's description of his life as a shepherd: 'To bed at midnight, up at fowre, / Drudge all daie and trudge from place to place, / Whereby our vittel for to winne' (Anon., *Mucedorus*, op. cit., sig. $D4_r$).

[7] Ibid., I.ii.85-88.

[8] Ibid., I.ii.94-99, 101-2.

Pondering the promise of workshop capitalism, the song's subject matter provides evidence of a contemporary consciousness of the contradictory fantasy at its core. To be poor, but to labour honestly, so the song implies, will bring 'sweet content'; perplexity, on the other hand, would appear to be the 'punishment' for being rich, for those who fail to realise that 'sweet content' should be taken from the performative action of adding 'golden numbers' to 'golden numbers' alone. One would expect the sort of 'honest labour' that the basket makers' urge one another on to in song to bring wealth with it. The fact that it has not indicates at best that the market for which Janicola and his colleagues manufacture is flat, or at worst (as Babulo suggests above) in decline, a state of affairs which would be consistent with the depressed economy of late 1590s London.[9]

There is none of Babulo's day-dreaming in the turmoil of Simon Eyre's workshop in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. The eponymous protagonist issues a tumultuous summoning to his household which the journeyman Firk at first mistakes for his master's having had an early-morning drink:

Eyre: Where be these boys, these girls, these drabs, these scoundrels? They wallow in the fat brewis* of my bounty, and lick up the crumbs of my table, yet will not rise to see my walks cleansed. Come out, you powder-beef-queans! What, Nan! What, Madge Mumblecrust! Come out, you fat midriff-swag-belly whores, and sweep me these kennels†, that the noisesome stench offend not the nose of my neighbours. What, Firk, I say! What, Hodge! Open my shop windows! What, Firk, I say!

Enter Firk

Firk: O master, is't you that speak bandog and bedlam‡ this morning? I was in a dream, and mused what madman was

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9 See chapter 3.1

* *brewis*: broth.

† *kennel*: gutter.

‡ *bandog and bedlam*: A 'bandog' was a ferocious dog, tied or chained up; the *SOED* offers 'furiously and madly' as a definition of the expression 'bandog and bedlam'.

> got into the street so early. Have you drunk this morning that your throat is so clear?[10]

Within Eyre's establishment, unlike Janiculo's workshop, there is no desire to make labour seem worthy or valuable in itself, and the shoemakers do whatever they can to take their minds off of the drudgery of their tasks. Firk implores Eyre to hire the Dutch shoemaker Hans Meulter (who is actually another of the play's protagonists, Rowland Lacy, in disguise) solely for the purpose that he will prove a distraction:

> Firk: hire him, good master, that I may learn some gibble-gabble: 'twill make us work the faster.
> ...
> Firk: Good master, hire him: he'll make us laugh so that I shall work more in mirth than I can in earnest.[11]

For all their employer's industrious intentions, very little work is done during the course of the play. By the fourth act, when Eyre is on the verge of being invested as Lord Mayor, his foreman, Hodge, who has been left in charge, is frantic that they should now be making up for lost time, whilst the journeymen and apprentices raise their spirits with a song. Unlike the workers' song in *Patient Grissill*, however, they sing not in praise of work itself, but in commendation of beer, another contrivance to obliterate consciousness rather than to focus effort.[12]

Interested only in beer and breakfast, and with no belief that they will ever enjoy prosperity, the refrain to Firk and Ralph's song – 'lll is the weather that bringeth no

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[10] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, ed. D.J. Palmer (1599, *1600*; London: A.C. Black, 1975), I.iv.1-13.

[11] Ibid., I.iv.47-49, 83-84.

[12] This song, called 'The Second Three Man's Song', appears in the 1600 quarto between the prefatory entitled 'To all good fellowes, professors of the gentle craft, of what degree soever' and the prologue, 'As it was pronounced before the Queen's Majesty'. D.J. Palmer has suggested that the song would have been sung at this point in IV.ii on the basis of the resemblance of the first line of the scene to the refrain of the song.

gain, / Nor helps good hearts in need' – represents figuratively the fact that, like Janicola, these artisans anticipate mere subsistence rather than significant economic gain from their work. However, unlike Janicola, they see no merit in it either.[13] It is on occasions such as these, where the characters' realisation of the oppressive nature of work is forcefully represented on the stage of the Rose, that we can perhaps get a sense of what its audience was trying to seek solace against within the theatre's walls. In so doing, we come perhaps to a better understanding of the early modern English amphitheatre's function as a liminal space within which work was undertaken to demonstrate a coming-to-consciousness of 'the contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation' at the level of social being.[14]

Artisanal characters in the Rose plays air an opinion that the aristocracy, as well as being work-shy, would be unable to undertake the labour that they do. In the anonymous *Fair Em*, the Saxon noble Sir Thomas Goddard adopts the guise of a miller. Unaware of the deception, Goddard's man Trotter declares of Em, his master's daughter:

Trotter: You are too fine to be a Miller's daughter:
For if you should but stoope to take up the tole dish
You will have the crampe in your finger
At least ten weekes after.[15]

Apprentices on the Rose stage are also heard to protest about the fact that their masters overwork them in an attempt to squeeze additional surplus-value from their

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[13] The drudgery of the apprentices and journeymen leaves them with little sympathy for the guild's ruling body, as demonstrated by Hodge, Firk and Ralph's exchange later in the same scene: 'They say seven of the Aldermen / be dead, or very sick… / I care not; I'll be none / No, nor I'. Thomas Dekker,*The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit., IV.ii.35-38.

[14] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p. 706; Frederick Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, op. cit., p. 417.

[15] Anon., *Fair Em*, ed. John S. Farmer (c.1589-94, *1631*; London: Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1911), sig. $A4_V$.

labour. In Heywood's *Four Prentices of London*, Eustace complains to his father of the hard work he is having to undertake as a grocer's apprentice, bemoaning the fact that he has little time to indulge in the traditional apprentice recreations which he lists with some relish:

Eustace: I cannot goe to breake-fast in a morning
With my kinde mated and fellow-Prentises,
But he cries Eustace, one bid Eustace come:
And my name Eustace is in every roome.
If I might once a weeke but see a Tilting,
Sixe dayes I would fall unto my businesse close,
And ere the weekes end winne that idle day.
Hee will not let mee see a mustering,
Nor on a May-day morning fetch in May:
I am no sooner got into the Fencing-schoole,
To play a venew with some friend I bring;
But Eustace, Eustace, all the streete mustring.
Hee will allow me not one howre for sport:
I must not strike a foote-ball in the streete,
But hee wil frowne: not view the dancing schoole,
But he will misse me straight: not suffer mee
So much as take up cudgels in the streete,
But hee will chide: I must not go to buffets;
No, though I bee provoked; that's the hell,
Were't not for this, I could endure it well.[16]

In the last instance, whether at the workshop stage of capitalism's development or at any other phase, labour's tendency is to alienate the worker from himself. Accordingly, Marx's 'conception of human nature [is] radically opposed to that of political economy'. As István Mészáros has explained, what matters to political economy is 'not the assessment of the *human* implications of an objective economic

[16] Thomas Heywood, *Four Prentices of London with the Conquest of Jerusalem*, in A.W. Verity (ed.), *Collected Works*, Vol. 2 (1592-c.1600, *1615*; London: J. Pearson, 1874), pp. 170-71. On Eustace's willingness to otherwise 'endure' the conditions of his apprenticeship, cf. Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 1033: 'Since the sole purpose of work in the eyes of the wage-labourer is his wage… he is wholly indifferent towards the *content* of his labour and hence his own particular form of activity'.

process, but the analysis of the necessary conditions of an undisturbed functioning and reproduction of the given process'. The reproduction of this system is contingent upon the worker's complicity on the grounds that

> The worker could not come to face the product of his own activity as a stranger if he were not alienating himself from himself in the very *act of production*. Activity cannot be unalienated activity if its product is alienation; for the product is nothing but the sum of activity, of production.[17]

However, represented on the stage of the Rose, 'the social character of his labour confront[ed] the worker as something not merely alien, but hostile and antagonistic, when it appear[ed] before him objectified and personified' in the cultural commodity he had paid to see. Spectators were confronted with a representation of the social form of labour both in the performance they observed and in their coming-to-consciousness of correspondences between the lives of the characters depicted and their own as 'components of... social formations'. Brought into being in performance, the dramatic cultural commodity was 'transformed… into a social product, the joint product of a collective labour', physical on the part of the actors, mental on the part of the audience.[18]

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[17] István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 4th edn. (London: Merlin Press, 1975), pp. 147-8.
[18] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 1005, 1054, 643. Cf. p. 644.

2.2 'The sinnewes of the world': money's function in the Rose plays

The content of the Rose's repertory may have been diverse, but its purpose was uniform. As Roslyn Lander Knutson concludes, 'whatever else the plays may have been, they were merchandise in a commercial enterprise. The purpose of the business was to attract customers, and the commercial strategy was to offer a large and changing repertory diverse in the age of the plays, the stories that were told, and the formulas that were used in the telling'.[19] A theatrical entrepreneur could expect a worthwhile yield from his investment. Henslowe's *Diary* indicates that from an initial investment of around £500 and an additional outlay of around £100 every five years, a landlord might expect a return in the region of £250 from his share of the receipts in 'a moderately successful year'.[20] The various share-holding companies which operated at the Rose also relied upon its co-owner to perform a number of other financial functions for them such as book-keeping and the provision of credit.[21]

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[19] Roslyn Lander Knutson, *The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company 1594-1613* (Fayetteville: U. Arkansas P., 1991), p. 177. Carol Chillington Rutter has estimated that 'companies at the Rose were used to playing fifteen plays in repertoire while they rehearsed and opened new plays fortnightly'. *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, 2nd edn. (Manchester and New York: Manchester U.P., 1999), p. vi. See also pp. 22-3. Cf. Andrew Gurr on the 'huge appetite' of the repertory system at the Rose for new material in his *The Shakespearean Playing Companies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 100-102.

[20] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, op. cit., p. 8. Even playwriting was subject to nascent workshop-capitalism's modest division of labour. Rutter notes that 'of the eighty-nine plays whose composition for the Admiral's Men is documented... fifty-five were collaborations' (p. 128). See Roslyn Lander Knutson's useful summary of syndicate team-writing enterprises between playwrights in her *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2001). See also her account of repetory practice and company commerce in the same volume (pp. 56-63).

[21] Carol Chillington Rutter details sixteen separate instances of Henslowe having recorded loans to the Admiral's Men in his *Diary* (*Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, op. cit., p. 242).

Susan Cerasano has provided a strong antidote to the previously dominant opinion that Philip Henslowe was an exploitative, money-fixated manager of the various companies which passed through his theatre rather than an entrepreneur for whom the Rose was simply one investment among several others.[22] Neil Carson has also pointed out that Henslowe's ignorance of the names of plays and his confusing of the playwrights with one another suggests that 'the widely held impression that Henslowe ran the companies in his theatre is clearly wrong'. The fact that money paid out is recorded as 'for the use of the company' and approved by individual sharers provides 'the final proof that Henslowe was acting on the players' orders rather than the other way around'.[23] As Carol Chillington Rutter has summarised, 'Henslowe was landlord of the Rose, but never manager of any of the companies that performed there', and neither employed players, nor commissioned plays, nor made policy decisions'.[24] As befitted an institution established for the purposes of making a profit, the money-function received a considerable amount of attention on the stage of the Rose.

Marx writes in 'Excerpts from James Mill's *Elements of Political Economy*' that

> In money the unfettered dominion of the estranged thing *over* man becomes manifest. The rule of the person over the person now becomes the universal rule of the *thing* over the *person*, the product over the producer... so now we see that *money* is the sensuous, corporeal existence of that *alienation*.[25]

The tendency towards alienation which coalesces around work as identified in the previous section is obscured, but not negated, by the process of its precipitation into

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[22] Susan Cerasano, 'Revising Philip Henslowe's biography', *N&Q* 32 (1985), pp. 66-72.
[23] Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary*, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
[24] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, op. cit., p. 9
[25] Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 270.

the money form.[26] Marx's theory of money, as Duncan Foley has summarised, 'shows that money in each of its moments mediates a social relation':

> When money functions as a measure of value it expresses the equivalence of socially necessary abstract labour in exchange, the relation between commodity producers. Money in circulation permits the social validation of the products of private labour. The use of money as means of payment mediates the relation between debtors and creditors. Money capital expresses the capitalists' command over labour power.[27]

Looking back to the realisation of the exchange value of labour in money in the workplace, and forward to its role in the alehouse as the facilitator of the money-commodity cycle described below, this section will review the ways in which the extant Rose plays may have raised their contemporary audiences' level of awareness of the character of the function of money.

The continuing interposition of the function of money into the economic life of late sixteenth century London is re-inflected in the extant Rose plays in a number of ways, some obvious and frequently repeated, others more subtle and surprising. The complexity of the conceptual structures within which money was perceived to function speak perhaps more forcefully than any other indicator could as to the extent which the perceived importance of fiscal relations was beginning to penetrate London's cultural and moral as well as economic life.

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[26] Marx comments in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* that 'the *devaluation* of the human world grows in direct proportion to the *increase in value* of the world of things', and that 'the worker is related to the *product of his labour* as to an *alien* object'. As a consequence, the forced labour of the wage relation 'estranges man from his own body, from nature as it exists outside him, from his spiritual essence, his *human* essence', with the corollary that 'the relation of the worker to labour creates the relation of the capitalist... to that labour'. See *Early Writings*, op. cit., pp. 323-4, 329, 331.

[27] Duncan Foley, 'Money' in Tom Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, 2nd edn., op. cit., p. 386. Money itself Foley defines as 'a *socially accepted* general equivalent, a particular commodity which emerges on social reality to play the role of general equivalent, and excludes all other commodities from that role' (p. 385).

One of the figurative functions associated with the acquisition of money on the early modern English stage was its apparent ability to purchase anonymity and security. The protagonist of Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria* is the cunning son of a lowly shepherd who adopts four increasingly aspirational guises during the course of the play.[28] As Irus, a blind beggar, Leon a usurer, Count Hermes and Duke Cleanthes, his schizophrenic appearance exaggeratedly emphasises the sort of perplexity facing early modern Londoners as they attempted to reconcile the security which money provided with the often iniquitous methods which have to be resorted to in order to acquire it.[29]

Perhaps inviting a contemporary audience to perceive of him as the personification of a parodic immanent critique of Tamburlaine, the nameless shepherd's son's progresses from beggar to usurer, and from count to duke, accruing wealth at every stage and demonstrating how 'to grow great' is 'to grow riche'. No critical gloss is offered at all on the fact that during the course of the play he defrauds a lord of £4,000 as Leon, seduces, makes pregnant, and abandons two sisters as Cleanthes, and admits to having carried out several murders as Count Hermes.[30]

Finally, as Cleanthes he returns to Egypt and routs the invasion force of the kings of Ethiopia, Arabia, Phasiaca and Bebritia, before being crowned himself, the ultimate symbol of fiscal security.[31] From money alone, Chapman suggests, comes security,

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[28] See also 4.2 below regarding the signficance of this character's shifting class-identities.

[29] George Chapman, *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, ed. W.W. Greg (1596, *1598*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1929), ll. 115-27.

[30] Ibid., ll. 325-26, 342-44.

[31] As Perin the corrupt courtier in *A Knack to Know a Knave* reflects, there was money to be had by defrauding, as well as wearing, the crown:'sometime I can counterfeit his hand and seale, / And borrow money of the communalty: / And thus I live and flaunt it with the best, / And dice and carde inferiour unto none' (Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, ed. G.R. Proudfoot (1592, *1594*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1964), ll. 329-32). Cf. Christopher Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine the Great*, in *The Complete Plays*, ed. J.B.Steane (c.1587, *1590*; : Penguin, 1969), II.iv.26-41.

a motivational (but also unrealistic) message for those members of the Rose audience who may, like Count Hermes have committed acts of violence, or who like Cleanthes had become fathers. Unlike him, however, they were unlikely to be able to claim as Cleanthes does (with a metafictive wink to the audience) 'not the worlde / Shall ever know the mad prankes I have played' (ll. 1589-90).

The association of the acquisition of money with a marked amorality is a recurring trope in the Rose plays, with many of the protagonists displaying a noteworthy disinterest in the means by which they attain their fortune, or in how the function of capital which benefits them may penalise others. Captain Thomas Stukeley, the eponymous hero of the anonymous 1596 Rose play, explains how he considers a concern with the procurement of money ignoble, and expects his new father-in-law, Sir Thomas Curtis, both to pay off his debts and to surrender up his daughter's dowry to him. Stukeley's death at the end of the play at the hands of his own troops may appear to offer a moral gloss on this, but as the Pope's personal guard their function is merely to represent the treachery of Catholicism. As a consequence, a contemporary spectator may have been left uncertain as to whether the protagonist is really as heedless of the value of money as he suggests:

Stukeley: I scorne this trash, betrayer of mens souls:
Ile spurne it with my foot: and with my hand
Raine shewers of plenty on this Barren land,
were it my fortune could exceed the clouds,
yet would I beare a mind surmounting that.
Father you have enough for you, and for your store
When mine is gone you must provide me more.
...
I must have honour, honour is the thing
Stukly doth thirst for, and to clime the Mount
Where she is seated gold shall be my footstoole.[32]

[32] Anon., *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, eds. J.C. Levinson and G.R. Proudfoot (1596,*1605*: Oxford: Malone Society, 1975), ll. 695-701, 771-73.

Other characters in the Rose canon re-inflect a fascination in early modern English society with the ways in which the possession of capital influences the respect in which an individual is held. Fortunatus, on giving his sons four bags of gold harvested from his magic purse, tells them to

Fortunatus: Shine in the streetes of Cyprus like two starres,
And make them bow their knees that once did spurn you;
For to effect such wonders gold can turn you.[33]

Similarly, having been given a bag of money by Ragan to murder her father, the Messenger in the anonymous *King Leir* muses on the way that his being 'flush' changes the way people behave towards him:

Messenger: It is a world to see now I am flush,
How many friends I purchase every where!
How many seekes to creepe into my favour,
And kisse their hands, and bend their knees to me![34]

The contradiction between the disreputable behaviour associated with the acquisition of money and the respect its possession affords is signified in the Rose plays by an adaptation of the allegorical inheritance to mimetic, but not necessarily realistic, ends. The following example from Wilson's *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* marks a transition away from the allegorical form whose boundaries it strains as the uneasy interactions between wit, will and wealth, anthropomorphised as pages, are enacted at the level of mimesis rather than metaphor, normalising their representation:

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[33] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, in *Works*, Vol. 1, ed. F. Bowers (1600; Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1953), I.ii.193-95.

[34] Anon., *The History of King Leir*, ed. R. Warwick Bond (1590, *1605*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1908), ll. 1295-98. Characters who express these sort of observations are equally aware of how fickle such friends can be; Sempronius remarks in *A Knack to Know an Honest Man* 'like the antes they eate the gaine of mens wealth, / But flye them lyke the fiends when they are falne' (ed. H. De Vocht (1594, *1596*; Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1910), ll. 811-12). Cf. Anon., *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, op. cit., ll. 577-79.

Wit: this wealth's a gay lad,
Will: I care not for him, carmudgenly swad.
Wealth: Wel, misse me a while & you'll go neer to be sad.
Wit: Wil, ye are wil-foole, if of him ye be not glad.
Will: Nay wit if thou want him, thou'ilt go neer to be mad.
...
Wealth: If Wealth were away, Wit and Wil would agree.
Will: Nay, Wit and wil are at strife, when ther's no body but we.
...
Will: thus Wealth goes away with al.[35]

The ambivalence of Wit and Will's attitude to Wealth corresponds to what we may suggest was a coming-to-consciousness, if not an acceptance, in the London of the 1590s of the fact that, as Will remarks, 'wealth goes away with all'.

Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* is little more than an extended exposition on the debilitating effects of the pursuit of wealth at any cost and the attendant difficulties its possession brings with it. The figure of Fortune appears before the destitute Fortunatus and offers him one of her gifts of 'wisedome, strength, health, beautie, long life, and riches', describing the benefits of each of the gifts in turn. Of money she declares:

Fortune: If through Gold's sacred hunger thou dost pine,
Those gilded wantons which in swarmes do runne,
To warme their slender bodies in the sunne,
Shall stand for number of those golden piles,
Which in rich pride shall swell before thy feete.

Predictably, Fortunatus chooses the monetary option ('My choice of store is gold; the rich are wise'), proclaiming that:

Fortunatus: Gold is the strength, the sinnewes of the world,
The Health, the soule, the beautie most divine,
A maske of Gold hides all deformities;
Gold is heaven's phisicke, life's restorative,
Oh therefore make me rich
...

[35] Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, ed. John S. Farmer (1588?, *1590*; London: Tudor Facsimilie Texts, 1912), sig. $B2_{r-v}$, $B3_{v}$.

let me ever spend, be never poore.[36]

Fortune condemns his poor judgement and curses him to 'goe dwell with care and quickly die' (I.i.312), presaging the many mishaps which befall Fortunatus as a result of his new-found wealth. Even within the allegorical confines of the play, such a conclusion underlines the fact that Dekker was not attempting to mimetically 'reflect' the ways in which money functioned within late sixteenth century English society. Instead, by presenting a series of vignettes dramatising the traumas associated with the attainment and possession of wealth in no particular order, Dekker sought to re-inflect the ways in which in the last instance early modern English society, like the drama it fostered, was represented as being overdetermined by capital rather than character, a theme returned to below.

Contradictory attitudes towards money within the extant canon of the Rose can also be observed through the ways in which monetary tropes are deployed as metaphors in non-fiscal contexts. The eponymous protagonist of *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, for instance, is portrayed as a character who refuses to live by capital's 'rules'. For all of the protestations of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, or the outlaw Robin Hood as he becomes, that 'what we want in wealth, we have in flowers, / And what we loose in halles, we find in bowers', there is a strong sense in the play that his real crimes are perceived to be against capital rather than Prince John or Queen Elinor. The protagonist is twice described as 'wastfull Huntington', whilst Warman, the Sheriff of Nottingham, denouncing him as one who lives only to

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[36] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., I.i.211, 248-52, 286, 289-93, 296. Fortunatus is given a purse which will always contain 'ten pieces of bright gold, / Currant in any Realme' (I.i.301-2)' whenever Fortunatus puts his hand into it, later described as a 'sacred spring which never ebbs'. (III.i.357). Cf. Robert Greene, *John of Bordeaux, or The Second Part of Friar Bacon*, ed. W.L. Renwick (1590; *1594*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1936), ll. 346-57.

'revell, wast and spende, and take no care', brings his anti-acquisitive tendencies to the attention of the play's contemporary audience.[37]

The disturbing association of money, trade and death is developed in the sequel, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*. Towards the end of the play, Bruce, on discovering his mother and younger brother at the bottom of a tower at Windsor castle, starved to death at the order of King John, orders that a 'shop front' be knocked into the castle walls, inviting his enemies on several occasions to inspect their corpses, as if they were somehow commodities to be assayed:

Bruce: Shall I againe
Set open shop, shew my dead ware, deare bought,
Of a relentlesse merchant that doth trade
On the red sea, swolne mightie with the bloud
Of noble, vertuous, harmlesse innocents.[38]

The uncompromising conflation of commerce and carnage in this tableau may be the most radical expression in the extant canon of the Rose of the contradictions in the plays concerning financial contracts, commercial transactions, and the money function, but other more characteristic examples signify a contemporary consciousness of the symbolic exchanges taking place within these operations.

For all his success as a usurer, Pisaro the merchant in Haughton's *Englishmen for my Money* has a poor understanding of the world of trade into which he has recently diversified. Having heard report of fierce storms which may have wrecked the merchant ship he has hired, Pisaro is delighted to receive a message brought by

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[37] Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, ed. John C. Meagher (*1598*, 1601; Oxford: Malone Society, 1965), ll. 1380, 160, 770, 976. Cf. Lear's observation 'I have ta'en / Too little care of this'. William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. G.K. Hunter (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1972), III.iv.32-3.

[38] Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, ed. John C. Meagher (1598, *1601*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1967), ll. 2741-45.

Towerson, a merchant's factor, that his vessels have arrived safely. When Towerson presents Pisaro with a bill of exchange in order to complete the deal, however, Pisaro refuses to sign:

Towerson: From these same Shippes I did receive these lines,
And there inclosde this same Bill of exchange,
To pay at sight; if so you please accept it.
Pisaro: Accept it, why? What sir should I accept,
Have you received Letters, and not I?
Where is this lazie villaine, this slow Poast?
...
I would not have you bring me counterfeit;
And if you doe, assure you I shall smell it:
I know my Factor's writing well enough.
Towerson: You doe sir; then see your Factor's writing.[39]

Haughton's rather laboured explanation of the sequence in which financial transactions take place signals a belief on the playwright's part that such ideas were as yet not commonly understood, an impression which is reinforced by the appearance of similar passages elsewhere in the Rose canon.[40] Pisaro demonstrates a lack of understanding of the formal qualities of commercial trade, the workings of which appear almost thaumaturgical to him. As if to demonstrate the bill of exchange's mysterious qualities, multiplying the merchant's money as it has, Towerson's letter 'changes' into Pisaro's own factor's handwriting, which only a few lines before he declares he knows 'well enough', and stands as a good example

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[39] William Haughton, *Englishmen for my Money*, ed. W.W. Greg (1598, *1616*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1912), ll. 440-5, 448-51.

[40] Cf. Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, in which Hodge explains to the audience how his master has been offered bills of lading ('the loading of a ship with its cargo', *SOED*) for a shipment of, amongst other things, sugar, civet, almonds and cambric from Canada: 'Hans offers my / master Eyre a bargain in the commodities. He shall have a / reasonable day of payment; he may sell the wares by that / time and be an huge gainer himself' (op. cit., II.iii.18-21). Later in the play, Scott remarks to Otley that it was well that they became partners with Eyre in the deal, because the 'bills of lading / Show that Eyre gains in one commodity / Rise at the least to full three thousand pound, / Beside like gain in other merchandise' (III.i.67-70).

of trade being represented on the Rose stage more as an arcane art than as a series of negotiations and exchanges.

As well as some of the figurative descriptions detailed above, there are also attempts within the Rose canon to represent the re-inflected influence of money and the market-place on early modern London life. For example, the extant Rose plays contain some colourful descriptions of the language, behaviour and culture of peddlers, packmen and street-vendors, the very culture in which the theatre itself was immersed, and in which it actively participated. 'Money talked' as the hollering of those vendors represented on the stage was re-echoed by the vendors of commodities hawked in the commotion of the playhouse during a performance.[41] In order to warn Huntingdon of a trap, Friar Tuck and Jinny set off into Sherwood in *The Downfall of Robert* 'like Pedlers, / singing', imitating their cries as well as assuming their likenesses:

Tuck/Jinny: What lacke ye? what lacke yee? what is't ye wil buy?
Any points, pins, or laces, any laces, points or pins?
Fine gloves, fine glasses, any buskes, or maskes?
Or any other prettie things?
Come cheape for love, or buy for money.
Any cony cony skins,
For laces, points, or pins? faire maids come chuse or buy,
I have prettie poting sticks,
And many other tricks, come chuse for love, or buy

[41] Thomas Platter wrote in 1599 of how 'during the performance food and drink are carried round the audience, so that for what one cares to pay one may also have refreshment'. Quoted in Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, op. cit., p. 214.

for money.[42]

Wealth the page asks the ballad-seller Simplicity in Wilson's *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* which ballads he has for sale, at which the street-seller becomes extraordinarily animated and slips into his 'sales pitch' as he describes his wares, even going so far as to sing snatches of them:

Simplicity: I have chipping Norton a mile from Chappell
O'the heath, A lamentable ballad of burning the Pope's dog, The sweet Ballads of the Lincoln-shire bagpipes, And Peggy and Willy, But now he is dead and gone, Mine owne sweet Willy is laid in his grave la, la, la, lan ti dan derry, dan da dan, lan ti dan, dan tan derry, dan do.[43]

Money also 'talks' in the sense that its mere mention can drown out any articulations of conscience. The Messenger in *King Leir* assures Ragan that her telling him that she will give him two bags of money if he murders Leir will deafen his ear to his victim's cries for mercy:

Messenger: Yet here are words so pleasing to my thoughts,
As quite shall take away the sound of his.[44]

As such associations suggest, the marketplace is seldom described uncritically in the Rose canon, and is on occasion represented as innately degenerate. Tom Strowd observes in *The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*:

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[42] Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., s.d. 1554-55, 1546-65. See also *A Knack to Know an Honest Man* in which Lelio enters in disguise dressed, according to the stage direction, '*like a Colliar*' and cries 'Will you buy any Coles, fine small Coles' (op. cit., ll. 1382-83); Jane the seamstress is depicted crying her wares in in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*: 'What is't you lack, sir? Callico, or lawn? / Fine cambric shirts, or bands? What will you buy?' (op. cit., IV.i.23-24). Shipwrecked in Ireland, Eustace in *Four Prenctices of London* reflects 'Tis safer sitting in my maisters shop, / Crying what lack you, then 'tis here to stay / To Wolves and wilde beasts to be made a prey' (Thomas Heywood, *Four Prentices of London*, op. cit., pp. 185-86). Cf. Joan Thirsk's influential account of the development of contemporary consumer industries in *Economic Policy and Projects: The Growth of a Consumer Society in early modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

[43] Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., sigs. $C1_r$. Cf. $C2_v$.

[44] Anon., *The History of King Leir*, op. cit., ll. 1350-51. Earlier in the play, the Messenger declares 'Oh had I every day such customers, / This were the gainfulst trade in Christendome! / A purse of gold giv'n for a paltry stabbe!' (ll. 1224-27). See also Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 1421-26.

Tom Strowd: Faith Sir, 'tis a common saying in our country, you
shall know by the market-folks how the market goes; and none
knows their knavery better than I that was one of their company.[45]

Whilst the economic understanding Strowd exhibits is underdeveloped, it nevertheless demands of its audience a relatively sophisticated understanding of the mimetic relationship between money and value, without recourse to a reification of the 'mysteries' of the market.

In the heavily allegorical *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, the mendacity of the market-place is personified in the figure of the 'gallant' Fraud who, disguised as a Frenchman, demonstrates the perfidy of the economism Simplicity places so much faith in. This play suggests a suspicion of wealth without work, and a contemporary coming-to-consciousness of the fact that capitalism's promise of a limitless escalation of wealth for all is a fantasy, which some wilfully disregard to their cost:

Simplicity: What lacke ye? What do ye lack?
Fraud: Me lacka da moonee pour da feene verie feene Franche knack
da feene gold buttoone, de braue bugla lace, a da feene gold ringa, you
be free man, mee un' foriner, you buy a me ware, you gaine teene
pownd by lay out teene shellenga

Of course, the commodities that Fraud is offering are fake and all but worthless, but such is Simplicity's belief in the inviolable nature of commercial transactions that he buys them:

Simplicity: Friend you have not stolne them, but you make them, well,
Ile buy them i'the open market, and then I care not, here is then shil-
lings, deliver me the wares.

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[45] Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, ed. John S. Farmer (1600?, *1659*; London: Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1914), sig. $H2_r$.

Simplicity is awestruck at the prospect of making ten pounds from his investment, an unattainable fantasy which he is lured into by the prospect of getting something for nothing:

Simplicity: Adieu Mounsieur: Adieu foole, sel such gold buttons & ringes for so litle money, good Lord what peniworths these strangers can afford: now wife let me see, x. pound, when we have ten pound, we'll have a large shop, and sell all manner of wares, and buy more of these, and get ten pound more, and then ten pound, and ten pound, and twenty pound, then thou shalt have a taffeta hat and a garded gown, and I a gown and a new cap, and a silk doublet, and a faire house.

Inevitably, Simplicity is eventually made to learn a harsh lesson in economics, and Usury, Dissimulation and Simony, the other Vice-like 'gallants' of the play, have no sympathy for him:

Simplicity: Why alas I bought them of a stranger, an old French man for good gold, and to be worth ten pound, for so he told me, I have good witnesse, for my owne wife was by, and lent mee part of the money.
Usury: And what did they cost you?
Simplicity: Ten shillings every penny.
Usury: That argues that you are guilty: Why? Could ye buy so many rings and buttons of gold thinke ye for ten shillings?[46]

Thrasibulus's exclamation in *A Looking Glass for London and England* 'O miserable time wherein gold is above God' is symptomatic of the sort of category error waiting to be made by early modern Londoners who had yet to fully grasp how

[46] Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., sigs. $E3_V$, $F3_r$. An exception is the Usurer in *A Looking Glass for London and England*, who repents of his trade at the end of the play and declares 'I heare restore into these poore mens hands, / Their goods which I unjustly have detain'd' (op. cit., ll. 2358-59). The *MCR* contain an entry desribing a deception which is startlingly similar to that which Fraud plays on Simplicity: '11 February, 39 Elizabeth – True Bill that, on the said day, Richard Broomeley and Thomas Bowyer, both late of Clarkenwell co. Midd. yeomen, gave to Polidore Longe late of London yeoman certain counters of copper called 'Cowpers', and by asserting to the same Polidore that the same copper counters were pieces of coined gold, received from him ten shillings of lawful money, of which the same Richard and Thomas thus defrauded him' (*MCR*, p. 235-36; GDR 39 Eliz.). Cf. *MCR*, p. 201; 3 December, 34 Eliz.: 'Richard Collyns, a vagrant "charged with felonies and traytorous counterfeitinge of the Queenes Majesties coyne called a syxpence'. See also *MCR*, pp. 251-52; 22 February, 41 Eliz., a reference to the 'clipping' of coins.

market conditions were developing in the era of nascent workshop-capitalism.[47] On occasion, however, the Rose plays disclose a knowledge of the laws of necessity, if not of the function of capital. When the Usurer enquires of Alcon as to where he availed himself of the stolen doublet and hose he is pawning, Thrasibulus offers the terse reply 'How catch the fisher-men fish? M[aster] take them as you / thinke them worth, we leave all to your conscience'.[48]

A sense of pessimism pervades the Rose canon's representation of the cultural and social changes precipitated by the emergent workshop-capitalist ethic, of which perhaps the most sophisticated example is to be found in the conclusion of Wilson's *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*. Subsequent to the marriage of the three lords, Policy, Pomp and Pleasure, to the three ladies Love, Lucre and Conscience, the sub-plot is resolved as Simplicity is allowed to punish Fraud for his deceitfulness. It is Simplicity, however, who is finally duped:

Pleasure: That his punishment may please thee the better, thou shalt punish him thy selfe: he shall be bound fast to yen post, and thou shalt bee blindfold, and with thy torch shalt run as it were at tilt, charging thy

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[47] Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., l. 754. Cf. ll. 1276-77 ('When gold is made a god to wrong the poore, / And charitie exilde from rich mens doore'), also ll. 2401, 2890-93.

[48] Ibid., ll. 1766-7. It should be remembered that Alcon and Thrasibulus are only driven to utilising the services of the usurer as pawn-broker subsequent to his having cheated them of the property they put up against loans they took out with him, claiming as he does that the recognisance is invalid because they are late with their repayments, which they are not. A similar case appears in the *MCR*: 'Recognizances, taken before George Assebye esq. J.P.,... of George Genefer of [St. Martins-in-the-Fields] joyner, in the sum of twenty pounds; For the said George's appearance at the next Session of Enquiry for Middlesex, to answer "for detayning of lynnen laide to gage, togeather with the principall monys borowed and the Interest all paide, of the goodes of Peter Rowlandson, and yet the said Genefer kepes the pawn"' (*MCR*, p. 232; GDR, 2 July, 38 Eliz.). Cf. ll. 631-43, 1737-45, 1746-48, 1750-51, 1753-54. By 1600 arguments against usury had lapsed and it was no longer considered a sin; indeed, it was 'not even "usury" any more, but "interest", a morally neutral word epitomising the triumph of capitalist values over older moralities'. L.A. Clarkson, 'Inflation and the moral order', op. cit., p. 14. See also Norman L. Jones, *God and the Money-Lenders: Usury and the Law in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989). As Laura Stevenson succinctly summarised in *Praise and Paradox : Merchants and Craftsmen in Elizabethan Popular Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1984), 'the emphasis remained on the sins of the usurer' in such plays, 'but these sins had little to do with lending at interest' (p. 98).

light against his lips, and so (if thou canst) burne out his tongue, that it never speake more guile.
...

Simplicity: Laugh all you to see me in my choller adjust to burne and broile that false Fraud to dust.

Blind Fraud, blind Simplicity, turne him thrice about, set his face towards the contrarie post, at which he runnes, and all to burnes it, Dis[simulation], standing behind Fraud, unbindes him, and whiles all the rest behold Simp[licity] they two slip away.

Simplicity: How now, Have I heated his lips? have I warm'd his nose? and scortched his face? Let me see, how lookes the villaine? Have I burned him?

Dilligence: Thou hast done more, for thou hast quite consumed him into nothing, looke, here is no signe of him, no not so much as his ashes.

Simplicity: Very few ashes if there be any, ye may see what a hot thing anger is, I think that the Torch did not wast: him so much as my wrath: wel, al London, nay, all England is beholding to me, for putting Fraud out of this world, I have confirm'd him & brought him to nothing & Ile tread his ashes under my feet, yet no more Frauds shal ever spring of them: But let me see, I shal have much anger, for the Tanners wil misse him in their lether, the Tailors in cutting out of garments, the Shoo-maker in closing, the Tapsters in filling pots, and the very oistermen to mingle their oisters at Billingsgate, yet it is no matter the world is well rid of such a craftie knave.[49]

In a brilliant reversal of perspective, the narrative turns its gaze upon itself as the corruption that contemporary society has allowed to become integrated into the structure of economic life is re-inflected, compellingly illustrating the determination

[49] Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., sig. $I3_V$, $I4_r$.

of consciousness by social being on the Rose's stage.[50] Wilson reminds his audience that Fraud will always 'escape' and will never be eradicated whilst its practice is so widespread within enterprise. We may even discern in Simplicity's conclusions the suggestion that the success of London's economy was structurally dependent upon fraudulent practices, an intimation which may not have passed unnoticed by any member of the Rose's audience who, overdetermined by capital rather than character, may have 'be[en] content to hide his eies, where he may feele his profit'.[51]

Aside from the moral ambiguities it presented, the developing consumerism accompanying the new economism re-inflected in the Rose canon was depicted as vacuous and banal. When the fair comes to Fressingfield in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Margaret, whilst admitting that any potential suitors to her should 'court us with such fairings [i.e. purchases made at the fair] as they can', is also made to acknowledge that their value is symbolic rather than material, and that ultimately they are mere 'needless naughts'.[52] Andelucia goes further in Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* in his comparison of the counter of the mercer's shop to the Counter prison. Describing 'Satten / commodities' as prisoners awaiting bail from 'Monsieur

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[50] The Rose canon features a character who makes a living out of breaking recognisances made against loans, and bearing false witness. Cuthbert Cony-Catcher in the anonymous *A Knack to Know a Knave* describes how 'falling in with some rich merchant there, / I take commodities for six months day, / The bill being made, I must set to my hand, / Then if I pay not, they may burne the band' (op. cit., ll. 302-5). Honesty, the play's protagonist, arranges Cuthbert's downfall when he gets him to swear before the disguised King Edgar that he saw a gentleman pay a farmer £400 as payment for a farm. The *MCR* contain an account of a similar attempt to defraud: 'True Bill that, on the said 29th of May, at the city of Westminster, Christofer Heyward of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields co. Midd. clerk, fabricated and counterfeited falsely a certain obligatory writing, in the names of Robert Thompson and John Best, by which writing it was represented that the same Robert and John were bound to the aforesaid Christofer Heyward in the sum of twenty pounds under a certain condition set out on the back of the writing, and further put seals purporting to be the seals of the same Robert and John, whereas they never made, sealed or delivered the same writing' (*MCR*, p. 172; GDR, 22 December, 30 Eliz.).

[51] Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, eds. W.W. Greg and P. Simpson (1599,*1600*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1908), ll. 520-21. See also Firk's outburst in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*: 'I care not for seeing, I love feeling. Let me / feel it here, *aurium tenus*, ten pieces of gold, *genuum tenus*, / ten pieces of silver' (op. cit., IV.v.91-93).

[52] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 357, 355.

money', Dekker draws his audience's attention to the commodity-money-commodity cycle by means of his account of the metaphoric imprisonment and subsequent release of commodities:

Andelucia: By my povertie, and that's but a threed-bare oath, I am more than mad, to see silkes and velvets, lie crowding together in Mercers shops, as in prisons…
for these Satten commodities have such smooth consciences, that theile have no man give his word for them, or stand bownd for their comming foorth, but vow to lie till they rot in those shop Counters, except Monsieur money baile them.[53]

We find intimations in the Rose canon that the new mode of production was acknowledged to have had an impact on courtship practices, as money supplanted the more traditional class-related indices of a possible suitor's appropriateness. Marchetto observes in *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*:

Marchetto: who so gaineth wealth,
Hath beautie tide as captive to his coine,
And wordly pleasure tendeth on his traine.
...
The fairest Ladies for a little bribe,
Will let Diogenes disport awhile,
Gold is a God in this desired age.[54]

Money's dominion over courtship also continued to put a price on chastity as a commodity to be bartered. Gwalter in *Patient Grissill* assumes the role of auctioneer in order to make a claim for Grissill's love:

Gwalter: Nay then Ile play the cryer: once, twice, thrice,
Speake or shee's gone els: no, since twill not be,
Since you are not for her, yet shee's for me.[55]

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[53] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., I.ii.102-9. On the commodity-money-commodity and money-commodity-money cycles, see Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 247-57.
[54] Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 333-35, 339-41.
[55] Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., I.ii.229-31

However, virginity's financial as well as moral value also served to empower those objects of suitors' desires who chose to use their purity as an artefact to negotiate with for themselves rather than be bartered by others. In Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Prince Edward complains of the shrewdness of Margaret, the Keeper's daughter with whom he is enamoured:

Edward: our country Margaret is so coy,
And stands so much upon her honest points,
That marriage or no market with the maid.[56]

In a similar vein, Ralph, returning injured from the French wars to find his wife being pursued by Hammon, a city gentleman, castigates his rival when he offers him twenty pounds to give up his claim to his wife:

Ralph: Sirrah Hammon, Hammon, dost thou think a shoemaker
is so base, to be a bawd to his own wife for commodity?
Take thy gold, choke with it! Were I not lame, I would
make thee eat thy words![57]

Other bartering procedures represented in the canon of the Rose accentuated the worth of traditionally valuable commodities whilst cheapening human life, as Piston discovers in Thomas Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* when he attempts to negotiate with a cryer to make known the fact that he has lost a chain and is offering a reward for its return. The cryer demands ten crowns for his services having ascertained that the chain is worth a hundred crowns, although, as Piston points out, he only charged sixpence to cry the details of a missing woman presumed to have gone into prostitution:

Piston: Come, sirra, let me see how finely youle cry this chaine.
Cryer: Why, what is it worth?

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[56] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 121-23.
[57] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit., V.ii.84-87. Cf. William Haughton, *Englishmen for my Money*, op. cit., ll. 865-68.

Piston: It was worth more then thou and all thy kin are worth.
Cryer: It may be so; but what must he have that fmdes it?
Piston: Why, a hundred Crownes.
Cryer: Why, then, Ile have ten for the crying it.
Piston: Ten Crownes? And had but sixpence for crying a little wench of thirty years old and upwards, that had lost her selfe betwixt a tavern and a bawdie house.
Cryer: I, that was a wench, and this is Golde; she was poore, but this is rich.[58]

A contemporary coming-to-consciousness of the commodification of domestic as well as sexual relationships is also evident within the extant Rose canon. Pisaro in *Englishmen for my Money* assures the foreign suitors to his three daughters that 'For you I bred them, and you brought them up, / For you I kept them, and you shall have them' (ll. 1012-13), as he would so many cattle. Equally unpalatable is Servio's undisguised horror at the conclusion of *A Knack to Know an Honest Man* to learn that his nephew is alive, and that such monies as would have reverted to him must be forfeit. His outburst ('O misery, is he restord to life, to take away my goods / Command me death, nay prisonment, and what ye will, / So he revive not, so I meet him not') prompts Sempronio to observe:

Sempronio: See here the picture of true avarice,
Where men preferre their goods before their friends.
...
A knave will gaine by all unlawfull meanes,
But good men still their goods by vertue gleanes.
A knave makes shift his thrift, forsweares and lies,
An honest man on love and faith relyes.[59]

As we can deduce from the varied examples re-inscribed on the stage of the Rose detailed above, love and faith alone were singularly ill-equipped to contend with the

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[58] Thomas Kyd, *Soliman and Perseda*, in *Works*, ed. F.S. Boas (c.1588-92, *1599*; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), I.iv.72-83. Whilst Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* was a cornerstone of the theatre's repertory, it cannot be definitively stated that *Soliman and Perseda* was performed at the Rose. It does not, therefore, appear in Appendix A.

[59] Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 1766-8, 1769-70, 1791-4.

influence of the money-function in early modern London. Not all of the extant plays from the theatre's canon have such insubstantial endings, however. Some works conclude with the re-inflection of a strongly-expressed desire to correct actively rather than merely illustrate the potential iniquities facilitated by the money-function. Such scenes appear to articulate a contemporary opinion that the operations of the era of nascent workshop-capitalism were fundamentally inequitable. Those characters who exploit this tendency are seen to be confronted and castigated within the theatrical space of the Rose, if not in the world outside the theatre's walls. Underlining a contemporary understanding of the fact that the basis of the emergent mode of production lay in social relations rather than market forces, instead of encountering characters who rail against the injustice of the marketplace, the Rose's audiences saw individual violators singled out and punished.

The four hopelessly corrupt sons of the Bailiff of Hexham (a conman, a farmer, a courtier, and a priest) in the anonymous 1592 play *A Knack to Know a Knave* may revel in their cozening during the course of the play, but the punishments meted out to them are unswervingly brutal. For 'mak[ing] the market so / deare, that the poore can buy no corne' (ll. 1271-2), for example, Walter the farmer (ll. 1271-72) is condemned by 'Honesty'

> Honesty: To be caried into a corne field, and there have your legs and hands Cut off, because you loved corn so wel, and there rest til the crowes Pick out thine eies.[60]

It is the anonymity of Walter, elsewhere described as 'this unknown farmer' (l. 1236) and 'an unknown theefe that robs the common wealth' (l. 1230) which appears to have been seen as particularly unsettling; undertaking the husbandry of

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[60] Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 1851-53. Honesty offers a similar warning to the audience: 'I warne you all that use such subtill villanie, / Beware least you lyke these be found by Honestie, / Take heed I say, for if I catch you once, / Your bodies shall be meat for Crowes, / And the Devill shall have your bones (ll. 1885-9).

capital first, and the land second, he is unknowable because he is everywhere, and accumulates surplus-value 'behind the backs' of his countrymen and at their expense. In the play-world, as well as in the real world, such miscreants could be identified and be seen to be punished.[61]

Andelucia's observation in *Old Fortunatus* that 'for gold / I see that most men's soules too cheap are sold' is a reconfiguration of the familiar notion that money has an infinite capacity to corrupt.[62] However, the introduction of the money-commodity-money cycle into this conceptual framework (with the 'soul' as commodity in this instance) is particularly striking.[63] When the aptly-named Shadow asks his master for money, it prompts Andelucia to raise the social impact of the operations of the function of money to the level of a universal evil:

Andelucia: To morrow, Shaddow, will I give thee gold.
To morrow pride goes bare and lust acold.
To morrow will the rich man feed the poore,
And vice to morrow vertue will adore.
To morrow beggers shall be crowned kings,
This No-time, morrowes-time, no sweetnes sings.[64]

A society dominated by the function of capital is suspended, as Andelucia recognises, in 'no-time, morrowes-time', a state of affairs which, by inference, will only end when existing economic arrangements are deposed.

Ultimately, the plays of the extant Rose canon attempt to depict the potential to change the manner in which the forces and relations of production are organised by

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[61] Whilst punishments for engrossing were severe, low yields probably had more to do with poor economic practices than engrossment. See Joan Thirsk (ed.), *Chapters from the Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1500-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1989).

[62] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., III.i.482-83. Cf. Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., sig. $G1_r$.

[63] See Karl Marx, 'The circuit of money captial', *2 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 109-43.

[64] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., III.i.488-93.

means of example on the one hand, and by a call to common action on the other. An example of the former is represented in the person of the Everyman-like figure of Honesty in *A Knack to Know a Knave*, 'a plaine man of the country... / That knowes a knave, if he doe but see his cap' (ll. 79-80), commissioned by King Edgar 'to fynde deceivers out… that we may punish them for their amisse' (ll. 134, 136). Honesty unswervingly details the corruption he encounters at every level:

Honesty: I was at the water side, where I saw such deceit,
I dare not say knaverie, in paying and receiving
Custome for outlandish ware, that I wondered to see,
Yet durst not complaine of, the reason was,
They were countenanced with men of great wealth,
Richer than I a great deale, but not honester:
Then I went into the markets, where I saw petie knaverie:
In false measuring corne, and in seales,
That wanted no lesse than two ounces in the pound.
But all this was nothing, scant worth the talking of:
But when I came to the Exchange, I espyed in a corner of an Ile
An Arch-cosoner, a Conicatcher I meane,
Which used such grose cosoning, as you would wonder to heare.[65]

The extant Rose plays communicate a contemporary, often unfavourable, awareness of the ways in which the money-function directed social and economic changes within the nascent workshop-capitalist economy. The canon re-inflects the idea that, as Andelucia remarks in *Old Fortunatus*, 'Twas never merie world with us, since purses and bags / were invented, for now men set lime twigges to catch wealth'.[66] The 'freedom' the development of the money-function and wage-relation was bringing to early modern England was regarded with an air of ironic detachment, an idea perhaps best summarised by Simplicity in Wilson's *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* as the street-vendor muses on the nature of his 'freedom':

Simplicity: Time hath made me a free man, as free to beare water and sell Ballades, as the best of our [p]opulation: I would

[65] Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, op. cit., ll. 584-96.
[66] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., I.ii.75-76.

> have thought once my horse should have bene free as soon as my selfe, and sooner too.[67]

Simplicity's deliberations on the 'freedom' that the era of workshop-capitalism has afforded him to 'take the provision of his needs and the fulfilment of his wants into his own hands and be in immediate relation to his "vocation"... without the social, ecclesiastical, and political mediations of feudalism' also lead him to acknowledge that the equality it promises is abstract, and 'does not extend to the conditions for attaining the means' of his individual requirements.[68] Those on the margins of the workshop-capitalist economy, however, were denied even these illusory freedoms.

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[67] Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., sig. $C3_r$.

[68] Herbert Marcuse, 'The affirmative character of culture', in *Negations*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1972), p. 97.

2.3 The use and abuse of alcohol in the Rose plays

Whilst the dramatisation of the consumption of alcohol in the Rose plays may have sought to represent elements of the lighter side of the early modern London artisan's life, there were also serious points to be made about the resort to alcohol use in the face of economic adversity. Commencing with a review of contemporary attitudes towards alcohol use, this section proposes that the desire of characters represented in the Rose canon to spend what they could afford on alcohol re-inflected either an act of defiance against the contemporary ethos of accumulation in the world outside the theatre walls by those who had surplus income to consume, or else a longing to obliterate the harsh realities of life by those who lived on the economic margins of early modern London. For the former, alcohol use challenged the emergent doctrine of thrift. For the latter, whilst a network of services provided by the alehouse may have offered some support, alcohol provided a means to obscure rather than enhance a consciousness of the effects of the social and economic changes initiated by the emergent mode of production.

Whilst the censuring of drink and drinkers was a mainstay of popular religious writing in the sixteenth century, the exhaustive and repetitive tracts produced by the authors of contemporary complaints serve to suggest that they could not explain the popularity of the social phenomena they described to their own satisfaction. Recourse to Biblical precedent was popular; the passage from *Isaiah* 5 (11-12), as quoted by Robert Harris, is typical in this regard:

> Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drinke, that continue untill night till wine inflame them... they regard not the worke of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.[69]

Commentators believed that the environment within which drink was consumed was hazardous to the body as well as to the soul. William Clowes was not merely indulging in a literary motif when he wrote of a widespread infection by the pathogen of alcohol use, contracted in the company of the 'infected' in alehouses. Clowes connected the

> many lewd and idell persons, both men, and women, about the citye of London, and the great number of lewd alehouses, which are the very nests and harbourers of such filthy creatures. By meanes of which disordered persons, some other of better disposition are many times infected, and many more lyke to be, except there be some speedy remedy provided for the same.[70]

Whilst Thomas Thompson condemned the consumption of 'measures unmeasurable for Christians to carowse by', he saw the alehouse as a part of everyday life, and maintained that 'in it selfe it is not a sinne... to goe into a taverne, an inne, or an alehouse'. However, he recommended leaving quickly, lest 'by alluring pleasures there commonly ministered [one's] heart be entangled'.[71] Others were troubled by precisely what degree of alcohol consumption could be considered healthful, and what sinful, realising that the use of wine in the Eucharist meant that some sort of

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[69] Robert Harris, *The Drunkard's Cup* (London, 1619), sig. $B2_{V}$. Cf. sig. $B3_{r}$ [Films STC 1175]. See also Anon., *A Looking Glasse for Drunkards* (London, 1627), sigs. $B1_{r-v}$ [Films STC 1246]; Arthur Dent, *The Plaine Mans Path-way to Heaven* (London, 1603), pp. 165-66 [Films STC 1314]; Thomas Kingsmill, *The Drunkard's Warning* (London, 1631), p. 20 [Films STC 1177]; Richard Young, *The Drunkard's Character* (London, 1638), p. 251 [Films STC 1590]; William Prynne, *Healthes Sicknesse* (London, 1628), p. 11 [Films STC 1331]; Samuel Ward, *Woe to drunkards* (London, 1622), pp. 9-10 [Films STC 1045].

[70] William Clowes, *A Short and Profitable Treatise* (London, 1579), sigs. $B1_{V}$-$B2_{r}$ [Films STC 417]. Cf. John Downame's treatise claiming that the rise in alehouse culture presaged the end of the world (*Four Treatises* (London, 1609), pp. 97-98 [Films STC 1270]).

[71] Thomas Thompson , *A Diet for a Drunkard* (London, 1612), p. 82 [Films STC 1039].

accord had to be reached, and the sinful nature of alcohol consumption in itself underplayed.[72]

These arguments in themselves were familiar enough. What was new in the debate over the use of alcohol in late sixteenth century England, reproducing one of the prevailing concerns of the era of workshop-capitalism, was the issue of the 'wastefulness' of drinking. Richard Rawlidge describes with horror 'the Great Drunkard' who

> can and will sit swilling and tipling, with twenty severall companies in a day and yet never be drunke; this is he that makes his belly as a barrell, that wasts and spoileth more good liquor in one day, then would serve two or three honest families, being moderately taken.[73]

In keeping with the general disposition of an era in which 'drunkenness was encouraged by a wide social acceptance of over-indulgence in drink', alcohol is frequently seen to be taken in excess in the Rose plays.[74] For Dick Coomes in *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, prodigious drinking is a raised to a matter of national pride:

Coomes: you know I have drunke
all the Ale-houses in Abington drye, and laide the taps on the tables when I have doone: 'sbloud I'le challenge all the true rob-

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[72] See Thomas Kingsmill's comment in *The Drunkards Warning* that 'it were extreame folly to crye out, I would there were no wine, because there are some never quiet but when they are at it. A man might as well say, I would there were no night because of theeves, no women because of adultery, no weapons because of murther' (op. cit., pp. 61). Cf. *A Looking Glasse for Drunkards*, op. cit., sig. $A4_r$.

[73] Richard Rawlidge, *A Monster Late Found Out* (Amsterdam, 1628), p. 9. [Films STC 857]. Whilst such commentaries make interesting reading, it is necessary to remember Peter Clark's observation that 'Puritans like Richard Rawlidge, obsessed with eradicating superstition and moral disorder in the land, arguably overstated the pernicious contribution of myriad alehouses for didactic effect'. Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History 1200-1830* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1983), p. 40.

[74] J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Seventeenth Century England: A County Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1983), p. 49. Cf. Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., l. 379; Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta* , in *Complete Plays*, op. cit., IV.iv.12; Cf. Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, ed. F.W. Clarke (1587-93, *1599*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1911), ll. 1175-83.

> pots in Europe, to leape up to the chinne in a barrell of Beere, and if I cannot drinke it downe to my foote ere I leave, & then set the tap in the midst of the house, & then turne a good turne on the toe on it, let me be counted no body, a pingler, nay let me bound to drinke nothing but small Beere seaven yeeres after, and I had as leefe be hanged.[75]

The fantastic strain of Coomes' speech is an indicator of the fact that financial restraints, as well as a lack of opportunity, would have prevented the artisanal element of the Rose's audience from achieving a state of perpetual drunkenness. As a consequence, such opportunities as present themselves to the artisan-clown characters of the Rose plays to slip away from their employers for a drink are seldom overlooked. When, in *Sir John Oldcastle*, the Bishop of Rochester orders his servants to wait outside the room in which he is preparing to try the play's eponymous protagonist for heresy, they perceive an unmissable opportunity:

> Bishop: Perhaps I may have present neede to use you.
> 2 Servant: We will attend your worship here without.
> Bishop: Do so, I pray you.
> 3 Servant: Come, we may have a quart of wine at the Rose at Barking, I warrant you, and come backe an hower before he be ready to go.[76]

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[75] Henry Porter, *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, ed. W.W. Greg (1589?, *1599*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1912), ll. 1031-39. Despite such bold claims, Coomes spends most of the play suffering from his overindulgence. Cf. his feeble acknowledgement of the fact that he has made himself ill ('I am not drunke I would ye should know it, & yet I / have drunk more then wil do me good', ll. 2274-75), and references to his staggering, reeling and vomiting (ll. 947-51).

[76] Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 1971-76. Two watchmen abandon their lookout for an invasion fleet in order to 'go to goodman Gemmings, & watch / a pot of Ale and a rasher of bacon' in the anonymous *The History of King Leir*, op. cit., ll. 2445-6. Cf. *MCR*, p. 264; GDR, 1 December, 43 Eliz: '20 September, 42 Elizabeth – True Bill that, at Chauncerylane co. Midd. on the said day, John Middleton of the same lane yeoman refused to keep watches at the same alley'. See also *Mucedorus*, where Mouse bluntly informs his master that he intends to 'belabour [him]selfe' with beef and beer for an hour, 'therefore I pray you cal me not 'till / you thinke I have done' (op. cit., sig. $B4_v$).

Whether on the stage or outside the theatre walls, and regardless of the motive or the sum spent, to spend money on alcohol beyond one's means was to challenge the emergent fiscal orthodoxy of accumulation. The corrupt priest of Wrotham from *Sir John Oldcastle* takes pleasure in admitting that he has spent the thousand 'angels' he acquired by highway robbery on drink, whilst Sparing, the vintner of 'the Gray hound in Fleet Street', has been far from miserly in his granting of credit to the eponymous hero of *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, to whom he presents a bill for an impressive thirty pounds 'for Taverne suppers, and for quarts of wine'.[77] On the other hand, Painful Penurie's discovery of her husband Simplicity's consumption of their modest means at the alehouse in *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* has more serious consequences, as he has drunk on credit, and now owes, the value of the capital with which he should have replenished the stock of ballads he makes a living by selling. In addition to paying off his debt with her earnings as a water-bearer, Painful Penurie offers her husband another chance to share in her equally improbable dreams of accumulation:

> Penury: looke wel to your wares,
> and Ile ply my waterbearing and save and get, and get and save till we be rich, but bring these wares home every night with ye.[78]

Simplicity is more cynical about the assets he is likely to acquire by means of this arrangement, and chooses instead to situate the possibility of obtaining significant wealth in the realm of predestination, perhaps in order to make its absence easier to

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[77] Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 1312-17. The *SOED* offers a 1488 reference to an Angel or 'Angel-Noble' as a gold coin bearing the device of the archangel Michael and a dragon, valued at between 6s. 8d. and 10s; Anon., *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, op. cit., l. 612.

[78] Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*,op. cit., sig. $E3_{r-v}$.

bear. Whilst he is glad that he has managed to avoid falling out with his wife, because then 'the alewife and my wife had scolded' ($E4_r$), he clearly has no intention of changing his behaviour, concluding fatalistically that 'a man may / see, he that's ordained to be rich, shal be rich' ($E4_r$). Those characters in the Rose canon who are in the most desperate financial difficulties are wont to behave in just as profligate a manner. When, in *A Looking Glass for London*, the Usurer gives Alcon six shillings for a doublet, hose and cloak he has stolen, his immediate thought is to retire to the alehouse, forgetting for today the fact that he will have no money tomorrow:

Alcon: come let us to the spring of the best liquor, whilst this lastes, tril-lill.[79]

Alcon's destination, the alehouse, was one of the few quasi-public buildings not under the direct supervision of church or state, and accordingly served as the 'natural location for dancing, revelling, mumming, feasting, common law unions, dowry negotiations, betrothal and nuptial feasts, christenings and churchings'.[80] Peter Clark distinguishes an 'erosion of the traditional sense of the community focused on the local church in the latter half of the sixteenth century', and perceives in the alehouse an 'obvious alternative forum for communal activity'.[81] The atmosphere of the alehouse would doubtless have seemed less threatening and more congenial than the church to second-generation urban immigrants, displaced from their parents'

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[79] Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., ll. 1774-75. Characters also encourage others to drink to excess to further their own ends. In *Look About You*, Gloucester, disguised as Faulconbridge, stops off at the Salutation Inn with Faulconbridge's pursuivant, Winterbourne, and attempts to rid himself of his company so that he may continue his flight from his pursuers. Gloucester remembers Winterbourne's intolerance to alcohol, and tricks him into drinking sack and sugar, making him collapse (Anon., *Look About You*, ed. W.W. Greg (*1599*, 1600; Oxford: Malone Society, 1913), ll. 1497-1512).

[80] Theodore Leinwand, 'Spongy plebs, mighty lords and the dynamics of the alehouse', *JMRS* 19.2 (1989), p. 166.

[81] Peter Clark, 'The Alehouse and the alternative society', in D. Pennington and K. Thomas (eds.), *Puritans and Revolutionaries* (Oxford: O.U.P., 1978), pp. 53, 62.

provincial culture and traditions and yet to firmly establish their own: 'heaven was here, and hell where they were not' for patrons who inclined 'themselves that way where the staff falles, where haplesse hazard le[d] them'.[82] A despairing entry in the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* for 1591 reports:

> Small reformation has been made by the Ecclesiastical Commission, as may appear by the emptiness of churches on Sundays and holidays... the people who resort to church are so few that preachers who were determined to preach on Sundays and holidays have refrained, for lack of auditors; the people so swarm in the streets and alehouses during service time, that many churches have only present the curate and his clerk, and open markets are kept in service time.[83]

Contemporary writers appear to have been concerned as much about the political and economic as the spiritual health of the country, often believing that the alehouse had the potential to focus seditious intent, detract labourers from their work, and serve as a cradle for all kinds of criminal activity. They purported to discover behind its doors

> the roote and foundation of many other enormous sinnes, as bloodshed, stabbing, murder, swearing, fornication, adultery and such like, to the great

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[82] Philip Foulface (pseud.), *Bacchus Bountie* (London, 1593), sig. $C3_V$; William Vaughan, *The Spirit of Detraction* (London, 1611), p. 129 [Films STC 943].

[83] *CSPD*, Vol. CCXL (1591), No. 138, pp. 158-59. Cf. Patrick Collinon's citation from John Stockwood, *A sermon preached at Paules Crosse on Barthelmew day being the 24 of August 1578* (1578): 'Wyll not a fylthye playe, wyth the blast of a Trumpette, sooner call thyther a thousande, than an houres tollong of a Bell bring to the Sermon an hundred?' Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 204. The argument that the alehouse also provided a diverting alternative to churchgoing is supported by evidence from contemporary records which suggests that alehouse keepers were prosecuted for being open during a time when its patrons should have been at church: '31 August, 40 Elizabeth. – True Bill that, at the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields co. Midd. on the said day, William Dugdale of the said parish yeoman sold 'beere and ale' to divers of the Queen's lieges... on the Lord's Day during time of prayer then and there commonly sold and uttered the same drinks' (*MCR*, p. 248; GDR, October, 40 Eliz.). The *MCR* contain thirty-two accounts of individuals, but more commonly of groups, being prosecuted for not attending church, of which the following is typical: '21 January, 29 Elizabeth – True Bill against Robert Ball of the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields yeoman, for not going to church, chapel or any usual place of Common Prayer, from 21 Jan. 29 Eliz. to 5 April then next following' (*MCR*, p. 170; GDR, 28 April, 29 Eliz.). An entry from June 1599 gives a list of forty-two people presented together before the court who had not attended divine service for six months (*MCR* pp. 254-55).

> dishonour of God, and of our nation, the overthrow of many good arts and manuell trades, the disabling of divers workemen, and the generall impoverishing of many good subjects.[84]

In reality, as Paul Clark has observed, 'fears about the threat posed by the alehouse to respectable society, to public order, the fabric of the family, and established cultural and political values were... almost certainly exaggerated':

> There was no master-plan for a new levelling republic commanded from the alehouse. Rather the tippling house's growing importance as a social and communal centre was primarily a development that occurred in response to the major economic, social and other changes affecting society in the century or more before the English Civil War[85]

The scant evidence which exists of such misdemeanours as may have originated in alehouses are haphazard and comical rather than imbued with revolutionary intent. Paul Hentzner recorded in his diary how Londoners were

> vastly fond of great noises that fill the ear, such as the firing of canon, drums, and the ringing of bells, so that it is common for a number of them, that have

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[84] *An Acte for repressing the odious and loathsome sine of Drunkennesse*, An° Regni Jacobi (4/7/1607), sig. $D6_r$ [Films STC 1378]. Cf. William Vaughan, *The Spirit of Detraction*, op. cit., pp. 129, 130; John Downame, *Four Treatises*, op. cit., p. 88. Similar passages appear in a number of other contemporary texts, stripping these passages of their significance and relegating them to the status of commonplaces. See Robert Harris, *The Drunkard's Cup*, op. cit., sigs. $A4_v$, $C2_r$; Thomas Heywood, *Philocothanista, or the Drunkard* (London, 1635), sigs. $G3_{r-v}$ [Films STC 1488]; Richard Young, *The Drunkard's Character*, op. cit., pp. 117-8, 78; 'Regulation for the relief of the poor of Norwich, 1571', R.H. Tawney and Eileen Power, *Tudor Economic Documents*, Vol. 2 (London: Longmans, 1924), p. 317. An alternative viewpoint is expressed by a Judge in *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, who remarks that for all of the social problems the alehouse caused, whilst the commonalty were stupefying themselves with strong drink, they were not planning insurrections: 'When the vulgar sort / Sit on their Ale-bench, with their cups and kannes, / Matters of state be not their common talke, / Nor pure religion by their lips prophande' Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 136-39.

[85] Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse*, op. cit., p. 159.

> got a glass in their heads, to go up into some belfrey, and ring the bells for hours together for the sake of exercise.[86]

Efforts to reduce the number of alehouses and to implement orders to curtail the excesses of their clientele 'with great severitye seeke correction, and punishment' were largely unsuccessful; instead, attempts to curb the alehouse's popularity brought attention to and unintentionally verified its social and economic function.[87] Whilst ineffectual, the repetitive body of legislation passed in the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean eras would appear to indicate that the proliferation of alehouses was a matter of concern to the Crown. Fundamental to this apprehension may have been an awareness of the potency of the alehouse as a mechanism for the provision of social support, and its concomitant evolution into a structure which those on the economic margins came to owe more allegiance to than King or clergy. The variety of services which the alehouse supplied developed *in response* to the major economic and social changes that would also foster their growth, and which any amount of legislation could never circumscribe.

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[86] R. Bentley, et al (eds.), *Paul Hentzner's Travels in England During the Reign of Elizabeth* (London: E. Jeffrey, 1797), p. 64. Cf. Peter Clark, 'The alehouse and the alternative society', op. cit., p. 58. Various acts of petty vandalism recorded in the *MCR* may have been the result of an excess of alcohol: 'Recognizances, taken before Sir Owin Hopton knt. J.P., ... of Walter Myhelson of Katherin's ... joyner, in the sum of twenty pounds; For the said Walter's appearance at the next Session of the Peace for Middlesex, for that he was charged with suspicion of stealing a Signe in St. Katherine's' (*MCR*, p. 228; GDR, 10 July, 37 Eliz.). *CSPD*, Vol.CCLXII (1597), No.4, p. 251 features an account of anti-enclosure riot in Bayton, Worcestershire, which failed on account of the prioritisation of the acquisition of alcohol over artillery.

[87] William Clowes, *A Short and Profitable Treatise*, op. cit., sig. $B2_V$. A number of ineffectual statutes attempting to regulate alehouses were passed soon after the accession of James I. See *An°. Reg. Jacobi Primo* (London, 1604), sig. $D1_r$ [Films STC 1378]. C.f. *An°. Regni Jacobi, Regis Angl., Scotiæ, Franc., & Hybern*(London, 1607), sig. $D4_r$ [Films STC 1378]; *Articles of Direction Touching Alehouses*, 21/3/1607 (London, 1607), p. 2 [Films STC 1378]. On the financial reasons for a lack of local civic intervention, see S.K. Roberts, 'Alehouses, brewing and government under the early Stuarts', *Southern History* 2 (1980), p. 45; Keith Wrightson, 'Alehouses, order and reform in rural England, 1590-1660 in E. Yeo and S. Yeo (eds.), *Popular Culture and Class Conflict, 1590-1914* (Brighton: Harvester, 1981), p. 18; Theodore Leinwand, 'Spongy plebs, mighty lords and the dynamics of the alehouse', op. cit., p. 163.

The alehouse differed in several respects from other establishments now synonymous with it, but which appear historically to have offered a clearly distinguishable form of service. Inns were the largest establishments, having considerable numbers of guest rooms, stables, warehouses and storage facilities; taverns, 'a degree, or (if you will) a pair of stairs above an alehouse', also offered a superior service, lacking the inn's extensive accommodation, but selling a diversity of wines and boasting drinking rooms which could be panelled or painted, with dinner services of choice plate.[88] Alehouses, or 'tippling houses', offered no such luxury.[89] Located in the cellars or outhouses of back-alley dwellings, sometimes in the keeper's kitchen or even outside the house, alehouses had traditionally offered a limited range of cheap drinks or perhaps just one, from harsh spirits, cider, perry, ale or beer, to regional brews such as mead and metheglin (based on honey) or braggot (derived from barley).

Drunkenness of a disabling intensity was becoming easier to achieve by the end of the sixteenth century, as brewing techniques using hops were acquired from the continent and beer replaced ale as the most popular alcoholic drink.[90] European innovations such as the adding of hops or barley and the refinement of the brewing process produced a drink which as well as tasting better, was clear, cheap to brew in bulk, travelled well, and was considerably stronger than the ales which had formerly

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[88] From John Earle's *Micro-cosmographie* (1628), quoted in John Dover Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England* (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1944), p. 145.

[89] For a comprehensive account of the differences between the three classes of establishment, see Peter Clark's *The English Alehouse*, op. cit, pp. 66-72.

[90] Beer was also relatively cheap, as Adam celebrates in *A Looking Glass for London and England*: 'the Ale is / good Ale, and you can aske but a peny for a pot, no more by the staute' (op. cit., ll. 812-14). The *MCR* contain an account of the prosecution of a licensee who sold wine and beer at a price higher than that allowed by statute: '7 March, 30 Elizabeth. – True Bill that William Goughe, late of Islington co. Midd. inholder, on the said day and at divers times before and afterwards, sold and uttered to divers persons unknown twenty gallons of Gascoyne wine as 2*s*. 3*d*. per gallon, and twenty gallons of sack at 3*s*. 4*d*. per gallon, being beyond the prices appointed and limited by the statute in the case provided' (*MCR*, p. 176; GDR, 19 April, 30 Eliz.). Cf. *An°. Reg. Iacobi Primo*, op. cit., sig. $D2_V$ which introduced a fine of twenty shillings for selling a quart of best beer for more than a penny.

been brewed. Paul Hentzner recorded during his travels around England that 'the general drink is beer, which is prepared from barley, and is excellently well tasted, but strong, and what soon fuddles'.[91] William Harrison's *Description of England* (2nd edn, 1587) breaks off from a description of contemporary fairs to offer up one of the most colourful accounts of the variety of strong beer available in early modern England. Harrison's acknowledgement of his digression at the end of the extract is a wonderful semantic slippage:

> There is such headie ale and beere in most [markets and fairs], as for the mightinesse thereof among such as seeke it out is commonlie called huffecap, the mad dog, father whoresonne, angels food, dragons milke, go by the wall, stride wise, and lift leg, &c... It is incredible to saie how our maltbugs lug at this liquor, even as pigs should lie in a row, lugging at their dames teats, till they lie still againe, and be not able to wag. Neither did *Romulus* nor *Remus* sucke their shee woolfe or sheepheards wife *Lupa*, with such eger and sharpe devotion, as these men hale at hufcap, till they be red as cockes, and little wiser than their combes. But how am I fallen from the market into the alehouse?[92]

Those who could not thrive within the emergent workshop-capitalist economy were perhaps most likely to experience the consequences of Harrison's declension from the market to the alehouse, for if the clientele of the inns and taverns were identifiable by their substance, then the patrons of alehouses were most clearly distinguishable by their poverty. Whilst the anonymous author of *A Looking Glasse for Drunkards* assumed that the typical alehouse user's shabby appearance was due to his having squandered his means drinking so that 'the most part goe in ragged coates, and having had great meanes, have consumed all to nothing', the fact that

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[91] R. Bentley (ed.), *Paul Hentzner's Travels in England During the Reign of Elizabeth*, op. cit., p. 62.

[92] Transcribed in R.H. Tawney and Eileen Power, *Tudor Economic Documents*, Vol. 3, op. cit., pp. 73-4.

they may have had little in the first place is not conceded.[93] For those on the margins of the workshop-capitalist economy, the alehouse provided a network of services which defined its function as much as the alcohol it served. Alehouses were run, to use Peter Clark's phrase, 'by the poor for the poor'.[94] Accordingly, an increase in the number of alehouses may be interpreted as an indicator of an increase in the demand for their services.[95] In a time of demographic reorganisation, alehouses provided temporary accommodation for new arrivals in the neighbourhood. Such lodging may have only been on the alehouse bench or perhaps even in the landlord's bed, but nevertheless it provided newcomers with 'a foothold in the community until they had found themselves a job or a place to live'.[96]

Alehouses were important from a nutritional perspective. As real wages slumped in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, food sold in conventional measures frequently became too expensive in terms of unit price to be purchased by any individual.[97] Alehouses on occasion came to assume a role similar to that of the nineteenth century co-operative as patrons combined resources to purchase foodstuffs such as joints of meat before preparing them at their hosts, saving the price of fuel, and reducing the chances of the commodities purchased having been

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[93] Anon., *A Looking Glasse for Drunkards*, op. cit., sig. $A4_{v}$. Cf. William Hornby, *The Scourge of Drunkenness*, op. cit., sigs. $A2_{r-v}$.

[94] Peter Clark, 'The alehouse and the alternative society', op. cit., p. 48. Clark offers some evidence from the records of contemporary Northamptonshire and Norfolk justices that 'alehouse-keepers were largely recruited from the lowest ranks of the social hierarchy' in *The English Alehouse: A Social History*, op. cit., p. 72

[95] A survey of 1577 cited by Clarke (*The English Alehouse,* op. cit., p. 4) recorded 15,095 alehouses in England.

[96] Ibid., p. 55.

[97] After 'a period of modest prosperity for the wage-earner' in the fifteenth century, J.A. Sharpe describes how 'real wages fell rapidly in the early sixteenth century, then continued to decline steadily until the 1610s, when they stood at little more than a third of their 1450-75 level'. Sharpe also offers the salutory reminder that (particularly outside London) many apprentices, servants, family farmers, and family artisans were simply not wage-earners in the modern sense. J.A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England*, op. cit., pp. 212, 211.

adulterated.[98] This procedure appears to have served basic nutritional needs, and even then perhaps only on an irregular basis; it would be wrong to suggest that alehouses offered Rabelaisian repasts.[99]

Alehouses may also have provided the only financial services its patrons would have had access to, from informal credit or pawnbroking services, to serving as an impromptu marketplace for peddlers and customers, as well as supplying a 'source of information about local economic conditions, wage rates, and places of work'.[100] The existence of such services offered no surety against hardship, however, and in the fragile interstices of their peripheral economic existence it was possible for alehouse users on the verge of destitution to be drawn into criminal activity. Indirect associations between the alehouse and crime are alluded to in the extant Rose plays. For example, when in *Look About You* Gloucester asks Skink, disguised as Prince John, to return the gold chain he has lent to him, Skink's first concern is to keep enough of the chain himself to pay for several sojourns at the alehouse:

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[98] Shaddow's observation in *Old Fortunatus*: 'liberalitie dyed long agoe' (Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., I.ii.178) and Samia's comment 'No charitie within this citie bides: / All for themselves, and none to helpe the poore' in Greene and Lodge's *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., ll. 1067-68 are reminders of the fact that charitable aid for those on the economic margins was scant, and that self-help was vital. Familiar traditions of hospitality had little place in the urban workshop-capitalist economy, and their diminution is bemoaned in the Rose canon. The Knight complains to Walter the farmer in *A Knack to Know a Knave* of how 'housekeeping is decayed within / this thirtie yeare', a state of affairs which Walter, judging by his response, has clearly contributed to: 'at a Christmasse time feast none at al, / But such as yeeld you some commoditie' (Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, op. cit., ll. 929-30, 961-2). A Senator in *A Knack to Know an Honest Man* remarks 'Thou talkest of matters fortie yeres ago, / The worlde thats now differs from that was then, / Men are more neere and deerer to themselves' (Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 803-5). Cf. Nemo's remark in *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*: 'Simplicity with Painful Penurie sits, / For Hospitality that was wont to feed him, / Was slaine long since and now the poore do need him' (Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., sigs. $I2_V$-$I3_r$).

[99] Whilst William Harrison detailed the times of day at which the nobility, gentry, merchants and husbandsmen took their meals in the second edition of his *Description of England* (1587), he observed that 'the poorest sort... generally dine and sup when they may, so that to talk of their order of repast it were but a needless matter'. Quoted in John Dover Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England*, op. cit, p. 282.

[100] Peter Clark, 'The alehouse and the alternative society', op. cit., p. 56.

Skink: There's more, and more, I'le geld it eare it go *He breakes*
This same shal keep me in some Taverne merry, *the chaine.*
'Til nights blacke hand curtaine this to cleare sky.[101]

The majority of crime associated with alehouses appears to have been 'amateur, small-scale, and sporadic', and should not be seen to have undermined the fact that by offering support and companionship the alehouse functioned as 'a vital popular centre, helping to integrate the marginal and the migrant classes into the community'.[102] Perhaps over and above all other things, however, an alehouse, much like the Rose, offered its clientele the opportunity to escape temporarily from the drudgery of day to day life. Associations between the pleasure of forgetfulness which alcohol use brings about are often referred to in the Rose canon, and there can be little doubt that the near-destitute who utilised the services of the alehouse most comprehensively would have had pressing reasons to seek out, albeit temporarily, the obliteration of consciousness and the blurring of perception.[103]

In *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, Gnatto, a masterless man, encounters his fellow Franco and advises him that, assuming he can avoid arrest, begging will furnish him with sufficient income to get drunk:

Gnatto: What Franco, wel met, whether art thou going?
Franco: Faith my master is gone awaie, and I am going a begging.
Gnatto: A begging, why 'tis the best occupation thou canst use,
...

[101] Anon., *Look About You*, op. cit., ll. 1303-5.
[102] Peter Clark, 'The alehouse and the alternative Society', op. cit., pp. 57; Peter Clark, 'The alehouse and social integration in English towns', in *Habiter de la ville: Actes de la Table ronde organisée aved l'aide de la D.G.R.S.T. et de la Mission de la Recherche Urbaine sous la direction de Maurice Garden et Yves Lequin* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1984), p. 228.
[103] Such references were even made at a metafictive level; Skelton steps out of his role as 'Friar Tuck' in Chettle and Munday's *The Death of Robert* to confess to the audience that 'I, like a sot, have / wholly forgot the course of our plot'. Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 12-13.

Franco: Why what profit can that yield?
Gnatto: Why, by being alwaies dronke thou shalt learne never to be sober. O the vertue of a dronkard is much, he speaks little because he sleeps much, he stands not upon opinion, for everie litle straw throwes him downe: he is not proud, for his head is readie to salute everie poast: nor hee is not envious, for hee teares his stomacke open to everie man, and sleepes as soundly on a donghil as on a downe bed.

For all his rhetorical flourishes, however, Gnatto leaves Franco with the most important reason for obliterating his consciousness at every opportunity:

Gnatto: 'Tis better to be dronken and drousie,
Than hunger starved and lousie.[104]

The marginally employed artisan and alehouse user who may from time to time have found himself in the Bankside amphitheatres may also have sought 'to drive away care', 'to blind the world' until 'so besot[ted]... that hee knoweth not where he is' in pursuit not only of 'a drowsie sleepinesse, but also a senselesse deadnesse' in order to counter (if only temporarily) the difficulties of living on the economic hinterland of an urban environment during times of high inflation, unemployment and social upheaval.[105] Just as we identify in the playgoing community a coming-to-consciousness of the theatre's potential to act as a consolation against, or possibly a retreat from, the alienation of the wage relation in a liminal space that is liberated from the control of external influences for the duration of the performance, so alehouse users could to some degree be said to have been 'drink[ing] out the threats of the world'.[106] For all their attempts to elude hardship, however, deliverance would

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[104] Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 619-23, 641-50, 658-59. Cf. Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., sig. $C2_V$.
[105] John Taylor, *A New Discovery* (London, 1623), sig. $B1_V$; John Taylor, *The Praise, Antiquity and Commodity of Begging* (London, 1621), sig. $C3_V$; Thomas Kingsmill, *The Drunkard's Warning*, op. cit., p. 5; John Downame, *Four Treatises*, op. cit., p. 91.
[106] Robert Harris, *The Drunkard's Cup*, op. cit., sig. $D2_r$

only ever have been temporary, for all the tribulations they had faced prior to raising the cup to their lips would be awaiting them on their revival.

3 'Age barbarous, times impious, men vitious': The economic determination of social unrest and criminality

Enter three or foure poore people, some souldiers, some old men.

1: God help, God help, there's law for punishing,
But there's no law for our necessity:
There be more stockes to set poore souldiers in,
Than there be houses to releeve them at.
...

Old Man: If a poore man come to a doore to aske for God's
sake, they aske him for a licence, or a certificate from a Justice.[1]

This chapter proposes that unrest in England in the last decade of the sixteenth century may be viewed as an indicator of economic dissatisfaction rather than as a manifestation of a cohesive and widespread insurrectionary tendency. In support of this claim, the chapter suggests that both the political reclassification of vagrancy as a criminal activity and its theatrical representation as a state of shame on the stage of the Rose connote a contemporary awareness of the vagrant's status as an economically determined corollary of the operations of the emergent mode of production. The chapter concludes with a review of such violent acts as are depicted on the stage of the Rose, and enquires as to whether causal associations may also be discerned between the represented motives of the characters who enact them, and the social and economic expectations engendered by the emergent workshop-capitalist mode of production.

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[1] Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 323-7, 336-7.

3.1 Interpreting social unrest in the 1590s

Early modern English anxieties regarding the adverse effects of the economic changes brought about by the new mode of production found forms of articulation outside of the sphere of popular culture. The combined effects of population growth, inflationary pressure and agricultural change had significant economic consequences for late sixteenth century England's urban communities. As David Underdown has remarked, those with 'incomes that failed to keep up with inflation suffered correspondingly', and the 'heightened polarisation of society' which accompanied these changes made the period in question 'an important stage in the long process of class formation'.[2] It has been estimated that agricultural prices rose 4.6 fold and industrial prices 2.8 fold during the course of the sixteenth century, mostly in three 'spurts' between the 1510s and 1520s, 1540s and 1550s and during the 1590s. With the third of these periods of inflationary pressure came a degree of unrest.

Analyses of the 'crisis of the 1590s' by cultural critics over the last twenty five years variously claim to have revealed an 'exploration of subversion through transgression', to have discerned 'the ventriloquised voice of the common man speaking against the privileges of the rich and the literate', and to have detected the sound of 'the popular voice protesting' within its contemporary cultural representations.[3] Such claims raise

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[2] David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1600-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 20.

[3] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy*, 2nd edn. (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 109; Jean E. Howard, *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 137; Annabel Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 51.

expectations that a significant inventory of serious disturbances should be identifiable within the decade in question.

Several noteworthy incidents did indeed take place during this ten years' span. Five apprentice riots, for example, occurred in London during June of 1595. On 6th June, a silkweaver was liberated from Bedlam by apprentices, having been arrested and committed as insane. A riot over the price of fish followed on 12th June, with a similar incident on 13th June having being precipitated by the local price of butter. On both occasions, the goods seized were not looted, but re-sold equitably at the statute price. A demonstration by apprentices outside the Lord Mayor's house on 15th June was succeeded on the same day by a pitched battle between an apprentice mob and the Compter's men, who were holding an apprentice who had assaulted his master. The incidents of this particular month culminated on 16th June with the forcible dispersion of a throng of apprentices, demobbed soldiers and masterless men who had met near St. Paul's to initiate an insurrection which was supposed to culminate in the beheading of the Lord Mayor. By 27th June, however, the key figures of these incidents had been arrested. A number of those involved were whipped and pilloried, and on 22nd July five of those who had threatened the Mayor and the sheriffs of the City with violence were tried for treason and hung, drawn and quartered. Similarly, in Oxfordshire in late

1596 a small band of protestors discontented with the high price of food planned an insurrection, the leaders of which were executed for treason subsequent to its failure.[4]

Whilst this list may hardly be described as extensive, it does serve to illustrate that rumour, confusion, and a fear of disorder could raise 'what amounted to little more than a "clandestine gathering of less than a handful of conspirators who disbanded for lack of support"' to the status of a minor rebellion for the Tudor authorities as well as for historians.[5] The disorders in question were motivated by economic necessity rather than political aspiration. As Buchanan Sharp has noted, the disturbances coincided with periods of dearth and were 'concerned with subsistence matters: grain prices, wage rates, unemployment and common rights'. Of equal consequence is the fact that these incidents can retrospectively be seen to have been 'instrumental in forming elite attitudes towards social problems and social policies', their 'quite limited and definite aims' being viewed 'as threats to property rights and to social stability' and countered with a correspondingly 'punitive response'.[6]

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[4] See M.J. Power, 'London and the control of the "crisis" of the 1590s', *History* 70 (230), (1985), pp. 371-385. Beyond the historical purview of this thesis are the 'Midland Rising' of 1607, the Seend and Westbury clothworkers revolt of 1614, and the Burrow Hills and Maldon riots of 1629. See Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1982), pp. 174, 178-79; J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Seventeenth-Century England*, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

[5] Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (eds.), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1985), p. 29. John Walter has observed that 'when the generally small-scale and scattered riots have been discounted, only the Oxfordshire rising remains to substantiate the thesis of rebellion in the 1590s'. He ultimately rejects even the significance of this event, however, concluding that the 'changes that produced a discontented poor also forged new fetters to prevent collective political action by them' (John Walter, 'A "rising of the people"? The Oxfordshire Rising of 1596', *P&P* 107 (May 1985), pp. 92, 141).

[6] Buchanan Sharp, 'Popular protest in seventeenth century England', in B. Reay (ed.), *Popular Culture in Seventeenth Century England* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 273; Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Longman, 1988), p. 100.

Sharp makes a number of persuasive observations regarding the riots' basis in necessity rather than militancy. He notes that they were most likely to occur in those regions which relied more on the wage relation than other means of exchange such as barter (i.e. urban rather than rural environments) and which would therefore be most affected by market fluctuations, with 'the failure of the market to provide for the subsistence needs of the wage-earning consumer and his family' also serving as a catalyst. The riots frequently stemmed from the participants' unsuccessful attempts to enforce officially sanctioned market regulations. In most instance, they can therefore be regarded 'not as attacks upon the established order but as efforts to reinforce it' by physically reinscribing the shared ideals of a 'just' society by means of the use of 'just' force.[7]

Within their contemporary economic context, the disorders associated with the 'crisis of the 1590s' appear to be less the actions of political insurgents than of ordinary citizens struggling with the economically destabilising effects of the emergent mode of production's exchange relations in times of dearth when real wages fell, commodities were scarce, and the prices of basic foodstuffs rose. Rather than fomenting rebellion,

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[7] Buchanan Sharp, 'Popular protest in seventeenth-century England', op. cit., pp. 275, 276, 279. The majority of the records detailing the theft of foodstuffs in the *MCR* are for small amounts of produce, suggesting that the they were stolen for personal consumption rather that resale: '27 July, 38 Elizabeth. – Recognizance, taken before Edward Vaghan esq. J.P., of Henry Hunte of St. Leonard's parish in Shordich gardiner, in the sum of ten pounds; For the said Henry's appearance at the next Gaol Delivery for Middlesex, to answer to a charge of "stealinge of artichokes"' (*MCR*, p. 234; GDR, 1 Sept., 38 Eliz.). See also *MCR*, p. 172; GDR, 28 April, 29 Eliz.. A spectacular exception to this rule is the following entry: ' 17 February, 40 Elizabeth. – True Bill that, at the Stonebridge in the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields co Midd., John Frauncis late of London yeoman assaulted Samuel Morris, and robbed him of a graye horse worth forty shillings, eight hundred egges worth forty shillings, three dead mallardes worth three shillings, a dead teale worth six-pence, seven dead larkes worth seven pence, tow dead hennes worth three shillings, a black woollen-cloth cloak worth nine shillings, and twenty-two pence in numbered money. John Frauncis was sentenced to be hung' (*MCR*, p. 242, GDR, 29 March, 40 Eliz.).

most of the disorders of the 1590s may be interpreted as misguided attempts to counter the fluctuations of the free market through the establishment of 'a process of negotiation and reciprocity' which could be construed as having 'confirmed the social order of urban England rather than offered a fundamental challenge to it'.[8]

Laura Stevenson has remarked:

> Before men abandon old paradigms and develop new ones that accurately describe what they observe, they strain their... concepts to the snapping point in an attempt to deny the possible ramifications of what they see. The tension between what men really see and what they say they think they see expresses itself in paradox.[9]

In this manner, the participants' paradoxical belief in the fact that the operations of a market which they understood to be inequitable could be corrected may be said to have prefigured a coming-to-consciousness of 'the contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation' in its inverted form.[10] Assuring the establishment of an equitable exchange value for labour is not, of course, a function of capitalism in any of its stages on account of the mode of production's reliance on the extraction of unacknowledged, and unremunerated, surplus value from labour.[11] Consequently, with the true value of the surplus value extracted from the worker obscured, 'the greatest "social control" available to capitalism is the wage relation itself – the fact that, in order to live and reproduce, the worker must perpetually sell

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[8] See also John Walter, 'The social economy of dearth in early modern England', in J. Walter and R. Schofield (eds.), *Famine, Disease and the Social Order in Early Modern Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988).

[9] Laura Stevenson, *Praise and Paradox*, op. cit., p.6. Cf. Raymond Williams' account in *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford U.P., 1977) of 'structures of feeling' describing a 'tension' enacted in 'practical consciousness' which can be 'an unease, a stress, a displacement, a latency: the moment of conscious comparison not yet come, often not even coming... experiences to which the fixed forms do not speak at all, which indeed they do not recognise' (p. 130).

[10] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., p.706; Frederick Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, op. cit., p. 417.

[11] See Ernest Mandel's summary of Marx's theory of surplus value in the 'Introduction' to *1 Capital*, op. cit, pp. 46-54.

his or her labour power'.[12] The tension between the ethical and the economic which may be discerned in such a rereading of the 'crisis of the 1590s' is foregrounded in the two studies which compose the remainder of this chapter.

[12] Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1983), pp. 38, 87.

3.2 The reclassification of vagrancy and its theatrical reputation

Despite the fact that the riots were not led by them, the authorities' response to the disturbances of 1595 in London was directed against vagrants and beggars. An act of 1597 promised 'payne and punyshment' to 'all wandering persons and common Labourers being persons able in bodye using loytering and refusing to worcke for such reasonable Wages as is taxed or commonly gyven'. The same act unequivocally stated that 'all such persons not being Fellons wandering... shalbe taken adjudged and deemed Rogues Vagabondes and Sturdy Beggers', and subjected to the same treatment.[13]

However, as Paul Slack suggests, 'for every migrant whipped as a vagrant, there must have been several who were accepted into the expanding populations of towns and areas of rural industry'. Those who were singled out for punishment were 'either unfortunate in being caught or... particularly unwelcome', so that their 'exceptional characteristics helped to shape... contemporary definitions of the vagrant'.[14]

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[13] 'An acte for punyshment of rogues, vagabondes and sturdy beggars' (29 Elizabeth, c. 4), 1597, reproduced in R.H. Tawney, and Eileen Power, *Tudor Economic Documents*, op. cit, Vol. 2, p. 355. See also 'An acte for the punishement of vacabondes, and for releif of the poore and impotent' (14 Elizabeth, c.5), 1572; 'An acte for the setting of the poore on worke, and for avoyding of ydleness' (18 Elizabeth, c.3), 1576; 'An acte for the reliefe of the poore' (39 Elizabeth, c.3), 1597, op. cit., pp. 328, 331.

[14] Paul Slack, 'Vagrants and vagrancy in England, 1598-1664', *Economic History Review* 27.3 (1974), p. 377. As Slack has recorded elsewhere, 'constables' accounts show that less than one in ten of the migrants passing through a parish were usually whipped' (*Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, op. cit., p. 92). Keith Wrightson has also suggested that the notion of order embodied in the statutes and proclamations of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries 'should not be identified too readily with that implicit in the norms and attitudes which governed social behaviour in the village community' ('Two concepts of order: justices, constables and jurymen in seventeenth-century England', in J. Brewer and J. Styles (eds.), *An Ungovernable People: the English and their Law in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), p. 22). A.L. Beier notes nearly 100 recorded instances of vagrants arriving at Warwick receiving hospitality from widows, alehouses, or even the gentry (A.L. Beier, 'Vagrants and the social order in Elizabethan England: a rejoinder', *P&P* 71 (May 1976), p. 16). Cf. Felicity Heal's 'The Idea of Hospitality in early modern England', *P&P* 102 (1984), pp. 66-93.

Employment seekers, licensed beggars, victims of fire or theft, those seeking relatives, disabled war veterans, and all other individuals with equally plausible reasons for being on the road were collectively regarded as 'vagrants' by the new legislature. Paul Slack has shown that of the 651 vagrants taken in Salisbury between 1598 and 1638, seventy claimed to be seeking work in reputable trades, from joiners and weavers to shoemakers and wiredrawers. If the authorities' motivation was to resolve the problem of vagrancy, their actions also appear to have served to aggravate the issue. As Paul Slack has argued, vagrancy legislation 'helped to create the conditions it was directed against', for 'the very process of labelling a man vagrant helped to make him one', so that 'when the constables happened to catch people at the respectable end of the vagrants spectrum, they gave them a firm push towards the opposite extreme'.[15] There was, in a literal sense, no room for the 'unproductive' vagrant in early modern English society; as Marx summarised:

> The worker exists as a worker only when he exists *for himself* as capital, and he exists as capital only when *capital* exists for *him*. The existence of capital is *his* existence, his *life*, for it determines the content of his life in a manner indifferent to him. Political economy therefore does not recognise the unoccupied worker, the working man in so far as he is outside this work relationship. The swindler, the cheat, the beggar, the unemployed, the starving, the destitute and the criminal working man are *figures* which exist not *for it*, but only for other eyes – for the eyes of doctors, judges, grave-diggers, beadles etc. Nebulous figures which do not belong within the province of political economy.[16]

Classical historical materialism associates the rise of the concept of vagabondage with the disintegration of the feudal system and the emergence of a nascent workshop-capitalist economy. It was only at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries that this vagabondage made 'a general and

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[15] Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, op. cit. pp. 99-100.
[16] Karl Marx, 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts', *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 335.

permanent appearance', heralding the appearance of a class 'which has to bear all the burdens of society without enjoying its advantages, which, ousted from society, is forced into the most decided antagonism to all other classes'.[17] Subsequent to the 'forcible expropriation of the people from the soil', those individuals displaced 'could not possibly be absorbed by the nascent manufactures as fast as [they were] thrown upon the world', and the legislation described above ensured that 'the fathers of the present working class were chastised for their enforced transformation into vagabonds and paupers'.[18] The general conditions which Marx delineates translated into harsh historical specifics, as access to common ground formerly used for the grazing of cattle or cultivation was restricted, and the privilege of gleaning (where stray grain was gathered by the poor after the harvest) was withdrawn by many rural landlords towards the end of the century on account of the 'greater pressure on resources, advancing rural capitalism and a concomitant hardening of attitudes to property'.[19]

As A.L. Beier has pointed out, even 'early Tudor analyses of vagrancy... stressed the economic and social origins of the problem', and we in turn must ask ourselves 'how far Elizabethan vagrants had meaningful choices open to them'.[20] As a consequence of the contemporary legislation, 'regardless of whether people wanted to work, they

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[17] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., pp.74, 94.
[18] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit., p. 896.
[19] J.A. Sharpe, 'Enforcing the law in the seventeenth-century village', in V.A.C. Gatrell, B. Lenman, and G. Parker (eds.), *Crime and the Law: the Social History of Crime in Western Europe since 1500* (London: Europa, 1980), p. 105.
[20] A.L. Beier, 'Vagrants and the social order in Elizabethan England: a rejoinder', op. cit., p. 133.

were liable to prosecution as vagrants simply for being out of work, for begging, and for not having lands, a master or a craft from which to get a living'.[21]

As described by Marx in *1 Capital*, the statute of 1597 decreed that unlicensed beggars of above fourteen years of age were to be 'severely flogged and branded on the... ear'. Two more arrests for the same offense invoked a mandatory sentence to execution.[22] Similar statutes had been issued in 1572 and 1576. The Middlesex County Records contain examples of these statutes being exercised to their fullest extent. An entry for 6 October 1590 names thirty-six men and women arrested

> or being vagabonds in the said ... co. Midd., and in divers other parts of the said county, over fourteen years of age, strong in body and fit for labour, but masterless and having no lawful means of livelihood, in contempt of the Lady the Queen, and against the form of the statute in this case provided: With sentence, that each of the said vagabonds should be severly flogged and burnt on the right ear according to the form of the statute'[23]

Jeaffreson calculates that seventy-one people were whipped and branded in Middlesex as vagrants between 6 October 1590 and 14 December 1591. There are also references to those who were repeatedly arrested for being 'vagabonds, commonly called Egipcians' [i.e. 'gypsies'] being hung.[24]

Supplementary influences coalesced around the figure of the vagrant within early modern English society and modified its status. Firstly, the inflation which accompanied the price rises discussed above 'created a relatively small section of

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[21] Ibid., p. 130.
[22] Karl Marx, *1 Capital*, op. cit, pp. 759-60.
[23] *MCR*, p. 190; GDR, 6 October, 32 Eliz.
[24] *MCR*, p. 221; GDR, 21 June, 36 Eliz.

society who were becoming wealthier and a much larger section who were becoming poorer, thus aggravating the... problem of pauperism that beset the whole of Tudor society' whose visible consequence was the vagrant.[25] Secondly, subsequent to the dissolution of the monasteries and the disappearance of the most obvious figure of mendicancy, the monk, poverty lost its sacred connotations as labour was elevated to the status of a religious duty and a way of glorifying God.[26] As a consequence, as Christopher Hill has noted, poverty 'ceased to be a holy state and [became] presumptive evidence of wickedness'.[27]

Thirdly, the circulation of such capitalist-puritan fantasies as shaped Painful Penurie's unwavering faith in the inviolable correlation between the expenditure of labour and the acquisition of wealth as described above may have been effecting a transformation in 'the mental outlook of the lower orders so that they no longer waited at the rich man's gate for charity, but went out to offer their services on the

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[25] L.A. Clarkson, 'Inflation and the moral order', *History Today* 36.4 (1986), p. 11.

[26] Mark Koch has argued that the further degradation of the figure of the vagrant in 'rogue' literature 'played a more direct role in desacralizing mendicancy than did the theological writings of the Protestant reformers'. See 'The desanctification of the beggar in rogue pamplets of the English renaissance', in David G. Allen and Robert A. White (eds.), *The Work of Dissimiltude: Essays from the Sixth Citadel Conference in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Newark: U. Delaware P, 1992), p. 96.

[27] Christopher Hill, 'Puritans and the poor', *P&P* 2 (Nov. 1952), p. 34. In what is perhaps a comment on the altered status of poverty, Rossalin remarks in *John of Bordeaux*: 'pitte hath fled the riche and dwelles with the pore' (Robert Greene, *John of Bordeaux*, op. cit., l. 857).

labour market', resulting in a 'sharp distinction [being] drawn by the poor laws between the impotent but deserving poor and sturdy rogues'.[28]

Despite the rhetoric which suffuses the act of 1597, with its emphasis on the need to 'reform' vagrants and 'relieve' the indigent, the legislation endeavoured to coerce vagrants into a workplace which in reality held few opportunities for them, driven by the ideological imperative to prevent the 'waste' of human labour and couching the protection of economic interests within supposed 'moral concern'.[29] Provincial 'Houses of Correction' such as those in Norwich, Salisbury, and the Bridewell Hospital in Southwark ensured, amongst other things, that those deemed 'unemployed and work-shy' could be 'set to work or disciplined'.[30] Whilst the proliferation of these institutions was, as J.A. Sharpe has recognised, a 'major, and

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[28] Joan R. Kent, 'Attitudes of members of the House of Commons to the regulation of "personal conduct" in late Elizabethan and early Stuart England', op. cit., p. 36. The mid-sixteenth century manifestation of such attitudes towards work is evident in the declaration made by 'the citizens of London to the privy council on their suit to the king for Bridewell' (1552) which observed that the 'cause of all this misery and beggary was idleness: and the means and remedy to cure the same must be by its contrary, which is labour. And it hath been a speech used of all men, to say unto the idle, work! work! even as though they would have said, the means to reform beggary is to fall to work.' Cited in R.H. Tawney and Eileen Power, *Tudor Economic Documents*, Vol. 2, op. cit. p. 306.

[29] The precise size of the 'vagrant' community is difficult to quantify. William Harrison's estimate of 10,000 in the 1570s is impossible to authenticate, and as he offers no evidence to support his assertion, it must be doubted. Harrison may have been alluding to a biblical reference, or perhaps meant the figure to imply 'an infinitely large number'. Even less credible is the reckoning by a Cornish magistrate in the 1590s that were 200,000 vagrants in England, with 10,000 in his county alone. The Somerset Justice of the Peace, Edward Hext, estimated in 1596 that there were between 300 to 400 vagrants per county. Paul Slack has employed less speculation in determining that 'in 1571-72, when special searches [for vagrants] were organised in the aftermath of the Rising in the North, 742 arrests were made in eighteen counties, most of them in the Midlands and the south-east'. He notes an increase particularly in London, based on the number of vagrants punished at Bridewell, which rose from 69 a year in 1560-61 to 815 by the middle of the 1620s. Vagrancy became the most commonly punished crime at the institution during this period. (Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, op. cit., p. 93).

[30] Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London*, op. cit., p. 154. A proportion of vagrants were on the margins of the labour market, but seasonal fluctuations and local market recessions regularly curtailed their employment. Cf. Paul Slack, 'Vagrants and vagrancy in England, 1598-1664', *Economic History Review* 27.3 (1974), p. 370; Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, op cit., p. 94.

most novel, development... in the field of punishment', what remains unclear is whether the primary aim of these institutions was to relieve and reform the poor or rather to 'remove them... from society'.[31] A letter from a Somerset Justice of the Peace, Edward Hext, to Lord Burghley on 25th September 1596 gives some idea as to these institutions' reputations:

> I sent dyvers wandrynge suspycous persons to the howse of Correccion, and all in generall wold beseche me with bytter teares to send them rather to the gayle, and denyinge yt them, some confessed felonyes unto me by which they hazarded their lyves, to thend they wold not be sent to the howse of Correccion.[32]

Contemporary commentators, as well as more recent surveys of the subject, have been keen to emphasise the alterity of vagrants, but their further pronouncements are difficult to corroborate. For example, Thomas Harman's *A Caveat for Common Cursitors* (1566) has a notorious glossary of 'pelting speech' appended to it, alleged by the author to be 'an unknown tongue only but to these bold, beastly, bawdy beggars and vain vagabonds, being half mingled with English when it is familiarly talked'.[33] The author's desire to categorise and explain the nature of vagrancy serves as a kind of 'watermark', revealling a collision of 'discordant features of ideologies and codes', and to read Harman is to be left in little doubt that 'he selected, shaped and gilded his material'. Paul Slack has argued that the so-called 'rogue' literature

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[31] J.A. Sharpe, *Judicial Punishment in England* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), p. 26; A.L. Beier, 'Social problems in Elizabethan London', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9.2 (1978), p. 218.

[32] R.H. Tawney and Eileen Power, *Tudor Economic Documents*, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 340.

[33] Thomas Harman, *A Caveat for Common Cursitors, Cony-Catchers and Bawdy Baskets*, ed. G. Salgãdo (: Penguin, 1972), p. 146. This anthology also contains five of Greene's equally suspect 'cony-catching' pamphlets. Harman's work has an agenda of its own, however; as Linda Woodbridge comments, 'far from being a credible source for social history, Harman was an axe-grinder... His every syllable bespeaks an antivagrant agenda, unsettlingly prophetic of [the] modern American idiom of law and order, getting tough with "welfare bums."' She concludes her study by oberving that 'modern pronouncements on the unemployed sound remarkably like early modern pronouncements', and suggests that 'recent attitudes toward the poor and vagrant are the distant historical echo of attitudes that crystalised in the sixteenth century'. Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, Homelessness and Renaissance Literature* (Urbana, U. Illinois P., 2001), pp. 40, 264, 265.

served to make the consideration of social issues tolerable by caricaturing their representation and lessening their importance by making light of them; in reality, he suggests, 'the vagrant was only just distinguishable from other migrants and paupers'.[34]

The evident tension between the entertainment value of such texts as Harman's and their diminished utility as historical 'evidence' has not dissuaded critics from conducting exhaustive surveys of the so-called 'rogue literature'. Frank Aydelotte informed his readership that Robert Greene, author, in addition to a number of the Rose plays, of three 'cony-catching' pamphlets depicting the alleged misdeeds of all manner of criminals he claimed to have been operating in the capital, 'passed a large part of his life among the worst company to be found in London', and later 'exposed the tricks of this wicked crew of sharpers'.[35] Normand Berlin deemed sixteenth century English towns to have been 'disturbed by a multitude of rogues and vagabonds', whilst Gãmini Salgãdo was convinced that a 'vast and ragged army... roamed the woods and fields of England' as 'wretched hovels' began to 'scar the city [of London] like an eczema'.[36]

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[34] Roberto de Romanis, 'Camouflaged identities, criminal writings' in Rosamaria Loretelli and Roberto de Romanis (eds.), *Narrating Transgression: Representations of the Criminal in Early Modern England* (Frankfurt, Germany: Peter Lang, 1999), p. 80; Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, op. cit., p. 105.

[35] Frank Aydelotte, *Elizabethan Rogues and Vagabonds* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. 75.

[36] Normand Berlin, *The Base String: The Underworld in Elizabethan Drama* (Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson U.P., 1968), p. 15; Gãmini Salgãdo, *The Elizabethan Underworld* (London: J.M. Dent, 1977), pp. 22, 20. Paul Slack, amongst others, has pointed out that there is almost no evidence of vagrants having travelled or been encountered in groups other than perhaps on market days or at fairs, where they converged rather than arrived together. He also makes the intelligent point that the vagrants' chances of success 'depended on their relative solitude' (Paul Slack, 'Vagrants and vagrancy in England, 1598-1664', op. cit., p. 365). J.A.S. McPeek's belief in the veracity of the 'rogue' pamphlets was at least tempered by his acknowledgement of the potential economic disruption to the livelihood of an individual living in a county in 'the process of changing both its living and thinking from a medieval agrarian state into a modern one of trade and commerce' in *The Black Book of Knaves and Unthrifts in Shakespeare and Other Renaissance Authors* (Conneticut: Conneticut U.P., 1969), p. 19

William C. Carroll's account of the social, political, economic, and semiotic configurations which came together in the figure of 'the beggar' is, at least, set within the historical context of a society which had yet to fully 'realize the complex and necessary links between the formation of wealth and the formation of an entire class of expendable workers'.[37] Carroll also usefully acknowledges the fact that 'the move toward a state-originated compulsory poor tax... expose[d] the structural function of charity in economic terms: to ease the pressures of poverty and unemployment created by an emergent capitalism.'[38]

Kathleen Pories' assertion that 'the state, working from the evidence of the popular literature, assigned a fixed behaviour to the poor and then created legislation that helped reinforce that behaviour' infers an assumption that 'rogue' literature contained at least a residual facticity which recent work has left difficult to defend. However, if we interpret Pories' observation that 'poverty is reread as artifice' in these texts, with the reader being encouraged to understand poverty 'more as a game of dissimulation... than a social disruption' not as a statement of poststructuralist *jouissance* but rather as an acknowledgement of the origins of the 'rogue' literature

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[37] William C. Carroll, *Fat King, Lean Beggar: Representations of Poverty in the Age of Shakespeare* (Ithaca and London: Cornell U.P., 1996), p. 7. Less successful is Barry Taylor's *Vagrant Writing: Social and Semiotic Disorders in the English Renaissance* (Hemel Hempstead, Herts.: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) which collapses the historical on to the discursive in familiar poststructuralist fashion in coming to its unlikely conclusion that the state of beggary assumed the status of a counter-cultural lifestyle choice: 'the discourse on vagrancy identifies a counter-order of social being which is originated by the vagrant's undoing of differentiation, by his assumption of the signifiers of states and conditions not "properly" his own' (p. 211).

[38] Ibid., pp. 29, 39.

tradition in the Tudor jest book, we move closer to the position occupied by one of the most recent, and certainly most persuasive, analyses.[39]

Linda Woodbridge's account of the representation of the vagrant in early modern literature argues that 'the presence of the desperately poor... was an embarrassment to... upbeat Renaissance publicists', and that 'many groups in [early modern English] society and several intellectual movements had a stake in exaggerating the threat vagrants posed, and that many were constructing their own identities against what vagrants represented'.[40] Having rehearsed a seven-point summary of the 'compelling evidence' as to the historical unreliability of the contemporary literary depiction of vagrants in order to focus the reader of 'rogue' literature on the imaginative nature of its subject matter, Woodbridge's study argues convincingly

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[39] Kathleen Pories, 'The intersection of poor laws and literature in the sixteenth century: fictional and factual categories' in Constance C. Relihan (ed.), *Framing Elizabethan Fictions: Contemporary Approaches to Early Modern Narrative Prose* (Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 1996), pp. 40, 36. Whilst Paola Pugliatti's *Beggary and Theatre in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003) has interesting observations to make about the ways in which the characters depicted therein 'devised means of their own to erase or diminish the inequalities which their society finds it expedient to maintain' (p. 193), in the last instance the work invests too much credence in the truth-value of the literary fictions of the 'rogue' literature which form its historical core for the arguments to merit attention.

[40] Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, Homelessness and Renaissance Literature*, op. cit., p. 2.

that 'rogue literature, long treated as social or cultural history, is instead a species of the Tudor jest book'.[41]

To 'position a book about homeless people as a jest book', Woodbridge remarks, 'was to identify the poor as funny, worthy of contemptuous laughter rather than social concern – the same impulse that relegated the lowborn to comic subplots in the drama'. She suggests that the 'idealization of the vagabond life', with its comedic 'pretence that vagrants formed organized societies', and 'band[ed] together in merry groups recall[ing] happy-ending literary antecedents like the Robin Hood tales' stands in stark contrast to historians' observations that the vagrancy that poverty engendered was 'more like the isolating movement of tragedy', sundering families apart as individual vagrants, travelling alone, sought a means of subsistence.[42]

Outside of London, the nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production in the late sixteenth century was doing little more than 'struggling forward in a society whose institutions were still largely feudal'. However, a brief survey of the contemporary cultural representations of the figure of the vagrant within the extant canon of the

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[41] Ibid., pp. 3, 46. Woodbridge's summary of the historical evidence reminds us that 'the common belief that vagrants were organised in highly disciplined societies... has been discredited by historians'; that 'the belief in an intricate system of criminal specialisations... is a stark contrast to the improvisational, hand-to-mouth subsistence of real vagrants'; that 'it was not wandering beggars who rose in riots and political rebellions'; that far from being radicals, 'there is no evidence that the truly down and out articulated *any* economic doctrines'; that the 'vagrant were not jobless by choice'; that accounts of the vagrants' supposed promiscuity were 'tabloid-style fantasies', and finally that 'there is very little evidence that vagrants spoke thieves' cant' (pp. 6-9). Bryan Reynolds' *Becoming Criminal: Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2002) plunges into many of the pitfalls identified by Woodbridge: 'cant was invented so that members of criminal culture could communicate privately and securely while operating unlawfully withint the physical and conceptual territory of official culture' (p. 87).

[42] Ibid., pp. 46, 51, 21.

Rose theatre suggests that work was being undertaken within this theatrical space to mediate social being within the capital by foregrounding vagrancy's determination by economic factors.[43]

Vagrancy was, and perhaps remains, 'the classic crime of status, the social crime *par excellence*', with individuals being arraigned not 'because of their actions, but because of their position in society'.[44] Such a condition was both difficult to escape from, and hard to disguise, as the eponymous hero of Greene's *John of Bordeaux* observes:

John: povertie
can get no cloake, no covert, no disguise
great harts in want may purpose not effect.[45]

The severe punishments meted out to those deemed to be vagrant as described above would doubtless have provoked strident disavowals from those who were accused of, for example, begging. Such repudiations are certainly noticeable in the extant canon of the Rose, with characters being keen to disavow any personal associations with the state of beggary. Adam in *A Looking Glass for London* cannot order a beer without feeling compelled to point out the fact that he has the means to pay for it, ('Tapster, fil me a pot here is mony, I am no / beggar'), whilst Simplicity in *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* is only comfortable with admitting to his having 'begged til the bedles snapt [him] up' within the context of a broader

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[43] Christopher Hill, 'Puritans and the poor', op. cit., p. 37.
[44] A.L. Beier, *Masterless Men* (London: Methuen, 1985), xxii.
[45] Robert Greene, *John of Bordeaux*, op. cit., ll. 1099-101.

narrative which emphasises how he has subsequently improved himself by working as a water bearer and ballad seller.[46]

None of the plays which survive suggest that the Rose canon may have contained a protagonist who would have commended the scourging of beggers from its stage as a notion to be applauded. In fact, those characters from the extant Rose plays who pronounce unfavourable opinions on the state of beggary are at best depicted unsympathetically, and at worst punished severely. For example, the corrupt courtier Mario (who declares he would 'rather fall to miserie, / Then see a begger rais'd to dignitie') is merely banished from court at the end of *Patient Grissil*, the same farmer mentioned previously whom Honesty condemns to dismemberment opines earlier in *A Knack to Know a Knave* that:

> Farmer: if you be downe, and bid God help you up, and do not help your self, you may fortune lie and perish
> ...
> therefore learn to provide for your self, let God provide for the pore.[47]

The trope of indigency is deployed in the Rose canon as a signifier of social exclusion and economic segregation by those who rail against injustice. Whilst the anonymous *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall* (1600) cannot be verified as a Rose play, its protagonist Lodowick may relate it to the lost *Alexander and Lodowick*, recorded in Henslowe's *Diary*, and its title echoes a line delivered by Parson Ball in *Jack*

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[46] Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., ll.791-2; Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, op. cit., D4.

[47] Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., II.ii.176-7; Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, op. cit., ll. 972-3, 978.

Straw (see 4.2 below). Lodowick, Duke of Bullen, in exile and disguised, is forced into poverty, and muses on the state of the poor:

Lodowick: the world is grown so ful of doubts,
Or rather so confounded with self-love,
As if a poore man beg, they straight condemne him,
And say, he is an idle vagabound:
Or if he aske a service, or to worke,
They straightway are suspicious of his truth:
So that however, they will find excuse,
That he shall still continue miserable.
And tis as common as tis true withall,
The weakest ever goe unto the wall.[48]

'Ful of doubts' as to the consequences of the economic changes accompanying the development of the new mode of production, this passage conveys a contemporaneous coming-to-consciousness of direct associations between the economic self-interest ('self-love') nurtured by the nascent workshop-capitalism and the social and economic ostracisation of the vagrant. Within the paradigm outlined by Lodowick, the vagrant is condemned for begging as well as for seeking work, and is thereby ensnared within precisely the same double-bind his real-world counterpart endured in the operations of the wage relation, as described above.

In a similar vein, and in spite of the play's allegorical setting, the prophet Oseas addresses London directly in two separate speeches from *A Looking Glass for London*:

Oseas: London looke on, this matter nips thee neere,
...
Spend lesse at boord, and spare not at the doore,
But aid the infant, and releeve the poore.

[48] Anon., *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall*, ed. W.W. Greg (1600,*1600*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1912), ll. 1035-44.

Oseas: Where mercilesse men rob the poore,
And the needie are thrust out of doore.
...
Where povertie is despisde & pity banished
And mercy indeed utterly vanished.
....
London take heed, these sinnes abound in thee:
The poore complaine, the widowes wronged bee.[49]

Within the setting of *Old Fortunatus*' notably London-like Cyprus, Shaddow declares himself 'mad, to / see Souldiours beg, and cowards brave', whilst Ampedo also rues the fact that 'all treade downe the poore'.[50]

John of Bordeaux features another aristocrat reduced to beggary, this time in the person of the eponymous protagonist's wife, Rossalin. In a striking scene, Rossalin teaches her children to beg:

Enter Rossalin with her children

Rossalin: children lerne to beagge wep when you crave
my boyes your case is good, bread must be had though it be
bought with teares
...
die we in want yet honerd shall we die who geves on peni to theas penncive
on peni to releve a matrons want, ha chearity thow now art wayed
will none geve eare? Com Children walk a longe on penie master
for to by
one penie master for my babes and me ha vertu thow ar scornd in
misery
...
...I wep for more than for theas I wepe
I begge for more than for theas I begg yet no man pittieth ether
i penie.[51]

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[49] Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., ll. 284, 286-7, 407-8, 413-14, 419-20.
[50] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., ll. 117, 186.
[51] Robert Greene, *John of Bordeaux*, op. cit., ll. 841-3, 845-8, 852-3.

Whilst the scene is affecting in its own right, Greene amplifies the impression it makes by constructing a striking paradox in the figure of the begging aristocrat, defamiliarising and deforming reality in order to focus attention upon the act of begging itself. The impact of the passage is intensified by Greene's finally compelling his audience to focus once again on Rossalin's claim to 'begge for more than for theas I begg', looking beyond her children to those who share her plight.

Whilst the representation of those reduced to the state of vagrancy could be also be undertaken humorously, such scenes are tempered by those which recommend audiences to refrain from indulging in the sort of behaviour which could sentence them to a similar condition. Gnatto counsels Franco, whose master has 'gone awaie', to pursue the 'occupation' of begging, which he ennobles with a sparkling, carefully constructed conceit, before bathetically undermining it for the fantasy it is:

Gnatto: A begging, why tis the best occupation thou canst use,
A begger hath five of the seven liberall sciences At his fingers ends: he hath musike to sing for hi dinner, he hath logicke to cavel with the constable, he hath rhetorike to perswade that hee should not go to the stockes, he hath Geometrie to measure out his bed in the plaine field, and he hast Astronomie to shew a warme sunne from a colde shade. Nay, Ile prove that a begger devours the foure morall vertues at one breakfast: he's valiant when he must needs fight, he is liberall when he hath anie monie to spend, and he is true if there be nothing to steale. A begger, why tis the ancientest occupation that is, it began at Adam, & wil never end til doomes day.[52]

In a rather more somber tone, Shaddow tempers Andelucia's excitement at being given four bags of gold drawn from his father's magical purse:

[52] Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 620, 622-36.

Andelucia: Come, Shaddow: now wee'le feast it royally.
Shaddow: Doe, master, but take heede of beggerie.[53]

There is a mimetic quality to some of the musings on and representations of vagrancy and the relief of the poor in the extant Rose canon, with *1 Sir John Oldcastle* containing an example of both. Whilst Harpoole may chide his master, the play's eponymous protagonist, for what he considers to be his extravagant relief of the poor and harangues those who gather at his gate, he cannot help but pity their condition:

Harpoole: Your foolish almes maintaines more vagabondes,
Then all the noblemen in Kent beside.
Out you rogues, you knaves, worke for your livings,
Alas poore men, O Lord, they may beg their hearts out,
Theres no more charitie amongst men,
Then amongst so many mastiffe dogges.

Those outside the gate whom Harpoole berates are 'three or foure poore people, some souldiers, some old men', two of whom muse on the fact that those who are being called upon to relieve the poor are barely distinguishable from themselves:

4: Maister maior of Rochester has given commaunde-
ment, that none shall goe abroade out of the parish, and they
have set an order downe forsooth, what every poore housholder must give towards our reliefe: where they be some ceased
I may say to you, had almost as much neede to beg as we.
1: It is a hard world the while.[54]

Theodor Adorno has described the ways in which an ostracised social group can function as an ideological 'screen for society's objective functional context',

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[53] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., ll. 202-3.
[54] Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 374-9, 324, 331-6.

diverting the social gaze from the actual conditions which define the group as 'unacceptable'. Such a society tolerates the ongoing cause of the ostracised group's alienation, but cannot tolerate its symptom, their presence.[55] The presence of the figure of the beggar on the stage of the Rose can be construed as an act of social displacement, as well as an expression of cultural disquietude at the existence of the economic conditions which realigned, and perhaps exacerbated, their status. Such articulations doubtless released the pleasure and relief of *schadenfreude*, but also spoke of a fear of falling into the same situation. No solutions may have been forthcoming from the early modern English amphitheatres as to how the condition of the vagrant could be improved, but their state is acknowledged rather than punished, and their circumstances are offered up for consideration rather than condemnation.

[55] Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton (1966; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 66-67.

3.3 Violence in the Rose plays: motives and manners

The historical figure of John Skelton, playing the role of Friar Tuck in the complex metafictive frame within which Munday and Chettle's *Downfall of Robert* is enacted, denounces his epoch with admirable economy: 'Age barbarous, times impious, men vitious'.[56] As the following analysis of the representation of violence in the canon of the Rose theatre suggests, the portrayal of the complex (anti)social relations, recreations and norms it touched upon served to counteract 'the tedium, fatigue and dependence of... daily labour'. It also offers support to the contention that violent crime in early modern England was 'essentially modern' in nature, 'its basic impulse being economic gain rather than peasant brutality', with the plays constituting a coming-to-consciousness of the behaviour which nascent workshop-capitalist individualism had the capability to nurture.[57]

As is established by the corresponding entries from contemporary records cited in what follows, such dramatic vignettes were not mere 'ephemera in a play world of little consequence', but rather 'fundamental social activities which were inseparable from the full range of social reality', deriving their meanings from 'the total social fabric', determining consciousness and mediating social existence.[58] In this section, subsequent to a review of the problems which face historians who consider the nature of early modern criminality, I will sustain these contentions by means of analyses of symbolic, exhortational and mimetic violence on the stage of the Rose

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[56] Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., l. 845. See Chapter 4 for a further commentary on the significance of Skelton's role in this play.

[57] J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Seventeenth-Century England: A County Study*, op. cit., p. 115. See also Alan Macfarlane, *The Justice and the Mare's Ale: Law and Disorder in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981).

[58] R.W. Malcomson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1973), p. 88.

before concluding with a comparison of the nature of tragic and comic violence in its extant canon.

J.A. Sharpe has suggested that the history of criminality in early modern England, whether violent or not, is 'a relatively underdeveloped and extremely problematic field', noting that 'there is no single avenue along which the historian of crime might pursue knowledge, and recommends the taking of 'as wide a view of the phenomenon' as possible. Sharpe has also drawn attention to the difficulty of quantifying 'data dealing with crime in the past and the derivation of conclusions from statistics relating to crime and punishment', as well as the pressing need to recognise 'the short-term objectives and long-term ideologies of groups in positions of authority and power' in attempting to control it.[59] Crimes recorded in the assize records which constitute the bulk of the statistical evidence from which historians attempt to construct arguments 'represent only a proportion of actual conduct that might have resulted in prosecution', and this 'dark figure' is impossible to quantify. It is equally unfeasible to attempt to accurately gauge fluctuations in the relationship between recorded and unrecorded crime on the part-time efforts throughout the country of 'local, unpaid and amateur law-enforcement officers'.[60]

The majority of violence encountered in early modern English public life does not appear to have been criminal, just as the majority of crime does not appear to have been violent. Only rough trends may be plotted from the twenty five or so extant sets of evidence detailing the history of interpersonal violence between 1250 and 1800. Whilst Lawrence Stone has calculated that homicide rates 'in the sixteenth and

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[59] J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in early modern England 1550-1750* (London: Longman, 1984), pp. 13, 7, 14-15. Cf. J.A. Sharpe, *Judicial Punishment in England*, op. cit., p. 18.

[60] J.A. Sharpe, 'Enforcing the law in the seventeenth-century village', op. cit., pp. 98-99.

seventeenth centuries were some five to ten times higher than those today', these figures have halved on a per capita basis since the thirteenth century, a trend perhaps indicative of 'a shift from the values of a feudal to those of a bourgeois society'. In the former, Stone suggest, 'honour and status are the most prized attributes, and crimes are therefore directed against the person', whilst in the latter 'money and market relationships form the basis of social organisation, and crimes are therefore directed against property'. Stone contends that this development opens up 'ethical and economic fissures' and 'exacerbat[es] conflict'.[61]

Social histories of early modern England, from the picturesque to the rather more conscientious, have acknowledged the acceptability of violence in some social contexts, and its unavoidable pre-eminence in others. Both are important to try and comprehend in light of Robert Malcomson's valuable observation that 'popular recreations can only be properly understood' within the context of an analysis of the 'social recreations and norms in which they were rooted'.[62] Bear, badger and bull-baiting, as well as cock and dog fighting, were staged in rural and urban communities and were both popular and relatively inexpensive. Violent interpersonal sports were also well-liked with organised boxing, fencing, backsword (where the opponent is cudgelled into submission with the flat of a sword) and singlestick (a similar duel using staves) bouts attracting wagers from paying onlookers.[63] The Rose theatre also served as a venue for the enactment of violence,

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[61] Lawrence Stone, 'Interpersonal violence in English society, 1300-1980', *P&P* 101 (Nov. 1983), pp. 25, 27, 30, 32.

[62] R.W. Malcomson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, op. cit., pp. 25, 75.

[63] Such pursuits were frowned upon by church and state alike not just because they may have generated more enthusiasm amongst their adherents than any sermon or proclamation, but because more recreation meant less work; for this reason, dancing was considered just as unacceptable as bear-baiting by commentators. When William Kethe arrived at the Dorsetshire village of Childe Okeford in 1571 to assume his rectorship, he found Sunday to be set aside as a 'revelling day, which... is spent in bull-baitings, bear-baitings, bowlings, dicing, carding, dancings, drunkenness and whoredom'. Cited in David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1600-1660*, op. cit., p. 47.

but unlike these recreations, it presented more than simply violence as an autonomous spectacle: it offered the ability to explain violence as socially and economically motivated.[64]

Cynthia Marshall has suggested that 'one of the lessons our culture evidently learned from Renaissance literature was the pleasure of imaginative involvement with violence'. There is evidence in the canon of the Rose to suggest that a certain amount of 'enjoyment [was] afforded by the description of violent acts' on the stages of the early modern English amphitheatres 'through imaginary immersion in these events'.[65] In attempting to explain the nature of contemporary violence, the canon of the Rose drew attention to its manners and motives and traced their origins in part to the influence of the new mode of production. The studies of fanciful or nostalgic, mimetic and exhortational violence which follow are accompanied by a selection of contemporary entries from the Middlesex County Records which have been footnoted in light of their similarity to scenes from the Rose plays. These entries are presented in support of the contention that through the pleasure of

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[64] Like the Globe, the Rose was 'designed to double as a venue for bear-baiting', their shared architectural style 'almost certainly derived from contemporary inns and animal-baiting arenas'. The interchangeability of these two forms of entertainment at the Rose is reinforced by a surviving deed for the Little Rose estate of 1650 which contains an injunction against 'bare bayting Bull bayting or stage playing'. Julian Bowsher, *The Rose Theatre*, op. cit., pp. 13, 14, 56. Commenting on the depiction of Bankside in the map of London published in John Norden's *Speculum Britanniae* (1593), R.A. Foakes remarks that 'it is notable that both "The Beare howse" and the Rose are shown as round buildings.' R.A. Foakes, *Illustrations of the English Stage, 1580-1642* (Stanford, CA: Stanford U.P., 1985), p. 7. Cf. Erica Fudge and Ruth Gilbert (eds.), *At the Borders of the Human: Beasts, Bodies and Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Period* (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2002).

[65] Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore, MD : Johns Hopkins UP, 2002), pp. 55, 53. Marshall's account of the chiastic relationship between the violence of theatrical pleasure and the pleasure of theatrical violence, both comic and tragic, on the early modern English stage (also of forgiven violence) identifies a clear rupture between its contemporary dramaturgy and the classical Aristotelian prohibition on the dramatic representation of violence. On 'the tragic pleasure that is associated with pity and fear', Aristotle observed that 'those who employ spectacle to produce an effect, not of fear, but of something merely monstrous, have nothing to do with tragedy, for not every kind of pleasure should be demanded of tragedy, but only that which is proper to it'. 'On the art of poetry', *Classical Literary Criticism*, ed. T.S. Dorsch (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1965), p. 49.

theatrical experience, the determination of social consciousness was partially mediated by means of the dynamic relationship which existed between real-world acts and their representation on the contemporary stage.

Whilst the representation of violence is frequently inscribed on the body in the Rose canon, it is perhaps enacted rather more for the theatrical pleasure of watching violence portrayed than for more symbolic purposes.[66] However, both symbolic violence and the symbols *of* violence appear on occasion to have served either to catalyse uncommon events on the stage of the Rose, or else to have triggered nostalgic reactions in characters. An example of the former may be found in *A Looking Glass for London and England*, in which the Smith challenges Adam, his apprentice, with adultery, declaring 'Thou art not only content to drinke away / my goods, but to abuse my wife'. After sophistically refuting a charge the audience already knows him to be guilty of, Adam concludes that he is justified in driving the sin of jealousy out of his master, and assaults him, reinforcing his new status in relation to the Smith by disparagingly referring to him as 'peasant':

[Adam]: Then maister will I prove by logicke, that seeing all sinnes are to receive correction, the maister is to be corrected of the man, and sir I pray you, what greater sinne is, then jealousie? tis like a mad dog that for anger bites himselfe. Therefore that I may doe my dutie to you good maister, and to make a white sonne of you, I will so beswinge jealousie out of you, as you shall love me the better while you live.
Smith: What beate thy maister knave?
[Adam]: What beate thy man knave? and I maister, and double beate you, because you are a man of credite, and therefore have at you the fairest for fortie pence.

[66] Whilst the frequency of the depiction of acts of violence may be increasing within our own popular culture, the intensity of all but the most extreme instances that we may care to cite are matched on the Elizabethan stage by, for example, *Titus Andronicus*, as described below. The enduring popularity of Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, as demonstrated by the takings recorded in Henslowe's *Diary*, may indicate that violence was popular amongst audiences and something of a theatrical draw. On *The Spanish Tragedy*'s frequent revivals into the late 1590s at the Rose, see Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, rev. edn., op. cit, Documents 16, 21, 48, 58.

Smith:	Alasse wife, help, helpe, my man kils me.
Wife:	Nay, even as you have baked so brue, jealousie must be driven out by extremities.
[Adam]:	And that will I do, mistresse.
Smith:	Hold thy hand Adam, and not only I forgive and forget all, but I will give thee a good Farme to live on.
[Adam]:	Begone Peasant, out of the compasse of my further wrath, for I am a corrector of vice, and at night I wil bring home my mistresse.
Smith:	Even when you please good Adam.
[Adam]:	When I please, marke the words, tis a lease paroll, to have and to hold, thou shalt be mine for ever, and so lets go to the Ale-house.[67]

Warming to his new status with rhetorical flourishes as Greene and Lodge embellish their fantasy, Adam is rewarded for the suspension of 'further wrath' against the Smith not only with an assurance that he may bring another mistress back to his master's house, but also with the promise of a farm tenancy which Adam seizes upon as 'lease paroll', a legally binding verbal contract.[68] Adam appears to become inflamed by the Smith's disparaging remarks about his class, perhaps suggesting that it is class antagonism rather than the tension between a servant and his master which is coming into conflict in this scene. In this regard, it is interesting to note that whilst the Middlesex County Records between 1587 and 1603 do not contain an instance of a servant assaulting his master, there are several examples of individuals striking out at figures of authority, which is perhaps especially significant in light of the fact that

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[67] Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., ll. 1323-24, 1335-60.

[68] An entry from 1590 in the *SOED* defines 'parol law' as having been 'made (as a contract or lease) by word of mouth or in a writing not sealed'.

Adam's assault is precipitated by his social rather than his economic relationship with his master.[69]

The apprentices, artisans and craftsman-clowns (to use Laura Stevenson's phrase) of the extant Rose plays are predisposed to be fascinated by weaponry. The possession of arms is raised to the height of a collector's obsession by some of the servants and apprentices who appear in the extant Rose canon, apparently in keeping with contemporary attitudes towards the ownership of weapons outside of the theatre walls.[70] In the following example of a character 'over-arming' himself, Miles in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is late for his watch over the magical brass head his master has created on account of his having gathered together as many weapons as he can carry:

Friar Bacon is discovered in his cell, lying on a bed, with a white stick in one hand, a book in the other, and a lamp lighted beside him; and the Brazen Head, and Miles with weapons by him.

Bacon: Miles, where are you?
Miles: Here, sir.
Bacon: How chance you tarry so long?
Miles: Think you that the watching of the Brazen Head craves

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[69] For example, one Thomas Winn was summoned to the General Session of the Peace 'to answer "for strikinge and greatly abusinge of the Constable of Hoxdon as well by blowes, as by most opprobrious reveiling speeches"' (*MCR*, pp. 217-18; GSPR, Easter, 36 Eliz.), whilst 'William Dugdale of the parish of St. Martins-in-the-Field co. Midd., on 4 October 40 Elizabeth, assaulted John Burde one of the bailiffs of the liberty of Westminster' (*MCR*, p. 248; GDR, October, 40 Eliz.). See also 'True bill that, at Norton-folgate co. Midd. on the said day, John Gervis late of the said parish yeoman and his wife Margaret Gervis assaulted and beat Edward Nicollson, Provismarshall of the said county, when he was in the execution of his office' (*MCR*, p. 258; GDR, 4 April, 42 Eliz.).

[70] Victor Kiernan records how 'William Harrison... in his *Description of England* said that few Englishmen were without at least a dagger, even 'aged burgesses and magistrates', while nobles, and their serving-men, usually had a sword or rapier as well; and there were some 'desperate cutters' who carried two daggers or two rapiers, ready for use 'in every drunken fray' (*The Duel in European History* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1989), pp. 79-80). The *MCR* refer to a startling number of weapons, or everyday objects put to violent use; as well as a variety of knives, swords, 'dagges', or pistols, and 'fowling-peeces', the records mention 'a peece of wood called "a scull"' (p. 246), 'a longestaffe' (p. 250), 'a handbil' (p. 253) and 'a padlestaffe' (p. 163) amongst others.

> no furniture? I warrant you, sir, I have so armed myself
> that if all your devils come, I will not fear them an inch.

Comically, when the head begins to speak, Miles' first reaction is to reach for more weapons, doubtless having an armful already, as he declares 'What, a fresh / noise? Take thy pistols in hand, Miles'.[71]

Characters are as likely to fall into a dream-state at the mention of weapons as they are to fall into a conflict.[72] In *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, Mistress Goursey, hearing of the impending match between her son Frank and Mall Barnes, bribes her butler Dick Coomes to assist her in hindering the union. Whilst Dick does not refuse the money and new clothes on offer, he also intimates that he will want a new sword and shield, the thought of which sends him into a steel-tempered reverie:

> Mis. Goursey: I will do very much for thee,
> If ere thou standst in need of me,
> Thou shalt not lack, whilst thou hast a day to live,
> Money, apparrell.
> Coomes: And sword and Bucklers
> Mis. Goursey: And sword and Bucklers too my gallant Dick,
> So thou wilt use but this in my defence.
> Coomes: This, no faith I have no minde to this, breake my
> head if this break not if we come to any tough play, nay mistres
> I had a sword, I the flower of smithfield, for a sword, a right fox
> I faith, with that and a man had come over with a smooth and
> a sharpe stroke, it would have cried twang, and then when I
> had doubled my poynt, traste my ground, and had carried my
> buckler before me like a garden. But, and then come in with a
> crosseblowe, and over the picke of his buckler two elles long, it
> would have cried twang, twang, mettall, mettall, but a dogge
> hath his day, tis gone, and there are fewe good ones made now,
> I see by this dearth of good swords, and dearth of sword and
> buckler fight, begins to grow out, I am sorrie for it, I shall ne-

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[71] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 1541-49, 1614-15.
[72] Laura Stevenson, *Praise and Paradox*, op. cit, p. 169.

> ver see good manhood againe, if it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up then, than a man, a tall man and a good sword and buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or a conney, then a boy wil be as good as a man, unlesse the Lord shewe mercie unto us, well, I had as lieve bee hang'd as live to see that day.[73]

Coomes' speech spills out of the piece, going far beyond what is required of it dramatically, and the pathos evoked by the memory of the sword of which he speaks and its subsequent loss is as strong a dramatic moment as any in the play. The fact that Porter has seen fit to invest all of his artistic abilities in this seemingly trivial subject invests it with a certain grandeur, certainly comic in part, yet also striving to say something more about age as well as social change.

Coomes mourns the loss of the symbolic tradition of the duel, whose weapons were poetically described ('the flower of smithfield'), prized for their aesthetic rather than their functional qualities, and served an emblematic as much as a practical purpose. The 'tough play' of the duels which Coomes imagines himself having fought would appear to have been more about ritual than combat: his sword '*would* have cried twang' if it had been drawn in anger as he 'doubled [his] poynt, traste [his] ground, and had carried [his] buckler before [him]' in a formal ceremony more resembling a dance than a fight. Coomes is disquieted by the fact that the 'new technologies' of rapier and dagger have turned the duel into a dangerous event, suppressing its social character, disregarding the age or status of the participants ('a boy wil be as good as a man'), and reconfiguring expectations that disputes should now have a fatal

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[73] Henry Porter, *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, op. cit., ll. 1323-47. Cf. Anon., *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, op. cit., ll. 220-25, 238-40

outcome rather than a ceremonial resolution. No longer a form of ritualistic disputation, the duel has assumed the appearance of a contractual obligation in keeping with the wider expectations of the emergent mode of production.

Judging by the extant canon of the Rose, its audiences appears to have been captivated by displays of aggressive bravado, bellicose rhetoric, and shows of swordsmanship, whilst the dramatisation of interpersonal violence is a thematic preoccupation. Some of the rhetoric describing violence in the canon is exhortational in tone: there is a sense in these plays, with attendant implications for the world outside the theatre walls, that a predisposition towards violence was a prerequisite for success, and that those who lacked it were unlikely to prosper. As Doncaster declares of Huntingdon in *The Death of Robert*:

Doncaster: He is a foole, and will be reconcilde,
To anie foe hee hath: he is too milde,
Too honest for this world, fitter for heaven.[74]

The representation of interpersonal violence on the stage of the Rose could be both elaborately set up or entirely improvised, and the anonymous *Captain Thomas Stukeley* contains examples of both. In the midst of the direction of siege operations outside Shane O'Neill's castle in Dundalk, Stukeley reminds Captain Jack Harbart of his promise to settle an argument which they embarked upon over dinner in London. Somewhat taken aback, Harbart says that this is not the right time to resolve their dispute, as the Irish are preparing to engage with them, but Stukeley will not be put off. Harbart is in full mail and offers to disarm, but again Stukeley

[74] Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 311-13.

refuses, saying 'I hold [i.e. 'I'll wager'] my head Ile hurt thee in thy mouth', which he duly does during their duel, declaring 'Sir your teeth bleeds this picktooth is to keene'.[75] Their unexpected contest in the midst of more formal martial stratagems is counterpointed by what follows immediately afterwards as the Irish and the English clash, a stage direction indicating the retreat of the Irish 'after a good pretty fight' (s.d., l. 1172). The tumult of mêlée suffuses the play, and whilst it recognises a bewildering variety of disorder, it fails to concede its necessity.

Conflict is acknowledged, but seldom celebrated in the Rose canon. In fact, when blood is shed the victorious party often regrets the encounter. Old Strowd in *The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, for instance, immediately laments his fatal encounter with Sir Robert:

Sir Robert: O I am slain.
Old Strowd: Then Heaven receive thy Soul,
And pardon me, thy Conscience can tell
I never wish't unto thy Soul but well.

Before fleeing, he feels compelled to seek out his son Tom and his servant Swash to confess what he has done in a display of remorse which underlines the distinction between body and soul and suggests that the Christian underpinnings of the ethical regret of violence remained rather more than vestigial. Swash, as his name suggests, is another character from the Rose canon captivated by all things martial. Entranced rather than horrified by his master's admission, he proceeds to break into admiring 'rores':

Old Strowd: Lord how my heart pants
in my bosome! I have slain a man.
Swash: Slain a man! oh oh oh oh.
Tom Strowd: Peace *Swash* do not cry so.

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[75] Anon., *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, op. cit., ll. 1160, 1165.

Swash: No, I do not cry, I do but rore.[76]

Swash's reaction signifies more than comic relief. In this exchange, we find the tragic outcome of interpersonal violence colliding with the veneration of combat, and neither makes particular sense. Strowd need not have killed his opponent in order to resolve their conflict, and Swash has no reason to admire him for having done so.

These examples illustrate the fact that conceptual work was being undertaken in the depiction of exhortational violence on the stage of the Rose, perhaps in order to better understand incidents taking place outside its walls. The Middlesex County Records contain nine records of murderous affrays during the working life of the Rose, the following being an example of an encounter which took place on 16th January 1587:

> 16 January, 29 Elizabeth. – Coroner's Inquisition-post-mortem, taken at the parish of St. Pancras, on view of the body of John Byttfield late of London gentleman, there lying dead: With Verdict that, on 15 January 29 Eliz. between the hours seven and eight a.m., the said John Byttfield and a certain Josias Raynescrofte..., met in a certain field within the said parish called Foordes Close, and that after parleying together they then and there drew forth their swords and daggers, and made an affray with one another, in which affray the aforesaid Josias Raynescrofte with his sword gave the said John Bytfield on the fore part of his body a mortal blow, of which the said John then and there instantly died.[77]

In other examples, the surviving party, presumably in the absence of witnesses, claims to have been acting in self-defence in order to escape hanging for having participated in an illegal combat, as the following somewhat artless account of the

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[76] Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., sigs. $E2_{r-v}$. As Swash's comic interjection initmates, duels with rather more light-hearted outcomes appear in Rose comedies. Cf. George Chapman, *An Humorous Day's Mirth*, eds. W.W. Greg and D.N. Smith (1597, *1599*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1938), ll. 534-38, 542-43, 544-54; Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., II.i.32-41. A comic tradition associated with duelling had therefore been well established by the time Sir Andrew Aguecheek issued his pusillanimous challenge to Cesario/Viola around 1602 in *Twelfth Night*, as rehearsed by Sir Toby Belch (*Twelfth Night*, ed. M.M. Mahood (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1968), III.iv.147-68.

[77] *MCR*, p. 170; GDR, 5 April, 29 Eliz.

events of 4th November 1591 illustrates. Reality is mediated by the theatrical in this record, with its reported speech and dramatic description, giving it a doubly-loaded significance:

> 4 November, 33 Elizabeth. – Coroner's Inquisition-post-mortem, taken at St. Clement's Danes without the bar of the New Temple co. Midd., on view of the body of Thomas Coxon, then and there lying dead: With Verdict that, and on the 2nd inst. between the hours nine and ten a.m. the aforesaid Thomas Coxon and a certain Daniell Carter late of Westminster yeoman were about to go together between 'the twoe gates' near Whitehall, when Thomas Coxon assaulted Daniell Carter violently, giving him on the face several wounds with a dagger, whereupon Daniel Carter said "What meanest thou to strike me? I have nothinge to doe with thee", and did his utmost to withdraw from the same Thomas, and whilst followed by his assailant with a drawn sword did retreat before him to the angle of a wall beyond which he could not go; and that after receiving divers wounds from his enemy, Daniel Carter in self-defence drew his sword, when Thomas Coxon ran in upon the point of Daniel's sword and so, against the same Daniel's wish, received in the left part of his body a mortal blow, of which he died on the 3rd inst.[78]

In light of these entries, the representation of the potentially fatal outcome of interpersonal violence on the stage of the Rose could also be construed as an exhortation not to participate in it. In Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Lambert and Serlsby's sons, who are the best of friends, ask Friar Bacon if they can see their fathers in his magical mirror. However, when they perceive that they have killed each other, they too begin to brawl, with fatal consequences:

Lambert: A veney, man! fair Margaret craves so much.
Serlsby: Then this for her.
L.'s son: Ah, well thrust!
S.'s son: But mark the [re]ward
Lambert and Selby stab each other.
Lambert: Oh, I am slain! *Dies.*
Serlsby: And, I, – Lord have mercy on me! *Dies*
L.'s son: My father slain! – Serlsby, ward that.
S.'s son: And so is mine! – Lambert, I'll quite thee well.

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[78] *MCR*, pp. 200-201; GDR, 3 December, 33 Eliz.

The two scholars stab each other, and die.[79]

In accordance with this study's contention that a dynamic relationship may be discerned between real life and theatrical texts, such poisonings (for example) as were represented on the stage of the Rose may have been imitations of contemporary incidents rather than Italianate stylistic affectations. Poisonings were not unknown in early modern London, and the *MCR* contain the following entry:

> 'True Bill that, on the said day at Enfielde co. Midd., Eleanor Trevener of the said parish spinster, not having the fear of God before her eyes, but moved and seduced by the devil's instigation, and her own malice aforethought, gave and offered to her mistress, Susanna Jackson, a certain dish filled with pieces and mixed with a certain poison called ratesbane, with the intention of killing and murdering the aforesaid Susanna Jackson; which same Susanna Jackson immediately after taking of the same mixture became languid and feeble in her body and still remains in great peril of her life'[80]

The Death of Robert contains scenes which attempt to look into the minds of two poisoners. Doncaster, collaborating with the Prior of York to trick Huntingdon into giving King Richard a contaminated 'rich elixir', admits that he is a seasoned poisoner:

Doncaster: Tut, tut, let me alone for poysoning:
I have alreadie turned ore foure, or five,
That angerd mee.

Later in the same play, Will Brand, hired by King John to murder Huntingdon's mistress, Matilda, tests the poison he intends to use on a dog:

Enter Brand solus, with cuppe, bottle of poyson
Will Brand: Good, by this hand: exceeding, passing good.
The dog no sooner dranke it, but, yugh, yugh quoth he:

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[79] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 1823-30. Cf. the judgement of the senator in the anonymous *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, which decouples cause from effect, and ill deeds from punishment, reducing justice to a studied caprice of civil society: 'Our senators in Venice are well schoold in such haps, / And can doome of things, not by thy teares, / Or sorrow working wordes, / But by the truth and estimate of acts' (op. cit., ll. 162-5).

[80] GDR, 7 October, 33 Eliz. (*MCR*, p. 196). See also GDR, 7 July, 40 Eliz. (*MCR*, p. 244).

So grins me with his teeth: lyes downe, and dies.

Trapped by Doncaster in the monastery to which she has fled, Matilda drinks off the poison cheerfully, toasting her executioner's employer ('now to King John's health / A full carouse', ll. 2597-98) with lively stoicism, precipitating, according to a stage direction, a fit of 'standing and shaking' (s.d., l. 2607) in Brand. Matilda's attitude, far from precipitating repentance and contrition in Brand drives him, Judas-like, to hang himself in remorse (ll. 2689-99).[81]

Whilst the representation of violence is not confined to the Rose tragedies, there is a notable difference in context as well as tone in the depiction of violence in the Rose comedies which transcends the expectations generated by the loose genres into which the plays may be assigned. Such trends as may be plotted from the surviving Rose plays would appear to suggest, for example, that the representation of torture and murder on the its stage was mostly associated with aristocratic characters in the tragic mode, which such acts of violence as the commonalty tended to indulge in tended to be comic brawls.

Sempronio observes in *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*:

Sempronio: Good Lord how apt the world is now adaies,
To finde invention to destroy a man:
When as the greatest arts of our age,
Can never make or hardely mend a man.

That such an observation should be made in this play is particularly appropriate, featuring as it does several orders to carry out acts of torture or execution. Branco, for instance, is tortured in order to be made to confess that the fugitive Lelio has fled

[81] Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 296-98, 2403-6, 2584-90. There is a striking similarity between this scene and the exchange between Bosola and the Duchess in *The Duchess of Malfi*. See John Webster, *Three Plays*, ed. David Gunby (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1972), IV.ii.205-37.

Venice by having his thumbs crushed. Marchetto advises Fortunio to 'use force, my Lord, & win what you wold have', the latter issuing the following order:

Fortunio: Unbend thy musket souldier in the locke.
Presse me his thumbes, and make the slave confesse.
Heere pinch him.

Later, Duke Corrodino, furious with Servio for having allowed Brisheo's sons to escape, threatens him with the rack ('Bring tortors forth, bring me a cord, / Stretch me the villanes lymes'), before Phillida enters and confesses that it was she, and not her father, who was responsible for the boys' escape, at which Corrodino orders that she should be executed, saying 'I am the Judge and sentence thee to dye, / Slaves strangle her, let Servio be releast'.[82] The threat of violent torture at court also features in *Old Fortunatus*, with Athelstane condemning Longaville to 'be tortur'd on a wheele to death' and informing Montrose that 'thou with wild horses shall be quartered'.[83] Furthermore, in *Look About You* the young King Henry, now reformed, shames the court by testing their reaction to his suggestion that they should torture the Earl of Gloucester, who has remained faithful throughout the play to Henry's deposed father:

Henry: Gloster, have to thy sorrow, chafe thy arme
That I may see thy bloud (I long'd for oft)
Gush from thy vaines, and staine this Pallace roofe.
John: 'Twould exceed gilding.
Queen: I as golde doth oaker.[84]

George Peele offers extensive stage-directions in *Edward I* to ensure that the sufferings endured by David of Brecknock at the hands of Meredith are depicted to his satisfaction:

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[82] Anon., *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, op. cit., ll. 1329-1332, 474, 505-7, 1296-97, 1322-23. Cf. Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 670-75.
[83] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., V.ii.238, 239.
[84] Anon., *Look About You*, op. cit., ll. 3064-68.

Meredith stabs him into the armes and shoulders
...
He showes him hote Pinsers
...
He cuts his nose.[85]

It is Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, however, which features perhaps the most arresting description of aristocratic violence, as Doncaster confesses to Salisbury that he murdered his two sons and their nursemaid merely because they failed to stop crying when he shouted at them:

Salisbury: Remembrest thou a little sonne of mine,
Whose nurse at Wilton first thou ravishedst,
And slew'st two maids that did attend on them?
Doncaster: I grant, I dasht the braines out of a brat,
Thine if he were, I care not: had he bin
The first borne comfort of a royall king,
And should have yald when Doncaster cried peace,
I would have done by him as then I did.[86]

If the tragedies of the Rose are full of murdering aristocrats, then its comedies are equally replete with brawling commoners. George a Greene defends the honour of Wakefield by beating a shoemaker who is passing through the town, together with

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[85] George Peele, *Edward I*, ed. Frank S. Hook (c.1590-92, *1593*; New Haven and London: Yale U.P., 1961), s.d. ll. 894, 897, 903. It has yet to be proven that Peele's *Edward I, Surnamed Longshanks* is a Rose play. It does not therefore feature in Appendix A. It may, however, correspond to the entry for 'Longshanks' in Henslowe's *Diary* (see Appendix C), and reference is made to it on this basis. *Titus Andronicus* was staged 'as [a] "ne" (new?)' play at the Rose on 3 March 1592, possibly the same year in which *Edward I* was first performed. We can only speculate as to whether the other tragedies staged at the Rose in the same year were equally violent. See Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), p. 68. Amongst the atrocities enacted in Shakespeare's grimmest tragedy, cf. the mutilation of Lavinia (II.iv), the morbid humour of Aaron as he kills the Nurse ('"Wheak, wheak" – so cries a pig prepared to the spit', IV.iii.145), and the sadistic pleasure the eponymous hero takes in the slaughter of Chiron and Demetrius (V.ii). See also Henry Chettle and Anthony Munday, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 208-16.

[86] George Chapman, *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, ed. W.W. Greg (1596, *1598*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1929), ll. 633-40. Cf. Ragan's comment that it is an 'easy matter' to 'give a stab, or slit a paltry Wind-pipe' in the anonymous *The History of King Leir*, op. cit., ll. 2380-1.

the disguised King Edward, and forcing them to trail their staffs along the ground in respect to local tradition rather than carry them on their shoulders:

George: beare me your staves [from] upon your necks
Or to begin withall, Ile baste you both so well,
You were never better basted in your lives.
Edward: We will hold up our staves.
George a Greene fights with the Shoomakers and beates them all downe.[87]

This idea is reinforced in *The Two Angry Women of Abington* in Mistress Goursey's instruction to Dick Coomes to strike Mistress Barnes' men if they should encounter them, but not to kill them; Coomes takes offence at the suggestion that he might strike Mistress Barnes herself, Mistress Goursey providing him with the opportunity for a bawdy pun:

Mis. Barnes: if that she and I fall to words,
Set in thy foote and quarrell with her men,
Draw, fight, strike, hurt, but do not kill the slaves,
And make as though thou strukst at a man,
And hit her and thou canst, a plague upon her,
She hath misusde me Dicke, wilt thou do this?
Coomes: Yes mistresse I will strike her men, but God forbid
That ere *Dick Coomes* should be seene to strike a woman.
Mis. Coomes: Why she is mankind, therefore thou mayest strike her
Coomes: Mankinde, nay and she have any part of a man, Ile strike her I warrant.[88]

J.A. Sharpe has concluded that the sixteenth century witnessed 'the transition from a "feudal" criminality based on violence to a "capitalist" one based on property offences'. He suggests that the 'harsh treatment of property offenders' discernable in contemporary court archives is 'a hallmark of the arrival of a bourgeois or

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[87] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 1164-69.
[88] Henry Porter, *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, op. cit., ll. 1354-65.

commercial ethic among ruling groups' which he contends was 'considerably stronger in 1600' than at any point up until the early eighteenth century.[89] The discursive effects identified in the plays are an important part of larger matrices of social interactions which set the terms for history: novel relations of economic affect mediated through the residual ethical relations and the transcendent values of Christian brotherhood, riven with anxieties and contradictions which may always have been present, but which are brought into sharp focus by the stark and often violent resolutions depicted. Nowhere was this contradiction more evident in the Rose plays than in the representation of class relations.

[89] J.A. Sharpe, *Judicial Punishment in England*, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

4 'Wee will have all the Richmen displaste / And all the braverie of them defaste': Class relations at the Rose

4.1 The appearance, representation and description of class

An analysis of the operations and significance of class relations to the interpretation of early modern English drama should perhaps begin by addressing the question of how such a notion as "class" and its accompanying ideological conceptual apparatus can best be understood within the context in question. I discriminate in what follow between the *appearance*, *representation*, and *description* of class relations, the differences between the three categorisations being subtle yet worthy of note. The first category seeks to explain the significance of the ways in which class relations are presented visually, whilst the second term focuses on their symbolic value. The final sub-division addresses the ways in which the relationships between classes are classified, explained or judged.

The canon of the Rose theatre articulated a growing awareness of the development of distinct and significant changes within the structure of early modern English society. The clear divisions maintained within feudal society between aristocratic and peasant status had been eroded by the transition to the era of nascent workshop-capitalism which emphasised the destabilising effect of the money-function on social relations. This chapter will consider the ways in which the canon of the Rose acknowledged an immanent potentiality within the new mode of production to contest the authority of those whose wealth and power had formerly been founded on land and position, and whose status, no longer immutable and divinely ordered, was now accordingly open to examination, criticism and challenge.

To discuss the representation of class relations on the early modern English stage is to make a number of assumptions regarding their reconfiguration subsequent to the

transition from a feudal to a nascent workshop-capitalist economy, and presupposes both that early modern English audiences' recognised that such a transformation had taken place, and that they were aware of its significance.[1] Neither of these factors may be assumed to be self-evident, and both need to be demonstrated. This chapter will therefore begin by outlining the framework within which the historical materialist account of the transition is best understood. It will then go on to identify examples of an evolution in understanding in the late sixteenth century of the ways in which class structures were evolving, perceiving a coming-to-consciousness of the notion that social arrangements which could change in part could potentially be changed utterly.

Such definitions of class as are to be found within the classical historical materialist canon are notoriously indistinct. Marx's legacy leaves scant indication of such progress as he may have made in honing a working definition of class between an observation recorded in 1837 wherein he propounded the significance of the proletariat as 'the idea in the real itself', and the few halting paragraphs which break off abruptly at the end of the third volume of *Capital*.[2] Some hints as to the direction in which Marx's argument may have developed can be found in the preceding chapters of this volume, most importantly the following passage:

> It is in each case the direct relationship of the owners of the conditions of production to the immediate producers... in which we find the innermost

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[1] Garrett A. Sullivan Jr. notes that early modern English drama can only be said to have critiqued the nascent capitalist mode of production 'if read... through the lens of a fully developed and culturally available articulation of capitalism, one absent from Tudor-Stewart England', and recommends instead a 'focus on [the] ideological contradictions and skirmishes that partly defined the long period of uneven transition from feudalism to capitalism'. Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., *The Drama of Landscape: Land, Property and Social Relations on the Early Modern Stage* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 20-1.

[2] Letter to Heinrich Marx, 10 November 1837. Cited in Tom Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, op. cit., p. 84; Karl Marx, *3 Capital*, trans. David Fernbach (1894; Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1981), pp. 1025-6. *3 Capital* was edited and published by Engels six years after Marx's death in 1888.

> secret, the hidden basis of the entire social edifice, and hence also the political form of the relationship of sovereignty and dependence, in short, the specific form of state in each case. This does not prevent the same economic basis… from displaying endless variations and gradations in its appearance, as the result of innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural conditions, racial relations, historical influences acting from outside, etc., and these can only be understood by analysing these empirically given conditions.[3]

The following passage from Marx's notes of 1857-8 entitled 'Forms which preceded capitalist production' offers some explanation as to why definitions of class are rarely encountered within his oeuvre. The separation of social production from human relations and the concomitant extraction of surplus labour – ordering the hierarchical class structure under the capitalist mode of production – not only suffuses, but also constitutes the nature of class relations. In short, the influence of class relations under the capitalist mode of production is to be found everywhere and encountered in everything, and therefore by definition need not (indeed, cannot) be analysed in isolation. Marx's irritation leaps from the page as he testily critiques Pierre Proudhon's account of the '*extra-economic* origin of property' for failing to realise this, which the former redefines as 'the *pre-bourgeois* relationship of the individual to the objective conditions of labour', stating:

> To claim that pre-bourgeois history and each phase of it has its own *economy* and an *economic base* of its movement, is at bottom merely to state the tautology that human life has always rested on some kind of production – *social* production – whose relations are precisely what we call economic relations… *The original conditions of production cannot initially be themselves produced* – they are not the results of production… What we must explain is the *separation* of these organic conditions of human existence

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[3] Karl Marx, *3 Capital*, op. cit., pp. 927-8.

> from this active existence, a separation which is only fully completed in the relationship between wage-labour and capital.[4]

In *History and Class Consciousness*, Georg Lukács augments Marx's emphasis on the empirical analysis of different social arrangements with the requirement that such studies be situated within the context of specific sets of historical, economic, conceptual and psychological conditions in order that the '*practical, historical function* of class consciousness' may be discovered:

> We must discover, firstly, whether it is a phenomenon that differs according to the manner in which the various classes are related to society as a whole and whether the differences are so great as to produce *qualitative distinctions*. And we must discover, secondly, the *practical* significance of these different possible relations between the objective economic totality, the imputed class consciousness and the real, psychological thoughts of men about their lives. We must discover, in short, the *practical, historical function* of class consciousness.[5]

Whilst we may no longer be able to share Lukács' confidence in the fact that such sets of 'qualitative distinctions' can be recovered in a comprehensive way, this chapter follows his example by attempting to identify the determining factors influencing the operations of early modern English class relations within their practical, functional and historical contexts through a study of the documents of its contemporary culture. In this way, the following analysis seeks to consider the contemporary significance of class relations as a 'concept through the contexts of its deployment', articulating such insights into the early modern understanding of class

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[4] Karl Marx, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, op. cit., pp. 86-7. Cf. Adorno's observation regarding Shakespeare that 'the social antagonisms are everywhere, but they manifest themselves primarily in individuals and only secondarily in collective or mass scenes'. Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, eds. G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann, trans. C. Lenhardt (1970; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 361.

[5] George Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, op. cit., pp. 51-2.

relations as the documents of its popular culture (specifically, the extant Rose plays) may afford.[6]

This investigation is also informed by such meditations on the mediation between class relations and cultural representation as are to be found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu, who recommends that the study of the 'objective structures... that define the external constraints bearing on interactions and representations' be conjoined with 'the immediate, lived experience of agents in order to explicate the categories of perception and appreciation (dispositions) that structure their action from inside'.[7] Bourdieu has reinterpreted this interrelation as a metonym for the function of class relations in ways that always return to the fundamental significance of class to social analysis rather than attempting in some way to undermine its primacy.

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[6] John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago and London: U. of Chicago P., 1993), p. 341.

[7] Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), p. 11.

Rejecting the notion of 'society' as a seamless totality, Bourdieu delineates fields and social spaces, domain and habitus, 'an ensemble of relatively autonomous spheres of "play" that cannot be collapsed under a societal logic, be it that of capitalism, modernity or postmodernity'. Bourdieu's 'field' is 'simultaneously a space of conflict and competition... in which participants vie to establish monopoly over the species of capital effective in it – cultural authority in the artistic field, scientific authority in the scientific field', whilst 'habitus' he defines as 'a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks'.[8]

Within the context of the early modern English amphitheatres, the structures of expectation this matrix of signification produced gave additional meaning to both discursive and dramatic outcomes, overdetermining each pleasurable engagement with individual theatrical actions with supplemental conventions and familiar notions, and thereby served to ensure that the import of the outcomes of the scenes portrayed on the stage were mediated by affects produced within the audiences observing them. To their contemporary audiences, these plays were 'making sense'.[9]

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[8] Ibid. p. 17; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practise* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1977), pp. 72, 95.

[9] Gramsci wrote of the effective theatrical act as depicting 'a necessary collision between two inner worlds' through which the audience, 'by reliving the inner world of the drama... also relive[s] its art, the artistic form that has given concrete life to the world, that has made the world solid in a living and sure portrayal of human individuals who suffer, rejoice and struggle incessantly to go beyond themselves'. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, op. cit., p. 70.

It is in *Distinction* that Bourdieu offers his most extensive exposition of these concepts in relation to what he calls 'class conditioning and social conditioning'.[10] Urging a resistance against the 'inclin[ation] to abstract each class from its relations with... others, not only from the oppositional relations which give properties their distinctive value, but also from the relations of power and of struggle for power', Bourdieu counsels that those 'who suppose they are producing a materialist theory of knowledge when they make knowledge a passive recording and abandon the "active aspect" of knowledge to idealism... forget that all knowledge, and in particular all knowledge of the social world, is an act of construction implementing schemes of thought and expression, and that between conditions of existence and practises or representations there intervenes the structuring activity of the agents, who, far from reacting mechanically to mechanical stimulations, respond to the invitations or threats of a world whose meaning they have helped to produce'.[11]

This study contends that every performance enacted upon the stage of the Rose theatre was just such an 'act of construction', for forged within the interstices of contemporary social, economic and cultural relations – in the observation of or participation in the physical act of theatrical performance, in the numerous commercial transactions conducted in order to bring a drama to performance and to witness its being played out, in the suffusing of the cultural discourses of its society with elements of the theatrical – early modern English drama was a 'commodity... exchanged for the symbolic existence of exchange value as exchange value'. In this

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[10] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, translated by Richard Nice, (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1984), p. 101.
[11] Ibid., pp. 245, 467.

exchange value lies the significance of the system of relations Bourdieu re-examines for the purposes of an historical materialist contribution to a critique of early modern English drama, for as Marx observed in the *Grundrisse*, within the 'society that rests on *exchange value*, there arise relations of circulation as well as of production that are so many mines to explode it', concealing 'the material conditions of production and the corresponding relations of exchange prerequisite for a classless society'.[12]

Rather than reading class relations in early modern English drama 'from the top down' by examining the depiction of the structure of the state's power, the condition of the monarch, relations between nation states and so on, this chapter will attempt to isolate and identify such scenes, settings, outcomes and relations as would perhaps most often be adjudged to be atypical or of little significance to the operations of class relations. In so doing, this study endeavours to recognise such recurrent motifs, structural patterns or orders of meaning as may be said to provide evidence of the articulation of a contemporary interest in the conceptual expression of the nature of class relations in early modern London.

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[12] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, op. cit., pp. 153, 159.

4.2 The augmentation and diminution of class relations at the Rose

One of the first questions we may ask of the data set of this thesis in relation to the appearance, representation and description of class relations is difficult to compose and equally taxing to answer, namely: can the appearance, representation and description of class relations as depicted in the extant canon of the Rose theatre be said to have augmented or diminished the political potency, dramatic significance or social standing of the participating individuals?

The criteria against which this question wishes to examine the representation of class relations often fails to register with the dramatists in question as an issue which needs to be addressed. A startling feature of several of the Rose comedies, for example, is that they frequently do not see fit to explain away the gross differences between their protagonists' ranks. Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is a case in point: with no thought as to whether the liaison may be inappropriate, Prince Edward, in love with Margaret, a game-keeper's daughter, enlists the assistance of Ralph the Fool to further his romantic ambitions. Ralph's solution to Edward's concerns that his wooing will occasion a prolonged absence from court that will be noticed by his father is to take the Prince to Oxford in order to secure the services of Friar Bacon. Bacon, he suggests, will turn the Fool into the Prince, and Edward into a purse which will ultimately find its way into Margaret's 'plackard', with obscene consequences:

Ralph: thy
father Harry shall not miss thee, he shall turn me into thee;

and I'll to the court, and I'll prince it out; and he shall make thee either a silken purse full of gold, or else a fine wrought smock.

Edward: But how shall I have the maid?

Ralph: Marry, sirrah, if thou be'st a silken purse full of gold, then on Sundays she'll hang thee by her side, and you must not say a word. Now, sir, when she comes into a great prease of people, for fear of the cutpurse, on a sudden she'll swap thee into her plackard; then, sirrah, being there, you may plead for yourself.[13]

Ralph's confidence in his abilities to 'prince it out' at court whilst Edward pursues the lower occupations normally associated with clowns and fools is of course primarily comic, but also carries the connotation that appearance is of more significance than substance in matters of class-relations, and that assuming the semblance of the heir to the throne will also allow him to don his power and privilege. Later in the play, however, when Ralph has indeed assumed the character of the Prince (by means of putting on his clothes rather than through the application of sorcery), he begins to play out on stage a fantasy wherein the commoner outvies his master, augmenting the semiotic code of dominance signified by his rich clothes with the rhetoric of superiority:

Ralph: Where be these vagabond knaves, that they attend no better on their master?

...

mayst thou not know me to be a lord by my reparrel?[14]

For all the naïveté of this position, proposing as it does that the only thing to differentiate a prince from his subject is the way in which they dress, it is one, which

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[13] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 99-110. The *SOED* offers a 1546 definition of 'placket' as the slit at the top of a skirt or petticoat, for ease of getting on and off, and was synonymous in early modern English slang with the female genitals.

[14] Ibid., ll. 497-98, 540-41.

is frequently deployed in the Rose canon.[15] In an inversion of the homage that Ralph demands on account of his wearing the Prince's clothes, in *A Knack to Know a Knave*, King Edgar gives his robes to Philarchus' father as a symbol of his having also gifted him the right to pass judgement on his son:

King: I will not be the Judge,
To doome Philarchus either lyfe or death,
Here take my robes, and judge him as thou wilt.[16]

Such a convention provides the dramatist with a convenient way of developing an emblematic confrontation between the symbols of impotence and influence, for as Babulo remarks to the Marquess Gwalter in *Patient Grissil*, 'It's hard... for this motley jerkin to find friendship with this / fine doublet'.[17] The monarch's vestments symbolise power, privilege and money, the social and economic determinants which nominally separate the ruler from the ruled, but they also serve to draw attention to the superficial nature of this division. The simplistic nature of this position (a half-articulated expression of the essentialist idea that somehow 'underneath our clothes we are all the same') is upheld in *King Leir* by antithesis, when Leir and Mumford assume the personae of peasants:

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[15] Whilst the elaborate costumes and frequently deployed disguises of the early modern English stage vexed the authors of contemporary anti-theatrical tracts due to their promulgation of an inferred indeterminacy within social divisions, official concern with respect to the diminution of dress as a marker of status in the mid- to late sixteenth century (resulting in the issue of statutes) focused predominantly on the squandering of resources and 'the wasting and undoing of a great number of young gentlemen... [who] do not only consume themselves, their goods, and lands which their parents left unto them, but also run into such debts and shifts as they cannot live' (15 June 1574, 16 Eliz. I). It is excessive consumption which is the first concern here. Cf. N.B.Harte, 'State control of dress and social change in pre-industrial England' in D.C. Coleman and A.H. John, eds, *Trade Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1976), pp. 132-65.

[16] Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, op. cit., ll. 511-13. In the same way, after the King makes Mouse a courtier in *Mucedorus* for bringing him the news that Amadine is safely returned, Mouse declares that he will not *be* a courtier until he looks like one, drawing attention to the fact that courtiers would not dress as he does: 'what should Lordes goe so beggerlie as I / doe?' (Anon., *Mucedorus*, op. cit., sig. F4r).

[17] Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., I.ii.304-5.

Mumford: For Gods sake name your selfe some proper name.
King: Call me *Tresillus*: Ile call thee *Denapoll.*
Mumford: Might I be made the Monarch of the world,
I could not hit upon these names, I sweare.
King: Then call me *Will*, ile call thee *Jacke.*

Similarly, when the King of Gallia encounters the exiled and destitute Cordella on the road, she declares:

Cordella: What e're you be, of high or low discent,
All's one to me, I do request but this:
That as I am, you will accept of me.[18]

Babulo in *Patient Grissil* takes another view:

Babulo: as long as we
have good cloathes on our backes, 'tis no matter for our honesty,
wee'll live any where, and keep Court in any corner.[19]

Declaring 'let him be master, and go revel it', (l. 606) Edward gives sanction to such actions as Ralph may choose to conduct. Ralph is no Jack Cade, however, and rather than putting his new-found powers to political ends chooses instead to undertake an extensive pub-crawl, declaring that he will 'be / Prince of Wales over all the black-pots in Oxford' (ll. 609-10), thereby comically defusing the insurrectionary potentiality of their role-reversal.[20] Despite having been arrested for 'making a great brawl and almost kill[ing] the / vintner', (ll. 832-3), Ralph stays very much in character, declaring 'when they see how soundly I have broke his / head, they'll say 'twas done by no less man than a prince' (ll. 870-1) before extravagantly threatening his Oxford captors with the dissolution of the university:

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[18] Anon., *The History of King Leir*, op. cit., ll. 591-95, 717-20. Cf. Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 497-98, 540-41, 606, 609-10, 874-77; Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 1191-93.

[19] Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., III.i.36-38.

[20] The *SOED* offers a defintion of 'black-pot' from 1590 as a beer-mug. Made of waxed leather, its outside was coated with tar or pitch.

Ralph: know that I am Edward Plantagenet,
whom if you displease, will make a ship that shall hold
all your colleges, and so carry away the niniversity with a
fair wind to the Bankside in Southwark.[21]

Having previously assumed his prince's garb and authority, Ralph now adopts his discourse, threatening a proto-Foucauldian assault on Oxford's discursive regime by relocating its university. Recognising that to 'pos[e] for discourse the question of power means basically to ask whom does discourse serve', Ralph envisages the transportation of the 'fine meshes' of Oxford University's 'web of power' to the Rose theatre's locale, Bankside.[22] By conjoining his imbricated references to popular culture and familiar themes with the appearance, authority and power of the prince, Ralph's revels provide a demonstration in miniature of the fact that the operations of class relations within the context of 'the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group' are ultimately reducible to two theses, namely that 'ideology has a material existence', and that 'ideology represents the imaginary relations of individuals to their real conditions of existence', neatly

[21] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 874-7. Cf. Sebastian Brant's satirical poem *Narrenschiff* (1494), or 'Ship of Fools', translated into English by both Alexandar Barclay (1509) and Henry Watson (1509). See also Marx's gloss on this symbol in the *Letters from the Franco-German Yearbooks* (1843): 'A Ship of Fools can perhaps be allowed to drift before the wind for a good while; but it will still drift to its doom precisely because the fools refuse to believe it possible. This doom is the approaching revolution'. Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 200

[22] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1980), pp. 115, 116.

summarised by Young Plansey's remark in Henry Chettle and John Day's *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, 'Thus I see power can master any thing'.[23]

The context within which Ralph's actions are conducted need not necessarily be construed to have diminshed their worth. Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the 'carnivalesque', the turning upside down of social conventions and political hierarchies always-already constrained by the arena within which they are enacted, may be imbued with more political significance than first appearances suggest. Whilst the carnivalesque's structural inversions and acts of misrule always bear the hallmark of their fictive status, being licensed social experiments rather than insurrectionary protests, they also demonstrate the possibility of alternate futures by bringing them into being, albeit for a limited time and in an artificial context. 'Laughter', as Bakhtin remarked, 'opened men's eyes on that which is new, on the future', both permitting the expression of what he calls 'popular truth' and demonstrating that

> Its external privileges are intimately linked with interior forces; they are a recognition of the rights of those forces. This is why laughter could never become an instrument to oppress and blind the people. It always remained a free weapon in their hands.[24]

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[23] Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (notes towards an investigation)', *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, op. cit., pp. 149, 155, 153. Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., C3v. See also Tamburlaine's observation that he and his army 'in conceit bear empires on our spears' (Christopher Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine*, op. cit., I.ii.65). Cf. II.vii.28-29; II.v.52-58, III.iii.262-64; *2 Tamburlaine the Great*, ed. J.B.Steane (1588, *1590*; : Penguin, 1969), V.i.115-28.

[24] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (1965; Bloomington, IN: Indiana U.P., 1984), p. 94. Cf. Robert Weimann on the 'comedy of solidarity' in Shakespeare in *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theatre*, op. cit., pp. 250-4, also 'The dialectic of laughter' in Michael D. Bristol's *Carnival and Theatre*, op. cit., pp. 125-39.

Following on from the above, we may ask whether the contemporary audiences at the Rose perceived of themselves as participating in a theatrical experience which was influenced and informed by an emerging set of reconfigured social relations, or rather took the view that the class structure of the society within which these plays were performed was stable, perhaps even static. Michael Mascuch has observed that whilst 'our understanding of the individual motivation shaping social mobility in pre-industrial culture has depended upon interpretations of theological and philosophical treatises, or of the letter of the law' rather than studies of popular culture, it is nevertheless 'through both the appropriation and reproduction of the gamut of available narrative discourse, oral and written... [that] individuals identify personal goals and develop strategies for achieving them'.[25]

Such interpretative strategies as the early modern English theatre-goer may have developed would doubtless have been framed to some extent by the inherent radicalism of the Christian tradition. In very broad terms, the post-Reformation subject's perception of the equality of all souls before God can be understood to have provoked an expectation of future challenges to the social hierarchy and an eventual movement towards egalitarianism. From the thundering of the Magnificat ('He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree', Luke 1:52), to the pronouncements of the 'Sermon on the mount' ('Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'; 'No man can serve two

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[25] Michael Mascuch, 'Social mobility and middling self-identity: the ethos of British autobiographers, 1600-1750', *Social History* 20.1 (1995), pp. 47, 48. See also Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (1930; London: Unwin, 1985); R.H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1938).

masters... Ye cannot serve God and mammon', Matt. 5:3, 6:24), the church's teachings fostered such oppositional expectations as may have led the faithful to believe that 'there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last' (Luke 13:30).[26]

The radical potential of the figure of Piers Plowman is exploited in his appearance in *A Knack to Know and Honest Man* in a 'thread bare coate' (op. cit., l. 1223) to collectively denounce grain exporters as an 'unknowne theefe that robs the common wealth', (l. 1230) unknowable and everywhere. In so doing, he identifies the fact that the accumulation of surplus value through overseas sales goes on 'behind the backs' of the artisanal class and therefore takes on the appearance for the producers as having been 'handed down by tradition' (*1 Capital*, op. cit, p. 135).[27] Tamburlaine legitimates his assault on the authority of the state by declaring 'Jove sometimes masked in a shepherd's weed'. Conflating power with divinity, but also challenging the notion that this power should reside within the person of the monarch or the aristocratic class, Tamburlaine is aware of the correlation between authority and

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[26] Patrick Collinson depicts the various forms of 'fragmented sociability' within early modern English metropolitan life, with its leisure pursuits such as playgoing, as being 'as modern and progressive as protestant sermon-going itself'. The wage relation brought an element of choice to both the pursuit of pleasure and the pursuit of salvation: 'in pre-revolutionary England, religion and morality of an exacting character were effectively voluntary, a matter of taste and choice'. Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants*, op. cit, pp. 222, 241.

[27] Similar themes were still in evidence on the stage almost thirty years after the Rose closed; Heywood's *If You Know Not Me* (performed by Queen Henrietta's Men at the Cockpit in 1630) features an Adam-figure digging on the stage. Thomas Heywood, *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*, prepared by Madeleine Doran in consultation with the general editor W.W. Greg (Oxford: Malone Society, 1935).

discourse: 'Speak in that mood, / For *will* and *shall* best fitteth Tamburlaine... I that am term'd the Scourge and Wrath of God'.[28]

The radical egalitarian agenda of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 as recorded in Froissart's *Chroncicles* was famously condensed within the couplet popularised by John Ball ('when Adam delved and Eve span / who was than the gentleman?').[29] This historical figure makes an imposing appearance in the Rose canon as Parson Ball in the anonymous *Life and Death of Jack Straw*. Parson Ball observes how 'the weakest now a dayes goes to / the wall' before delivering a speech which reproduces both the key phrases from Froissart and the couplet for which he is best remembered:

Parson Ball: England is growne to such a passe of late,
That rich men triumph to see the poore beg at their gate.
But I am able by good scripture before you to prove,
That God doth not this dealing allow nor love.
But when *Adam* delved, and *Eve* span,
Who was then a Gentleman?
....
So quickly the poore mans substance is spent,
But merrily with the world it went,
When men eat berries of the hauthorne tree,
And thou helpe me, Ile helpe thee,
There was no place for surgerie,
And old men knew not usurie:
Now 'tis come to a wofull passe,
The Widdow that hath but a pan of brasse,
And scarse a house to hide her head,
Sometimes no penny to buy her bread,
Must pay her Landlord many a groat,
Or 'twil be puld out of her throat.

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[28] Christopher Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine*, op. cit., I.ii.199, III.iii.40-1, 44.

[29] Froissart wrote 'This priest used oftentimes on the Sundays after mass, when the people were going out of the minster, to go into the cloister and preach, and made the people to assemble about him, and would say thus: "Ah, ye good people, the matters goeth not well to pass in England, nor shall not do till everything be common, and that there be no villains nor gentlemen, but that we may be all united together, and that the lords be no greater masters than we be"'. Jean Froissart, *The Chronicles of Froissart*, trans. John Bourchier, ed. G.C. Macaulay (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1910), p. 62. Cf. Christopher Hampton (ed.), *A Radical Reader: The Struggle for Change in England, 1381-1914* (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1984).

...
The Rich have all, the poore live in miserie.
...
make division equally,
Of each mans goods indifferently.[30]

Jack Straw responds to Ball's speech with a call to arms against class hierarchy, declaring 'Wee will have all the Richmen displaste / And all the braverie of them defaste' (ll. 113-14), which Wat Tyler supports by promising that soon there 'shall bee no other but hee, / That thus favours the Communaltie' (ll. 122-23), and that 'Wele be Lords my Maisters every one' (l. 127).[31]

Whilst few plays contain such overtly radical messages, a review of the extant entries in the Rose canon together with a consideration of the titles of those plays which are now lost to us indicate that the Rose playwrights frequently interrogated normative social arrangements by returning to a bank of familiar narratives, popular images, memorable historical moments and common (or at least commonly understood) knowledge which they reworked in order to find new ways of describing and defining the social values which constituted the lived experience of their audiences. This repository of images and stories 'define the range of canonical characters, the settings in which they operate, [and] the actions that are permissible

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[30] Anon., *The Life and Death of Jack Straw*, ed. K. Muir (1591, *1593*; Oxford: Malone Society, 1957), ll. 74-75, 77-82, 89-99, 103, 108-9.

[31] Henslowe's *Diary* suggests that Shakespeare's *1 Henry VI* may have premiered at the Rose (see Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary*, op. cit., p. 68). It is Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*, performed by Pembroke's Men at the Theatre in the early 1590s which contains the most notorious dramatisation of the Peasant's Revolt. Whilst the rebels are presented with considerably less sympathy overall, the play contains some noteworthy dialogue: 'It was never merry world in England since / gentlemen came up'; 'O miserable age! Virtue is not regarded in / handicraftsmen'; 'Henceforward all things shall be in common' (William Shakespeare, *2 Henry VI*, ed. Norman Sanders (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin, 1981), IV.ii.8-9, 10; IV.vii.16).

and comprehensible', providing 'a map of possible roles and possible worlds in which action, thought, and self-definition' are allowed.[32]

The 'Robin Hood' myth was one such objective structure to have enjoyed a number of re-interpretations on the stage of the Rose, its popularity perhaps having stemmed from the fact that the figure at its centre renounces his aristocratic status in order to become a commoner. The precise motivation behind this act of class-apostasy varies. In Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle's *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, as part of Prince John's scheme to thwart his intention to marry Marian Fitzwater, the eponymous character is proclaimed an outlaw, 'a lawlesse person' (l. 184) on exaggerated, rather than trumped up, charges of having substantial debts. Denouncing the friends and servants who have betrayed him and are now in the pay of the royal household, Robert Hood, Earl of Huntingdon, relinquishes his aristocratic status for that of the commonalty, becoming 'a simple yeoman as his

[32] Jerome Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard U.P., 1986), p. 66. Cf. Stephen Crites, 'Storytime: recollecting the past and projecting the future', in Theodore J. Sarbin (ed.), *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct* (New York: Praeger, 1986), pp. 152-73; Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class 1848-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1991); Michael Macdonald, '*The Fearefull Estate of Francis Spira*: narrative, identity and emotion in early modern England', *Journal of British Studies* XXXI (1992), pp. 32-61.

servants were', whom 'no man must presume to call... master / By name of Earle, Lord, Baron, Knight or Squire, / But simply by the name of Robin Hoode'.[33]

There are other ideological forces at work within this play. As preparations are made for the trial of the Bishop of Ely, Lord Chester bemoans the fact that men of rank and quality should be demeaned in such a manner before the common sort. In a novel piece of immanent critique, the Prior of York insists that

Prior: more it fits
To make apparant, sinnes of mightie men,
And on their persons sharpely to correct
A little fault, a very small defect;
Than on the poore, to practise chastisement.
For if a poore man die, or suffer shame,
Only the poore and vile respect the same:
But if the mightie fall, feare then besets
The proud harts of the mightie ones, his mates:
They thinke the world is garnished with nets,
And trappes ordained to intrappe their states.
Which feare, in them, begets a feare of ill,
And makes them good, contrary to their will.[34]

Inverting the supposedly immutable principle of punishing the rank and file for infractions against the dictates of their superiors, thereby supposedly engendering terror and respect in equal measure, the Prior argues that it is in fact the ruling class which should be punished most severely. Turning the ideological potency of the

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[33] Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 497, 1329-31. Bishop Hugh Latimer complained in 1549 how the people 'prefer Robin Hood to God's word' when he found the church he had come to preach at locked on account of the parish's celebration of 'Robin Hood's day'. See 'Sermon preached before Edward VI, 12 April 1549' in John Dover Wilson (ed.), *Life in Shakespeare's England*, op. cit., p.38. Other figures from popular history who feature in the Rose canon appear to have vied for popularity. Warwick in *George a Greene*, for instance, remarks of the play's eponymous protagonist that 'his carriage passeth Robin Hood', whilst Marian and Robin themselves make cameo appearances late in the play, the former complaining 'I heare no songs but all of George a Greene', and the latter hoping that 'he doth proffer us no scath' before being beaten by him in a brawl (Anon., *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 859, 930, 935).

[34] Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 1643-55.

threat of state power against itself, the Prior wishes to provoke trepidation, if not paranoia, not in those who are ruled but in 'the proud harts of the mightie ones', who through observing the severest of punishments being meted out to their peers will come to perceive 'nets / and trappes' all around them, 'beget[ting] a fear of ill'.[35] Once again, a conceptual space is opened up within the canon of the Rose that facilitates (and to some extent seeks to legitimate) the envisioning of novel social arrangements.

The obvious impact of the emergent mode of production on such aspects of social and economic life as may have been perceived to be inviolable within the contexts of feudal society could arguably be said to have engendered a similar sense within the body of authors who wrote for the Rose of the potential for the reconfiguration of political relations within their society. What we may loosely describe as a 'what if?' factor finds expression in a number of the Rose plays, offering tentative sketches of speculative political futures, not in any ordered or theorised manner, but with a sense of urgency, perhaps even excitement. What we encounter in these plays is a recognition of the fact that the ushering in of a new mode of production not only demonstrated that social and economic arrangements were subject to change, but also that by the same transformational logic, contemporary political structures could be realigned. In Drayton, Hathway, Munday, and Wilson's *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, as King Henry makes preparations to invade France, two Judges consider the fact that rumours of an uprising in his absence mean that the monarch may have no kingdom to return to:

1st Judge: We heare of secret conventicles made,
And there is doubt of some conspiracies,
Which may breake out into rebellious armes

[35] Cf. Sidney's observation that tragedy 'maketh kings fear to be tyrants, and tyrants manifest their tyrannical humours'. Sir Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, op. cit., p. 45.

When the King's gone, perchance before he go:
Note as an instance, this one perillous fray,
What factions might have growne on either part,
To the destruction of the King and realme.

Issuing an edict to the Sheriff and Mayor of Hereford to ensure that 'there be no meetings' (l. 136), the Judges forbear to shut down the town's alehouses, stating that seditious ideas could only feasibly be disseminated at the former:

1st Judge: When the vulgar sort
Sit on their Ale-bench, with their cups and kannes,
Matters of state be not their common talke,
Nor pure religion by their lips prophande.[36]

It is not inconceivable that these lines could have been delivered with an ironic inflection, or metafictive wink to the audience. Bearing in mind Bankside's notoriety, in which the audience both temporarily shared by choosing to travel there, and actively participated in for the specific duration of their visit, it is hard to imagine that the contemporary observers of this scene failed to perceive a significance in, and perhaps feel slightly flattered or even empowered by, these dramatists' chiastic acknowledgement of their political potentiality. The paradigm may be inverted (this is the commonalty sitting in an alehouse appraising their society's leaders, rather than judges passing sentence on its subjects) but this passage leave us in little doubt that the verdicts passed from the former bench would have been just as damning were the relations of power transposed.[37]

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[36] Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday, and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 123-9, 136-9.

[37] Cf. Harpoole's exasperated exclamation later in the play on encountering four beggars pleading for alms: 'Hang you roags, hang you, theres nothing but / misery amongst you, you feare no law, you'. Michael Drayton, Michael Hathway, Anthony Munday, and Robert Wilson, *1 Sir John Oldcastle*, op. cit., ll. 408-9.

Defining the genre of a given play is not always a simple matter, and most of the Rose plays are best described as 'medleys' first, and comedies, tragedies or histories second.[38] The loose group of 'comical histories' constituted by *James IV*, *Friar Bacon*, and *George a Greene* feature a medley of scenes focusing variously upon a king or prince casting off his rank for his amusement in order to bestow his friendship upon a particular craft or town, a love interest, popular heroism, magic, horseplay, songs and dancing. An analysis of whether the Rose canon was ultimately confined by or conformed to the resolutions expected of its genres (such as comedies ending in reconciliation and tragedies concluding with the meting out of punishment and the re-establishment of political stability), or whether it provoked new mentalities or 'ways of seeing' in its audiences instead, offers a further perspective to a study of the appearance, representation and description of class relations on its stage.[39]

Whilst the aristocratic rebels of Robert Greene's *George a Greene* are presented as unsympathetic despots, the figure of Edward, but more particularly the monarchical power he represents, is continually reconfigured as representative 'of the people'.

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[38] Most Rose plays defy the expectations of genre, featuring medleys of scenes tumbling on to the stage one after another, sometimes serving as padding for scant plots (which often resolve themselves several hundred lines before the end of the play), but frequently serving no purpose other than to entertain, with varying degrees of success.

[39] Genres as we now understand them were still being constructed in the sixteenth century by the likes of Sidney and Puttenham, as part of a wider enterprise to supplant the structures of the church and fedualism with those of the state and individualism, tidying away the vestigial remains of the former mode of production. Just as the church had made a crowd into an audience, so the theatre turned a fair into a performance, with commodities bought and sold, an idea which goes some way towards explaining contemporary anxieties about the theatre as a disorderly (rather than a subversive) space, the chaotic influence of which threatened, in theory at least, to overwhelm early modern London's tenuous grip on law and order. See Jonathan Crewe, 'The hegemonic theatre of George Puttenham', *ELR* 16.1 (1986), pp. 71-85.

Whilst the corruption Kendall symbolises is anathema to the notions of solidarity and camaraderie at the heart of the play, Edward's person is seen to encompass such traits as are supposedly personified by the commonalty. The trope of the loyal subject is inverted and emphasis placed instead upon the loyalty of the monarch to his people. The citizens of Wakefield's support for Edward is not unconditional, and their allegiance to their king is founded upon a shared perception of their being his equal rather than emanating from a traditional sense of the deference and duty owed to one's monarch. As George declares, using an idiom more often utilised by king than commoner, the people of Wakefield are Edward's 'friends' rather than his subjects.[40]

The equivalence of the relationship between the commonalty and the monarch in the Rose canon is an acknowledgement of a coming-to-consciousness on the part of the former of its potential autonomy, but couched within the conceptual structure of absolutism. It is not then, perhaps, overly surprising that the relationships depicted between monarch and commoner in the Rose canon bespeak a certain schizophrenia, with the ordinary man on the one hand expecting to be treated as an equal by the monarch when king and commoner meet, yet on the other, forced by the framework within which this reconceptualisation of the structures of power is undertaken to pledge earnest allegiance to the monarch *as subject* in their absence. This is, in other words, less a realisation of the need to abolish the hierarchical systems of rule that the monarchy operates within, than the enunciation of a utopian belief in the notion that England could become a 'nation of kings', an idea often repeated in these plays.

[40] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., l. 109.

Hodge, for example, remarks to his master and mistress in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* that, should they succeed in purchasing the cargo from the captain of a Portuguese ship they are in negotiation with,

Hodge: you cannot choose
but be a lord at least.
Firk: Nay, dame, if my master prove not a lord, and you a lady,
hang me.[41]

In much the same way, Sir Thomas Wyatt promises his followers that they 'shall be all Lord Maiores at least', whilst the eponymous monarch of George Peele's *Edward I* asserts that all his troops are his equals on the battlefield:

Edward: welcome manly followers,
That beares the scars of honour and of armes,
And on your war drums carry crownes as kings.
...
For lims, you shall have living, lordships, lands,
And be my counsellers in warres affaires.[42]

Ultimately, however, many of the artisanal characters in the Rose plays give frequent voice to a belief that the conceptual revolutions precipitated by the emergence of nascent workshop-capitalism would not result in significant changes for their class. Babulo in *Patient Grissil* maintains that

Babulo: beggers are fit for beggers, gentlefolks for
gentlefolks: I am afraid that this wonder of the rich loving the
poor, wil last but nine daies.[43]

Babulo's cynicism is typified by his reference to Will Kempe's so-called 'Nine Daies Wonder' of 1599, during which time the clown supposedly danced from London to Norwich, a metonym for how the rich, in Babulo's eyes, are 'leading the

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41 Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit., II.iii.94-97.
42 George Peele, *Edward I*, op. cit., ll. 77-79, 98-99.
43 Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., I.ii.317-19.

poor a merry dance'. With commendable prescience, Babulo suggests that the artisanal classes he represents in the atemporal setting of the play, as well in the Rose's audience, had little hope that the era of nascent workshop-capitalism would do much for them.

The attention paid to the dramatisation of imaginary encounters between monarch and subject would suggest that both the playwrights and patrons of the Rose believed that the nature of an individual's relationship with his ruler had deep-seated implications for his personal autonomy. With the main plot of *George a Greene* resolved, and the treacherous Earl of Kendall imprisoned in the Tower of London, rather than summoning the protagonist to attend on him, King Edward declares that he will travel to see him on a somewhat flimsy pretence:

Edward: I sore doe long to see this George a Greene:
And for because I never saw the North,
I will forthwith goe see it:
And for that to none I will be knowen,
We will disguise our selves and steale downe secretly.

On arriving in Wakefield, rather than revealing himself immediately, Edward defers to George for no apparent reason other than to physically enact upon the stage of the Rose the abasement of a monarch before a peasant, trailing his staff along the ground in a symbolic act of self-depreciation which maddens George rather than placating him:

George: Hollo, you two travellers.
Edward: Call you us, sir?
George: I, you. Are ye not big inough to beare
Your bats upon your neckes,
But you must traile them along the streetes?
Edward: Yes sir, we are big inough, but here is a custome
Kept, that none may passe his staffe upon his necke,
Unlesse he traile it at the weapon's point.
Sir, we are men of peace, and love to sleepe

In our whole skins, and therefore quietnes is best.
George: Base minded pesants, worthlesse to be men,
What, have you bones and limmes to strike a blow,
And be your hearts so faint, you cannot fight?

This theme is revisited in the play's conclusion, where Edward's encouraging of George to declare that 'English Edward vaild his staffe to you' becomes a metaphor for the king's emasculation, removing a further element of the monarch's figurative potency:

Edward: And for the ancient custome of *Vaile staffe*, keepe it still,
Clayme priviledge from me:
If any aske a reason why? or how?
Say, English Edward vaild his staffe to you.[44]

Subsequent to George having eventually vented his spleen on a party of shoemakers rather than the king's person, Edward reveals his true identity. After a perfunctory pledge of allegiance on the pinner's part ('nature teacheth us duetie to our king', l. 1200), Edward declares

Edward: Rise up, George
...
George a Greene, give me thy hand:
There is none in England that shall doe thee wrong.
Even from my court I came to see thy selfe,
And now I see that fame speakes nought but trueth.[45]

Whilst this interlude can be said to be a simple tableau within which a monarch forgives his subject, both the language and the staging of the spectacle invite a more nuanced reading. Edward's speech goes far beyond mere forgiveness, and there is something of a subversive semantic sense in his 'Rise up, George', a cry from the

[44] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 913-17, 1143-55, 1338-41.
[45] Ibid., ll. 1196, 1206-9. Correspondingly, artisanal figures consider kings to be their friends: George a Greene remarks 'We are English borne, and therefore Edward's friends' (l. 109); Adam barges into Rasni's court, declaring 'I am going to speake with a / friend of mine... for if he be not my friend, Ile make / him my friend ere he and I passe' (Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, op. cit., ll. 1882-83, 1889-90).

very monarch's throat encouraging this English Everyman-character to quite literally 'get up off his knees', and revolt.

At no time in this play is the possession of aristocratic status presented as something worthy of either innate respect or admiration; rather, it is something to be interrogated or resisted.[46] When Edward declares his intention to knight George towards the play's resolution, in a symbolically significant gesture, the pinner steadfastly refuses his monarch's offer:

George: let me live and die a yeoman still:
So was my father, so must live his sonne.
For tis more credite to men of base degree,
To do great deeds, than men of dignitie.[47]

What George implies – that the commonalty are at the very least the equals of the aristocracy, and that such divisions as are claimed to exist between the classes are illusory – other characters in the Rose canon state with a degree of bluntness which verges on the confrontational. Old Strowd, described in the dramatis personae of *I The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green* as a 'Norfolk yeoman', has strong opinions regarding the relative merits of yeomen and their supposed betters:

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[46] Fenella Macfarlane's analysis of the 'flexible view of social mobility' embodied within the rhetorical trope of 'merchant chivalry' notes how tradespeople were praised according to the values of the aristocracy. Macfarlane observes that the protagonists of Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* take 'pride in being apprentice tradesmen *and* in the fact that the play ratifies changes in social status and... goes so far as to associate the more socially mobile subjects with valour and agency'. In renouncing aristocratic for artisanal status and embarking on their odyssey, the four nobles' adventures assume a synecdochal quality through which a consciousness of coming class reconfigurations is expressed. Fenella Macfarlane, 'To "try what London prentices can do": Merchant chivalry as representational strategy in Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London*', *MRDE* 13 (2001), p. 148. Cf. Theodora A. Jankowski's observation that the history play in the hands of Heywood 'records the deeds of capitalists, not traditional sovereigns', rewritten as 'a genre to accommodate capitalists as heroes' requiring him 'to erase or severely downplay the ways that capitalism is complicitous with the government and exploits the poor'. Theodora A. Jankowski 'Historisizing and legitimating capitalism: Thomas Heywood's *Edward IV* and *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*' *MRDE* 7 (1995), pp. 329-30.

[47] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 1314-17.

Old Strowd: I am as proud,
And think my self as gallant in this grey,
Having my table furnish't with good beef,
Norfolk temes bread, and conntry home bred drink,
As he that goeth in ratling taffity.
Let gentlemen go gallant what care I,
I was a yeoman born, and so I'll dye.[48]

The relative autonomy of such characters mark them out as figures situated within the interstices of late sixteenth century England's economic, cultural and political *zeitgeist*, where on the theatre stages that came as close as is possible to representing a collective imagination, monarchs deferred to pinners, and shepherds and carters became kings, as Fortune summarises in *Old Fortunatus* in describing a dumb-show of those she has raised up which passes over the stage:

Fortune: Viriat a Monarch now, but borne a shepherd.
This Primislaus (a Bohemian king)
Last day a Carter: this Monke Gregorie
Now lifted to the Papall dignitie.[49]

The artisan's increasingly informal conceptualisation of his relationship with his monarch, a metonym for his interaction with all figures of rank, is further re-inflected in those Rose plays such as *Patient Grissil* and *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* which depict a romantic relationship between a member of the royal family and a commoner, thereby developing the potential for other characters to test the nature of the monarchy's status.

In *An Humorous Day's Mirth*, Lemot resolves to

Lemot: go set the Queene upo[n] the
King, and tell her where he is close with his wench: and he
that mends my humor, take the spurres: sit fast, for by hea-
ven, ile jurke the horse you ride on.[50]

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[48] Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., D3v.
[49] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., I.i.200-3.

The idea of an individual having a liaison with a 'wench' in a tavern would doubtless be familiar enough to the Rose audience. That the individual in question is the King adds a threatening edge to Lemot's promise to 'jurke the horse you ride on'. Embroidering his entirely fictitious tale, which becomes increasingly complicated so that almost all of the court is implicated in the incident, Lemot goes on to tell the Queen that the woman had been in the company of an earl prior to her abduction and rape by the King. Another lord, a friend of the earl in question, hears of the incident and sets upon the King (note again the implicit enmity between the aristocracy and the monarchy), threatening to emasculate him, again with complex figurative implications for the authority of the monarch:

Lemot: Another lord did love this curious ladie, who hearing that the King had forced her, as she was walking with another Earle, ran straightwaies mad for her, and with a friend of his, and two or three blacke ruffians more, brake desperately upon the person of the King, swearing to take from him, in traiterous fashion, the instrument of procreation.[51]

The representation of the aristocracy in the Rose canon varies from dismissive to abusive. On the one hand, we find the likes of Simon Eyre lecturing Sir Roger Otley's daughter, Rose (but also 'the Rose audience') to stay away from courtiers:

Eyre: A courtiers wash, go by, stand not upon pishery-pashery. Those fellows are but painted images; outsides, outsides, Rose; their inner linings are torn.[52]

On the other hand, we find the following exchange between the three 'nymphes of Alexandria' in *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, who are discussing the rank of their husbands:

Elimine: My husband is a Lord past a Lord,
Samathis: And past a lord what is that past I pray,

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[50] George Chapman, *An Humorous Day's Mirth*, op. cit., ll. 1461-64.
[51] Ibid., ll. 1614-20.
[52] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit., III.iii.41-43.

Martia: A what you call it can you not name it.
Elimine: I thinke I must not name it.
Samathis: And why so I pray.
Elimine: Because it comes so near a thing that I knowe,
Martia: Oh he is a Count that is an Earle.[53]

Of course, characters who are squeamish about naming an object 'because it comes so near a thing that [they] knowe' are in fact flagging up the imminent deployment of an obscene pun for the benefit of those members of the audience who are not paying close attention. The above example is no different, but the sentiment Martia is expressing – that Earls are 'counts' – is unusual in its bluntness.

Perhaps the most extraordinary example in the Rose canon of a character drawing attention to (or in this case, personifying) the theoretically permeable nature of the boundaries between classes is the figure of Duke Cleanthes in George Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*. Even to audiences familiar with protagonists swapping appearances or even genders, the notion of a character donning four distinct personae over the course of a play must have been noteworthy. Hence Cleanthes, in disguise for having supposedly been banished for attempting to woo Ageiale, the Queen of Egypt, also plays Irus, the blind beggar of the play's title, fond of predictions and Gnostic utterances, the dangerously unstable Count Hermes, and Leon the usurer. A further stratum of complexity is superimposed upon the character by means of his revelation that even the figure of Cleanthes is a conceit:

'Irus': I am *Cleanthes* and blind *Irus* too,
And more than these, as you shall soon perceave,
Yet but a shepheardes sonne at *Memphis* borne,
And I will tell you how I got that name,
My Father was a fortune teller and from him I learnt his art,
And knowing to grow great, was to grow riche,
Such mony as I got by palmestrie,
I put to use and by that meanes became
To take the shape of *Leon*, by which name,

[53] George Chapman, *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, op. cit., ll. 857-63.

> I am well knowne a wealthie Usurer,
> And more then this I am two noble men,
> *Count Hermes* is another of my names,
> And Duke *Cleanthes* whom the Queene so loves,
> For till the time that I may claime the crowne,
> I mean to spend my tyme in sportes of love,
> Which in the sequell you shal playnely see,
> And Joy I hope in this my pollicie.[54]

With all the reliability of Melville's Ishmael, this character's experiments with different class identities serves as something of a metaphor for the potential for social change now invested in early modern English life. His calmly stated claim that he, a shepherd's son, will end the play's (lost) sequel as the King of Egypt does not seem improbable, but what is perhaps more significant is that it is thinkable *at all*.

Building upon these surveys, it is appropriate to go on to ask whether the appearance, representation and description of class relations as depicted in the extant canon of the Rose theatre can be said to have interrogated or mediated contemporary social, economic and political relations. Certainly, the monarchy's predilection for describing the ordering of society as divinely ordained must have been a familiar one to the early modern English playgoer, frequently encountering as they did such kings as Edgar in *A Knack to Know a Knave* who declare themselves to be 'God's Viceregent here on earth, / By God's appointment heere to raigne and rule', whose duty as he perceives it is 'To maintaine Justice, were it on himself, / Rather than

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[54] George Chapman, *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, op. cit., ll. 115-31.

soothing him in his abuse'.[55] Some entries in the Rose canon (*A Knack to Know a Knave* being a good example) interrogate the integrity of this arrangement, whereas others (*1 Tamburlaine*, for instance) invert its entire basis by supplanting the royal figurehead with one of rather more humble origins.

In opening scenes which bear testament to the enduring influence of the morality play tradition and its emblems on the amphitheatres of the late sixteenth century, *A Knack to Know a Knave* sees the Everyman-like figure of Honesty detailing the faults of King Edgar which, intriguingly, the monarch attempts to reconfigure as having originated in the commonalty rather than his own person:

Honesty: And yet thou art not happy Edgar,
Because that sinnes, lyke swarmes, remaine in thee.
King: Why, 'tis impossible, for I have studied still,
To root abuses from the common wealth
That may infect the king or communaltie.
Therefore, base Peasant, wilfull as thou art,
I tell thee troth, thou hast displeasd the King.

On the basis that he has undertaken to seek out his subjects' transgressions, and that rather than behaving improperly at his own behest, their misdemeanours alone could 'infect' him, Edgar declares Honesty a 'base peasant'. Identifying Edgar's principal fault as a tendency to listen too closely to his flattering courtiers, the closed, quasi-religious images and moral values that suffuse Honesty's discourse lead him to declare that

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[55] Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, op. cit., ll. 13-14, 42-3. Cf. the messianic tone of Elizabeth's 'Speech to the Troops at Tilbury' (1588) rallying her forces against 'those enemies of my God': 'I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time… to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood' M.H. Abrahams, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 6th edn., Vol. 1 (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993), p. 999. See also Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (1957; Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1997).

Honesty: Many an honest man knowes a knave to his cost,
And is neither physician, physiognomer, palmester, nor astronomer
But a plaine man of the country, lyke me
That knowes a knave, if he doe but see his cap.
...
Honesty is plaine my Lord, but no good fellow.[56]

It is in *1 Tamburlaine* that the Rose canon's most extensive analysis of the significance of power to the operations of class relations is to be found. There is a strong sense in *1* and *2 Tamburlaine* that the humble origins of the eponymous protagonist provoke his enemies as much as his martial success, and it is rewarding to consider the diptych from a class perspective. Variously described by kings and nobles as a 'base villain', 'devilish shepherd', 'Tartarian thief', and 'sturdy felon', Tamburlaine's 'lawless train' proceeds over the course of the play to commit 'incivil outrage' under his 'vagrant ensign', overturning established regimes and undermining the stability of those states he wages war against by striking swiftly at their heads, namely their kings.[57] The motivation of 'this man, or rather god of war' (V.i.i) is expressly to rob his conquests of their power rather than of their riches, perceiving the latter to be a mere corollary of the former, and possessing an innate

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[56] Anon., *A Knack to Know a Knave*, op. cit., ll. 54-60, 77-80, 96.

[57] Christopher Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine the Great*, op. cit., II.iv.19; II.vi.1; III.iii.171; IV.iii.12; I.i.39-40, 45. 'Born of parents base of stock', Faustus' origins are also humble, although his demonic pact eventually endows him with the potential to 'command the world's obedience', as the Emperor Bruno observes. Unlike Tamburlaine, however, Faustus' empiricist tendencies ('Resolve me of all ambiguities') endow his strain of individualism with a desire to gauge, judge and ultimately demean the authority of the powers of heaven and earth by humiliating them as his whim dictates rather than finding expression in a desire to overthrow them in the manner of Tamburlaine, for as he remarks to himself, 'the God thou servest is thine own appetite'. The Epilogue mourns Faustus' failure to fulfil his own potential ('Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight'), and ambivalently exhorts those 'forward wits' who have 'wonder[ed] at unlawful things' to 'practise more than heavenly power permits'. Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, in *The Complete Plays*, op. cit., Prologue l. 11, IV.ii.7, I.i.79, I.v.11, V.iii.20, 26, 25, 27

sense from the play's beginning that in authority alone lies influence.[58]

This is a war between the classes in its purest sense, where the lubricant that oils the wheels of civil society, capital (in the form of gold), is spurned in pursuit of the systems of power that drive political society forward. Viewing *1 Tamburlaine* as an entity distinct from the bipartite structure of *Tamburlaine the Great*, a member of the audience leaving a performance of the first half of the sequence has seen only the protagonist's unchecked and systematic destruction of the structures of state power depicted within the play which he has supplanted with his own authority. At the end of *1 Tamburlaine*, the protagonist's ascent still teems with untrammelled potential and is thereby seemingly sanctioned, as yet untainted by any threat of retribution or punishment. Such a spectator would have been given no reason to question the legitimacy of Tamburlaine's project, and placing a disorderly emphasis on the Prologue's injunction to 'applaud his fortunes how you please', may perhaps have emulated the protagonist's disregard for and active resistance to existing structures of power outside the theatre's walls.

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[58] This dynamic is also acknowledged by Tamburlaine's conquests, as well as being the protagonist's motivation. The Scythian's disdain for money ('What, think'st thou Tamburlaine esteems thy gold?' IV.i.262) is equalled by his royal prisoners' disgust for their newly-acquired status. Zabina tellingly declares that 'all the world will see and laugh to scorn / The former triumphs of our mightiness / In this obscure infernal servitude', exclaiming in despair 'Why should we live? O wretches, beggars, slaves!' shortly before braining herself on the bars of the cage within which she is imprisoned (V.ii.189-91, 185).

4.3 Class and the nature of affective social relations

One of the questions most frequently posed by critics considering the appearance, representation or description of class relations in early modern English drama is whether the plays can be said to have challenged or reinforced the nature of affective social relations. Ronda A. Arab remarks of Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* that 'the politics of a play that displaces age-old social hierarchies to insist that it is artisans who matter, not aristocrats and gentlemen, are worthy of notice in themselves'. Arab has attempted to show how 'the artisan body is inscribed into the sphere of elite power and written as vigorous, vital and crucial to the nation', standing as a 'measure of national value' and a cornerstone of national identity. In Dekker's dramatic vision, she suggests, 'the construction and celebration of an artisanal masculinity involves a critique of a lazy, effeminate aristocracy and constitutes a discursive means of forwarding the place and status of artisans in early modern English society'.[59]

It needs to be remarked that Dekker's account of artisanal status is somewhat disingenuous. Arab is quite right to observe that

> *The Shoemaker's Holiday* depicts artisans as a cohesive social group and offers a nostalgic, idealised picture of the late sixteenth-century work world that masks the considerably grimmer reality. Through its sanitised representation, the play erases artisan protest against unfavourable conditions and strips the powerful artisan body of its dangerous agency to act against such conditions. The increased status given to the productive body deflects attention from the transformation of working men into a labouring class. Thus, ironically, the adulation of the artisan body makes possible its pacification and submission to capitalist work regimes.[60]

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[59] Ronda A. Arab, 'Work, bodies and gender in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*', *MRDE* 13 (2001), pp. 182, 183. Cf. Lawrence Stone's account of the manner in which the social elites sustained themselves by means of their increasing permeability in *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

[60] Ronda A. Arab, 'Work, bodies and gender in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*', op. cit., p. 186.

Arab and David Kastan have compared what we know of the real conditions the early modern English artisan worked under historically to those represented in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and respectively declared them to be 'a whitewashed fantasy that masks both the very real divisions within artisan society and the extensive social fears of... artisans', and a 'comforting fiction of reciprocity and respect' in the midst of the 'increasingly complex social and economic organisation of pre-industrialised England'.[61] Whilst there is an element of truth in these observations, the theatrical dynamic of *The Shoemaker's Holiday* can also be said to be directing this narrative towards a positive rather than a negative outcome.

The shared enterprise conducted in Eyre's workplace endows the cobblers with a sense of community and identity, providing a structure (albeit a residual, declining one) to mitigate the alienating effects of labour.[62] Simon Eyre's declaration 'Prince I am none, yet am I princely born', also plays on a contemporary ambivalence to draw attention to the fact that 'nobility' or dignity is by no means the preserve of the

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[61] Ibid., p. 192; David Scott Kastan, 'Workshop and/as playhouse: *The Shoemaker's Holiday*', in eds. David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass (eds.), *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), p. 154. Cf. Mark Thornton Burnett's more rewarding suggestion in *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1997) that plays such as *The Shoemaker's Holiday* attempted to 'form a bridge between disintegrating conceptions of service and the demands of competitive enterprise' during a time of increasingly complex social and economic change' (p. 55).

[62] This idea is contextualised compellingly by E.P. Thompson in *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1963). Don E. Wayne has also found 'a palpable realism' to the way in which *The Shoemaker's Holiday* 'idealises the social atomisation produced by intensified commerce, celebrates the energy of popular culture, and asserts its importance to an imagined national destiny', usefully reminding us that 'the social relations of production are as "material" as the "things" of everyday circulation and consupmption'. Don E. Wayne, '"Pox on your distinction!": Humanist reformation and deformation of the everyday in *Staple of News*' in Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt (eds.), *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 75, 76, 86.

'nobility' or aristocracy. In fact, the play goes to some lengths to demonstrate the opposite, with the sense of potentiality within the artisanal classes being balanced by the atrophy of the aristocracy.[63] In stark contrast to the tenure of the former Lord Mayor Otley, who despite his origins as a grocer has adopted the characteristic languor of the aristocracy he is so enamoured of, the 'hearty vitality that is represented as intrinsically connected to Simon [Eyre's] identity as an artisan is seen to renew the civic realm'.[64]

The aristocracy are presented as having degenerated into lethargy, from which they may only be redeemed by an injection of artisanal vigour. Arab usefully describes the indolent and effeminate courtier Lacey as being 'rehabilitated' among Eyre's workers, relinquishing his finery for a set of shoemaking tools and joining them in their labour as well as their leisure. With a potent semiotic value of their own, the tools 'puncture [the] dramatic illusion by pointing to alternate social dramas of economic production, exchange and ownership', whilst Lacey's taking up of the shoemaker's implements signifies his acknowledgement of his adopted class's 'craft mastery and consequently property in the instrument of labour', reiterating 'the economic basis of different forms of community'.[65]

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[63] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit., V.v.17. Cf. Eyre's similar assertion regarding his mental aptitude earlier in the play: 'Prince I am none, yet bear a princely mind'. (V.i.20), also Tamburlaine's declaration 'I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove, / And yet a shepherd by my parentage' (Christopher Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine the Great*, op. cit., I.ii.34-5).

[64] Ronda A. Arab, 'Work, bodies and gender in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*', op. cit., p. 187.

[65] Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Kordova, ' Introduction: towards a materialist account of stage properties' in Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda (eds.), *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge UP, 2002), p. 15. Karl Marx, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, op. cit., p. 102

The message is unambiguous: the aristocracy must adopt both the attitudes and actions of the artisanal class or perish. Lacy does so, and is seen to thrive, whilst Hammon, the 'proper gentleman, / A citizen by birth, fairly allied' is inept and unproductive:

Hammon: Good sweet, leave work a little while: let's play.
Jane: I cannot live by keeping holiday.
Hammon: I'll pay you for the time which shall be lost.
Jane: With me, you shall not be at so much cost.[66]

Adding nothing to the economic or symbolic economy of the workshop, Hammon 'buys instead of works, consumes rather than produces', and is notably excluded from the generic settlements at the play's resolution.[67] His exclusion and solitude in the midst of reconciliation and marriage denote his shortcomings, branding him a failure and precipitating his ostracisation from 'the work-centred [artisanal] community of the play'. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Hammon is 'not only deficient in production and reproduction', but is also 'linked to the superficial values of commercial culture', offering as he does to buy Jane from her husband Ralph for twenty pounds. Ralph robustly rebukes Hammon's proposal ('dost thou think a shoemaker / is so base, to be a bawd to his own wife for commodity? / Take thy gold, choke with it!'), in a scene which maps 'cultural anxieties about material consumption on to the elite' whilst 'shor[ing] up the play's portrayal of the artisan

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[66] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit., IV.i.32-5.

[67] The king's role in the dénouement 'represents an alliance between the monarch and the upwardly mobile tradespeople', whereby 'the standard of blood has conceded somewhat to the standard of merit. And merit is measured by productivity'. Don E. Wayne, '"Pox on your distinction!": *The Staple of News*', op. cit., p. 75.

class as a social group with superior values'.[68] Whilst the possession of money was increasingly equated with status in early modern English culture, there is also a recognition in the Rose canon that traditional class structures were under threat from the emergent mode of production. When, in *Englishmen for my Money,* Heigham observes 'Gentlemen, you know, must want no Coyne, / Nor are they slaves unto it, when they have', it is clear that the possession and accumulation of wealth has become one the most important factors determining social standing.[69] His disclaiming of the enforced servility of the individual to capital actually works to draw attention to how strong the connection is, reaffirming that in this era of workshop capitalism money rather than rank is beginning to regulate the nature of class relations.

By presenting the elite classes' opinions as riven with contradictions, the extant plays of the Rose theatre suggest its canon served to interrogate them. Within twenty lines of Henry Momford, Earl of Kendall and leader of a rebellion against King Edward having pledged 'to relieve the poore, or dye my selfe', his associate Earl Bonfield counsels that in order to alleviate their shortage of provisions,

Bonfield: We must make havocke of those countrey Swaynes:
For so will the rest tremble and be afraid,
And humbly send provision to your campe.

Heeding his ally's advice, Kendall declares

Kendall: Well, hye thee to Wakefield, bid the Towne

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[68] Ronda A. Arab, 'Work, bodies and gender in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*', op. cit., p. 190.

[69] Haughton, William, *Englishmen for my Money*, op. cit., ll. 463-64. Cf. Momford's observation in *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green* making explicit the connection between power and the purse: 'You're rich and strong, and I am weak and poor' (Henry Chettle, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., G4v).

> To send me all provision that I want;
> Least I, like martiall Tamberlaine, lay waste
> Their bordering Countries,
> And leaving none alive that contradicts my Commission.[70]

Invoking the reputation of Tamburlaine's mercilessness, in laying claim to protecting the interests of the commonalty whilst at the same time extorting what he requires from it, Kendall conflates what he would like to present as a progressive form of aristocracy with the familiar forms of tyranny. Rather than building upon this theme, however, the potency of the threat posed by the aristocracy to the commonalty is eroded over the course of the play, degenerating from a potentially tyrannical menace to the butt of a clown's jokes. In a complex scene near the beginning of *George a Greene*, the playwright gives his protagonist the opportunity to informally re-inflect in dramatic terms some of the ways in which the commoner's conceptualisation of his relationship with his monarch has been renegotiated in comparison to the unconditional loyalty expected of the feudal subject, as well as drawing attention to the gulf between the aristocracy and the commonalty.

Sir Nicholas Mannering presents a commission to the Justice of Wakefield's bench, demanding that the town surrender up supplies for the rebel forces outside the town who are travelling to Scotland to join with King James before declaring war against King Edward. George steps out of the background and demands not only that Mannering remove his hat before the Justice's bench, 'that represents the person of the king', but also tears up the commission and forces the rebel knight to consume it, insisting that he literally 'eat his words'. George, by comparing the dependable nature of his own yeoman heritage's with the aristocrat's treachery, turns the following exchange with Mannering into a performative demonstration both of the 'equality' of the relationship between the commoner and the king (for whom he

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[70] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 45-9.

becomes a mouthpiece) and the disdain of the commonalty for the aristocracy, as well as their moral superiority.[71] Symbolically, George forces the rebel lord, who began by enquiring with derision 'what art thou that darest gaynsay my Lord' (i.e. the Earl of Kendall, l. 122), to finally submit to his will and declare 'I will doe your arrant':

George: Seest thou these seales?
Now by my fathers soule, which was a yeoman
When he was alive, eate them,
Or eate my daggers poynt, proud squire.
Mannering: But thou dost but jest, I hope.
George: Sure that shall you see, before we two part.
Mannering: Well, and there be no remedie, so George,
One is gone: I pray thee no more nowe.
George: O sir, if one be good, the others cannot hurt.
So sir, nowe you may goe tell the Earle of Kendall,
Although I have rent his large Commission,
Yet of curtesise I have sent all his seales
Backe againe by you.
Mannering: Well, sir, I will doe your arrant.[72]

Having made reference to his own yeoman heritage, George sees fit to call Sir Nicholas Mannering a 'squire', initially taking him to be his equal, although by the end of the sequence, the thoroughly humiliated Mannering is deferring to him.

The playwright endorses George's actions by having the symbolic figure of the Justice interject to remark that 'in cutting of proud Mannering so short... well hast thou deserv'd reward and favour'.[73] This incident is also related from the point of view of the aristocracy, with the Earl of Kendall later describing to the other rebel

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[71] Cf. Lloyd Edward Kermode observation that by betraying a treasonous courtier, Raph the Cobbler in Wilson's *The Cobbler's Prophecy* is rather 'ensuring the maintenance of the hierarchical class system' and 'promoting interclass harmony than inciting class war. Lloyd Edward Kermode, 'The playwright's prophecy: Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London* and the "alienation" of the English', *MRDE* 11 (1999), p. 71.

[72] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 140-53.

[73] Ibid., ll. 162, 164. George's actions stand in stark contrast to those of Grime who, as his name suggests, besmirches himself not only by giving the rebel lords food, but by deferring to them. Cf. Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 200-5.

lords in suitably derogatory terms what he has heard of Mannering's ill-treatment at the hands of the pinner of Wakefield:

Kendall: Nick [Mannering], as you knowe, is hawtie in his words;
He layd the lawe unto the Justices,
With threatning braves, that one lookt on another,
Ready to stoope: but that a churle came in,
One George a Greene, the pinner of the towne,
And with his dagger drawne layd hands on Nick,
And by no beggers swore that we were traytours.[74]

In representing this scene from both above and below, Greene draws attention to the ways in which the ideological structure of class relations could be exposed in the dramatic space of the theatre, and by implication, outside its walls as well. This scene contains in brief the sum total of the play's thematic content, as the monarch, who remains a passive figure throughout, is on the one hand threatened by the aristocracy, and on the other defended by the commonalty. For the purposes of an historical materialist critique of the re-inflection of early modern English class relations in the canon of the Rose theatre, more important than George's defence of the monarchical institution itself is his coming-to-consciousness of the fact that hierarchical structures of government are not inviolable, and mean little without the support of the commonalty.

By the end of the play, the scope of the rebel lords ambitions have degenerated to such an extent that they are scheming to destroy George's crops rather than his growing reputation. Entering 'all disguised' with Bonfield and Gilbert, Kendall weakly declares

Kendall: Now we have put the horses in the corne,
Let us stand in some corner for to heare
What braving tearmes the pinner will breathe

[74] Ibid., ll. 235-41.

When he spies our horses in the corne.

Even as Kendall is describing his trivial plan, Jenkin the clown has discovered the horses, declared them to be a 'prise', and drives them to the pound. Coming upon the disguised nobles, whom Jenkin has dismissively described as 'three geldings more' (l. 493), George makes inquiries as to their status:

George: Nowe, gentlemen, I knowe not your degrees,
But more you cannot be, unlesse you be Kings,
Why wrong you us of Wakefield with your horses?
I am the pinner, and before you passe
You shall make good the trespasse they have done.
...
Kendall: Peace, saucie mate, prate not to us:
I tell thee, pinner, we are gentlemen.
George: Why sir, so may I sir, although I give no armes.
Kendall: Thou? Howe art a gentleman?
Jenkin: And such is my master, and he may give as good
Armes as ever your great grandfather could give.
Kendall: Pray thee, let me heare howe?
Jenkin: Marie, my master may give for his armes,
The picture of Aprill in a greene jerkin,
With a rooke on one fist, and an horne on the other:
But my master gives his armes the wrong way;
For he gives the horne on his fist:
And your grandfather, because he would not lose his armes,
Weares the horne on his owne head.[75]

Jenkin's impromptu creation of an imaginary heraldic impresa for George in response to his declaration that he 'give[s] no armes' serves to dismantle another arbitrary division between the classes whilst at the same time ridiculing and debasing the idea of having a coat of arms at all. The gradual erosion of the notion that there is any intrinsic value in such distinctions between the classes as are identified during the course of the play prepares the audience for the staging of the beating of a member of the aristocracy by a member of the commonalty. Having

[75] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 450-3, 496-9, 501-15.

bested the Earl of Kendall strategically and intellectually, George now proves himself to be his physical superior too:

George: Now by my father's soule,
Were good King Edward's horses in the corne,
They shall ammend the scath or kisse the pound,
Much more yours sir, whatsoever you be.
Kendall: Why man, thou knowest not us,
We do belong to Henry Momford, Earl of Kendall,
Men that before a month be full expirde,
Will be King Edward's betters in the land.
George: King Edward's better, rebell, thou liest.
George strikes him.
Bonfield: Villaine, what hast thou done? thou hast stroke an Earle.
George: Why, what care I? A poore man that is true,
Is better than an Earle, if he be false:
Traitors reape no better fauours at my hands.[76]

Two further meditations on the arbitrary nature of class divisions and the illusory behavioural expectations associated with such demarcations within the extant canon of the Rose merit examination. In the anonymous *Look About You*, subsequent to escaping from the Fleet after having been falsely imprisoned, Robert, Earl of Gloucester, is described by the stammering Redcap as 'a va va vacabond, a fu fugitive', the easy interchangability of terms used to describe Gloucester's rank serving to highlight the fact that his class and status are functions of his legitimacy rather than something which innately commands deference.[77]

Contemplating striking off the hand of Gloucester for having beaten his favoured servant Skink, Prince Henry justifies his actions on the basis that the Earl's misdemeanour is all the more egregious on account of his rank: 'the greater the man

[76] Ibid., ll. 519-31.
[77] Anon., *Look About You*, op. cit., ll. 1220-1.

the greater his transgression, / Where strength wrongs weaknes, it is meare oppression'. Whilst Henry attempts to give a class-based moral gloss to what amounts to tyrannical conduct, regardless of the status of the recipient of the punishment, his mother Queen Elinor is inspired by his speech to deliver what equates to a prolegomena to despotism:

Queen: Heare me Sonne Henry, while thou art a King,
Give, take, pryson, thy subjects are thy slaves,
Life, need, thrones: proud hearts in dungions fling.
Grace men to day, to morrowe giue them graves.
A King must be like Fortune; ever turning,
The world his football, all her glory spurning.[78]

Having let slip that he had contrived to have Momford (disguised as a beggar) banished whilst recovering from his wound in the hut of the eponymous protagonist of Chettle and Day's *1 Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, Sir Robert hires Canby, Hadland and Tom Strowd to murder his preserver:

Sir Robert: it much concerns us
To see this Beggar dead, upon whose breath
Proud slander sits to blemish our good names,
And blast our honest reputations.[79]

Tom, after a change of heart induced by Bess, Momford's daughter, promising to marry him if he helps her father, follows Sir Robert and Canby to court and declares their treachery before King Henry. A duel is arranged, from which Strowd emerges victorious despite uneven odds and having nothing more than a cudgel to defend himself with, subsequent to which King Henry asks of him:

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[78] Anon., *Look About You*, op. cit., ll. 2984-5, 2992-7. Having become 'stricken with horror' (l. 3141) at his own betrayal of his father, to whom he ultimately makes the court reswear their allegiance, Prince Henry's threat is later revealed to have been a test of his brothers, wife and mother.
[79] Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., H2.

King: Fellow, dost hear?
Tom Strowd: Anon?
King: What should I call thy Country, and thy name?
Tom Strowd: Sen ye?
Gloucester: The King wo'd know thy Country, and thy name?
Tom Strowd: My name? I am not asham'd of my name, I am one *Tom Strowd* of *Harling*, I'll play a gole at Camp ball, or wrassel a fall a the hip, or the hin turn with ere a Courtnoll of ye all, for 20 quarters of Malt, and match me height for height.[80]

Henry has some difficulty in communicating precisely whom he is to Tom, which of necessity serves to undermine his authority over him, for why should an individual defer to another laying claim to be his ruler if the former neither knows who the latter is, nor acknowledges his ascendancy over him?

Far from being abashed in Henry's presence, Tom Strowd sees fit to challenge the monarch and any of his courtiers to trials of skill and strength. In and of itself a trivial act, Tom's defiance is a further instance of the commonalty rejecting the influence of the monarchy, and offering to contest it in such ways as it deems to be worthy of challenge, namely the familiar and popular, standing as they do outside of the processes of political society. Tom's ignorance of Henry's person becomes a metaphor for the mutable nature of class relations, and its reliance upon the governed recognising the dominion of their masters over them. If this acknowledgment does not take place, the ruling of one class by another, whilst it may not have been directly challenged at the level of ideas, cannot be effected in practice.[81]

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[80] Henry Chettle and John Day, *1 The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, op. cit., I4v

[81] This idea is also inverted in the Rose canon, but to the same effect. For example, whilst Tamburlaine recognises Mycetes to be a king, he is unimpressed by his personage and rather less than awestruck by the trappings of his authority: 'Are you the witty king of Persia?... I would entreat you to speak but three wise words'; 'Is this your crown?... You will not sell it, will ye?' *1 Tamburlaine*, op. cit., II.iv.23, 25, 27, 39.

To similar effect, some characters in the Rose canon, such as Mouse in *Mucedorus*, demonstrate an ignorance of the fact that there is such a person as the king, as Segasto finds out when he offers him a position at court and his would-be employee mistakes the monarch for a namesake of Mouse's parish:

Segasto: Why thou shalt be my man, and waite upon me at the court.
Mouse: Whats that?
Segasto: Where the King lies.
Mouse: Whats that same King a man or a woman?
Segasto: A man as thou arte.
Mouse: As I am, harke you sir pray you what kin is he to good man King of our parish the church warden?
Segasto: No kin to him, he is the King of the whole land.
Mouse: King of the land, I never see him.[82]

The majority of the artisanal characters who appear in the Rose plays, however, appear not only to be aware of the identity of their ruler, but also to possess a carefully reasoned conceptualisation of their relationship with them, often beginning from a position of equality rather than servitude. This idea is frequently associated with the challenging notion that it is better to be sovereign of oneself than subject to another, such as Tom Stukeley says in George Peele's *Battle of Alcazar*:

Stukeley: Why should not I then looke to be a king?
...
King of a mole-hill had I rather be,
Than the richest subject of a monarchie,
Huffe it brave minde, and never cease t'aspire,
Before thou raigne sole king of thy desire.[83]

The extant Rose plays also re-inflect a sense that rank *per se*, stripped of the trappings of power, counts for little. In *George a Greene*, Bettris, Grimes' daughter and George's love, rebuffs the advances of Bonfield with some subtlety; when he

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[82] Anon., *Mucedorus*, op. cit., sig. B2r.
[83] George Peele, *Battle of Alcazar*, ed. W.W. Greg (1588-89?, 1594; Oxford: Malone Society, 1907), ll. 503, 506-9.

attempts to impress her with the significance of his title and the fact that he is a knight, she mocks him by intimating that he is not aristocratic *enough*, and that she will be wooed by no-one less than an Earl:

Bonfield: But, gentle girl, if thou wilt forsake
The pinner, and be my love, I will advance thee high:
To dignifie those haires of amber hiew,
I'll grace them with choice rubies, sparkes and diamonds,
Planted upon a velvet hood to hide that head,
Wherein two saphires burne like sparkling fire:
This will I doe, faire Bettris, and farre more,
If thou wilt love the Lord of Doncaster

Bettris: Heigh ho, my heart is in a higher place,
Perhaps on the Earle, if that be he,
See where he comes.

After Bonfield, suitably humiliated, has retreated, Bettris goes on to reflect in soliloquy on her admiration for George's idealism, opposing it to the aristocracy's baseness:

Bettris: Oh lovely George, fortune be still thy friend
And as thy thoughts be high, so be thy minde,
In all accords, even to thy hearts desire
...
I care not for Earle, nor yet for Knight,
Nor Baron that is so bold:
For George a Greene the merrie pinner
He hath my heart in hold.[84]

Similarly, Babulo in *Patient Grissil* points out the correspondences between himself and the aristocratic Furio, a gentleman of the Marquess Gwalter's court, making sure that the courtier understands that he considers him to be his equal, and will not tolerate oppression:

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[84] Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, op. cit., ll. 226-38, 255-58, 261-63. Cf. Anon., *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, op. cit., ll. 1959-60,1275-76, 2298-300, 2946-48; Anon., *The Life and Death of Jack Straw*, op. cit., ll. 16-25, 30-38, 42-63, 148-52, 199-200, 210-11, 231-32, 615-21, 650-54, 680, 704-5, 715-20, 732-34, 753-57, 848-51.

Babulo: What doe Courtiers but wee doe the like: you eat good cheere, and wee eate good bread and cheese: you drinke wine, and we strong beare: at night you are as hungry slaves as you were at noone, why so are wee: you go to bed, you can but sleepe, why and so doe wee: in the morning you rise about eleven of the clocke, why there we are your betters, for wee are going before you: you weare silkes, and wee sheepe-skinnes, innocence caries it away in the world to come, and therefore vanish good Furio, torment us not good my sweet Furio.
Furio: Asse Ile have you snaffled.
Babulo: It may be so, but then Furio Ile kicke.[85]

From the above examples, we can begin to see that the encounters staged in the extant Rose plays between monarch and subject are not carnivalesque fantasies in which 'peasants daunce and Monarches groane', but part of an ongoing conceptual re-configuration of class structures.[86] Such a representation is facilitated by the use of two plot devices, inevitably conjoined, which allow the parties involved to come face to face on equal terms. The first requires that the monarch be in disguise, allowing the playwright to overcome the traditional hurdle to the depiction of such a encounter, namely the fact that the subject under consideration would under normal circumstances be expected to pay tribute, immediately re-inscribing the hierarchical nature of the relationship between the two.

The second means whereby the playwright prepares for an encounter between royalty and commonalty requires the monarch to seek out his subjects in order to reward them for their deeds which they have learnt of by repute, or alternatively to express a desire to meet an individual who has acquired considerable popularity amongst the citizenry. This device is deployed despite the fact that it breaks the mimetic spell which the dramatic frame provides for such an encounter by

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[85] Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker and William Haughton, *Patient Grissil*, op. cit., V.i.73-83.
[86] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, op. cit., I.i.98.

foregrounding its artifice, an act which is significant in its own right. We find examples of such attitudes in the King's declaration in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* that he is 'with child til I behold this huff-cap' Simon Eyre and worrying that he has been a nuisance to him when they do meet ('have I been too troublesome / Say, have I not?'). King Henry similarly rewards Friar Bacon with his intimacy and familiarity for having overcome the German mage Jaques Vandermast, despite his having left a trail of death and devastation behind him in the play:

Henry: Bacon, thou hast honour'd England with thy skill,
And made fair Oxford famous by thine art:
I will be English Henry to thyself.[87]

One element that needs to be factored into any analysis of the *Downfall of Robert*, for example, is the complex metatheatrical frame within which it is set. The induction to the play is spoken in part by no less a narrator than John Skelton, who goes on to play the part of Friar Tuck. Skelton (c.1460-1529) was hardly an anti-establishment figure, having had the title of Poet Laureate conferred upon him, and serving as he did as tutor to the young Henry VIII. Nevertheless, the notoriety he gained for both his swingeing satire on court life of 1498, *The Bowge of Court* and his series of vituperative assaults on the sermons and statesmanship of Cardinal Wolsey in *Speak, Parrot*, *Colin Clout* and *Why Come Yet Not to Court?* (1521-2), make him an interesting figure to deploy within the contexts of a drama. When Skelton slips out of his role around a third of the way through the play and reassumes his own identity in order to censure contemporary playwrights for 'suffering their lines / to flatter these times', we are reminded that this is a play in

[87] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, op. cit.., V.iii.10, V.v.173-74; Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, op. cit., ll. 1266-68.

search of more serious subject matter than 'boastings and braves,... vaine foolery / and rude ribaldry'.

In a further metafictive episode towards the end of the play, Sir John Eltham (playing Little John) steps out of character and remarks to Skelton

Eltham: Me thinks I see no jeasts of Robin Hoode,
No merry Morices of Frier Tuck,
No pleasant skippings up and downe the wodde,
No hunting songs, no coursing of the Bucke.

Skelton's reply – 'for merry jeasts, they haue bene showne before, / ... Our play expresses noble Robert's wrong' – reminds the audience that such diversions as the ribaldries of Much should not detract from their focusing upon the failings of the elite which Huntingdon has rejected in becoming a commoner.[38]

In the same play, in contrast to Prince John's ill-tempered relations with his nobles, Robert's friends from the opposite end of the social scale are to be found across the length and breadth of the country:

Scarlet: Its ful seaven years since we were outlawed first,
And wealthy Sherewood was our heritage:
For all those yeares we raignd uncontrolde:
From Barnsdalde Shrogs, to Notinghams red cliffes,
At Blithe and Tickhill were we welcome guests.
Good George a Greene at Bradford was our friend,
And wanton Wakefields Pinner lov'd us well.
At Barnsley dwels a Potter tough and strong,
That neuer brookt we brethren should have wrong.
The Nunnes of Farnsfield, pretty Nunnes they bee,
Gave napkins, shirts, and bands to him and mee.
Bateman of Kendall, gave us Kendall greene,

[88] Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 864-5, 857, 860-1. Something of a recurring figure in the Rose plays, John Skelton was presumably also the subject of 1601's *Scogan and Skelton*, now lost. See Appendix C.

> And Sharpe of Leedes, sharpe arrowes for us made:
> At Rotherham dwelt our bowyer, God him blisse,
> Jackson he hight, his bowes did never misse.[89]

Of more interest than the fact that Robert's band have built a wide-ranging power base during his seven years in self-imposed exile is the fact that they are capable of equipping and arming themselves with the assistance of such artisanal allies as George a Greene (*George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*) and Bateman of Kendall (cf. *1 Black Bateman of the North, 2 Black Bateman*), both of whom are self-referentially drawn from the ranks of those popular folk heroes who form the subject of other Rose plays.[90] Whilst none of the plays which we know to have been staged at the Rose feature a Sharpe of Leeds or Jackson of Rotherham in their titles, Henslowe's *Diary* mentions more than twenty plays the titles of which (by inference or otherwise) refer to artisanal classes by name (e.g. *Pierce of Winchester, Page of Plymouth)*, by trade (*Tinker of Totness*, *The Cobbler*), or collectively (*1* and *2 Six Clothiers*). In light of these evocative titles, and also bearing in mind that they feature in the same description as two characters whom we can identify within the fraction of extant Rose plays, it is not beyond the realms of the conceivable that the fletcher and bowmaker Scarlet refers to may have made appearances elsewhere in this amphitheatre's canon.

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[89] Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 1341-59.

[90] Scarlet's litany of allies from the far-flung places of the North of England (far from the Rose, anyway) serves as a device to authenticate and legitimate his claims. Cf. Stephen Knight, *Robin Hood: A Complete Study of the English Outlaw* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

Extending beyond this speech and this play, underpinning many of the accounts of class relations depicted on the stage of the Rose, too loose and disparate perhaps to be called an 'agenda', but in evidence nevertheless, is a schema which constructs a conceptual space, peopled by characters from their own popular narratives as well as political history and classical mythology. Within this space, the artisanal class can conduct its affairs without intervention or instruction from the elite, constructing or conceiving of new social orders either figuratively or as abstractions in order to evaluate their utility and practicality.[91]

Within this theoretical and theatrical arena, popular figures drawn from the lower social orders are recast as heroes in the classical manner. Having received a sound beating from him, the Earl of Warwick is apt to say of George a Greene 'For stature, he is framed / Like to the picture of stoute Hercules' (ll. 857-8). New agendas are also formulated within this theoretical space, and one such manifesto is given voice in Sherwood Forest. Having pledged to call Huntingdon 'Robin Hood' and Lady Matilda 'Maid Marian', Robin's men variously decree that

Little John: Thirdly, no yeoman, following Robin Hoode
In Sherewood, shall use widowe, wife, or maid,
But by true labour, lustfull thoughts expell.

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[91] I understand 'schema' here to refer to the *SOED* definition (after Kant) of certain forms or rules through which the understanding is able to apply its 'categories' to the manifold of sense-perception in the process of realising knowledge or experience. I supplant the Romantic notion of the 'productive imagination' originally harnessed to these forms or rules with the Althuserrian idea of the lived relation to the real which 'reinforces or modifies the relation between men and their conditions of resistance, in the imaginary relation itself'. Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, op. cit., p. 234. Althusser observed that 'the State and its Apparatuses only have meaning from the point of view of the class struggle, as an apparatus of class struggle ensuring oppression and guaranteeing the conditions of exploitation and its reproduction. But there is no class struggle without antagonistic classes. Whoever says class struggle of the ruling class says resistance, revolt and class struggle of the ruled class'. Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (notes towards an investigation)', op. cit., pp. 171-2.

Robin: How like yee this?
All: Master, we like it well.
Much: But I cry no to it. What shall I do w[ith] Jinny then?
Scarlet: Peace Much: hoe forwarde with the orders, fellowe John.
Little John: Fourthly, no passenger with whom ye meete,
Shall ye let passe till he with Robin feast:
Except a Poast, a Carrier, or such folke,
As use with food to serve the market townes.
All: An order which we gladly will observe.
Little John: Fifthly, you never shall the poore man wrong,
Nor spare a Priest, a usurer, or a clarke.
Much: Nor a faire wench, meete we her in the darke.
Little John: Lastly, you shall defend with all your power,
Maids, widowes, Orphans, and distresséd men.
All: All these we vowe to keepe, as we are men.[92]

The admixture of statecraft and sexuality ensures that the tone of this passage remains light-hearted, but its statement of intent is serious enough. At its heart is a vow never to spare the punishment of the instruments of authority – the church as symbolised by the priest, the repressive state apparatus of education in the figure of the clerk and that reviled symbol of the inequality sanctioned by the new mode of production, the money-lender – whilst defending the interests of the poor, displaced and disadvantaged. Before it became apparent that the bonds of the feudal mode of production would be replaced by the chains of the wage-relation, the latter, re-inflected in early modern English drama, appears to have exercised a liberating influence on the artisanal consciousness. Having broken away from feudalism's hierarchical absolutism and rigid economic relations, it became feasible to conceive of the idea that monarchical and religious absolutism could also be mutable, and

[92] Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, op. cit., ll. 1341-59

subject to change at some future time.[93] The Rose canon demonstrated a cultural, as well as a social and economic (if not yet a political), *awareness* of the potential for such change, which, even if it did not delineate a manifesto for a programme of reform, recognised the potentially transient nature of the established hierarchies of power and the terms and conditions facilitating their continuation.

Rodney Hilton has noted that

> Since men make their own history, the historian must know what part the political and social consciousness of the various classes played in advancing or retarding the tempo of capitalist development. Since that consciousness is by no means a direct reflection of the economic activity of these classes, the historian cannot but concern himself with law, politics, art and religion. Neither feudalism not capitalism are understandable simply as phases in economic history. Society and its movement must be examined in their totality, for otherwise the significance of uneven developments, and of contradictions, between the economic foundation of society, and its ideas and institutions, cannot be appreciated.[94]

The compulsion Hilton identifies within the historian to address law, politics, art and religion in order better to understand a given class's political and social consciousness is also present within early modern English drama. In the last instance, these plays were neither paradigms nor products, but rather symbolic of a relationship being established, a developing dynamic rather than a pair of static opposites. Whilst the examples analysed above operate at an abstract rather than an applied or analogous level, it would be a misrepresentation to suggest that the plays were nothing more than value-free artistic expressions. As such, they should be

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[93] The reconfiguration of class structures occupied several contemporary writers of prose. Sir Thomas Smith in *De Republica Anglorum I* (written in 1551, but not printed until 1583) separated English society into four divisions; 'Gentlemen', 'Citizens and Burgesses', 'Yeomen', and 'the fourth sort or men, which do not rule', whilst Thomas Nashe observed some forty years later in *Christs Teares over Jerusalem* (1593) how 'in London, the rich disdain the poor. The courtier the citizen. The citizen the country man. One occupation disdaineth another'. See John Dover Wilson (ed.), *Life in Shakespeare's England*, op. cit., pp. 18-22.

[94] Rodney Hilton, *Class Conflict and the Crisis of Feudalism*, 2nd edn. (London: Verso, 1990), p. 201.

understood as having attempted to articulate such changes in the quality of contemporary class relations in London in the last quarter of the sixteenth century as the emergent mode of production had instantiated.

Bearing in mind the fact that only some thirteen per cent of the plays thought to have been staged at the Rose are extant, it is not possible to state with any certainty whether those themes which appear with a degree of frequency in the remaining sample are representative of larger trends across the canon as a whole.[95] Nevertheless, in developing an historical materialist account of the appearance, representation and description of class relations in the canon of the Rose theatre, this chapter has illustrated that the authors of these plays assumed their audiences were capable of envisaging a potential re-configuration of contemporary class relations in the era of nascent workshop-capitalism. In their articulation of a coming-to-consciousness of the changes taking place within early modern English society as a consequence of the transition to a new mode of production, these plays resisted authoritarian, undemocratic class structures and explored the libertarian implications of acknowledging the individual's identity as being materially constituted by, or equivalent, to their 'Being-in-the-world'.[96]

In its struggle to find the language to fully articulate the operations of the emergent capitalist mode of production upon the subject within the context of class relations, the 'interrelated tropes and ideologemes' of early modern English dramatic discourse encourage the reader to acknowledge fundamental similarities between the society within which capitalism was forged and the society which can envisage its

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[95] Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), pp. 82-4. See also Appendices A and C.

[96] See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, transs. John Macquarrie, Edward Robinson (1926; Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), pp. 78-88. 'We thus find phenomenally that *knowing is a kind of Being which belongs to Being-in-the-world*' (p. 88).

dissolution.[97] There are powerful analogies connecting the interface between class relations and appropriated language in the early modern period and historical materialism's attempts to forge a discourse through which the developing social and economic relations of the second half of the nineteenth century could be articulated, with both lexicons striving to identify, iterate and explain the affective changes which the eras of nascent workshop-capitalism and industrial capitalism made within the arena of human arrangements.

In the final scene of the first part of *Tamburlaine*, the protagonist ponders the fact that

Tamburlaine: If all the pens that ever poets held
Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,
And every sweetness that inspir'd their hearts,
...
Yet should there hover in their restless heads
One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
Which into words no virtue can digest.[98]

Just as the extant canon of the Rose theatre exhibits a preoccupation with finding terms to describe economic, social and cultural change, so historical materialist discourse has to some extent always struggled to find the words to describe the influences and affects of the mode of production it was created to critique. J. Hillis Miller has taken this observation an intriguing stage further by positing that Marxism not only seeks a vocabulary to describe the subtle and shifting economic, social and cultural characteristics of the world it offers a taxonomy of, but can itself

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[97] Paul N. Siegel's meditation on the significance of Shakespeare to a contemporary audience in this context is equally applicable to the works of those authors upon whom this study has focused: 'if we understand the Shakespeare living in the world of nascent capitalism, we find that in some aspects he has a greater meaning for us, living in the world of late capitalism'. Paul N. Siegel, *The Gathering Storm: Shakespeare's English and Roman History Plays – A Marxist Analysis* (Walthamstow: Redwords, 1992), xxxi.

[98] Christopher Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine the Great*, op. cit., V.ii.98-100, 108-110.

be seen to be operating as a language. Making much of the significance of Marx's description of political economy as a '"hieroglyphic"... parallel to human language', and conjoining to his analysis an ambitious reclaiming of Paul de Man as a political theorist in the Marxist tradition, Miller argues that a 'resonance or *stimmung*' exist between them:

> For both Marx and de Man the goal of 'theory', whether economic or literary theory, is to suspend the taking for granted of the sign system in question and even to displace attention away from straightforward description of the way the system operates. Each wants to make an analysis of a given system's generation, the way value and meaning are produced and established within it. The purpose of this in both cases is to make a 'critique' that will allow or promise the possibility of a new start, perhaps a revolutionary one.[99]

The 'crucial congruence' in both of their bodies of work is that 'factor or force that disrupts or "deconstructs" the economic and textual system by being something radically other to it, though nevertheless immanent within it' (p. 18). It is a factor which can also be identified in the extant Rose canon's struggle to articulate (amongst other things) such transformations in the nature of class relations as were occurring in early modern England. Dramatising the social anxieties of the age, where 'issues of rank are constantly negotiated and a ferocious competition for status played out', in spite of the fact that the 'terminology of social difference' is constantly deployed, 'the various terms of respect are given or withheld simply

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[99] J. Hillis Miller, 'Promises, promises: Speech act theory, literary theory and politico-economic theory in Marx and de Man', *NLH* 33 (2002), p. 7. See chapter 1 re. Marx and political economy as a hieroglyphic. Countering the claim that Marxism is 'hopelessly old-fashioned' in an age where many commodities have a wholly digital existence, Miller reminds us that Marx 'already saw commodities, insofar as they embody exchange value, as disembodied' (p. 19).

according to an individual's power to exact or refuse them', with the consequence that 'status... is shown to be a largely contingent thing'.[100]

Classical historical materialism's account of the key factors which determined the nature of class relations during the transition from a feudal to a nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production have had a continuing utility to this study.[101] In *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács describes there having been 'an unbridgeable gulf between [pre-capitalist society] and capitalism, where economic factors are not concealed 'behind' consciousness but are present *in* consciousness itself (albeit unconsciously or repressed)'. Upon the abolition of the feudal estates and the creation of a society with a '*purely economic* articulation', Lukács argues that 'class consciousness arrived at the point where *it could become conscious*':

> From then on, social conflict was reflected in an ideological struggle for consciousness and for the veiling or the exposure of the class character of society. But the fact that this conflict became possible points forward to the dialectical contradictions and the internal dissolution of pure class society.[102]

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[100] Michael Neill, '"This gentle language": social change and the language of status in *Arden of Faversham*, *MRDE* 10 (1998), pp. 80-81. Whilst Neill is referring to *Arden of Faversham*, his analysis is equally well suited to any of those Rose plays (for instance *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*) which stage confrontations between, for example, kings and artisans.

[101] This is fortuitous, for as Sharon O'Dair has remarked 'the structure of contemporary scholarship, combined with the hegemony of the new cultural Left, with its focus on race and gender, has left young scholars without the practical or theoretical tools necessary to address the subject of class or, in what amounts to the same task, to contest their elders'. Sharon O'Dair, *Class, Critics and Shakespeare: Bottom Lines on the Culture Wars* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2000), p. 120. This point is borne out by the fact that even the editors of a recent anthology bearing the title *Marxist Shakespeares* should see fit to argue 'that "class" relations cannot be considered to possess a priority in the colloquial sense, a greater immediacy or practical relevance to any and all human situations... to insist that the category "class" is of more universal [sic] importance than other categories such as "race" or "gender" is to fall into old-fashioned economic determinism'. Jean E. Howard and Scott Cutler Shershow (eds.), *Marxist Shakespeares* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 7, 8.

[102] George Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, op. cit., pp. 58-9.

Walter Benjamin similarly observed that 'every epoch dreams the one that follows it', and from Marx's account of classical Greek art, to Gramsci's touchstone of the popular Italian art forms of the 1920-30s, to Benjamin's own consideration of Parisian cultural life, or Jameson's studies of the formal characteristics of postmodern art, most Marxist theories of art have pursued this idea in their attempts to reveal the emancipatory significance of the act of the creation of a work of art.[103] Such analyses have provided assistance in my reinterpretation of the representation of social and economic relations on the stages of the Rose theatre. The early modern English amphitheatres acted as a 'storage place in the unconsciousness of the collective', imbuing such residual economic, political and cultural significance as may still be found to be resonating within their print incarnations with strong analytical criteria and broad theoretical insights. As Benjamin comments in *Das Passagen-Werk*:

> In the dream in which every epoch sees in images the epoch that follows, the latter appears wedded to elements of ur-history, that is, of a classless society. Its experiences, which have their storage place in the unconscious of the collective, produce, in their interpenetration with the new, the utopia that has left its trace behind in a thousand configurations of life'.[104]

On the evidence of an analysis of the extant canon of the Rose theatre which has formed its data set, this study sees the art of the early modern English amphitheatres as having 'decouple[d] the class structure and the formation of cultural capital', both

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[103] In addition to Marx and Engels' *The German Ideology*, op. cit., Gramsci's *Cultural Writings*, op. cit., and Benjamin's collected writings on the 'Arcades' project (see below), see also Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

[104] Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schiften*, 6 vols., eds. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, with the collaboration of Theodor Adorno and Gershom Scholem (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972 -), vol. V: *Das Passagen-Werk*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (1982), pp. 46-7, as translated by Susan Buck-Morss in *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), p. 114.

a paradigm of the development of class relations and a product of its transformation, invoking the contexts of the Marxist theory of the transition between modes of production as an explanatory force.[105]

[105] Sharon O'Dair, *Class, Critics and Shakespeare*, op. cit., p. 6.

5 Conclusion

5.1 'On the stage of the theatre of capital'

> If we have no business with the construction of the future or with organising it for all time there can still be no doubt about the task confronting us at present: the *ruthless criticism of the existing order*, ruthless in that it will shrink neither from its own discoveries nor from conflict with the powers that be.[1]

'Art', Pierre Macherey has argued, 'as a duplicate of real life, is characterised as a "phantom"', presumably like 'the phantoms formed in the human brain' which Marx and Engels describe in *The German Ideology*, sublimations of the 'material life-process,... empirically verifiable and bound to material premises'.[2] Macherey is not the only critic to have singled out for attention 'the haunting spirit of social determinism that penetrates all existing Marxist models of realism', a spectral horseman of the aesthetic apocalypse bringing pestilential ideology, floods of philosophy, and a dearth of familiar debate.[3] This in itself need not be defended. Historical materialism is a body of thought concerned with 'emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles', not an offshoot of aesthetics in any of its incarnations.[4] This thesis has not sought to turn historical materialism into a literary-critical tool, but merely to account for the production and reproduction of literature within the context of an analysis of changes in the cultural and social superstructure as a result of changes in the economic base. As Pierre Macherey definitively replied to an interlocutor who accused him of reducing the study of literature to an analysis of the ideological state apparatus, 'why do you want there to be something left?'.[5]

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1 Karl Marx, 'Letters from the *Franco-German Yearbooks*', *Early Writings*, op. cit., p. 207.
2 Pierre Macherey, 'Problems of reflection', *Literature, Society and the Sociology of Literature*, eds. Francis Barker et al (Colchester: U. Essex P., 1977), p. 42; Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 47.
3 George Bisztray, *Marxist Models of Literary Realism* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1978), p. 205.
4 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, op. cit., p. 65. The quotation is from Engels' 'Preface' to the 1888 edition.
5 Pierre Macherey, 'An interview with Pierre Macherey', transs., eds. Colin Mercer, Jean Radford, *Red Letters* 5 (Summer 1977), p. 5.

In *Literature and Revolution*, Trotsky explains a passing admiration for the Futurist movement, which sought to '"anticipate history" by giving birth in the present to the art of the future. Art, they said, was "not a mirror, but a hammer: it does not reflect, it shapes"'.[6] In much the same way, the only means by which an historical materialist critique of early modern English drama can demonstrate that the superstructure of which it is a part can 'react back upon and influence the economic base' (p. 9) is to abandon the traditional but untenable literary perspective which seeks to demonstrate that 'art reflects life' and instead, in the fashion of classical historical materialism, to invert (but also re-orient) the paradigm to explain how 'art re-inflects life', viewing literature not as an aesthetic artefact, but as a cultural commodity. This thesis has therefore endeavoured to foreground early modern English drama's status first and foremost as the product of social labour, as a profit-making commodity, in the belief that it is more worthwhile to address such cultural commodities as plays from the perspective of their economic rather than aesthetic significance.[7]

Whilst it is difficult to discern a clear, collective cultural consciousness in late sixteenth century England, the previous chapters begin to illustrate how theatrical re-inflections of the operations of early modern English drama within the socio-economic interstices of late sixteenth-century life may have promoted a

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[6] See Baruch Knei-Paz, *The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 467 passim.

[7] Whilst material and economic conditions may have formerly been perceived as obscuring the 'meaning' of drama, they are perhaps better understood as the motivating force behind that drama. Contemporary observers were certainly alive to the fact that the the most successful productions would thrive financially: a visitor to London at the turn of the seventeenth century, the Swiss scholar Thomas Platter wrote in 1599 of how 'daily at two in the afternoon, London has two, sometimes three plays running in different places, competing with each other, and those which play best obtain most spectators'. Thomas Platter, *Thomas Platter's Travels in England*, ed. and trans. Clare Williams (1599; London: Cape, 1937), p. 167.

contemporary understanding of the social and economic effects of the transition from the feudal to the nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production within audiences, and precipitated within them a coming-to-consciousness of nascent workshop-capitalism's foundations in social relations rather than market forces.

As resident players in a permanent, purpose-built amphitheatre run for profit, the companies who performed at the Rose participated in the creation of one of the archetypal expressions of the basic commodity-form of all art. Its study demands examination by a criticism which is grounded not in aesthetics and essentialism, but in materialism and market-processes. This thesis has undertaken such a study in the belief that art which is in the last instance a commodity must of necessity actively re-inflect the condition of the society it is simultaneously produced in, produced by, and produced for. This thesis has attempted to detail the ways in which plays performed at the Rose theatre actively questioned rather than passively accepted the effects of the shift from one mode of production to another, showing in their frequent references to and analogies with the forces and relations of production a self-conscious knowledge of the fact that 'all successive historical systems are only transitory stages in the endless development of human society from the lower to the higher'.[8]

Raymond Williams once wrote that he had his 'own reasons' for believing that 'the most practical and effective' direction for the analysis of early modern English drama lay in the study of 'the plays themselves as socially and materially produced'.[9] In its attempt to reveal the ways in which the canon of the Rose theatre

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[8] Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, in *Marx and Engels: Selected Works in One Volume* (1886; London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1968), p. 588.

[9] Williams, Raymond, 'Afterword' in Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (eds.), *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1985), p. 239.

articulated a contemporary consciousness of the social and economic changes taking place within early modern London as a consequence of the transition to the nascent workshop-capitalist mode of production, I hope that this study would at least in part have vindicated Williams' convictions.

Appendix A

The following table lists those extant plays understood to have been performed at the Rose theatre between 1587 and 1603, constituting the data set of this thesis. The first date cited corresponds to the year in which it is believed the play in question was premiered, whilst the second date (where present) signifies the last year the play is believed to have been staged at the Rose. The separation of companies by a comma signifies that the play was performed by each company individually during different seasons, whilst separation by a back slash denotes a collaborative production. Question marks in all categories denote uncertainties. Much (but not all) of the data contained in the list has been reproduced from the *Early Modern Drama Database* (http://www.columbia.edu/~tdk3/earlymodern.html, 15th July 2004), maintained by Tom Dale Keever of the University of Columbia. Keever's resource draws upon the following sources:

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Year	To	Playwright(s)	*Title*	Compan(ies)
1587	-93	Kyd	*The Spanish Tragedy*	Strange's Men Admiral's Men
1587	-90	Munday	*John a Kent and John a Cumber*	Admiral's Men? Strange's Men?

1587	-94	Marlowe	*1 & 2 Tamburlaine*	Admiral's Men
1588?		Lodge	*The Wounds of Civil War*	Admiral's Men
1588	-89	Peele	*The Battle of Alcazar*	Admiral's Men
1588	-94	Wilson	*The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*	Queen's Men Admiral's Men
1588	-92	Greene	*Orlando Furioso*	Queen's Men, Admiral's Men, Queen's Men / Strange's Men
1588?	-94	Marlowe	*Dr. Faustus*	Strange's Men?, Admiral's Men
1589?		Porter	*Two Angry Women of Abington*	Admiral's Men
1589	-91	Anonymous, Wilson?	*Fair Em, The Miller's Daughter*	Strange's Men
1589	-94	Greene	*Friar Bacon & Friar Bungay*	Strange's Men, Queen's Men / Sussex's Men
1589	-1601	Marlowe	*The Jew of Malta*	Strange's Men, Sussex's Men, Admiral's Men
1590	-94	Greene	*John of Bordeaux (2 Friar Bacon?)*	Strange's Men?
1591	-92	Shakespeare	*1 Henry VI*	Admiral's Men / Strange's Men
1592		Greene, Lodge	*Looking Glass for London and England*	Strange's Men
1592		Anonymous	*A Knack to Know a Knave*	Strange's Men / Admiral's Men
1592?	-94	Shakespeare	*Titus Andronicus*	Strange's Men / Sussex's Men / Pembroke's Men
1593	-94	Anonymous	*James IV*	Strange's Men / Admiral's Men
1594		Anonymous	*A Knack to Know an Honest Man*	Admiral's Men
1594		Anonymous (Heywood?)	*The Siege of London (Edward IV?)*	Admiral's Men
1594?		Heywood	*Four Prentices of London, The*	Admiral's Men
1596		Anonymous	*Captain Thomas Stukeley*	Admiral's Men
1596		Chapman	*The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*	Admiral's Men
1596		Jonson	*The Tale of a Tub*	Admiral's Men?

1596?	-99	Dekker	*Old Fortunatus*	Admiral's Men
1597		Chapman	*An Humorous Day's Mirth*	Admiral's Men
1598		Chettle, Munday	*Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon (1 Robin Hood)*	Admiral's Men
1598		Chettle, Munday	*Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon (2 Robin Hood)*	Admiral's Men
1598		Haughton	*Englishmen for My Money, or A Woman Will Have Her Will*	Admiral's Men
1599		Anonymous	*Look About You*	Admiral's Men
1599		Chettle, Dekker, Haughton	*Patient Grissel*	Admiral's Men
1599		Day, Dekker, Haughton	*The Spanish Moor's Tragedy (Lust's Dominion)*	Admiral's Men?
1599		Dekker	*The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft*	Admiral's Men
1599		Drayton, Hathway, Munday, Wilson	*1 Sir John Oldcastle*	Admiral's Men
1600		Chettle, Day	*1 The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*	Admiral's Men
1603		Heywood	*A Woman Killed With Kindness*	Admiral's Men

Appendix B

The following table provides a chronology of salient events regarding the construction of the Rose theatre. Significant events and changes in the resident playing companies are denoted by the use of bold type. The material contained in the table below has been collated from the following:

Julian Bowsher, *The Rose Theatre* (London: Museum of London, 1998).
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Carol Chillington Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, 2nd ed. (Manchester and New York: Manchester U.P., 1999).

The articles of Susan Cerasano listed in the bibliography have also been consulted.

1585
- Philip Henslowe takes out a twenty year lease on a 'garden plotte' containing a tenement and two gardens referred to as the 'Little Rose' estate. Measuring 'fforescore and fourteene foote', or around 29m^2. The parcel of land was situated between Rose Alley and the contemporary Southwark Bridge Road, north of Maiden Lane, and some fifty metres from the banks of the Thames. It was part of the Liberty of the Clink, and fell within the parish of St. Saviour's Church (Bowsher, p. 17).

1587
- **Building of the Rose** on the 'Little Rose' estate by John Grigge at the commission of Henslowe and his financial partner, 'cittizen and grocer' John Cholmley, for a total of £816. The Rose was the first Bankside playhouse, and the fourth to be erected in London subsequent to the construction of the Theatre (1576) and Curtain (1577) in Shoreditch and Newington Butts (1587), some two miles south of the Thames.
- 'The commercial nature of the building necessitated a vernacular construction', and the Museum of London dig in the 1990s revealed the original building to have been 'a simple but irregular polygon' of fourteen bays with an external diameter of around 22m which may have held 'about two thousand people' (Bowsher, p. 59). Erosion lines from rainwater suggest that the eaves were unguttered, and the roof therefore thatched. A wooden structure which probably featured 'three tiers of galleries surrounding an open yard into which projected a raised stage', the regularity of the Rose's design was 'broken at the southern end, where the angle of the walls was shown to be shallower than those elsewhere'. This feature would have

provided 'an almost straight side' along the Park Street frontage (Bowsher, pp. 14, 33). The yard floor sloped from south to north, affording a better view from the rear of the building.

- The stage was open to the elements and 'projected from the line of the internal wall in the north of the building', narrowing to a front which featured three edges, measuring approximately 46.4 m^2. There is no evidence of there having been cellarage dug under the stage, although the estimated 1.52m stage height does not preclude the possible use of a trap door.

1591

- The performance history of the Rose between 1587 and 1592 is indistinct. 1591 may have heralded the arrival of the Admiral's Men subsequent to their departure from Burbage's Theatre, but this is uncertain.

1592

- Henslowe begins to keep accounts in a substantial ledger book inherited from his brother John. An early entry from February 1592 details 'suche charges as I have layd owt a bowte my play howsse' to the value of £105, indicating the undertaking of **a second phase of building works** at the Rose during which substantial alterations were made to the fabric of the building.
- The Museum of London's excavation revealed an extension to the northern half of the theatre's structure which would have 'created a larger audience capacity and new staging arrangements' (Bowsher, p. 44), as well as increasing the size of the stage to around 50.5 m^2. Demolition debris recovered from the yard in front of the stage suggests that the 'roof was tiled with wooden shingles' whilst the ceiling was composed of lath and plaster. Further account entries by Henslowe for 'payntinge my stage' could be indicative of an ornate decorative finish having been applied to the stage area.
- The two posts supporting the roof over the stage appear to have been incorporated into post-1592 productions either figuratively as trees or literally as posts. Frisco warns Vandalle in *Englishmen for My Money* to 'take / heed sir hers a post' (ll. 1406-7), whilst Coomes walks into one of them in *Two Angry Women of Abington*: 'A plague on this poast, I would the Carpenter had / bin hangd that set it up for me' (ll. 2220-1).
- **Lord Strange's Men**, 'undoubtedly London's premier company in 1592' (Rutter, p. 24), begin their residency in February of this year.

1593

- A prohibition on playing due to plague sees Lord Strange's Men leave the Rose in February 1593 in order to commence an eight month tour of the provinces. The company dissolves on its return.
- **Sussex's Men**, drawing together actors formerly belonging to the newly-dissolved Lord Strange's Men and the bankrupt Pembroke's Men, begin a seven week run at the Rose on 27th December 1593. During their tenure, the company undertakes a total of thirty performances and maintains a repertory of fourteen plays.
- The season is curtailed by an outbreak of plague which precipitates

the issue of a restraint in February 1593 prohibiting playing.

1594
- Members of Sussex's Men (possibly including Shakespeare) leave the company whilst the Rose remains shut, prompting further reorganisation. A short-lived collaborative enterprise lasting a mere eight days between **Sussex's Men** and the **Queen's Men** commences when the theatres reopen on 1st April 1593. The hybrid company stages eight performances of six different plays on consecutive days.
- The collapse of Lord Strange's Men prompts Edward Alleyn to form a new company, the Admiral's Men. With the Sussex's Men and Queen's Men collaboration faltering, the **Admiral's Men** open at the Rose in May 1594 and remain at the theatre for a further five years. A restraint almost immediately afterwards prompted their having to share Newington Butts briefly with the Chamberlain's Men, but by the middle of June the Admiral's Men had received permission to return to Henslowe's theatre.
- The **longest single period of stability in the Rose's history** followed as the Admiral's Men completed 217 performances of thirty-two plays (including seventeen debuts) in the nine months between 15th June 1594 and 14th March 1595.

1595
- Henslowe records having paid £7 for the installation of a 'throne In the hevens'.
- The opening of Francis Langley's Swan theatre brings competition to Bankside.

1596
- Perhaps suffering from the novelty of the Swan, the Rose endures one of its worst seasons towards the end of 1596, with the sixteen performances staged between 27th October and 15th November each taking less than £1 at the door. New plays fare especially badly.

1597
- A further reorganisation of the company sees **Pembroke's Men** conjoin with the **Admiral's Men** at the Rose.
- Edward Alleyn retires from the stage.

1599
- The Globe opens, bringing further theatrical rivals to Southwark in the form of the Chamberlain's Men. Takings at the Rose to 3rd June 1599 continue to be poor.
- Charles Howard, patron of the Admiral's Men, had been elevated to the title of Earl of Nottingham in October 1597. Henslowe finally takes account of his change of status by beginning to refer to the company as **Nottingham's Men**.

1600
- **Henslowe commissions Peter Street to build the Fortune theatre**, situated north of the City in Golding Lane in the parish of St. Giles-without-Cripplegate.
- After a further poor season from 6th April to 13th July 1600, the availability of a new venue combined with the effect of the appearance of a new rival, rising overheads, instability within the company, and a dearth of profitable new plays prompt Nottingham's Men to depart from the Rose. The company's first week of takings at

the Fortune is four times greater than that which they collected during their last week at the Rose, possibly as a consequence of Alleyn coming out of retirement to mark the opening of the new playhouse with some popular rivals.

- Henslowe secures **Pembroke's Men** to replace Nottingham's Men at the Rose. They appear to have only staged a brace of performances on 28th and 29th October before departing again. **The theatre remains officially closed for two years**, although a Privy Council minute of 31st December 1601 may indicate that sporadic illicit, unlicensed performances took place at the Rose.

1602
- **Worcester's Men** move to the Rose from the Boar's Head in August. Famous clown Will Kempe is among their number. Thirteen of the sixteen plays they commission are completed and presumably performed prior to their departure in March 1603

1603
- Henslowe attempts to negotiate a renewal of the lease on the Little Rose estate and learns that the ground rent would triple from seven to twenty pounds per annum, prompting him to declare that he 'wold Rather pulle downe the playehouse' (Rutter, p. 213) than agree to the terms. This is the last reference to the Rose in the Henslowe's papers.

1604
- The Rose is not listed amongst the theatres which reopened subsequent to the lifting of the embargo on playing as a consequence of plague outbreaks.

1606
- The Rose is referred to as 'the Late Playhouse in Maide Lane' in a Sewer Commission record of 15th February.

1650
- Displaying an interesting lack of discrimination between the three activities, a deed concerning the development of new buildings on the Little Rose estate prohibits the use of the site for 'bare bayting Bull bayting or stage playing'. The first Bankside playhouse appears to have cast a long shadow.

Appendix C

'A chronological list of play titles mentioned in [Henslowe's] *Diary*' from Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), pp. 82-4.

Italic titles extant.

1. *Friar Bacon*
2. Muly Molloco
3. Orlando
4. Don Horatio
5. Sir John Mandeville
6. Henry of Cornwall
7. *Jew of Malta*
8. Clorys and Orgasto
9. Pope Joan
10. Machiavel
11. *Henry VI*
12. Bendo and Richardo
13. Four Plays in One
14. *Looking-Glass for London*
15. Zenobia
16. *Jeronimo (Spanish Tragedy)*
17. Constantine
18. Jerusalem
19. Brandimer
20. Titus and Vespasian
21. 2 Tamar Cham
22. Tanner of Denmark
23. *Knack to Know a Knave*
24. Jealous Comedy
25. Cosmo
26. *Guise (Massacre at Paris)*
27. God Speed the Plough
28. Huon of Bordeaux
29. *George a Green*
30. Buckingham
31. Richard the Confessor
32. William the Conqueror
33. Friar Francis
34. Abraham and Lot
35. Fair Maid of Italy
36. King Lud
37. *Titus Andronicus*
38. Ranger's Comedy
39. *King Leir*
40. Cutlack
41. Hester and Ahasuerus
42. Bellendon
43. Hamlet
44. *Taming of a Shrew*
45. Galiaso
46. Philipo and Hippolito
47. Godfrey of Boulogne
48. Merchant of Emden
49. Tasso's Melancholy
50. Mahomet
51. Venetian Comedy
52. *1 Tamburlaine*
53. Palamon and Arcite
54. Love of an English Lady
55. *Dr. Faustus*
56. Grecian Comedy
57. French Doctor
58. *Knack to Know an Honest Man*
59. 1 Caesar and Pompey
60. Diocletian
61. Warlamchester
62. Wise Man of West Chester
63. Set at Maw
64. *2 Tamburlaine*
65. Siege of London
66. Antony and Vallia
67. French Comedy
68. Long Meg of Westminster
69. Mack
70. Seleo and Olympio
71. 1 Hercules
72. 2 Hercules
73. 1 Seven Days of the Week
74. 2 Caesar and Pompey
75. Longshanks (*Edward I*?)
76. Crack Me This Nut
77. New World's Tragedy
78. Disguises
79. Wonder of a Woman
80. Barnardo and Fiammetta
81. Toy to Please Chaste Ladies
82. *Henry V*
83. Welshman
84. Chinon of England

85. Pythagoras
86. 2 Seven Days of the Week
87. *1 Fortunatus*
88. Blind Beggar of Alexandria
89. Julian the Apostate
90. 1 Tamar Cham
91. Phocas
92. Troy
93. Paradox
94. Tinker of Totness
95. Vortigern
96. *Stukeley*
97. Nebuchadnezzar
98. That Will Be Shall Be
99. Alexander and Lodowick
100. Woman Hard to Please
101. Osric
102. Guido
103. Five Plays in One
104. Time's Triumph
105. Uther Pendragon
106. *Comedy of Humours*
107. Henry I
108. Frederick and Basilea
109. Hengist
110. Martin Swart
111. Witch of Islington
112. Sturgeflattery
113. Hardicanute
114. Friar Spendleton
115. Bourbon
116. The Cobbler
117. Book of Yong Harton
118. Branholt
119. (Benjamin's Plot)
120. Alice Pierce
121. Black Joan
122. Mother Recap
123. Dido
124. Phaeton
125. *1 Robin Hood*
126. *Woman Will Have Her Will*
127. *2 Robin Hood*
128. The Miller
129. Triplicity of Cuckolds
130. Henry I and Prince of Wales
131. 1 Earl Goodwin
132. Pierce of Exton
133. King Arthur
134. 1 Black Bateman of the North
135. 2 Earl Goodwin
136. Love Prevented
137. Funeral of Richard
138. Ill of a Woman
139. 2 Black Bateman of the North
140. Madman's Morris
141. Woman's Tragedy
142. 1 Hannibal and Hermes
143. Valentine and Orsen
144. Pierce of Winchester
145. 1 Brutus
146. (A Comedy for the Court)
147. Hot Anger Soon Cold
148. Chance Medley
149. Cataline
150. Vayvode
151. 2 Hannibal and Hermes
152. 1 Civil Wars of France
153. Fount of New Fashion
154. Mulmutius Dunwallow
155. Brute Greenshield
156. Conan, Prince of Cornwall
157. (Chapman's Playbook)
158. 2 Civil Wars of France
159. 3 Civil Wars of France
160. Tis No Deceit
161. War Without Blows
162. 2 Two Merry Women of Abington
163. William Longsword
164. Intro to Civil Wars of France
165. World Runs on Wheels
166. Joan as Good as my Lady
167. Friar Fox
168. Polyphemus
169. *Two Merry Women of Abington*
170. The Spencers
171. Four Kings
172. Troilus and Cressida
173. Orestes
174. Agamemnon
175. All Fools
176. Gentle Craft (Shoemaker's Holiday)
177. Pastoral Tragedy
178. Stepmother's Tragedy
179. Bear a Brain
180. Page of Plymouth
181. Poor Man's Paradise
182. Robert II, King of Scots
183. (Play by Marston)
184. Tristram of Lyonesse
185. *1 Sir John Oldcastle*
186. 2 Sir John Oldcastle

187. *Patient Grissell*
188. Tragedy of John Cox
189. 2 Henry of Richmond
190. Tragedy of Merry
191. Orphan's Tragedy
192. Arcadian Tragedy
193. Italian Tragedy
194. Owen Tudor
195. Truth's Supplication
196. Jugurtha
197. Spanish Moor's Tragedy
198. Damon and Pythas
199. Seven Wise Masters
200. Ferrex and Porrex
201. English Fugitives
202. Cupid and Psyche
203. Wooing of Death
204. Devil and his Dame (Grim the Collier?)
205. Strange News out of Poland
206. *1 Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green*
207. Judas
208. 1 Fair Constance of Rome
209. 2 Fair Constance of Rome
210. Fortune's Tennis
211. Robin Hood's Pennyworths
212. Hannibal and Scipio
213. Scogen and Skelton
214. 2 Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green
215. Conquest of Spain
216. All is Not Gold that Glisters
217. Conquest of West Indies
218. King Sebastian
219. Six Yeomen of the West
220. 3 Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green
221. 1 Cardinal Wolsey (Rising)
222. Earl of Gloucester
223. Friar Rush and the Proud Woman
224. 2 Tom Dough
225. 2 Cardinal Wolsey (Life)
226. 1 Six Clothiers
227. 2 Six Clothiers
228. Too Good to be True
229. Spanish Fig
230. Prologue to Pontius Pilate
231. Malcom King of Scots
232. Love Parts Friendship
233. Bristol Tragedy
234. Jephthah
235. Tobias
236. Caesar's Fall
237. Richard Crookback
238. Danish Tragedy
239. Widow's Charm
240. Medicine for a Curst Wife
241. Samson
242. Philip of Spain
243. Play of William Cartwright
244. Felmelanco
245. Mortimer
246. Earl Hertford
247. Joshua
248. Randal, Earl of Chester
249. As Merry as May Be
250. Set at Tennis
251. 1 London Florentine
252. Prologue and Epilogue for Court
253. Hoffman
254. Singer's Voluntary
255. Four Sons of Aymon
256. Boss of Billingsgate
257. Siege of Dunkirk
258. (Play of Chettle)
259. 2 London Florentine
260. *Patient Man & Honest Whore*
261. Like Unto Like
262. Roderick
263. (Chettle Tragedy)
264. Albere Galles
265. Marshal Osric
266. Cutting Dick
267. Byron
268. Two (Three) Brothers
269. (Play by Middleton)
270. 1 Lady Jane
271. *2 Lady Jane*
272. Christmas Comes But Once a Year
273. 1 Black Dog of Newgate
274. Blind Eats Many a Fly
275. Unfortunate General
276. (Play by Chettle and Heywood)
277. 2 Black Dog of Newgate
278. *A Woman Killed With Kindness*
279. Italian Tragedy
280. Shore

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