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ALIEN STAGES
IMMIGRATION, REFORMATION, AND REPRESENTATIONS
OF ENGLISHNESS IN ELIZABETHAN MORAL AND COMIC DRAMA

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation discusses the complex representation of foreigners in sixteenth-century English drama. It relates literary evidence to contemporary implicit and overt allegations that vices brought to England by both immigrant aliens and returning English travelers were corrupting, infecting, or "alienating" England and the English.

My thesis argues that, during the Elizabethan period, the English experienced an increasing awareness of their own "national" identity vis-a-vis immigrant aliens and ideas of the alien "other" in literary representation. Such awareness spawned an English obsession with preserving an imaginary core of "English identity" against alien encroachments.

The "alienation" of the English is both physical and psychological. Aliens buy up property and evict innocent English tenants; they ruin English artisans by importing fashionable trifles and using inferior materials in order to undercut the domestic market price; and they pass on their evil, alien ethics and heterodoxy. The English who remain unaffected by the alien find themselves needing to "colonize" their own country as they feel increasingly identified as the strange "other" in an "alienated" society. The English response varies from calls for expulsion of the aliens to petitions for mass English repentance.

Through an investigation of general trends and specific literary and cultural events, this study finds that English community, although self-assured and proud, effectively loses this battle with the alien. By the end of the sixteenth century, despite the efforts of preachers, polemics, and prophets, who publish and perform at length in an attempt to reform the wayward island nation, the English are "alienated."

By locating a discussion of the emergence of "national identity" in the sixteenth century, this dissertation provides a foundation for, and encourages rehistoricized reading of, the (post-) colonial studies that engage with English identity in the
seventeenth century. Before it was possible for the English to think of (re)defining themselves by means of their seventeenth-century "discoveries," they were creating an idea of Englishness in response to the incoming alien; English identity thus becomes an attribute of the colonial travelers that was radically altered—rather than invented anew—in the process of exploration and exploitation.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without the help of many friends and colleagues. I will remain forever grateful to the screening committee at Rice University in 1994 for placing me at least high enough in the list of potential acceptees so that a viable offer eventually came down to me. While I was in Houston, the Graduate Committee and several individuals were instrumental in ensuring my continued ability to support my research and buy groceries.

I would be a less sophisticated, less motivated, and less successful scholar without the help of my teachers, my peers, and my students. Any evidence to the contrary which may appear between these covers is entirely down to me. Dr. Meredith Skura deserves special mention, as does Dr. Edward Snow.


For everything else, Martine.

To my mother, father, sister, nieces, and nephew.

Shake it like you mean it!

LEK, Alexandria, VA, April 1998
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PREFACE

All citations are noted in full in their first reference in the footnotes, and by short title thereafter. Full citations are provided for their first reference in each chapter to help the reader avoid flipping pages. In the footnotes titles are as they appear in the early printed book or the edited text that I have used; in the bibliography I have regularized capitalization and spelling. Line references to plays appear parenthetically in the text. Old spelling is retained in all primary quotation because it is richly indicative of the period, and we should keep reminding ourselves of the gap in language as well as time that we are dealing with. Old spelling also brings up homonyms, puns, and such features that might be missed by modernizing the spelling. The only silent modernizing has been to adjust $i$/$j$ and $u$/$v$.

Sections of this dissertation have been presented at professional meetings or published between August, 1994, when my program of study at Rice University began, and the present. Early, short versions of chapter two were read at the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Conference (1997), at the Sixteenth International Conference on Elizabethan Theatre (1997), and at the MLA Convention (1997). A shorter version of chapter two is forthcoming in Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England (1998). Sections from chapters two and three have appeared in Studies in English Literature (1995) and in Renaissance and Reformation (1996). My thanks are due to anonymous readers at SEL and PMLA for extensive, harsh, and very useful criticism.
INTRODUCTION

Alienation in the political history of sixteenth-century England

Historical theory and contexts for study

I.

The community in the “imagined community” of nationhood has been defined by Benedict Anderson, with a strange juxtaposition of adjectives, as “a deep, horizontal comradeship.”¹ The nation comprises natives, known and unknown to each other, the unknown imagined as similar to the self in terms of their conception of, and loyalty to, a realm. Despite class boundaries and the working of inequality in a realm, the “imagination” invents a single idea of nationhood. The “alien invasion”² of sixteenth-century England broke into the inferred horizontality of English comradeship in a very visible way; it seems to have imbalanced the community insofar as the alien bodies imposed physical barriers to the inference and development of a national (i.e. native) community. How could a native community retain identity against the constant push of the alien? The aliens also aggravated and exposed pre-existing cracks in the make-up of English communal identity, such as the growing sectors of native religious alterity that placed themselves on the other side of the street from the Church of England. This ideological opposition was given legal and material weight with the appearance of central and local government-sanctioned places of worship and trade, where the aliens were given liberties to worship in peace and practice their trades under the generally watchful eye of the authorities. The alien influence—both directly and through certain classes of English men and women turning against other natives in the increasingly cut-

² The phrase is from Richard Vliet Lindabury, Patriotism in Elizabethan Drama (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1931), title to chap. 7.
throat market of fashion and produce—forced the English to examine their own assumptions of native identity and to interrogate both the “alien” in themselves and the changing relations of society all around them.

In the sixteenth century, the subordination of Europe to the power of the Pope was breaking down, control being wrested from Rome by monarchical forces in separate countries. This was most noticeable and effective in England, for Henry VIII went further than just controlling a national system of churches, as in, say, early sixteenth-century Spain. John Breuilly reminds us that the bringing together of religion and politics in Europe enabled the strengthening of a monarchical, and therefore “national,” control over institutions previously the sole preserve of either Church or State. In rejecting even the nominal authority of the Church of Rome, Henry bound the country to a national, rather than ideological, center. As allegiances switched during the reigns of Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, this was the dynamic—England versus Rome, the monarch or the Pope, the native and the alien. In addition, England did not have states of independent rule as we find in early modern Italian, French and Spanish lands, and was therefore able to employ the rhetoric of single “national” identity more easily. In theory, anyway. In practice, through the century, ideology split the country. Tensions between duty to country(men), class, professional trade, and family inevitably caused disunity on anything approaching a national level. That the early modern term for someone from a domestic town other than one’s own was “foreigner” might suggest to us (with some anachronism) the difficulty for sixteenth-century English persons to conceive of community on a national scale.

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4 This is not to say that such extensions of monarchical control had not been going on for centuries. Boyd Shafer summarizes the methods of strengthening central government carried out by kings from the twelfth century, on. See his *Nationalism: Myth and Reality* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1955), pp. 69-73. However, a convergence of many forces, religio-political, cultural, technical (especially print technology), and spatial makes the sixteenth century unique in the force with which centers of power were shifted and reestablished.
The "reformation" in my subtitle, then, is intended to cover both the ideas of England’s Church and State practices in transition and the puritan attempt to encourage the individual to be her or his own reformer of ideas and practices, a reformer of self and of local community in response to the increasingly "alienated" state of the country. England is "alienated" in the senses of being invaded by aliens and corrupted or deformed by alien ways; natives are also "alienated" from each other, allegedly as a result of alien contact and infection, so that the sense of English community is increasingly fractured. The New Religion involved Protestantisms that were far from being in accord with one another, such that the movement of national (i.e. political) control over religion begun by Henry VIII was continually being undercut in the sixteenth century by various rebelling ("alien") doctrines and practices. The most worrying were those instigated and practiced by immigrants from the Continent. A reformation, then, entails a "purification" of the native against the alien. The natives are required, strangely, to colonize their own country, to (re)assert their status through the destruction of what they see as the invading "other." The drama appropriates the alien, displays it as a representative of what belongs outside the limits of a national community, and, by rejecting it, restores a particular sense of, and yearning for, native community.

Only with consistent class unity—such as Robert Wilson and other writers show us to be lacking in London and England—can a reforming movement succeed. My outline of the population in transition between ways of seeing their own subjectivity entails understanding early modern socio-political and cultural critiques, such as the drama, as incomplete modes; they are texts speaking to communities in process. Part of my argument, then, must be that the official successes of Reformation and anglicization of the church were not attended in the sixteenth century by extensive successes in the reformation of Englishness as a national idea. Just the opposite, in fact. National disunity, the influx of aliens, and the increase in English traveling abroad and travel
literature, which detailed the alien for the English, combined to insure the large-scale failure of reformation on personal, regional, and national scales, and a population increasingly aware of their own corruption, their “alienation.”

II.

The voice of the alienated native reflects the general national disunity in England. In the plays studied in this dissertation the equivocal English voices that play a major part in questioning formulations of national identity are supplemented by the input of the “other,” the alien, the non-national. The play-text, as written instrument that valorizes the powerful, native language (in this case, English), controls the extent of alien presence and the manner in which the alien words and actions are represented. As declarative, oral presentation, however, the playwright gives over his argument like a litigator at trial, in the end resting his case with an epilogue, song, or dedicatory prayer, hoping that the community he has fashioned in text has been conveyed to the audience in utterance without excessive deformation. I argue in this study, however, that such a wish is fanciful and that text is both created in multiple moments of invention by the writer, and it is (re)created as a cultural artifact full of mutable semioses in constant flux as it shifts through performance and book circulation in space and time.

Discussing the historical development of communities (including the contexts of class, language, gender, and “race”), and the individual’s ideas of his or her place in those communities gives us some access to positing possible alternative stances for dramatic characters (why they act the way they do, what their motivations are); it also makes us question the forces behind dramatic—textual and performative—relations that seem to undercut the plays. I argue that the conflicts within the relations, the tensions between readings, and the equivocality and open-endedness of the plays’ closure (especially in the more mature drama) are products of writers’—and to an unfathomable but estimable extent, audiences’ and the general public’s—ingrained and immanent
sense of themselves and those around them as members of larger or smaller communities with some core of (intangible) common identity. The plays seem to circle closely around ideas of identity in the second half of the sixteenth century, and although I talk of some cultural and literary “progression” in this dramatic dialogue between mimetic representation and stages of (political or ideological) history, the cyclicity of representation (the return of the alien trope) seems to allow us—nay, obliges us—to examine the same questions of individual place and communal identity (through religion, or ethics, and politics) in the 1550s, the 1570s, the 1590s, and points in between.

While I read the plays and interrogate them as steeped in their cultural moment, I remain aware, of course, that the job of critical art is to retain a distance within its mimetic endeavor, to remain at once a product of the society from which it arises and to assert its alienation from it, its ability to comment on its own means of production; by doing so, it infers by example the ability of the nation’s subjects to practice self-scrutiny for themselves. If playgoers recognize how drama’s cultural reflexivity works, then they may transfer the dynamic to themselves. At any particular historical moment, the “radical” nature of politically-tinted cultural artifacts, or of texts in process, is determined in large part by their refusal to understand or acknowledge their own role within the prevailing modes of the day. Such a denial implies autonomy and turns reflexive critique into an illusion of invention, of primary motion—the dramatic text as cultural creator rather than created. I address a number of moments in which dramatic texts appear to be creating historical and cultural cruces by presenting themselves at once as divorced from immediate contextual influence yet absolutely central to a critique of contemporary society. For instance, the character YllWyll in the 1550s suggests the subversion of the mode of courtly respect without having any relation to the court or acknowledging any concern with making a didactic point in the process of his words and actions; the character Hospitality in the 1580s complicates a simple message
by undercutting his own identity. He is not the “Hospitality” of biblical teaching, but a figure tailored specially for England; thus his central critique is hidden beneath the deceptively non-specific label of his name. In a tense and fuzzy field of communal identities, the stage—increasingly alienated from expectation and native norms—can provide heterodox and radical sets of relations in which the “alien” is a complex and strangely attractive “other,” as in *The Jew of Malta*, or conversely illuminates the very center of a despicable, corrupted Englishness, the “alienated” self, as in *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*.

Elizabethan dramatists and writers on the whole do not work out their national identity, because it is a formulation that depends in large part on dynamic, mutable, unstable alien forces. For the place of an imaginary, generic English citizen (without class, gender, or religious affiliation) to be assessed, it would require a set of stable “others” against which to posit that identity. But a “controlled” experiment cannot exist. When Friar Bacon shatters his “prospective glass,” he is not simply rejecting his magic, but destroying the icon that pretends to reflect with clarity the relations of persons in London and England. There is no “honest” prospective glass for the English, and neither is there a stable “other” set; distortion and lack of clarity prompt the drama’s obsessive return to the same questions of repressed or undiscovered identity, to methods of self-scrutiny, of looking “with inward eyes,” penitents on the road to reformation.

Added to this uncertainty, any concentrated consideration of a particular alien, even in the simplest scenarios, has to be evaluated by his or her “identity baggage” (those variables of gender, class, ethnicity, and religion), which complicates the relational

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6 Osea implores London in these terms to learn the lessons of the play (Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene, *A Looking Glass for London and England*, in Fraser and Rabkin, eds., *Drama of the English Renaissance I*, 4.5.70).
English-alien picture. I am in accord with new race and gender critics who insist that we cannot consider such categories as gender, "race," or class independently of each other or in isolation from any other socio-political force. I hope to show that religion as an attribute of individual character must be added to this list, not least because (as I have mentioned) religious identity in early modern England is a political positioning (and posturing). Therefore, it is inextricable from the formation of individual social identity and the development of town, city, and nation states, with their images and rubrics of identity based on language, geopolitical power, technology, international trading and military relations, and myriad other factors, many of which the plays touch on. I am concerned also with discovering the types of person against whom, and the processes and products against which, the English playwrights decided it was useful to set English men and women. The aliens studied in this work are male, female, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, and mostly white. Without privileging a desire to elevate the influence of gender, "race," class, ethnicity, or religion, I have taken my cues from the play-texts and the political and social conditions prevailing around the times of writing and possible performances of the plays.

Such historicizing is not meant to imply simple relations between author's person, authorial intent, the formal working of a text, performative options, and political affairs. A writer and his or her work are rarely one and the same. Friar Bacon's "glass" and brazen head, for instance (his tools of creation, like a writer's pen), are not producing the texts, images, and utterances that Bacon thought they were; or rather, the textual productions of the glass and head are not understood until "too late" (although in this case it is a good thing, for the text was evil). So he destroys his misreadable magic. In this study I posit historical culture as interlinear, or intratextual. Historical culture does not exist around a text so much as within it at every point, between the lines. Within this materialist methodology I have formalistic concerns: this involves a central belief in the holistic nature of the literary artifact and the work that goes into its
production, with an attendant understanding that the text—in the moments of production and in its history of reproductions and circulation—is always changing in cultural importance, even as its formal structure remains stable. We should take account of the formal control the author has over a text (by reading carefully and considering structural relations within and between texts), but also the opposing freedom a text has to escape intention and determination. We will need to accept that these opposing characteristics of text and the attendant implications of authorship and intention may occur simultaneously, successively, or concurrently in alternate loci or spheres (in the processes of writing, playing, printing, and circulation). Such an acceptance of the vagaries of the dramatic text should lead to a more open, relevant, and thoroughly inquired inclusion of cultural issues. Around my general thesis of the triumph of alienation in the second half of the sixteenth century, this type of reading will scatter local possibilities for alternative readings and contraries.

My title, "Alien Stages," is meant to portray the idea of the English stage trying to work out a re-emerged problem of social relations between aliens and the English; it is also meant to suggest that there are highly localized movements, or stages (in terms of space and time), during the latter half of the sixteenth century in which specific ideas of the alien are being discussed, be it concerned with national origin, national character trait, religious practice, economic viability, sexuality, or other factors. The "alien" and the "stranger" in the sixteenth century were those persons from abroad. I shall also use these terms synonymously when discussing what we would today call foreigners. At the same time, the "alien" as a conception of otherness (L. *alius*), directly related to non-Englishness is discussed in this study and resides in English and non-nationally-determined characters as much as, and eventually more than, in alien characters. The term "foreign" will be used in its modern sense throughout, so that all three terms refer
to persons from abroad; I will make it clear when I am using “foreigner” in the
Elizabethan sense of a person from a domestic town other than one’s own.7

The movement from one “stage” to the next—platforms, or moments in time—is
primarily a horizontal one. I find that ethical and cultural “progression” with regard to
aliens is minimal; there is not much of a “renaissance” for aliens on the English stage.
This is not entirely in accord with the equivocal, but real, accommodation of aliens in
productive and relatively peaceful communities, both in London and, especially from
the 1560s, provincial towns, but then my concern is first and foremost with dramatic
interpretation and representation, and secondarily to question the relation of literature to
the histories we might recover from the period. I discuss the works chronologically in
part to emphasize the continual revival of ideas of the alien “other,” to illustrate the
concurrence and repetition of political and social arguments, representations, and modes
of drama. This opposes a notion of the displacement of old ideas for new and neat
progression suggested by a traditional historical view of dramatic development and
improvement. Such a grand narrative of dramatic history would have the mature
Renaissance drama growing out of the sixteenth-century moralities, which in turn drew
on earlier moralities, which in turn included ideas from miracle and folk plays, which
were in turn compact entertainments drawn from sections of provincial town cycle
plays. The work of John Wasson, Lawrence Clopper, Peter Happé, and others, has
demonstrated how flawed such a “progressive” model of drama in England is.8

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7 This usage is not hard-and-fast in the period, however. Many writers talk of “foreign” customs meaning
those of other countries. The label as applied to persons tends to stay within the categorization. At the
same time, of course, “countries” in Elizabethan England could also mean “counties” of England.
8 See, for example, Lawrence Clopper, “The History and Development of the Chester Cycle,” Modern
English 7 (1974): 63-94, in which he analyzes the plays as sixteenth-century artifacts (i.e. Tudor, not
Clifford Davidson (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Press. 1986) both re-read the progression
of early drama to the mature Elizabethan stage, arguing for the importance of the Saints’ plays in the
My argument of "stages," with its binding of simultaneity and accretion of ways of representing and investigating the alien, permits a methodology that remains highly aware of the relative advantages and drawbacks of the late-medieval/Tudor/Renaissance modes of dramatic form and rhetoric, but needs make no judgment on the evolution of drama per se.9 My analysis examines the way in which any dramatic type at any historical stage discussed contemporary issues surrounding the alien in England. The similarities that run through the texts are not pointed out to show how one mode of drama influenced its successor, but to emphasize that the ever-present issue of the alien in the morality plays in the mid-sixteenth-century decades remained commercially viable, in part because of the radically changing dramatic format of the 1580s, and in another part because of the drastically changing role of the alien in England, ever closer and ever more infused with the identity of Englishness. Dramatic structure (and more precisely its alteration) is studied in this dissertation more as a necessary means of survival of a genre, and a way to expand its auspices, than as a reflection on the intellectual, philosophical, or neo-Humanistic ideals and evolution of a native rhetorical art.

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9 Having said this, I find and enjoy in all the plays under study, levels of literary achievement ranging from the pleasing to the remarkable. One aim of this project is to resuscitate marginal, well-written work that has become more alien to the modern reader in the wake of New Historicism, Cultural Materialist, and Post-Colonialist studies in the Renaissance, which continue to read canonical texts juxtaposed with non-literary documents instead of re-introducing us to rewarding drama of the past.
Foreign relations and immigration

I. Aliens on the throne

There was a constant fear in the sixteenth century of alien presence and influence at all levels of society: the rural workers producing the wool for export, the provincial urban craftspersons trying to protect their trade and families, the London apprentices for whom contact with foreigners was an everyday and overwhelming experience, the noblemen whose duty it was to provide hospitality to their neighbors in the countryside yet who were drawn to the city for the lifestyle and fashionable, foreign products that arrived there, the merchants who relied on the Antwerp (and for a few years Hamburg) mart remaining open for trade, the courtiers whose jobs and lives depended on international relations. At the pinnacle of the pyramid of English society was the monarch, from whom the ramifications of alien-English relations decisions reverberated down to all these ranks of person to a greater or lesser extent. While the legitimacy and stability of Henry VIII’s succession remained in doubt—or at least while members of Parliament and influential peers did not fully believe in the Tudor rights to the throne—rule of England was poised to pass to James V of Scotland, Henry’s nephew. When Edward VI and his advisors drew up laws of succession, the document apparently designed to keep the line male was underlain by another, Anglo-centric motive: Mary and Elizabeth were excluded from the lineage for fear “that they might marry foreign princes and subject the realm to alien rule.” David Loades writes that such a determination “had political weight but no legal validity.” Mary, of course, did just as Edward had feared by marrying Philip II and provoked blunt disapproval from countrymen in England and abroad; Elizabeth’s spinsterhood was no more comforting,

for it turned the fear from the monarch marrying a foreigner to her leaving an empty throne for one.

The Marian phenomenon was not an easy one for the English to come to terms with. For Catholics, her accession was the providential return of England to the right Church. The truth of this point of view was symbolized by way of putting down a resisting force led by the Duke of Northumberland, a coordinator of the succession planned out by Edward VI to by-pass Mary. For Protestants, Mary was either a sign that they had been mistaken in their reformist convictions or, more widely, that she was the mistake, a result of the devilish influence of Catholic sympathizers in England. The accession impacted the alien population in England, being mostly Protestant French and Dutch, and they began returning to the Netherlands and Flanders. A few tried to remain in London and the surrounding countryside, but by December Mass was officially restored and the emigration continued. On 17 February 1554 a proclamation was issued expelling non-denizen aliens (denizens being those with resident status and many rights of citizenship). Many more strangers left, but Andrew Pettegree argues for a significant remaining alien population, perhaps 40 per cent of those currently in England, throughout the Marian years, not least because the expensive process of denization that they had opted to earn was not a privilege to be given up lightly.11

Social class, occupation, and geographical location all contribute to alter the views toward Mary among the native population. We should constantly remind ourselves of the relatively localized nature of community in the sixteenth century and of the differing concerns, awareness, and ambitions of different groups of persons. For instance, while counselors to the court may have concerned themselves with keeping their jobs and liberty in the present moment and therefore followed the machinations of politics in the capital and also speculated on the future of their roles, corporations in the

towns either played along too, as in Royalist East Anglia, or resisted the changing face of religious politics. While the educated Londoners and those in provincial governmental roles would have appreciated the political expediency of religious affiliation at court, merchants would have concerned themselves more with political agreement between nations. While religion and politics were not handled by discrete governmental thinking, practical lines of communication and trade could withstand religious discord and remain open and active far more easily than they could be maintained during times of political and military conflict. And while artisans and apprentices in the capital could see the great bundles of woolens leaving the country and the widely-despised foreign luxury goods flooding in, the workers in the towns where aliens settled found local trading, living conditions, and rising prices in their towns to be more prevalent problems.

Unrest surfaced as a result of the alien presence in England and in response to the political “alienation” of England through court connections and lack of governmental regulation against adverse alien influences and practices. Toward the end of his book, The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, R. B. Wernham writes that, although the Anglo-Spanish war of the late-sixteenth century did not cause the revolution of the mid-seventeenth century, “the Elizabethan war with Spain and the long-drawn-out burdens it imposed did play a considerable part in changing sixteenth-century Englishmen from a king-worshipping nation into a king-criticizing nation.” But dissenting voices were being heard well before the years of Spanish crisis. We must not be over-swayed by the ideas that oppression under Mary or the cult of Elizabeth secured unequivocal subjectivity to monarchy in England before the seventeenth century. Every Tudor ruler had major objectors and through Mary’s and Elizabeth’s reigns rebellions kept reminding the court that you can’t rule all the people all the time.

Wernham's assertion is also troubling because it does not acknowledge the obvious problem for many contemporary commentators concerning the gender of England's rulers for the whole of the latter half of the sixteenth century. Could a woman rule and be called "Prince" (as Elizabeth had self-titled her role), or replace a "king"? Moreover, to what extent could a woman be said to govern her own nation if she was married to a foreign monarch, a man to whom she was subject as a wife? Indeed, to what extent did the nation depend on native rule for retention of a sense of itself as a single nation? These were major concerns during the mid 1550s that expressed themselves in monarch-criticizing tracts and action.\(^{13}\)

The polemical, political literature of these years also sets the stage for understanding a tightly-bound connection between provocative writing and performance. Sermons were declarations of allegiance to godly persuasions almost inevitably bound up with the state of political affairs in the realm, and were published to

\(^{13}\) John Knox published *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* in Geneva in 1558, in which he wrote, "To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion or empire above any realm, nation, or city is repugnant to nature, contumely to God, a thing most contrarious to his revealed will and approved ordinance, and finally it is the subversion of good order, and all equity and justice." The following year, John Aylmer prodded at the alien status of Knox, being a Scotsman, and contemptuously called *The first blast of the trumpet* "a little book strangely written by a stranger" (*An harbors for faithful and true subjects*). John Leslie would pick up on Knox's insistence that the biblical use of the masculine gender in determining relations of rulers over nations meant that men only should rule. Leslie, also a Scot, writing in 1569, says directly to Knox, "Ye say the Jews were commanded to take no king but ex fratribus, a brother, ergo, we can have no sister to our queen . . . as in the civil law the masculine gender comprehendeth the feminine, so doth it in your word brother . . . . Now when the holy scripture saith, *thou shalt not hate thy brother; thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother* . . . shall we infer thereupon that we may hate our sister, that we may oppress our sister with usury . . . ?" The debate is extracted and collected in K. Aughterson, ed., *Renaissance Woman, A Sourcebook: Constructions of Femininity in England* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 138-44.

\(^{14}\) For examples, Christopher Goodman wrote *How superior powers ought to be obeyed* (Geneva, 1558), in which he promoted disobedience to ideologically incorrect rulers, in his view Papists and women; John Ponet, bishop of Winchester, *A Short Treatise of Politick Power* (London, 1556) is more concerned with rational thinking on the part of subjects to differentiate between the fair ruler and tyrants, who "use their subjectes as men doo their beasts, and as lorde do their villanes and bondemen, getting their goodes from them by hoke and by crooke" (B3).
promote activity within the converted audience. Phenomena such as hospitality, real estate management, and the manufacture of staple goods, luxuries, and armaments were all pieces in the extremely puzzling picture that kept forming and reforming as relations between England and Continental neighbors were solidified, melted, and recast; and they were all phenomena ostensibly controlled from court but increasingly handled locally, by special interest groups, by favorites with monopolies on production and trade, and by alien merchants or immigrants.

When Mary married Philip of Spain in 1554 it spelled doom for the Protestant sector in England. Although—by prenuptial agreement and personal choice—Philip's personal influence in England was slight, Mary's own declarations that she was ruled by her husband did nothing to put the English at ease from the possibility of direct foreign rule, either immediately or upon the death of the Queen. When, after the first of Mary's two false pregnancies, the King left England in August 1555, not to return until the political situation required it in the spring and summer of 1557, there was little doubt that the match was a purely political one on Philip's part. With the failure of the second "pregnancy" in 1557-8, the stage was once more set for conflict as the aging Mary's throne would be left open either for Elizabeth or Philip; and out of the woodwork of exiled corners and Protestant printing presses came the tracts prophesying imminent terror. An example of less violent criticism of Marian government is Laurence Saunders's *A trewe mirrour or glasse wherin we maye beholde the wofull state of thys our Realme of Englande*. It takes the form of a dialogue between two friends, the Catholic Eusebius and Protestant Theophilus. They lament the fact that intelligent friends such as they are should be split by ideology; they go on to discuss the state of England. Eusebius is curious to hear his friend's reaction to the marriage of Mary to Philip: "I heare say ye King of Spayne shal at last be crownd kyng of England, what say you to that[?]" Theophilus replies, "Alas brother Eusebius what should I say to it: if god have determyned, who maye wythstande: we muste commyt it to his good pleasure and
wyll." "But do you not thynke it a plage?" asks Eusebius, using the ubiquitous disease metaphor of alien influence in England, and prompting the stronger reply that he seems surprised not to have drawn the first time around. "Yes verely," Theophilus agrees, "and an utter desolacion of Englishe bloud."\textsuperscript{15}

But Theophilus's concerns go deeper than lambasting alien influence, and he laments the fickleness of the Privy Councilors and court advisors, changing their allegiance to safeguard their careers rather than remaining true to any personal or national conviction: "They have not only consented and agreed" to the Queen's marriage with Philip, "but are also chefe doers and procurers thereof." Eusebius agrees:

> Now surely Theophilus you have spoken as true as the gospell, for if he be once stablished king, he may without contradiccion furnishe al the fortes of England with his owne men, for I would not thinke him wise to trust straungers so muche as his own countre men: when he hath therefore brought yt to passe he may at all times bring an army either out of flaunders or spain, the shyppes being also at hys commaundement, and thorow Engelande may he goe at hys wyll and pleasure.\textsuperscript{16}

All classes will suffer, Eusebius goes on to remind us, including those sycophantic governmental officials and nobles who are for the most part of the "newe learnyng," and therefore most likely to de dispatched by the ruthless Catholic conqueror.\textsuperscript{17}

A more radical view of the situation is laid out in the anonymous \textit{Lamentacion of England}. Written on 30 December 1556, and with editions in 1557 and 1558, it concentrates more on prophecy of future dangers, although it also includes valid

\textsuperscript{15} Laurence Saunders, \textit{A trewe mirrour or glasse wherin we maye beholde the wofull state of thys our Realme of Englande} (London, 1556), A8v.
\textsuperscript{16} Saunders, \textit{A trewe mirrour}, B2.
\textsuperscript{17} Saunders, \textit{A trewe mirrour}, B2v.
observations about the handling of power and the assertion of status by both Philip and Mary. The author begins by quoting Hugh Latimer’s speech at Westminster Palace before Prince Edward VI in 1549:

Well the kings grace hath sisters, my lady Mary and my lady Elizabeth, which by succession and course ar[e] inheritors to the crown, who yff they should mary with strangers, what shulde in sewe god knowith, but god graunt they never come to coursing nor succeeding, therfore to avoid this plage, lett us amend our lives, and put away all pride.\textsuperscript{18}

The author continues the metaphor with the apostrophic question, “Oh what a plage is it to see strangers rule in this noble realme violently, wher befor time tr[e]we hartid Englishmen have governid quietly?” Then, invoking the memory of Catherine of Aragon, and implying a continuous alien presence in the royal house, he asserts that Mary:


toke the most part off here blude and stomake off her spanish mother, and therefore from time to time ever regardid her spanish kinred, and permotid them, by geving them licensis, wherby they do cary and convoy away, out of this realm, frely without paieng any custome therfore, our goudly & best comodites, as woll Tinn leade lether & c. to the great decay and ympoverishment, off the pour comons off this realm, by reaison wheroff the said comodites, be now at doble pryces, that they were before, & also pour men cannot be set a worke as they have bene.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} Anon., \textit{Lamentacion of England} (Germany(?), 1557 & 1558), A3.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Lamentacion of England}, A3v. In 1557 Philip had his thirtieth birthday, whereas Mary turned forty-one.
While this mismanagement is going on at home, the author complains about the assertion of royal image and name by the absent half of the monarchy: an iconic invasion has already taken place, for Philip has his image on the English coin but has not put Mary on the Spanish coinage, and his tyrannical motto reads, "Philip R. anglie, francie, neapolis princep. hispaine." This is the kind of "alienation" of English preserves that constitutes the important context for discussing alien characters and influence represented in the drama, from the moralities to the 1590s. It is the King of Spain's plan, the author correctly predicts, to draw England into war with France again, which will impoverish the English.\textsuperscript{20} The blatant economic motives of Philip make it "manyfest and playnly apperyth as clere as the sone, that in mariage he sought not the queenes persone but only the rich and welthy realm of England."\textsuperscript{21} "[A]s touching the kings persone," the author writes:

\begin{quote}
I know non to find any faute with it, exceap the quene her selff do, for sake off his company so long, the which as it is reportid he litle regardith, for as his spanierds have blasid abrode in other contres saieng what shall the king do with such an old bich, also affirming that she may be his mother, a yonger is more meter for him.\textsuperscript{22}
\end{quote}

He then returns to the irony of the impoverished English being financially drained in their time of dearth in order to provide Philip with the resources necessary to conquer them.\textsuperscript{23} In fact, the option of ruling in England was not an attractive one for Philip. For one thing, the society was unattractive: in 1557, the Venetian Ambassador, alluding to Philip II, reported that "he cannot live with dignity in this country, on account of the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[20] Lamentacion of England, A6-A6v.
\item[21] Lamentacion of England, A8.
\item[22] Lamentacion of England, A7.
\item[23] Lamentacion of England, A7v-A8.
\end{footnotes}
insolence with which foreigners are treated by the English”;
for another, the Anglo-Spanish relations and relative war-readiness in the 1550s were quite different from the 1580s, when more imminent, frightening, and perhaps better-founded rumors about the dangers of the pitiless Spaniard invaders were circulating. Despite the popular fear of the Spaniards in England, Philip seemed to prefer rule by proxy, and in name and image rather than in person. He did not want to live his days in a country where everyone despised him, however strong his military power, and in fact, he did not want to chance testing his countrymen with a war that, judging by popular sentiment over the preceding few years, would be protracted and costly.

II. Aliens in the mind

Kett’s rebellion in Norfolk in 1549 and Wyatt’s rebellion in Kent five years later had warned the respective monarch that social order was a key to effective rule. If the stability of the country relied on a class hierarchy that determined behavior and allegiance, then earls and peasants should not be in league against monarchs and their governments. Such transgressions of the vertical social boundaries made uprisings (effected through disguise, imitation, role-playing, and speech-making—remarkably dramatic means) both more likely to occur and less easy to detect. Social rebellion, leading to political dissidence, was particularly watched for at a time when pincer movements against the nation were the chief cause for concern. Such a pincer could come from the combined efforts of France from the south and Scotland from the north, especially after the 1548 Scots-French agreement under which Scotland was put under the protectorship of France; another effective pincer would be for troops from Spain to meet Alva’s (later Parma’s) men, who were occupying the Netherlands, across the

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northern region of France, thus forming a Spanish band along the channel coast and choking English trading ability with the Lowlands and Germany; the third pincer was a more general one, in which a foreign enemy would invade England from without while rebels would rise up from within the country, taking the realm by surprise. This was the strategic idea that the later Elizabethan rebels drew on to drum up popular support. Who would be the domestic rebels to rise up? Well, those settled aliens who had come over from war zones were particularly good suspects to begin with; and joined with them were all those persons who went around looking like (though not necessarily truly) beggars or wounded soldiers. The continuing fear of groups of such unsavory characters and of Englishmen being drawn into rebellion by the influence of the strangers is used by the Marian and Elizabethan playwrights, as we shall see, sometimes didactically, sometimes subversively.

We see Elizabeth, and later James, ordering noblemen to keep hospitality for the “honor” of the nation (a repeated term), and to keep the agricultural population passive, but “specially” for the defense of the realm against aliens:

The Queen’s Majesty is credibly informed that sundry persons of good wealth and calling having their habitation within sundry shires bordering upon the seacoast have of late time departed from their said houses and part of them withdrawn themselves from their houses on the seacoasts, and some other part out of the maritime counties into inland countries, and many of them into the city of London or to places near about; whereby not only the accustomed hospitality in those places but specially the ability and strength for defense of those countries [i.e. seacoast and maritime counties] are notably decayed; whereof her majesty, in respect of her royal estate and dignity, to whom the
special charge hereof belongeth, cannot but give order and provide speedy remedy for the same.\textsuperscript{25}

Paul Hughes and James Larkin note a similar concern in an order to the Marquis of Winchester to remain in charge of Southampton and Dorset to maintain coast beacons against possible invasion.\textsuperscript{26} Local governments of strategic towns recognized dangers similar to those expressed in the \textit{APC} and in the Elizabethan proclamation for maintaining hospitality. In Norwich returns of aliens were sent to London with the note that most of the aliens were honest and good men, but:

they urged the council to relocate those aliens who 'though they are men of honest conversation, are not needful to the city, as tailors, shoemakers, bakers and joiners,' implying that unless the aliens were economically beneficial, there was no room for them at Norwich. . . . 'haven townes be no convenient place for straungers.' . . . They apparently feared that the aliens secretly conveyed away commodities they manufactured, supposedly to be sold elsewhere for their private gain and to no advantage of the town.\textsuperscript{27}

Although portrayed by some as a xenophobic rejection of refugee foreigners, this is remarkably like modern immigration policy, which also depends heavily on the economic benefit of immigrants. Also, as we have just seen with the example of port towns, aliens were feared not just because of the economic loss they might cause, but


because of the danger of organized invasion, military liaison, and disloyal persons. As coastal sites provided access to an escape or smuggling route, so market towns delivered regular communication lines for incoming information and illicit supplies.\textsuperscript{28}

A strange incident at Norwich during the first year of Elizabeth’s reign illustrates the currency of these issues of invasion, disguise, rebellion, and class transgression. Aliens were entering the south-eastern coastal towns in the 1550s, and in 1565 the official invitation for settlement in Norwich was served, the immigrant community eventually comprising a third of the town’s population. The ideals behind hosting the foreigners were largely realized in improved technologies and new international market access. But central government’s view of long-term achievement and the day-to-day experience of the people are not always in accord. The refugees had the suspicions of distasteful manners, heterodoxy, and even espionage laid upon them. The Queen and Privy Council were aware of the disjuncture between the opinions of different domestic classes and between themselves and the artisanal and apprentice masses. They issued several proclamations and Acts against seditious murmuring and rumor contrary to the Queen’s orders or against the stability of the realm. Certainly there were disagreements between central government and local corporations representing their town’s view (or sometimes the view of just a few powerful individuals). It may have been upon the assumption of such a rift that one Nicholas Coleman gave the following deposition to the Norwich Justices on February 3, 1559:

\begin{quote}
Fyrrst the sayde Nicholas sayth that ther shall go certeyne Sedicyus persons in diverse places within this Realme in the monethes of Maye June and July next
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{28} The survival of a number of letters from 1570 indicates that communication between England and Flanders was both fairly straightforward and rapid (see Pettigree, \textit{Foreign Protestant Communities}, pp. 221-22), which suggests that such fears were well-founded.
comyng and Sett dyverse Markett townes and villages on fyre within this Realme.

And he sayth the parsons that shall do thes actes shalbe Strangers Viz Skotts ffrenchemen Spanyards and of other foren Nacons which parsons shall come clothed havyng beggars clokes for thir uttermost garment and under that havyng Sylk dubletts.29

Coleman cited Norwich as one of the first to be burned. The deposition played on latent (and expressed) English xenophobia and on the fear of the multitude of subversive sturdy beggars, those dressed as paupers but not the needy poor. Such a phenomenon is taken to an extreme here as well-informed foreigners, it is suggested, will exploit both the English fear of future conflict between natives and foreigners and a seriously difficult-to-manage social problem to destroy the very fabric of mercantile England. As it turned out, the judges either investigated the matter further or were tipped-off about Coleman’s character, because he was haled back before them four months later, at which time they discovered that the source of the scare was not substantial. They asked him “what ded move him to utter suche words as he hade spoken before or by what arte or knowlege he hade yt.” Coleman claimed “that he had this knowlege by certen vysyons and dreames that he had in his sleape.”

The fear of aliens remained a useful tool in the hands of scare-mongers and rebels. Laura Hunt Yungblut usefully reminds us in Strangers Settled Here Amongst Us that a secondary impetus for the Catholic Northern Rebellion was the perception that the aliens were supporting Protestant supremacy in England: “The conspirators of the Midsummer Rising in Norfolk in 1570 also tried to exploit anti-alien sentiment as a

29 Great Britain: Norwich City. Interrogatories and Depositions 1534-67, Norfolk Record Office, Case 12 a, 1 b.
means of raising popular support”; and of Wyatt’s rebels under Mary she writes, “The popular support that they had hoped to garner by rousing xenophobia against the Spanish—Wyatt told the men of Devon that the Spaniards were going to ravish their women—never materialized, not because of any lack of xenophobia, but rather because most anti-alien sentiment in the countryside remained largely directed against the French, the traditional enemies of the English.”\(^{30}\) Apparent disparity between political outlook in London, in the larger towns (especially ports and markets like Bristol and Norwich), and in the countryside, and also between noblemen and manual workers, made concerted and large-scale rebellion or ideological movement difficult. However, this “use” of the aliens as a prop on which to support rebellious action and treason continued in Elizabeth’s reign, and was taken extremely seriously. By 1571 and the discovery of the Ridolfi plot, the City of London authorities began to waver in their fairly consistent protection of the economically-useful foreigners, and kept ever-closer tabs on the numbers and locations of aliens both in London and provincial towns.

Yungblut notes that “The most elaborate and detailed of these surveys were conducted in May, November, and December of 1571, the year of the disclosure of the Ridolfi plot, a proposed operation against Elizabeth which had as its primary component a foreign invasion of England coordinated with an internal rebellion.”\(^{31}\)

Texts addressing the issue of English prejudice against the aliens, acts against their own government, and antagonism toward each other, seem either drawn from, or to have promoted, foreign ideas about the rebellious nature of the English, ideas that would work symbiotically as alien-English contact increased. Travelers in England generally remarked on an unusual feature of English towns—that they were not walled. An initial reaction might be to conclude the relatively pacific history of the island of Britain. One visitor saw it otherwise, however, and explained, “for what was fortified and strong has

\(^{30}\) Yungblut, *Strangers settled here amongst us*, pp. 39, 76.

\(^{31}\) Yungblut, *Strangers settled here amongst us*, p. 23.
long ago been entirely razed and destroyed, in order that the subjects, who are naturally inclined to sedition, should in no case find an opportunity to rebel and rise up against the government.” Two other foreign observers add alleged English characteristics to this, which together suggest a frighteningly uncontrollable population:

The people are bold, courageous, ardent, and cruel in war, fiery in attack (vyerich int aengrijpen), and having little fear of death; they are not vindictive, but very inconstant, rash, vainglorious, light, and deceiving, and very suspicious, especially of foreigners, whom they despise.13

And because they have somewhat thick spyrits, slenderly perfused with heate, they will stomache a matter vehemently, and a long time lodge an inward grudge in their hearts, wherby it happeneth that when theyr rage is up, they will not easily be pacified.14

These national traits, noticed by aliens, were perceived as being manifested in the form of xenophobic rhetoric and violence throughout our period. Yungblut writes that “The landscape of British history is dotted with outbursts of this antagonism, from the attack on Flemings in the 1381 Peasants’ Revolt and the 1517 Evil May Day riots to the internment of alien Jews in the 1940s, and the Notting Hill riots of the recent past.”15

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15 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, p. 37.
This list confuses anti-alien disturbances with wartime containment and race riots, and if we were to continue such a list, we could add the "outbursts" of the 1590s, anti-Semitism in the nineteenth-century, and any number of other recognizably anti-alien movements in England, and yet end up with a record that does not seem excessively bad compared with, say, even the limited historical span of post-1800 America. To maintain proper focus, however, we might observe that the "dott[ing]" of "antagonism" would seem somewhat less significant than the national stains of intolerance on the Continent of early modern Europe. Indeed, it is widely accepted that the social and political state of England was somewhat less serious than Continental Europe and, after all, refugees tend to run to a land not at war, and one likely to take in immigrants; that land was England. This is not to deny extensive, recurrent anti-alien propaganda and occasional action in Elizabethan England, but violent behavior against aliens was not as widespread or long-lasting as were continuing complaints to the authorities about other socio-political issues, such as fair trade practices and relief of dearth.

**III. Aliens all around**

If the problem with Mary was her marriage to a foreigner, the problem with Elizabeth was her failure to marry with an Englishman. After the Robert Dudley affair, in which she resisted making a match with her favorite in order to avoid a major scandal, Elizabeth never really looked likely to leave the single life. In a way this kept England theoretically neutral in the Continental wars. England would have been the perfect prize for either Spain or France, since a league with Spain would have encircled France with Spanish provinces, and a permanent link with France would have truly placed a north-south line between Spain and the occupied Netherlands. The strategic status of England probably contributed to an initial coolness in the official stance toward the aliens returning after a Marian hiatus, and during 1558-9 the strangers did not feel
particularly welcome. Elizabeth remained wary of versions of the new religion, and petitioners for the return of the strangers’ churches to their old privileges were flatly refused at first. However, alien craftsmen and skills were required and the provision of patents and monopolies multiplied at this time.36 At Sandwich the town council requested foreigners to start up new cloth manufacture; this was granted by the Privy Council, but the strangers were to come from London rather than the Continent. Twenty-five families moved there in 1559. This condition of inland movement of aliens was part of an ongoing program of alien dispersion, which will be discussed further below.

Despite official restrictions on immigration and alien movement, the queen would not accept any disturbances against the strangers, for a significant number of them remained denizens with many of the rights of citizens, including a right to live peacefully in the adopted land. Moreover, they remained useful to English manufacturing and should not be forced out of economic circulation by xenophobic or political unrest. Following the Lord Mayor of London’s report of a fray between Frenchmen and Englishmen, a Proclamation was issued for 13 August, 1559, stating:

The Queen’s Majesty commandeth all manner her subjects, of what degree soever they be, to keep the peace as they be bound, and specially towards all manner of persons of strange nations within her Majesty’s city of London or elsewhere, without reproaches of words or like quarrels, and to remit the avenge of all quarrels past of late in the same city to the ordinary justicers. And the like

36 Granting monopolies to alien artisans would set up new manufacturing in England, thus decreasing imports of luxury goods. “In the early years of Elizabeth’s reign such projects almost invariably involved foreign projectors,” writes Andrew Pettegree. William Cecil had a hand in promoting a number of such ventures involving monopolies by aliens in England, including soap manufacture and saltpetre provision (a raw material for dying) (Pettegree, Foreign Protestant Communities, pp. 140-41).
also her Majesty commandeth to all strangers born, to be observed on their part.

(H&L, i, 134)

There is to be no more conflict and malefactors will be severely dealt with, English or alien, with "her highness' determination, that no partial favor be showed to English or stranger, but that every of them shall live in the safety and protection of her laws."

Early in her reign, Elizabeth had to worry not just about the practice of extreme new Protestant religions, but also about extreme reactions against the physical remains attributed to Mary and Catholicism. A proclamation for 19 September 1560 had to be issued against the destruction "by the means of sundry people, partly ignorant, partly malicious, or covetous, . . . of certain ancient monuments . . . which were erected up as well in churches as in other public places within this realm only to show a memory to the posterity of the persons there buried, or that had been benefactors to the buildings . . . and not to nourish any kind of superstition" (H&L, i, 146). This kind of even-handed but stern control of the country's religio-political situation at home was mirrored in Elizabeth's foreign policy. Although she dabbled with events in Spain, France, and the Netherlands, it took a lot of pressure for Elizabeth to involve her people in war abroad. When she did finally send troops to the Netherlands in 1585—although it was only a force of some 7,000 men under the Earl of Leicester, and could have been seen merely as another step in her "prodding" of the Spanish occupiers to discourage any advances toward the coast—it crossed a new line of engagement. It was certainly read by Philip as a sign of war, one which led, fairly directly, to the launching of the great Armada of 1588.

Elizabeth had been burned by the fire of war abroad in 1562-4 and was always tentative in braving the flames again. On that occasion she had sent armed support for the Huguenots in the first of the French "Wars of Religion." The English were not welcomed by the French who, although at war for Protestantism, were also fiercely
patriotic and were Frenchmen fighting for France. Elizabeth understood from then on the danger of relying on foreign Protestant rebels for cooperation. Side-effects of involvement included government-sanctioned English privateering in the channel, which targeted Spanish ships as well as the enemy French. Indirectly, this prompted reaction from the Spanish controllers of the Antwerp mart, provoking trade squabbles which were not resolved until 1566. Full Anglo-Spanish conflict did not develop, however, because Philip’s military plate was filling up from other sources. The King of Spain was coping with both domestic rebellion and trouble in the Mediterranean from the Turks, who besieged Malta in 1565. So when, in 1568, Alva requested more money from Philip, the King was hard-pressed to oblige. And simply paying up was not a solution. Having sent funds to Alva, the ships were harried, en route, into Southampton and Plymouth ports. The vessels were carrying a loan of £80,000, and were held in England until Elizabeth decided whether to seize the money, effectively taking over the loan from the Genoese banks who had issued it. This forced possession was responded to in the Spanish Netherlands by action against English shipping. Despite the Anglo-Spanish tensions, Elizabeth would not join France in an invasion of the Netherlands to oust the Spanish army; neither was their offer of Dutch sovereignty ever an attractive one for the Queen of England. Indeed, she remained more suspicious of the likelihood of French gains on the coast of Flanders than she was tempted by their offers.37

As it turned out, the Paris Massacre of Huguenots on 24 August 1572 and ongoing domestic struggles kept the French within their borders until 1577. The flood of French refugees to England in the 1570s would have been welcomed not just as victims of a war of religious oppression, but, since their struggle had temporarily thwarted any French plans for international expansion, also as the unfortunate fall-out from a conflict that effectively kept the Continental danger away from England. The Spanish, too,

37 Wernham, The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, pp. 36-38.
continued to have problems that kept their minds off England. The battle of Lepanto with the Turks in 1571 and continuing trouble in the Mediterranean meant that Anglo-Spanish relations were relatively tame for several years following. With the English authorities able to devote time to domestic affairs, those Massacre refugees experienced waning enthusiasm from their hosts. The stranger churches in particular seemed to be adversely influencing the native population, and they were feared as centers of resort for Englishmen dissatisfied with the Church of England; indeed records in the 1560s and 1570s show Englishmen being received into the alien churches. An order in 1573 was sent to both the French and Dutch churches commanding them to cease in these activities, with which edict the Dutch promised to comply. The French may have been less quick to fold under pressure, however, but did officially say that they would only entertain Englishmen who were not attending in contempt of Church of England ceremonies.38

The concept of a “national” idea of reform is a difficult one, of course, when practice varied between different native groups of Christians. Foreigners remarked on the unclear nature of English “reformed” churches. One traveler’s notes on service in Westminster Abbey read, “In this beautiful church the English Ministers, who are dressed in white surplices such as the Papists wear, sang alternately, and the organ played.”39 This priestly apparel was a particular bone of contention in 1565 when the French Church was lent out for a baptism with an English minister who refused to wear the surplice. Elizabeth, upon learning who the minister was, immediately sent a substitute.40 The temptation toward English heterodoxy had to be watched very closely as the “popish” rituals and regalia of the English Church seemed to be a cause of English persons seeking out the new style of the Continental services. The first London

38 Pettegree, Foreign Protestant Communities, pp. 273-76.
40 Pettegree, Foreign Protestant Communities, pp. 273-74.
Stranger Church, really for the Dutch, was granted in 1550 with a substantial subsidy, renovations to building of Austin Friars, and generous salary for their preacher. John Lasco. The French and Dutch congregations insisted on the need for separate churches and The Chapel of St. Anthony, Threadneedle St., was granted by October. Austin Friars was granted solely to Dutch congregation on the proviso that they pay for renovations to the new church for the French. But occupation of the French church had still not been permitted by the end of August, a month after the church liberties had been secured. After the Marian hiatus, the French church was restored to the strangers in April 1560, and the Dutch church—sans churchyard and ministers' houses with which it had previously been endowed—came into that congregation's hands by June.

While Spain, France, the Netherlands, the Hapsburgs, and Ottoman territories were in conflict and England relatively peaceful, Elizabeth took advantage of the situation by promoting the expansion of English trade markets. The future of the old, close markets did not look at all certain and so two things had to be done: alternative markets at greater distances had to be sought and secured, and essential armaments and gunpowder production had to be pursued at home. In the later 1570s, therefore, "a more vigorous era began," 41 leading to several trading companies: the Spanish company in 1577, the Eastland company in 1579 for trade with the Baltic and Danzig, the Turkey company in 1581, and the Venice company in 1583. These all became necessary because Hamburg, under pressure from other German towns, was reluctant to renew the ten-year trade agreement with England, and a major disagreement with Spain would make a return to the Antwerp mart impossible. Amid these mercantile dealings Philip was continuing expansion apace. In 1580, as a result of the deaths of Sebastian in 1578 and his successor cardinal Henry two years later, the King of Spain became the King also of Portugal. The resistance of the pretender Don Antonio was easily overcome and

41 Loades, *The Mid-Tudor Crisis*, p. 52.
he fled to England. This incorporation of Portugal doubled Spain’s navy and made it a viable threat to England. It was following this build-up of Spanish forces, and the realization on Spain’s part that England, and not France, was the real power standing between them and a settled occupation of the Netherlands, that Elizabeth’s move into the Netherlands in 1585 looked like so direct a challenge.

The Duke of Guise rebelled against France’s Henry III with his Catholic League in 1585; a Catholic rebel against a Catholic king, the differences being political—a preference on the League’s part for Spanish power in France. In Continental dealings, both England and Spain attempted to force a stability favorable to themselves, thus England gave limited support to a third party in the French mêlée, the Huguenot resistance, and Spain tried to keep France’s effervescent politics in check. Henry III succeeded in having Guise assassinated in 1588 and made a unique alliance with Henry of Navarre and his Huguenots. This stalemated Paris between Spanish influence and nationalist French control. When Henry III was himself assassinated, Henry of Navarre took the throne, gaining the upper hand in Paris by 1590, only to lose it back again to Parma’s forces who were drafted in from the Netherlands. Again, English military intervention on the Continent proved unhappy; Navarre went south to take Chartres, the supply town for Paris, thus leaving the north coast undefended. Alarmed at the possibility of the old pincer movement that would bring the whole of the northern coastline under Spanish control, Elizabeth sent troops to France and called on Henry to besiege Rouen. Neither did Henry meet the English troops on arrival, nor did he return north in any great hurry, but detoured and delayed. This behavior led the English to doubt Henry intentions, doubts confirmed when he converted to Roman Catholicism in July 1593.

A Franco-Spanish king did not sound perfect for the English, but on the other hand it did calm down the military situation on the Continent and made the Spanish domination of the coastline unlikely. By 1596 the Triple Alliance was signed with
France and the United Provinces of the Netherlands, and after that the chief international battles were privateering incidents. Henry IV made official peace with Spain in 1598 which, although stabilizing the Continent, also lost Elizabeth any possible French support against the Catholic rebels who were rising in Ireland. The second Armada had set sail in October 1596, only to be wrecked by the weather off the northern coast of Portugal. Intended to aid Tyrone and O’Donnell in their struggle against the colonialist English, it demonstrated the Spanish will to intervene in Catholic Irish affairs, if not their continuing efficacy. The costly and questionable fight against Tyrone and the Irish resistance was to occupy Elizabeth for the remainder of her reign.

London, the towns, and hospitality

Thomas Platter wrote that London is not said to be in England, but rather England to be in London. With a late sixteenth-century population of almost 200,000 persons London was twenty times larger than most provincial towns and over 12 times as populous as the next largest English city, Norwich, with a figure of 15,000 in 1600. One solution to the overcrowding is pointed up in John Stow’s survey of London (1598 and 1603) where Stow notes the religious houses and mansions that had been bought up after the Reformation and converted into tenements, accommodating the influx of population. By far the largest part of the problem was the increase in immigration into London, and an unsettling focus on foreigners in the city took hold. One observer wrote:

43 Avoiding the city building regulations, terraced housing was erected just outside the city walls, soon to become slum. Elizabeth’s proclamation of 7 July 1580 attempted to deal with all these problems by forbidding multiple occupation of existing buildings and the erection of new houses within three miles of the city walls (H&L 2, p. 466). Residents of London with fewer than seven years’ residency were to leave the city. D. M. Palliser questions the efficacy of such an order, and indeed, it could not have been easy
Believe me, Sir, the Country is so empty already, that a true *Englishman* cannot look into it, without a great deal of just Pity and Concern . . . and then to behold the prodigious Growth and Increase of the unwieldy City, and to observe what a strange multitude of People there is jumbled together in it; who can reflect upon this but must necessarily believe, that the Head in a little time longer will grow so much too big for the Body, that it must consequently tumble down at last, and ruin the Whole.  

Part of the problem would have been “foreigners” from the provinces, and this passage is taken from advice to the “country gentleman,” a class increasingly moving from their country estates into town. The further suggestion in this extract, however, is that the “true English” gentleman will be befuddled partly by the size of the city, and partly by the “strange” nature of the multitude, the mixing of the English with a growing contingent of aliens. The native will be concerned and piteous that the very head of the country has been alienated.

Stow confirms for us the aggravation of the population problem by the increasing concentration of aliens in areas of London. Of the parish of St. Bottolph he writes that it “is no great thing”:


notwithstanding diverse strangers are ther harboured, as may appeare by a presentment, not many yeres since made, of strangers inhabitants in the warde of

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Billingsgate in these wordes. In Billingsgate ward were one and fiftie houseolds of strangers, whereof thirtie of these householdes inhabited in the parish of saint Buttolph in the chiefe and principall houses, where they give twentie pounde the yeare for a house lately letten for foure markes: the nearer they dwell to the waterside, the more they give for houses, and within thirtie yeares before there was not in the whole warde above three Netherlanders, at which time there was within the said parish levied for the helpe of the poore, seaven and twentie pound by the yeare, but since they came so plentifully thither, there cannot bee gathered above eleven pound, for the stranger will not contribute to such charges as other Citizens doe.\footnote{John Stow, \textit{A Survey of London}, 2 vols., ed. C. L. Kingsford (1599 & 1603; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 1, p. 208.}

When Barabas is forced to pay war dues in \textit{The Jew of Malta} the clear unfairness of the imposition may have been tempered for the London audience by a reputation aliens had for keeping their money to themselves. That such behavior was an inevitable result of encouraging the groups of aliens to remain essentially separate communities through their own churches, trading halls, and home-based retailing and production, would be conveniently forgotten. The issues of strangers taking up the finest housing, and contradictorily of them crowding into cheap tenements and driving up the rents, are prevalent themes in the drama.

Both London and the provincial towns were affected. When the Earl of Leicester was sent to Sandwich to sort out unrest between natives and aliens, he reported of the aliens' trading and residence:

"I fyne that yf they may [be] suffred to take up the howses, and shoppes [in the] towne, and use that trade they requyre [they] will eat the naturall townedwellers
out." He did not so much blame the aliens, however, as he did "some 4
inglishmen themselves having the best [hou]sing and other thinges in their
handes, for gayne, do lett and sell them rather to straungers and privily
mainteyne their sins against their owne countrymen." 46

Here we have an example of a central type of "alienation" of Englishmen: a craving for
lucre leads to their lack of concern for fellow English men and women. Understanding
their business opportunities to be better with the desperate (yet proverbially wealthier)
aliens, these corrupted, unethical, Englishmen work to ruin communities for their own
gain. Such issues, discussed at some length in the chapters that follow, are addressed in
Wager's Enough is as Good as a Feast as well as his personal life, in Wapull's The
Tyde Tarrieth No Man, and in Wilson's The Three Ladies of London. The ports of
Bristol, Southampton, and especially the south east coast were gateways to immigration.
Lady Lucar tells us in The Three Ladies of London that not only London, but "Bristow,
Northampton, Norwich, Weschester, Caunterbury, Dover, Sandwich, Rie, Porchmouth,
Plimuth, and many moe" (885-86, C4) all suffered from rent increases because of the
influx of strangers. The major waves of immigration in the 1560s were split mostly
between those from the Netherlands (about 75 per cent) and those from France (15 per
cent). "Only 6.5 per cent came from Mediterranean areas, with the balance of 3.5 per
cent falling into a number of miscellaneous categories." 47

D. M. Palliser calculates that "By 1547 there were perhaps 5 to 6,000 foreigners
in London, amounting to between 5 and 8 per cent of the population; and by 1553 their
numbers had risen to perhaps 10,000 or some 10 per cent," 48 while Yungblut finds that
"Despite the increased flow of immigrants into England, particularly in the 1560s and

46 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, p. 112.
48 Palliser, The Age of Elizabeth, p. 66.
1570s, the aliens on average rarely represented more than about 4–5 per cent of the total population living in areas in and around the City.49 Whether one-in-ten or one-in-twenty is a more accurate proportion of aliens to natives, strangers were apparently a visible minority. This visibility was made all the more obvious by the clustering of the alien communities in relatively small areas (as the Stow passage above on St. Botolph illustrates), which offset official attempts to keep the alien population in London steady. The role of London—an oversized head, “too big for the body” of the country—was as a “funnel” for the rest of England; this applied to international trade and negotiation and to alien population control as well. Despite the increasing immigration in the sixteenth century, “the sustained size of London’s alien population remained between 4,000 and 5,000 for most of Elizabeth’s reign” because “The central government embarked on a carefully considered policy of dispersing substantial numbers of aliens to other locations, the said policy periodically lowering the strangers’ numbers in London.” Figures are of certain use only, of course, and Yungblut rightly reminds us that “No matter what the exact numbers, the most important aspects of this immigration are the perception at the time that it was unusual, and the reactions that this perception provoked.”50 It is some record of these perceptions and reactions through dramatic representation that I am tracing in this dissertation.

The distribution of aliens around the realm had a motive behind it other than avoiding overcrowding in London and the likelihood of anti-alien unrest. Smaller groups of aliens could be watched over and policed more effectively. Several years after the immigration that initialized legal communities in provincial towns such as Norwich and Colchester, The Paris Massacre of 1572 sent Huguenots fleeing to England. We have already looked at the political climate in which these events took place; let us now examine the social environment for incoming aliens:

49 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, p. 29.
50 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, pp. 21, 23.
Many of the residents of Dieppe, for example, together with a large number from Rouen, poured across to Rye and Winchelsea. Others landed at Sandwich and Dover, and, of course, great numbers crowded into London. The Council directed the Lord Mayor in 1573 to disperse the strangers in some areas where “moche infection grewe by reason that many families of the said straugers dwelt pestred up in one place.” The councilors also took this opportunity to eject some of the foreigners altogether, ordering that “where it was informed that diverse straugers were there that professing no religion nor frequenting any Divine Service used in this realme, her Majesties plesure was that they shuld be dispatched out of their jurisdictions.”

Yungblut notes that “This again implies that while religious refugees were welcome, those who sought a haven from which to support rebellion against Philip were not. It also can be read to imply that the government suspected aliens who refused to attend Protestant services of being Catholic agents.” This interpretation rings true, for despite the generalized view—due to the weight of “Elizabethan” study that concentrates on the last two decades of her reign—of Elizabethan England as a predominantly anti-Spanish society, the facts are less one-sided. The official line was much more carefully balanced between on the one hand knocking the proverbial “pride” of Spain with privateer and military actions designed to keep Philip II from organizing a sudden overrunning of coastal Netherlands and north-eastern France, and on the other hand avoiding over-provocation of the Spanish. Until the later 1570s France was still the enemy in the minds of the English people at large, and until the adversarial relations with Spain became inescapably belligerent, Elizabeth had no desire to worsen the situation. Just as

51 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, p. 89.
52 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, p. 153 n. 92.
the English sent spies and troops onto the Continent to harry, divert, and depose Spanish forces and plans, they expected Spain to do the same, and so any suspect characters were to be dealt with efficiently.

The excessively high population density in London and the perceived prevalence of aliens could not avoid producing cultural conflicts, and many aliens kept records of their personal experiences in England and of the English character. Extant texts tend to concentrate in a few areas: the self-sequestered and therefore xenophobic and ignorant nature of the English; their lack of art and culture (as a result of such insularity); and their alleged idleness, passivity, corruptibility, inconstancy, and rebelliousness. One French traveler in the mid-seventeenth century wrote home to a nobleman friend of his journey from Dover to London. His pen oozing the ink of irony, he recalls “the boys, running after and affrighting our horses, hooting and crying out, French Dogs, French Dogs, A Mounser, Mounser! by a particular expression of welcome, which other people would interpret derision.”  

Neither did the Frenchman consider the behavior of his higher-class hosts, or hostlers any better. Even in London this poor man was assailed with abuses:

Ariv’d at the Metropolis of civility, London, we put our selves in Coach with some persons of quality, who came to conduct us to our Lodging; but neither was this passage without honour done to us, the kennel-dirt, squibs, roots and rams-hornes being favours which were frequently cast at us by the children, and apprentices without reproof.

The second case of harassment was clearly mainly an assault on class and was more severe than the one on nationality. By this time in the letter, one is tempted to plump for

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54 A Character of England, A7-A7v.
the root-throwers against this rather unforgiving judge of manners. This is clearly the translator’s aim, who Englished the text to expose the Frenchman’s hypocrisy, in the process dubbing him “Gallus Castratus.” The architecture of London he found unimpressive, only St. Paul’s and Whitehall worth looking at, the activities in the former shocking him into the following tirade:

*England* is the sole spot in all the world, where, amongst *Christians*, their *Churches* are made jakes, and stables, markets and Tipling-houses; and where there were more need of *Scorpions*, than *Thongs*, to drive out the *Publicans* and *Money-Changers*: In sum, where these excellent uses, are pretended to be the markes of Piety and Reformation.\(^{55}\)

When he did attend a church for its proper use he was rather dismayed at the unled and disordered practice. “*Form,* they observe none,” he remarked, “They pray and read without method, and indeed, without reverence or devotion: I have beheld a whole Congregation sit on their -- with their hats on, at the reading of the *Psalm,* and yet bareheaded when they sing them.”\(^{56}\)

An alternative view is given by the Dutch Physician, Levinus Lemnius, in his “Notes on England” of 1560. The early date of Lemnius’s visit, his age, and the class of person he is remembering probably contributed to the likelihood of a pleasant experience (although other visitors later in the century similarly recalled a good reception in England). Lemnius wrote that:

> every Gentleman and other worthy person shewed unto mee (being a straunger borne and one that never had beene there before) all pointes of most frendly

\(^{55}\) *A Character of England*, A9v.

curtesy; and taking me first by the hand, lovingly embraced and bad mee ryght hartely welcome. For they be people very civil and wel affected to men well stricken in yeares, and such as bear any countenance and estimation of lerninge, which thing they that halfe suspect and have not had the full trial of the maners and fashions of this countrey, will skarcely bee perswaded to beleeve . . . franckely to utter what I thinke of the incredible curtesie and frendlines in speache and affability used in this famous realme, I must needes confesse it doth surmount and carye away the pricke and price of al others.  

Lemnius's doubt that others will believe his report of the English as good hosts confirms that the general consensus seems to have been contrary to his drift. London "is a very populous city," wrote the Duke of Wirtemberg's secretary of the Duke's 1592 visit, "so that one can scarcely pass along the streets, on account of the throng." He went on, at the instruction of the Duke:

The inhabitants are magnificently apprelled, and are extremely proud and overbearing; and because the greater part, especially the tradespeople, seldom go into other countries, but always remain in their houses in the city attending to their business, they care little for foreigners, but scoff and laugh at them; and moreover one dare not oppose them, else the street-boys and apprentices collect together in immense crowds and strike to the right and left unmercifully without regard to person; and because they are strongest, one is obliged to put up with the insult as well as the injury.  

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The scoffing and laughing of the English skilled working classes in the 1590s gave no heed to dignity or place, as the Venetian ambassador to James I noted: "it was well for the foreigner to avoid any strangeness in his dress in the City. The clerks and apprentices were not well disposed to strangers, and were apt to ill-treat and rob them."59

The paradoxical shift that Yungblut contends toward greater displays of hostility as time went on and familiarity with foreigners increased seems plausible from the evidence, and a contemporary perception of the trend seems to have produced a number of seventeenth-century tracts on hospitality and pleas for English tolerance, if not for a simultaneous lowering of the English sense of superiority. The tracts and sermons on hospitality all cite the biblical stories in which Jews and heathens hosted their neighbors and strangers; how much more necessary, then, (the argument went) for a Christian country to host its needy neighbors, especially those running from religious persecution? The well-known tract, Christian Hospitality, by Caleb Dalechamp demands:

Love and kindnesse we ow to all strangers which are come amongst us; and though we know not the purpose of their hearts, yet we must do good unto them for the proportion of their bodies, because they are men, and the children of Adam like our selves. Wheresoever a man is, there is room for a benefit, saith the heathen Moralist. A Jew, a Turk, a Pagan, or any other infidel, deserves to be respected and relieved in his necessities, though not for his manners, yet for his manhood, for his communion and fellowship in the same nature with us.60

A complicating factor for recovering Renaissance attitudes on any socio-political issue is apparent contradiction. In the case of the accommodation of aliens, for example, we witness the juxtaposition of xenophobic, simplistic anti-alien polemic with examples of

59 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, p. 47.
clear-headed (if biased) assessment of international, inter-religious, and inter-ethnic relations. Dalechamp's kind of appeal was necessitated by such features as the English people's self-sequestered lifestyle. This gave them no experience of alien cultures and they remained suspicious and hostile to visitors. Hezekiah Burton argues that beginning hospitality at home promotes international cooperation and mutual benefit:

"good Hospitality encourages men to go abroad, this increases Commerce, and gives an Opportunity of making the Good of one Nation commnn to others. ... How should we grow acquainted, and learn to bear with, if not to like one anothers manners: And this would increase first into Private, and then Publick Friendships."  

English "inwardness" was not limited to ignorant apprentices or jealous, job-guarding craftspersons, but spread among the more outward-looking middle ranks. Even the merchants did not explore the market locations that would broaden their experiences. "In England," writes William Thomas in his *History of Italy* (1549):

the most merchants of the realm resort to London to utter their own wares ... [whereas] ... they of France, of Spain, of Germany, and of all other westerly places that covet the merchandise of Syria, Egypt, Cyprus, Candia, Constantinople ... resort most commonly into Italy ... and there, meeting with Jews, Turks, Greeks, Moors, and other easterly merchants."  

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Thomas Platter would say that the isolation of the English was largely self-imposed by the English humor, which did not like to venture abroad. Even those Englishmen who did venture abroad in the sixteenth century complicated the idea of a “Renaissance man”’s worldly education by showing severe inconsistencies between their learned experiences and what they (as Lemnus puts it, above) “harfe suspect.” William Parry, for instance, records in a travelogue of 1601: “we had bin very grievously distressed, but that certaine Persians (though Pagans by profession) being in the ship well vittailed, and seeing the impious and dogged disposition of those Italians, supplied all our wants for that seaven dayes gratis.” This experience with the helpful “Pagans” does not dissuade Parry from falling on old prejudices while in Aleppo, where he brashly summarizes the native people, “whose behaviors in points of civilitie (besides that they are damned Infidells and Zodomiticall Mahometes) doe answer the hate we christians [sic] doe justly holde them in.” As we look at the plays and the non-dramatic literature of Elizabethan England, then, we will always have to juggle the circulating examples of enlightened learning and deep-seated hatred for alien persons and strange habits that we find in the writers and suspect of the playgoers.

Reasons put forward for the general decline in English hospitality ranged from the massive inflation of the sixteenth century, which had increased three-fold in a generation, to the diversion of personal funds toward the vanity of excessive apparel, to the unhealthy over-engagement in such pastimes as the expensive new leisure pursuit of smoking tobacco or studying books rather than entertaining. In theory, of course, to an extent all these causes of hospitality’s decline could be blamed on aliens. Wasn’t it

64 Parry, A New and Large Discourse, B3v. p. 10.
66 Yungblut, Strangers settled here amongst us, pp. 56, 57.
they who had encouraged the merchants to hoard goods and drive up prices? Wasn't it they who had encouraged the brokers to pinch every last penny out of the London market? Wasn't it they who had introduced the luxury cloths that made fine apparel and tempted the English beyond measure? And wasn't it an alien habit that merchant adventurers had brought home in smoking (or "drinking") tobacco?

The ideal was for travelers to promote the good things of international cultural exchange, but not to be overawed by the trifles of other nations. One must bring home the achievements of stranger nations while remaining a staunch ambassador for the benefits of one's own country. The traveler who misbehaves will set the example of his whole nation before the alien. The practice of tar-brushing a nation through observing the acts of one person is a misrepresentation that Dalechamp rails against, and was a mine of mischief that, by his time of writing, had been exhaustively exploited on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage:

For every stranger should be, as Bellarmine saith Josephus was, _most desirous of the glory of his Nation_; not by telling strange tales of it, but by leading a most vertuous life. Aristides being asked what did most grieve him in his banishment, said it was the blame that his Countrey did beare for it. Agodly-wise stranger may be said in some sort to be _the exaltation of his Countrey, and the glory of his Nation_, which is the excellent praise that is given to Judith: but a scandalous one may be called the reproach and shame of his Mother-countrey; for he _makes her to stink among the inhabitants of the Land_, as Simeon and Levi did their father. As _a man is known in his children_; So a Nation is soon esteemed by one or two of their sonnes. Albeit _one swallow makes not a summer_, nor one woodcock a winter, nor one or two examples a generall Rule in other things; yet in this case it is otherwise: For by the manners of one stranger, men are wont to judge of his whole Nation, . . . Besides, every Nation being branded abroad for
some peculiar vice and corruption, as the Dutch for drunkennesse, the French for vanitie and lightnesse, the Italian for lasciviousnesse, and the Spanish for pride and African haughtinesse: it is the dutie of every stranger to vindicate his own Countrey from common imputation, and to shew by his vertuous behaviour, that such ignominious reports of his Nation are not universally true, not withstanding the forestalled judgement and prejudice opinion of the World, there can some good thing come out of his Nazareth; that out of Galilee may arise some Prophets, out of hated Samaria some thankfull and compassionate men, and that even Scythia (the most barbarous & brutish of all countreys) doth bring forth Philosophers and Divines.  

The sixteenth century English solution to this problem would seem to have been not to go abroad in the first place. The insularity of the English left little avenue for cultural, artistic, or humanistic exchange and growth. We have already read of “Gallus Castratus”’s disdain for English architecture, and he was not alone in his criticism: the Dutchman Lemnius iamented that the English were “to the studies of humanity not so greatly given, and in exquisite artes not so well furnished”;  

and Henry Farley, advocate for St. Paul’s church repairs in the reign of James I, wrote a rhyme with a familiar ring, satirizing the prevailing taste of the age:

To see a strange out-landish Fowle,
A quaint Baboon, an Ape, an Owle,
A dancing Beare, a Gyants bone,
A foolish Ingin move alone,
A Morris-dance, a Puppit play,

67 Dalechamp, Christian Hospitality, R4-R4v, pp. 119-20.
Mad Tom to sing a Roudelay,
A woman dancing on a Rope,
Bull-baiting also at the Hope;
A Rimers Jests, a Juglers cheats,
A Tumbler shewing cunning feats,
Or players acting on the Stage,
There goes the bounty of our Age;
But unto any pious motion,
There's little coine, and lesse devotion.⁶⁹

The lack of international experience seems to have made what was "alien," or "outlandish," especially attractive, sometimes in a terrifying and sometimes in a luxurious way. A remarkable phenomenon was the use and abuse of apparel by the English. Foreigners noted it, the government legislated over it, polemicists condemned it, and dramatists exploited it. As soon as the Elizabethan government was settled in, it tried to control those who were evading the sumptuary laws. Addiction to sumptuous-looking apparel led to the imitation of fine clothes, so a decree of the Privy Council on 20 October 1559 tried to ensure that there was no bandying with the words of the laws: "upon this reformation the mailyncous invencion and frowarde nature of any servauntes, shall not devyse any newe fashion or sorte of apparrell, that should be as sumptuous as the former, though not contrary to the wordes of the statute, thereby sekyng by fraud to avoyde the Payne of the lawe."⁷⁰ But problems persisted. In addition to alien observers' alarm at the English tendency to take on the foreign ways of those they despise, the English appeared weak in terms of resolve, to change their minds constantly, and be

⁶⁹ Henry Farley, "St. Paules-Church, her bill for the Parliament" [MS 1621]. Quoted in Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. 188 n. 16.

⁷⁰ Great Britan, Privy Council, Articles agreed uppon by the Lordes, STC 7903.
open to any suggestion, however ludicrous. The Antwerp merchant, Emanuel van Meteren, wrote that “The English are a clever, handsome, and well-made people, but, like all islanders, of a weak and tender nature”;\textsuperscript{71} he goes on to note that “The English dress in elegant, light, and costly garments, but they are very inconstant and desirous of novelty, changing their fashions every year, both men and women.”\textsuperscript{72} The Frenchman—the archetype of vanity in dress in the English mind—could observe that the English were “conspicuous in their several Modes and Dresses, which they vary ten times for our once; everyone affecting something particular, as having no standard at Court, which should give Laws, and do countenance to the fashion. . . . it is not an easy matter to distinguish the Ladie from the Chamber maid; servants being suffered in this brave Country to go clad like their Mistresses.”\textsuperscript{73}

There are two ideas in this passage that become important on the Elizabethan stage: first, the inevitable or intentional crossing of class lines through apparel, and second, the tendency of the English to be easily influenced and easily diverted from their own intention by alien “fashion.” In many cases, both the foreign and English commentators expressed the opinion that the English were so easily influenced, so easily led astray, so eminently corruptible, that they employed all the vices they imported from other countries and peoples with such vigor and success as to excel beyond measure of the original practitioners. In his Compleat Gentleman of 1622, Henry Peacham writes:

Within these fiftie or threescore yeares it was a rare thing with us in England to see a drunken man, our nation carrying the name of the most sober and temperate of any other in the world. But since we had to doe in the quarrell of

\textsuperscript{71} Meteren, A true discourse Historicall. Quoted in Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. 69.

\textsuperscript{72} Meteren, A true discourse Historicall. Quoted in Rye, Englund as Seen by Foreigners, p. 71.

\textsuperscript{73} A Character of England, B12, B13.
the Netherlands, about the time of Sir John Norrice his first being there, the
custome of drinking and pledging healthes was brought over into England:
wherein let the Dutch bee their owne judges, if we equall them not; yea I think
rather excell them. 74

Notice how the practicing of a type of hospitality (a Christian practice) leads to a type of
corruption of the English. This idea will be discussed in response to Wilson’s
presentation of English “Hospitality.” This trope of the “alienation” of the English
through shortcomings of national character is one that receives continual attention in the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it is a weakness seen to increase as time goes
on. The comparison of national drinking habits is only one pervasive version of this
trope. In every chapter (whether it be to demonstrate the dangers of vanity, disguise, or
the breaking-down of gender and class identities) the example of apparel crops up, with
its concomitant of foreign fashions (mainly French and Spanish) that corrupt the puritan
minds of good English men and women. And in later chapters, particularly in the
discussion of *Englishmen For My Money* and *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*, we find a
similar argument raised concerning the vicious usury being practiced in England, which
was, some wrote, far worse than ever the Jews had engaged in.

Of course, the concentration here on England should not blind us to the fact that
every nation accused other nations of similar shortcomings and each nation confusingly
accused different nations of the same shortcoming. Thus, nearly forty years after the
publication of Peacham’s book, and its attribution of the vice of excessive drinking to
the Dutch, the Scots Marquis of Argyl, Archibald Campbell, warned in his *Instructions
to a son*, “I would have you therefore detest that barbarous *German* mode of drinking to
victory, by a beastly subduing of those, whom you have invited, and humanely

Foreigners*, p. 194 n. 20.
welcomed, and bid to your Table, 'Tis one of the greatest Vices our Gentry hath brought from thence, . . . ." A French observer in 1558 blamed none but the English for inappropriate drinking behavior. The English, he said, forced foreigners to drink excessively by offering "drind iou, which is, I drink to you" and, being drunk, "they will swear blood and death that you shall drink all that is in your cup . . . They consume great quantities of beer double and single." Lemnius's observation tips the balance again in favor of the English: "At their tables although they be very sumptuous . . . yet neyther use they to overcharge themselves with excesse of drincke, neyther thereto greatly provoke and urge others, but suffer every man to drincke in such measure as best pleaseth hymselfe." The consistencies and contradictions within representations of international exchange, national identity and character occupy my time throughout this study.

The Jewish alien

Whether the expulsion of Jews from England in November 1290 was mostly the result of their decreasing economic value to the crown and government, whether the prospect of seizing real estate upon the departure of so many resident aliens was too attractive to resist, whether Edward I was responding to the pressure of popular (and certainly high-level) pressure from a xenophobic population and parliament (as is suggested by the provision of a large subsidy to the Crown after the expulsion), or whether it was a combination of these factors over a number of years, the reasons were apparently good enough for the English to substantially keep Jews out of the country until the seventeenth century. With the pioneering 1920s study of Lucien Wolf and the

75 Archibald Campbell, Marquis of Argyll, Instructions to a son (Edinburgh and London, 1661), E7, p. 85.
77 Lemnius, "Notes on England." Quoted in Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. 79.
additions and adjustments by, among others, Cecil Roth, C. J. Sisson, and most recently James Shapiro, we are now able to sketch—if not quite paint—a picture of Jewish existence and English responses in sixteenth-century England. That sketch in fact centers on London, with a few strokes in Bristol where, for a while, there was actually a larger community of Jews than in the capital. Spanish Jewish merchants were trading in cloth with the port of Bristol in the early fifteenth century, and one Beatriz Fernandez became renowned for tutoring newly arrived Marranos in Jewish ceremony and law. It is usual to trace the Jews of sixteenth-century England back to the 1492 Spanish decree in which, on 31 March, the Jews of Spain were given the option to convert to Christianity, or leave the country. A large number took the former option, and became “conversos,” or “New Christians,” so assimilated had they become in Spanish society; however, whether they were faithfully taking on a new religion or donning the outward trappings of Catholicism while inwardly retaining their faith and practicing it in private (i.e. were “Marranos”) is not entirely clear. The reprieve for those who moved westward over the border into the more accommodating Portugal was to be short-lived, as an infamous mass conversion of 1497 warned devout Jews of the imminent loss of another homeland. Those who did not leave at the end of the century for the attractive Ottoman territories, or for the less-secure havens of northern Italy, the Germanic states, and the Netherlands, faced the interrogations of the Inquisition. In 1512 the Portuguese-Jewish Mendes trading and financing house set up business in Antwerp. It was with this institution that Henry VIII carried out loan transactions, the relationship between the English monarchy and the Mendes house


being so strong by 1532 that when Spanish charges of judaizing were brought against Diogo Mendes, the King personally intervened to vouch for him. The Jewish Portuguese-Netherlands trading link was a strong one: the sea-route along the channel, the relatively short distance from Dover to the Netherlandish ports, and the overbearing proportion of English trade that went through Antwerp (and later Amsterdam) makes it not surprising that a small number of Jews (New Christians) moved over to England. Wolf identified at least thirty-seven households as being Jewish-headed in 1536. Soon after this, complaints from Spain that Jews were resident illegally in London prompted the arrest of many of the community, but they were later released on the orders of the King. The evidence wanes after this episode, and Roth concludes, “it seems that before long the little community dispersed.” By the end of Edward VI’s reign a few houses of Jews are recorded in London and some in Bristol, but they disappeared again with the accession of Mary.

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81 Lucien Wolf records a specific event in the 1540 migration as a key element in starting a significant Jewish community in London (and Bristol, the second most important center of Jewish activity): “In 1540 a flotilla of fourteen spice ships arrived in Zeeland from Portugal with many New Christians on board. When the officers came to examine the refugees two of the ships precipitately weighed anchor and returned to London, where the New Christians landed and apparently became permanent residents. This appears to have been the chief source of the Marrano immigration in the early years of Queen Elizabeth’s reign” (“Jews in Elizabethan England,” p. 4). After the second wave of northern migration the Jews began to prove their usefulness. The lack of a geographical homeland for the Jews made them strangers everywhere; it also made them politically neutral figures for international affairs. It is partly for this reason that many Jews were employed as foreign ambassadors and messengers. Wolf points out a possibly crucial Iberian-Jewish contribution to English intelligence: “The espionage system thus established by Nunez proved extremely valuable in 1587 and 1588, when Philip was preparing the Invincible Armada for the invasion of England. According to Pedro de Santa Cruz it was through a despatch received by Nunez from Jeronimo Pardo that the English Government first learnt of the arrival of the Duke of Medina Sidonia in Lisbon, and the great military and naval parades which followed. It was in this way, he says, that ‘the English finally concluded the destination of the Spanish Armada, and they began to take precautions with greater care and earnestness’” (Wolf, “Jews in Elizabethan England,” pp. 5-6). On the other hand, one Catholic recusant, in a letter to the King of Spain’s ambassador to Paris, suggested that the nature of the Armada and its planned invasion was general knowledge in England, and it was the fault of the Spanish themselves: “I must needes say that in very trueth no one thing hath done at this time more
“Jews Garden,” just outside the walls in Cripplegate ward, marks the medieval Jewish cemetery (Honeybourne). It lies north of the wards of Cheap and Coleman Street where most of the London Jews of the thirteenth century lived. Shortly before the expulsion of 1290 there was a westward shift into Cripplegate within the walls, and a few Jews moved east to Aldgate—to the “Poor Jewry.” The family of George Anes is one of the earliest Jewish households resettled in London, at least as early as 1521. When the Jews began to return to London in significant numbers from 1540, they were concentrated in Tower Ward and Aldgate, locations that will be relevant in the later plays discussed in this book. Since the small parishes all attempted to impose their own particular strictures or leniency on their local population, Jews (with the means to) could move a few streets’ distance for greater freedom. Like Lancelot in The Merchant of Venice, one Thomas Wilson was a Christian working for a Jewish family. He left the service of Ferdinand Alvares in 1594 and revealed the clandestine Jewish ceremonies that occurred in this household. He confirmed that such practices were general knowledge to the parish authorities who often turned a blind eye. Wilson records the ease with which these Jewish observances were continued. They maintain their practices:

|hurt to the action, then the untimely hasty publishing abroad in this Realme before this Armie of Spaine was readie to come forth to the seas, of sundrie things written and put in print, & sent into this realme, to notifie the people, that all the Realme should be invaded and conquered, that the Queene should be destroyed, al the Nobilitie, and men of reputation, of honour, and wealth that did obey her, and would defend her, or that would withstand the invasion, should be with all their families rooted out, and their places, their honours, their houses and landes bestowed upon the conquerors: things universally so odiously taken, as the harts of all sorts of people were enflamed: some with ire, some with feare, but all sorts almost, without exception, resolved to venture their lives for the withstanding of all maner of conquest, wherewith every body can say this Realme was not threatned these five hundreth yeares and more” (William Burghley, The Copie of a Letter Sent Out of England to Don Bernadin Mendoza [London, 1588], A3v, p. 4).|
because they have not been troubled about their Relygon or use of supersteycous ceremonyes since they came to dwell there as they now do, where before they were constrayned to come and heare servyce at Fanchurche when they dwelt in Fanchurch streete.\textsuperscript{82}

The family had moved into Aldgate in the vicinity of Duke’s place, so called since 1544 when the old site of Saint Katherine’s Christ Church had been built upon by Sir Thomas Audley. This location was in the East End concentration of the Protestant alien community; it may be inferred from this that liberty for one group of marginalized persons in a district of London meant relative liberty for all.

During the 1580s and early 1590s the Jewish communities grew in profile, due especially to the presence of the Jewish doctor, Rodrigo (Ruy) Lopez, who acted as Earl of Leicester’s physician, before becoming attendant on the Queen herself in 1586.\textsuperscript{83} With a certain amount of circumstantial evidence against him, and generally known as a politically-active figure—he harbored Don Antonio, the Portuguese Pretender, in his house in 1585, and he liaised between the English court and Alvaro Mendes, Jewish councilor to the Sultan of Turkey—Lopez was arrested for treason in the Autumn of 1593. It was true that the Spanish had made overtures to him in an attempt to draw him into treasonous activity and he had not altogether dismissed them. On 7 June of the following year he ascended the scaffold at Tyburn, recorded as stating “that he loved the Queen as well as he loved \textit{Jesus Christ}; which coming from a man of the \textit{Jewish} Profession moved no small Laughter in the Standers-by.”\textsuperscript{84} Edgar Samuel has argued

that Lopez’s actual utterance was that he loved the Queen as well as he did the Lord, meaning his God, and this term was misinterpreted by the Christian crowd to mean Christ. The contention of Lopez’s retention of his old faith is in line with Wolf’s and Sisson’s views on the practice of the London Jews and reflects on something of the consistent prejudice against the “vile Jew” Lopez in his trial due to the fact of his Jewishness.\textsuperscript{85} Lopez’s tendency to side with the call for peace with Spain was highly unwelcome at a time when, just after the defeat of the Armada, anti-Spanish hostility was at a peak in London. There is a consensus among literary historians that the Lopez affair strongly influenced the writing, revival, and reception of The Jew of Malta, The Merchant of Venice, and related drama.\textsuperscript{86}

Whether the accusations were justified or not the fascination of the Jewish crime would survive. Well into the seventeenth century writers were still taking the trouble to transcribe accounts of the Lopez affair, remembering the Jew that “was willinge and did affix to poyson her Maijjes[t]ie. . . . he would mynster her poyson in a syropp” at her next medical “examynate[on]” and be rewarded “with the value of 50,000 crownes in Rubyes and dyamonds.”\textsuperscript{87} Was it coincidence that Thomas Nashe should, in late 1593, have had his Jewish character, Zachary, suggest to his friend that the way to kill their enemy, the Countess Juliana, is to send their bondmaid to poison her; to the maid he says, “thou, if thou beest placed with her as her waiting maid or cup-bearer, mayest temper poison

\textsuperscript{85} See Great Britain, Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series (Hereafter CSPDom) (London: Longman’s, 1856-72), 1591-94, pp. 444.

\textsuperscript{86} Lopez’s harboring of Don Antonio, the exiled Portuguese Pretender, was just a cover, alleged the CSPDom of 1594; his fiendish plot was found out by the interception and discovery of allegedly treasonous communications between Lopez and representatives of the King of Spain (p. 446). “Lopez, a perjured murdering traitor and Jewish doctor, worse than Judas himself” (p. 446) was unsavable. The ever-alert Alvaro Mendes appealed for Lopez but was given the reply that “the discontent of the people was so great” that it was impossible to grant his request.” Wolf concludes that “this curious plea goes far to confirm . . . [the] . . . contention that Lopez fell a victim to an anti-Spanish mob clamor rather than to any misdeeds of his own” (Wolf, “Jews in Elizabethan England,” pp. 31-32).

\textsuperscript{87} Anon., Account of the Conspiracy and Trial of Dr. Roderigo Lopez (MS. 1650), Folger MS X.d.438 (Film Fo.66.10).
with her broth, her meat, her drink, her oils, he syrups, and never be bewrayed”?88 It was the truth of the fact that Lopez had received a ruby from the King of Spaine that lent weight to all suspicions against him, weight which might be shifted by last-minute pleas (his execution was postponed in April), but which nobody could lift. In the aftermath of the Lopez case, the Jews were again enemies to the State. The city of Amsterdam was an increasingly attractive location for the London Jews who were finding their business and social activities stifled in a new atmosphere of hostility. Jewish traders had reestablished businesses here after their ejection from Antwerp in 1542 (and would have to again after the Dutch blockade of the Low Countries ports in 1595). It is not improbable that many of the London Jews chose to move to Amsterdam toward the close of the century.89

89 Roger Prior has provided limited but good evidence for the existence of a second Jewish community in Tudor London. He argues that Italian musicians brought into the country by Henry VIII, “with the deliberate intention of increasing the fame and splendour of his Court,” were in fact Jews. He cites the previously investigated name of the Italian musician, Bassano, possibly the very same that Shakespeare had in mind when naming the character, Bassanio, in The Merchant of Venice. These Jews, considering themselves Italians first, and Jews second, did not have intimate relations with the Portuguese Marrano community. They seem to have assimilated with the English Christians fairly quickly, taking English spouses and living for the main part in Cripplegate, not Tower ward or Aldgate. “It seems clear,” Prior concludes, “that there was a consistent Tudor policy of employing Jews as royal servants. Elizabeth’s employment of men like Hector Nunez, Rodrigo Lopez, and the Anes family was not due to mere chance or their availability. In this respect, as in so many others, she was following a policy that her father had begun. . . . If there was a policy of royal employment, there was also a policy of readmission. . . . Perhaps we should think of a tacit readmission in 1540, long before the overt one of 1656” ("A Second Jewish Community in Tudor London," TIJHSE 31 [1989-90]: 137-52, pp. 148-49). The agents in this case for Henry were obviously scrupulous in who would be allowed to come into England, since they were to be paid and provided for, and would need to be highly competent entertainers. This particular admission program would seem, if we are realistic, to be more concerned with the benefit of the court of England, and less with the freedom of Jews to live in England. Cecil Roth does note other connections between Henry VIII and Continental Jews, however. The King was contacting Venetian Rabbis for advice on his marriage problems, through the intermediary, the Humanist Fra Francesco Giorigi. His Act of Uniformity (31 Henry VIII c. 14, 1549) detailed the use of Hebrew in private devotions, and coins commemorating
One of the aims of this dissertation, as it looks at the representation of aliens on the Elizabethan stage, is to determine what the Jewish character was doing in the English theater. It may seem like another book-length project of its own to include the Jewish alien as well as the Protestant and Catholic immigrants of various nations. Indeed, the Jews in England and their representation in early modern drama have been the subjects of a number of books. But I do not think we can really discuss the “alienation” of the English and the ways in which the phenomenon was represented on the English stage if we exclude a major element from the formula. The Jewish character and the various Christian and anti-Christian characters cannot be dealt with separately, for the “infection” of vices that the drama and the prose tracts allege occurred crossed international, inter-ethnic, and inter-religious boundaries. Whereas representations of “Dutch” and French persons can easily be accommodated within the contemporary state of urban society, the presence of the stage Jew is a greater puzzle. Why the interest in a representative of a religion and race largely invisible to the English? What use was made of the Jew and why was another “type” of character not used in his and her place? I will argue here that the Jewish character’s role is a contradictory one, sometimes deeply subversive and sometimes benignly conservative in presentation, but remarkably similar in premise. The very absence of the Jew from England made him so much


90 A play that would have been a major contribution to this part of the dissertation’s concerns, but which is no longer extant, is The Jew, which Stephen Gosson tells us played at the Bull (probably between 1575 and 1579), and concerned “the greedinesse of worldly chusers, and bloody mindes of Usurers.” This is one of the plays, according to Stephen Gosson, that are “without rebuke . . . never a woorde without wit, never a line without pith, never a letter placed in vaine” (The Schoole of Abuse [1579], C6v, 22b). This is the earliest example we know of the early modern drama involving the figure of a contemporary Jew, and was one of Gosson’s rare exceptions to his general damnation of the theater and performances. Gosson’s approval may have been a result of the play’s unadulterated rejection of Jews and their evil influence, in which case it would not be in complete accordance with my thesis, but there is a hint that contemporary summaries did not tell the whole story: the title-page of the 1600 quarto of The Merchant of Venice summarizes the role of Shylock with the note that the play shows “the extreame crueltie of Shylocke the
more the palimpsestic site for the invention and inscription of mythic otherness. He could be used, then, as a radically distanced foil, a touchstone, a mirror of Englishness, and in the drama the role of the Jew is highly active.

As an outsider—in terms of religion, nationality, and natural or imposed appearance and professional occupation—the Jew becomes in the hands of the Elizabethan playwrights the tool of a powerfully dynamic two-way critique. In one direction the Jew expresses or acts out—sometimes with distance and disinterestedness, sometimes embroiled in alienating societal structures—a judgment of institutions, of individual representatives of class and occupation, and of State and ecclesiastical ruling structures. Simultaneously, and against this projection of wisdom from the Jewish character, there is a force moving toward him, as he is the target of the on- and off-stage audience’s judgment against himself. Such a bi-directional dynamic is clearly on the surface in The Merchant of Venice; but in the other plays, as I show in this study, there is an uneven progression of representation of the Jewish character on the stage, whereby earlier plays work in a sophisticated way to disguise their own project. By contrast, plays toward the end of the century and into the Jacobean years seem to take a leaf from the less complex thinking of medieval views on the Jews.

This dissertation adds to Shapiro’s extensive examination of the Jew as alien in Shakespeare and the Jews by arguing that there is no “English view” of the Jew, and English ideas about the Jew, and consequently about themselves as “not the Jew,” are not represented by Shakespeare, as Shapiro argues, so much as by the gradual manipulation of the character in a number of plays from 1580 onward and prose tracts from the 1560s. There is good reason for Shapiro to discuss Shakespeare in less than twenty per cent of the book’s three-hundred-page bulk, and it is a reason that argues partly against Shapiro’s own observation that Shakespeare represents Englishness towards the sayd Merchant, in cutting a just pound of his flesh.” This is the summary, but hardly the story of Shylock’s role in the complicated social and political milieu of his adopted city.
almost to the exclusion of other signifiers. Writers before Shakespeare had already
carved out a significant idea of what it meant to be English, and did so through
representations of other nationalities and nations. Shakespeare's contribution to this
project, massive as it is, remains a contribution among many, and I mean in the pages
that follow to recontextualize Shakespeare to acknowledge the effect of cultural
intertextuality on the formal and performative aspects of the play text. I take
"Shakespeare" out of an isolated space in which he transcendently conveys his insights
into human relations and re-situate him among the state of play in the professional
theater in the mid-1590s, when much of the theater surrounding the play-text, and which
we think of as "Shakespearean," had already been developed.

In addition to this reconsideration of Shakespeare within the larger history of
dramaturgy that takes on aliens and Jews, there is another feature of the Jewish
character that Shakespeare does not address directly, yet which pervades the late-
Elizabethan and Jacobean drama and the prose writings throughout the period. This
feature is the creation of the "Jew-ish," or Jew-like character. The approaching end of
the century, the growing interest in Hebraism in the Universities, the presence of high-
profile Jews in London, the Lopez execution, the increasing trade with Jews in the
Netherlands and Mediterranean—all these historical developments may be factors in
what I see as a metamorphosis of the Jewish character toward the end of the century. As
I discuss at length in chapter four, the steady "alienation" and "foreignizing" of
England, which had been going on for fifty years and more, manifested itself variously
through the different alien characters; as far as the Jewish character is concerned, he
breaks down. I have been saying "he" because it is the male Jew that is represented as
causing the alienating problems in the earlier plays and it is the male Jew that now
somehow mutates. We get the character, Pisaro, in Englishmen For My Money, who is
foreign and possesses some characteristics of the stock Jew, but who is never revealed
as a Jew; then we get Mamon, who represents all the stereotypical despicable ideas of a Jew’s features and behavior, but who is clearly an Englishman.

The shift, uneven and imprecise as it is, is profound; for it marks a watershed in the dramatic representation of foreignness, whereby the alienating of the English is represented as unredeemable, unreformable. Poignantly coinciding with the turn of the century this phenomenon represents the end of an age, an age in which there was discovery by the English not with ships and cannon on oceans and in foreign lands, but with words and clubs each side of the Thames in their homeland. It was a discovery by trial and error during which there were shameful episodes of xenophobia, hatred, violence, and corruption; yet during which there was also integration, international promotion, and hospitality. What the drama seems to say about this discovery of national identity and selfhood by all classes of English men and women is that it was made at a high price, at the permanent loss of something very “English.” Such a lamentation is based on what we would now consider a rather short-sighted and unacceptable vision of nationhood. But it is easy to be self-righteous in hindsight, harder to investigate with objectivity, admiration, and compassion the achievements and failures of persons attempting to live by their religious conviction and political affiliation, to practice their trade and to secure liberty and a living for their families, whether newly-settled in a foreign land or adjusting to life with new and strange neighbors.

From the time of the earliest plays that I study here, foreigners regarded England with an equivocal appreciation of its own sense of national identity. They thought the English language a mix of other languages rather than being something peculiar to the islanders; English clothing, too, aped the French, Dutch, and even Spanish; the architecture and art had little to recommend it; and their manufacture was chiefly woolens, a natural product of sheep grazing on plentiful English grass, which left the people with little to do, and hardly said much for their enterprising minds. The very
claim of a recognizable "Englishness," then, and of its subsequent corruption by alien influence and presence in England, is a difficult one to support. In the end it might be safest and most comfortable to cling to a single man with an extraordinary quantity of extant commentary on the state of Englishness at all levels of society and say, here he is, Shakespeare, the Englishman. But precisely because of his breadth of vision, and because his plays are never records of what "Shakespeare says" as an Englishman, but what Shakespeare has created and reconstituted as possible instances of cultural exchange between nationalities, genders, and classes, we cannot stop there. Versions of these exchanges, and scenes from Shakespeare, Marlowe, Wilson, Haughton, and others all contribute to this working-out of Englishness which is always a working-out by selected individuals, always exchange and negotiation at some level of conflict or there would be little dramatic tension, yet often tending from very different points of ideological origin toward an imaginary center that is the essence of Englishness.
CHAPTER ONE

Abstracted England: the alienation of moral and political drama

In this chapter I have two main concerns. The first is to observe and bring out an entrenched feature that unites a number of the morality plays: the alien presence pervades all aspects of English material and ethical culture depicted in the early drama. To talk about religious corruption is to engage with the influence of foreign practices; to discuss economic problems is to investigate the dealings of alien merchants and craftsmen; to question the government is to intimate the trial of Englishness against the forces of foreign princes and potential invaders. It seems to me that there is no escaping the issue of the alien, no matter what the "labels" of the morality characters on stage may be, and here I will expose the continuity of alien interest, a factor in pre-Shakespearean drama that has not been extracted in interpretation to date. The didacticism of the morality drama arises from the coincidence and combination of characters rather than their isolated speeches. The two-dimensionality of many (but by no means all) morality characters may make them forgettable as individuals, but the scenes of moral conflict involve social, political, and emotional impact that are provocative and memorable. It will be my aim in discussing these mid-century and early Elizabethan plays to bring out moments of representative richness—usually through conflicts between characters—and to argue for the plays' artistic and cultural importance in their own moment, rather than as simplistic steps on the way up to the Shakespearean summit.

The second concern is to argue for a certain literary-historical progression in the three plays under study. It is, of course, dangerous to propose grand representational narratives from the minuscule evidence of one play per decade, but I hope to show at least that there is a pattern of representation of the alien that repeats itself in the later drama and seems like an inevitable progression of English-alien (or any patriotic native-
alien) relations. The progression begins with the situation in which cracks in the make-up of a country are blamed unequivocally on alien presence (be it alien bodies, fashions, or habits), and aliens are found in order to be scapegoated; this is the situation in *Wealth and Health* (1554). The next stage of the process involves recognizing the “alien” tendency in the native. This requires a deeper investigation of the “alienated” native while using the alien body (in the case of Ulpian Fulwell’s *Like Will to Like* [Q1 1568], the Flemish men) as a red herring, something to re-direct attention away from the corruption of the native. This stage of combined acknowledgment and denial, of representation and suppression shift into the third stage with *The Tyde Tarrieth No Man* by George Wapull (Q1 1576). Here pride, narcissism, and patriotism assure the natives of their national superiority and invincibility. Such pride does not permit self-doubt and self-scrutiny, the examination of the self required for reformation of a deformed self or community. The weaknesses of the self or nation are therefore left open for the alien to see and exploit; the very self-assurance that they are “untouchable” makes the natives in this stage an easy target for (sometimes fatal) corruption by “alienation."

Moving from the alien body to the alien within, or toward the “alienation” of the native, is a frightening one, for the alien person can be physically removed and eliminated, while the “alien” status of individuals or a community is a condition that needs to be reformed within the self or community; the longer such a state is allowed to remain, the deeper the alien takes hold, the more the alien seems to be (or in fact is) part of the native self, and the harder it is to get rid of through a reformation. Hence it is important to examine the “alien” not just in all its physical, material, and named states, but also in its abstract, internalized, and psychological manifestations. The progression of the place of the alien and the break-down of the native community in the morality drama repeats itself, albeit with major alteration, in later Elizabethan drama. An example of the first stage would be the native (or possessor)-alien relations in *The Jew of Malta*, where the Jew as New Testament anti-Christian is posited as the source for
trouble in Malta and is thrown over the walls, or the comedy of *The Three Ladies of London*, where Lady Lucre is sent to hell as the emblem of English evil; the second stage might include *The Merchant of Venice*, where the equivocality of the Christian position is foregrounded, but where the alien Jew is used to side-track the argument onto the cruelty, un-nativeness, and incorrectness of the “other.” The third stage is developed in Haughton’s *Englishmen For My Money* and *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*, which I discuss in the final chapter. English pride triumphs in the first play, but clearly fissures are left for “alienation”; in the latter play that alienation happens, and Mamon the Englishman has become a perverted, violent usurer, as corrupted as he can be.

I.

The first play I examine, the anonymous *Wealth and Health*, defines the character of England by debating the limits of equivocal attributes. Vital aspects of a national character include those features that, if taken too far, contribute to the downfall of national character. Too much of a good thing. Like diseconomies of scale, overcirculation of such characteristics as wealth and pride makes them unwieldy to use to one’s advantage. They change from being national tools of assertion, patriotism, and success to burdens of weakness, nationalism, and regional factionalism. In *Wealth and Health* the alien is posited as the means for English failure (be it by dearth or over-possession of “wealth”), and also as the end into which English wealth runs away. This play has not yet discovered the “alienation” of the English that Fulwell will investigate in the next decade, and the sense of “alien” remains largely one of literal foreign bodies onto which blame for the English situation can be projected, a scapegoat to be branded, marked in his “otherness” and, ideally, expelled from the active, native, community. These features of marking and expulsion come up time and again in the later plays, a fact that speaks to my argument that, while developing different points of view and
approaches to subject matter, the plays circulate around the same issues, trying through various representations to work out who the alien is, and how to get rid of, or reform, him or her in such a way that one’s self (one’s English self in the case of these plays) is clearly separable from that ejected “other.”

The title characters of Wealth and Health open the play by arguing over the relative values of their services to the realm. Retrospectively, we can recognize the accusations of one toward the other (particularly Health accusing Wealth) as accusations of “alien” tendency, unEnglish activity caused by aliens, to the benefit of aliens, and to the detriment of the English. The corruptive element of such alienation is not yet fully formulated, however. Wealth and Health are soon joined by Libertie, who triangulates the argument by putting his own case forward against the others. YllWyll enters, deceptively calling himself plain “Wyll” and seeks employment with some good master. Libertie, believing the job-seeker to be Wyll, who “ever longeth unto Lyb[e]rtye” (B3), hires him. ¹ This trope of the wily, self-alienated character (here fashioning himself falsely by changing his name) fooling the simple, honest Englishman returns in more complex fashion later. For example, in the exchange between Simplicity and Sir Nicholas Nemo or Fraud in Robert Wilson’s The Three Ladies of London, or John fo de King’s tricky French lesson in Marston’s Jack Drum’s Entertainment. Then comes Shrewd-wyt (who will call himself plain “Wyt”) and laughs with Wyll about a purse-picking he has just successfully pulled off. The Dutchman, Hance, enters and is generally abused and ridiculed by the pair of thieves. Once Hance leaves, they work toward gaining permanent employment with Wealth, Health, and Libertie, and successfully do so in the next scene. Enter Remedi, the character whose job it is “To maintaine you three in this realme to be” (C2v) he warns the employers, with exactly the

¹ I am quoting from the edited text, Anon., Wealth and Health, ed. F. Holthausen (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1922), but I use signature references since they will be useful to most available versions of the text.
right adjectives, to “Take hede in any wise, eschewe yl and shrewd compani” (C3). Remedi (who foreshadows a number of wise, mediating characters in later drama, from the Turkish and English judges in *The Three Ladies* to Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*) then recognizes YllWyll and Shrewd-wyt; in fear of having their identity revealed to Wealth, Health, and Liberti, they determine to “put him [i.e. Remedi] out of favour” (C4v). The next scene brings Remedi and Hance together, and Remedi does a good, xenophobic, English job at informing Hance that he is not wanted in the realm and has to leave. Once Hance leaves in distress, Health comes in, injured. He, Wealth (“fallen in decay”), and Libertie (“kept in durance and captivitie”) are all victims of YllWyll and Shrewd-wyt and recognize their corruption. It is apparent at this point that the evil work is being carried out by English characters who are quite distinct from the alien body. In the next play I discuss, the “native” vice is in fact conditioned in deviilish and alien ways before the drama’s fiction begins. The anti-alien thematic in *Wealth and Health* runs deep, for not just the perverted Englishmen mock Hance the Dutchman, but so does the character representative of good Englishness. The obligation to despise the alien among this narrow-minded, non-traveling, island population seems ubiquitous. When “Wit” and “Wyll” return they are accosted by Remedi. Wyll feigns a Spanish disguise to avoid arrest, but fails with Health’s witness and Wyt’s betrayal. The thieves are taken away to be locked up by Health, who returns with his comrades to celebrate their reformation through Remedi.

   Entered in the Stationers’ Register in 1557, *Wealth and Health* possesses the moral dialectic suited to court performance and the limited cast and doubling pattern indicative of popular performance. This gives the critic a range of possibilities for interpreting any particular scene, character, or exchange. This text has clearly been produced to cover both the reading and the playing market: the verse of the text is set in octave stanzaic form for pleasant reading, but the title-page doubling pattern (albeit faulty), the audience address—Wealth enters with the cry, “Why is there no curtesy now
I am come? / I trowe that all the people be dume” (A2)—, and the prompt for improvisation, “Here entreth with some jest YllWyll” (B2), assure us that it is a working playscript too. The play’s position within both the elite and popular reading and playing modes, however, is unstable. The title page lists a doubling of parts, claiming that “Foure may easely play this Playe,” when in fact five characters appear on stage at once. As David Bevington has pointed out, this seems like a deliberate fraud on the printer’s part to sell the playbook to professional companies; five players, however, would still be within the range of most touring companies. The dialogue between Wealth and Health suggests performance at court, for it emphasizes the “naturalness” of wealth in the realm as a whole, wealth as an idea of collective Englishness: “I am Welth of this realme” (A2). “Wealth” in the sixteenth century indicated happiness, prosperity, spiritual well-being, and the opposite of woe, as well as monetary portliness, and thus Wealth and Health should not be seriously at odds. To come to this compromise conclusion, however, usually takes some heated dialogue between the parties.

The argument would probably have been familiar to contemporaries. In the years that Wealth and Health was being written, for example, the characters Money and Man were arguing their relative positions in the realm and their grievances against the other in a work called The Bayte and Snare of Fortune. Money opens the dialogue with a

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2 See David Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 53. Two of the more arguable points made by T. W. Craik in support of his court play theory are that the necessity for five rather than four actors implies that the larger royal interluders were the intended players, and that Wealth’s address to the audience who “syrt dreaming” “with its implication of a seated audience, suggests a court performance” (“The Political Interpretation of Two Tudor Interludes: Temperance and Humility and Wealth and Health,” *Review of English Studies* n. s. 4 [1953]: 98-108, p. 107). These are sensible arguments, but invite equally plausible counter-arguments: first, a need for five players was probably easily accommodated by most professional popular companies; and second, seated members of an audience would have been apparent in “mayor’s plays” in provincial hall performances, quite possibly in some inns, and certainly private house performances.

usual boast, “I am the prince perelesse in puissaunce” and Man immediately berates him, predicting themes to come in the drama:

For unto man thou art so dere and lyef,
That hebecummeth a robber, and a thief,
For thee forsaking God and al goodnes.
And hanged is at last for thee with great reprief.

All wickednes is wrought by meane of thee
As robberies, rapine, usury, and strife
with fraude, flattery, disceite and subtiltie
Brawling and barat, with all misordered lyfe.⁴

Perhaps because a dialogue between these two would be expected to conclude the right of Man over Money, the author makes Money a better defender of his right to existence than Man is an objector. Money asks, “who builded London that named was newe Troy / But I puisant peny, that eche man cloth and fede”;⁵ he then goes on to list over forty other English towns and cities that would not exist but for him. Man simply counters with the complaint that the other side of Money’s coin also enables the ruin of cities. Money has two good arguments yet to come: first, “When god formed man (thy selfe thou mayst it rede) / He gave him fre will” not to “Misuse me”;⁶ and second, if Money is the cause of evils done between men, as Man charges, then how did the enmity between Cain and Abel come about? For at “That tyme was I uncoyned, therfore man chaunge thy mind / To blame me of all evils, in dede thou dost great wrong.” Man is stunned:

⁴ Anon., The Bayte and Snare of Fortune, A2. STC gives 1556 and 1550 as likely publication dates.
⁵ The Bayte and Snare of Fortune, A3.
⁶ The Bayte and Snare of Fortune, A4.
"This is a faire excuse if it might be so taken," is his weak reply. However, Man soon bounces back and perseveres with his tirade against Money, blaming him for excesses in apparel, for making women sell their bodies, and for husbands to fall "to aduoutry, and breake theyr mariages." Money easily casts these aspersions aside on the assumption that men and women will do these things whether money is a factor or not. In conclusion, Money ranks the three primary banes of man: they are old age, sickness, and poverty. Man has to agree with this three-fold premise, but warns that enough is as good as a feast, and instructs that "reason shape the fashion" of men's lives.⁷

The understanding, albeit tentative, between characters representing English wealth and English men and women's health itself is admirable and a national experience to be thankful for; but praising one's own status must not go too far because pride and self-love are sins that will inevitably bring God's disfavor. In the drama, both the acquisition of wealth and the pride of excessive possession are linked to alien behavior. Illicit money-making via the means listed by Man and the misuse of wealth on one's own vanities are disorders laid on foreign characters and "alienated," corrupted English men and women. There is yet another, important problem with wealth, one that begins to suggest the anonymous author's critical view of the court and its connections. The critique here is not simple, but double: it seems to cite both a particularly English shortcoming, and also a compounding of this theme with the suggestion of alien interference:

Welth. Welth hath ben ever in this countrey,
And here I purpose styll for to be;
For this is the lande most mete for me,
And here I wyll endure.

⁷ The Baye and Snaire of Fortune, A6v.
⁸ The Baye and Snaire of Fortune, B4.
Health. Therin ye speake full lovingle;
For in this realme welth should be:

... Yet, to myne understanding,
Welth is mutable, and that is shame:
And Welth is hauty and proude of name:
Welth is cruell and in great blame;
For Welth is ever waverynge. (A2v)

Health insists that although wealth is a good thing *per se*, it cannot exist as a stable commodity or attribute, but causes domestic and international rifts because of the way in which it transfers itself from person to person or realm to realm. Wealth does not seem to have a conscience or any dedication or loyalty to one being. It is dangerous, then, for it is an unstable subject, traitorous (or at least mercenary) in that it is “mutable,” “cruell,” and “ever waverynge,” and those very characteristics put Wealth’s claim that he has always been in England into doubt. Craik notes that “there is a satirical implication that wealth was not known in England during the previous reign (of Edward VI).”¹ It is more difficult than this, though. Questions abound, such as where has Wealth been if not in England? Where did Wealth come from in the first place? Why should Wealth be proud now? Why is Wealth of the nation foregrounded now? Why are the failings of Wealth brought out so strongly by Health?

The first part of this exchange’s double-critique has to do with the reputation of the English—according to Continental commentators—for inconstancy. Sara Warneke has written of the theories behind such thinking, including the fact that an island nation

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¹ Craik, “The Political Interpretation,” p. 102 n. 3.
cannot help but be influenced by the constant changes of moon and tide that the population experiences around it all the time.¹⁰ Such inconstancy, it was felt, led to ethical and economic problems, where a realm becomes a hodge-podge of religious sectors, and a mess of foreign clothing and behavioral fashion. Such uncertainty of national identity through internal and external practice and appearance breaks up a realm in a factious and unreadable way so that nationality and class become increasingly difficult issues; for they not only now involve defining differences between groups of persons, but also entail crossing over theoretical boundaries such as the Frenchified gallant who carouses in a common inn, or the upstart artisan who decides to spend his earnings (illegally) on silks to wear. Legal constraints, the laws of the land, governing proper behavior within recognized ranks, are strained by the mutable distribution of wealth, and just as significantly by the source of that wealth and the ways in which wealth is displayed; and religious constraints, the laws of God, are being flouted as hospitality wanes, men effeminize themselves, and recusant groups from abroad pester the realm.

The second part of the critique has to do with the “alien” combination of pride and Wealth. While the proverbially wealthy and proud realm of the sixteenth century was Spain, Marian and early Elizabethan England saw France as the primary military enemy, and anti-Spanish jokes would have cut further from the popular nerve than they did during the 1580s and beyond. The court was altogether a more sensitive body, however. The attempt to secure the alliance between Mary and Philip II of Spain and return England to the Catholic fold after Edward VI’s Protestant parade was an endeavor that could not withstand too much criticism. Historians generally agree that the official conversion of a country from one religious house to another cannot change the practices of a population overnight. When Mary came to the throne there would

have been a significant number of people who assumed that the Protestantism of the past had been an unsavory fling with Continental radicals and that they would settle back into the old religion. There would also have been a rural section for whom it made little or no difference, who carried on worshipping in their own manner. The entertainment, job placement, and personal treatment of court and government officials was what counted at a time like this.

At court, Mary’s greatest concern would have been with not offending the Spanish and Rome. Much of the play can be heard as supportive of the current queen and government, although it is often open-ended in its praise, and could be applied to any court or regime, in a wonderfully pat playing out of its own concern with inconstancy. This “open end” can be closed down by rewriting dedicatory speeches. Thus Craik and others argue that Remedi’s final speech was tacked on by the Elizabethan printer and that the original version intends Wealth’s address to the “soveraine” to be directed to Mary, who is in the audience, and not to Remedi, who might be considered the “soveraine” on the stage. Craik uses a related supposition to refute another objection to his argument for court performance, and that is the fact that Philip was in England in the winter of 1554-55 when a court performance is argued to have taken place. He writes that “a play performed at court before the Queen and her consort would be sure to contain compliments to them both; and the probability is that the publisher or other reviser of 1558 made way for his own lines about Elizabeth by suppressing other lines in which Philip was included in the original prayer.”11 Bearing in mind Mary’s public expressions of wifely dedication to Philip it would seem almost certain that there is indeed a missing reference to the King.

There is a moment near the end of the play, which seems to be based on a commonplace, and which may well relate to the Spanish presence at a court

performance, although the authorial intention is far from certain. When YllWyll is discovered and arrested by Remedi he attempts to slip the shackles of the law by taking on the role of the uncomprehending Spaniard: "Wyll. Que quieres, [a]quest es un malo ombre; / Me is in spanyardo, com poco parlare" (D3). A. J. Hoenselaars reads this episode as "a shrewd attempt to capitalize on pro-Spanish sentiments prevailing in court circles." He writes that YllWyll's "choice of nationality suggests that, despite the anti-alien policy of Good Remedy, to be taken for a Spaniard still involved certain privileges not to be expected by other foreigners like Hance Berepot."¹² Indeed, it could be argued that the English criminal, YllWyll, expects the Spanish "disguise" to protect him, either because of political sensitivity, a kind of diplomatic immunity, or because a Spaniard would not be thought guilty of YllWyll's crimes. In performance, however, the initial reaction of a playgoer to this sudden switching of identity would probably be to superficially connect YllWyll—that evil influence that insinuates its way into our unwilling self—with the Spaniard. The sudden (attempted) transformation of the character suggests the closeness of the two identities he represents in these exchanges. Moreover, we must remember that this character is "YllWyll," one who presents himself as Wyll but has ulterior motives; such deceptiveness was consistently at play in the anti-Spanish Marian tracts that I mentioned in the introduction. Should a recommendation of national stature from such a character be taken as a compliment, or as a confirmation of what the exiled, Protestant political commentators were asserting?

Contrasted with this equivocal Spanish reference are the episodes with the actual alien, Hance the "Dutchman." While on the surface the two scenes with Hance appear to exist solely to show the English criticism—and eventually to justify deportation—of the stranger in a celebratory and comic way, the appeals of the alien, his

straightforwardness, his valid claims to residency, and the callous nature of the English characters belie the initial simple reading. In both court and public performance, in either London or the provinces, these scenes could be expected to provoke an ambivalent reaction from the audience. Neither would the reaction be the same in different parts of the country. Hance is clearly the economic alien, seen as interfering with the Englishmen's control of England. As such, a proportion of the population would agree to his deportation. Attempts were made by a radical few to do just this; but they were outvoted locally and overpowered nationally. Hance is also the representative of Protestant immigration, which, under the Marian government would presumably be another good reason for him to be sent out of the realm. Among pockets of Protestant sympathizers away from the capital, however, Hance's religio-political identity would provide an alternative argument and a very different dynamic to the play as a whole. Imagining such an audience supposes the distribution of the play-text for popular professional companies during the last year of Mary's reign, which depends on our dating the Q1 of the play in 1557, for it is marked on the title page as "newly imprinted." The reinterpretation of Hance that I go on to argue below may suggest radical thinking by the Marian author; or it may reveal the vulnerability of text to cultural intertextual reinvention at all points and in all moments. Put simply, I try to demonstrate the fluidity of dramatic text to be read against the conservative grain. My reading would open up for widespread acceptable acknowledgment after 1558, as the Dutch were becoming a more familiar sight in England. Whether recusant Protestants or humanist thinkers, supporters of immigration from the religiously-oppressed and/or economically useful Continental communities could see this play as a damning critique of everything currently "English." Wealth (influenced by Spain) has corrupted the country; the people are unstable, wavering in religion, taste, and political allegiance; and the most honest, constant resident seems to be the Protestant foreigner. Audiences sympathetic to Mary or bitterly opposed to her monarchy could both furiously agree
with Remedi's judgment that "the people be so variable; / And many be so wilfull: they will not be reformable" (C2). What an astoundingly tense statement this becomes, desperately uninterpretable, on the sharp edge that slices the cleft between Catholics and Protestants. It is at once the tame statement of a non-committal author and the very moment of a formal text at its most culturally vulnerable. Here is our first example of the "radically" (re)creative nature of the dramatic text. The reflexive critique is so strong because apparently unaware of its own power. Both the cultural milieu out of which the text was produced and the intertextual re-visions caused by the politico-cultural shifts in the years of possible performance coincide in this text; it speaks to both sides in the potential audience but answers for neither of them. Whereas the Marian court audience could take this as a comment on the need for control of the capital to be extended to the unruly mass of the population, Protestants could not but accord with the sense that this was a comment on the retrogressive Marian process, and hinted at a return to post-Reformation Protestantisms.

Let us look, then, at Hance's role and see how he exists on this pivotal point between radically different interpretations of a widely recognizable single problem of English "alienation." He enters "with a dutche songe" (B4). Shrewd-wyt disdainfully declares, "Let the knave alone! for his name is War: / Such dronken Flemminges your

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13 This song is one of the pieces of evidence Craik uses to argue that "It is clear that its actors were accomplished musicians" ("The Political Interpretation," p. 107). There is a general trend towards assuming high standards of musicianship among professional players, and this may have been so, but the presence of songs does not necessarily indicate the presence of "accomplished musicians." First, actors with moderate ears for tone can produce extremely pleasing two-part and four-part harmonies; second, and more relevant, Hance's song is immediately interpreted by YllWyll as signifying drunkenness, not musical expertise. "Here ye not dronken hance, how he be-gins to prate?" remarks YllWyll on confronting the alien, "The malaperte Fleminge is a little to check-mate" (B4). Of course, the actors may have been musicians, and the progression of court and popular musicians to interlude performers was probably widespread enough, but I am interested in examining the play's moments in context to see how they propel the dramatic story and here the point is to sing (as Ulpian Fulwell writes) an "evil favoured" song (Like Will to Like, Cv).
company wil mar” (B4). It is unclear at first whether the “War” nomenclature has to do with strife in England or war abroad, but the latter concern increasingly takes precedent. Hance denies drunkenness absolutely, however: “Ic ben nete dronken,” he says. Certainly the “Dutch” accent could be played up to sound drunk with little effort, but the textual evidence lies in the mouth of one of the most untrustworthy characters in the play, one whose job it is to mislead the English characters, and perhaps, therefore, the English audience. The idea of the drunken alien was a comic opportunity that Fulwell would lift and capitalize on a decade later in Like Will to Like.

Hance does claim that “ic can skynke frolyck,” that he can pour happily, and backs it up with the cry, “Tap bere, frow!” (B4). If he is drunk, it has enabled him to defy the scorning Englishmen, to claim a skill at shooting (or also, perhaps, armaments production, a sore point with the English who were still importing military technology and supplies), and to declare that he wants to be (like the character in his song) in the king’s service. YllWyll tells Hance that he and Shrewd-wyt cannot help him, suggesting, “Hance, ye must go to the court, and for Welth inquere.” Hance looks at Shrewd-wyt askance and replies, “What seggt ye? Welth? Nen yke, he is net here: / Welth, he is in Flaunders; ic my self brought him dere” (B4v). It may be deliberate on the author’s part that Hance slips into a pidgin English at places, perhaps those moments where we are supposed to understand what he says without too much difficulty. At several places it is impossible to be sure what Hance is saying in his Germano-Dutch-English language; the strangeness of the language suggests at once that the playwright had significant familiarity with Dutch and German, since he uses some words correctly, and that he was making a point about both its comprehensive difficulty and its similarity to English. To the Netherlander van Meteren, “The English language is broken German, mixed with French and British terms, and words, and pronunciation.”

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infiltration of England has partly been made possible by the ability for the two communities to communicate passably each in a version of their own tongues. In this English-y speech, then, Hance concedes some way toward filling the role of the Flemings as responsible for the economic ruin of England. It is done strangely, though, and the objection against Hance remains not altogether clear.

In 1554/5, the concern that wealth resided in Flanders rather than England could be a prompt for the Anglo-Spanish court alliance to ensure retention of occupation forces in the region in order to secure the wayward fellow. If we move forward in time to consider the political situation in 1557, the year *Wealth and Health* was entered into the Stationers’ Register, we are given a possible new context for meaning in this exchange and a potentially subversive performance opportunity. After Mary’s marriage to Philip of Spain in 1554, many fears of alien rule of England remained, despite a pre-nuptial agreement in which Philip acceded all control of the realm to Mary and English statesmen. Even with Philip’s accession to the Spanish throne in 1556 Mary remained an independent ruler, something that Philip rode along with, knowing that he was hated in England and more concerned with producing a legitimate heir to the English throne than nurturing the country as a home away from home for himself. From March to July of 1557 Philip was in England convincing Mary to help him in his war against France. Against the majority of her advisors Mary joined her husband’s conflict by declaring war on June 7, and by July 5th a fleet had left England to hold the French at bay while Spanish ships traded through the channel with the Lowlands. Prior to this engagement a significant amount of public money had been spent on refitting the navy, this in a time of dearth that spanned the two years preceding the war and an influenza epidemic that was to last until the end of the decade. Wealth could not be seen as prospering at court, then, for it had been drawn out of the realm and into hulks in the service of Spain.

For a Protestant thinker these hard times showed a lack of English moral and religious wealth as the famine and disease were seen by many as God’s judgment
against a mistaken monarch. For Catholics, too, doubts were raised about the
providential correctness of the Marian claim or Philip’s attempt to secure it in terms of
an heir; twice in her reign Mary announced that she was expecting a child, in 1554 and
1558, the first time to be disappointed with a long, false pregnancy, the second to be
humiliated with wishful thinking that others predicted. If no heir was arriving, was this a
sign from God, too, of the realm’s lack of moral wealth? The play could probably get
away with its implied criticism at such a politically highly-charged time because of the
ways in which it can be interpreted as mildly as required, as ambivalently partisan, and
as both an élite and popular critique. On the popular level, the joke with Hance and his
“dutche song” being named “War” and being responsible for England’s loss of wealth
becomes a post-July 5th, 1557 joke. I am not suggesting a composition date as late as
this, as does C. F. Tucker Brooke, but I point out the appropriateness of the political
situation in 1557 and into the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign for the play’s revival and
reinterpretation.\(^{15}\) The stationers’ register entry suggests a printing and/or performance
(since now protected by entry) of the play at about this time. It sets up Hance as the
available scapegoat to allegorize the contemporary political situation. By draining
England of its wealth and paying for war against France in support of Spain, wealth is
being passed from Spain to the Lowlands where trade is rife. The play could vary
between being a warning and a commentary, depending on the date of performance.
Through the court, wealth has passed by means of war to Flanders. This is what Wealth
and Health could be read to claim during two highly-charged scenes involving the alien,
and this would indeed seem to be the situation in the world of the play’s audience, be
they courtiers, private householders, town aldermen and officials, or popular spectators.

\(^{15}\) C. F. Tucker Brooke, *The Tudor Drama: A History of English National Drama to the Retirement of
When Hance returns later in the play he meets Remedi, the character who wishes to restore wealth, health, and liberty to their proper places in the realm. The exchange runs as follows:

_Hance_. Be Gots drowse, ic my selfe bin cumpt here from [min] lansman;
Ic mot in ander land lopen; al is quade dan.

_Remedi_. Thou Fleming, from whence comest thou, and what dost thou here?
_Hance_. Ic my selfe cume from sent Katryns: dare mot ic skyn[k]e de can beer.
_Remedi_. Get the thether againe, and tary here no longer!
_Hance_. Syr, ic mot mid ye spreken; ic my selfe be en scomaker.
_Remedi_. What and thou be? therwith I have nothin[g] a-doo.
_Hance_. Ic ben al forelore; [min] copin is dods: ic magh net gan therto.
_Remedi_. I pray thee, go hence, for thou dost trouble me yll!
_Hance_. Nen ic, seker, ic wyl not gan; ic wold fain live here stil!
_Remedi_. There is to many aliaunts in this real[m]e; but now I, good Remedy,
Have so provided that English-men shall lyve the better dayly.
_Hance_. What segt ye? By Gots drowse, dat is de quade man!
Be de moder Got, ic my selfe love de scone Englishman.
_Remedi_. Fie on the, flattering knave! Fie on you aliaunts al, I say!
Ye can with craft and subtelti get Englishmens welth away.
_Hance_. O skon mester, ic heb here bin this darten yeere;
Ic can skete de colverin, and ic can be[erei]de beare.
_Remedi_. Thou canst play the knave, and so ye can do all.
I trust soo to provide that Welth from you have I shall.
_Hance_. I seg to you dat Welth is lopen in en ander contry,
Wa[n]t [ic] heb hym dar brough[t]. Forstan ye net? segt me!
_Remedi_. I understand the wel; yet thou liest lyke a knave:
Weth is here in England, and Weth stil, I trust, we shal have.

_Hance._ Ic ment no quad; ic love de English-man, by min ere.
Cump up sent Katrin, and ic shal ye geven twe stope bere.

_Remedi._ Get the hence, dronken Fleming, thou shalt tary no lenger here!

_Hance._ Mot ic net mere here sin, broder? sal ic [di] geven klinkin?
Ic wil to de Kaizer gan, dar sall ic wal skinkin.

_Remedi._ Is he gon? I pray God the devyll go with him! (Dv-D2)^16

Contrary to David Bevington’s recent lumping together of _Wealth and Health_’s Hance with other “Flemish rogues” as “hated foreigners” who “carouse drunkenly,” I cannot read undiluted xenophobic comedy in this passage.^17 However much ground we give to that bias, Hance’s sincere distress at his imminent deportation is palpable and painful. Yes, he keeps returning to the topic of beer drinking and his utterances seem from time to time like non sequiturs, but through the difficult pseudo-dialect and inebriated anti-alien comedy gasp these pleas of sobriety and logic. Remedi’s accusation that aliens are false, “flattering knave[s],” crafty and subtle, would have been recognizable stock traits for the audience to laugh at. But Hance’s knowledge that wealth is not in England contains no malice—it is just an honest observation, delivered naively, for it leaves him open to further anti-alien attack. Hance’s opening proclamation is that his countrymen have confirmed that he must leave England, and he is distraught. Later we find out that Hance has already heard of a deportation order against Flemings, and his running away to his

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^16 Approximate translations: lopen=walk, quade=evil, skynke=pour, copin=friend, sekere=certainly, scone=beautiful, skete de colverin=shoot the gun, want=because, forstan=understand, geven klinkin=give a toast.

countrymen is because of his fear at being sent back to a war zone. Shrewd-wyt says later, with the scatological pun on voiding the country and the bowels:

I must nedes laugh, I cannot forbeare
To remember Warre, that knave: wil ye heare?
The horson Fleming was beshitten for feare, because he should voyde so soone. (D2v)

Remedi, by his name, might help Hance, but like Hospitality in *The Three Ladies of London*, Remedi is an agent for the English, not for aliens. To Hance, the idea of being forced to walk in another land is “quade,” evil. Remedi’s first instinct is to use the foreigner’s nationality as an insult; in a remarkably similar usage to the derogatory tag of “Jew,” directed both at Jews and non-Jews in early modern texts, Remedi spits out, “Thou Fleming.” The rest of his line is a double-edged question, for it has an overbearing implication of national boundaries: “from whence comest thou, and what dost thou here?” Hance takes it on the local level and replies that he has come from “sent Katryns,” adding a naive reminder of his earlier scene by saying that “dare mot ic skyn[k]e de can beer,” a comment on the ale-based communality with his “lansman.” He had offered YllWyll and Shrewd-wyt a beer-pouring: “I bring it to you, brother, by God’s heavenly empire!” (B4) he says, translated from his Germano-Anglo-Dutch, but is met with disdain. The national meets the local insofar as Saint Katherine’s Hospital, outside the walls just east of the Tower, was the site of a strong alien community. It is to this “Little Flanders” outside the walls of the English city of London, that Remedi orders Hance to return, only, of course, as a station *en route* out of the realm completely.

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Through difficulties produced perhaps by drink, or language, or both, Hance is trying to say something. He claims to be a shoemaker, whether to insist on his honesty or Englishness, and says that his friend is dead, and he cannot return to Saint Katherine’s; is this true or gibberish? Has there been unrest between Englishmen of the mind of the cantankerous YllWyll and the alien community leaving some dead? Something serious eats at the center of Hance but we cannot pare away the layers of language nor cut across the gaps in interpretation to get at it. Hance protests his will to remain in England, which provokes Remedi’s “There is to many aliaunts in this realme,” and his declaration that the expulsion of aliens is part of his plan to ensure the “better dayly” living of Englishmen. Hance calls this evil; he says that he loves beautiful Englishmen and has lived in England thirteen years. Then finances get the upper hand. Turning to the trope of the alien sucking money from the realm and its English inhabitants, Remedi determines to get wealth from the foreigner, whether this means to take his money and goods as a requisite before deportation, or whether it is a more philosophically and ideologically-inspired notion, whereby the idea is that wealth will return to England and the English in the wake of the Continent-bound exiles’ ships. Hance’s response is equally ambivalent and the printed text itself may be corrupt. He says that “Welth is lopen in en ander contry,” which Remedi takes as an insult and denies, but which may also be meant as a disinterested observation of the current state of the English economy.

One’s reading depends on an interpretation of the next line. An edited text reads, “Wat heb hym dar brought. Forstan ye net? segt me!” If we read the “heb” as an anglicized “have” and the first clause is a question, then Hance is implicitly asking Remedi what has caused dearth in England, via the question of what brought wealth to Flanders—he does not know. The heavily anglicized line of Hance’s in the previous scene makes it possible to accept that reading, or to entertain the possibility that the line should read, “War heb hym dar brought” (i.e. a compositor’s or copyist’s error, “r” for
"t," or an interpretive reading on their part), again anglicizing the "heb" to sound like a general "have" to English ears, and repeating something he has learned in his previous encounter in this story; this would obviously implicate himself in partial responsibility for the loss of wealth, since he is known as "War." A third reading is the one provided by F. Holthouse in his edition of the play.19 I have reproduced Holthouse's version in the transcription of the scene above because it is quite plausible considering the comma that ends the previous line, and since the verb, "heb," if Dutch and not Anglo-Dutch, is meant to imply a first-person subject. Holthouse provides the "I," and changes the anglicized "W[hat]" into the Dutch "Want," or "Because." Hance, in this reading, is claiming responsibility for taking wealth out of England. In reply to this difficult, multivalent line, Remedi replies, "I understand the well" and proves himself a better person than us, unless—as is quite likely—the line is a sarcastic joke. Whether Hance is admitting fault or not for what he perceives as England's loss of wealth, or for what Remedi perceives as slander, he protests that he means no evil, which is more than can be said for a few of the Englishman in this play, and to show his good-naturedness he holds out to Remedi a peace offering: "Cump up sent Katrin, and ic shal ye geven tewe stope bere." Again he is rejected and resigns himself to having to drink instead with the Kaiser. There is a tension between reading the alien as a bad influence (be it through evil intent, naiveté, or plain carelessness) and as a wronged, good member of English society. Comedy and socio-political critique remain in similarly uncomfortable proximity in the "alien" plays throughout the sixteenth century.

As I turn to consider the second of three plays, it would be well to remind ourselves of the importance of appreciating fully the sense we get in the drama, from Marian through Jacobean, of the "foreignness" underlying so much of what is bad about England and its people. The obvious aliens, such as the Dutch, French, Spanish, Italian,

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19 See footnote number 1.
Moors, and Jews, stand on the surface of a deeply-rooted trope of foreignness (in terms of the infiltration of aliens) and of alienation (in terms of the corruption of the English). I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter that the moralities seem to play out an early version of the “alienation” of the English, a process that repeats in the mature drama. Indeed, if the major alien characters of the later Elizabethan stage, with whom we feel we are familiar, existed in isolation from this trope of underlying foreignness that is set up in early drama, then the plots of deceit, murder, tragedy, and farce that we know would often not have been possible, and certainly would not possess the cultural depth that we feel them to. The early drama has effectively “alienated” the later; the search for doing business and going about life amidst an English “purity” (an impossible notion, as I argued in the introduction), unsullied by a dramatic history of the representation of alien corruption, is denied. The English and the alien have become entwined. It is the shared characteristics of anglicized foreigners and the alienated English, along with the denial of those shared characteristics, that provide us with the international and inter-ethnic tensions so essential to complex drama of political and social observation and critique.

II.

The name of the Flemish character in Wealth and Health is shared by his counterpart in Like Will to Like, a play from the 1560s, with Q1 dated 1568. Its lasting popularity may be attested to by two further extant editions, the second undated and the third printed in 1587. Although Fulwell’s characters from the Lowlands are not as socially engaging as Hance of Wealth and Health, the play as a whole is a more advanced achievement of comic dramaturgy. I agree with Hoenselaars’ summary that "Welth and Helth is a sociopolitical allegory about the English nation. Like Will to Like,
however, is best described as an amalgamation of comedy and sermon.”

Chambers suggests that “This might be The Collier played at Court in 1576,” and notes Fleay’s assignation of it to the Paul’s boys. It may have been played at court, but the existing texts seem primarily aimed at small, professional troupes, and the stage directions allow for the company’s lack of resources: “Nichol Newfangle must have a Gittorn or some other instrument (if it may be) but if hee have not they must daunce about the place all three, and sing this song that followeth...” (A4v). Bevington is right to say that “The tone is predominantly satiric and denunciatory rather than morally positive,” and as such it serves more as an entertaining warning to the popular audience than a moral judgment on ruling the realm or a political allegory of the sort we saw hinted at in Wealth and Health. The possibility of the play being the same as “the [devell] licke unto licke” that comes up for playing at the Rose in Henslowe’s Diary on October 28, 1600, is unprovable, but strongly suggests the continuing interest in the dominant theme and perhaps in the mode of proverb plays in general.

Following the prologue, the vice Nichol Newfangle enters, laughing. He tells how he was apprenticed in hell before his master, Lucifer, himself comes to the stage. Lucifer reminds Nichol of his corrupting, newfanging task on earth, and Nichol assures him that he has already been a highly effective presence. Tom Tosspot and Ralfe Roister, two thieving knaves, enter to boast of their escapades. Nichol sets them apart to judge which is the verier knave, the prize for the winner being a certain plot of land.

After hearing the testimony of the two men as to their own knavery, Nichol defers his

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20 Hoenselaars, Images of Englishmen and Foreigners, p. 42.
22 In the introduction to the Malone Society Edition of the text, we read, “the phrase ‘in the shroudes’ (l. 248) may be a hint that Like Will to Like was in fact originally designed (and perhaps produced) as a boys’ play at St. Paul’s.” A note then continues, “(OED ‘shroud’ sb. I.4). It is possible that the playhouse of the Paul’s Boys was in the cloister from around 1570” (p. 56) (Ulpian Fulwell, Like Will to Like Quod the Devil to the Collier, in Two Moral Interludes, ed. Peter Happé [1568; Oxford: Malone Society, 1991]).
decision. In the meantime there is a comic interlude with the drunken Hance and his friend, Philip Fleming. When the vice is finally left alone once more, he laughs and addresses the audience with his success so far and his plan to continue ensuring the downfall of the simpletons under his control. Two pick-pockets come along and are also offered the prize plot of land once Nichol can work out which of the two has inherited it by descent. Again, the answer is deferred. Then comes a lengthy set of speeches by Vertuous Living, God’s Promises, and Good Fame on proper upbringing and the avoidance of vice. When Ralfe and Tom re-enter, they have been ruined by their roistering and gambling, and their situation is aggravated when they find that Nichol’s land is nothing but the earth under their feet to be trod as beggars. They beat him up and exit. Severity the justice enters and sympathizes with the deceptive Nichol, now making the most of his injuries. When the pick-pockets re-enter Nichol fingers them as crooks, Severity arrests them, and they are taken off to be hanged. Nichol laughs again and rides away on the devil’s back.

The alien thematic in Like Will to Like is a far less developed precursor to what we find in The Three Ladies of London. The lack of English persons’ reformed education and strict upbringing leads them to associate with licentious and dangerous types who can corrupt them to the point of bringing about their deaths. These dangerous types are inextricably bound—by origin and association—with aliens. When Bevington writes that “Philip Fleming and Hans perform in a brief satire of drinking, swearing, and general horseplay, aimed primarily at immigrant labor from the Low Countries,”24 he isolates these characters in a way that we cannot successfully do in a more extensive examination of the text, any more than we could talk about Wealth and Health’s Hance without discussing YllWyll, Shrewd-wyt, and Remed.
No sooner does Nichol Newfangle the vice enter than he "offereth unto one of the men or boyes standing by" (A2v) the knave of clubs he has in his hand. Instantly leaving his calling card with a new victim, he goes on to associate himself with those present and with the source of his vice: "How say you woman? you that stand in the angle, / Were you never acquainted with Nichol newfangle?" This taunt is followed by his claim:

For first before I was borne I remember very wel:  
That my gransire and I made a journey into hel.  
Where I was bound prentice before my nativity,  
To Lucifer him selfe suche was my agilitie. (A2v)

The diabolical history of servitude from birth, and the surreal suggestion of pre-natal memory ("bound prentice before my nativity") summons the spirit-like nature of Newfangle. He may be represented on the earth by outward means such as unnecessary fashions, but the clothes reveal just the surface degradation of the corrupted soul. Moreover, Newfangle is not always immediately recognized, and when he is it is because he has previously befriended (and endangered) his acquaintance. This lack of recognition gives him time to insinuate himself into the company of new victims. Newfangle's claims to greatness at the beginning are cut down somewhat by his fear at facing Lucifer. This is enhanced by the stage direction for the latter character that "This name Lucifer must be written on his back and in his brest" (A3), turning him into a kind of sign of himself; he could be an impostor, but by his reaction we can see that at least Newfangle recognizes Lucifer as the real McCoy. When Lucifer addresses Newfangle as "myne own boy" (an appellation suggesting kinship, which he will repeat a several more times), Newfangle, flustered, blurts out, "He speaketh to you sir I pray you come neer," and the stage direction follows, "pointing to one standing by." Newfangle claims to be
afraid of Lucifer because “ye didst bruse me behinde” in a fit of temper and notes that “I am like to Cary the mark to my grave” (A3v). Lucifer’s brand is eternal and is seared into Newfangle’s behind, which evokes the common iconography of the devil with a face in his tail.

Early in the play Nichol Newfangle the vice “kneleth down” and is forced to repeat oaths given him by Lucifer, his mentor. Newfangle evades them with comic misrepresentations familiar in comedy today:

 Lucifer. All hail oh noble prince of hel,
 Ni. New. All my dames cowes tail fel down in the wel.
 Lucifer. I wil exalt thee above the clouds:
 Ni. New. I wil salte thee and hang thee in the shroudes.
 Lucifer. Thou art the inhaunser of my renown:
 Ni. New. Thou art haunce the hangman of Callyce town.
 Lucifer. To thee be honour alone:
 Ni. New. To thee shall come our hobling Jone.
 Lucifer. Amen.
 Ni. New. Amen. (B)

By this introduction Newfangle is already implicated as unEnglish insofar as he is apprenticed to the devil. Indeed, this play will equate hell with Spain at its conclusion. The evidence for his foreignness gets more earthly: “so soon as my pretishod was once come out: / I went by and by the whole world about” (A3). It seems that he did not start from England, but straight from hell, because Tom Tosspot declares:

 At your first comming into England wel I wot,
 You were very wel acquainted with Tom tospot.
You know when you brought into England this new fangled kinde
That tospots & ruffians with you were first acquainted. (B2, my emphasis)

So when Newfangle first came into England he was already of some age, for he was well acquainted with Tosspot. This suggests that the “tosspot” is a foreign figure, too, and that when Newfangle brings his “new fangled kinde” both foreigners and foreignized Englishmen would follow him. Richard Lindabury was right some sixty-odd years ago, then, when he wrote of the “alien invasion” by new-fangled foreigners:

it was against tradition that the attack was directed: the tradition that England was a country for Englishmen, and specifically for such Englishmen as could not be mistaken for foreigners. For the perpetuation of so agreeable a condition there were two serious difficulties: the large number of immigrants who brought foreign manners with them, and the large number of English travellers who, unaccountably, did the same thing. 25

As in all the plays to follow in the Elizabethan period the notion of foreignness is portrayed on the stage as a liquid concept, spreading to taint foreign-born characters and aliens resident in England, and also those characters who display “alien” ways, or “kinde” as Tosspot calls it. Such characters become dangerous, liminal entities, questionable in their allegiance to nationhood, strange in their acquired customs, and more often than not a threat across the board of class, race, and gender. Pride, vanity, desire for lucre, desire for power: all these aspects of conflict, which have been brought about in England—and other nations used as settings in the plays—by foreign presences

have the potential to touch all inhabitants, urban or rural, high or low. At the end, having left his wake of destruction, Newfangle "rideth away on the Devils back," a familiar scene of closure in the drama. Here, however, the location that is usually assumed or stated to be hell (as in *The Tyde Tarrieth No Man*) has another name: Newfangle exits with the cry, "Farwel my masters til I come again, / For now I must make a journey into spain" (F). The audience must have felt that Spain was a fitting, hell-like hot place for the foreign-devilish vice; Spain was also a place where they wore outrageously puffed-up fashions, and of Nichol’s new-fangled, mad-brained ways the playgoers could predict that "'Twill not be seen in him there" (*Hamlet* 5.1.154).

Tom Collier sets the scene of selfishness and division among common folk in the realm, and Tom Tosspot confirms the attitude that aggravates the social disintegration:

*T. Coliar* . . .

Cha begilde the whoresons that of me ha bought,
But to begile me was their whole thought.

*N. New.* But hast thou no conscience in begiling thy neighbour?

*T. Colier.* No mary so iche may gaines vor my labour,
It is a common trade now adaies this is plain:
To cut one another's throte for luker and gain. (A4v)

Kill or be killed, metaphorically in the market place, and literally in the street. Death can be—and in several of the plays under study here, is—the result of conflicting consciences. Tom Tosspot professes a willingness to kill, after finding the country surprisingly moralistic:

Many a mile have I ridden, & many a mile have I gone:
Yet can I not finde for me a fit companion.  
Many therbe whiche my company would frequent:  
If to doo as they doo I would be content.  
They would have mee leave of my pride and my swearing  
My new fangled fations and leave of this wearing.  
But rather then I suche companions wil have.  
I will se a thousande of them laid in their grave. (Bv)

The aphorism "Like Will to Like," of course, does not just frighten the godly with the threat of a unified army of unreformable types, but also precludes any Christian attempt at reconciliation between the two sides before reformation has been effected. Hoenselaars' observation, then, that "The xenophobia of Welth and Helth is alien to the Christian doctrine of understanding that pervades Like Will to Like" seems to ignore the fact that the two sides (native and alien) do not at all come together in social harmony in Like Will to Like, and the "Christian doctrine" shown by the vicious English characters is hardly an understanding one. The difference between our readings lies in Hoenselaars's concentration on the foreigners with named nationality and not the inherent and dangerously permanent "alien" presences (such as the vice Newfangle) that I am including. Taking the latter category into account contextualizes the treatment of the nationally-determined aliens and gives us a deeper sense of what pervades Like Will to Like, not Christian understanding, but intra-Christian fracturing. Christ made it clear that his followers should accept the sinners to come unto them, and in their presence would reformation be made possible. The strictly bipartisan living shown in this play does not allow such practice, so when Newfangle introduces himself slyly to Vertuous Living as "your olde freend," the latter character scornfully replies:

26 Hoenselaars, Images of Englishmen and Foreigners, p. 43.
My freend, mary I doo thee defy:
And all suche company I doo deny.
For thou art a companion for roysters and ruffians,
And not fit for any vertuous companions. (D)

This is the bind in which the play finds itself, a constraint that hinders any tale of moral restitution. It observes the state of affairs in the realm but does not display a Christian solution so much as a conservative cleaning-up operation, as the downtrodden and vice-ridden are executed, get sick, or leave the country.

Having seen, then, how Newfangle is bound up with foreignness, we should examine how his imported net of newfangled charms ensnares the English characters who have already associated with foreign vice, who have been brought up and lived with too much liberty and not enough Protestant structure and stricture in their lives, an argument that Wapull will expand in _The Tyde Tarrieth No Man_. In a way, _Like Will to Like_ is inferior to _Wealth and Health_, for it appropriates stock comic tropes without integrating them into a greater whole. The story of Newfangle bringing about the downfall of two pairs of villains—Cuthbert Cutpurse and Pierce Pickpurse, and Ralfe Roister and Tom Tosspot—holds together fairly well, but the characters of Hance and Philip Fleming do not have the hidden dimension of _Wealth and Health_’s Hance, and so remain stereotypes; Newfangle’s opening speech, too, and his exchange with Lucifer, in which they discuss pride through apparel, are not overly significant component of the play thereafter. Lucifer asks Newfangle to sow “suche pride through new facions in mens harts” (A3v) as he himself possessed when he was cast down from heaven. Lucifer continues:

From vertue procure men to set their mindes aside,
And wholy imploy it to all sin and pride
Let thy new fangled fations bear suche a sway,
That a raskall be so proud as he that best may.

What Newfangle responds to is the emphasis on pride of apparel:

Tushe, tushe, that is all ready brought to passe,
For a very skipiack is prouder I swear by the masse,
And seeketh to go more gayer and more braue,
Then dooth a Lord though him self be a knave.

This seems to indicate that the performance will play on the sixteenth-century concern, both conservative and radical, with proper dress codes, yet the story follows other routes to knock persons off the straight and narrow path of “vertue” so that their minds are “wholy imploy[ed]” to sin. The roads taken are those of drinking and violent thievery. When Newfangle sets himself up as judge to determine whether Tom Tosspot or Ralfe Roister be the verier knave, neither of them mentions apparel or new, foreign fashion as one of their knavish vices. Tom Tosspot claims to drink endlessly, swear, and lure poor men into spending their weekly wages of one groat “in one hour in tossing the pot” (B4). He also entertains married women and “As for flemishe servants I have suche a train, / That wil quaffe and carous and therin spend their gain.” Ralfe Roister claims to “entice yung gentlemens vertue to eschew” (B4v) and to ensure that all his acquaintances, including serving men pick pockets and thieve.

While Newfangle reduces boasting roisters and drinkers to beggary and real crime, he manipulates existing criminals until they reach the gallows. Pierce Pickpurse and Cuthbert Cutpurse are similarly offered the land, this time being told that one of
them—it is not yet clear which one—has inherited it. Newfangle convinces them by inventing a lineage:

For thou Cuthbert cut purse wast Cutbert cut throte son:
And thou Pierce pickpurse by that time thou hast done.
Canst derive thy petigree from an ancients house:
Thy father was Tom theef and thy mother Tib louce.
This peece of land wherto you inheritours are:
Is called the land of the two legged mare.
In whiche peece of ground there is a mare in deed:
Whiche is the quickest mare in England for speed. (C4)

The joke is in the meaning of “two-legged mare” as a gallows, also known as the three-legged mare, whereon the victim “rides.” (The OED cites this passage.) But Cuthbert and Pierce miss this and are delighted with their new-fangle-found wealth. They go off to pursue purses again and between the two scenes of promised land and the two scenes of come-uppance, Fulwell lets Vertuous Living, supported by Good Fame, God’s Promises, and Honour deliver a diatribe on the way to virtue, scolding and warning the audience directly, delivering maxims and rules to live by, and ending with a hymn. In this section Vertuous Living expounds on the universal influence of God, who is “of all men to be praysed: / Of Christians, Sarasens, Jewes, and also Turks” (C4v), and he rejects the company of Newfangle (D). So when Newfangle finally returns, singing “trim, trim merchandise” and brandishing his “rewards” of begging bag, bottle, and a pair of halters for his victims, the audience has been well-warned of the inevitable ending. Newfangle, as a devil-worshipper, is worse than Saracens, Jews, or Turks, who (however misguided) turn to God. Newfangle is ultimately more alien in his activity than all these “others.”
In the interim, Ralfe and Tom have indulged their excesses to the point that Ralfe Roister loses everything at dice and Tom Tosspot turns up in doublet and hose because he pledged all his clothing for ale. When they find Newfangle again the only land they are given is the town and country to walk in, and a bag to collect alms. Ralfe is distraught:

Gogs hart can I way with this life?
To beg my bread from door to door?
I wil rather cut my throte with a knife.
Then I wil live thus beggarly and poor.
By gogs blood rather then I wil it assay:
I wil rob and steal and keep the hie way. (Ev)

Ralfe's leanings toward suicide expose the self-defeating power of pride, revealing that one who has put so much store by possessions and image would abandon Christian salvation to avoid worldly embarrassment. Confirmations and contrasts to this observation are played through in The Tyde Tarrieth No Man and A Looking Glass for London and England (c. 1590). In the "verier knave" scene Tom Tosspot had boasted that "I have such a train: / That sometime I pitche a feeld on Salisbury plain," but now that claim seems false as the backing he requires now to resort to serious crime rather than be a sturdy beggar never materializes. And this is what the play is getting at, for the deprivation of good teaching (Tom Tosspot laments, "If my parents had brought me up in vertue and learning, / I should not have had this shameful end" [E2]) and association with new-fangled vice produces the kind of men that were feared by law-abiding citizens and law-makers. Newfangle drives the point home when Ralfe and Tom attack him for his deceit and he shouts, "Back I say, back thou sturdy begger." Satisfied with
the beating they have given him, Tom and Rafe leave the stage with the line "Now we go a begging God send us good speed" (E2v).27

Newfangle proves to be Tom and Rafe's judge indeed, for he assigns them their ongoing roles as beggars. In an interesting irony this reassignment of pastime crosses that line which many in the period considered particularly unclear between players and beggars; Rafe and Tom were playing their parts in front of Newfangle, boasting in a similar way to the alien merchant, Pisaro, in *Englishmen For My Money*, who lists his many "Jewish" vices but does not actually live up to the hyperbolic role. The thieves, however, require another justice, "Severity the Judge." Newfangle makes the most of lying on the floor after his beating, play-acting in order to harm others. With the judge's attention caught by his groans he declares, "Heer were to fellowes but right now: / I think they have killed me I make God avow. / I pray you tel me am I alive or am I dead?" (E2v). Immediately before the re-entrance of Cuthbert and Pierce the Judge asks Newfangle, guessing that he is a traveler, how things go in the country outside of town. Newfangle states that "I came lately from the stewes. / There are knaves abrode you may beleeve me: / As in this place shortly you shall se" (E3). The last line is triple-edged, with the comically prophetic meaning that the Judge and the audience shall shortly see the two knaves re-enter; that the suburbs without the walls (such as the East End and Southwark, both areas with high numbers of aliens) will spawn undesirable "foreigners" (in both the sixteenth-century and modern senses) who will come into the city to disturb the population; and that "abrode" in the audience there are knaves, as will shortly be manifest through picked pockets and cut purses. Newfangle betrays the two men to Severity and they are sentenced to execution; here the question of apparel returns in a

27 This beating returns one that Newfangle gave the two knaves at their earlier encounter. Having set himself up as judge, Newfangle responds to Rafe's addressing him simply as "Nichol" by getting down from his judge's chair and beating them not once, but three times in a row, each time stopping for a rest, and the last with the admission that there is no good reason for it except for getting a laugh from the audience: "I wil have but one fit more & to make an end / . . . / Mary this hath brethed me very wel" (B3).
fleeting moment, less important in the theme of clothing than in the revelation of the level of Newfangle's destruction. Hankin Hangman has become Newfangle's friend because of all the work the vice brings him; so when Newfangle asks for one of the condemned man's coats, Hankin has no hesitation in obliging him:

Thou shouldst have one Nichol I swear by the masse,
For thou bringest woorke for me daily to passe.
And through thy means I get more cotes in one yeer,
Then all my living is woorth beside I swear. (E4v)

It is instructive that my study of* Like Will to Like* has not yet discussed the roles of the first characters that most readers or spectators would think of as the aliens: Hance and Philip Fleming. At the beginning of the chapter I worked through the process of "alienation" that goes on in these plays; I pointed out that I find the integrated alienation of the English as a difficult-to-remove concept of vice most important to the state of English society. Although that state is commented on and affected by aliens, such as the Dutch and French, being present in body, the power of the representing the "alien stages" of English community lies in combining the alien body with the internalized alien effect. The Dutchmen in* Like Will to Like* are given a limited comic role in the play and it is Newfangle and the pairs of "alienated-native" wrong-doers, all instigators or victims of unEnglish, unChristian manners, who run the show. I have cited Tom Tosspot's claim that the Flemish in his company were servants to him, not leaders; his word is dubious in the least, but it does support the theory of transference of vice from the alien to the English resident that I am arguing takes place as we work though the morality plays. We are half way on that road of transference, for the "English" characters, as I have argued, are in fact alien presences from hell and around the world, who have assimilated. They represent perhaps the always-already corrupted, the
surfacing of the unsavory part of the self that must be suppressed, rather than an
imaginary, "pure" nationality corrupted.

Insofar as Hance and Philip Fleming are there to remind us of the origin of such
behavior, the aliens' role is like that of Hance in Wealth and Health. These Flemings put
a blatant version of depravity before us as we watch the corrupted English out-Herod
Herod. Hance is in a pathetic state—but that has not always been the case. He is
apparently telling the truth when he says "as stammeringly as may be" that he once knew
Latin and could "help the pp preest to to zay mas" (Cv), because Tom Tosspot confirms:

For he was once a scoler in good faith.
But through my company he was withdrawn from thence:
Thorowe his riot and excessive expence.
Unto this trade whiche now you doo in him se:
So that now he is wholy addicted to followe me.

The confluence of nationalities in this instance has been detrimental to both sides, for
Tom Tosspot's corruption at the hands of the foreign Newfangle has inevitably led him
to corrupt Hance in a kind of reflexive, contagious, re-alienation of foreigner and native.
Of course, Fulwell makes the "English" status of Tosspot doubtful, thus turning this
dynamic into an unstable circulation of variously alienated characters. The metaphor of
disease that was persistently invoked by complainants against alien wiles and fashion is
here enacted as the infected players cannot help but pass the disease to others; their
vices are addictive and sharing in the tools of abusive, illicit trade spreads the illness. It
is, of course, a deforming disease, one in which identities are altered, one that breeds
among the communal apparel and contiguous bodies of the theater. Where reformation
is being preached in the morality of the plays and in the State ideology, the
representatives of reformed states and nations are being brought down before our very
eyes and ears. As well as putting forth deformed speech, an over-emphasized stammer, Hance cannot hold together a dance or even the form of his upright body. The stage direction orders him to “daunceth as evil favoured as may be devised, and in the dauncing he falleth down, and when he riseth he must grone” (Cv). He becomes almost inhuman, a semi-linguistic, crawling figure, who has allegedly soiled himself like an uncontrollable animal: “By the mas he hath beraid his breches me think by ye smel,” says Newfangle.

The “deformation” of Hance is not presented as something the spectators should be sympathetic about or even ambivalent over. Hance does not contribute to the value judgments of the play in the way that the major pairs of good and evil figures do, nor is he in the mold of the trinity of Vertuous Living and his two companions; most, if not all, of the spectators would see his fall from scholarly grace to drunkenness as a reversion of the civilized (anglicized?) man to the nature of his national shortcomings. In case there should be any doubt, Fulwell introduces Philip Fleming, Hance’s friend and partner in drunkenness. Fleming, like Hance, enters singing, and soon recognizes a play-mate, Torr: Tosspot. Newfangle remarks, “Why now I see the olde proverb to be true: / Like wil to like bothe with Christian, Turk and Jew” (C2v). It is unclear what kind of slander this is; which part of the proverb has this meeting just confirmed? Is it the “Dutchman” or the “native” who is the “other”? Equivocation is almost certainly the point, for Newfangle has traveled around the world observing races, religions, and nationalities conform to the proverb of the play, and it is this ubiquitous coming-together of likes that suggests Christian and English similarity to all things alien. When Hance eventually wakes up from a deep, drink-induced sleep he relates the details of his dream, which implicate either French “knaves” or perhaps English pirates in the traffic of the immigrant burden to England:

Me thought iche was drowned in a barel of beer.
And by and by the barel was turned to a ship,
Whiche me thought the winde made lively to skip.
And iche did sail therin from Flaunders to Fraunce:
At last iche was brought hether among a sort of knaves by chaunce. (C2v)

Bevington’s observation that “Ludicrous as they are with their dancing ‘as evill favoured as may be devised,’ Hans and Philip are harmful dissipaters of England’s wealth” usefully brings out a trope of dangerous comedy that we will see used in the drama of the 1580s and 1590s. However, the dissipation of wealth is, as we saw, more relevant to the role of Hance in *Wealth and Health*. In *Like Will to Like* the alien threat displays the other side of the same destructive story: while wealth is allegedly drained from England, knavish destroyers of well-being pour in. *Like Will to Like*’s Hance emphasizes the incoming flow of “Dutch” and French aliens and suggests an uncontrollable over-running of the realm with foreigners. These alien figures of vice and deformation are the types of characters that playgoers would like to have seen board the barge to hell in George Wapull’s *The Tyde Taryeth No Man*.

III.

Wapull’s play of 1576 carries over some of the character relational and stage business features of *Like Will to Like* and strongly foreshadows the ethical leanings and societal tropes that concern Wilson in *The Three Ladies of London*. This play completes the representation of the process of “alienation” in the moralities by presenting proud, ambitious, selfish, complacent, and therefore weak English characters, ripe for deforming corruption by the alien. A play about the reformation of Christian practice,

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*The Tyde Tarrieth* presents the vice not just as individual corruptor of the people, but as a representative of all systems of perverted encouragement toward evil. Similarly, the Prologue claims that the Courtier character in the play represents "any such greedy guttes" (A3) who act like him, rather than solely the courtier class. From the beginning it is hinted that evil can be overcome as the Prologue explains how one bad apple, rather than spoiling the whole bunch, causes those who have not inspected the barrel to suspect the corruption of the others. If such rotten elements are looked to in a city or a realm they might be discovered and dealt with; otherwise "The symple ones commonly, by such are opprest" (A2) and the godly citizens' "good name doth spill" (A2). *The Tyde Tarrieth* continues the critique of wealth in a realm and the idea of common-wealth and wealth for the few, and it expands upon the vice theme we saw in *Like Will to Like*. It also points toward the mimetic representation in Wilson's plays, presenting social relations as containing problems already ingrained in the fiber of the English character. Wapull makes sure that we are aware of the power of evil encouragement and that we connect such power to the social problems of the day: schooling, church practice, and religious interpretation. The concerns, however, are not woven into the plot in the way that Wilson manages; instead they remain powerful but isolated calls from characters in the thick of social upheaval.

In this play Courage the vice "incourages" the characters, gives them the nerve to commit unethical and evil acts for their own selfish gain. Under the banner of *The Tyde Tarrieth No Man*, which he interprets as "get all while you can" on earth, he manages to ruin a courtier, make a tenant homeless, and drive a merchant to suicide. The depravation of the society is grave, for all the main characters have name prefixes that they drop to present themselves to the world at large with deceptive nomenclature. It is a difficult, but ultimately successful, task for Christianity, Faithful Few, Authority, and Correction to reform the reformable and punish the terminally evil. Courage enters to begin the play and calls on the audience to join an "imagined community" on his
“Barge” (A3). It is now a familiar argument that the morality play worked in part by
drawing the audience into empathetic identification with the vice, so that the come-
upance at the end of the play hit home all the harder. This is possible because the vice is entertaining, evilly funny; Courage’s list of characters making up the Barge’s
community, however, includes those perverters of societal relations that any self-
respecting playgoer should shun:

To the Barge to,
Come they that will go,

... If you come not soone,
You shall have no roome.
For we have almost our frayte
There are Usurers great,
Who their braynes doe beat,
In devising of guyles:
False dealers also,
A thousand and mo,
Which know store of wyles.
Crafty cutpurses,
Maydens mylchnurses,
Wives of the stampe:
Who love mo then one,
For lying alone,
Is yll for the crampe.
Husbandes as good,
As wigges made of wood:
We have there also. (A3)

In this imperfect world, however, these stage characters—rotten apples—are also part of the community of the audience. Whether known members or assumed members, the evil characters of “Usurers great,” “False dealers,” “Crafty cutpurses,” bad wives, husbands, and servants represent the expanded imagined limits of the urban English community, of which the players and audience are just a small part. There is a small lesson in this play, however, about the proximity of this “distant” community of evil-doers from the assuredly godly playgoers subjecting themselves to the secular lesson of the morality play. Courage the vice encourages “Good cosen Cutpurse” among the audience his “bussnesse to plye” (D4v). Although it is a familiar joke in the interludes to interact with the audience in this suggestive way, the declaration that “no man shall thee espye” is powerful rhetoric in the context of The Tyde Tarrieth, where the vice infiltrates at all levels. Courage goes on to show that he can beguile all sorts, and they do not “espye” his dealing until it is too late; he also shows that he “incourages” evil-doers such as cutpurses to go about their trade (provided they give him some portion of their spoils), unafraid of punishment because he knows that the leader of the rabble escapes:

The yong ymphes I incourage and leade,
In ryotous footesteps, so trimly to treade.
That guilty, and ungulity, often they pleade,
And being found guilty, hang all save the head. (Dv)

The good, the innocent, and the simple are at Courage’s mercy, and his insertion of the cutpurse among the audience places them in a subservient position to him. The cutpurse is indistinguishable from the playgoers; a foreign presence among them who cannot be deciphered; infected by “contagious” Courage (the epithet is used at A3, B3v,
C3v, and G3v), the cutpurse in turn corrupts and spoils the godly playgoers. Cutpurses are the third type in the passenger list aboard “the Barge of sinne” (A3v) that Courage invites all to board. Making his roll-call in a couplet rhyme scheme (a, a, b, c, c, b) the suggestion is there of a type of anti-ark with rhetorical pairs of lines and perhaps the suggestion of pairing off playgoers with their recognizable vices (like will to like, after all); this reading is aided by the diluvial notion that “It is high tide, / We may not abide, / Tide taryeth no man.” Here again is perversion of the proverb. One must repent and reform before the tide takes souls away in the final judgment. Courage translates this into earthly terms at points, and here he inverts it so that all are going to hell instead of heaven. Since Courage proclaims that the barge will “sayle, / To the Divell of hell” (A3), we should probably conclude that this is a boat moored alongside Charon’s skiff; it is almost like a commercial rival to the generic trans-Styx service, for Courage the contagious captain skims off the top of the villains’ gains and promises them earthly gain and good “welcome” at the end of the boat’s journey.

While Wealth and Health throws up powerful questions about the state and meaning of Hance, it is dramaturgically weak; parts of Like Will to Like could clearly be hilarious in performance, but the effective stage business detracts from a greater depth of philosophy that could have been instilled into a drama in which the vice escapes instead of being condemned; and The Tyde Tarrieth does not really commit itself to extended comic sequences, long dialectic, or digression on reformation, instead incorporating them all in a drama that is thereby a balanced dramatic text, and in ways finer than Fulwell’s. But it hints at greater dramatic things to come in a tantalizing but unfulfilling way by broaching but not investigating some topics I will now go on to examine. Jean-Christophe Agnew, in Worlds Apart, discusses the ubiquitous “disguise” of the metic in commercial meetings and exchange, the ways in which persons crossing societal boundaries have to take on new faces, manners, and characters in order to ply
their trade and impose themselves upon others.39 He makes no mention of The Tyde Tarrieth, but it is a text that significantly prefigures a part of his thesis. A number of the characters in this play—those in control of the economic and ethical action—fashion themselves deceptively. This has a double-effect. On the one hand, stage characters do not know who their friends and who their enemies are, and Wapull can play with dramatic irony; on the other hand, these representations suggest that any person, whatever his or her character or occupation, has the potential to act out their anti-self. In the play this is done simply by removing the telling adjectival prefix to the characteristic nomenclature. We saw the beginnings of this method in the characters of (Yll)Wyll and (Shrewd)Wit in Wealth and Health, but in Wapull the citizens’ deceptive quality has become so rife that its ubiquity makes all relations doubtful. Hurtful help becomes plain “Help,” Paynted Profit “Profit,” No good Neighbourhood just “Neighbourhood,” and Fayned Furtheraunce puts himself out as true “Furtheraunce.” Even the vice Courage has alternate identities. Having encouraged the Merchant to inhabit greediness and the Courtier to seek out worship, he turns to the audience with the boast:

Thus may you see Courage contagious,
And eake contrarious, both in me do rest:
For I of kind, am alwayes various,
And chaunge, as to my mind seemeth best. (C3v)

The unpredictability of the vice makes tackling him difficult. An evil mirror of the proverbially inconstant English, he is like a mutating virus, contagious through contrariousness, and the demonstration that his deforming influence knows no bounds comes in the person of inverted Christianity. Entering late in the play, Christianity is

presented as the manifestation of English evil, a kind of sink into which the ethical filth of society has run and soiled beyond recognition. Christianity arrives only just in time for reformation to be made, and Wapull seems to understand that the kind of extended moralizing we were subject to in Like Will to Like is neither dramatically tenable nor necessary for the ethical message. This is how Christianity looks on first sight:

Christianity must enter with a sword, with a title of pollicy, but on the other syde of the tytle, must be written gods word, also a Shield, wheron must be written riches, but on the other syde of the Shield must be Fayth. (F2v)

Christianity displays “pollicy” and “riches” but protests his heart is good. The character Faithfull Few (again one figure representing an imagined collective type) calls Greediness (alias the Merchant) “a Christyan with a canckered heart” (F4), and the premise seems to be that a Christian country and people is still reformable despite the extent to which evil has insinuated itself. Bernard Beckerman writes, “in using the idea of misplaced Courage, Wapull the author stresses the twisting of virtue rather than the prevalence of inherent evil.”30 Indeed, the example here is corrupted English Christianity, illustrated in part through the character of the fallen merchant Greediness, whose conscience is touched by a preacher (B2-B3).

Having introduced himself, Christianity explains his strange appearance, warning that it is possible to destroy Christianity both by malicious means and ignorant, self-deluding measures. “Their cruell force I may not withstand,” he says of the greedy, “Therefore I bear this deformed sword and shield”:

For in steade of Gods word, and the shield of fayth,

I am deformed with pollicy, and riches vayne:
And still I say, the greater part sayeth,
I am still a christian, and so shall remayne,
My Christianity say they, no domage doth sustaine:
But alas they are deceived, their armoure is not sure,
For neyther pollicy, nor ryches, may long time indure. (F2v)

English Christians see no danger in their weakened states, vulnerable to alien corruption. The state of Christianity is so dire that even Faithful Few starts to doubt him. The rhetoric of “policy” is—as Peter Happé points out, and as Marlowe knew, and reinvented it—the usual preserve of the vice, and so Christianity has some explaining to do. Faithful Few has just returned from court where he has witnessed the manifestation of those fears expressed in the prose tracts and plays before and after The Tyde Tarrieth No Man: “the spoyle of the symple” and the bad name given to a community through the actions of a few; “the covetous greedines, which some cittizens use, / A shameful ill reporte to the whole ensues” (F3). Faithfull Few says, “Now are you deformed like a thing forlorne, / Which maketh me suspect, of me in my mind.” The deformation of Christianity infuses Faithful Few, who, believing in Christianity, must now doubt his own fidelity, his state of mind, and his very identity. Can a character called Faithful Few be what he thinks he is, or appears to be, if the object to whom he is faithful is in fact corrupted? Christianity assures Faithfull Few that he is what he claims and that God will reform him, but for Faithful Few the question mark remains because a corrupted Christianity would claim this, too, for the purpose of deceiving Faithful Few into following him..

When Faithful Few accords with the maxim, “Si Deus nibiscum, quis contra nos” (If God is with us, who against us? [F3v]), it is sincere, but invites a cynical reply from the playgoer along the lines of “almost everyone else.” And when Greediness (alias the Merchant, alias Welthiness) and Courage encounter Christianity and Faithful Few only to depart again disdainfully, the latter pair are left to remark on a double-bind. On the one hand God must be relied on to help the evil reform themselves and thereby reform Christianity; preaching God’s words of reformation and showing the evil ways of men and women to themselves to force them to change is Wilson’s plan also. Christianity says to Faithful Few, “I will pray unto God for thy comfort and ayd: / I beseech thee make like intercession for me, / And that my reformation be not long delayd” (G1). However, a deeper, and contrary, problem in Wapull’s thinking is the insistence by evil persons that they are in fact Christians and that their evil ways are legitimate pastimes. This is what threw up the problem for Faithful Few: should he believe Christianity, or is this the ultimate example of misrepresentation, a devilish temptation toward an anti-Christian Christianity?

Yet many there are, which in the world doth live,
Who for Christians will needes accompted be:
Though to all abominations, their selves they doe give,
And from no kind of vice be cleare or free.
Covetousnesse is accompted no sinne,
Usury is a science and art:
All wayes are good, whereby we may win,
Although it be to our neighbours smart. (Faithful Few, G)

A cliché today is that the first step toward curing one’s illness is admitting that one is ill. Christianity wastes no time in taking that step and thereby gains the trust of
Faithful Few. Christianity recognizes this problem in others, citing as his authority Aristotle. (In this play, in *Like*, and in a majority of the sermonic prose tracts the "pagan" authors are turned to for "Christian" moral teaching): "The covetous man cannot learne the truth. / Wherefore he cannot, or will not know, / The way to reforme me Christianity" (G). An evil-doer may have gone too far to be able to reform himself, or he may stubbornly refuse the teaching of reformers. Somehow the people must be made also to look inward and discover their own corruption. Through self-scrutiny, an investigation of actions and beliefs, people must break down the public disguises they have used to propel themselves toward riches at the expense of their neighbors and must reveal their true faces and their un-doctored names. Only then will their mistaken creed be discovered, the creed that follows the proverb, "The tyde tarrieth no man," as the irreligious dictum of earthly greed. It is this very important combination of false self-representation and cankered thinking that is unique in this play; although Wapull does not go on to investigate the problem in depth or to suggest secular, social ways of dealing with the problem, this recognition of a deep-seated flaw in a number of powerful English citizens highlights the play's own particular facet of the problem of reformation of society in Elizabethan England. It is a side of Englishness that incorporates the need for religious and philosophical education, and the failings of the class system.

Anyone who had seen Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* in the previous few years could have sensed a parallel between the vice from hell who rides away on the devil's back to Spain at the end of the play and Courage, whose first speech entreats everyone present to join him in his journey to hell. But Wapull's vice gets caught and is taken away to be hanged. Whereas Newfangle fashioned his halters for his underlings and successfully avoided punishment, Courage's belief in the continuance of the tradition of the head avoiding the henchmen's fate is given the lie as Correction lays his hands upon him. This suggests a state in which everyone is vulnerable to justice and vengeance. It
suggests that there is more than one side to every story, more than one way to enact one’s citizenship, at whatever class; in short, that deformation and reformation lie on each side of a very thin line. Indeed, the Merchant Greediness is almost pulled across that line into reformation by the persuasive words of a preacher: “His talk I confess my conscience did nip” (B2v), he declares to Courage’s disgust. Having mulled over the preacher’s accusations against the unethical acts of merchants, he strengthens the sentiment:

Yea but truely his wordes did my conscience prick,
Of me he did so unhappily gesse,
I promise thee he couched me unto the quick,
For that in gayning I used excessse.
My conscience doth tell me, I have done amisse,
And of long time I have gone astray,
And a thousand witnesses the conscience is,
As Salust in most playne wordes doth say. (B3)

This is an interesting moment, for Greediness recognizes his evil and this was the concern of Christianity and Faithful Few—that lost souls “cannot, or will not know, / The way to reforme me Christianity.” The knowledge of his evil, and the tortured conflict between earthly temptation and his conscience’s objections, leads to the man’s desperate suicide. In the end, he cannot resist living in accord with the teachings of Courage, who reminds him that “the world will thee despysse” (B3) if the Merchant willfully gives up riches. Greedinessse declares, “In deede as thou sayest, it doth me behoove, / Not so rashly to lay my gayning aside, / Least so my selfe a foole I do proove” (B3).
I have already suggested the idea of the “anti-ark” in the play, and we have seen Christianity with his shield and title backward. There are further examples of such turning of the iconic tables. After Courage describes Furtherance, Helpe, and Profite by their trades and characters they sing a song and Helpe observes of their exit, “so shall we be even a whole trinity” (B2). Courage works his congregation in a truly evil church; he adds to Helpe’s observation, “Syr here was a trinity in a witnesse, / A man might have shapte three knaves by their likenesse.” Several scenes later Courage expounds his heterodox teaching, as he talks of the devil’s desire to lead men astray, “In hope after death, to have body and soule”:

Tush what meane I thus of soule for to speake,
In vayne with such talke, my braynes I doe breake.
For soule there is none, when the body is dead,
In such kinde of doctryne, my schollers I leade.
Therefore say I, take time, while time is,
For after this life, there is nothing but blisse.
There is no soule, any Payne to abide,
The Teachers contrary, from truth are far wide. (Cv)

His hellish preaching says thus much, and his school of abuse issues deformed education to its pupils:

Ah syrra, I cannot choose but rejoice,
When I remember my little pretty boyes:
My schollers I meane, who all with one voyce,
Crye we love Corage, without other choyce. (Dv)
When Courage is finally overcome and one of his victims, Wastefulness, saved from Despair by Faithfull Few, confirmation of the ambivalence of all appearances comes in the triumphant turning of the vice’s own proverb against his teaching. Faithful Few says to Wastefulness:

And as hertofore thy mind for to please,
Thou haste learned the Tyde will tarry no man,
So now it behoveth for thy greater ease,
That saying, after Gods will for to scan.
Take time while time is, thus I doe meane,
Amend thy life whilst here thou hast space:
To God’s mercifull promises see that thou leane,
So shalt thou enjoy the Tide of his grace. (G2v)

This resurrection of the divine author through a close reading and reinterpretation of the proverbial text convinces Wastefulness, and he goes off to reform his wife, too. Here we see the tide that was the last chance for hellish gain of riches in the opening scene turning to the approaching, baptismal waters of God, suspended like a wave over all the Christians of England and held back only by the forces of ignorance and deformed learning. In Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene’s *A Looking Glass For London and England* we will see such a wave of absolution reform the wicked residents of Nineveh. And it is not enough just to profess Christianity; reformation must be absolute and genuine. Faithful Few lays down a judgment:

For better it were unchristened to be,
Then our Christianity for to abuse:
The Jewish Infidell to God doth more agree,
Then such as Christianity do so misuse. (G4-G4v)

A related comparison comes up again in *The Three Ladies of London*, and is struggled with in the drama for the remainder of the century. The English were frighteningly aware of their own tendency to scoff at alien vices, yet to take on those vices in an extreme and "unChristian" way. Such an inversion of English, faithful self was surely more hideous to God than the "Jewish infidell" who had never known any better and might yet come to salvation through Christ.

The lack of an extended digression by Christianity and his followers lend the text an air of non-exclusive Puritanism. In a Lutheran vein the "case studies" of the corrupted, flawed, cheated, downtrodden, and saved characters suggest that there are not just the elect few in society, but that anyone can work their way to heaven if they turn to God and acknowledge their own sinfulness. That this is the case is brought out in an extemporization on the themes of hospitality (here termed neighborhood), greed, poverty, and God’s grace by the layperson named "Tenant tormented." Like the usurer and the broker, the covetous landlord had become a stock character for which the morally upright critic could voice disdain. As a result, the tenant became a common character too, thus Beckerman considers him a "generic Tenant." 12 Paula Neuss writes that the character of Tenant is one among a few who "are introduced not simply or mainly for the purposes of social satire, as is usually supposed, but in order to give concrete application to the proverb, to show what it might mean in practice for this particular audience." 13 I think this observation can be extended to include the merchant Greediness and also the newly-weds Wantonness and Wastefulness. William Wager’s *Enough is as Good as a Feast* includes a depressed tenant, the idea taken perhaps from personal experience. As Mark Eccles has discovered, Wager (being a parson) attended

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the dying Lancelot Fothergill of the Blackfriars and heard his grievances. Apparently Fothergill “was not able to prefer his poor boy to the lease of his house, he was tied so hard not to alien the lease for twenty-one years that had been made to him by Francis Pitcher.” 34 Fothergill’s “leasesmonger” (as Satan gleefully calls the corrupted worldly men in _Enough is as Good as a Feast_) would not cooperate. This reverses Neuss’s argument, as the concrete experience produces the dramatic satire. Of course, this does not go against Neuss, but strengthens the likelihood of maturing mimetic moments in the theater having an increasingly realistic effect on the audiences.

“Whether shall I goe, or which way shall I take,” asks _The Tyde_’s Tenaunt rhetorically, “To fynd a Christian constant and just” (C4v). A fine preacher, he forecasts the view of Faithful Few exactly as he states that “Ech man himselfe a Christian would make. / Yet few or none, that a man may trust. / But for the most parte fayned, inclined to lust.” Tenaunt then goes on to lament the greed of his landlord who threw him out, and the hostility of his deceitful neighbor who does not play his part true to his publicized name (“My neighbour supposed, is my deadly foe”). Unlike Lady Conscience in _The Three Ladies of London_, who is also evicted at a moment’s notice and succumbs to a criminal life to make ends meet, Tenaunt declares that he will retain his honesty and strive for salvation through Christianity. His concerns about the health of Christianity prepare us for the heavier fate of English Hospitality in _The Three Ladies_:

> Both my house and living, I must now forgoe.  
> What neighbour is he, that hath served me so?  
> Thus crewelly to take my house, over my head,  
> Wherein these forty yeares, I have bene harbored and fed.  
> And now being aged, must thus be thrust out,

With mine impotent wife, charge, and famely:
Now how I shall live, I stand in great dout,
Leading and ending, my life in misery.
But better doe so, then as they live, by theevery,
Catching and snatching, all that ever they can,
Because that (they say) Tyde taryeth no Man.
But God graunt that they, in following that Tyde,
Loose not the tyde of Gods mercy and grace:
I doubt that from them, away it will slyde,
If they still pursue the contrary race.
.
I see whome I seeke, is not here to be found,
I meane Christianity, constant and just:
I doubte that in bondage he lyeth fast bound,
Or else he is dead, and lyeth buryed in dust.
But if he be living, to fynd him I trust,
Therefore till I fynd him, I will no where stay,
Neyther in seeking of him, I will make delay. (D-Dv)

"The Lord helps those who help themselves" is an often-abused maxim for it is usually quoted by the "have"s in reference to the "have not"s. In The Tyde Tarrieth, however, to help oneself is merely to seek out God's promises in the form of Christianity. The lateness of Christianity's arrival in the play, coupled with Faithfull Few's remark even later that Authority has not yet turned up to finalize control over Courage and pass him over to Correction, lays more emphasis on the necessity for faith and determination of laypersons and perhaps on the ability of everyman and everywoman to effect the changes they pray for.
So this is the result of greediness and “no good” neighbourhood. But it is in
turning to the cause of Tenaunt’s eviction that we come across Wapull’s trope of self-
scrutiny most powerfully, and in two ways. First, this is the one time that Wapull pushes
the consequences of corruption through a mimetic sequence so that we are shown the
working-out of the plot in human terms in an extended later scene. Second, in
discussing how he may gain the tenement in which Tenaunt lives, No Good
Neighborhood is aided by Courage and “Hurtful” Helpe to discover the beneficial aspect
to what he thinks is a disadvantageous side to his character; the bivalency of character
that runs as a premise for deformation and reformation through this text is pushed into a
new, and literally alien, dimension, as the strangeness, foreignness, and similarity of
Neighborhood to aliens becomes his greatest asset in achieving his anti-Christian
desires. Neighborhood wants to get the lease on a “commodious and feate” tenement but
fears that two things work against him: the “good name and fame” of the current
resident and the fact that he is “but a straunger among them.” Helpe explains how
Neighborhood misperceives himself and his chances:

Marry syr it is much the better for that,
For if thou werte more straunge, and borne out of the land,
Thou shouldest sooner have it I dare take in hand,
For among us now, such is our countrey zeale,
That we love best with straugers to deale.
To sell a lease deare, whosoever that will,
At the French, or dutch Church let him set up his bill.
And he shall have chapmen, I warrant you good store,
Looke what an English man bids, they will give as much more.
We brokers of straugers, well know the gayne,
By them we have good rewardes for our payne.
Therefore though thou be straunge, the matter is not great,
For thy money is English, which must worke the feate. (B4v)

The stranger the better, it seems, in "this Town [which] is grown so monstrously corrupt and degenerate, and so strangely over-run with Vice and Folly, that there's little good to be expected from the Society you'll find in't."  

Neighborhood is a "foreigner," strange insofar as he comes from a different town. This puts him half way on a scale of strangeness that plays to his advantage: known for their willingness to pay through the nose for property, aliens are given first refusal at prime real estate. In a displacement relationship of replacing the native with the alien (in conceptual terms), or an inverse relationship of the upwardly mobile alien with the downwardly mobile native (in real, bodily terms), the more "strange" or "alien" the person and the activity, the more likely that alien is to damage the quality of personhood and life of the English. The relation of the "strange" to the "more strange" comes up in this passage, a relation that appears and works in a similar manner in The Merchant of Venice. The "strange" is posited at first as what is different from the norm. The "more strange" pushes the strange further away, seemingly to a greater "otherness" (as suggested by Helpe's definition of "more strange" as "borne out of the land"). However, the "more strange" becomes the newly familiar, the self-like. Landlords are familiar with aliens (i.e. the "more strange") and Courage, Helpe, and the rest of them are far more identifiable as non-Christian, unEnglish aliens than as natives. Like will to like, and the alienated residents of England deal with the familiar aliens from abroad.

Helpe knows the subject of aliens so well because his career is that of a broker, or "factor," for foreign traders. Brokers were disliked by a sector of the godly and economic observers because they seemed to do nothing in exchange for their wealth.

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Like usurers, brokers have no trade from which there is a product. They use the good works of others to make money with money; nay, worse than usurers, they breed money not even from money, but merely from speculation, from nothing. George Clarke, concerned with the decline of traditional, English industry, wrote of these people that they:

advanc’d themselves from little or nothing to be Men of great Estates, and as much impoverish’d their Masters, who sadly complain of these Abuses, and are left without prospect of a Remedy.

... These Factors ... are a Publick Nusance and Prejudice to the Clothing Trade.36

Clarke is not directing this at foreigners specifically, but the exchange is where the proverbial “confusion of languages” is to be heard and where Helpe makes his money by the aliens. He appears to help buyers to producers and domestic sellers to overseas merchants, but his help is hurtful as neither the seller nor the buyer get the prices they should, but instead pay hefty brokerage fees to middle-men. Courage describes Helpe as “a broker, betwene man and man. / Whereby much deceyte thou usest now and than” (B). In setting up a rotten deal between the Merchant greediness and the Courtier wanting worship, Helpe’s lack of productive work gains him double:

Yea but of them both, I had my bribes,
My masters, the Broker can play of both sides.
He is almost payd as well for his trotting,
As is the Scribe, for his writing or blotting. (D4)

36 George Clarke, A Treatise of Wool, and the manufacture of it (London, 1685), Bv, p. 26; B3, p. 29.
The Courtier laments his misdealing at the hands of Helpe, the Merchant, the scribe, and the Merchant's man, Furtherance. A little fee to each factor adds up to a great proportion of the gross gain:

*Ninubula plavia imbrem parit,*

A mizeling shower ingendreth great wet,
Which saying *officium proverbia non tarit,*
Many a little maketh a great.
So every of them, by me wrought his feate,
And every of these brybes, being cast to account,
To a good porcion I feele do amount. (E)

Behind it all, Courage the vice acts as "Godfather," encouraging his men to carry out their evil deeds and then skimming off the top. When he is alone with Greediness the Merchant shortly after the beguiling of the Courtier, Courage says, "Now that here is none but you and I, / I pray thee deliver to me my part" (E2v). When Greediness refuses to recognize this head of the crime family, threats ensue: "I will make thee confesse a parte of mine," warns Courage, "Or else I will make thy bones to smart." Help protests that there is no profit to be turned over, but Courage is buying none of it. They fight amid Courage's cries of "I will heate you in every jointe" (E3v) until Help submits; Courage then turns, as if nothing had happened, to work his evil ways on the newly-entered Wastefulness. An unChristian, deformed, and alien system of organized crime and false dealing is corrupting the ethics of the English, cutting across ordered social hierarchy, ruining the upper classes, and impoverishing the simple folk.

But Courage is not victorious in the way that Newfangle is, and from this time forward in the plays under study, it becomes a far more suspenseful question as to
whether the "vice," villain, or disrupter of society will be judged and punished appropriately, as was traditionally the case. Drama moves from providing didactic answers and resolution toward a poetics of socio-political ambiguity, deliberately poised on the cusp of great questions. Just as we see Greediness the merchant arguing with himself over his conscience and eventually going mad, so we see Courage in the end engaging in private dialogue, unsure of his position. Beckerman notes the shift: "If intensified direct presentation by Courage promotes disruption, then the revelation of inner debate which diverts the player's energy from the audience to himself is an acting-out of his defeat." Indeed, the outward masks of the troublemaker easily make their point, but the questioning mind of the vice who has achieved some limit of corruption and deformation is a barrier to amoral action. Answers turn to questions, resolution to ambiguity. The vice's strength—his rapport with the audience—is lost with the switch to non-interactive, internal dialogue. It is as if the two-sidedness of Courage, which he has so proudly boasted of throughout the play, has finally confounded him too.

Moreover, the internal dialogue is a denial of Courage's own claim that the head survives the punishment of lesser criminals. His "student," the Merchant Greediness, went through such a personal battle before his downfall, and Courage now mirrors the doomed man's state. As the title page of The Three Ladies will tell us, the morality play is good "for all estates" to look into and learn from. Here, the classes of power-lusting leader, middle-ranking merchant, and underling small-time crooks are homogenized under the aegis of Christianity (with the aid of Authority and Correction).

I want to close this chapter by reiterating my argument that we need to keep in mind the ever-present and linked nature of the social, the political, the religious, and the alien in these plays of Elizabethan England. We have seen that a particularly harmful example of aliens ignoring Wager's adage of "enough is as good as a feast" was their

grabbing up of housing at high rents. Bevington comments on this phenomenon, "With such a scapegoat conveniently at hand, English popular drama of the late 1560's and 1570's was prepared to soft-pedal the domestic religious question."\(^{38}\) It seems to me that a Calvinist pointing out of the ways of sinful mankind and a Lutheran or mildly puritan scenario of individuals aiming for the Lord are, in the plays I discuss here, inevitably part of the alien question. It is part of my thesis to insist on the inextricability of the relative portrayals of different types of alien, and it is my task to argue for the concurrence and non-discrete values of social and religious issues. Moreover, that other category, the political, is equally bound up whenever aliens are involved. If they are blamed for the "infection," corruption, or deformation of England through excess (of apparel, rents, usury, and so on), then political questions of governmental alien legislation are involved. G. K. Hunter and F. P. Wilson write that in the morality play the wicked cause "social rather than political corruption."\(^{39}\) But this cannot apply to the corruption caused directly by aliens. Once the Elizabethan reign had settled in, religious heterodoxy could be portrayed as alien, because Roman or, recently, Spanish, and social corruption involved the politics of the immigration of alien bodies, ideology, and practice. Similarly, Bevington's comment that "Concern for economic rivalry rather than religious doctrine led to the satirical exposure of domestic villains as well as foreigners" should be adapted in the context of this study.\(^{40}\) The later drama, such as we shall see in *Englishmen For My Money* and *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, certainly revels in exposing the vice-ridden and self-destroying Englishman, but in the moralities and mid-century prose tracts there is a prevalent suggestion, overt or implied, that sinful behavior in the social milieu and in the economic marketplace is an alien tendency, one

\(^{38}\) Bevington, *Tudor Drama*, p. 133.


\(^{40}\) Bevington, *Tudor Drama*, p. 135.
either "caught" from contact with aliens like a disease, or one imitated from alien
element and all the more vicious for being practiced on either a naturally innocent, or
over-proud, careless, and therefore eminently corruptible population.

*Wealth and Health* provided us with an ambivalent alien onto whom the blame
for home-grown corruption was laid; in *Like Will to Like* the alien Flemings were the
comic side of the more serious "alienation" by the foreign vice, Newfangle. Wapull
presents another facet of the same stone as he emphasizes the corruptive power of
internal (i.e. English) weakness, and the latent evil within the English breast, which
simply needs a little "incouragement" to manifest itself in myriad ways. Just as we
cannot know the extent of the communities that make up nationhood and national
identity, we cannot know the complete chain of causes that leads to the effects we
witness in the present. Both matrices contain levels beyond our immediate
comprehension. To compensate for this, the earlier plays present the alien body as a
starting point from which to trace the deformation of the English. With *The Three
Ladies of London* Wilson begins to provide us with a fuller appreciation of this
"distanced" awareness of the depth of societal machinations. The complicated state of
English artisans, of women, of beggars, of merchants, and the rest, are examined by
Wilson, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Haughton not just as the results of single causes,
but as components of a metamorphosing, growing set of social and political relations.
Continual motion among the sets of relations means that the blame for corruption
cannot be instantly laid at one source's door; rather, the hidden faces that cause what we
see to be seen must be inferred from experience and from our knowledge of the patterns
of causes and effects at any particular moment of history.
CHAPTER TWO

Robert Wilson’s London: religion, class, gender, and the struggle for English community

Before Marlowe’s visionary reinterpretation of theatrical space and power or Shakespeare’s exploration of inter-racial relations, Robert Wilson was examining the economic and ethical effects of social community and conflict. In the process, he pushed the bounds of the morality play to the brink of mature mimetic drama. Wilson’s aura of Renaissance dramatic maturity comes from his acute perception of the economic state of, and social relations existing in, London in the late 1570s and '80s and his foresight concerning the unfortunate consequences of anti-alien feeling several years down the road. Richard Dutton has called Wilson, “a true professional of the theatre, an actor, comedian and playwright,” and H. S. D. Mithal sees him as “a writer who stands like a sign post, as it were, on the crossroads of the times.” Yet Wilson remains a footnote in most studies. This chapter attempts to give Wilson’s dramaturgy the extended investigation it deserves and to show how he handles the social, political, and religio-moral impact of alienation in a complicated manner more akin to that of Marlowe than to the earlier interludes.

Wilson understood London society—persons of all ranks—to be in desperate need of self-scrutiny. Individuals must strive to reform their wayward lives and reject the evil companions who have led them down the paths of error. And Wilson leaves us in no doubt about who he thinks these companions are: the deformation of the English was, in the first place, and remains, a direct result of ethical and economic corruption by aliens. Since the 1560s, various foreigners have settled in England and assimilated and

many more continue to pour into towns on the south-east coast and London, where their
effect is to "alienate" the English—to tempt them from honest livings and lure them
with lucre. Beginning with the role of the Jewish alien and moving on to consider the
other alien-English and alien-alien relations that Wilson presents, I intend to show that
Wilson engages in the kind of complicated questioning of stereotypes of nationality and
ethnic characteristics that some critics would have Marlowe or Shakespeare doing for
the first time.

Clearly, the improvements of the later, greater writers cannot be denied. The
Marlovian and Shakespearean workings-out of the relationships between the "alien"
Jew or "other" and a native or colonial, settled population have been examined by,
among others, Emily Bartels, Alan Dessen, and Daryl Palmer, and refined by James
Shapiro.\(^1\) But, as I have already pointed out, Robert Wilson was no mere scribbler
either, at least in this, his early period.\(^4\) If we come to the play with pre-conceived
notions of the late morality, we will share opinion with C. van der Spek, who describes
*The Three Ladies* as one of two "belated and very dull specimens of the moribund
morality genre."\(^5\) It takes little more than a surface reading, however, to understand the
importance of this dramatic work. Thomas Cartelli's *caveat* reminded us in 1988 that

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\(^4\) I believe, along with H. S. D. Mithal, that there was only one man of the theater named Robert Wilson, who wrote *The Three Ladies of London, The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, and *The Cobler's Prophecy* and later went on to work for Henslowe at the turn of the century. See Mithal, "The Two-Wilsons Controversy," *Notes and Queries* 204 (March, 1959): 106-09, where he effectively dismisses earlier two-Wilsons theories.

pre-Shakespearean drama has much yet to teach us: he writes that The Three Ladies's
“unorthodox treatment of Christian and Jew should also be enlightening to those critics
who continue to subscribe to a view of Elizabethan attitudes toward cultural difference
which is as oversimplified as the one Marlowe and Shakespeare persuade us to reject.”
This observation tells us that there is even more going on in the play than whether or not
the portrayal of Christians and Jews by Wilson is unorthodox; a variety of Christian and
“infidel” alien characters have profound purposes and precise roles in this play of
alienation.7

Louis B. Wright observes of the later moralities:

The plays of the 1560’s and ’70’s are predominantly reactionary. The authors
bewail the evils of the new order and set forth preachments against the times. No
longer is the play a spiritual sermon warning sinners primarily of judgment and
hell, but the hand of the preacher is still evident. Materialism and prodigality

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Shakespeare Studies 20 (1987): 255-68, p. 259. Wilson’s development is also apparent in the literary
form in his plays. He progresses from a play largely in fourteens, a sometimes plodding tradition taken
from the interlude tradition and then in its twilight, to a more careful use in the later work of prose, and
the new style, blank verse, used to reflect characterological features and the style or genre of the speech.
In illustration of the need to move away from the “flatness of the fourteener” for drama to mature, G. R.
Hibbard points to the unintended comedy of Preston’s Cambises at what should be the most horrifying
moment, the playing of Sisamnes (“From ‘iygging vaines of riming mother wits’ to ‘the spacious
playwright with limited skill and a style from what Hibbard calls “the East Coker school of versification”
(“From ‘iygging vaines,’” p. 57), Cambises contrasts with “this rather impressive drama,” The Three
Ladies, in which Wilson handles fourteens somewhat more artistically. Even Wilson, though, would
recognize the need for the music of the four-stress song line and the natural feel of blank verse.

7 I make this summatorial comment acknowledging and agreeing with A. J. Hoenselaars’s observation that
The Three Ladies shifts us from the era of using “mere foreignness” in alien characters to allocating
specific national identity, but that those identities do not always seem to make sense in terms of stock
character traits (Images of Englishmen and Foreigners: a Study of Stage Characters and National
Identity in English Renaissance Drama. 1558-1642 [London and Toronto: Associated University Presses,
1992], pp. 43-44).
incidental to it are the bogies of the later stage homilies. Greed is the source of all social evils; the usurer comes to be the Great Devil; Ambition is more detestable even than Pride in the earlier plays.\(^8\)

Now Wilson brings the earlier characters together in more complex ways, showing us the consequences of evil actions, which Wapull began to manage, and rethinking received wisdoms about dramatic setting, plot, closure, and character representation. While he does warn of hell like the old plays, he conforms with the new trend of material concern, yet subverts the trend by presenting a usurer who is anything but the “Great Devil.” This radical coverage makes Wilson’s use of genre somewhat unstable (with morality figures, mimetic characters, and abstract ideas parading as persons), but there is much that is focused here too. He concretizes his thesis with contemporary political relevance (the concern of immigration), and this gives the play an air of modernity that Marlowe would go on to better. Also modern is the complexity and evasiveness of the author’s mind. His apparent and distasteful xenophobia\(^9\) strikes against his presentation of the generous Jew and the wise Turkish judge; and while his wishful scene of biblical judgment that ends the play is there to deliver us from evil, it also (still biblically, some would say) reveals a misogynist strain. Yet his dramaturgy is sound: when we hear the character Hospitalitie cry out for help and when we realize he has been murdered, we are thrust into a theater that challenges the combative, paradoxical ethics in all of us. Hospitalitie, representing the social and physical provision of Christian teaching, is a material matter on earth and therefore a “touchable” character. Wilson’s play is—like in olden days—a moral sermon, but now the game is

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\(^9\) This is more blatant in *The Pedler’s Prophecy*, a Wilson-like, but probably significantly earlier, play. On dating the play, see G. L. Kittredge, “The Date of *The Pedler’s Prophecy*,” *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology* 16 (1934): 97-118.
deadly, and we catch an inkling of that Marlovian will such that the “alienated” English cannot help but drive relentlessly, proudly, and lustfully forward toward their own (self-) destruction.

Wilson wrote *The Three Ladies of London* at the beginning of the 1580s, and by 1584 a quarto edition had appeared. Q1 was probably a lightly cut version of the original play, and bore on the title page the words “publiquely played.” During the early eighties, then, this play appeared in London or the provinces, or both. *The Three Ladies* tells the tale of the downfall and corruption of Lady Love and Lady Conscience at the hands of Lady Lucre and her unsavory team of henchmen—Usurie, Dissimulation, Symonie, and Fraud. An Italian merchant called Mercadorus trades in London with money he has borrowed on usury from Gerontus, a good-natured Levantine Jew. Mercadorus provides an essential link between Turkey and England, between the Jew and the Christians. Previous commentary has not dwelt on the important ways in which the scenes featuring Mercadorus and Gerontus work in the play. Bartels gives Wilson a passing mention in her discussion of colonialist discourses in *The Jew of Malta*:

With the exception of Wilson’s *The Three Ladies of London* (whose setting is obviously England), Renaissance plays situated the Jew in foreign worlds, not only to reproduce the historical alienation of Jews from England but also to enhance the otherness of the figure.10

But the reader of *The Three Ladies* soon finds out that the play is not an “exception” in terms of the Jew’s situation, since the London setting accommodates almost everyone

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except Gerontus, but rather in Wilson’s radical twist on the “otherness” of the figure: the Jew (a usurer, no less) is a good character whose sympathetic acts reflect back on the morally corrupt English. Bartels’s paragraph continues by praising Marlowe for “the uniqueness of his use of setting,” Malta rather than Italy, “for he associates his Jew with a place defined not by corruption, but by imperialist conflicts of significant consequence to England’s national security.”

But Wilson’s choice of Turkey as Gerontus’s home is an earlier example of such dramatic savviness. The relationship between Turkey and England was a strange one, based on a history of military power and fear, then shifting towards trade war and the rights to sea-routes—imperial conflicts, not corruption. Gerontus’s Turkey would have summoned great images of the newly-familiarized Ottoman Empire in the way The Jew of Malta’s Turks probably did ten years later; Wilson even provides us with the Turkish-Catholic contrast, which Marlowe goes on to exploit for all its satirical and subversive worth.

The significance of Wilson’s choice of foreign location and the characters he places there need to be investigated fully because they weigh heavily on the moral lessons that Wilson is trying to teach. An early critic, J. L. Cardozo, misreads Wilson’s handling of Gerontus. “When the author wishes to enliven his canvas with a Jew,” he writes,

he has to transfer the action abruptly to Turkey, - because otherwise he could not bring his Jew in. He had to choose between the improbability of brusquely shifting his scene to the Levant, or the impossibility of importing a Jew into England.\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\) Bartels, “Malta, the Jew,” p. 5.

Putting to one side the fact that we now know the phenomenon of Jews entering England in the 1580s was far from an impossibility, Cardozo implies that the ideal—necessarily missing in the play—would be to depict a Jewish character in London. On the contrary, it is essential that the Jew is located far from the core team of London characters. Part of Wilson’s sociological critique depends precisely on the distance in the scene in which Mercadorus travels to Turkey (1235, D3v) for the power of the portrayal of the Jew. A more simple precursor to the situation with Barabas outside Malta’s walls in the final act of The Jew of Malta, Wilson’s division of city and Jew introduces a dramatic contrast to his picture of the state of affairs in London: the geographically separated Jew in the Moslem country effectively exposes the hypocrisies and evils of the Christians in England and those in transit. This bodily, physical relationship permits and underlies the ethical teaching of alien concepts that are addressed both in Turkey and London.

The twist Wilson inserts in the play with his Turkish Jew is based on a xenophobic premise of the Jew as the worst type of usurer, but it is set up precisely as a stereotype which is in the process of being questioned. Bartels points out that the division between “Jewish fiscalism” and “Gentile mercantilism” is challenged in The Jew of Malta, since “the transaction which is at the center and the crisis of the play, and which threatens to prove the Jew a Jew, does not involve usury.” As distinctions between Jew and Gentile break down in The Jew of Malta so the assigning of “fiscal” or “mercantile” duties exclusively to one or the other becomes difficult, or impossible.

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14 I cite line references from Mithal’s edition of the plays followed by the Q1 signature.

Wilson approaches this problem another way, a harder way—the Shakespearean way: by retaining the stereotypical bipartite division he questions head-on the morality both of the persons involved and the activities themselves. He shifts the scene of the play to a location in which Mercadorus and Gerontus are in uncomfortable proximity—the Jew trying to persuade the merchant to give him his money, the merchant trying to wheedle his way out of it—thus suggesting the impossibility of dividing the professions. By keeping Gerontus a usurer while setting up the contrast with the merchant, Wilson asks the audience to see through the trade to the person, and to ask what effect that kind of person could have on England and Englishness. Marlowe will expand the concept of “profession” as including one’s career choice and one’s ethical and theological beliefs and activities. As such, self-determined identity, professional activity, and religio-moral “profession” become entwined. It is possible to see how this influence of material and spiritual identity builds on the “alienated” character we saw developing in Wapull’s The Tyde Tarrieth. Whether deliberately self-fashioned, or weakly “deformed,” the character in whom notions of “native” self and “otherness” are combined becomes more and more complex and more and more central in the Elizabethan drama of moral, comic, and tragic conflict.

The portrait of this Jew in the land of the “malignant . . . circumcised dog” (Othello 5.2.354-6) is astoundingly sympathetic.¹⁶ We are not given a picture of the precise, cutting usurer, but of a man whose place in society has necessitated his role as money-lender; and in this role he is considerate and lenient to his borrowers. We are not told that Gerontus has become rich through his trade, and must assume that it is doing him significant financial harm to be left unrepaid of the three thousand ducats loaned to

¹⁶ The significant treatise concerning usury to be published before this quarto was Thomas Wilson, A Discourse upon Usury (London, 1572), and although it damned the practice, it also based that argument in part upon the damage that usury does to trade. It is local English trade only that suffers, for Mercadorus’s trade is doing well with the help of borrowing, and Wilson’s emphasis on the anti-Christianity of usury would reflect more directly on Usurie of London than on a distant Jew.
Mercadorus for over two years. There seems to be no malice or irony, then, when Gerontus says, “I am glad you be come againe to Turky, now I trust I shall receive the interest of you so well as the principall” (1249-50, D3v); he is simply desperate for the conclusion of a long-overdue business contract to which both parties initially entered freely. Gerontus declares, “Senior Mercadorus, I know no reason why, because you have dealt with me so ill / Sure you did it not for neede, but of set purpose and will” (1256-58, D4). But still Gerontus is flexible. Having been made familiar with Mercadorus’s mercantile reason for returning to Turkey, he offers to aid the Italian in locating his goods. Later we hear Mercadorus himself admit that “My Lady Lucar have sent me heere dis letter, / Praying me to coossen de Jewe for love a her” (1563-64, E3), and we lose all hope in the veracity of his dealings when he spits out the insult as Gerontus exits, “Mary farewell and be hangd, sitten, scald drunken Iew” (1561, E3).

The portrayal of a pleasant resident of Turkey may be related to the changing view the English held of that country. The good relations between Elizabeth and the Sultan of Turkey during the 1580s (mediated in part by a Jew, Alvaro Mendez) might have allowed Gerontus’s image on stage to be more acceptable. But this may be falsely to impose international politics onto popular culture. Myth dies hard, and political and economic agreements between nations do not dispel the citizens’ ingrained ideas about historically horrible foreigners they must now “officially” consider friendly. Roslyn Knutson has recently struck a balance, accepting that “Elizabethans and Jacobeans took

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17 Cf. Shylock’s first line, “Three thousand ducats, well” (The Merchant of Venice 1.3.1), and his retribution when the bond runs out after only three months.
18 The section of the audience to pick up on such an idea would be the artisans and merchants, and we now have a play appealing across an impressive breadth of consumers, from the oppressed to the oppressors. Once the Sultan of Turkey, Murad III, had agreed on trading terms for English lead and tin in 1580, Elizabeth set about making the link permanent. The Turkey company of 1581 (the probable year of writing The Three Ladies) expanded to merge with the Venice company in 1592 (the year of Q2 of The Three Ladies), forming the Levant company (D. M. Palliser, The Age of Elizabeth: England Under the Later Tudors 1547-1603, 2nd. edn. [London and New York: Longman, 1992], p. 27, 336-37).
a darkly romantic view of infidels and pirates into the playhouse . . . in the popular mind a realistic view of the Turks based on commerce and diplomacy did not replace a fanciful view based on rumors of ‘violent cruelties and dark sensualities,’” but continues, “I do suggest that playgoers had a more tangible knowledge of international commerce and diplomacy than some recent commentators imply.”

This ambivalent sense of the Turk as “other” yet familiar was enhanced by the development of trade relations with the 1581 formation of the Turkey Company, and in the preceding years by the changes taking place in the Mediterranean. The Lepanto battle of 1571, in which the Turkish fleet was crushed by the Spanish-Venetian alliance, marked a shift in the Mediterranean balance of power away from the threatening Ottoman Empire, and it also prompted the transfer of expenditure from military activity to trade and diplomacy.

Of course, there is no Muslim Turk directly affecting England in The Three Ladies, a Turkish Jew being the character who links Turkey to London. Gerontus’s practicing religion is in question, however. It does not do Gerontus any favors in the eyes and ears of the audience that he swears “by mightie Mahomet” (1545, E3) to arrest Mercadorus if he does not settle his debt; whether this implies that Gerontus is a convert to Mahometism or not, this exclamation sets the Jew within an ideological context that he has trusted to, and which has accepted him—although in this instance, the Islamic machinations have not favored Gerontus. The Jew, the universal alien, has been given a home in Turkey. Marlowe’s Jew has a claim on our sympathies despite his repellent character, precisely because he is the Jew of Malta, because Malta should be a haven for him, yet proves hostile. We share, to an extent, his wish for revenge. Our awareness of Gerontus’s feeling of Turkey as his home is assured when, during a court hearing to

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settle the dispute with Mercadorus, he says to the Judge “I will not against our Lawes grudge” (1716-17, F, my emphasis).\(^{21}\) If, as Knutson claims, the playgoers did have a significant sense of foreign and political affairs, the realism of the picture of the settled Jew in Turkey would not have escaped their notice. Constantinople became a well-known haven for sixteenth-century Jews fleeing the Inquisition and the increasing trend of expulsion, which spread through central Europe following its 1490s institution in the Iberian peninsular. The escape of the Nasi family is one famous example of the hospitality of Constantinople; Jews in Constantinople were well known for their skills as businessmen, diplomats, and physicians. William Biddulph reports of the Empire in 1609 that foreigners were:

permitted there to live according to the institutions and precepts of such Religions as it pleased them to observe, and to exercise with all safety, their handicrafts and merchandises; which ministered an occasion unto an infinite multitude of Jewes and Marranes, driven out of Spaine, for to come and dwell there: By meanes whereof, in very short time the City began to increase in traffick, riches, and abundance of people.\(^{22}\)

It seems that what would have been “other” was the image of the Turk as marauding turbaned warrior and what would have been more familiar was the idea of the Turkish diplomat and trading negotiator, and for The Three Ladies and in late-

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\(^{21}\) Cf. Shylock’s emphasis on “your” law in The Merchant of Venice (4.1.101). In fact, Gerontus does more than this, for he adjusts the judge’s previous line, drawing himself and the Turkish system together further: “Judge. Sir Gerontus you knowe, if any man forsake his faith, king, countrey, / and become a Mahomet, / All debtes are paide, tis the lawe of our Realme, and you may not gaine- / say it. / Geron. Most true (reuerent Judge) we may not, nor I will not against our / Lawes grudge” (1712-17, F, my emphases).

sixteenth-century London that negotiator was often a Jew. Against the received idea of the evil Jew, then, Gerontus’s personal characteristics and his geographical and temporal place coincide to make him a site of temperance—the Jew is the familiar figure in the Turkish part of the tale. When Mercadorus worms his way out of paying Gerontus by threatening to “turn Turk,” it is significant that the Jew objects so strongly, because the objection would coincide with that of the English playgoer. So we have a problem: the (Catholic) Christian has “coossend de Jewe” (1759, Fv) and that in itself is comedy, and the Christian after all does not in fact change his faith, finally declaring, “Me be a Turke, no” (1763, Fv). But the Turkish Judge himself comes up with the conclusion which of course is not meant to apply only to the case before him, but to the general behavior of so-called Christians in the play. He says, “One may judge and speake truth, as appeere by this, / Jewes seeke to excell in Christianitie, and the Christians in Jewisnes” (1753-54, F). The cozening of Gerontus is set up through the threat of Mercadorus turning Turk to avoid payment of his debts, but in fact the cozening lies in the fact of him not turning Turk; in him relying, rather, on the Jew backing down from the bluff of conversion. The evil Christian merchant uses the fact that men and women with religious conviction and good conscience are easy to overcome in this corrupted world.

The Christian merchant displaying “Jewis[h]nes,” then, is a highly ambivalent character who highlights the contradictions inherent in received thinking about the evil

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24 Assessing the contemporary reception of what is going on on stage here is complicated by Roslyn Knutson’s wonderfully documented study of almsgiving and the English awareness of, and fascination with, foreign tales of capture and (often religion-based) hardship. Knutson notes that some of the petitioners for ransom money to free captives were foreigners who had got into trouble abroad while trying to come to the aid of Christians (“Elizabethan Documents,” p. 87). Gerontus’s “Christian” behavior, then, becomes less surprising in this historical context. Against this is the fact that so many of the captives being collected for were held by the Turks, with whom Gerontus is inseparably bound.
“other” and good native Englishmen. He is a Christian, whose material “profession” has entailed his lust for gain such that he is subject to deforming, corruptive, heterodox ethical “profession.” Wilson continues to make the critiques of his predecessors even more material. Lucre provides the universal alien link between corrupted persons and communities. Mercadorus elicits reactions from Gerontus that force us to make comparisons between the Jewish usurer of Turkey and London’s Usurie. The character Usurie received his training in Venice under Lucre’s “Graundmother the olde Lady Lucar” (278-79, Bv), and has been “naturalized” as a resident of England, since “England was suche a place for Lucar to abide, / As was not in Europe and the whole world beside” (285-86, Bv). In Wilson’s sequel play, The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London, Symonie lists the aliens for Usurie’s benefit:

Simo. Tis not our natie countrie, thou knowest, I Simony am a Roman,
Dissimulation a Mongrel, half an Italian, halfe a Dutchman: Fraud so too, halfe French, and halfe Scottish: and thy parents were both Jewes, though thou wert borne in London.” (1439-42, F4).

Mithal questions whether Wilson put that last clause in the mouth of Symonie precisely because this is slander and not the truth. The point is, I think, that Usurie, whatever his parentage, is a second generation English resident whereas the others (according to the admittedly doubtful testimony of Symonie) are all new immigrants; he was born in London, served in Venice, and now has returned. We can tell how assimilated Usurie is by his English inflection; he is not written as a foreign character with the comic bad English of Mercadorus.

The “foreignness” of Usurie, however, is made clear through the facts of his evil deeds and his employment by Lady Lucre. He has Nichol Newfangle-like identity in
that he is apprenticed to a character who will be condemned to hell at the end of the 
play, and he is English without being absolutely "native." Aliens of the artisan class are 
hurting native craftspersons in the marketplace and strangers from the merchant classes 
are—regardless of social and economic consequences for England—resorting to London 
to make money. "Euerie man doth sewe [sue]" for Lady Lucre says Lady Conscience, 
"And comes from cuntreyes straunge and farre, of her to haue a vewe" (10-11, A2v). 
Lady Love agrees:

For Lucar men come from Italy, Barbary, Turky, 
From Iury: nay the Pagan himselfe, 
Indaungers his bodie to gape for her pelfe. 
They forsake mother, Prince, Countrey, Religion, kiffe and kinne[.] (16-19, 
A2v)

Mercadorus is one such forsaker, who has come from Italy and Turkey to mine 
England's wealth. In the poor economic climate of the 1580s Lady Lucre’s instructions 
to Mercadorus to engage in economy-wasting trade must have touched the audience 
members who were laborers and feeling the pinch of poor harvests, or artisans seeing 
the imports of vanity in their market-stalls. She tells the Italian:

Thou must carry over Wheate, Pease, Barly, Oates, and 
Fitches and all kinde of graine, 
Whiche is well sould beyond sea, and bring suche 
Merchauntes great gaine. 
Then thou must carie beside Leather, Tallow, Beefe, 
Bacon, Belmettell and every thing.
And for these good commodities, trifles to Englande thou must bryng.

As Bugles to make bables, coloured bones, glasse, beačes, to make bracelettes withall:

For every day Gentlewomen of England doe aske for suche trifles from stall to stall.

And you must bryng more, as Amber, Jeat, Corall, Christall, and every such bable,

That is slight, prettie and pleasant, they care not to have it profitable.

... And you shall win me to your will. (405-24, B2v-B3)

This alliterative and chiming verse would have rung alarm bells in the minds of the workers. Using the limited documentary evidence of native responses to the trade problem, M. J. Power writes that craftspersons "claimed that their members were dying in the streets in 1597, starved of work because of imports. ... It would be rash, however, to generalise from so few complaints about the decline of London crafts in the decade, particularly when complaints from craft companies were endemic in the late sixteenth century." Power's paper, we should note, is concerned with "the severity of the crisis of the 1590s in London as perceived by those in authority." The actual decline of crafts might not be solidly arguable from this evidence, but the belief (or perhaps the politically-intentioned rhetorical stance) that such was the case is apparent. The production of such complaints either expresses a real concern or a system of texts which would be used as an excuse for retaliation against those blamed for the crisis."
Disinterested (or at least removed) contemporaries believed there was a crisis in the native craft industry: William Harrison's *Description of England* (1587) laments the English fashion for foreign products at the expense of home-production; Robert Yarington's *Two Lamentable Tragedies* (1594) says much the same thing; and in his *A Direction for Trauailers* of 1592 Sir John Stratling tells how the admiration of foreign artisans in England has encouraged apprentices to learn under foreign masters instead of English.²⁸ Philip Stubb's seconds the fear of "draining" the country of good product in *The Anatomy of Abuses*, while the greater part of his text suggests an increase in English "vanity." The ongoing importance of these concerns in London seems confirmed by the healthy publishing record of *The Anatomy of Abuses*: two editions in 1583, a third in 1585, and another in 1595. "[W]e are so surprised in Pride," writes Stubb's:

that if it come not from beyond the seas, it is not worth a straw. And thus we impoverish our selves in buying their trifling merchandizes, more pleasant than necessarie, and inrich them, who rather laugh at us in their sleeves, than otherwise, to see our gret follie in affecting of trifles, & departing with good merchandizes for it.²⁹

²⁸ Several of the vice figures are revealed. Similar to the national status of Newfangle and Tosspot, these characters represent a strange mixture of foreignness and Englishness, being of alien stock but well-settled, assimilated, and followed in England. We do not get a foreign country for Fraud until *The Three Lords* in which he is designated as a mongrel mix of French and Scots; and when Simplicitie tells the tale in that play of Fraud's mischief, it is a story from a figure with alien characteristics living in England with "long continuance" (311, Bv). Fraud, at one time an Ostler, used to grease horses' teeth so that they could not eat hay; he would then suggest to the owners that "I give him Otes, Fitches, Pease, Barley, or Bread" (97, A3v), stealing three-quarters of the foodstuff every night. The similarity of the list of cereals and grains uttered by Lucre and Simplicitie emphasize the double-pronged raid on English goods: they are being sent out of the country and exchanged for trifles and they are being stolen within the country by dishonest serving-men.


The physical influx of alien goods and persons is bound to “alienate” the English population from their native traditions. Ethnicity is threatened as status becomes more and more marked by foreign goods. The irony of such a deformation of Englishness lies in the fact that these visible goods of upper-class status were often baubles, trinkets with no cultural value. This connects to the critique Wapull delivered in his “foreign” character of the Neighbor: the more strange, the more (in inverse relationship) he would rise in society and honest, native Tenant would fall. Yet perversely, the more strange, the closer to the familiar. The intervention of the alien into the “deep, horizontal” sense of community also infects the strata of a vertically-conceived society. Stable native class and occupational structure is alienated as the various “styles” or “cultures” of the social strata are determined by their “strangeness”: the strangeness of one stratum of native society from another becomes normal. How desperate the task is, then, for preachers like Wilson to convince “all estates” that the trappings of their identities are the very elements of alienation in the realm, and must be rejected.

England prided itself on solid production of staple goods, such as wool and wheat; the further imports of fine cloths and foreign accessories differed from that basic English product, the more they seemed to be sought after as status symbols, or as markers of one’s disposable income. The inverse relationship continues, then. The more alien the product, the less worthwhile; the more foreign producers and traders earn, the more staple goods of the kind Lucre and Mercadorus list are drained from England; the more the pockets of aliens are lined with English money, the more the culture of England is lost to increasingly “alienated” society. Some would say that, through detrimental material intercourse with aliens, the English were expending or impoverishing their very identity. By the time John Deacon wrote in 1616 of “Our carelesse entercourse of trafficking with the contagious corruptions, and customes of
forreine nations,” foreign travelers to England and English observers alike had noticed
the fickle mutability and alienation of English culture:

from whence cometh it now to passe, that so many of our English-mens minds
are thus terribly Turkished with Mahometan trumperies; thus ruifully Romanized
with superstitious relickes; thus treacherously Italianized with sundry
antichristian toyes; thus spitefully Spanished with superfluous pride; thus
fearfully Frenchized with filthy prostitutions; thus fantastically Flanderized with
flaring net-works to catch English fooles; thus huffingly Hollandized with
ruffian-like loome-workes, and other ladified fooleries; thus greedily
Germanized with a most gluttonous manner of gormandizing; thus desperately
Danished with a swine-like swilling and quaffing; thus skulkingly Scotized with
Machiavillan projects; thus inconstantly Englished with every new fantastical
foolerie; thus industriously Indianized with the intoxicating filthie fumes of
Tobacco, and what not besides? From whence (I pray thee) do all these, and
sundry such other prodigious polutions of mind and bodie proceede, but from an
inconsiderate conversing with the contagious corruptions, and customes of those
the forenamed countries? According to the Italian proverbe which pourtrayeth
forth an English-man, thus: Englese Italienato, e un diabolo incarnato: An
English man Italienate, is a very divell incarnate.30

The list is amusing and overblown, but it is to the purpose. The alienation of the English
was appearing as something quite out of control; lists could not encompass it. An
interesting point about this list is its inclusion of the distant ethnicity in the term

“Indianized.” Deacon’s concern to write a treatise about tobacco lies largely in

tobacco's associations with an "other-too-far." The drama could (over-) complacently discuss Continental European aliens, but the "Indian" and the black character would be a marginal yet enticing figure, a central site of ethnic tragic tension, or the theme for a large-scale display in the form of a masque or outdoor entertainment. To move from white Continentals to "dark" others was a move outside the control of dramatic representation in some ways. To breathe in, and destroy oneself through, tobacco, was to—quite literally—"incorporate" a radically alien ethnicity into the native individual and communal body. As if this were not enough, the speaker, Hydrophorus, brings in the strange Italian proverb, one that could be taken to denigrate Italians as much as "English-men." The mix of English and Italian leads to the "divell incarnate," which has been the definition of the Jew. The Machiavel's connection with Barabas and Mercadorus and Lucre trading with the (half-willing) help of Gerontus hint at this bastard child of Anglo-Italian parentage. And English Usurie, as I pointed out above, has Jewish parents while being inextricably linked to Lucre, the English woman of Italian stock.

The ethnic embroilment becomes complicated, then, and all the more difficult for preachers like Wilson to see a way out of, short of expulsion of the aliens and long, hard repentance by the English. Hydrophorus makes us aware that he is not advocating total withdrawal from international contact in theory: "It is not simply their conversing with any those forreine countries themselves," he says, but something deeper, "but their communicating rather with the in-bred corruptions, and contagious customes of those severall countries, that poysoneth both, with such filthy pollutions."31 For a moment, it reads like the pollution happens "both" ways between native and alien, but the "both" refers to "in-bred corruptions" and "contagious customes." So contact is permitted, but contagion must be watched out for, However, writing in 1616, Deacon has observed the

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31 Deacon, Tobacco Tortured, C2, p. 11.
final stage of the break-down of native identity that I talked of in the introduction and first chapter. In this stage, the native cannot resist alienation because his pride, vanity, and ambition reveal the weaknesses inherent in us all. The ideal for the patriotic English preacher, playwright, or pamphleteer is still to conceive of a pure center of national identity, one to set against the contagious, corrupting "other." While that center does not exist, it is as well to articulate its existence—effectively to create it—in text, so that the fall from native grace can be rhetorically and iconically displayed as all the more deadly. John Deacon uses the metaphor of a clear stream and infected water in his version of representing Englishness:

But how difficult a matter it is for mans nature (so universally polluted) to escape the pollutions themselves, each one may perceive in his proper experience, and find it most apparently demonstrated by this ordinarie experiment: Namely, let a sweete christall streame but have it accustomed course through the midst of a foule filthie chanell, and then tell me how long that streame it selfe will soundly retaine his inherent sweetnesse or clearnesse, Now then, mans corrupted nature (being neither inherently sweet, nor essentially cleare in it selfe) if it be carelesly permitted (hand over head) to have an ordinarie entercourse of trafficking with corrupt and contagious countries, as is were in a foule filthie channell, the very mind it selfe will be as unable to withstand the pernicious customes of those contagious countries, as the very bodie of man (accustomably conversing in pestilentiall places) is unfit to resist the pestilentiall infections of those selfesame places.12

Hydorophorus understands the dilemma of English weakness permitting alienation, yet national insufficiency requiring the alien contact that leads to it.

Fulwell’s Like Will to Like (Q1 1568) staged a less complex version of the same problem by concentrating on the destructive power of pride on the vain island nation. Nichol Newfangle, who the Devil calls “myne owne boy” (A3), has been taught by the master of pride, Lucifer, how to display pride and how to extract it from citizens so as to lead them to their downfall. Referring to his own decline through pride, Lucifer details the end result of the desire for the fancy apparel that Newfangle has learned to make:

For thou knowest that through pride from heuen I was cast,
Euen vnto hel wherfore se thou make haste
Suche pride through new facions in mens harts to sowe,
That those that vse it may haue the like ouer throwe.
From vertue procure men to set their mindes aside,
And wholy imploy it to all sin and pride
Let thy new fangled fations bear suche a sway,
That a raskall be so proud as he that best may. (A3v)

Wilson details his own concern for the specific sin of pride of apparel in The Three Lords and in the character of the soldier in The Cobler’s Prophecy (Q1 1594),33 and it

33 In The Three Lords the pompous display of the Spanish is foregrounded, whereas lord Pompe and the other lords of London are shown to be sumptuously dressed not because of sinful pride but as a healthy tribute to the splendor of London, herself a character “very richly attyred” (Prologue). In The Cobler’s Prophecy Mars tells Venus that he overheard her servants, Niceness and Newfangle, commenting on her slavery to “fashions” of clothing and behavior (D3); Sateros the soldier makes apology, too, for his mean apparel in the presence of Mars (D3v). He makes a similar apology near the beginning where he notes that “Because I am homely clad, you hold me dishonorable” (B3). His contrast of his apparel with the “silks” of the courtier is a social comment not on transgressions of sumptuary law or on newfangled obsessions with fine cloth but on the dangers of pride and inter-class tensions.
may not be entirely coincidental that the two proclamations enforcing statutes of apparel in the 1580s were issued in 1580, soon before *The Three Ladies* was written, and 1588, the probable year of *The Three Lords*.

Nichol Newfangle’s response to Lucifer and Mercadorus’s response to Lucre’s order to impoverish England, are remarkably similar, and it seems clear that Wilson would have seen a short and direct link between everyday ethical, social transgressions and damnable submission to hellish pride and selfishness. Once more, the slide from material alienation to moral deformation and corruption. In each case the respondent’s tone assures the listeners that these mechanisms of depravity are long-standing imperfections within the English; the decline of English society through the pride of dress and the insatiable desire for new, foreign, and useless goods is already ingrained and destroying English ethics, culture, and identity. I quoted Newfangle’s reply in chapter one:

Tushe, tushe, that is all ready brought to passe,
For a very skipiack is prouder I swear by the masse,
And seeketh to go more gayer and more braue,
Then dooth a Lord though him self be a knave.

And Mercadorus similarly boasts in reply to Lady Lucre’s export order:

Tinke ye not dat me haue carried ouer corne,
Ledar, Beefe, and Bacon too all tis while:
And brought hedar many bables dese cuntry men to beguile?

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Yes, shall me tell you Madona, me and my cuntrimans have sent ouer, bell mettell for make ordinance, yea and ordinance it selfe beside, Dat my cuntry, and oder cuntreys be so well furnisht as dis cuntry, and has neuer been spide. (425-31, B3)

From the similarity of the speeches, we can see that the categorization of the plays by the kind of work they are doing in respect to the alien must remain flexible. The dramatic text is always newly revealing and always (re)creating itself. On the whole, in Like Will to Like the sources of corruption that lead to the downfall of the characters remain on the level of religious and moral abstraction. Wilson creates a wider base for his morality: his breadth of topical coverage and analytic depth in The Three Ladies is unique at this moment of dramatic history. It is “by the meanes of Lucar,” states the title-page, that “Loue and Conscience is so corrupted.” The ethical demise, or “alienation,” of the fair ladies of London is brought about by material economic means. The Prologue in The Three Ladies uses the clothing metaphor, hoping that the text proves “well woun, good and fine,” and what the play presents is “A perfect patterne for all Estates to looke into,” a matrix to be minded by the propertied and the artisan classes, one which weaves the international worldly processes of material exchange with the abstractions of moral corruption on a localized scale. The great system of trade, with its middle-men, money exchange, travel, and languages is pulled in to support the familiar morality teaching in a profoundly new and important way.

The uniqueness does not lie, however, in a radical or subversive polemic, as it will in the portrayals of, say, Tamburlaine, Barabas, or Friar Bacon. Wilson’s moral

35 A lengthy proclamation enforcing the statutes of apparel was issued in 1580 (H&L 2, pp. 454-62); this followed the proclamation of 1574, which specifically mentions the “unnecessary foreign wares” contributing to the excess of apparel, which is effecting “manifest decay” of the realm (H&L 2, pp. 381-86). For later proclamations on apparel see H&L 3, p. 3 (1588), and pp. 174-79, 179-81 (1597).
framework, with its political warning for all estates, creates a play with a conservative vision, by which I mean that Wilson shows a strong affection for social order, and in *The Three Lords* the ladies are properly matched to English lords, rather than, say, to ambitious artisans or upstart apprentices. In Wilson’s later play, *The Cobbler’s Prophecy*, too, Raph the Cobbler insures the maintenance of the hierarchical class system by betraying the treasonous courtier; the emphasis is on promoting inter-class harmony rather than inciting class war or workers’ rebellion. Wilson’s conservatism, however, includes serious questioning of governmental and ecclesiastical abuses or neglect, and of popular citizen behavior. He is not afraid to address those topics banned from interlude discussion in the 16 May 1559 proclamation for licensing of plays.\(^\text{36}\) Stephen Greenblatt seems to have brought out a central concern with the “alien,” then, when he writes that the alien is “unformed or chaotic (the absence of order) or that which is false or negative (the demonic parody of order).”\(^\text{37}\) Throughout *The Three Ladies*, as in the earlier moralities and the mature drama, alien intervention is shown to visibly break down the native community; and it is a force defined by its difference to the native order rather than possessing appreciable ethnic identity (other than isolated, stereotypical, derogatory attributes). We are in a position to add to this that the chaotic alien works through types of infection, distorting the mind and mangling the body. The alien breaks into the conservative, vertical, native hierarchy by finding weakness—vanity, pride, ungodly ambition—and attaching itself, appearing itself to be part of the native.

*The Three Ladies* includes a discussion of the current social workings, but it also does something more. Wilson’s critique involves depicting the tensions between

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\(^{36}\) H&L, 2, pp. 115-16. The proclamation ordered no interludes “to be played wherein either matters of religion or of the governance of the estate of the commonweal shall be handled or treated, being no meet matters to be written or treated upon but by men of authority, learning, and wisdom, nor to be handled before any audience but of grave and discreet persons.”

domestic classes as well as between the English and the aliens. Such disunity had been apparent for several decades by the 1580s, but the combination of the two social stresses, as Wilson discusses them, predicts the underlying dynamic of unrest in London that would surface in the early and mid 1590s, and which I address in the final chapter. Before examining scenes of tension, conflict, and violence in the London of Wilson’s play, I should say something about the English craftpersons and apprentices and their double reason to be dissatisfied. The first problem we have already met in part. They were worried primarily about the increasing presence in London of foreign artisans themselves, as well as foreign-made goods and imports; these aliens, according to Artifex the English artificer, produce cheap goods, dressed up as finery and sold to the detriment of English wares, which lie unsold in the hands of hard-working Englishmen with families to support:

But my true working, my early rising, and my late going to bed,
Is scant able to find me self, wife and children drie bread:
For there be such a sort of straungers in this cuntry,
That worke fine to please the eie, though it be deceitfully.
And that which is slight, and seems to the eie well,
Shall sooner then a peece of good worke be proffered to sell. (465-70, B3-B3v)

A new element here of the complaint against alien producers is that they are deceitful and cheat the retail buyers, and indeed, such complaints were common in London and the towns. Wilson’s critique is always both general and specific. Very quickly that deceitful character, Fraud, manages to persuade Artifex, who has been “liuing hitherto with good Conscience” (464, B3), to take on alien ways. Artifex is sick of being poor and seeing the foreign artisans succeed, so “to be a workman to Lady Lucar” (479, B3v)
he will work under the name of Fraud. When Fraud asks that "the next peece of worke that thou doest make, / Let me see how deceitfull thou wilt do it for my sake" (488-89, B3v), the corrupted Artifex replies, "Yes sir I will sir, of that be you sure, / Ile honour your name, while life doth endure" (490, B3v). Fraud lives up to his name in precisely this manner in the sequel play, The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London, where he cheats Simplicitie into buying copper for gold; Fraud, half French and half Scots, plays a Frenchman in the scene of deception. The suggestion in this scene seems to be that Simplicitie should guess rather easily that an alien chapman will cheat him. This is the kind of knee-jerk association of aliens with criminality and deception that I think an audience would have applied to YIWyll's Spanish disguise to avoid arrest in Wealth and Health; such a comic representation would be at the expense of any foreign dignitary present at a court performance, not at all flattering as some critics would have us believe.

The second concern of the craft classes was the feeling of being stabbed in the back by the English upper classes and the authorities, whose support of aliens and overt scorn of apprentices were all too apparent. This domestic aggravation of the foreigner problem seems to have been a key factor in the unrest of the London apprentice rank of the 1580s and 1590s. On 18 June 1584, the year of Q1, a letter from William

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38 The crowding of Bridewell with young poor and jobless leads Barbara Freedman to write, "it is no surprise that at least half of greater London's summer playing restraints between 1580 and 1600 were provoked by apprentice riots. Nor is it surprising that they typically began with cries for 'apprentices against gentlemen,' continued with massive prison break-ins protesting injustice, and included attacks upon gentlemen's residences. What is surprising is our ability to attribute these protests to youthful high spirits, and to deny the blatant motive of class hostility" ("Elizabethan Protest, Plague, and Plays: Rereading the 'Documents of Contol,'" English Literary Renaissance 26 [1996]: 17-45, p. 29). It is worth emphasizing that, while Wilson would approve of bringing the upper classes to task for any oppression of the lower classes, he both supports a strong social hierarchy and in The Cobbler's Prophecy picks out not just the gentlemen lawyers and courtiers for censure, but also the knavish pickpockets, dishonest shopkeepers, bakers, brewers, and butchers (See Wilson, An Edition of Robert Wilson's "'The Three Ladies," ed. Mithal, p. xiii). Freedman writes, "We know that by the late 1580s Bridewell Hospital—the London workhouse—was so crowded that it could only serve to administer punishment" ("Elizabethan
Fleetwood to the Queen’s secretary, Lord Burghley, attests to the atmosphere of hatred between higher ranks and apprentices. It is a well-known document but bears repeating:

Upon Mondaye night I returned to London and found all the wardes full of watchers. The cause thereof was for that very nere the Theater or Curten at the tyme of the Playes there laye a prentice sleping upon the Grasse, and one Challes al. Grostock dyd turne upon the Too upon the belly of the same prentice, wherupon the apprentice start up and after wordes they fell to playne bloues; the companie encressed of bothe sides to the nosmber of v c. in the least. This Challes exclaimed and said that he was a gentelman and that the apprentices was but a Rascall; and some were litell better then rooges that tooke upon them the name of gentilmen and said the prentizes were but the skomme of the worlde. Upon these trobles the prentizes began the next daye, being Twesdaye, to make mutines and assembles, and dyd conspire to have broken the presones & to have taken furthe the prentizes that were imprisoned; but my Lo. and I having intelligens thereof apprened .iii. or .v. of the chieff conspirators, who are in Newgate and stand Indicted of heire lewd demeanors."

The popular expectation of, or readiness for, violent conflict, as evidenced by the rapid gathering of a large crowd at the site of the incident related in the letter, reveals more of the social climate of the time than the incident of the fist fight. In the end it is the apprentices who are apprehended. Indeed, it was to their excessive frustration that

Protest,” p. 29); certainly Bridewell was over-filled but “successive attempts to improve and expand work there were made” in the 1590s. Pinmaking, the production of fustian, and grinding of rye were all instituted in Bridewell at this time (Power, “London and the Control,” p. 378).

everyone else seemed to be getting away with oppressing and cheating them while they themselves were continuously being watched, lest they step over the line of the law.

As disciples of Lucre, Usurie and Mercadorus are careful to make sure they know—and appear to act within—the laws to help maintain her alien-based organization. Usurie asks Lady Conscience whether anybody remains in the house that she rents from Lady Lucre; Usurie has been sent to evict Conscience and cannot legally enter the house unless it is empty. In a form altered from *The Tyde Tarrieth No Man*, the alien again comes to evict the native from his or her house. And once again the rule seems to be “kill or be killed,” and the inverted alien-native relationship returns. The patriotic argument (and Wilson would take this line) goes, if aliens were expelled from this “home” called England, then the English would be safe from eviction themselves. By allowing the aliens in (by “doing the Christian thing,” as I shall explain below) the English “alienate” themselves. Topsy-turvy, the aliens become the landlords and the English become strangers in their own land, treated as second-class citizens. We know that Usurie is experienced in both repossessing houses and murder, for Simplicitie complains that Usurie “lent my father a little money, and for breaking one day / He tooke the fee-simple of his house and mill quite away: / . . . / So he kild my father with sorrow, and vndoed me quite” (149-50, 153, A4). Neither does Usurie only pick on poor Conscience or modest Hospitalitie, but boasts early on that “sith I am so well setled in this Countrey, / I wil pinche al, riche and poore that come to me” (338-39, B2). As I pointed out in the introduction when I discussed Marian history, the ruling classes had their own fears of the alien, who, in order to take control of sectors of an adopted land must target the most influential persons first. The alien problem remains one for all classes and all towns: it is conceived as a national problem, then, even though it is often represented in regional terms. Satisfied that he is in the clear, Usurie leaves the stage to investigate the property, and in his absence Lady Conscience laments:
Both he and Lucar hath so pincht vs, we know not what to doe,
Were it not for Hospitalitie, we knewe not whither to goe.
Great is the miserable that we poore Ladies abide,
And much more is the crueltie of Lucar and Userie beside. (801-04, C3)

When Conscience offers to pay Usurie the old rent of ten pounds a year he considers the proposal a “stale ieast [i.e. jest]” and will let a different, smaller house for forty pounds a year; further he will only rent the house to Conscience for one quarter year “For perhaps my Ladie shall sell it, or els to some other will let it” (826, 831, C3). Conscience miserably accepts the extortionate terms, and Usurie immediately chastises himself for over-lenience:

What a foole was I, it repentes me I haue let it so reasonable,
I might so well haue had after threescore, as suche a trifile:
For seeing they were distressed, they would haue geuen largely.
I was a right sot, bit ile be overseene no more beleue me. (837-40, C3-C3v)

Usurie apologizes to Lucre for being too lenient with the rent charged to Conscience, and Mercadorus, standing by, offers up his expertise on profitable land-use:

Madona me tell ye vat you shall doe, let dem to straunger dat are content
To dwell in a little roome, and to pay mucho rent:
For you know da french mans and fleminges in dis countrey be many,
So dat they make shift to dwell ten houses in one very gladly:
And be content a for pay fiftie or three score pound a yeare,
For dat which da English mans say twenty marke is to deare. (876-82, C3v)

Ten houses dwelling in one was no joke. In the introduction I cited Elizabeth's proclamation of July 7, 1580, controlling multiple occupation of existing dwellings and the building of new houses. An act against new buildings in and around London to stem the tide of immigration and to avoid compounding the problem of overcrowding of persons with the overcrowding of buildings, followed in 1592, the year of Q2.⁴⁰

By this point in Mercadorus's speech the audience might be laughing at the plight of the "straunger," or may find sympathy with the immigrants. But Wilson will not leave it at that: for him, the alien must go. The laughter will be silenced and the sympathy dulled by English anger at the "knock-on" effect of the aliens' state in London. The "alien nation"'s queen of evil, Lady Lucre, dismisses Mercadorus with the words:

Why senior Mercadore thinke you not that I
Haue infinite numbers in London that my want doth supply.

... That great rentes vpon little roome doe bestowe.
Yes I warrant you, and truely I may thanke the straungers for this,
That they haue made houses so deare, whereby I liue in blisse. (883-84, 887-89, C3v-C4)

⁴⁰The 1592 Act is 35 Eliz. I c. 6. A large proportion of this population came not from foreign immigration but movement within Britain. Roger Lockyer records the vast influx to the city from the provinces, going as far as to say, "The increase in the city's population was caused entirely by immigration, for among the residents deaths outnumbered births, and even to maintain a stable level an inflow of 7,000 settlers was needed every year" (Tudor and Stuart Britain, 1471-1714 [London: Longman, 1964] p. 7).
Through their own toleration of the foreigners, which Steve Rappaport considered so admirable, the Londoners are creating a "ghetto" of their own capital city. 41 Lucre's lexicon is slyly ambiguous. At first the Londoners' nation-bound psychology which insists on the "otherness" and inferiority of the foreigners is given the lie by the apparent similarity of the state of poor Londoners and their immigrant counterparts. Then almost immediately a wedge is driven between the groups of persons with the realization that a distinct contrast is being made between Londoners and "straungers"; those "infinite numbers in London," which Lucre talks about, are the impoverished and encumbered English, and it is the "straungers" who are entirely to blame and whom Lucre "may thanke."

These conflicting ideological responses in the minds of theætægourers circulate at a strategic time in the play, for there is a bitter circumstance, which envelops this scene between Mercadorus and Lucre. It involves the one character who can save London from these evil alien influences: Hospitalitie. Conscience had earlier asked Hospitalitie, "But I pray you sir, have you invited to dinner any straunger?" (518, C), to which the answer is an emphatic negative. "No sure, none but Lady Love, and 3. or 4. honest neighbours" (619, C).42 With Conscience's post-eviction declaration that Hospitalitie is her only hope still ringing in our ears, Usurie murders Hospitalitie (Dv), thus insuring the destruction of the ethical, Christian system of safekeeping that London should provide for native Londoners. The importance of Hospitalitie's death is clearly worked out in the play as Conscience finds no friendly reception for such a character as herself

wherever she goes. Thus she decides she must live alone and sell brooms to earn a few pennies (D3). It is not long before Lucre corrupts Conscience too with a quick way out of poverty in a land “strangely” inhospitable to its own: Conscience must deck her home beautifully and make a little hospitable corner, “where few neighbours dwell, / And they be of the poorest sorte” (1392-93, Ev) for Lucre to bring home her “familiar friendes to play and passe the time in sport” (1370, E). The irony of the part Conscience is forced to play—that of perverted hospitality—is palpable.43

I spent some time discussing hospitality in London in the introduction. Like issues such as usury and the royal succession, hospitality was much written about and debated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Wilson’s Hospitalitie, perhaps speaking directly for Wilson himself, implies that he is for the English only, for his “honest neighbours,” not alien deceivers or “strange” neighbors who evict natives, for those like True Friendship, also physically assaulted by Usurie (1476, E2).44 Hospitalitie is murdered by the Jewish-parented Usurie, by order of the Venetian-grandmired Lucre. Wilson could be a bit of “a slie fellow” himself, and incorporate implications of stereotypes when necessary to balance his critique of ethnic prejudice. At Hospitalitie’s funeral we hear that “There were many of the Cleargie, and many of the Nobilitie, / And many right worshipfull rich Citizens, / . . . / But to see how the poore followed him it was a woonder” (1118-19, 1121, D2v); but the cries of the poor are ineffective, the influential citizens just mumble into their sleeves, and “none will hinder the murderer

43She rejects as deceitful ostlers, tapsters, brewers, tanners, weavers, bakers, and chaundlers (1174-85, D3).

44 Note the use of “honest” and “poor” to describe the destitute English living in the seedy parts of town and following Hospitality at the funeral. It seems that the practice of an honest living cannot be detached from a life of poverty.

45 In saying that Hospitalitie speaks for Wilson, I am referring to Wilson as a playwright. If Wilson, as an actor, played the part of Simplicitie, as is sometimes argued, then Wilson interestingly puts himself in the serio-comic role of the silly Englishman, victim of all those vices in the various shapes that Wilson had himself created and scripted.
for this cruell act” (1127, D2v). Good English Hospitalitie is lost because the simpletons of England have become greedy and do not understand his nature. On hearing of Hospitalitie’s demise, Simplicitie exclaims:

Now Gods blessing on his harte, why twas time that he was dead,
He was an olde churle, with neuer a good tooth in his head.
And he nere kept no good cheere that I could see:

... 

He had nothing but beefe, bread, and cheese for me to eate.
Nowe I would haue had some Pyes, or bagge puddings with great lumpes of fat. (165-67, 171-73, D2)

Simplicitie’s c расс behavior is funny, but behind the comic stupidity and shortsightedness are serious repercussions. John Deacon would later write of the corruption of “simplicity,” a state of natural, ancient, native purity. One of the characters in Deacon’s dialogue asks, very nearly rhetorically:

let me here aske thee, whether thou thy selfe dost not very plainly perceive (in thy proper experience) too too many of our English-mens minds most fearfully estranged from the Apostolike primitive sinceritie: and their bodies withall, very montrously transformed form their former ancient simplicity?46

Simplicitie in The Three Ladies represents the last bastion of Englishness, but he is already being alienated, already showing an inability to reform. He paws after any empty promise, so it be grand enough, rather than settling for the honest comfort of

46 John Deacon, Tobacco Tortured, C, p. 9.
Hospitalitie's "bread and beare, [and] one joint of meat" (623, C). A dinner invitation from one Sir Nicholas Nemo is more attractive to this kind of person. With this tempting culinary offer, Simplicitie is taken in by a call from "no man" to "no place" (762, C2v). Despite Sinceritie's repeated warnings about the non-existence of someone named Nemo, Simplicitie's belly grumbles for this unattainable feast, and he will be cast down, empty. The representation of Sir Nicholas Nemo also seems to be one of Wilson focused critiques: while the character's appearance is a general condemnation of false hospitality, it also relates to the resorting of the gentry from their country estates to London.\(^{47}\) In the introduction, I looked at the dangerous effect of such action, insofar as it abandoned hospitality in the vacated counties and, more immediately important, left those counties undefended and unled, subject to invasion from abroad or rebellion from within.

The murder of Hospitalitie has further significance, for it expands the critique of English-alien relations that Wilson touched on in the Usury-Conscience eviction episode. I think Wilson is proposing that a change in the nature of hospitality has come about in London, and perhaps England as a whole. It is a change that does not bode well for the social state of Londoners, yet one from which they cannot extricate themselves with any good conscience. Hospitalitie's provision for 3. or 4. honest neighbors and the joke about the non-existent host, Sir Nicholas Nemo, are comments on the state of what Caleb Dalechamp called Private Hospitality. This is the type of hospitality—private feasting and entertaining—that Felicity Heal discusses in her sizable book, Hospitality

\(^{47}\) There is another moment with Sir Nicholas Nemo that seems to be Wilson's thinly-cloaked stab at the upper classes who do nothing to help petitioners, but instead make empty promises. As Nemo promises a non-existent dinner, so Sinceritie recognizes him at a distance as a man of some rank and intends to appeal to Nemo for preferment. Such a petition to the non-existent man is, of course (and as Sinceritie soon realizes), comically sad, for it is bound to fail (The Three Ladies, C2-C2v). Note also how simplicity and sincerity are played in The Three Ladies and talked of in Tobacco Tortured as two aspects of the same character core.
in Early Modern England, and that most of the contemporary commentators concern themselves with. (In a liminal category is the public feasting of dignitaries, nobles, and royalty by town corporations—public in profile but private in practice, because hosted in large private dwellings or, more often, civic halls with controlled admission.) Dalechamp had another category in his 1632 Christian Hospitality, however, and this is one that concerns Wilson. Public Hospitality is the category and, in Dalechamp’s words, entails four obligations:

1. To suffer strangers to come into the land and countrey. 2. To defend them by good laws from injuries and wrongs. 3. To give them leave to exercise their lawfull calling, and to advance the ablest of them to some place of preferment. 4. To procure the relief of those that are in want and necessity. 44

The fashionable migration of the gentry from the country to the cosmopolitan city—where Public hospitality was most evident through English-foreigner contact—increased the visibility of that complex and deforming tendency for the English to covet foreign goods and foreign ways. The legitimate and long-standing admiration for foreign craft and engineering skills by the English government and the less-than-admirable obsession with newfangled foreign fashions and produce combined as interaction between the English and Continental foreigners grew and encouraged the latter’s immigration into England. The English are following the Christian teaching of providing Public hospitality by hosting foreigners, mostly French and “Dutch” (i.e. Flemish) Protestant artisans, and in the process are learning by foreign example to love lucre and lose the honest art of providing domestic, private hospitality.

44 Caleb Dalechamp, Christian Hospitality (London, 1632), D2, p. 11.
Against all rules of hospitality, the aliens were claiming more than they were offered, and moreover the lower classes of them were usurping their peers and higher-ranking Englishmen. We have already heard Lady Conscience’s cry that London is the place for money-making in the world, that “euerie man doth sewe [sue]” for Lady Lucre. Prime perpetrators of such covetous, un-guestlike, and indecorous behavior are the agents in the trading halls that we saw represented in *The Tyde Tarrieth* by the character Helpe. Wilson gives us the very scenario, in Lady Lucre’s actions, of an alien who goes about ruining native craftsmen and honest women through her “factoring,” her mediation between Italian merchants and English artisans, and her property ownership with Usurie as real estate agent. A second, and better-known, popular complaint was against the artisan class of aliens. The argument, which has been well-documented elsewhere and is rife among us still, was that aliens were infiltrating secure job markets, stealing trade and earnings from native English workers. Moreover, the government seemed to protect the aliens with preferable treatment concerning professional and religious life, and, as we shall see in relation to the unrest of the 1590s, secretly employed them to spy on natives if necessary.

The “honest” Londoners, then, have been put in a bind, whereby their Christian hospitality has led to their own corruption. Wilson preaches social and ethical reformation in the form of native resistance to alien temptation; and he advocates *punishment* both for slippery, vice-ridden aliens and the corrupted English. Nowhere does Wilson suggest that those ungrateful guests, the aliens, might be *reformed* out of their evil ways to live “peacable” lives among the English. Such teaching does not bode well for good, Christian persons of the realm below the status of landed gentry or established merchant class, for, as Henry Cornwallis notes in his late seventeenth-century tract, *Set On the Great Pot: A Sermon on Hospitality*, Christ is clear about Christian responsibility. Cornwallis reminds us of the section of Matthew 25, the
sermon on the Mount of Olives, where Christ talks of the Last Judgment. "He does not lay this to their Charge," says Cornwallis of the judging Son of Man, "that they were Whoremongers, Adulterers, Murderers," (all of which crimes are, incidentally, committed by foreigners in the course of The Three Ladies of London); Christ does not say that they are "guilty of those open Crimes which not only the Laws of God do threaten, but the Laws of Men punish with Death; but this was the chief Sin that was laid to their Charge, I was a stranger and ye took me not in, that is, you were inhospitable."49

Hospitable simpletons among the English would welcome aliens who could offer them riches and power through illicit means. Whether through newfangled enticement, "incouragement," or lust for the immodest part of "wealth," the dramatists employed a current crisis and channeled both the didactic warning and the entertainment of vice through prominent characters. In The Three Ladies, alien, over-zealous desire for quick gain leads Simplicitie to a whipping, given him for consorting with the shadowy pair of associates, Wily Will and Tom Beggar. Ironically, the punishment is meted out to Simplicitie according to the acts and supporting proclamations against vagabonds and sturdy beggars, a definition which included unlicensed players.50 Indeed, Fraud sees that Tom Beggar and Wily Will are "sound men in euerie ioynyt and lim" (1678-79, E4v); they are the able-bodied vagrants cited in the acts and those persons most worrying to the authorities. M. J. Power notes:

the city authorities were complacent about the fate of the poor at home during most of the crisis [but] they were much more aware of the threat of

50 "Roges Vacabonds or Sturdy Beggars," including insufficiently licensed "Comon Players in Enterludes," were "to bee grevouslye whipped" by order of the Act 14 Eliz. c. 5 (June 29, 1572). The same to be "stripped naked from the middle upwards and shall be openly whipped untill his or her body be bloudye" by 39 Eliz. c. 4 (Feb 9, 1598).
troublemakers in the streets. The concern about the able-bodied vagrant was shared by city aldermen and privy councillor alike and the years 1594 to 1597 saw a large number of measures to suppress vagrancy, to improve employment opportunities at Bridewell and take measures against disorder.\footnote{Power, "London and the Control," pp. 377-78.}

A decade-and-a-half before this, Wilson was preaching from the same chapter and verse: the poor needed relief and it was not being adequately provided; at the same time the able-bodied vagrants needed controlling for they were dangerous. Confirming the latter fear, Fraud approaches Tom and Will to rob Mercadorus on his return to England, and they are perfectly willing to commit the crime (1672-78, E4v).

At the end of \textit{The Three Ladies} Judge Nemo presides over the hearing held against the villains of London, and, since the bad ladies are arraigned and sentenced, there is certainly a sense of closure. However, the hem at the end of the "well wouen" text is not without its holes. First, not all the bad characters are jailed. Fraud, for instance, has gained such an established reputation in town that Serviceable Diligence the Constable will not arrest him in the face of charges from Simplicitie (F2); Fraud's immunity also protects Will and Tom, who are not brought to justice.\footnote{It may be worth connecting this alien's ability to avoid punishment for his crimes, with YllWyll's "disguise" as a Spaniard in his attempt to effect the same immunity in \textit{Wealth and Health}.} Fraud himself continues to live well among aliens and the corrupted English. Judge Nemo finds that other vice figures have similarly melted into the pot of London life:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Dilli.} . . . there are but three prisoners . . .
\end{quote}

\textit{Judge.} No? where is that wretch Dissimulation?

\begin{quote}
\textit{Dilli.} He hath transformed himselfe after a straunge fashion.
\end{quote}

\textit{Judge.} Fraude: where is he become?
Dilli. He was seen in the streets walking in a Citizens gowne.

Judge. What is become of Usurie?

Dilli. He was seen at the Exchainge very lately.

Judge. Tell me, when have you heard of Symony?

Dilli. He was seen this day walking in Paules, having conference and very great familiaritie with some of the Cleargie. (1847, 1850-58, F2v)

So the justice shown at the end is almost a token gesture, the three ladies sentenced and all the evil men still spreading their ill morals around. This gendered aspect of the punishments bears further thought. The abomination of the ladies leads to severe judgment, it seems, not just in response to their evils, but equally in response to the fact that they are women. When the three ladies are released from prison in *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* their ghastly wan appearance in tattered clothes is shocking to themselves and those on stage. Nemo has to warn the lords before they see the ladies in this later play that "their cloathes of cost and curious stuffe / Are worn to rags, and giue them much disgrace" (543-44, C4). The conservative, patriarchal vision of the play makes sure to note that the moral decline of women is far worse than that of men because they should be preciously good. They should also not be involved in the deception and robbery of men. Thus the three ladies are imprisoned in hellish conditions, while the evil or corrupted male characters either escape out of London (the morality vice figures) or are not mentioned at all (Artifex): we assume at this point that the men are all continuing to ply their trades dishonestly.

The harshness of the ladies' sentencing provides the second unresolved issue: are the ladies being sentenced to death or just to imprisonment? In a play that runs the gamut of representative, abstract, and even surreal moments (e.g. the Sir Nicholas Nemo episode) it is difficult to know how literally we are to take this sentence against Lucre:
"Thou shalt passe to the place of darcknesse, where thou shalt heare fearful cries, / weeping, wayling, gnashing of teeth, and torment without end, / Burning in the lake of fire and brimstone because thou canst not amend" (1907-10, F3). We might think of this as representing the last Judgment, but the Judge goes on to sentence lady Conscience slightly more leniently "to prison, / There to remaine vntill the day of the general session" (1953-54, F3v). If the "general session" means the day of Judgment, as it surely does, then what we are witnessing in the present cannot be that event, but a mock final Judgment, a prediction or foreshadowing of final judgment for the unreformed ladies. So are the Judge’s words metaphorical, and Lucre and Love simply sent to a grottier, darker jail than Conscience? There seems to be a greater contrast intended between the punishments when Judge Nemo sentences Lucre and Love and when he sentences Conscience. Love "shall be dying, yet neuer dead, but pining still in endles paine" (1950, F3v), "But as for Conscience carry her to prison" (1953, F3v).

What can we make, then, of the sentencing of two of the ladies to some kind of purgatorial life-in-death and the other to eternal imprisonment, and their subsequent reappearance in The Three Lords on equal footing with each other? This is where the third "hole" in the fabric of the play comes in: Judge Nemo himself. We have already met Sir Nicholas Nemo and been told repeatedly that the joke lies in this character’s non-existence. In the end, perhaps the escape of Dissimulation, Fraud, Usurie, and Symonie is irrelevant. If there were indeed a judge, he would jail the poor corrupted women, and he would send Lucre to hell. But perhaps there is no judge, no arraignment, and no sentencing. While the foreigners of low morals infiltrate and "alienate" the English population, so such flitting authority figures of emptiness come to promise improvements and provide nothing. The feast Simplicitie thought he could attend at Sir Nicholas Nemo’s house did not exist; neither, of course, did his house or his very person. "This was Nicholas Nemo, and no man hath no place," says Sinceritie; he goes
further, "Why his name was Nemo, and Nemo hath no being" (763, 776, C2v). The same surreal contact between characters of varying "reality" is being experienced at the end of the play. The "alien" vice figures (not strictly characters or persons) have rubbed shoulders with the more substantial characters of the desperate artisan Artifex and the Lawyer who turns bad, and with the full characters of Mercadorus, Gerontus, the beggars Will and Tom, and the mealy, flour-covered miller, Simplicitie. All these in turn fade away in various ways to leave the last words of the play to another representation of a person in a high place who should be there to reform society: the Judge Nemo.

The vice figures continue to live among those waterways, streets, houses, markets, and theaters of London because Judge Nemo fades away, and the fantasy ends; he asks where the villains are and apparently does nothing to have them arrested. He can order Lucre and Love thrown down to hell and Conscience jailed, but in the end the only judgment will come with the final Reformation at the end of time. Several years after this play was written, several years after the three ladies are condemned to wait for that day, either in limbo or prison, an event took place which was widely touted in England as a day of judgment, and a judgment on the side of Protestant, Reformed England, against the proud unreformed Spaniards. With the destruction of the great Armada, Wilson could retrospectively solidify the moral ending of The Three Ladies by presenting them disheveled from their physical torment and by having them reformed by three lords of London. And this is exactly what he did.

In the autumn of 1588 Wilson wrote The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London. This post-Armada piece is a celebration of the country's victory, and on the surface the "alien nation" that London was in danger of becoming seems re-Anglicized in the wake of military victory. But this process of re-anglicizing the English citizen within London is another step on the way up the ladder of proto-nationalism, a regime
in which foreigners are victimized and the working classes put in the front line of an imposed ideological movement. "The appearance of The Three Lords in 1588 was almost definitely accompanied by the revision and revival of The Three Ladies in the same year," says Mithal, "and this is proved by the change in the number of years since when Peter's Pence was abolished from "26. yeares" ago in the first quarto to "33. yeares" ago in the second."53 Taken together the two plays—at the simple level—present a long tale of English decline and resurrection. The ladies remain in prison until the worthy lords of London appear with the offer to marry them into redemption. "Though they were slandered late with Libertie / And marriage to three farre borne Foriners" (53-54, Bv), Judge Nemo would not let them out of confinement for anything less than the English heroes. As we are presented with the lords and their emblems we are assured of their perfections. For example, Lord Pompe's man, Wealth, is quick to point out that English Pompe exists "without pride or vaineglorie" (156, B3) (as we have seen, a major English problem in the sixteenth-century), and post-Armada wealth is now an unequivocally beneficial resident of England. The Lords' only flaw is that they all desire Lady Lucre over the other two, and it takes a trick of the returned Judge Nemo's involving disguising Conscience as Lucre to match her up with lord Pleasure to set them all right.

The reformation of the English is never quite complete, although there are limited social improvements. Behind the lordly examples of Englishness scuttle the evil quartet who seemed to escape judgment in The Three Ladies; however, we hear in the second play how they have had an increasingly hard time getting by in the London of the 1580s:

Fraud... Nemo that ypright Iudge had by imprisoning our Mistresses, banished vs (by setting such diligent watch for vs) out of London, and almost out of the world... 

...

Dis. Fraud, after my scaping away at the Sessions where I shifted as thou knowest in three sundry shapes, one of a Frier, and they can dissemble: another like a woman, and they doo little else: the third as a Saint and a Diuell, and so is a woman. I was banished out of London by Nemo, to the countrie went I, amongst my olde friendes and neuer better loued than among the russet coates.

...

Simo. And I haue bene a traueler abroad in other realms, for here I am so cried out against by preachers... [abroad] I am secretly fostered, sauing in Scotland, and the low Countries, they are refourmed, they can not abide me. (575-77, 617-22, 630-35, C4v-D)

Only Usurie continues to "liuest but too wel" (613, D) in London, and Dissimulation manages to slip back into town during the market-day at Leadenhall and into Westminster to pick up the latest news. The consistent undermining of the goodness of London by the vices that we saw in The Three Ladies is less pervasive here, and London is praised as better than both foreign places and the provinces: Dissimulation lives happily in rural England, while London proves hostile to him; and when three lords of Lincoln suddenly appear near the end of the play to claim the hands of the three ladies in marriage, they are dismissed easily and symbolically by the witty lords of London—the visitors are sent home with only the emblematic stones the ladies were sitting on when first released from prison (H4v-Iv). Lord Pleasure would go so far as to accord
London a distinctly separated identity; he says of Lady Lucre, “she dooth shine as siluer Dooue. / Of selfe bred soile, of London is her race” (26-27, B, my emphasis).

Usurie ends up branded with “A little x. standing in the midd’st of a great C” (1954, H3) to denote the maximum percentage he is allowed to take on usury by law; Fraud manages to trick his arresting officer, Constable Diligence, into letting him go, offering him in return money and a promise to meet the constable at the prison later on; and Dissimulation escapes in all the confusion. The final, comic attempt of the vices to win back the ladies’ favors fails dismally. Fraud and Dissimulation return in disguise at the wedding of the three lords and three ladies, but Simplicity recognizes Fraud as the “French” man who cheated him earlier and appeals to Lord Pleasure for justice. Pleasure orders that Fraud be bound to a post for Simplicity to run at him with a fire-brand to burn out his tongue “that it neuer speake more guile” (2293, I3v). Over-excited at the prospect of personal revenge, Simplicity runs at “the contrarie post” (presumably the stage posts of the public theater) and burns that instead. While everybody watches Simplicity’s comic show Dissimulation rushes over, unbinds Fraud, and the two gate-crashers escape. It seems that no matter how many mistakes these alien vice figures make they will ultimately get back to the job of infecting the native population of London and England. When Simplicity is unblinded he is convinced by Diligence that the lack of a body next to his burnt post is because “thou hast quite consumed him into nothing” (2309-10, I3v). The irony of Simplicity’s naive belief in the death of Fraud—he is of course being defrauded at that moment by Diligence—is the last important note in the play before the summing-up of the closing prayer to God and Queen. What Simplicitie says is, as usual, funny but serious:

wel, al London, nay, al England is beholding to me, for putting Fraud out of this world, ... But let me see, I shal haue much anger, for thc 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 verie oistermen to mingle their oisters at Billingsgate. (2313-19, I3v-I4)

English Simplicity is convinced that Fraud is dead but this puts him in a quandary. He knows that these settled foreign vices are now part of the English artisans’ and traders’ habits, and he will be disliked among them for his good deed.

In the final analysis even this ending, like that of *The Three Ladies*, is sewn up with the threads of wishful thinking. Wilson knows that the real lords of Elizabethan London are not perfect and courteous to the lower classes; thus he portrayed the useless Sir Nicholas Nemo and gave us Raph Cobbler, who has to work for quite a time to break through the communication blockade imposed by class barriers and be taken seriously. “Considered as a patriotic entertainment to honour the Armada victory and the national unity that won it,” writes Margot Heinemann, quite rightly, “Robert Wilson’s play *The Cobbler’s Prophecy* (c.1590, printed 1594) is remarkable for the emotional power with which it represents a national disunity that almost allows foreign invasion to succeed.”54 I have been illustrating how *The Three Ladies* was already insisting on the danger of disunity, the conflicts brought about by economic wrangling, social pride, hierarchical politics, and the sense of Englishness of citizens. Wilson is proved a fine dramatist as well as patriotic preacher as he maintains a consistency in *The Three Lords* and his post-Armada oeuvre as a whole through the retention of his words of warning below the always-translucent layer of celebration. So while it might be true that *The Three Lords* “could be unashamedly topical because they all take patriotic

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positions at moments when the nation is united in the face of a foreign threat," we have
to take this play in combination with The Three Ladies and recognize that Wilson shows
how many domestic aspects of society undermine national unity and safety, and cultural
stability. As we enter the rough years of the 1590s, the two vices Wilson allows to
remain at large are Dissimulation, the Italo-Dutch deceiver, and Fraud, the half-French
falsifier. It would not have escaped the notice of the audience that the streets, markets,
and houses of London were seemingly filling up with aliens, primarily Dutch and
French. Hard on the heels of The Three Lords Londoners climbed toward new levels of
libel and violence against aliens, creating a new "alienated" society, one that seemed to
fulfill the prophecy of unrest that Wilson had provided in his play of a decade before.

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(Revised as chap. 1 in Stage-Wright: Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and the Making of Theatrical
Value [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997]).
CHAPTER THREE

Foreign Mirrors for London and England: city-states and alien destabilization

I have been discussing the ways in which dramatic representations of relations between nationalities, genders, and religions inform us about popular and official views of the alien, and of international interaction. I have tried not to step easily between dramatic polemic and political history of the extra-theatrical world, for we are clearly dealing with commercial representation, attendant as it is with all the baggage that distances the dramatic genre from veracity. Whether written for the court, the public playhouse, or the private theater, these plays had to “accommodate” history and play around it in order to be successful theatrical fare, as much as incorporate it and play into it. It is essential, therefore, that I make it clear again as I enter an examination of that very “historical” decade, the 1590s, that I am not attempting to write a “micro-history,” but a localized literary critique. To argue for meaning, significance, and the effect of any particular literary work in the context of contemporary political events is to place oneself in danger of suggesting a transparent formula for reading history through the plays. Partly to steer away from this homogenizing of authorial intention and pretended textual lucidity, I have classified the chapters not just by rough chronology, but also in terms of varying thematic concerns, presented within quite different dramatic modes. The abstract sermons of the early Elizabethan theater, which Wilson molded into socially vital morality, now turn toward specific, harsh conflicts with particular—often deadly—ends.

The drama keeps returning to similar representative ideas of aliens and alienation, a feature that seems to bind the native drama by suggesting great dramatic continuity through the Elizabethan age. This suturing tool, however, rather than effacing local variation within its grand “alien” narrative, leaves interstices that would have encouraged what is now lost to us: the surfacing of local, historical interests that
influence the performance of a particular play for a few performances, or for a few years, and then disappear. Or also for play revivals and printed editions that reinvent a play in new moments of history; in this case, the authorial intention, occasion for original playing, and even formalist investigations can be radically shifted or inverted. No such newly-historicized (and, for us, all too often speculative) reading negates the possibilities for the play’s original effects; it simply attests to the manipulability of text and the interpretive power of performance. I have already shown, in Wealth and Health, an example of how a single performance in a set location might be undermined by text or character, and from such a small example—YllWyll disguising himself as a Spaniard before Philip II—we can see that the proliferation of such textual/performative/locational subversions and contradictions would require a study somewhat longer than the present one to contain them.

But containment is not my aim. Rather, I want to suggest the ways in which the thematic of the alien, like drama itself, is a concept that easily runs away from the author and from its own moments and hosts of conception. Thus, it is left open for further interpretation and association with the alien in history. To pursue an Elizabethan metaphorical commonplace, like a disease, or plague, the breeding, mutating, spreading, infecting, and corrupting alien of the Elizabethan theater is a feature whose aspect changes as intellectual, political, and social fashions change. While it may be useful to return at points to biographical evidence of authorship, part of my aim, particularly in the final chapters, is to link the plays with the socio-political milieu from which they and their writers arose, and to discuss the ways in which the plays in turn helped produce historical moments in the processes of revival, printing, censoring, and sale.

One alien in particular incorporates within himself or herself strong sets of characteristics along with mythical attributes always in flux. The difficulty of representing, interpreting, or defining the Jewish alien makes him or her of great interest to the Elizabethan dramatists. The issue of usury remained central in the late sixteenth
century and lies at the base of much of the study here. Because of the relation of usury to the Jews, the Jewish alien will also remain a focus of attention in these last two chapters. However, I am subsuming the particularity of the "Jewishness" within the identity of the "alien" (the outsider to the locations in the plays) more than as religiously ideological "other." I extend James Shapiro's analysis of the early modern discovery of Englishness via definitions of Jewishness to argue that the constant "alienation" of the stage Jew (the increasing emphasis on nationally-, or regionally-determined identity, in addition to pertinent questions of religion)\(^1\) and the concurrent "alienation" of the English (their "corruption" into alien vices) as represented on the stage and as perceived in London and England, bound up the identities of Jews and English subjects as groups of persons similarly separated from the many "others" surrounding them.

John Armstrong has examined the urban segmentation that resulted from immigration and religio-political law-making for cities in late-medieval and Renaissance East Central Europe.\(^2\) The segments—a system of ethnic, cultural, and religious "islands" within a conurbation—included those, most notably the Jews, who were not religiously assimilable, were not subject to city laws, and thus stood ideologically "outside" the official system, yet physically, and economically (they traded within the city) they were an integral part of the city's and the ruling "nation"'s identity. As such, the Jews were involved outsiders, religio-political critics, at once incorporated and alienated by their situation. This sense of the deeply-involved alien comes out in adapted ways in both Marlowe's and Shakespeare's plays, The Merchant of Venice being so fascinating because Shylock is subject to the city's (state's) laws because those

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\(^1\) James Shapiro, Shakespeare and the Jews (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). This is, of course, an imprecise dynamic. As I pointed out in the introduction concerning nation theory, and as several literary historians have noted, to talk about regionalism and ethnicity, or nationality and religion as terms indicating opposition is to force a false dichotomy for the sake of clarity.

laws have (almost magically) included him within special clauses. He pleads for the law, within the law, not for separation from it. Ironically, he pleads for confirmation (or discovery) of his ancient right to be re-alienated by inclusionary laws, laws based on the ancient tradition of city-states’ growth—or even instigation—through immigration. The stage Jew, through the process of being defined as an alien among other aliens while also subjected to stereotypical Jewish attribution (mostly evils against the kinds of other aliens that the English would have little sympathy for) could at one and the same time be encouraged as a fictional scourge on the stage, while he was seen in mythic history as a scourge of England and Englishness through usury, vagabondage, and the potentials for apostasy, treason, false profession of faith and consequent defiling of the Christian church, and debasing Christian (and English) blood by intermarriage.

In this chapter and the next I look at how the fears of alien invasion—physical and ideological—that we saw voiced in the Marian and early Elizabethan drama and prose are refigured in the later drama. As I draw conclusions about dramatic representation in the 1590s it should be borne in mind that theater seems to have been a belated medium for political polemic, satire, or comedy. I am not finding out the initial literary murmurings of national discontent by looking at these plays, but working through questions of the relations of literary works of specific moments to each other and to the society in which they were marketed. English pamphlets on usury, for instance, were hotly debating the arguments concerning its legality and its place in Judaeo-Christian thinking in the three decades leading up to Shylock’s emotional appeals and logical claims for justice. And the ideas (albeit imprecise ones) of Machiavellian practice were circulating in some circles well before Barabas’s execution of the “Machevil”’s dicta. These plays, then, are not introducing these politico-religio-philosophical dialogues to the public, but packaging them according to the state of the
dramatic market and expressing them according to the skill of the author. Almost every conclusion about the contemporary “meaning” of these plays and the ways in which they may have been received by their various audiences must bear a silent, but sizable, question mark.

The plays discussed in this chapter are fictionally set outside England, but clearly have relevance to England in the 1580s and ’90s; they are primarily The Merchant of Venice and The Blind Beggar of Alexandria, with an introductory section on A Looking Glass for London and England. The powerful portrayal of the alien and corruption of conflicting “professions” in The Jew of Malta force me to refer to the play often, but I have kept my section on it as short as possible, since it is a tragedy, and I am dealing primarily with morality and comedy. Once again, simple analogy must be avoided while entertaining the possibilities of contemporary political meaning and artistic cunning. Those ubiquitous (Marian and) Elizabethan fears of alien invasion from without and insurrection from within (and particularly a combination of the two) are manipulated in these plays in increasingly complicated ways. I will follow the identities of the aliens, as nationality, “race,” religion, class, and gender all remain bound up as important weapons in the hands of subversives, would-be and successful usurpers. In doing so, I will necessarily be discussing the ways in which bodies are read in the mature drama. A shift has taken place from the morality drama and its easier comments on nomenclature and deception to the mimetic personhood of character. For instance, when the Duke of Guise in The Massacre at Paris finds out that his wife has alienated him from herself through her affair with Mugueron, he asks, “hath my love been so obscur’d in thee, / That others need to comment on my text?” (4.1.27-28); and indeed, any alienated body needs to be glossed, noted, re-examined, reinterpreted, renamed,

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3 An example would be The Jew of Malta, with our only authoritative text being the 1633 quarto, a book appearing over forty years after the play’s composition, in the reign of Charles rather than Elizabeth, and reissued to be performed in the private theater at court rather than the Rose.
whether it be an old figure like the Judas-Jew or Barabas-Jew, or a newer one like the “Dutch” artisan. Only through such defining investigation can a particular national consciousness assimilate that “other” into its own language of self, identity, and community. Aspects of these ideas of the need to retain understandable textual persons within a realm are addressed again in the final chapter.

i) Money, Identity, Deformation, Reformation

Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene’s *A Looking Glass for London and England* (c. 1590) takes us into the new decade. It is a “looking glass” set at quite a distance from its intended viewers, the setting being biblical Nineveh (Assyria), based on the book of Jonah. This allows, perhaps, for some distortion of the images, certainly requiring exaggerated representations that will bridge the divide between the pedagogical text or performance and the student/audience. In his introduction to the play, Norman Rabkin writes that it “has the appearance of a spectacular résumé of the state of the theater in 1590,” and indeed, it runs the gamut of rhetorical and thematic modes, and requires the special effects that had apparently become staple during the 1580s. This play very usefully begins our study of the 1590s, for we can select moments in which set pieces of social and religious critique are addressed in simple and stark terms, and with spectacular effect. I want to run through five examples of pedagogical “show and tell” method of dramaturgy, in which the scene is played, followed by a sermonic chorus. The topics are the usurer; the use of foreign goods; the rampant sexual activity at court; the moral scheme of despair, repentance, and absolution; and finally how the class

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system breaks down under the pressure of the need to be absolved from sin. Early in A Looking Glass poor Alcon warns Thrasibulus, a gentleman, about the ineffectual power of a word like “conscience” to a usurer:

Friend, thou speakest Hebrew to him when thou talkest to him of conscience, for he hath as much conscience about the forfeit of an obligation as my blind mare, God bless her, hath over a manger of oats. (1.3.35-38)

There is surely irony in Alcon’s reference to Hebrew, since that is precisely the language that a “Jewish” usurer should understand well. The idea of communicating at odds across professional or religious lines surfaces again, in an inverted example, when Portia talks of Christian “charity” to Shylock; I will return to the moment when such rhetoric, based as it is on Christological adaptation of the Hebrew teachings, cannot budge the Jew. We should note that, while the usurer is clearly not English, as he will be in Marston’s view of corrupted, “alienated” society, this play is a mirror for England, and the suggestion is that the English are already the new Jews in the worst possible sense. To second-guess all market-driven representative moments and all negotiations of historical vitality in the plays is interesting work, but in the end not often the most profitable methodology. Opening up possibilities in the character conflicts seems to me to be most useful. By highlighting and examining scenes centered on ethnic conflict or class tension, we can understand the many ways for performance to leave text behind and “play out” to various audiences under different conditions at certain times. New performances, new editions of playbooks are alienated from previous stagings and printings by all these variable factors, and our interpretations and conclusions must always remain aware of the vagaries of time, space, and persons. Several years before

6 Least London fail to see itself in this mirror, Oseas, the prophet sums up: "Where hateful usury / Is counted husbandry; / Where merciless men rob the poor, / And the needy are thrust out of door; / Where
Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene wrote *A Looking Glass for London and England* (c.1590), Lodge published his *A Larum Against Usurers*. This tract, published in 1584, the year of Q1 of *The Three Ladies of London*, joined Thomas Wilson’s famous *A Discourse Upon Usury* (1572) and Phillip Caesar’s *A General Discourse Against the Damnable Sect of Usurers* (1578). These tracts were added to in the 1590s by *An Examination of Usurie* by Henry Smith (1591) and Miles Mosse’s *The Arraignment and Conviction of Usury* (1595).

This motion toward the “Judaization” of the English is one part—both continuing and newly-nuanced—of the “deformation” of England. The latter word is used by Robert Wilson and a number of prose writers to describe the ideological wreckage of English persons. Reformation is the way forward, and we saw this purpose acted out and preached particularly strongly in *Like Will to Like* and *The Tyde Tarrieth No Man*. Deformation is both a literal and metaphorical affliction and it lies in the will of the community and individual ability to see corruption in themselves, to diagnose the plague and its causes, and to provide sufficient and appropriate remedies. The “two faces” of Lady Love in *The Three Ladies* (1784, Fv) comprise her own self-scrutinizing guilt that sees herself swollen and deformed, while Lucre assures her that she has a smiling, beautiful countenance. The internal and external self are, in effect, “alienated” from each other, and the imprisonment at the end of the play eliminates the inner deformation, reforming Love and the other ladies for their resurrection in *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*. Such extreme measures of reformation through repentance will come at the end of *A Looking Glass*, but the mercy of God in that

\[\text{gain is held for conscience, / And men’s pleasures is all on pence; / Where young gentlemen forfeit their lands, / Through riot, into the usurer’s hands; / Where poverty is despised and pity banished / And mercy indeed utterly vanished; / Where men esteem more of money than of God: / Let that land look to feel his wrathful rod, / For there is no sin more odious in his sight / Than where usury defrauds the poor of his right. / London, take heed, these sins abound in thee; / The poor complain, the widows wronged be. / The gentlemen by subtlety are spoiled; / The ploughmen lose the crop for which they toiled. / Sin reigns in thee, O London, every hour; / Repent and tempt not thus the heavenly power” (1.3.130-49).\]
ending is demonstrated (and simply told, by means of the angel to the angry, vengeful
prophet, Jonas [5.3.55-64]) by the extremity of the sins of the people in the meantime.
This play pushes further the suggestions of foreign luxury that we saw in Lady Lucre’s
house of lust. While the “alienated” English in The Three Ladies look for no solution to
their state, the defiled natives of Nineveh ironically look to add foreign salt to their alien
wounds. When Remilia, King Rasni’s sister and queen, is struck down by lightning for
her excessive pride, Rasni calls for foreign cures; the more exotic the salve, the more
potent:

My Hesperus by cloudy death is blent.
Villains, away, fetch syrups of the Inde,
Fetch balsamo, the kind preserve of life,
Fetch wine of Greece, fetch oils, fetch herbs, fetch all
To fetch her life, or I will faint and die.

But there are limits, and the full stage direction might suggest a published text for
reading as well as playing, a moment in the drama to ponder: “They bring in all these
and offer; naught prevails / Herbs, oils of Inde, alas, there naught prevails” (114-19).
The idea that a multitude of foreignness is fitting or reviving for a person of class, be it
alien drugs, clothes, servants or victuals, was, of course, a long-standing contributory
factor to the “alienation” of the English according to prose writers, poets, the various
guilds of craftspersons who fought the immigrant work-force (perhaps particularly the
troublesome weavers), central and local government, and Queen Elizabeth. Importing or
incorporating the alien into native culture would clearly disturb the ways in which the
English could identify themselves as a unified nation. Certain groups such as soldiers or
individual crafts guilds worked and lived under rules that governed dress, public
behavior, and duties determining their daily routines; nobles, landed gentry, and
courtiers, however, would have leeway to shift the notions of propriety. Such a class division is highlighted to a greater or lesser extent in all the plays I discuss, but especially in *The Three Ladies* and in Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, where the shoemaker (and later mayor), Simon Eyre, refers to courtiers as “silken fellows” whose “inner linings are torn” (3.3.45, 46).

Lodge and Greene pull out the stops to reveal the linings beneath the silk, to expose the filthy underbelly of the well-groomed “noble” beast. Oseas the prophet is brought “from Jewry unto Nineveh” (1.2.2) by an angel, and we are told that this city is “Pampered in wealth and overgrown with pride, / As Sodom and Gomorrah full of sin.” (11-12). This may be proved through Rasni’s incest with his sister Remilia, through the ease with which the king, queen, and subjects steal or swap loves in this harem-kingdom, and, most interestingly, by the suggestion of Rasni’s bisexuality. When the courtier Radagon rejects his family, whose members plead to him for preferment, Radagon tells king Rasni that they are his mother, father, and brother, but that such peasants should not come unto lords and the court. The king agrees and spurns the petitioners, keeping Radagon, “Rasni’s friend,” “Rasni’s favorite” (145) for himself. Mother Samia’s curses on her son and cries to heaven for justice are instantly replied as “a flame of fire appeareth from beneath, and Radagon is swallowed.” Rasni’s response is to ask, “What exorcising charm or hateful hag / Hath ravished the pride of my delight? / . . . / . . . lovely Radagon?” (168-70, 173). One of Rasni’s soothsayers suggests that the king, “Let cloths of purple set with studs of gold, / Embellished with all the pride of earth, be spread for Alvida to sit upon. / Then thou, like Mars courting the Queen of Love, / Mayst drive away this melancholy fit” (194-98). Rasni has stolen the queen Alvida from the King of Paphlagonia and he accepts the counsel of his soothsayer, albeit with excessive meditations upon the name of his lost male love:

The proof is good and philosophical;
And more, thy counsel plausible and sweet.
Come, lords, though Rasni wants his Radagon,
Earth will repay him with many Radagons,
And Alvida with pleasant looks revive
The heart that droops for want of Radagon. (199-204)

By the time Jonas the prophet enters, late in Act 4, shouting, "Repent ye men of Nineveh, repent" (4.5.46), we have been made aware of the excessive debauchery at court, and the best we can say for him is that it's better late than never. He is as effective as his biblical source character, however, for each group of corrupted society falls to immediate, and wonderful, repentance; Oseas tells the spectators, "Look, London, look; with inward eyes behold / What lessons the events do here unfold" (4.5.70-71). The "inward" eye seems to me to have a strong reflexivity about it. It is a looking into the self, a self-scrutiny, that is forced through looking at others on stage. In this play, in particular, the authors have made those others on stage magnificently "other" for the audience, locating them around the Black Sea and Mediterranean, labeling them "Sodom and Gemorrah," having them indulge in a great list of vices. Yet, at the end of each scene, laboring the point, Oseas, as chorus, steps onto the stage, cuts through the distance, breaks down the illusion and points at the audience. "This is you," he effectively tells them. "They are foreign, yet they are you; God's deformed people, yet able to reform."

The alienated characters repent in their own ways. A stage direction instructs, "Enter the Usurer solus, with a halter in one hand, a dagger in the other" (5.2). We have seen this usurer take control of the poor man, Alcon, and the gentleman Thrasibulus, by practicing the most cutting and precise usury he legally can. When his victims fall, unsurprisingly, to crime, they return to him and he takes them under his wing as useful, petty accomplices (4.5.27-45); his position as a gang leader can be
compared with all the other major alien mob bosses: Newfangle, Courage, and Lady Lucre. In fact, what Thrasibulus says is, “Now will I to the broking usurer” (4.5.8), conflating the two occupations of broker and usurer, discussed in chapter two. This marks a shift away from a strictly Jewish character to an “alien” figure of the mediating “factor.” Lady Lucre was a “broker” in England and Clarke made it clear that such professionals were not wanted in the commonwealth. A fantastic broker yet to come in the drama is, of course, Barabas, who, crossing this alien/Jew division, mediates between the Turks and the Spaniards for his own gain:

Thus, loving neither, will I live with both,
Making a profit of my policy;
And he from whom my most advantage comes
Shall be my friend.
This is the life we Jews are used to lead,
And reason, too, for Christians do the like. (5.2.111-16)

Barabas’s declaration that he is only doing what Christians do is further working with the complicated idea of the “alienated” Jew as somehow attached to Christian practice, and by analogy lodged in the English breast. But Barabas makes a fundamental mistake in his political factoring: he brings the two parties together (5.2.111-14, 5.5.59ff), thus losing his value as middle-man. Wilson’s note that “all estates” should look into these matters is confirmed time and again by the dramatic representation of the powerful and pervasive “alienation” of England and by the danger of “alienation” to all classes. We

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7 Nichol Newfangle does not seem to be quite the same, although he surely “controls” two sets of victims, reducing them to poverty, crime, and death. But Nichol gets away with it, riding off to hell (Spain) on the devil’s back. He is different because Lucifer is surely the main coordinator of the criminals, and Nichol a second-tier man, in fear of his boss, using his position to exert power over his subordinates.
might remember here the warning of the anonymous writer of *A Lamentacion of England* (1556/7), who pointed out that the upper classes would be the first to be eliminated (because most powerful) in the case of military alien invasion. The usurer’s admission that “those whom my corruption brought to naught / Do serve for stumbling blocks before my steps” (4-5) shows the equalization of the ranks in repentance, and therefore in suffering, punishment, contrition, and forgiveness.

Rasni, in his repentance, states, “Let Israel’s God be honored in our land; / Let all occasion of corruption die / . . . / My court and city shall reformed be” (5.5.61-62, 66). The usurer, the downtrodden, and the king all bewail their states or fall to the lowliest activity of repentance in sackcloth. Outward signs of class are eradicated, and the community pares itself down to the bare essential that display a sameness among the people. The alien, the foreigner, the “other,” is stripped away with reformation, leaving the native community as close to pure, singular ethnicity and “national” identity as possible. To reform is to get rid of the alien. Jonas has the final speech, reminding London and England of their relatively peaceful and privileged state, but of their vulnerability to alien corruption and overthrow, particularly through their own blindness in a state of power over “the west”:

O London, maiden of the mistress isle,
Wrapped in the folds and swathing clouts of shame.
In thee more sins than Nineveh contains:
Contempt of God, despite of reverend age,
Neglect of law, desire to wrong the poor,
Corruption, whoredom, drunkenness and pride.
Swoll’n are thy brows with impudence and shame.
O proud, adulterous glory of the west,
Thy neighbor burns, yet dost thou fear no fire.
The preachers cry, yet dost thou stop thine ears.
The larm rings, yet sleepest thou secure. (5.5.75-85)

The country is only saved, says Jonah, by the prayers and virtues of the Queen, and the English people must support her, "That she may bide the pillar of his Church / Against the storms of Romish Antichrist" (5.5.93-94). This London of mixed identity and maturity, at once maiden and baby, is not just passively evil, receptive to alien deformation, but actively wills the deformation of others. In its drive ever deeper into unEnglishness, London and England is blind to the burning neighbors: Paris’s and France’s Huguenot victims and refugees, the oppression in the Lowlands, the Spanish Armada and increasing pressure from Philip. The plays set in England, and discussed in chapter 4, secularize "pride," "ignorance," and the dangerously complacent "fearlessness" of the English.

The sense of the island nation as pure, cut-off space suggests to London and England a remote possibility for Nineveh-like rejection of the alien through self-scrutiny, repentance, and reformation. The sense of the city as *polis*, cultured region walled-in from surrounding barbarism is evoked by the state of London as the enormous center (head, funnel) for the rest of England. The only breaches of the wall are those made by necessary suppliers from outside, stranger and alien persons bringing foodstuffs from the countryside, cloths, military supplies from abroad, soldiers and slaves, and financial capital and skill. The alien across boundaries was a subject used by Robert Wilson, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Chapman, and William Haughton; and in all these cases, the alien presence included a Jew or some manifestation of Jewishness, a character who carries out the function of social critic, sometimes passive and meek, often angry and loud.\(^8\)

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\(^8\) I discuss the role of the Jewish character as a critic of his adopted country or city in "Marlowe’s Second City: the Jew as Critic at the Rose in 1592," *Studies in English Literature* 35 (1995): 215-29.
As an outsider, in terms of religion, nationality, and (often enforced) professional occupation, the Jew on the late-sixteenth-century stage becomes the center of a larger critique. Barabas and Ferneze understand how the matrices within their respective (and remarkably similar) “policies” work. Each has their “profession” (1.2.121, 146, 161, 292), a half-declared, half-hidden set of religio-political aims and assumptions out of which they each “profess” beliefs about the other (“other”) and within which they manipulate the persons around them whom they can enslave or put under their control. The one in control at any moment (Ferneze at the beginning, Ithamore with Pilia-Borza and Bellamira in the middle, Barabas and Calymath near the end, and Ferneze again at the very end) can “profess” their requirements for power—usually in the form of “wealth” (meaning riches and power, torn from its healthy connotations). Control always has to do with knowing what the “enslaved” does not know or with manipulating the audience and application of knowledge shared by all—such things as terms of tribute, possession of secrets, the law, workings of a deadly plan, and so on. The logical extreme of “Judus ludens” is to “enslave” the audience (perhaps unwittingly, certainly with more force than they would like) by revealing the rapidly altering power-structure in the “city-state” to resemble a game, which only becomes truly devastating in the final act. By this time Barabas has—like the morality vice—got the audience to “identify” with him to the extent that they will be embarrassed and shocked by the effectiveness of the cauldron scene.

Marlowe and Shakespeare complicate their Jewish characters by constantly questioning Jewish identity, and combining it with alternative ideas of the alien. An example occurs at the very beginning of The Jew of Malta. Most commentators immediately associate the Machavel with the Jew, Barabas, but Marlowe has taken a leaf from Wilson’s book and complicates his representation before finally directing the

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scornful eyes of the spectators onto the rich Jew of Malta. Machevil—the one who "makes" evil or is the equivalent ("match") of evil—is of course an Italian rather than a Jew. The Machevil traveled from Italy to France to work with the Catholics. "And now the Guise is dead" (1.1.3), Machevil is in Malta to supervise the "policy" of the Turkish, Jewish, and Spanish factions. It is notable that this quick travelogue does not at all align Machevil with the Jew, but with the French Catholic murderers, who are themselves, as Marlowe insists frequently in his later play, A Massacre at Paris (1593), "policy" makers. It is extremely difficult—and this is surely Marlowe's own deliberate "policy"—to decide if the audience of the early 1590s would have hated the Jew most in this dramatic potage of alien infidels. Renaissance writers frequently equated Jews and Spaniards and Jews and Turks; so Marlowe's presentation seems to have been of three indistinguishably "Mach-evil" groups. It is only at the end of Machevil's induction that he takes the Jew under his wing, assuring us that Barabas's wealth "was not got without my means" (32) and that "he favours me" (35). The Jew enters, then, as the dangerous exemplum of subversive "policy." He is not the sole "other," the Jew, but one of the aliens.

Thinking along these lines of the alien makes us reconsider the relative places of Jewish and non-Jewish alien characters; are there moments in which the Jewish alien/non-Jewish alien division I have suggested in the introduction and chapter two is closed off, or at least pulled together? Consider the case of Portia, for instance. She is, of course, a stranger to Venice, a non-Jewish example of a figure from without who critiques the State she or he enters into, a State that to a greater or lesser extent marginalizes that character. The similarity of Portia's alien role with Barabas's pulls together the identities of marginalized "strangers"—women and Jews—and suggests (since here Portia is seen as a man) the contiguity of Christian and Jew as legal and ethical positions to take up in society. Thinking backwards from Shakespeare's portrayal of the cross-dressed stranger to Marlowe's alien, it seems that the earlier
character is so much more powerful in the theater of the early 1590s because, unlike Portia, Barabas is a hateful character, a Jew; yet he wins an audience empathy. Shakespeare could have done something similar had he followed his sources more closely, for he transfers the racial aspect of Portia’s disguise to the Prince of Morocco. In the source text, Il Pecorone, the Lady of Belmonte adds to her disguise as a lawyer in male clothing: we hear that her “face was stained with certain herbs.”

The Lady of Belmonte in Il Pecorone, then, when she comes to Venice in “blackface,” is making an overtly racialized statement that connects her to the Jew. We know from other texts, including The Blind Beggar of Alexandria, that disguise clothing was sufficient to consider someone’s identity appropriately hidden in comedy. The darkening of the face, then, seems like a deliberate choice; it makes the cross-dressed lawyer more “alien,” perhaps as alien as the Jew, and “balances” the sides in the war over the bond. Now the representatives of apparently opposite sides can be seen as in fact remarkably similar, even while the underlying joke may also be that the woman is mocking the mythic appearance of the Jew. In this latter case, the confluence of Christian and Jewish identity becomes more complicated because it makes use of the myth of Jewish “race” and Jewish “blackness.”


11 In fact, the idea was touted in the “real world” too. In his travelogue, Strange and wonderfull things happened . . . in many fornaine countries (London, 1595), the Englishman Richard Hasleton records that he escaped from captivity under Moors simply by dressing up “in apparell and with my weapons like a Moore” (Ev). The nighttime—and no blackface—was apparently sufficient to fool the watch. He even managed to speak to the Moors and convince them he was “one of them.”

12 Mary Janell Metzger has recently reminded us of the importance of returning “race” to the religious and gendered mix of conflicts in The Merchant of Venice (“‘Now by My Hood, a Gentle and No Jew’: Jessica, The Merchant of Venice, and the Discourse of Early Modern English Identity,” PMLA 113 (1998): 52-63. She rightly points out the “whitening” of the Christian-bound Jessica and by contrast the “blackening” of Shylock. She does not pursue her thesis as deeply as she could, however, nor does she incorporate history properly into the context of what the play says at certain points.
Another way in which the Jew is made “alien” and associated with other non-Jewish “others” that the English would have recognized, is through the theme of money. Barabas is the immigrant come to Malta on “The wind that bloweth all the world besides, / Desire of gold” (3.1422-3), relative to the wind Lady Lucre tells us blows men to London. Critics have not dwelt on how overpowering Barabas’s wealth really is. When he laments, “what a trouble ’tis to count this trash!” (1.1.7), an audience in 1592, 1593, 1594, or 1596 would have strong reactions (for slightly differing reasons each time, I suspect). He may signal to the audience in the yard as he says “The needy groom that never fingered groat / Would make a miracle of thus much coin,” and goes on to lament the money-counting chore a second time (1.1.12-3).

We should not forget that the title of the play is “The Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta.” Emily Bartels writes that “Its title . . . privileges type, as it presents ‘the Jew’ rather than Barabas . . . Yet the title links Barabas’s identity as ‘the Jew’ to his position as a figure ‘of Malta,’ and that link, often overlooked by critics . . . is crucial to an understanding of the figure and of the play.”\(^{13}\) Indeed, I mentioned in my discussion of The Three Ladies the need to keep in mind the relative senses of belonging to their adopted homes that Gerontus, Barabas, and Shylock display. But here I want to emphasize that Barabas is the rich Jew of Malta, as opposed to the other Jews and as opposed to Shylock, who has to borrow from Tubal to raise the loan sum for Antonio.\(^{14}\) Riches are Barabas’s religion and his family; his ability to get wealth is legendary and fantastic and is what strongly defines Barabas—a character rather than a “figure.” He is, furthermore, a character linked by this idea of wealth to the drama’s non-Jewish aliens. Shapiro notes that “After the expulsion of the Jews from England, the Lombards had


\(^{14}\) Tubal, the African progenitor, is a rich man; Morocco is a rich prince. The rich Jew becomes aligned with blackness and other unChristian aliens.
assumed the role of moneylenders and, by extension, the reputation of extortionate usurers," and Master of the Revels Edmund Tilney had replaced apparently too inciteful terms, like "stranger," "Frenchman," and "saucy alien" with "Lombard." The change diverts the course of anti-alien antagonism through Jewish channels. While the Jew is "alienated" the river runs both ways, and the aliens are made "Jewish." Such a redirecting tool is useful for desensitizing subject matter in the early 1590s, when the tide of English alien tension was running high. The moralities had also talked of the loss of England's wealth as a result of Continental foreigners and the Catholic troubles. If anything, Jews were generally thought of as bringing wealth to a nation, so some level of transference, Jew-alien, might be necessary to argue loss of wealth convincingly.

By making money the religion of the Jews, Marlowe and Shakespeare both "alienate" their Jewish characters and align them with the foreigners craving "lucr" that we heard of in The Three Ladies. This trope of money as religion is repeatedly propounded. Barabas tells us that riches "are the blessings promised to the Jews" (1.1.104); when Shylock hears that his daughter has stolen a diamond "cost me two thousand ducats," he exclaims, "the curse never fell upon our nation till now, I never felt it till now" (3.1.76-78). The blessings and curses of the Lord and Christians have little to do with heaven, it seems. Barabas also shouts, "My gold, my fortune, my felicity" (2.1.48) when he sees his daughter with the money bags: the alien-Jew lives where he can witness material manifestations of his faith. And more importantly, where the increases in wealth (or promises of wealth) raise the alien social status or increase the alien's political power at the direct expense of native comfort, social standing, or even life.

Marlowe exposes the terror of subversion, of treason: its open-endedness and its chaos. Its crux that relates to the everyday real world of London is not the assassination

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15 Shapiro, Shakespeare and the Jews, p. 186.
of the prince, the usurpation of power, or even the invasion of a nation or a city by foreigners, but rather the poor state of native-foreigner communication. A nation with non-exclusive ethnicity and religion will always remain (sometimes deliberately, for “policy”) at odds and display a disunity among its citizen and immigrant ranks. It could be argued, however, that the overt threat of treason is not the most dangerous. Rather, as Shakespeare understood, the alien claiming—with textual evidence—to be following good, “native” behavior subverts the State with a force much harder to resist or overturn, because such responsive force on the part of the governing body would inevitably seem to involve alien behavior, non-native texts and acts. This is the bind that Venice finds itself in as it faces up to its “bondman,” Shylock.

ii) Script(ure), Slaves, Confirmation

Shakespeare revives Marlowe’s use of the Jewish alien to articulate the vulnerability of even the most advanced of city-states. Renaissance Venice enjoyed both a healthy cosmopolitanism and well-founded, equitable, constitutional law; yet the alien is always on that edge of assimilation and disjunction with his or her adopted land. The alien holds the potential to seek out and utilize any cracks in the ideological, legal, or political make-up of the society. Whatever the level of direct contact between the Mediterranean merchants and the English, reports of the culture from which these men had come were popular in England throughout the second half of the century. Philo- and anti-Jewish views were represented by the prose of the sixteenth century. William Thomas, writing his popular History of Italy in 1549, insisted that:

It is almost incredible what gain the Venetians receive by the usury of the Jews, both privately and in common. For in every city the Jews keep open shops of usury, taking gages of ordinary for fifteen in the hundred
by the year, and if at the year's end the gage be not redeemed it is forfeit, or at the least done away to a great disadvantage, by reason whereof the Jews are out of measure wealthy in those parts.\(^{16}\)

Alvise Sanuto, a member of the Venetian board of trade, however, was writing by 1604 that there were at that time "more 'perfidious' Jews doing business on the Rialto than Christians and that the policy of the state since the 1570s had, in effect, favored Jews at the expense of Christians, which he regarded as intolerable in a Christian Republic. Nor were Venice's Jews performing any indispensable function. As he saw it, there were Christians enough who could handle the merchandise the Jews dealt in."\(^{17}\)

Once again, I am insisting on the disruption of an idea of historical "renaissance" or "progression," against the conception that ideas and actions about and against the alien improve ethically and practically with time. Although we would hope this to be the case, and overviews of periods would support advances in the humanities, political theory, science, and so on, local, year-to-year opinion and activity do not accord with such a simple idea. So it is that Thomas, a man from a technologically and artistically "backward" nation (as so many historians delight in repeating when discussing England) writes half a century before Sanuto, a man of that great traveling, merchandising nation, and paints a larger picture of liberal Venice depicting the wonders of an ideology with

\(^{16}\) William Thomas, *The History of Italy*, ed. George B. Parks (1549; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), p. 69. A likely indicator of the interest in Italy pervading England late in the sixteenth century is the success of John (Giovanni) Florio's books, *A Worlde of Wordes*, an English-Italian dictionary (London, 1598), and his *First Fruits* (London, 1578), containing simple dialogues in Italian and English. If Londoners were learning Italian at this time, the works of such influential writers as Cesariano (trans. Vitruvius, *De Architecture*), Guicciardini *The History of Italy* (1560), and the suppressed Machiavelli, written in Italian, may have received a significant readership.

which a Venetian himself cannot accord. Under the heading, "The liberty of strangers," Thomas continues:

All men, specially strangers, have so much liberty there that though they speak very ill by the Venetians, so they attempt nothing in effect against their state, no man shall control them for it. And in their Carnevale time (which we call Shrovetide) you shall see maskers disguise themselves in the Venetians' habit and come unto their own noses in derision of their customs, their habit, and misery.\(^{18}\)

Further, he that dwelleth in Venice may reckon himself exempt from subjection. For no man there marketh another's doings, or that meddleth with another man's living. If thou be a papist, there shall thou want no kind of superstition to feed upon. If thou be a gospeler, no man shall ask why thou comest not to church. If thou be a Jew, a Turk, or believest in the devil (so thou spread not thine opinion abroad), thou art free from all controlment. To live married or unmarried, no man shall ask thee why. For eating of flesh in thine own house, what day soever it be, it maketh no matter. And generally of all other things, so thou offend no man privately, no man shall offend thee, which undoubtedly is one principal cause that draweth so many strangers thither.\(^{19}\)

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\(^{18}\) "To come unto one's (own) nose" is not listed as proverbial in Tilley. The sense seems to be concerned with precociousness or presumptuous behavior, as in the phrase, "to hold up one's nose at anything" (Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950], N232), or "to look down one's nose at . . . ." A sense of mocking imitation, at least, seems clear.

\(^{19}\) Thomas, *The History of Italy*, p. 83.
Clearly, these writers represent two opinions of the same situation and I am slanting the
evidence somewhat to use these examples as indicative of cultural decline. What is
important is that we do not succumb to over-generalization of national traits in a kind of
corrective response to the stereotypes we find distasteful or short-sighted in the period.
While some towns in Italy welcomed the fiduciary power of the Jews, there were
complicating factors to their accommodation such as the establishment of the Monti di
Pieta, the scheme that challenged the Jewish money-lenders with a Christian free or
preferable-rate lending service. The echo of this organization in Shylock’s complaint
against the lending gratis by Antonio, which brings down the rate of usury, suggests that
such methods would have been recognized by a proportion of the Elizabethan
audience.  

It is out of an equivocal representative mix of mythical, economic, theological, and
ethnic ideas that the dispute between Shylock and the Christians emerges. In a speech in act
four Shylock insists upon the payment of his due bond. In this speech he does not resort, as he
and the Christians do in several other places, to biblical precedent, arcanely applying
theological laws to their own ends. Neither does he return to the pathos-grabbing of the “Hath
not a Jew eyes . . . ?” (3.1.54ff) speech above or of the dramatic “You call me misbeliever,
cutthroat dog, / And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine” (1.3.111). Instead he talks in clear, logical
terms, backed up by the legal system of Venice, and by the cultural system of which he is an
integrated, yet alienated part. The speech follows Shylock’s convictions and is a reply to the
Duke’s question, “How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?” The Christians can self-
righteously consider themselves blessed with the “New Testament” ability to show mercy.
Shakespeare would reinvestigate the universality and practice of this ability eight years later in
Measure for Measure. Shylock’s speech here is worth quoting in full:

20 Brian Pullan, Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: The Social Institutions of a Catholic State
What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
"Let them be free, marry them to your heirs!
Why sweat they under burdens? Let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be seasoned with such viands"? You will answer,
"The slaves are ours." So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh which I demand of him
Is dearly bought, is mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgement. Answer: shall I have it? (4.1.88-102)

Shylock is legally “doing no wrong.” To take his justification off the legal bookshelves and place it in the midst of contemporary practice, he makes the parallel between his claim for bought flesh and his accuser’s unstated claim for purchased bodies. Shylock “balances” the two sides in the composition of the scene; he also aligns himself with the Christians’ slaves: they use both him and their slaves like “verie dogges.” He does not deny that what is in his mind is revenge. He calls it justice: “I stand for judgement,” but does not feel a need to hide justified malice. It is a trait learned, after all, “by Christian example” (3.1.65-66). To be “dearly bought” is to be enslaved by the purchaser; both

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Jews and Christians in Venice and Malta live by this law of money purchase as marker of power-holder. The other time this phrase appears in *The Merchant of Venice* is when Portia tells Bassanio, “Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear” (3.2.312). In *Il Pecorone*, Gianetto, the suitor to the Lady of Belmonte, buys her dear with his repeated loss of ships and goods; the situation turns as the lady offers to pay what it takes to keep her love’s mind on her, rather than on his friend. Portia’s purchase of Bassanio is the enslaving step on the way to taking control of a State’s machinations. In a similarly serio-comic vein to *The Jew of Malta*, the impossible happens (in this case, a woman takes charge of the male society); it is an impossibility essential to the running of the play’s course, and inevitably ends in its own suppression. As Barabas is killed, so Portia and Nerissa return to their “proper” roles in Belmonte, where Portia has always been acting under the law of her father. As noted above, Shakespeare withdraws from the connection made between the lady and the Jew in *Il Pecorone* by the racializing of the Lady of Belmonte’s disguise. The idea that Jews were in fact “black” pervaded anti-Jewish polemic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and such an idea, had Shakespeare kept it in (rather than transferring it to the Prince of Morocco) would have bound up Jews as aliens within Christian activity even more, and added to that would be the “racial” aspect of slavery.\(^{22}\)

Slaves are a marker of the wealth of a nation, as suggested in *The Jew of Malta* by the visiting Martin del Bosco’s boast that “Our fraught is Grecians, Turks, and Afric Moors / . . . / Of whom we would make sale in Malta here” (2.2.9, 18), so Shylock’s “enslaving” of the Christians undermines the very stability of the State. “Enslaving” is the method of stabilizing the nation or ensuring control over dissident aliens, whether one enslaves those one goes out to get (like Tamburlaine) or whether one enslaves the incoming alien. Barabas and Shylock, in neither of these categories, should not be in

\(^{22}\) On the “blackness” of the Jews, see Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, pp. 170-73.
positions to "enslave" anyone, through law, language, or lucre. Venice's freedoms for Jews would make Shylock's rise through enslavement more credible than Barabas's, and herein lies part of the fantastic nature of *The Jew of Malta.* The contrast between Venice and Malta as locations for the Jew is brought out by the observation of Philip Skippon, a seventeenth-century English traveler, who writes of Malta:

*Jews, Moors,* and Turks (sic) are made slaves here, and are publickly sold in the market. A stout fellow may be bought (if he be an inferior person) for 120 or 160 scudi of *Malta.* The *Jews* are distinguish'd from the rest by a little piece of yellow cloth on their hats or caps, &c. We saw a rich *Jew* who was taken about a year before, who was sold in the market that morning we visited the prison for 400 scudi; and supposing himself free, by reason of a passport he had from Venice, he struck the merchant that bought him; whereupon he was presently sent hither, his beard and hair shaven off, a great chain clapp'd on his legs, and bastinado'd with 50 blows.\(^{23}\)

The strictness of Shylock's adherence to the letter of the bond supposes the strictness of the parallel he is making between his owning and treatment of the pound of flesh and the Christians' owning and treatment of their slaves. Shylock's alignment of himself with both the slave-owners and the slaves seems like a paradoxical and untenable position. He suggests indirectly—and unashamedly—that not only is he now taking his bond, but is doing so "in abject and in slavish" manner. By example from the Christians he fits the treatment to the matter. This seems, at first, to be unbalancing the argument.

in favor of the Christians, but I will show how Shylock brings the Christian slave-
owners down to his new level of the "slave." We must beware of modern connotation
when considering Shylock's words. Earl Dachslager reminds us:

The word "slave" of course did not carry the meaning for Elizabethans
that it has for modern audiences, nor did it simply mean one who is in
bondage. Because the centers and sources of the slave trade, as seen, for
example, in The Jew of Malta, were the Middle East and Northern
Africa, the word essentially connoted a non-Christian, again the infidel.24

For the Elizabethan audience Shylock is not introducing a new aspect of sympathy to
the scene, because the slaves are infidels, less-than-men, and women, bought for
service. In a moment I talk of the characters as slaves in the sense of "enslaving," of
being in bondage, but here notice the semantic prevalence over the word "slave" that
means that Shylock's appeal loses much of its (modern interpretive) power by being an
"unfaithful" one, a Jew's appeal and ipso facto contrary to Christianity.

Having linked the Christians to his "bound" pound of flesh, Shylock extends the
trope of slavery. His only hope of the continuance of his Jewish blood has been lost to
the scheming Lorenzo, who has taken his daughter from him and who becomes,
hyperbolically, the "curse" of the Hebrew nation (3.1.79-80). In response, he puts to the
Christians whether they would allow their lineage to be infected by allowing marriage
between their heirs and their lessers. Shylock must "balance" the psychological weight
preying on his mind by attacking the Christian minds with similar thoughts of "infidel"
infection. Through the analogical argument, the defiler of the blood of lineage, Lorenzo,
is implicitly labeled "slave" by Shylock, an "infidel" to the Jew. Lorenzo is just one of

24 Earl Dachslager, "The Stock of Barabas: Shakespeare's Unfaithful Villains," The Upstart Crow 6
(1986): 8-21, p. 16.
the mass of Christians Shylock has "enslaved." By owning Antonio's flesh, Shylock makes him slave. By being in debt to Antonio, Bassanio is likewise Shylock's slave, and by condoning the claims for mercy and equity on behalf of Antonio, the Duke—and by implication all of Christendom—is allying himself with the slaves, debasing himself. "Enslaved" by the Venetian system that determines his hated place as usurer, Shylock will use that system to put Venice into temporary imitative bondage.

Through the law, which the Christians themselves made, a law that demands repayment of debts, a law that does not even covertly or implicitly contain a clause for equity and mercy, but demands legal revenge (indeed, a law straight out of the legal justice of the Old Testament), they have made themselves the slaves to one who knows the use of such law much better than they do. "If you deny me fie upon your law!" (4.1.100, my emphasis) Shylock tells them; whichever way the Christians turn their acquired law is insignificant. The Christian law is for mercy and forgiveness, but that law is not relevant here: the decrees of Venice do not demand mercy—fie upon that "Christian" law. And the Hebrew law of precise judgment is instead laid down by the Christians to be followed by Jew and Christian alike. If the Christians swerve from the letter of that law then "There is no force in the decrees of Venice"—fie upon those laws.

When Portia comes to analyze the situation she perceives that particulars of what may be legally acted by accuser and accused are determined not in the words existing in the bond document but by that unscripted, improvisational space, what is not written. Assumptions, such as the necessity of blood being spilt in taking the bond, have no force in a law of written precision. Since Shylock has determined to take a pound of flesh Portia confirms that he shall not take "light or heavy" of that weight by "the twentieth part / Of one poor scruple" (4.1.326-27). Certainly Shylock's insistence on precision both allays, and then allows, his own downfall. But it is largely the seemingly random additions of performative requirements into the unwritten gaps of the bond document that entrap Shylock. It is the act, the practicing of the doctrine, and not the
text, that Portia is able to manipulate. Shylock is a man of words, a man of fact. He negotiates *in scriptis* loan deals—he writes down what is agreed upon. Portia lives for the act: there is great staged ceremony in her suitors’ attempts for her, and she is disguised now to act a new part. She cannot argue with unchangeable text and so intercepts in the malleable spaces between the textual instruction of what is to happen and the reality of what will actually be seen when that text is acted out.

Herein lies part of the power of performance, and here is revealed the complex cultural reflexivity of the dramatic text. It is a mimetic meta-text, for Portia is revealing how cultural intertextuality works against the formal text at all points. She shows how the text retains its form, but can never be assumed to mean the same thing at different points in time nor in different geographical and ideological spaces. Portia and scene 4.1 do this without acknowledging their historical moment; in other words, the play most radically provides a critique of cultural assumption, revision, and reformation by pretending toward ideals of isolated texts, and also proving that such ahistoricity or acultural behavior is not possible. Shylock has a strict text that sets up a balanced composition, one that follows artistic, dramatic, and political law. The Duke sits back, able only to see the overt signs that Shylock holds up to view. Portia, on the other hand, understands the subversion of text through performance. As an outsider, she can come to Venice and disrupt the city structure—the balanced composition can be tilted. The text of the bond states that the pound of flesh will be taken from “nearest his heart” (4.1.251). The act itself will show that the quantity of flesh taken will be less than or more than a pound, and that blood will be spilt. Because of the discrepancy between the text of what is supposed to happen (somehow, magically) and the visibility of the acts that will occur in the execution of the death-warrant text, Portia is able to provide the missing link in that logical chain. The text for a pound of flesh will require an act of blood for which, in turn—now that the process has been taken out of the Jew’s realm of precise text and into Portia’s realm of imprecise practice—allows Portia to insist:
Portia. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,  
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.  
Shylock. Is it so nominated in the bond?  
Portia. It is not so expressed, but what of that?  
'Twere good you do so much for charity.  
Shylock. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond. (4.1.254-59)

The cause-and-effect chain of acts means that any act that is not fully expressed in the text will leak physical matter, visual substance that will necessitate the imposition or addition of some physicality "not so expressed" in the bond.

The precise, realist, subdued, balanced composition set up in the trial scene begins to falter as the "expressionism" of Portia is revealed. Observing, yet working around, the rules that have seemingly hermetically composed the law of Venice, and therefore Shylock's bond, and therefore the nature of the trial scene, Portia begins to "action-paint," to splash her active color onto Shylock's "sober" scene. Portia's request is still, at this point in the play, beyond Shylock's comprehension. What determines this exit from the written law into unwritten practice is another Christian ideal, "charity." It cannot be hoped that such a request would have any effect upon Shylock's state of mind or his intention concerning the bond. Rather, Portia is preparing the way for her saving argument. She is playing both prophet and messiah: as the doctor of law she works at pointing out the limitation of the old law so that, as Portia, she can enter as the triumphant new interpreter. If Shylock will deny the provision of a surgeon because it is not so detailed in the bond, then he cannot argue against Portia's denial of a "jot of blood" (4.1.304) for that same reason. By couching her previous judgment on the status of the bond in Christian terms, Portia makes sure that it is impossible for Shylock to
accept her request. When she then makes the similar judgment, this time coldly expressing the inadequacy of the bond’s written words alone, Shylock has no alternative but to agree to the insufficient law for which he has been arguing all along. Under cover of her abstract art, Portia is confirming the conventional laws that set up the trial in the first place. To successfully bend the rules, one must first understand what makes them work, and how they fail. “Thyself shalt see the act” says Portia (4.1.312), squarely on home territory. Shylock immediately backs down and requests the money. But now the justice of the letters of the law should take over. It is here, after the clever working through of the bond by Portia, that the Christians return that revenge for which Shylock has said they are famous. The new “unstated” area outside the bond that Portia has opened up becomes a free-for-all, act-judgment center. Since the punishment that Shylock should receive for transgression from the letter of the bond document is not laid down, Portia becomes creative. She invents new text which can easily be put into power by the State. She makes speech-acts that ensure Shylock’s inaction simply in the fact that her text can be enacted without looking to the precision of a written document’s text.

Portia revenges. She does not want one drop of Christian blood (4.1.307, my emphasis). The punishment: Shylock’s “lands and goods / Are by the laws of Venice confiscate / Unto the state of Venice” (4.1.308-10); this reminds us of a familiar lament over the lack of Italian conversions due to the taking of the Jews’ goods by the authorities. Edwyn Sandys and Thomas Coryate, for instance, both expressed this sentiment.25 A new punishment is then added for the discrepancy in the weight of the flesh taken:

25 See Sandys, A Relation of the State of Religion, Y2-Y2v. In his Coryat’s Crudities, Hastily Gobbled Up in Five Moneths Travels, 2 vols., ed. W. W. Greg. (1611; Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1905), Thomas Coryate relates his visit to the ghetto at Venice: “Truely it is a most lamentable case for a Christian to consider the damnable estate of these miserable Jewes, in that they reject the true Mesias and Saviour of their soules . . . and it is pitiful to see that fewe of them living in Italy are converted to the Christian religion. For
... if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate. (4.1.327-29)

But this is not all. Portia turns away from Shylock's Jewishness and uses the fact of his alien status to put into practice another law:

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state,
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice. (4.1.345-53, my emphasis)

this I understand is the maine impediment to their conversion: All their goodes are confiscate soon as they embrace Christianity: and this I heard is the reason, because whereas many of them doe raise their fortunes by usury, in so muche that they doe not onely sheare, but also fle a poore Christians estate by their griping extortion; it is therefore decreed by the Pope, and other free Princes in whose territories they live, that they shall make a restitution of all their ill-gotten gains, and so disclogge their soules and consciences, when they are admitted by holy baptism into the bosom of Christs Church. Seing then when their goods are taken from them at their conversion, they are left even naked, and destitute of their meanes of maintenance, there are fewer Jewes converted to Christianity in Italy, than in any other country in Christendome. Whereas in Germany, Poland, and other places the Jews that are converted (which doth often happen, as Emmanuel Tremelliws was converted in Germany) do enjoy their estates as they did before” (1, p. 373-74).
Portia talks again with the threat of her speech-acts perlocutionary power, portents of practice to come. There is clearly a turn in how Shylock is being figured within Portia’s rhetoric here. James Shapiro writes of the moment:

As much as it might want to, given its charter, Venetian society cannot punish Shylock simply because he is a Jew. But in the terms of the play it can convict him as a threatening alien. In order to accomplish this delicate maneuver in the space of these dozen lines, the nature of Shylock’s difference is reconstituted: a Jew at the start of the speech, three lines later he is an alien. Yet once Shylock is convicted as an alien, he can be punished, not as an alien, but as a Jew, who must “presently become a Christian.”

For this brief and crucial moment in the play, Shylock is both Jew and alien. This momentary slippage is vital, for it allows Shakespeare to represent not simply theological questions, but pressing social ones, even as Elizabethan London confronted an ongoing crisis over its own alien communities.26

Although Portia’s representation of Shylock flip-flops here, Shylock is not “both Jew and alien” only for “this brief and crucial moment.” I have been arguing, and will continue below to argue, that the Jew has been figured as “alien” for a long time in drama before Shakespeare, and through a number of moments in The Merchant of Venice before this crux.

Before mentioning those moments, we can take a brief look at a very similar twisting of ethno-religious identities, which occurs in The Jew of Malta. Here, too, the Jew protests against the punishment by means of appealing to the city laws and here, too, the reconstitution of the alien-Jew’s identity line-by-line enables his subservience

26 Shapiro, Shakespeare and the Jews, p. 189.
and (temporary) ruin. Having called the Jews of the city to him, Ferneze reminds Barabas of the wars:

Ferneze. And therefore are we to request your aid.

Barabas. Alas, my lord, we are no soldiers;
And what's our aid against so great a prince?

First Knight. Tut, Jew, we know thou art no soldier;
Thou art a merchant, and a moneyed man,
And 'tis thy money, Barabas, we seek.

...  

Barabas. Are strangers with your tribute to be taxed?

Second Knight. Have strangers leave with us to get their wealth?
Then let them with us contribute.

Barabas. How, equally?

Ferneze. No, Jew, like infidels. (1.2.49-54, 59-62, my emphasis)

The First Knight hints at the Maltese anti-Jewish prejudice; Barabas plays the alien card, and the Second Knight matches him with his "strangers"; Barabas shows his weak hand by asking a question that puts him at the mercy of Ferneze, and the Governor trumpets the alien by returning the identity to "Jew." This is an example of the proposition I made earlier in this chapter, that the holder of power in the form of knowledge of policy (here, how the penalty will be exacted) enslaves the ignorant. Further foreshadowing of The Merchant of Venice trial scene comes a few lines later as half the estate of the stranger-Jews shall go to the State in fine, "he that denies to pay shall straight become a Christian," and "Lastly, he that denies this shall absolutely lose all he has" (1.2.73-74, 76-77). With this last order, Barabas's footsteps are marked out before him, tracks in which Shylock will step almost without alteration. Of course, even to tease out the flip-
flopping of representation in order to adjust previous criticism, is probably to pull
anachronistic interpretive threads from a fully-woven historical sweater. As Earl
Dachslager pointed out in his essay about Jews as infidels, the Jew and the alien “other”
can hardly be divided so easily. The very identifying of the Jews by Christians as
infidels, those who do not believe in Christ, puts them in the same group as all those
“stubborn” “others.”27 There is no doubt in the early modern Christian view: the Jew is
always also the alien.

Shakespeare himself hints at this deep-seated Venetian view of Shylock as an
alien “other” as much as a Jew, per se, when he has the Duke appeal to Shylock: “tis
thought / Thou’lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange / Than is thy strange
apparent cruelty” (4.1.19-21). The strangeness of Shylock implies not his religious
Jewishness so much as his ethnic “outlandishness,” his claims presented as being at
odds with the Christian and “civilized” emphasis on mercy. The Duke goes on to
patronize Shylock by adding to the request for mercy: he insists that Shylock should
also be overly-generous to Antonio, so that the Jew not be likened to those “strange,”
uncivilized, unmerciful peoples, “stubborn Turks, and Tartars never train’d / To offices
of tender courtesy” (32-33). The irony of the Duke’s next line, then, “We all expect a
gentle answer Jew!” is in the fact that Shylock’s reply, despite being sworn by “our holy
Sabbath” (presumably the Jews’, but interestingly ambiguous), is a gent(i)le reply,
familiar insofar as it appears to accord with the letter of the Venetian law. Shylock is not
“strange” at all, but is reflecting the very nature of what Venice, and the Venetians who
built the city, stand for. He is in fact “more strange”: beyond the strange lies the
refamiliarized. To be more strange than the “other” is in this case to show Christian
mercy, to be “one of them,” the Venetians. As an alien, he lives and works by the

27 See Earl Dachslager, “‘The Stock of Barabas.’”
Christians' law; as a Jew he has prospered by the Christians' law. It is as a combined alien-Jew that Shylock is taunted by the Venetian boys after his daughter's escape.

_Solanio._ I never heard a passion so confus'd
So strange, outrageous, and so variable
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets,—
"My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!

...  
_Salerio._ Why all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.
_Solanio._ Let good Antonio look he keep his day
Or he shall pay for this. (2.8.12-15, 23-26)

The relation of this episode is crucial, for I agree with Solanio: it seems to mark the moment when Shylock's determination to continue with the merry jest of the flesh bond is solidified. The joke of the bond as it is written up is suffused with the questionable relations of Shylock and Antonio, and by implication Bassanio; the taunting episode brings to the surface the real desire of Shylock for revenge. We are reminded of the travelers to England, who we met in the introduction, especially "Gallus Castratus," who remarked on the English apprentices' disdain for aliens; and this combines with the reintegration of the trope of the Jewish religion as a religion of money. Shylock's passion is "confus'd" indeed. It is the coming-together and fusing of Jewish and alien elements in a realistic, mimetic whole, a mirror of the complexity of real life. While Ferneze's and Portia's rhetoric can dissever the two, practicing personal identity is never so clear.

Once the self-binding words of the law have been revealed to contain loop-holes, they can be "enacted" within those spaces, interpreted to the gain of the dissatisfied
party that understands the power of performance. The final lines of the quotation are an insightful questioning of the Venetian Duke’s real power (Portia has done the work; the Duke now applies mercy as he sees fit)\(^{28}\) The written words have been stable, unmalleable, but the spoken words have changed the tack of the whole trial scene. The winds all blowing favorably for Shylock (because unfavorably for Antonio’s ships) soon change and his steadfast textual structure is destroyed as it attempts to batten down with analogy and accusation against the changeable zephyrs of Portia. So now, finally, the spoken word of the Duke will be the act of a Christian, mercy granted to make Shylock “see the difference of our spirit” (4.1.365). “Mercy” is granted to keep Shylock alive so that he can see his world collapse before him; so that, in front of the taunts of the cynical Gratiano, he witnesses his punishment for strictly following the letter of the Venetian Christians’ chosen law, or at least the law as they all thought they knew it before Portia re-read it. We notice that the Shakespearean text follows Portia’s adjustments by having Shylock incrementally repeat and change his utterances. “I stay here on my bond” (4.1.238, my emphasis) precedes Portia’s interpretations of the law; her order against a drop of Christian blood prompts Shylock to say “let the Christian go,” and her compounding of the Jew’s problem with the exactness of the weight of flesh turns his phrase to “let me go” (332). From staying to excluding the Christian to excluding himself, Shylock’s position is steadily shifted to the margins.

The turn at the end to the familiar conversion order seems like a gratuitous crowd-pleaser, taking the emphasis from the “alien” and placing it back on the Jew, a somewhat similar, defusing, move to that wanted by Tilney in relation to Sir Thomas More (see above, and chap. 4). And it is. But under this reading lies the fact that the

\(^{28}\) Laurence Aldersey writes, “To tell you of the duke of Venice, and of the Seigniory: there is one chosen that ever beareth the name of a duke, but in trueth hee is but servant to the Seigniorie, for of himselfe hee can doe litlle,” (Richard Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation, 8 vols. (1589; Toronto and London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1907), 3, p. 75.
threatened conversion brings the alien back into the center as a New Christian.

Impoverished but alive, Shylock might have reminded the audience of the conversos of the all-but-defunct Domus Conversorum, the London house of converts for Jews, where immigrants gave up their wealth before entering the house. The admission of Nathaniel Menda in 1578, after his 1 April 1577 public conversion by John Foxe—the text of the sermon was published as a pamphlet—may have played a part in initiating a new interest in the topic of Jews.39 Shylock leaves feeling ill; like a wounded animal he goes off to hide, perhaps to die. But for now the Jew, so much the marginal figure, the strong individualist, the anti-Christian, has been incorporated by religious and political law into the body of Venetian society in a way that other aliens are not. Morocco, for instance, arrives, tries his luck with the laws of Belmonte, fails, and is allowed to leave. Shylock’s failure forces him to become “one of them,” and paradoxically to be erased, effaced through Christening. Portia’s ability to bring about this dissemination of the alien-Jew’s identity into the interstices of the Venetian body politic is all the more remarkable since it entails her own temporary “alienation” both in terms of geographical origin and gender identity. The usual role for the alien woman is one of a commodity necessary to men’s pursuit of “policy.” Jessica and Abigail, the Jewish alien women, both enrich the Christians with their fathers’ money, thus inverting the trope of foreigners bleeding the country and enforcing that of Jews providing wealth. This is effected, of course, by their respective marriages to native men and their conversion to Christianity, a trope of religio-financial conversion and transferal (a Christian “profession”) continued in Englishmen For My Money and manipulated in Jack Drum’s Entertainment.

iii) *Pride, Disguise, Transformation*

Many critics have asserted the influence of Marlowe’s Jew on Shakespeare’s. There was another character, before Shylock, however, who seems to have learned from Barabas’s instruction for the alien as usurping threat. George Chapman’s *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* appeared as a “ne” play in Henslowe’s *Diary* on 12 February, 1596, and ran for just over one year, excluding summer months. A link with *The Jew of Malta* in terms of dramatic ideas is suggested by a revival of Marlowe’s play in January and early February of 1596, at which time it received a run of four performances at the Rose theater and made monies comparable with the early 1594 season. The extant quarto text of *The Blind Beggar*, 1598, is of a short play, a farcical and loosely-woven entertainment. It concerns one character, a stranger to Alexandria, making his way to the top of the political heap by playing four roles in society, the deceptions all managed through disguise. He is a shepherd’s son from Memphis, whose role-playing includes Cleanthes, presumably a journeyman soldier, who becomes renowned for his valiant military service in Alexandria and eventually becomes king of Egypt; a rich usurer called Leon; the “mad brayne,” dangerous Count Hermes; and Irus, the blind beggar who tells fortunes from his cave dwelling.

The title character of the play is only equivocally a “real” character in the fiction of the play. He seems to have been Irus the seer before he took on his other role-characters, since his father was a fortune teller; but he gives up that character late in the

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30 Its earnings were diminishing by December 1596-January 1597, and we might guess that the play left the Rose stage soon afterward. Philip Henslowe’s *Diary* does list the purchase of apparel for “the blind beggar” in 1601, however, so we should not think that the play possessed no currency after January 1597. The *Diary* ceases to list play names in its performance records soon after this date. See Henslowe, *Henslowe’s Diary*, ed. R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 34, 169-70.
play, and it, too, is revealed to be a role within a role. In this discussion, therefore, I talk of "the shepherd's son" as the primary actor, and I refer to his named characters either by name or as "role-characters." As several editors of the play have noted, the text is cut and corrupt at many points. This cut version of the play, with its emphasis on the comedy of disguise, seems to have been established as the norm fairly quickly, since by 1598 the first quarto title page read, "The Blinde begger of Alexandria, most pleasantly discoursing his variable humours in disguised shapes full of conceite and pleasure." The play-text as we have it does not seem overtly to place the role-played characters in the four categories of humor, although it is possible that they were originally developed further. As it stands, Cleanthes may be said to be sanguine and optimistic—after all, he is the final identity who has planned to take revenge on, and rule, the kingdom; Count Hermes is certainly choleric, brandishing his pistol and threatening death at any opportunity; Leon the usurer is a phlegmatically calm, calculated financier, assured of his own abilities in the trade of use; and Irus the blind beggar is the withdrawn hermit, although not altogether melancholic. Accepting such a scheme of "variable humours" suggests the dangerous transformations possible within every person and reminds us particularly of the fear of aliens entering England whose allegiances to their countries and princes were uncertain. This lead character, however, seems to be a particularly potent protean creator, and his disguises create not just comic confusion, but "shapes" that affect the structure of the realm. They are "shapes full of conceite and pleasure," full of a uniquely strong invention—reminiscent of a wronged and revenging Barabas, but quite different in method—and full of pleasure both for the audience and for the

31 Lloyd Berry notes that there seems to be missing text concerning the relationship between Cleanthes and Queen Aegiale (his illicit, would-be lover), and the rivalry between Cleanthes and Doricles (competitors for princess Aspasia). See his introduction to the play in George Chapman, The Plays of George Chapman: The Comedies, Allan Holaday, general ed. (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1970). Line references are from this edition.
role-characters who get to make money, fight, and sleep with women, indulging as much “tyme in sportes of love” as possible on the way to power.

Plays in different genres, before and after *The Blind Beggar*, tapped the deep-seated well of fear that lies beneath the practice of disguise, identity-transformation, and self-invention. Moreover, disguise is nearly always associated with the crossing of social/class lines, of urban/rural boundaries, or native/alien borders. All-knowing Macbeth, for instance, tells Banquo that “our bloody cousins,” Donalbain and Malcolm, have escaped to England and Ireland “filling their hearers / with strange invention” (*Macbeth* 3.1.29-32): they are allegedly conceiving assumed roles in foreign lands and mustering belief in their respective roles in order to return and usurp the realm.

Marlowe’s King of Navarre declares in the history of *The Massacre at Paris* that the superstitions, plots and ideas forced upon others by the Catholics are “strange inventions” (4.2.8); and in a comic embodiment of that strange invention, blind Irus of Alexandria, the purpose is similarly to canvass credibility and thereby take over the land.

In the opening scene of *The Blind Beggar*, Queen Aegiale bewails the loss of her illicit beloved, Cleanthes; Irus the beggar (knowing his other self, the role-character Cleanthes) reveals that she “made away his [Cleanthes’s] Dutches” (1.39), and when Cleanthes would not return her advances had him banished the realm for allegedly making love to her. She repents her bad behavior, done in the heat of passion, and declares that she will do anything to effect his “discovery,” a word, notably, that is repeated, for the uncovering of characters is the nub around which the extant text of the play revolves. Covering the self in different apparel is always required of one who escapes, is exiled, or returns. Queen Aegiale’s “dis-covering” of Cleanthes would entail a stripping of disguise, a return to the Cleanthes beneath the exiled appearance. The irony is, of course, that the alienated body’s return cannot be predicted or recognized. Like Barabas’s rejection and reintegration, the shepherd’s son might return in any shape,
Cleanthes or otherwise. Questions of what one makes of oneself and one’s life, and of the permanence of relations between persons, underlie the comedy. The Queen “will Moorelike learne to swimme and dive, / Into the bottom of the Sea for him” (1.61-62), for her pearl of a man. She seems to be a good judge of manhood, too, for the other men are “shapes” of men, drones, aliens, and braggarts. Although also an invented self, Cleanthes will transform into a permanent identity. Queen Aegiale, however, disappears before that point. Her absence from the final scene suggests her death somewhere in lost text. Irus’s advice to the queen is to have Cleanthes’s “true picture” set up “on each monument / About the Cittie and within the land” (1.68, 91-92). She agrees and declares a popish devotion to the manly icons: “To all his pictures when they be disperset / Will I continuall pilgrimages make, / As to the saints and Idols I adore” (1.99-101). She will offer prayers to Isis while she thinks upon Cleanthes. This instruction from Irus and compliance by the queen is our first hint that the “shape,” the image of the men in this play, rather than their personal identities, is what matters. Queen Aegiale exits and Irus goes on to explain himself in a familiar vice-type audience address:

See Earth and Heaven where her *Cleanthes* is.

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,

I am well knowne a wealtie Usurer,
And more than 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 meane to spend my tyme in sportes of love,

Which in the sequell you shall playnely see,

And joy I hope in this my pollicie. (1.109-26)

When Irus claims that "_Homer_ was blind yet could he best discerne, / The shapes of every thing and so may I" (1.220-21), he is talking about human shapes and the shapes of society. Part of his "pollicie" is to re-shape the realm with his sexual, financial, and political trickery, thus taking revenge on the country that exiled him by possessing it for himself. Irus’s role includes directing other characters in the decorum of their roles, then, from the queen’s devotional behavior to the appearance of the women who come to see him for their fortunes in love. Elimine, for one, asks, "How think you we are tyred to tempete mens lookes, / Beeing thus Nimphlike is it not too strange" (1.228-29). Irus assures her that she simply looks attractive, and not outlandish. The self-alienated stranger is dictating the "shapes" of the natives in preparation for "sportes of love" and ultimate rule.

The doctoring of the text has left the play, among other things, as a direct farce about the overturning of the official socio-political order through transgression in apparel—a trope, as we continue to see, that pierces the heart of English socio-political structure. We have already met the "newfangled" alien in chapter one, have been warned of the effects of pride of apparel in chapter two, and will see alien fashion plague native social structures in chapter four. There is a significant body of scholarship on the central place that questions of apparel held in early modern England. D. M. Palliser notes that the "apparent paradox is that the very period—from say 1540 to
1640—when society was especially fluid was the time of greatest stress upon order, degree, the Chain of Being, genealogy and the cult of ancestry. Yet it is not really paradoxical. In an age of rapid individual mobility, and of an exceptionally active land market, it was natural for concepts of status and deference to be stressed the more.”

The setting of the play in Alexandria may have helped to lend credence to the plot of revolution for an English audience dieted at the Rose theater on Tamburlaine and Mulo Mulocco, but there would have been little trouble in the audience recognizing the “mirror” for London and England implicit in the theme of improper dressing (through pride or deliberate disguise), as I have shown in the previous chapters and introduction.

The contemporary concern for apparel and identity bound popular cultural concern and the theater closely. Steven Mullaney comments on the significance of the “maisterless men & vagabond persons” who “attend the theaters to “meet together and recreate themselves.” He writes that “In the theater, masterless men could take on a new appearance; . . . Theater played with the social order, representing a cultural and ideological instability whose consequences verged on the apocalyptic.”

Theater, through its costumed characters, made “play” with social order. Dressing incorrectly must be stopped because it is akin to disguise. Peter Hyland writes, “Disguise is, after all, essentially anarchic, inverting systems and relationships, creating a distance between appearance and reality, turning the world upside down.” English society had been divided officially into twelve ranks-by-apparel as much earlier as 1533. Henry VIII’s act

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ordered a self-display of subjects’ place in the social hierarchy by limiting cuts and cloth of linings, ruffs, and hose to particular ranks.\textsuperscript{35} The sumptuary laws requiring members of the realm to display their place outwardly through costume were supported in 1542 and 1555, and Elizabeth was to institute increasingly important proclamations between 1559 and 1597.\textsuperscript{36}

What makes Haughton’s display of conceit and practice particularly powerful is the representation of Cleanthes’s “purpose-success,” the fact that, unlike Barabas of Malta, he achieves his ends as well as the means to an end.\textsuperscript{37} A prime factor in leading to the different successes of these two protagonists is the requirement for destruction, death and effacement on the way to a power position. Barabas’s victims are many, including his own daughter, but his mistake is to retain a central character against whom other dangerous characters hold grievances: himself. It therefore becomes inevitable that Barabas will become a victim. This is not the case for the shepherd’s son from Memphis, who, as Cleanthes, lives in lethal relation to his other disguises. Not only can

\textsuperscript{35} 24 Henry VIII c. 13.
\textsuperscript{36} 22 Elizabeth I. See Great Britain, Tudor Royal Proclamations, 3 vols. (Hereafter H&L), eds. Paul Hughes and James F. Larkin (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, [v. 1] 1964 and [v. 2 & 3] 1969), 2, p. 454 (1580); 30 Elizabeth I, H&L 3, p. 3 (1588); 39 Elizabeth I, H&L 3, p. 174 (1597); 39 Elizabeth I, H&L 3, p. 179 (1597, “Dispensing Certain Persons from Statutes of Apparel”). There is an interesting movement during the second half of the sixteenth century away from statute law and onto a reliance on local enforcement of proclamation orders. Frederic A. Youngs, Jr. notes that the later proclamations “differed markedly because they reflected the Queen’s disgust at the lack of reform, and thus they (1588, 1597, 1597) dispensed from all the statutory provisions which the proclamations did not repeat. Now regulation was to be on the basis of the proclamation alone, superseding the obsolete provisions of the statutes which had not kept up with the fashions” (The Proclamations of the Tudor Queens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 162). It is probable that proclamations had some effect, but one of limited time. The issue of proclamations “to enforce” previous ones might be for occasional reasons, such as those concerning the return of the plague in 1592 and 1593, but was often overtly to remind a forgetful or disobedient population.

he afford to allow the other role-characters to backfire; he depends on it. The alternative personas must be got rid of—just as Barabas kills the suitors, friars, and nuns, and threatens Ithamore. Cleanthes deliberately causes his disguised characters to be the objects of hatred and mortal judgment, and then “kills” them or has them escape in order to effect his greater plan. Through disguise he has given himself a four-fold buffer zone, four extra leases on life.38 Because all his crimes are committed by these role-characters, there is no scapegoat for the city to punish for their losses, no Titus’s Aaron nor Barabas-like villain to subject to ritualistic, grotesque semi-burial or cauldron-boiling, no stripping of his livelihood, nor is there the reduction of him to the state of Mamon’s lunacy that we see in John Marston’s Jack Drum’s Entertainment.

The frightening ideas that Nicholas Coleman played on when he went to the Norwich authorities in 1559, and come up again here, were, first, if an alien could take on an identity through disguise and throw it off again at a strategic moment, the hidden person need never be found out: he has no native history and will not be recognized as part of any plot; and second, that “dressing-down” was as politically dangerous to the realm as “dressing-up” was ethically (and legally) unacceptable. The nobleman dressing

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38 Of course, I am comparing the comedy of The Blind Beggar with the tragedy of The Jew of Malta, and it could be argued that aliens in the different genres are not working in the same way. This may be true to an extent, but the variation in dramatic use of the alien seems to me to be based on the ways in which stock alien attributes (deviousness; desire for money; debauchery and lust; infidelity to religion, law or state, and so on) are fitted into the representations of city and social structures, rather than a difference in the alien attributes or manifestations themselves. This is really an extension of my thesis that the plays circle around the same alien issues repeatedly. Whether the aliens are Dutchmen taking English artisans’ jobs, Italians draining the country of good product, or Jewish characters controlling the ready money of a realm, they are carrying out the same vices to similar ends in each genre. The biggest difference I should acknowledge is in the form of disguise, which I talk about further below. Comedies seem to make use of extensive “real” disguise—dressing-up and intentional hiding of the self from others; the tragedies and the moral plays emphasize the corruption of one’s identity and of others in contact with the corrupted (alien) through some ethical, ideological, or social change in the character. The character in tragedy and moral drama is thus “disguised” in the sense of being misread by others, believed when they should be doubted (e.g. Fraud in The Three Ladies or Barabas), or physically changed by their corruptive experience (e.g. Christianity in The Tyde Tarrieth or Lady Conscience).
down retained underlying powers that the poor man "dressing-up" could not match. An interesting comparative illustration comes up in another late 1590s play, the anonymous *Mucedorus.* In the first scene, which contains some wonderful writing, Prince Mucedorus of Valencia tells his friend Anselmo that he must venture to Aragon to seek the princess Amadine. "I must estrange that friendship," he says, but goes on, "Misconstrer not: 'tis from the realm, not thee; / Though lands part bodies, hearts keep company" (1.11-13). To "estrange" here is to pull one part of the twain of friendship into a strange land, to alienate oneself, to separate the bodily, physical self where hearts remain fixed. This separation of Mucedorus from his known self is aided by disguise. As such, he transforms himself from himself by overt play-acting. He requests a disguise for his journey, so that he might observe the oft-reported virtues of the Aragonese princess without being observed, insisting on "A more obscure, servile habiliment" (1.44) than the mountebank's outfit Anselmo at first suggests. Anselmo comes up with the solution:

Within my closet does there hang a cassock;
Though base the weed is, 'twas a shepherd's
Which I presented in Lord Julio's masque.

*Mucedorus.* *That,* my Anselmo, and none else but *that,*
Mask Mucedorus from the vulgar view.

*That* habit suits my mind; fetch me *that* weed.

*Exit* Anselmo.

Better than kings have not disdained *that* state,
And much inferior, to obtain their mate. (49-56, my emphasis)

The plethora of suggested little aphorisms and the repeated demonstrative pronouns insist on pause. Mucedorus has brought Anselmo down to suggest the lowest disguise
he can, having rejected the suggestion to be "like a Florentine or mountebank" (46). Anselmo seems to excuse the baseness of the weed by explaining its history as a shepherd's cassock (an honest, if lowly trade; the trade of Christ and a prince over his people and the trade of the cunning blind beggar of Alexandria). But in the next line we find that it was not the weed of a shepherd at all, but the costume for Anselmo playing a shepherd in a masque. Rather than providing the prince with the genuine clothing of a lowered state, Anselmo provides the courtly means by which Mucedorus might achieve his end, to win the love of Amadine. Mucedorus's promise that his estrangement is "from the realm, not thee" is ensured by Anselmo's offer: the cassock entwines the two friends within the same pastoral identity, such that even the land parting the bodies is in fact fooled to a metaphysical degree. The four-fold repetition of "that" in three lines by Mucedorus emphasizes his need to take on that individual item of apparel, since it will enfold him both as the new rustic identity for the sake of his quest and as the courtly "player" that he is. "That state" of shepherd "and much inferior" have histories of being "usurped" (42) by "Better than kings" to effect their ends. An inverse usurpation—the court invading the country—is what pulls Mucedorus "from the realm," across the borders between Valencia and Aragon and away from the very stabilizing structure of class within his own realm. Anselmo astutely notes that the prince's absence "will breed a blemish in the court" (31), for a central building block has been removed from the edifice of the State. The self-estrangement of Mucedorus is presented here as estrangement from the realm, the (royal, courtly) self being a micro-representation of the realm as well as a piece of it. Mucedorus's alienation from the realm through apparel contrasts with Chapman's tale of the stranger(s) entering the realm.

What has happened in The Blind Beggar, and what should not be allowed to happen by the authorities, is that the imaginary creations of character-ranks through apparel have become real. The shepherd's son has created characters, utterly alien presences, who act as subversive critics of the established socio-political order in the
city-state. The disguised role-characters actually use these social structures (they work apparently within the official codes of dress and rank—the count, for instance, wears a cloak fit for such a man); but, as imitations, disguises, frauds, they are subverting exactly that apparel-by-rank system. What is worse, “they” keep doing it successfully: the role-characters are comically acted with, sought after, talked to, slept with, and disposed of, just like real characters, and real human beings. The clothing has made the man, or rather the men. The disguises are comically simple and never fail. Irus predicts that the women, Elimine and Samathis, will meet fit men for them (two of the men being himself in disguise), and when his first wooing disguise as “the mad brayne Count” works, he says, “Lucke to this patch and to this velvet gowne” (2.19), simple but apparently sufficient properties for disguise that transgresses class lines, sexual ethics, and civil decorum.39 The Count’s strange habit also works well on the alien Spaniard Bragadino, who, chasing after Elimine too, rattles off the following aside:

Oh I know him well; it is the rude Count, the uncivil Count, the unstayed Count, the bloody Count, the Count of all Countes; better I were to hazard the dissolution of my brave soule agaynst an host of giantes then with this loose Count, otherwise I could tickle the Count. I sayth my noble Count, I doe descend to the craving of pardon; love blinded me I knew thee not. (2.28-33)

That the Spaniard is being bawdy here is supported by possible double entendres in the lines following, where he talks of “a woman’s concavity,” “Her hollow disposition which you see sweet nature / will supplye or otherwise stop up in her with solid or firm

39 Where the role-character himself does not turn up, but needs to be safely represented as having been present, a property may be used. Indicating a sword, Leon plans to deceive the Lords hunting down the fugitive Cleanthes: “By this I am knowne to be Cleanthes, / Whose sodayne sight I now will take upon mee, / And cause the nobles to pursue my shadowe: / As for my substance they shall never finde, / Till I my selfe, do bring my selfe to light” (3.31-35).
fayth”; also where the Count replies to Bragadino’s claim that “a Spaniard is like a 
Philosopher’s stone” with “I say an other mans stone may be as good as a Philosophers 
at all tymes”; and most directly, when Elimine refuses to say Hermes’s title “Because it 
comes so neare a thing that I knowe” (5.19). This “French” homonymic dirty joke is 
reminiscent of Princess Katherine’s “Le foot et le count! O Seigneur Dieu! ils sont les 
mots de son mauvais, corruptible, gros, et impudique, et non pour les dames de honneur 
d’user” in Henry V (3.4.52-54). A further example comes up in the wooing of the other 
woman: Leon invites Samathis (and himself) to her own feast. This begins to suggest 
the exploitation of the stereotype of the gout-ridden usurer who starves himself at home 
and eats off others.40 But once at the feast table, there is no gorging, and the character is 
curiously “taken-over” by the underlying operator of this multi-limbed, character-
machine. Irus-Leon is calm, “prettie” and “daintie” at the table (3.105, 106). This is 
most usurer-like; it is, once again, the clothing alone that creates an identity strong 
enough to disguise the acts of the underlying player who sits down to this meal. When 
Count Hermes says, “Now will I turne my gowne to Usurers Cotes” (9.42), it seems 
probable that, because of the long-standing association of Jews with usurers, such 
“cotes” were recognizable to the audience as, in fact, Jewish apparel, be it by a badge or 
patch on them, or simply by the cut or material of the clothing itself. The “cotes” 
probably resembled those worn by Gerontus in The Three Ladies of London and 
certainly, if it was actually the same “cote” that was used to dress Barabas on the same 
stage in the same months, and even consecutive nights, of 1596, then we are here seeing 
the conflation and confusion of the Jew and the usurer, which develops into a deliberate 
mechanism of evil attribution as the decade goes on.41 If this was the case, such a

40 For the usurer and gout, see C. T. Wright, “Some Conventions Regarding the Usurer in Elizabethan 
41 After its “re” performance on February 12, 1596, The Blind Beggar ran back-to-back with The Jew of 
Malta on 16/17 February and 13/14 May. Total numbers of performance for the revival months are as 
follows: January, Jew twice; February, Jew twice, Beggar five times; April, Jew once, Beggar twice; May,
“sharing” of the identities of the Jew and usurer through apparel (a “re-creation” of the usurer as Jew) would be all the more powerful in an organization such as a troupe of players where each property, particularly clothing (according to the property lists of Henslowe’s Diary), seems to have been assigned carefully to particular characters for their sole use. The tendency of the Diary, and of the period, to link images or insignia with specific signified objects or persons is further suggestion that the “Usurers Cotes” are pieces of apparel specifically to be used only by an actor playing the part of a usurer. The “gowne” in the Diary, where we read, “p[ai]d . . . for the manes /gowne & a sewte for the blind begger of elex / sandria the some of . . . iii li xii s 4d,” would seem to be for the Count. We see, for instance, in a March 1598 inventory of the Diary, “Item, i Mores cotte” and “Item, Tamberlynes cotte with coper lace.” The appropriation of apparel to the representation of a single character, or type, is strict. We are missing a “Usurer’s cotte,” but inventories are known to have been lost, and fragments of the Diary have turned up independently of its main body. That a missing one may well contain our elusive entry is confirmed by the appearance in one such separated inventory list of, “faustus Jerkin his clok.”

As in The Three Ladies of London and The Merchant of Venice, The Blind Beggar has a trial, or rather an arbitration, involving a dispute over usury. In this case the usurer succeeds in the case because the usurer and his witnesses, the Count and the blind seer, are all one man. Leon, reminiscent of Shylock, claims to be suffering “Of a late sicknesse” when he leaves the stage to change into his other disguises, and his

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Jew once, Beggar three times; and June, Jew once, Beggar twice. The Blind Beggar took significantly more at the door on average than The Jew of Malta in this year.

42 Henslowe, Henslowe’s Diary, pp. 169-70.
43 For the “gowne,” see The Blind Beggar, 1.334, 336; 9.42.
44 Henslowe, Henslowe’s Diary, p. 321.
45 Henslowe, Henslowe’s Diary, pp. 316, 291-94.
46 Henslowe, Henslowe’s Diary, p. 293. The inventory is a list of playing apparel in Edward Alleyn’s hand, MS at Dulwich. MS 1.30.
status as the damned villain of the moment is made clear by Euribates, friend to the bonded Clearchus, who appeals to king Ptolemy (the Duke/Judge figure):

My Lord I will be sworne he payde him,

On poor Irus stone foure thousand pound,

Which I did help to tender; and hast thou

A hellish conscience

And such a brasen forehead, to denye it

Agaynst my witnesse, and his noble woorde. (4.82-87)

The job of the usurer character here, and of the disguised, “alien” characters in general, has been to aid subversion; like Health, Newfangle, Courage, Gerontus, Barabas, and others, these “strange inventions” of playwrights concerned with orthodoxies and heterodoxies of a variously deforming, reforming, and transforming society critique the powers that be to the point that the Londoners see their own potential for action, for animating the dangerous tendency toward “imitacion.”

The authorities had reason to worry that the audiences were being taught to disrespect the order in society that the authorities had sanctioned. The issue of the proclamation in 1597 to enforce the apparel laws is corroborated of a general fear of disobedience toward the official social order, and a mark specifically of the importance to the authorities of a person’s outward appearance. As the hub of representation by outward appearance, the theater was watched particularly closely at this time. Just five

47 On 28 July 1597, the Privy Council ordered “the Curtayne and the Theatre nere to Shorditch . . . or anie other common playhouse” to be closed for performances and “plucke[d] downe.” It was added that the “Justices of Surrey . . . take the like order for the playhouses in the Banckside, in Southwarke or elswhere in the said county within iii miles of London.” See Great Britain, Acts of the Privy Council of England, 1452-1628, 32 vols. (Hereafter APC), ed. John Roche Dasent (London: H. M. S. O., 1890-1907), 1597, p. 314. The plucking down order does not seem to have taken force, although plays were ordered to stop for the summer of 1597. On 15 August 1597, “very seditious and sclanderous matter” in a play on Bankside
months before *The Blind Beggar* came to the Rose's stage, it was being protested that "Stage Plaies" contain:

nothing but profane fables, Lascivious matters, cozonning devices, & other unseemly & scurrilous behaviours, which ar so sett forthe, as that they move wholly to imitacion & not to the avoyding of those vyces which they represent, which wee verely think to bee the cheef cause, aswell of many other disorders & lewd demeanors which appeare of late in young people of all degrees, as of the late stirr & mutinous attempt of those fiew apprentices and other servantes, who wee doubt not driew their infection from these & like places.48

This is a commonly-quoted and not unusual complaint, of course, but one which goes some way toward highlighting the specific awareness of the power of outward appearance and of the danger of spectator imitation. The "cozonning" devices in our play can affect "all degrees" to "imitacion" of the shepherd's son's transgression of apparel law, and cause "mutinous" attempt upon the established order.

In 1583 Phillip Stubbes's *Anatomy of Abuses* character, Philoponus, had made plain how serious a sin transgression in apparel was, and how dangerous the invitation to imitate:

Pride is tripartite, namely, the pryde of the hart, the pride of the mouth, & the pryde of apparell, which (unles I bee deceived) offendeth God more then the other two. For as the pride of the heart & mouth is not opposite to the eye, nor

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48 Complaint from the Lord Mayor and Aldermen to the Privy Council, 13 September, 1595. Reprinted in *E. S. 4*, p. 318.
visible to the sight, and therefor intice not others to vanitie and sin (not withstanding they be greevous sinners in the sight of God) so the pride of apparell, remaining in sight, as an exemplarie of evill, induceth the whole man to wickednes and sinne."\(^{49}\)

We can see an added danger in the fact that the role-character Cleanthes is, despite being a “stranger” to Alexandria, a native to Egypt, and he therefore gains a “home-grown” legitimacy; he has exactly that devilish equivocal native status we saw in Newfangle and Usurie. His rise to the top among his own people is a ripe invitation for “imitacion” by the apprentices and “young people of all degrees” of London. In The Blind Beggar the critique of pride always folds back into the questions of apparel. For example, Samathis finds out that Elimine has been sleeping with her “husband” (i.e. the role-character, Leon). When she sees the husband-stealer approaching, it is not the woman, but her clothing, to which she scornfully refers: “Hence comes her head tyres and her fayre gownes” (5.158), and later (perhaps with some evidence of a memorially-reconstructed text), “Hence come your headtyres and your costly gownes, / Your trayne borne up and a man bare before you, / Now fye on pride when women goe thus naked” (7.6-8). It is a shame that the women’s parts in this play are damaged for what we have suggests astuteness in a number of their speeches. In this second passage Samathis plays on “bare” and “naked” to emphasize the irony in Elimine’s appearance: her train, designed to display her rich apparel, is ineffective in covering up her ethical misdeeds, her naked infidelity. Elimine is uncovered, stripped of all disguise or concealment (OED “naked” II.7.311), and she is defective in social ethics (OED 8. b), unchaste and deceptive.

While my definition of "disguise" is a wide one, it excludes simple changes in humor or demeanor, such as we see in Hamlet's madness.\textsuperscript{50} Indeed, we see that even when Cleanthes is "the mad brayne Count" (1.144), it is not the madness that is the disguise, but the Count's clothing, his "gowne" (1.336), which, he says, "hides my persons forme from beeing knowne" (338). The implication is of physical "forme." Hamlet, although playing mad, is still recognized as Hamlet. Cleanthes playing "mad," on the other hand, is recognized only as a new character. The full disguise, and the upset of the conventional order and expectation, works through apparel. The three moments in \textit{The Blind Beggar} in which the autonomy of apparel as a determinant of identity are most manifest are in the shepherd's son's double cuckolding of himself in the shapes of Count Hermes and Leon; the ending in which, as Cleanthes, he becomes king and is supported by his servant, Pego, who, unlike Volpone's Mosca, remains loyal: "Ile be secret thats flat" (10.91), he says); and the crucial scene in which Count Hermes murders Doricles, prince of Arcadia, because Doricles has been wooing Aspasia, princess of Egypt, and is thus close to being in a position to succeed to the throne before Cleanthes. In scene 9, the shepherd's son begins to clear the way for the man who would be king—his variously-humored self. Having done the bloody deed, the princess bewails the murder and the Count's precarious position. She cries out:

\begin{quote}
Wicked \textit{Count Hermes} for this monsterous deede,

\textit{Aegypt} will hate thee, and thou sure must dye;

Then hye thee to the hils beyond the \textit{Alpes},

Flye to unknowne and unfrequented climes,
\end{quote}

Some desert place that never saw the sunne,
For if the king or any of his friendes,
Shall find Count Hermes thou art surely dead. (9.15-21)

But the Count is resolute in the knowledge that he is not what he appears. Like Leon at the dinner table in scene 3, the Count’s underlying identity as a shepherd’s son turned courtly comes out in his lyrical appeal for the princess’s love.\footnote{We should note, however, that the unexpected shift into pastoral verse is something of a tradition of the “wild man” or madman in the drama. The wild Bremo in Mucedorus attempts to seduce Amadine with his verse of natural bliss, and Caliban describes the beauteous sounds and dreams the island effuses. For a summary of the history of the wild man in Renaissance literature, see G. M. Pinciss, “The Savage Man in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Renaissance Drama,” The Elizabethan Theatre 8 (1982): 69-89.}

Ile flye no more then doth a setled rocke,
No more then mountains or the setadfast powles,
But come sweete love if thou wilt come with me,
We two will live amongst the shadowy groves,
And we will sit like shepherdes on a hill,
And with our heavenly voyces tice the trees
To echo sweetely to our coelestiall tunes.
Els I will angle in the running brookes,
Seasoning our toyles with kisses on the bankes,
Sometime Ile dive into the murmering springes,
And fetch thee stones to hang about thy necke,
Which by the splendor will be turnd to pearle,
Say fayre Aspasia wilt thou walke with me.
Asp. No bloody Count, but I will cleare my selfe,
And tell thy murders to the amased court.
Count. Nay if thou wilt not chuse you peevish girle,
Thou canst not say but thou wert offered fayre.

[Aside.] But here must end Count Hermes strange disguise,
My velvet gowne, my pistoll and this patch,
No more must hide me in the countes attire,
Now will I turn my gown to Usurers cotes,
And thus appeare unto the worlde no more.

farewell Aspasia. (22-44)

The context in which the Count sees himself here does not at all accord with his presentation of himself elsewhere, and despite "twise five summers" (1.328) of experiencing the Count, Aspasia does not question his identity. A shepherd’s son from Memphis, this man takes on a "strange disguise" in Count Hermes because the Count is not only "strange" and "mad brayne," but he is of a different class, and, we assume, he is of a different origin, grounded as he is now in the Alexandrian court. Like the boundary-crossing Hermes, and also relevant to the hermetic processes of magical or alchemical change, the permanent player that once was a pastoral boy and ends as a soldier-king transforms himself into other classes, other men, and effects the changes necessary to his aims in different worlds. He manipulates these changes in a remarkably god-like way, interfering where necessary, prompting, directing, and standing by to watch where possible.

At its end, The Blind Beggar poses some open-ended questions about ethical and political right and wrong. A messenger reports the approach of four foreign kings, an alien threat that is the direct result of poor internal management. Cleanthes is a revenging usurper, yet because his revenge is for wrongs done to him, and because this is comedy, his overcoming of the country will be marked as legitimate by its permanence. The invading kings include "Black Porus the Aethiopian king," and other
kings, whose person or countries are labeled by the epithets “sweete,” “rich” and “sterne” (9.73-77). Elimine and Samathis, both pregnant with children of their role-character husbands and impoverished by the law against the murderer Hermes and the creditors of the usurer Leon, appeal to Cleanthes for help. When the foreign kings Brebitius and Porus both fall in love with Elimine, and Rhesus and Bion with Samathis, the ladies marvel at the fact that they may now be newly betrothed to kings. They praise “holy Irus” for predicting such a turn of events, and, in an aside, Cleanthes jokingly declares, “I did indeede, but God knowes knew not how” (10.153). The women’s choices in partners makes an interesting end to a play in which “the forme and shape” (9.139) of men has been more important than the indication of faces. These two women, who showed themselves to be trained in coyness, yet ever-ready to engage in bawdy banter and to learn the sly ways of the world, now express remarkable sentiments and convictions in the face of censure.\footnote{That these women are fully aware of social ironies and able to criticize the status quo is brought out in an exchange in the final scene: “Eli. Myne was a husband to my hartes content, / But that he usd the priviledge of men. / Clean. What priviledge of men. / Eli. To take some other love besides his wife, / Which men think by their custome they may do, / Although their wives be strictly bound to them” (10.78-83).}

Cleanthes orders the kings to line up and “let these Ladies view you”; a brief beauty contest follows, and the winner is:

\begin{quote}
Eli. In my eye now the blackest is the fayrest,
For every woman chooseth white and red,
Come martiall Porus thou shalt have my love.
Bebr. Out on thee foolish woman, thou hast chose a devill.
Pego. Not yet sir til he have hornes[.]
Sam. Tis not the face and colour I regard,
But fresh and lovely youth allures my choyse.
And thee most beautious Bion I affecte. (10.158-65)
\end{quote}
The option for international and interracial marriage is there in comedy; or perhaps it is there in comedy set in Alexandria, for in Englishmen For My Money everything is done by the English to avoid any such outcome.

The issues at the end of The Blind Beggar, and which are addressed in Mucedorus, involve questions of "manliness," martial prowess, and the ability to rule realms or resist invaders. Aliens and "alienated" selves become valid partners or means of progress to a self solidly rooted in native traditions. Mucedorus, as the shepherd, then as a hermit, is pitted against Segasto, whose name may have suggested a castrated animal ("Seg" and "sag" OED), and Bremo ("Breme" OED II.5) a rough, vicious man. Segasto's state of manhood is questioned by the fact that his wealth is drawn from his father's usury (3.32-33); dramatic usurers, if potent once, seem in the drama to be always on the downward slope of potency—they are losing wealth, daughters, and personal identity. So Segasto's character seems empty, not linked like Mucedorus's by strong friendships to other men of status, and not powerful in his own right to force the effect of his own will. Despite Mucedorus's wandering habit, he seems to be unifying ideas of the princely person and drawing together international relations. (In an altered way, the shepherd's son from Memphis, although ruthless and conniving, pulls together a country on the verge of being torn apart by four invading kings.) As one who can leave and return to his place in court, and in the process win a wife, Mucedorus proves himself so much more potent than his Aragonese rival, Segasto, who runs away from bears rather than cutting their heads off and displaying the bloody spoils before the female object of his affection (scene 3). In his roles as shepherd and hermit, Mucedorus rids the realm of dangerous animals and half-men, effectively cleansing the mythical, fantastical fringes of civilization, thus ensuring the cohesion and safety of the urban centers from transgressors such as Bremo and the terrorizing bear.
We might close this discussion of foreign mirrors for London and England by returning for a moment to a passage I quoted earlier. The words from Mucedorus to Anselmo were, “I must estrange that friendship. / Misconster not: ’tis from the realm, not thee; / Though lands part bodies, hearts keep company” (1.11-13). The differing effect of migration on the body and heart was a central question in sixteenth-century Europe. One’s heart is set on a particular course, or belongs to a particular land or prince, and migration should not change that. Immigration into England brought with it the concern that although the immigrants’ bodies were parted from their land, their hearts were not. Certainly in the case of the New Christian Jews, it was widespread practice to retain the original faith in one’s heart while displaying the body in appropriately disguised clothing and taking one’s body apart from the heart to places such as Christian church on a Sunday. On a grand scale, the fear of apostasy by the Jews riddled Europe; in England, as the New Religion took hold, interest in more extreme puritanisms (aided in part by immigrant French and Dutch colonies) and in hebraic austerity drew subjects away “from the realm,” from the religio-political asserted national—yet in reality highly regionalized—identity.

One’s policy as a migrant is the betterment or salvation of the self: Barabas wishes to better his status eternally and talks of his riches in terms of a religious profession, Lady Lucre moved to London to make her money, and Shylock—whether intentionally from the start, or whether the situation develops out of his control—uses the mercantile and fiduciary laws of his adopted home to press home his orthodox and personal faith. From the wings enters Portia, her body parted from Belmonte, parted from her proper gender, yet her heart in company with Bassanio, and via Bassanio with Antonio. There is a tug-of-war at Antonio’s heart. On the other side is Shylock with a bond on the heart: it is a bond like a marriage contract, ever-binding, but it also seems to seal a conversion to the letter of religio-political law, as determined by Shylock and as justified by the Christian State. Shylock attempts, through his bond on the heart of
Antonio, to draw all hearts present into keeping company: he would effectively convert all those present to his "Jewish" way of thinking, and, through the circumcision of the heart, to his Jewish practice. By the connection of hearts within a nationally-bound realm, Shylock is able to draw all to the precipice of apostasy by holding the knife to just one Christian heart; for that moment Shylock's enslaving words through the trial scene turn upon the blade of his knife. He can estrange the friendship of one of the Venetians by death, and estrange it also in the same moment by making Antonio Jewish, thus estranging the heart. Antonio's estrangement would be both from the realm's ideology and place and from his friends. But in that moment of conversion/execution, the hearts of the realm would follow, keeping company after all, in sympathy for the merchant, all of them over the precipice, all of them bondmen to the alien whose body has traveled from his people, but who continues to work treasonously through his heart's retention of an alien ethnicity.
CHAPTER FOUR
Domestic Mirrors for London and England: national preservation at the end of the century

Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* stands at the turn of the decades of the 1580s and ’90s and marks the beginning of a final sixteenth-century thrust toward reformation of English society, as represented in moral and comic drama. Daniel Seltzer has rightly noted equivocal messages and mode in the play:

There is no denying, of course, that the tone of the play remains light; even the satire of the academicians is not cynical, but touched with comic tomfoolery. Nevertheless, one returns with some uneasiness to the terminology and fervor of Bacon’s repentance, to the unmistakable aims of Prince Edward in regard to Margaret, and to those changes which Greene made in the source story, in which he obviously placed the magician, for a time, on the side of villainy.¹

It seems that it takes English practice of alien tendencies for the English to come to terms with the need to reject those practices. The drama has been insisting time and again on the depths to which foreign vices have been corrupting the English, and at points we have seen inklings of the light of reformation. In this final chapter I discuss instances of English dramatic self-scrutiny in which the “alienation” of England is understood either by “close calls” such as the Armada of 1588, which prompted *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, or by acknowledging English corruption and responding to it. The dramatic representations toward the end of the decade are complex, however, for they often only *appear* to be suppressing, imprisoning, or

ejecting vice from English community. The alien in fact remains within a section of the playful natives.

Norman Rabkin has written, "Greene’s cheerful nationalism typifies the optimism of much literature in the years following the victory over the Spanish Armada; a decade later it would be a note thoroughly out of fashion." This seems right to me, but it is a generalized assumption of the drama of the 1590s that has not been investigated in depth. I mean in this chapter at least to begin such an investigation into how the drama changed in its representation of national celebration and the place of aliens. The self-assuredness of the post-Armada English is portrayed in the plays both by scenes of accepting foreign dignitaries and immigrants into England (thus displaying brave England’s hospitality) and by moments of rejecting the alien, getting rid of corrupting or "inferior" elements. Friar Bacon’s dream of encircling Britain within a wall of brass as the culmination of seven years’ learning looks like a satire on stemming the tide of immigration. Bacon says that his great wall shall "[ring] the English strond / From Dover to the market place of Rye" (2.65-66), conveniently, we should note, guarding major ports that saw the waves of immigration earlier in the century. Bacon’s practical endeavor is designed to emphasize with physicality what is already professed with rhetoric and ideology. Greene’s Henry III makes a similar point about the physical enclosure of Britain’s island when he welcomes the Emperor of Germany, the German scholar Jacques Vandermast, the King of Castile and his daughter Eleanor:

Welcome, my lords, welcome, brave western kings,

To England’s shore, whose promontory cleeves

Shows Albion is another little world. (4.5-7)

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Certain alien intrusions into this "little world" are unacceptable and the disdainful Bacon sends Vandermast home by magic after the German has lost to him in a conjuring contest (9.154ff).

In all the plays under study in this chapter, however, patriotic activities of English strength lie on the surface of a deeply-entrenched culture of alienation. Below the comedy of domestic battle and the defeat of the aliens in *Englishmen For My Money* lies the danger of English pride; below the assurances in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* of evil Mamon's imprisonment, and of the freedom and recovery of Englishness, lies the observation of flawed Englishmen and the continuation of alien intrusion. In *Friar Bacon*, the alien is found to lie within the very (mistaken) conception of English power and wisdom held in the universities and the court. Self-deception undermines intended deception in this play. On the one hand, Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, dresses up as a country swain to win the love of Margaret on behalf of the prince, and the king's fool, Rafe Simnell, disguises himself as the prince; these disguises do not work well, but the antagonist parties are resolved. On the other hand, Bacon and King Henry both believe in the Englishness of "black" magic and find themselves terribly wronged by their own native convictions. The play sets up Bacon, and Oxford, as a composite center of English learning, so that the eventual realization of the error and foreignness in necromantic arts is all the more profound. The role-playing that Bacon is indulging in before his repentance makes Oxford a theater in which he performs his character's deeds to the delight of an audience waiting for pyrotechnics. When the scholars of Oxford hear of the approaching king and royal company, they immediately fall to a discussion of the drama that should be played for the visitors (7.9-12). This seems to prefigure the interlude of magic that Bacon will provide for the visitors and the use of Bacon's "prospective glass" as a kind of virtual theater, in which images from other times and places can be conjured by black art. He effectively creates alien stages for the English to observe, and these alien stages deform the ideal English stage being striven
for. Rafe turns up at Oxford with his courtiers, under guard of the constable, disguised as Edward, and tries to carry off the part of visiting royalty. The Oxford scholars, however, know an actor when they see one, and as these two sets of players face each other, Rafe makes a threat: “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” (7.72-76). This is the stage on which flames of fire burst upon stage and swallow up characters, the hand of God appears from clouds with a burning sword, and serpents appear and eat up vines (A Looking Glass, 3.2, 4.3, 5.3); in theatrical terms the threat is real, and the audience might expect some trick to represent the shifting of the houses of learning into the abusive schools of South Bank entertainment. The threat comes from a clown dressed as a prince, and having debased the state of nobility, he is not altogether an unfrightening threat to the institution of learning. Rafe speaks the last line of the scene: “I have heard Henry say that wisdom must go before majesty” (123). The two adjectival nouns are connected with the ambiguous and suggestive term, “go,” with its sense of disposal as well as the primary sense of motion. And indeed, to preserve his majesty, the king, and the England he stands for, Bacon will destroy the “strange invention” of his wisdom. Lodge would join Greene for one of the most explicitly “tutorial” plays of the 1590s, A Looking Glass for London and England. With the chorus Oseas continually ending scenes with warning addresses to the audience, Greene’s sense of the theater as forum for polemical writing (however ironic) is clear. Jokes and threats such as Rafe’s are funny and silly; in the theatrical world they are also dangerous, because possible.

Rafe cannot do such magic, of course, partly because he is a good English player and an honest fool. Bacon, perhaps, could carry out such a trick, and the king, for one, would be pleased to see whatever he could conjure:

Henry. Bacon, thou hast honored England with thy skill,
And made fair Oxford famous by thine art;
I will be English Henry to thyself. (9.165-67)

But the anglicization of Bacon’s art is mistaken. Bacon himself all but tells us so in his repeated insistence on his art being not native, but “strange and uncouth” (2.169, 11.19, 13.10), alien and unknown. This mistaken fetishization of the foreign as a means of inflating the wonders of England and the English continues as Bacon describes the table he will lay before the visiting kings:

The basest waiter that attends thy cups
Shall be in honors greater than thyself;
And for thy cates, rich Alexandria drugs,
FETCHED by carvels from Egypt’s richest straits,
Found in the wealthy stron of Africa,
Shall royalize the table of my king.

Kandy shall yield the richest of her canes;
Persia, down her Volga by canoes,
Send down the secrets of her spicery;
The Afric dates, mirabolans of Spain,
Conserves and suckets from Tiberias,
Cates from Judea, choicer than the lamp
That fired Rome with sparks of gluttony,
Shall beautify the board for Frederick. (9.248-53, 257-64)

The first two lines are boastful, if not downright insulting. As the foreign drugs were supposed to revive the dying Remilia in A Looking Glass, so the list of “cates” and
dressings brought from afar is designed to increase the wealth of England in the eyes, mouths, and stomachs of the aliens. The power of England (or, perhaps, Bacon as representing England at this point) is further suggested by the almost animated willing provision of the goods. Like the grounds of Jonson’s Penshurst, Kandy and Persia shall actively “yield” and “send down” their goods for the sake of English entertainment.

It is not until the three scenes from the end that Bacon repents, having understood the error of his “strange” ways. When the sons of Lambert and Serlsby, seeing their fathers duel and kill each other in Bacons glass kill each other in mutual revenge, the double-death is met with Bungay’s exclamation, “Oh, strange stratagem” (13.73). Bacon “breaks the glass” (83, s.d.)—the strangeness, the alienating effect of his art discovered. Henry later asks Bacon about the “strange event [that] shall happen to this land” (16.40), and a natural sense of Englishness is predicted to grow out of the alien, magic-soaked soil of the present. Away from this misguided time of magic and from an interim of wars to a peaceful, Elizabethan age, in which “From forth the royal garden of a king / Shall flourish out so rich and fair a bud / Whose brightness shall deface proud Phoebus’ flower, / And overshadow Albion with her leaves” (16.45-48). The stages of history are alienated from each other by political, prophetic, and patriotic practice. Henry’s immediate response that “This prophecy is mystical” (63) suggests the stage-world’s state of transition and uncertainty, or, to cull Philip Sidney’s words, that the play is set in a “misty time” from which the sixteenth century would emerge as a “clear age,” enlightened by Elizabeth’s “brightness.”

The other, duller, side of this English coin, as Greene and Lodge would go on to demonstrate in A Looking Glass for London and England, is the debasement of English wealth in the late-sixteenth century. I have already discussed the relative places of wealth, health, and man in the realm, and the play seems to suggest an unfavorable

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alienation at its end, one that undercuts (or clips, if you will) the wealth put forward at this medieval moment. The wealth in the England of Henry III is good wealth, put to use entertaining aliens in order to keep the peace and maintain the good name of England. Henry compliments his visitors with:

But, glorious commanders of Europa’s love,
That makes fair England like that wealthy isle
Circled with Gihon and swift Euphrates,
In royalizing Henry’s Albion
With presence of your princely mightiness,
Let’s march. The tables are all spread,
And viands such as England’s wealth affords
Are ready set to furnish out the boards. (16.64-71)

The irony of comparing water-encircled Albion to an Eden enriched with potent visitation is, of course, that there must be a Fall. Genesis 2 insists that in the land of Havilah there is gold and the gold is good gold (wealth as noble sustenance); it does not seem to be quite the same “isle” that is encircled in the biblical text with Gihon and with Euphrates, and Henry’s speech is probably generally asserting the primacy and holiness of England’s wealth rather than attempting accurately to represent the Genetic geography. As he speaks, Henry half-posita England as the Eden from which a single river flowed to water the garden of the world, splitting for that purpose into four nourishing rivers. At the same time he demarcates the place of Albion as only one of the lands in paradise. Wherever the precise location, there must be a moving outward, a leaving of the garden, by the privileged patrons of the royal feast. The aliens will have to leave. But there is another level: “alien stages” comprise not just alien space, but also
alien *time*. Thus the English themselves will move away from this triumphant, Edenic moment. The play ends with the lines:

Only your hearts be frolic, for the time
Craves that we taste of naught but jouissance.
Thus glories England over all the west. (74-76)

The “jouissance” is of “the time” only, for the power of England “over all the west” will set as surely as the sun, and the inhabitants will be estranged from this stage of English time, as well as mythic, conceptual, Edenic space; as alienated themselves, the English will wander to the east and into a time brighter with knowledge and self-awareness, marked with the understanding of the sins as well as the holy pleasures of the flesh. Fallen but wise is the age of Elizabeth.

One needs to fall into sin to reform and be redeemed; but as Seltzer pointed out, things are not always so easily resolved. Prince Edward’s attitude toward love and lust hardly shows any learning over the lesson of Lady Love in *The Three Ladies*. Certainly he understands the nobility of allowing Lacy and Margaret to marry, but this does not eradicate the memory of his willingness to kill his friend to protect his royal pride and narcissistic sexual appetite. Moreover (and more important to the topic of Englishness) is the fact that Edward finally woos Mary in the name of England and Englishness:

England and England’s wealth shall wait on thee;
Britain shall bend unto her prince’s love
And do due homage to thine excellence,
If thou wilt be Edward’s Margaret. (8.63-66)
Edward’s behavior should not at all be seen as “English,” and that which is declared as English in the play before the breaking of Bacon’s glass must always remain in doubt. The way in which Bacon becomes the center of English attention, from the king, down, suggests that we are supposed to understand his “strange” ways to be infusing the English at all levels. In the play’s self-deception about what is English, Bacon proves himself, through his necromancy, more “German” than Vandermast, and when he repents he connects his magic with the ultimate sins of another set of aliens, “those bloody Jews,” whose wounds inflicted on Christ Bacon by his magic “oft did bleed afresh” (13.101-02).

Such a mix of post-Armada optimism, process of English self-scrutiny, and the linking of the unEnglish self with foreign activity, including Jewish “crimes,” became increasingly pertinent in the socially and nationally tempestuous years following the writing of Friar Bacon. The quintessential post-Armada celebration play, The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London (1588/9) may well have been revived as a double-bill when the second extant quarto of The Three Ladies appeared in 1592, a print-run well timed to comment on the building tension in the capital, as foreign traders proliferated and inter-class disunity remained something of a national pastime. Wilson’s sequel coincides also with the writing of another play with similar concerns which probably never reached the stage because of its scenes of political violence: Munday’s (et al.) play of Sir Thomas More. Simplicitie had warned in The Three Ladies that the playgoers were “eating up” (1230, D3v) the play as if it were something to be digested as they go about their business in the city. The London authorities were painfully aware of such a possibility and the inclusion of scenes of civil unrest in the play of Sir Thomas More led the Master of the Revels to take this particular item of fare off the theatrical smorgasbord before a hungry populace could help themselves to a taste of whichever portion they thought most appealing.
On 2 June 1592 the Privy Council attempted to calm both sides, alien and native, in the long-standing war over the London marketplace, which these plays depicted. Complaints from Dutch candlemakers that they were being threatened by English traders, and defenses from the English that their livelihood was being threatened by the aliens, were investigated secretly, while openly the Council declared a stay of action against the alleged native malefactors. The apprentices were not satisfied and gathered to rise up a week later in Southwark. But contrary to Scott McMillin's comment that "A riot of apprentices actually broke out on 11 June," and Richard Dutton's "there was . . . rioting led by feltmakers' apprentices," the epistolary evidence we have to tell us of this event indicates that the "rude tumult" was an assembly put down before it got out of hand. As Barbara Freedman has reminded us, we should beware the use of words such as "riot," whose connotations change with time, especially if the words do not appear in the relevant documents. "Riot" in the period could refer widely from large-scale

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6 Barbara Freedman also encourages careful reading of Elizabethan uses of the words "theater," "houses," and "apprentices," all being words—like "riot"—with multiple referents (Barbara Freedman, "Elizabethan Protest, Plague, and Plays: Rereading the 'Documents of Contol'," English Literary Renaissance 26 [1996]: 17-45). My emphasis is on historicizing our own thinking, and use, of the word. Once we have established parameters for the kind of disturbance that "riot" meant in any particular instance, we must then make sure to take into account the possible differences between the sixteenth century and today in the way certain levels of disturbance were thought of by the authorities. What we today think of as harsh punishment for misdemeanor offenses seems to be part of a strategy in the period for preventing escalation's of minor disorders. A proclamation of 1598, for instance, asserted that "divers routs" have escalated to "robberies and murders" and ordered a round-up of idle persons; a week after the Essex rebellion of 1601, another proclamation imposes martial law over those who have not necessarily offended in any significant way but that sort "being of likelihood ready to lay hold of any occasion to enter into any tumult and disorder, thereby to seek rapine and pillage" (Great Britain, Tudor Royal Proclamations, 3 vols. [Hereafter H&L], eds. Paul Hughes and James F. Larkin [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, (v. 1) 1964 and (v. 2 & 3) 1969], 3, pp. 196-97, 232). The former document also mentions that the petty disorderlies became violent when confronted with officers of the law; assertions of
gatherings down to a general tendency toward ruffian-like behavior (even sometimes mirthful revelry annoying to others) and in the street could involve as little as "where three (at the least) or more doe some unlawful act: as to beate a man, Entre upon the possession of an other, or such like." Caused by the wrongful imprisonment of apprentices, the Southwark crowd was calmed by Mayor Webbe who had a suspicion of "a great disorder and tumult lyke to grow" (my emphasis). "Having made proclamation, & dismissed the multitude," he reports, matter-of-factly, "I apprehended the chief doers . . . & have committed them to prison." Sir Thomas More repeated this story element with violent rhetoric and the Master of the Revels' fear of the play was, quite rightly,

power and rebellious responses can spiral upward, requiring more officers who in turn provoke louder calls against by the citizens against oppression. Freedman writes, "One good reason to minimize social disorder in official reports was economic. When disorder was reported adequately, the Privy Council automatically appointed provost-marshals, with the result that communities such as Southwark were highly taxed for disciplinary services. Another good reason to minimize disorder was to avoid court interference in city affairs. Elizabeth's preference for martial law and exemplary punishment was well known. So, too, were its incendiary effects" (Freedman, "Elizabethan Protest," p. 24).

7 John Rastell, An Exposition of certaine difficult and obscure words, and Termes of the lawes of this Realme (London, 1592), Y4.

8 Letter from Sir William Webbe, Lord Mayor, to Lord Burghley, 12 June 1592: "Beeing informed of a great disorder & tumult lyke to grow yesternight about the viij of the clock within the Borough of Southwark, I went thither with all speed I could, taking with mee on of the Sherifes, whear I found great multitudes of people assembled together, & the principall actours to bee certain servants of the feltmakers gathered together out of Barnsey street & the Black fryers, with a great number of lose & maisterles men apt for such pourpuses. Whearupon having made proclamation, & dismissed the multitude, I apprehended the chief doers and authors of the disorder, & have committed them to prison to bee farther punished, as they shall bee found to deserve. And having this morning sent for the Deputie & Constable of the Borough with Divers other of best credit, who weare the present, to examine the cause & manner of the disorder, I found that it began upon the serving of a warrant from my L. Chamberlain by on of the Knight Mareschalls men upon a feltmakers servant, who was committed to the Mareschalsea with certein others, that were accused to his L. by the sayed Knight Mareschalls men without cause of offence, as them selves doe affirm. For rescuing of whom the sayed companies assembled themselves by occasion & pretence of their meeting at a play, which byssides the breach of the Sabbath day giveth opportunitie of committing these & such lyke disorders. The principall doers in this rude tumult I mean to punish to the example of others" (Reprinted in E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, 4 vols. [Hereafter E. S.] [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923], 4, p. 310).
that by using the Ill May Day riots as analogue to current unrest it sensationalized a contemporary event that was not in itself, and alone, quite so serious.

Having said as much, this event, with its potential for wide-scale unrest, may have been a more potent single spark for beginning to write Sir Thomas More than is given credit by Scott McMillin, who believes more generally that the play was written "between the summer of 1592 and the summer of 1593 and that the representation of the Ill May-Day uprising was intended to reflect the crisis over aliens that was troubling the City during those months." In fact, it is not until the late Spring of 1593 that we hear of significant trouble, when a libel (a threatening or illegal placard set up in a public place) seems to have sent the court itself into convulsions, who issued a carte blanche to the arresting officer to apprehend and torture whomever had threatened violence against aliens in the document. On 22 April the Privy Council recorded the Queen’s demands against the “disordered and factious persons” responsible, authorizing officers “to examine by secret means who maie be authors of the saide libells.” The letter goes on to suggest the employment of strangers for these secret investigations who might possess some intelligence concerning possible libelers; results of the search were to be reported to the Queen personally. It is clear that the authorities were willing to take great

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10 On 16 April the Privy Council sent a letter to the Lord Mayor of London: “Whereas there was a lewde and vyle ticket or placarde set upon some post in London purportinge some determynacion and intencion the apprenticeys should have to attempt some violency on the strangers, and your Lordship as we understande hath by your carefull endeoure apprehended one that is to be suspected and thought likelie to have written the same. Because oftentimes it doth fall out of soche lewde beginnings that further mischeife doth ensue yf in tyme it be not wyselie prevented . . . wee thincke it convenient that he shalbe punished by torture used in like cases and so compelled to reveale the same. Wee Truste you are so carefull in the government of the city as yf some lewde persons had soche wicked purpose to attempt any thinge againste strangers that by your carefull foresighte the same shalbe prevented” (APC 1592-3, p. 187). This final sentence might imply the existence of a break between the attitude of the central Council and the officers for the parishes and wards. Some of the local officials may have been turning blind eyes to acts with which they could sympathize, even if not publicly approve.
11 APC 1592-3, pp. 200-01.
risks by employing strangers. Should the native libel supporters discover the cooperation of State and immigrants, their fears of being betrayed by the merchant and noble class—the national disunity I have discussed—could extend to the feeling of an abandonment by their government as a whole, and even the Queen.¹²

*The Three Ladies* displays the class and moral conflicts of London society but is a play about being the victim; *The Three Lords* begins to suggest the comeback of the English (or more particularly, the Londoner) in a stylized and highly emblematic way. In both plays justice is contained within the conventional structures of legal process. *Sir Thomas More*, on the other hand, incited illegal, vigilante reaction against the oppression of the English lower classes. It targeted the alien artisans, and it is little wonder that a play which actively displayed the power of lower-rank crowds was suppressed. The authorities were certain that it took a very small spark to light the fire of rebellion; ten years earlier the Lord Mayor of London had written to a Justice of Middlesex laying out the concerns of crowd size, place, and symbolic significance in public shows. Referring to an illegal fencing bout planned for playing at the Theatre, the Lord Mayor worried specifically about “the danger of disorders at such assemblies, the memorie of ill May daie begun vpon a lesse occasion of like sort.”¹³ The play, *Sir Thomas More*, had it been allowed, would have provided an even more direct “memorie of ill May daie” in the second act, where a crowd assembled at St. Martin’s responds to the rumor of a Frenchman beating a carpenter in Cheap with the cry, “fire the houses of these audacious strangers” (2.1.21-22). Doll predicts “we’ll drag the strangers out into Moorfields, and there bombast them till they stink again” (2.1.42-44), to which George Bettes adds “Let some of us enter the strangers’ houses, / And if we find them there,

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¹² Thomas Platter wrote in the final year of the century that the Dutch and French immigrants “have been very kindly received” (*Thomas Platter’s Travels in England*, trans. and intro. Clare Williams [1599; London: Jonathan Cape, 1937], p. 156). We can question whether he was thinking of the behavior of the aliens’ peers or the protection afforded them by the government against native hostility.

¹³ Reprinted in *E. S.*, 4, p. 293.
then bring them forth” (2.1.46-47). In an added hand intended to replace the same scene, a clown replies to Doll’s reservations with the exclamation that he is ripe for going a-raping; moreover, he will do it in the name of the god of war: “Now Mars for thy honour, / Dutch or French, / So it be a wench, / I’ll upon her” (2.1.50-53). This listing of violent acts to be performed against the strangers is the kind of rhetoric that frightened authority: a call to action in a libel and in the theater was a call to action in the city, or at least food for poisonous thought.

Richard Dutton has written, “It is the depiction of the riot, and any talk of rioting, which is uppermost in his [Tilney’s] mind, particularly when it is directed at foreigners: ‘It is hard when Englishmens pacience must be thus jetted on by straungers and they dare not revendge their owne wrongs’ (24-25) is one passage specifically crossed out by him.” In fact, simply gathering with intent to act unlawfully was illegal in itself; incitement on the stage to act against strangers comes close to this line. Certainly Doll preaches the incorrectness of vigilantism as she stands on the execution scaffold but her resolve with death and its final justice makes her all the more the heroic martyr of the working-class. This balance to be struck between the acceptable playing out of opinions against orthodoxies of State and religion on the one hand, and provoking

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14 In his reprint edition of the play for the Malone Society, W. W. Greg keeps the clown’s speech in an appendix (The Book of Sir Thomas More [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911], Addition II [B, C] [Fol. 7a, b]); see Greg’s explanation of the revision on p. 69. Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori favor the text of the addition as intended to replace the original scene. However, this addition was probably made in 1603, and not during the 1592-3 attempts to get the play through the Master of the Revels, Edmund Tilney. (See Munday, et al., Sir Thomas More, eds. Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori [Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990], p. 19), and pp. 37-40, detailing correspondences between Gabrieli’s and Greg’s edition with the Harley MS 7368; also McMillin, The Elizabethan Theatre, p. 153ff.) Line references are from the Gabrieli and Melchiori edition of the play.

15 Dutton, Mastering the Revels, pp. 82-83.

16 The relevant crime would be “rout,” the stage before “riot.” John Rastell writes, “Rout, is when people do assemble them selves together & after do proceed or ride, or go forth, or do move by the instigation of one or more . . . that is a rout & against the law although they have not done or put in execution their mischevous entent. See the statute 1. Mar. ca. 12” (Y4-Y4v).
unrest on the other, was largely what permission to stage plays in the 1580s and early 1590s depended on. The manner of depiction more than the content being depicted led Tilney to get out his censor’s pen;17 in contrast, Wilson’s conservative vision and lack of on-stage street violence made his severe political and theological criticism stageable.

The anti-alien disturbances did not let up for, as is well known, on 5 May 1593 some person or persons unknown affixed a libel against the strangers of London on the wall of the Dutch Church in Broadstreet Ward. The libel has been discussed at length and I do not mean to rehearse that work here.18 It is worth reprinting a significant portion of the document, however, to remind ourselves just how clearly all the complaints that we saw in the moralities, and especially in The Three Ladies, are mirrored in this document: devastating usury, high rent and overcrowding, unEnglish wares of the foreign merchants, and domestic class war.

Your Machiavellian Marchant spoyles the state,
Your usery doth leave us all for deade
Your Artifex, & craftesman works our fate,
And like the Jewes, you eate us up as bread (5-8)

... 

In Chambers, twenty in one house will lurke,
Raysing of rents, was never knowne before
Living farre better then at native home
And our pore soules, are cleane thrust out of dore (28-31)

... 

Since words nor threates nor any other thinge

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17 For a fuller discussion of the sensibilities of Tilney, see Dutton, Mastering the Revels, chap. 3.
canne make you to avoyd this certaine ill
Weele cutt your throtes, in your temples praying
Not Paris massacre so much blood did spill (37-40)

With Spanish gold, you all are infected
And with yt gould our Nobles wink at feats
Nobles said I? nay men to be rejected,
Upstarts yt enjoy the noblest seates
That wound their Countries brest, for lucres sake
And wrong our gracious Queene & Subjects good
By letting strangers make our harts to ake
For which our swords are whet, to shedd their blood
And for a truth let it be understoode
Flye, Flye, & never returne. (45-54)\(^9\)

The Paris Massacre allusion in the Dutch Church Libel and a marginal note mentioning Tamburlaine may suggest that the population of London was finally ready to take what it saw as its only remaining option, that of violence. These references, being titles of Marlowe’s plays, seem more than coincidental, and the perpetrators knew quite well the transference they were making from stage depiction to the scenes on the city streets. The slippage between identifying Protestant aliens as “Jewish” is also foregrounded in ways that I discussed earlier in this study. Scott McMillin writes of the arrest of Thomas Kyd and Christopher Marlowe:

These writers would not be sought because they wrote sensational plays for the Rose, of course, but it cannot have escaped the notice of the authorities that the playhouses in Southwark had a number of connections with persons accused of disorder during the anti-alien troubles of 1592-1593.²⁰

What seems to have been a stalemate position between the “libel” threats without significant action and the Council’s worry provided a hot-bed for any new crisis that should come along. The potential for unrest put the Privy Council on the edge of their seats, who warned the Mayor of London that “oftentimes it doth fall out of soche lewde beginniges that further mischiefe doth ensue yf in tyme it be not wyselie prevented.”²¹ The authorities certainly did not want to leave it to chance. The Friday after the appearance of the libel, 11 May 1593 the Privy Council ordered officials to enter into all

²⁰ McMillin, *The Elizabethan Theatre*, p. 69. Dutton writes, in contrast, “It is not often observed that Kyd’s own arrest had nothing to do with religious heresy but was prompted by suspicion of his involvement in anti-alien propaganda, the issue so prominent in *Sir Thomas More*” (*Mastering the Revels*, p. 87).

²¹ *APC* 1592-3, p. 187. Some writers like to emphasize London’s avoidance of extended periods of violence, its closeness to turmoil without going over the brink. Steve Rappaport, for instance, has argued that although tension was high in London in the mid-1590s, the occurrence of minor disturbances was and is not unusual in cities of any size (*Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], pp. 8-9). Rappaport goes on to make an important analysis on the insignificance of strangers in causing London’s problems in the 1590s: “In 1593 there were 5450 aliens in London and its environs, mostly French and Dutch, only 2.5 per cent more than in 1573. That area’s total population, however, increased more than ten times as much between those years, from about 152,000 to 186,000 people, and thus the alien community actually became relatively smaller by the 1590s when strangers amounted to less than 3 per cent of all people living in London. However persuasive their claims, then, it is likely that the ‘great hurt of English citizens’ which Londoners blamed on aliens was caused instead by economic problems, especially in the city’s cloth-related crafts and trade, which began in the early 1560s and for which Dutch, French, and other aliens were not responsible” (p. 58). He continues, “Indeed the fact that the two communities coexisted within the walls throughout the Tudors’ reign must be counted among London’s most important accomplishments. The deaths of thousands of Protestants and Catholics, royalists and radicals on the continent are bloody reminders that in the early modern period brutal repression, expulsion, and even slaughter were at times the means adopted for dealing with religious, political, and other minorities. However grudging their acceptance of foreigners and strangers in their midst, Londoners chose a different course” (p. 60).
houses of suspects, and since “of late divers lewd and malicious libells set up within the citie of London . . . [this] doth exced the rest in lewdnes” the suspected malefactors were to be put “to the torture in Bridewel . . . to th’end the aucthor of these seditious libells maie be known.” 22 It seems that the authorities’ response to apprentices angry with mistreatment was to continue mistreating.

On the whole, then, there was increasing alien–English tension in the capital in these years, but, according to the official evidence, something short of the “crisis” widely argued about today. Official records hardly tell the whole story, however. M. J. Power concludes his essay on the London authorities’ control of disorder with the sentence, “What was not a thorough crisis for those in authority might well have been perceived as a crisis by those they governed.” 23 Indeed, what is the value of political evidence—the facts and figures of crime, trade, and finances—when the populace believes it is being wronged? We have seen that exaggerating or suppressing the seriousness of unrest can be beneficial to the city authorities, and we have seen that much of the extant popular text (the fact of insurrections occurring, and the publication of plays and books hinting and warning of cultural and social collapse or rebellion) engages in what we might consider a rhetoric of crisis. Whether the situation was dire from year to year, or just worrisome, popular textual production validates the view that apprentices, artisans, (ex-) military personnel, the middle-class, and perhaps the idle poor were all highly aware of the economic and social difficulties being experienced at the local, national, international level. Maybe the London of the late Elizabethan period was relatively quiet in the European context, but the fragility of London’s state was like an hourglass blown too thin in the middle. The walls of containment could any minute break as the inhabiting grains made their way in time through the economic squeeze of

22 APC 1592-3, p. 222.
the 1570s, '80s, and '90s, through the frustrating constriction they increasingly blamed on the aliens.

Despite the anti-alien tensions (or perhaps because of it) the drama of the 1590s was still able to represent contemporary cosmopolitan life in London in comic modes. I opened this chapter with the observation that underneath the comedy of Englishness lay darker forces and purposes. I want to investigate that thesis further by looking at plays performed in the shadow of the anti-alien disturbances. Once again, I follow a trajectory of increasing alienation: light-hearted anti-alienism through English-alien serio-comic conflict to the violence attendant upon internal alienation of the English breast. As an example of the strand of comic drama that retained the idea of the alien largely as an integrated and paradoxically binding influence in English community, I will turn first to Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* (1599). Despite the play’s xenophobic elements—heavily, I think, by the anti-female aspects of the oppression of the shoemaker’s wife—there are assumed structures of integration between aliens and natives upon which modern society is built. Dekker’s is a mature comic vision insofar as it acknowledges realistic social and political tension while creating a fantasy version of London, strangely set in the past, yet dependent on social systems of the present. This dynamism of an invented past feeding the present, and its concomitant sense of celebration, holiday, and resolution leads unnervingly into the last two plays I discuss, *Englishmen For My Money* and *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*, in which realistic discussions of the present reveal cracks in the societal make-up that bode ill for the future of Englishness and native identity. Of course, by jumping in fictional time, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* can effectively ignore that ugly alien stage of the early 1590s and keep its comic representations less sullied by the underlying alien.

The ideas of alienation in this play are lighter than in *Englishmen* or *Jack Drum*, mostly because there are no aliens in the play at all and the “alien” is incorporated and examined in highly controlled ways. *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* seems to show that,
Despite contemporary socio-political affairs, the fantasy of communal, if not national, unity is still available to the playgoers. And the late-Elizabethan stage is broadly supplied with critical choice, for while the playgoers can witness this feast of English social harmony, they are required to ponder—another day on the same stage, or the same day on another stage—the break-down of that community or the reformation of individuals and groups of persons in the name of England. The various stages of London are providing contrasting ideas of the alien and alienation, and each stage includes plays that, within themselves, provide contrasted visions of English community. Thus, as I interpret this play as a general celebration of Englishness we should keep in mind the ending of the play: the nation is (rhetorically, theoretically) unified not in order to continue the feasting and beautiful craftsmanship of the gentle craft, but because of a daunting prospect concerning aliens: the king reminds Eyre and the shoemakers, "When all our sports and banquettings are done, / Wars must right wrongs which Frenchmen have begun" (5.5.199-200).24 In the end, the cyclicity of dramatic representation is remarkably embroiled with the cyclicity of history; the fictional rehabilitation of relations within London and England is always both a consequence and a precursor to conflict. Conflict necessarily involves the alien, either as direct alien-English contact or as the alienation and estrangement of the English.

Acts of estrangement, often for the purposes of refamiliarization, pervade The Shoemaker's Holiday. Characters who should remain in the country go abroad; those who should leave, remain; an Englishman plays a Dutchman; Simon Eyre brings up his lowly family and workers to great estate; characters dress outlandishly, taking on foreign fashion and misfitting their apparel; human beings become alienated—and alienate themselves—from circles of society through their disguises, disguises of shape (bodily change through injury), of language (Lacy speaking Dutch), and of apparel (class

24 Line references are from Fraser and Rabkin's edition of the play in Drama of the English Renaissance I.
mobility and/or transgression). The rhetoric throughout The Shoemaker’s Holiday demotes practitioners of such habits to the status of animals, suggesting their alienation from the “natural” laws or orders of English human society. When the shoemaker Simon Eyre is to become sheriff, he has fine clothing brought to him: “Silk and satin, you mad Philistines! Silk and satin!” (2.3.117-18). Firke looks at the newly-appareled mayor and laughs, “Ha ha! My master will be as proud as a dog in a doublet, all in beaten damask and velvet.”

Margaret, too, is likened to “a cat out of a pillory” by Hodge when she asks “How shall I look in a hood, I wonder?” (3.2.42). Very soon afterwards her husband, now sheriff, brings her the hood:

See here, my Maggy. A chain, a gold chain for Simon Eyre. I shall make thee a lady. Here’s a French hood for thee—on with it, on with it! Dress thy brows with this flap of a shoulder of mutton to make thee look lovely. (3.2.160-64)

Eyre has reminded Margaret that he brought her from the gutter to a decent living, and now he shall raise her further to a lady. The status is defined first by a foreign fashion, the “French hood,” and this is added to a few lines later where Eyre orders her, “on with your trinkets,” presumably the (foreign) baubles of the upper classes that we heard about in The Three Ladies of London; then the alienation of English identity is animalized by calling the wool “a shoulder of mutton”; and finally Margaret is told that it is the association with the animal that shall make her lovely. Like Simon Eyre, a mere dog dressed up in his silks and satins, so his wife becomes the cat in a comically pretentious hood, two animals at odds, alienated in nature as well as in the urban social culture.

I talked in chapter three of the dangers of mis-appareled persons, and of the need for re-clothing as a temporary necessity (for love and re-stabilizing the realm in the case of Mucedorus, for saving a friend from death in the case of The Merchant of Venice, for
usurping the crown in the case of *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*). In these cases the disguised or mis-appareled character casts off his or her various skins to return to a natural appearance; in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* permanent changes have to be broached—ones that are real, everyday, and to be dealt with in the recognizable society depicted on stage. In an instance already cited, the dressing-up of Simon Eyre, the shoemaker as sheriff and mayor, a change of status unequivocally follows upon change of clothing. Or rather, endowment of status upon Eyre in decree (a text, spoken or written) allows his change in apparel, which in turn effects (puts into practice, into reality) that change of status in the public eye.25 Through the system of ennobling the commoner that incorporation of city government entails, men may take on ill-fitting outward appearance; in fact, as Robert Tittler argues, it is essential that they do so in the way that Eyre does, convincing themselves and others of the legitimacy of their illusion of power.26 By looking fine, the governing persons hold themselves above the citizens.

Eyre repeats a favorite saying, “Prince am I none, yet am I princely born,” a paradoxical maxim that foreshadows the shepherds in *The Winter’s Tale* after their promotion to gentlemen. There is substance in his seemingly automatic iteration, however. Eyre, for all his affectation, and blind to his own incorporation of trumpery, counsels Rose that she should marry with “a gentleman grocer” (3.2.48) or some such

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25 The character of the shepherd’s son in *The Blind Beggar* comes to mind in relation to this analysis of the work of clothing and status. Perhaps even more closely linked is the role of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, 4.1, where her change of clothing results in radical identity change and a different type of honor paid her: her role with that clothing is, as I pointed out in chapter three, to be an actor, one who has been presented with a text and turns it into practice, into the reality of action in a community. She is the other “more strange” alien who comes to eliminate the effect of what the Venetians have incorrectly perceived to be the “strange” Jewish alien. Shylock has disturbed the community’s imagined structure of Christian “purity” and the other stranger, Portia, refamiliarizes the texts and practices of that community.

honest English tradesman, instead of "A courtier! wash, go by! Stand not upon pishery pashery. Those silken fellows are but painted images, outsides, outsides, Rose; their inner linings are torn" (3.2.44-47). Of course, we are meant to laugh at his hypocritical stance against courtiers' fashion and worth, but we are also surely meant to appreciate Eyre's sense of class, community, national (and even international) unity through the socio-political systems of trades guilds, corporations, and marriages. This sensitivity—despite whatever faults he trails with him and in addition to his "luck" with a number of more senior councilmen dying of the plague—helps ensure his promotion to Mayor; it helps him keep his word to the shoemakers to create the holiday of St. Hugh's Day; and he feasts them all at breakfast, despite needing to "beleaguer the shambles" (5.4.29) for victuals to do so. In The Shoemaker's Holiday, Dekker sets up comic and unlikely, though possible, sequences of unifying events. In his vision of a particular version of London and England at the end of the sixteenth century, the English civic system, the native craft industries, and the institution of marriage work so that even the most heinous crime, treason, is mitigated by need: "I am a handicrafts man, yet my heart is without craft" (5.5.10-11), pleads Lacy to the king in defending himself after his military desertion. Of course, his heart is with craft, but such skirting of proper behavior is sometimes necessary and can be contained by the solid structures of English society. Society is only this rugged, however, in comedy that ignores certain aspects of the contemporary socio-political state of England. That London and England (or the monarchy and provincial councils and populations) were unequivocally unified after the Armada is a fiction; so is the idea that local communities retained a family-like unity through the middle ages and Elizabethan period. Early records of provincial communities reveal myriad conflicts between individuals, guilds, and town or crown authorities; and rivalry between genders, classes, and those of different religious affiliation abound.
So when a London-Lincoln rivalry appears here, as it did in *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, it is a disunity set up to be resolved (even if grudgingly), rather than one highlighted and retained at the end of the play. ²⁷ Neither the Earl of Lincoln, Sir Hugh Lacy, nor the Lord Mayor of London wish their respective charges, Rowland Lacy or Rose, to marry the other, despite the children being in love. When the Mayor finds out that Rowland Lacy, nephew to Lincoln, is hiding in London, disguised, to find Rose, the servant Dodger’s words are that he “Lurks here in London” (3.1.91). The Mayor adapts the phrase with the rhetorical question: “Lurch in London?” and this skulking, hiding figure they are imagining is talked of in terms of an animal who may be hunted down: “Well, Master Dodger,” says the Mayor to his informant, “you perhaps may start him,” flush him out of his hiding place, like a ferret to a fox. This animalizing of alienation through apparel, then, is a comic vein used to represent both the innocent and guilty alienated characters in the play. Lacy gets the treatment because he has alienated himself (geographically) from his father by disobeying his orders and moreover, by remaining in the realm has alienated himself (politically) from the realm, for he was due to serve in the army in France. By staying in England, he has disobeyed a king’s order and this treasonous act has further necessitated his taking on of an alien disguise. It is not difficult to detect in this single character traces of the fearsome “pincer movement” against the realm that I discussed in the introduction: the cooperation of an alien presence and a rebellious native. Lacy, disguised as a Flemish workman, sings his Dutch song and Firke’s response is to judge that “He’s some uplandish workman; hire him, good master, that I may learn some gibble-gabble” (1.4.52-54). Although the word “uplandish” is glossed by Rabkin and Fraser as “provincial,” or “foreign” in the early modern sense, the word can also mean alien, or “outlandish” (“uplandish” OED, entry

²⁷ It should be noted that there is also the suggestion of London-Lincoln friction in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, since Lacy, the Earl of Lincoln, temporarily falls out with Prince Edward for the same reason as the other plays: disagreements over matches in love and marriage.
4); its other sense of referring to highland districts of a country may be Firke’s ironic joke, since he knows that the journeyman comes from the low countries of the Netherlands.28

In the play’s other love story, between the journeyman Rafe Damport and his wife, Jane, Rafe crafts Jane a pair of unique red shoes, leaving one shoe with her and taking the other with him to the French wars. Eventually the shoes will be used to identify the couple once more. When Rafe returns, crippled and unrecognizable, and inquires after his wife, he is told by his former fellow workers that “Jane is a stranger here” (3.2.118), for she has gone away to avoid troublesome, would-be suitors. Foreign wars, it seems, alienate both the men who fight and those who avoid fighting, and it alienates those connected with the soldiers. The alienation is an infection in the play that will be cleansed by the divine hand of kingly forgiveness. The Shoemaker’s Holiday, in narrating a recovery from such alienation, argues for the stability of English social and political hierarchy and English workmanship, which can withstand the “alienations” willfully effected by individuals (like Rowland Lacy) and the “alienations” inherent in the English system (such as the association of foreign fashion with elevated status). During Jane’s alienation from Rafe by her “lying low” and absenting herself from once-familiar company, she is, like the others, animalized: “We’ll ferret her out,” promises Hodge. The marriage of true love and accord between the French-sunburned (3.2.80-81) and alien-looking Rafe about whom Margaret remarks, “Perdy, I knew him not,” and his estranged wife Jane is re-familiarized, re-Englished by means of the recognition of Rafe’s own English handiwork on the love-pricked red shoes and by a “lusty crew of honest shoemakers” (4.2.66), who will bring them together to their wedding by force if necessary.

This play might be seen as representing a London and an England that have spent the 1590s reforming in the ways demanded by the Marian and Elizabethan moralities, by Wilson, by A Looking Glass, and by the example of Friar Bacon renouncing his necromantic art. In this case, The Shoemaker’s Holiday is a “mirror” for London, for it is set fictionally in the past, seeing in itself the future and the future’s promise. The Shoemaker’s Holiday is like good magic. Whereas Friar Bacon must destroy his crystal glass, Dekker suggests that there are ways to incorporate conflict between aliens and natives and even the various alienations within the self, while coming out at the other end relatively unscathed. Such a celebratory reading is made of Haughton’s Englishmen For My Money by the small number of critics who have addressed it. I intend to argue that Haughton cleverly takes on board both the strand of 1580s and ’90s drama that deals comically and “safely” with aliens in England and also the strand in drama, after Marlowe and Kyd, that displayed the near-inevitability of communal fracture under the dissonant noises made by the forces of extensive alien-native contact.

In 1596, Thomas Johnson asked rhetorically, “[w]hat countrie or nation in the world is there at this presente that nourisheth so manie Aliens from all parts of the world as England doth?”29 By this time, the English had been living with legal and refugee immigrant alien communities for many years. As Yungblut points out, however, continued contact seemed, if anything, to increase anti-alien antagonism. In looking at the last two plays here, I want to follow a very specific strand of the “alienation” of the English. In William Haughton’s play, Englishmen For My Money (1598), the role of Pisaro, the usurer, includes a warning for England, for he stands on the brink of naturalization. Just two years later, in John Marston’s boys’ play, Jack Drum’s

Entertainment, the suggested dangers have become reality: usury has not just entered England in the form of an alien who creates xenophobic havoc, but is incarnated in the English character Mamon, the usurer "with a great nose" (so designated in the list of dramatis personae). A vice amid English society, Mamon is vengeful, hateful, and disruptive in the extreme. I argue that the troping on (turning between) the "alien" and "Jewishness" digs ever-deeper into the dramatic representation of the state of Englishness in the 1590s and beyond.

In Englishmen For My Money we find the Portuguese merchant and usurer, Pisaro, living comfortably in London. He is the widower of an English wife and is attempting to secure matches in marriage for his three daughters with three foreign merchants—Delion (French), Alvaro (Italian), and Vandal (Dutch). The women themselves do their best to elope with their true English loves—three men who are in debt to Pisaro, held financially captive through usurious bonds on their property. The Englishmen triumph over the aliens, and with a little help from their friends (through feats of disguise, practical joking, and feigned sickness) marry the daughters and win back their property. Pisaro, in a surprising scene, graciously accepts defeat, and the marriages are celebrated with a feast at the usurer’s house. Since his mercantile and usurious achievements have left him in the financial and social position where he is able to employ and direct the three strangers to disrupt the social life of the English, Pisaro’s dramatic status is always superior to any of the trio of aliens. Vandal, Delion, and Alvaro are weak figures in stock comic roles, and the London audience would find the game of identifying these stage-aliens by the type of broken English they speak particularly enjoyable—and probably difficult. Londoners generally confused identities of Continental aliens or did not consider the difference between a Dutchman, a Frenchman, and an Italian particularly important.

Whether Pisaro is a Jew or not is a moot point, and while he is not directly called a Jew in the play, he displays some stock "Jewish" characteristics. He also rejects some,
as we shall see. In general, when the Jewish or “Jew-like” character is used in
Elizabethan drama, he takes on a powerful, catalytic role at the center of the plot action.
Albert Croll Baugh writes in the introduction to his 1917 edition of Englishmen For My
Money, “The usurer motive is the most important in the plot of the play and is the basis
of the action,” although he is not denying the importance of the other “major element,”
that of “the national motives.” Issues of nationhood are inextricably bound up with the
important fiction of blaming the Jews—and subsequent usurers of all nations—for
causing the conflicts of nationality we see acted out in the streets of London in the
1580s and 1590s and rehearsed on the stage. The character who enters the stage with
“Jewish” traits is the one without whom the conflicts in the plot would never arise.
What would happen in The Merchant of Venice without the steadfastness of Shylock?
Where would be the Maltese drama had Barabas been as submissive as his fellows?
Pisaro’s multiple status (as alien yet domestic resident; as judaiser but Anglicized)
makes him a vital figure in facilitating a shift of usury’s allegiance that I contend
occurred at the end of the sixteenth century—a shift from foreign Jew to English usurer.
Pisaro is more important than the famous Jews in a couple of ways: he survives, unlike
Barabas, and he continues to live in the heart of England, not in some distant city like
Shylock’s Venice.

Dramatic satire turns against the Englishman in the late 1590s, for by 1598 the
main Armadas, including the unexpected third, had been defeated and the anti-alien
disturbances of mid-decade had quietened; the aliens can be considered part of a tame
comedy, and the English playgoers feel they can laugh at their own weaknesses because
the English political and social infrastructure can withstand such shocks to the ego-
system. A. J. Hoenselaars writes that “Haughton’s play marks a shift” in the
Elizabethans’ view of the alien, who:

30 William Haughton, Englishmen For My Money, ed. Albert Croll Baugh (diss., Philadelphia: University
is no longer capable of scheming successfully like his predecessors but instead is
eminently gullible. . . . Whereas the English in the earlier plays were inspired by
fear and hatred, those in Haughton’s comedy are motivated by national pride.
This national pride, by definition, causes anything not English to be inferior.
And what is inferior no longer inspires fear. It can be ridiculed or derided in a
carefree, comic fashion.31

It is clear that what is at stake in all cases of competition—international, domestic, or
personal—is pride. Shylock’s and Barabas’s pride led them to their downfall; Pisaro in
turn takes his fall. But the pride of the English will catch up with them also. Hoenselaars
has not taken into account that the decline in the potency of the aliens is a palimpsest of
the weakness and unguardedness of the English, which in turn has let the insuppressible
activity of usury into England. As with our earlier encounter with usury in London, such
a presence is bound to promote the alien and alienation at the (financial and personal)
expense of the native. For the English audience “Jewishness” has been getting literally
“closer to home,” and the satirical dramatist makes a play on the way the English pride
over the Continental aliens has in fact left the English vulnerable to “alienation” from
the “Jewish” usury, and by implication all unEnglish, unChristian acts. The potential
danger of the “judaiser” Pisaro is recognized in Englishmen For My Money, but because
he acts only as the agent for the laughable foreign suitors his long-term potency is
diminished. Hoenselaars’s observation is useful up to a point, then, but it fails to
differentiate between the acceptable, comic characters (the three foreign suitors) and the
ever-present figure of warning, Pisaro.

31 A. J. Hoenselaars, Images of Englishmen and Foreigners: A Study of Stage Characters and National
Identity in English renaissance Drama, 1558-1642 (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses,
The text is deceptive, for it disguises the warning for England, and the Jew-like elements of Pisaro are cleverly sanitized. When he loses his daughters and the obligations to the three Englishmen he should, by rights, do one of three things: go mad, religiously convert, or die. Certainly he should rage, “My bonds, my daughters, my bonds,” or some such lament. He does none of these, but instead invites everyone, aliens and Englishmen, to a celebration feast—the rules of romantic comedy prevail, and the “Jewish” character folds back into the mold of beaten “alien.” The urgency of the Englishmen’s quest for Pisaro’s daughters is born of three dams: romantic love is one, certainly; but reclaiming their lands pawned to Pisaro is another; and Anglicizing the half-foreign women is the third. In the scheme of things (social, economic, and political) the latter two have wider-reaching importance. The combination of the father’s usury (the “Jewishness”) and the daughters’ mixed birth (the foreignness) must be conquered for the play to remain in the realm of comedy. The comic alien sequences reveal national political issues on the one hand and earnest combat with the serious danger of usury on the other. The serio-comic conflicts are simultaneously codified and revealed in *Englishmen For My Money* through the use (and misuse) of native and foreign language. Hoenselaars comments on the efforts of two of the Englishmen to disguise themselves as aliens:

One interesting aspect of Anthony’s case is that his lack of French is the crucial flaw in his disguise. Frisco, too, only manages with an immense effort to produce some broken Dutch. To a modern reader, both characters’ defective foreign-language skills provide an ironic counterpoint to the foreign merchants’ ultimately disastrous inability to speak proper English. The play itself does not elaborate or comment on this irony. Haughton unwittingly adopts a double
standard, providing the play with that flaw by which patriotism thrives—namely, a blindness to one’s own national weakness.\footnote{32}{Hoenselaars, *Images of Englishmen*, p. 58.}

This needs expansion because it is not right to say that Haughton “unwittingly adopts a double standard.” Patriotism in this play comes from a recognition of the importance of the native tongue, and English victory in war has made the English language a powerful tool of social, sexual, and hierarchical politics. The Englishmen’s inability to speak foreign languages is simply proof, in their view, of such skills’ lack of worth. At this level of proud belief (as we saw in *The Three Lords*) patriotism enters the bitter heights of (what we might today call) nationalism. However, we should not confuse the “unwitting” behavior of the play’s tunnel-visioned or bigoted characters with the level of awareness of the author himself.

This emphasis on the power of the tongue proves to be another agent that binds the duality of foreignness (language) and “Jewishness” (usury and economy-wasting). Frisco gives Heigham, the English suitor, his summation of the Frenchman:

I am seeking a needle in a Bottle of Hay, a Monster in the likeness of a Man: one that in stead of good morrow, asketh what Porrage you haue to Dinner, *Parley vous signiour?* one that neuer washes his fingers, but lickes them cleane with kisses; a clipper of the Kings English: and to conclude, an eternall enemie to all good Language. (B2v)

As a “Monster,” “a clipper of the Kings English,” an alien (according to Frisco) is a debaser of the realm’s ubiquitous currency, the English language—it is the one binding common denominator of Englishness and prone to forgeries. The failure of Vandal,
Delion, and Alvaro's "forgeries" of language as they stand below the sisters' window and impersonate the Englishmen is a sign of the weakness of foreign linguistic currency. "Ah! gentlemen," Frisco continues with the conceit, "do not suffer a litter of languages to spring up amongst us" (B2v).\footnote{In \textit{The Pedler's Prophecy} (Q1 1595), the Pedlar, talking of "Tyre," his analogue for England, warns against miscegenation and what destruction can be brought to the realm: "Jewes, Ruffians, Moorees, Turkes, and Tartarians, / With these you have mixed the virgins people, / Anabaptists, Lybertines, Epicurians, and Arians, / Infinit of these, your country to infeeble" (Dv, 824-27ff); he goes on to blame an Artificer for the sinking of Tyre. The Artificer replies, "The divill of lye that is, such a number of Alians, / And that of all nations are come hither to dwell, / As he said, even Jewes and Barbarians, / So the Realme is like to be made another hell" (Dv, 832-35).} Just as coin currency is bred illegally by cutting usury, so the linguistic currency is infected with breeding of aliens in England. Pisaro's daughters emphasize the importance of preserving their Englishness through breeding and language: "I have so much English by the Mother," says Mathea, "That no bace slavering \textit{French} shall make me stoope" (G4v). Once again Frisco ironically tells it like it is:

Oh the generation of Languages that our House will bring foorth: why every Bedd will have a proper speach to himselfe, and have the Founders name written upon it in faire Cappitali letters, \textit{Heere lay}, and so foorth. (l3v)

The "Heere lay" is a pun on the sexual "death" of the alien man, whose prodigy increases the foreignness of the Pisaro household; and the death of the Englishness of the woman who "lay" in that bed. This prophesy must be avoided, and since the girls "are Portingale by the Fathers side" (G4v), it would be politic to minimize that heritage by marriage to Englishmen. The nuances of the marriages comprise a comic dilution of the trope of conversion of Jews' daughters by Christian men, and the obsession with anglicizing foreign women, as exampled in \textit{Friar Bacon}, where Eleanor of Castile,
preparing to marry Prince Edward, calls herself, "The Albion princess, English Edward's wife" (16.27).

It is clear that Haughton is continually making pertinent contemporary comments that are far from "run-of-the-mill," and Elizabeth Shafer did well to attack G. K. Hunter for using such a label in his earlier dismissal of the play. ³⁴ Haughton imitates in order to ironize, and he subverts or invents in order to stamp his own authority as a playwright of note. The opening of the play, with Pisaro, solus, is surely mock imitation of Marlowe's Machiavel and Barabas; it suggests a character type, which is adapted gradually throughout the play until Pisaro is finally the accepting father of comedy, not the "Judas-like" (A2) villain his own words proclaim him to be at the beginning. The foreign merchants, although ineffectual, are not particularly nasty either. Against the seeming run of the play, Haughton makes the Englishman Ned Walgrave the vicious one, who turns on Pisaro in a way that is reminiscent of Graziano's attack on Shylock in the trial scene of The Merchant of Venice. Walgrave has to be restrained by his fellow Englishmen and threatens Pisaro that he will lie with his daughter Mathea "before thy face, / Against the Crosse in Cheape, here, any where" (H2). ³⁵ These are unnecessarily violent words and expose the over-zealousness and unguardedness of the victor's pride.

Even when the comedy in Englishmen For My Money seems harmless enough, it is grounded in deeper cultural values and prejudices than first appear. For example, when the Frenchman, Delion, asks for directions to Crutched Friars where he hopes to

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³⁵ Walgrave's use of the sacrosanct Cheap Cross location emphasizes the nastiness of his threat. John Stow details the history of the ancient cross in his A Survey of London, 2 vols., ed. C. L. Kingsford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 1, pp. 265-67; and in the APC we sense deep concern in the orders sent out to rectify a misdemeanor committed on Candlemas Day, January 1600, when someone unknown actually removed Cheap Cross from its place (APC 1599-1600, p. 27).
find his English love, Heigham gives the deceptive reply, "Marry this is Fanchurch-streete, / And the best way to Crotch'd-Friers, is to follow your nose" (F4). Delion is already in Crutched Friars, as he suspects, and "following his nose" would take him through the Poor Jewry to Aldgate. In fact, even if he were truly in Fenchurch Street the alien would still find himself leaving the city by Aldgate. The wily words to the Frenchman may seem like a simple piece of fun, but they contain two greater resonances. First, there seems to be a joke on the meaning that one’s nose can be followed to Crutched Friars, because the area smells of aliens, Jews, and usurers. In Nashe’s The Unfortunate Traveller Zadoch the Jew reveals the potency of the Jew’s smell as he conspires with his accomplice to commit the murder of a woman: "I’ll come and deliver her a supplication, and breathe upon her. I know my breath stinks so already that it is within half a degree of poison." Frisco makes the most of using his nose to find the way to Crutched Friars on a dark night (Gv); and at the very beginning of the play we are warned of the olfactory potency of Pisaro’s pots of stew, which give off a "precious Vapour, let but a Wench come neere them with a Painted face, and you should see the paint drop and curdle her Cheekes, like a peece of dry Essex Cheese toasted at the fire" (A4). Second, the turning out of the city is a trope of expulsion that was evident in The Jew of Malta and is a cultural response to otherness in general that I will discuss in relation to Marston’s Jack Drum’s Entertainment.

Another example of the cultural depth of the jokes can be found just prior to the Delion / Heigham encounter. Here we are treated to a nighttime escapade in which the mischievous Frisco loses the Dutchman, Vandal, in the dark streets of London and slips away with the alien’s cloak. Frisco warns Vandal at one point, “take heede sir hers a post” (F2), opening the way for simple rough-and-tumble physical comedy with

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characters running into stage-posts. Andrew Gurr has noticed that the identification by
Frisco of the stage-posts as maypoles (Gv) implies

that they were set in enough open space to allow dancing around them. But there
might also be a joke built into the visuals in this play, if the characters
blundering blindly through the London streets are seen coming dangerously
close to the edge of the stage when they encounter the posts.\(^{37}\)

The latter—ironic—option seems more likely to me, since this comic vein continues:
we hear from the Italian, Alvaro, “I hit my hed by de way, dare may be de voer Spouts”
between Leadenhall and Crutched Friars (F3),\(^ {38}\) and Vandal complains “ic go and hit my
nose op dit post, and ic go and hit my nose op danden post” (G2v), possibly wandering
back and forth hitting each of the stage-posts. As stage-posts indicate the largely
invisible border between stage space and audience space, so they represent ideological
limits and the edges of the Englishmen’s control. They are used as “weapons” by the
English as they give the aliens the runaround. John Orrell has reminded us recently that
the history of the pillars and posts in the theater includes their confused connection to
the columns that represented enslaved, dismembered, and encumbered foreign bodies in
the “caryatids and atlantes of ancient buildings.” The architectural Term (or column)
was linked to these carved depictions of defeated enemies, set up to public display in

\(^{38}\) In his edition of the play, Baugh identified the conduit at the junction of Leadenhall and Cornhill streets
as the one referred to in this instant (Haughton, *Englishmen For My Money*, ed. Baugh, p. 226). Stow
writes that a forcer conveyed Thames water through the main pipe, which “with foure spoutes did at
every tyde runne (according to couenant) foure ways, plentifully seruing to the commoditie of the
inhabitants neare adyoyning in their houses, and also cleansing the Chaneles of the streete toward
Bishopsgate, Aldgate, the bridge, and the Stocks Market” (*A Survey of London*, 1, p. 188). Stow also
notes that the highly beneficial conduit was built by one Peter Morris, a German, in 1582.
literal support of the conquerors' edifices of power. It is a sound mechanism adopted by Haughton, therefore, to have the Englishmen inflict pain on, and embarrass, the aliens through the use of this feature of the structure of the public theater.

Alert to the available options, Haughton plays with some stereotypes of foreignness to their full comic extent, but debunks others. For instance, when the English suitor, Harvey, feigns fatal sickness in a ruse to win the hand of Marina, his Italian counterpart in the wooing competition assures Pisaro that "if he will no die" from the sickness, "I sal give him sush a Drincke, sush a Potion sal mak him give de Bonos noches to all de world" (Kv). Alleged Italian skill at poisoning was well known; we are warned in The Unfortunate Traveller that "If thou dost but lend half a look to a Roman's or Italian's wife, thy porridge shall be prepared for thee, and cost thee nothing but thy life." But when Harvey does not die, Alvaro denies any knowledge in the art of poisoning before the devastated Pisaro. Throughout this play viewpoints are shifted subtly; the prejudices of the Englishman against aliens are also the prejudices of one alien against another of a different nationality. The picture is not at all black and white, for the colorful Pisaro takes on a stereotypical stance against his friend Alvaro and then threatens to commit the slippery English schoolmaster, Anthony, to Bridewell for deceiving him in the process of marrying off his three daughters. When Pisaro orders the punishment he thinks the disguised Anthony is a Frenchman and says that he will make Anthony "sing at Bride-well for this trick" (K3). As well as being a prison and a


40 Nashe, The Unfortunate Traveller, p. 283.

41 The term "bridewell-bird" was current in the 1580s and 1590s (OED "Bridewell"). James Shapiro notes that, in response to the Dutch Church Libel, the Privy Council "not only ordered a search and
workhouse for the idle poor Bridewell was a place for torture. Torture is designed to produce sound, to make the victim "utter" (the most commonly used word in relation to torture at Bridewell in the *Acts of the Privy Council*); that extracted utterance is made in the victim's own language and reveals his own identity and fate. Bridewell was also used for something else, less notoriously, and that was holding foreign prisoners. Such a place, then, is precisely the enclosure to "out" someone like Anthony, to make him utter the truth in his own language. Anthony's own language, ironically, is English, and such a confession would expose the weakness of the Englishman who behaves in an unEnglish manner.

Anthony does not end up in Bridewell, of course, because his plans succeed; this is in sharp contrast to Mamon's conclusion in Bedlam in *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, where the torture of whips is not designed to make the victim utter comprehensibly, but to make him "sing" only the noises that confirm madness, unlexical sequences of howls that bear no relation to any of the languages spoken outside the walls of the "hospital." Again, this vocality confirms the victim's status of self as an unlinguistic madman, to be kept isolated from those with language. Aliens—whose utterances are themselves illegal, since they clip the king's English—are similarly held to be speakers of something unknown to the proud Englishman, something base, ugly, infectious, and likely to breed. This seems like a more complicated and multiple version of the vision of mad, alien status that we saw portrayed through the characters of Hance in *Wealth and Health*, with his stuttering language, and the other Hance in *Like Will to Like*, with him drunkenly flailing on hands and knees. Like madmen, suspect aliens must be isolated by enclosure (sent to sing in Bridewell), yet also by expulsion (sent out of the gates of London, or out of the realm).
Set in the countryside near London, *Jack Drum's Entertainment* presents us with the alienated Englishman, Mamon, who must also be subject to such treatment. He is an old usurer in love with a young woman, Katherine. She already has a young lover, however, called Pasquil. Mamon attempts to have Pasquil killed and poisons Katherine when she refuses to return his amorous advances. The comedy of attempted sexual liaisons and misplaced trust runs throughout the play, and indeed the play's 1601 quarto subtitle and running title is *A pleasant Comedie of Pasquill and Katherine*. But the "pleasant" comedy turns black as night as the play progresses. Public hatred for the usurer is shown in the burning of Mamon's house and all his goods. Finally, he goes mad and is sent to "Bedlam" for a whipping. Meanwhile, things lighten up for the good citizens: Katherine has been cured of Mamon's poison by a wondrous "Juice of hearbes" (H4), and the losers in the sexual antics are amply ridiculed.

Mamon is not a Jew; he is exactly what he is billed to be in the list of players at the end of the 1601 quarto: he is Mamon, the money-worshipper. He represents the final invasion of the "Jewish" disease of usury and poisoning into the identity of the English character. Nearly two decades before Marston, Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London* included the warning that Usury was usurping what should reside in the Englishman, Love and Conscience. And Thomas Wilson preceded the drama with his *A Discourse upon Usury* of 1572, in which he compares the Jew and English Christian (both "judaisers"):

> for thys cause [usury] they [the Jews] were hated in England, and so banished worthelye, wyth whome I woulde wyshe all these Englishemen were sent that lende their money or their goods whatsoever for gayne, for I take them to be no better than Jewes. Nay, shall I saye: they are worse than Jewes. For go whither

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you wil throughout Christendom, and deale with them, and you shall have under
tenne in the hundreth, yea sometimes for sixe at their handes, whereas englishe
usurers exceede all goddes mercye, and will take they care not howe much,
wythout respecte had to the partye that borroweth, what losse, daunger,
hinderaunce soever the borrower susteyneth.43

Not only does the Englishman put on the habit of the Jewish alien, but it fits him better
than it did its previous owner.

As in Englishmen For My Money, questions of the "Jewish" infection are bound
up with those of the evil alien influence. A prime example of the latter is given us when
the Englishman, Brabant Senior, decides to play a joke by presenting his wife to the
Frenchman, John fo de King, as a courtesan. Brabant bets on his wife's fidelity to him,
but fo de King manages to seduce her. John fo de King is bald from venereal ("French")
disease, and makes the joke of teaching his prospective wenches French; in other words
he will talk to them in French and give them the clap. At the end of Jack Drum's
Entertainment fo de King triumphantly returns, post-coitus, among the Englishmen and
offers to teach Brabant Senior French "to t'end of the voride" (13) for his help to a
wench. This is a double confirmation of linguistic infection—that Brabant will now get
the French disease if he sleeps with his own wife and that Brabant has be proven
unEnglish by playing the bawd to her. As Hoenselaars writes, "The foreigner who was
initially presented as a possible agent of evil in the traditional manner turns out to be
more humane than he seemed and is the appropriate scourge of the evil Englishman who
needs to be taught a lesson."44 The Englishman in this episode is displaying a tendency
to engage with precisely the sorts of behavior an Englishman should detest—in this case

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44 Hoenselaars, Images of Englishmen, p. 69.
the sport of venery. Similarly, but more seriously, Mamon, as "the evil Englishman," is both destructive and self-effacing; it is the "alien" within the breast of this Englishman that causes his English shoulders to be whipped in punishment. We see that the concerns of the two plays are largely the same, with the emphasis shifted. Englishmen must be protected from lecherous, usurious, and damnable vices, hateful to the Christian commonwealth, while Englishwomen must be protected from lustful aliens and murderous Jews—or rather, in contemporary England, from Englishmen who have become "worse than Jewes."

As both scapegoat for the conscience of the community, and figure of real physical danger, Mamon exists in the play solely to be silenced. Silence follows the cries of protest and pain as one is beaten into submission—beaten comically by stage-posts or beaten viciously by whips. Marston's Jonsonian lack of sympathy for his character is a reflection of the times and his audience.\(^4^5\) Mamon is all evil: he is the assassin (Abraham and Ruy Lopez return to mind), the lecher, the old seducer, and the child molester of medieval iconography. That the myths of Jewish child-abuse and diabolism continued right through the Renaissance period and were ripe for plucking back into the propagandist forefront at any time, is evident from the writings of the traveler, William Biddulph. Lucid and acute in his observations elsewhere, he slips into dramatic reportage in his passage on the Turkish Jews:

They observe still all their old Ceremonies and feasts, Sacrifices only excepted, which the Turkes will not suffer them to doe: for they were wont amongst them to sacrifice children, but dare not now for feare of the Turkes. Yet some of them

have confessed, that their Physicians kill some Christian patient or other, whom they have under their hands at that time, in stead of a sacrifice.\textsuperscript{46}

As an English usurer with all the vices of the old Jew firmly stuck in his breast, Mamon shows the ultimate level of the infiltration of "judaising" into English society. The scapegoat was the earliest manifestation of the evil alien "other," as I argued in chapter one. This play, then, recovers the ugliest of past dramatic representation and iconic idea, and inserts it into a pseudo-fantasy about purging modern, alienated society.

Like all earlier figures of "Jewish" vice this Mamon, set up so hugely, must be knocked down. His servant, Flawne, has no qualms about playing his part in the downfall of his anti-Christian, usurer master; he revels in the privilege of listing Mamon's bad fortunes, all working to "laie him up in Bedlame, commit him to the mercie of the whip, the entertainment of bread and water, and the sting of a Usurers Conscience for ever" (F3v).\textsuperscript{47} First, the precious bonds of Mamon as the anti-Christian usurer are shredded. The effective poisons used by real Jews—such as Abraham in Selimus\textsuperscript{48} or Barabas against the convent—become in Mamon horrific intent ultimately negated, countered by the Arcadian antidote of "A skilfull Beldame with the Juice of hearbes" (H4). Indeed, there is an apparent paradox in the whole satirical scenario: the great evil of the figure that represents corrupted Englishness invokes a response that conjures up notions of England as full of natural healing powers, an idyllic utopia of safety and purging. This is not really a paradox, of course, but one example of nature's contrapuntal matrix: nature marries diseases and cures, poisons and medicines. The

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\textsuperscript{46} William Biddulph, \textit{The travels of certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bythinia, Thracia, and into the black sea} (1609; Facs. New York and Amsterdam: Da Capo Press, 1968), M4v, p. 74.

\textsuperscript{47} In Michael Scott, \textit{John Marston's Plays: Theme, Structure, and Performance} (London: Macmillan, 1978), we come across a nice typographical error: "a skilful 'Bedlame' miraculously restores Katherine to health," (p. 57). Indeed, although the Beldame repairs Katherine's face, Katherine's mental health is cured by "Bedlame" because Beldam locks Mamon further away from her than he can throw poison.

\textsuperscript{48} Robert Greene, \textit{Selimus} (London, 1594), G4v.
soothing dock leaf grows next to the stinging nettle, and the woman who finds the cure for Katherine is a "Beldame," a name that has been used twice before, contemptuously on both occasions.

Finally, in an episode that is reminiscent of Lincoln's cries to the crowd in the play of *Sir Thomas More*, Flawne tells Mamon, "Your house with all the furniture is burnt, not a ragge left, the people stand warming their handes at the fire, and laugh at your miserie" (2.1.21-22). The relation of this act emphasizes the ideological anti-Englishness of Mamon, insofar as the crowd in *Sir Thomas More* was preparing to burn down the houses of the aliens in London. A shift has occurred away from the threat of Continental aliens and toward the figure of the alienated Englishman. For some members of the audience, at least, this scene would also have jogged the memory of a whole trend in the history of the Jews: the final repose of the Jew/usurer—his house—must be taken, and the Jew must be sent to some house of correction or conversion.\footnote{For this trope in Italy, see Poul Borchsenius, *Behind the Wall: The Story of the Ghetto*, trans. Reginald Spink (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), p. 94. For England, see Michael Adler, *Jews of Medieval England* (London: The Jewish Historical Society, 1939), chap. 6.} In 1215, John Stow tells us, the walls and gates of London that were wrecked by civil war were repaired "with the stones taken from the Jewes broken houses, namely, Aeldgate being then most ruinous."\footnote{Stow, *A Survey of London*, 1, p. 30.} For centuries, the homes of the Jews have been "converted" into the very structures that hold them in subjection. The homes of the Jews of Elizabethan London were their synagogues, their holy centers, the only domains safe from the Christian oppression.\footnote{C. J. Sisson concludes that "the whole colony of Portuguese Jews . . . did in fact practise their true religion in secret, throughout the Tudor period" ("A Colony of Jews in Shakespeare's London," *Essays and Studies* 23 [1938]: 41-51, p. 49).} We met Thomas Wilson (not the writer on usury) in the introduction, who told us of the Jewish household in London as a religious enclosure. From the tearing down of the German *Judensynagogs* and their replacement with Christian churches, to Barabas’ house, which was turned into a Christian convent,
house-taking is the final invasion of the Jew’s life, the final destruction of his world within the world. So, through Mamon’s suffering of house-loss and incarceration, England is purged of alien infection and Jew-like usury. The portrayal of this involved trope (turning-out, eviction, and expulsion, and almost simultaneously imprisonment and enclosure) in the plays of the late Elizabethan stage is an illustration of the deep influence of the alien and alienation in history on the production of Renaissance dramatic texts and their performance.

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CODA

Renaissance Alienation and the Modern Reader

If the fashioning of personal identity, and, by implication, fashionings of community involve inescapable crossings of boundaries between the literary and the "real," then sixteenth-century alien characters on the stage have much to tell us about the alien in London and England. And just as the Continental aliens physically broke into native communities in the period, so modern critics enter the sixteenth century as alien archaeologists, likely to disturb (sometimes deliberately, perhaps irreparably) what lies there, in the very process of taking samples for analysis. Of course, and with reverberations of the colonial past, it may be just this danger of destroying what we admire or find marvelous that makes the endeavor such an exciting and weighty one; we find the sixteenth century a locus of surprise, slippage, change, liquidity, and deception, yet also a region filled with clear markers, solid bridges, and level stepping-stones. It is the responsible use of those aids that proves difficult.

Steven Mullaney tells us of the destructive need for colonial Europe to possess exempla of the alien—a possession ending inevitably in the oblivion of the alien bodies and the absorption of elements of those "others" (alia, aliens). Detailing the alien is purportedly for the sake of display and subsequent rejection, but the very observation and recording of alien cultural elements is a way to inscribe them within the dominant culture.¹ By displaying the "differences" of the alien, a community—even with comic pretensions—creates a tragic and violent scenario in which, as René Girard outlines,

essential (ethnic) differences are effaced.\(^2\) To comprehend the alien is, to a greater or lesser extent, then, to become the alien, to share the stage. As critics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, we profess an inability put oneself in the place of an early modern subject, yet we spend our time critically thinking with just such pretensions. And certainly we are able to alienate ourselves from ourselves in strange moments on the stage. When Mother Courage wheels her cart a few yards, for instance, like a snail with her house, ready to be crushed any moment by the great boot of war, she is so utterly on a stage, yet so completely not-belonging to that safe enclosure of the theater that we are torn between recognition and dismissal, empathy and contempt. Not only do space and time create alien stages, so do character, property, clothing, and the architectonics of theatrical performance.

In the end, all stages are alien. Players are strange: Robert Wilson, Will Kemp, William Shakespeare, and Richard Tarlton convert themselves with apparel, and convert the stage, itself deliberately alienated, set apart, from London or town authorities. Characters are more strange: players like Mucedorus, the shepherd’s son from Memphis, Barabas, Portia, YIIWyll, Fraud, Anthony in \textit{Englishmen}, Newfangle, and so many others alienate themselves from themselves to take on meta-roles. When this happens, however, we may be facing the more familiar part of the character, the part that requires acting in the way that extra-theatrical professionals of each class had to wear appropriate clothing and play their part in everyday business. To “interact,” after all, is to create drama between persons, dialogue. To engage socially is to act at all times.

Spoken language possesses more nuances and dangers for interpretation and misinterpretation than written text—or perhaps it only displays those interpretive cruces. The formalistic element in my study—my concern with the longevity of literary function

through formal design—requires that I am clear about what I am claiming about each text at critical points. In *Wealth and Health*, for instance, I selected small passages to look at, and hinted at possible manipulations of text, the ways in which formalism in practice (in performance) is pervaded and determined by cultural, political, and social necessities or niceties that vary from month-to-month, from one town to the next, and from one stage to the next within a single urban center: to play at the guild hall, the church hall, by the market cross, or in front of the Abbey/Cathedral gates could be taken and interpreted quite differently by the spectators. Because of the doubtfulness of dating *Wealth and Health* I put forward options for particular moments and do not pretend to be able to analyze a sure-footed path throughout the text.

By the time we get to *The Three Ladies of London*, however, it seems to me that such a process is possible. Hence, I devoted a whole chapter to examining the ways in which the writing of the play in the early 1580s, its revival, second printing, and twinning with a sequel play in the late 1580s and early 1590s, is related to historical culture and other literature and documentation not just in simplistic one-to-one terms, but in terms of Wilson's formal and cultural concerns. To take a belated mode of drama and use it to provide an observation, analysis, and critique of the present, and in the process to predict a future is to involve the writing process so deeply in the progression of culture that the two cannot be divorced at any line or even in the white spaces between scenes. Wilson's use of the morality mode and his jerky fourteeners may be a mark of his lack of dramatic stylistic skill; this does not detract from his form, however, or his construction of societal relations that marry sermonic pedagogy with mimetic entertainment. I suspect that he was fully aware of the lack of "pure" Englishness even while he preached toward the reformation that would attain such an alien-free community identity. Personal convictions, communal ideology, and literary production do not often seem to be in expected, "correct" relationship when examined closely.
Dramatic literature is probably the most obvious self-creating literary product, for the written text is one thing (e.g. a bond to take a pound of flesh), the performance another (the blood that will be spilt), the practical result, post-performance, another still (punishment, changes in social status), contextual manipulation (invocation of unrevealed law-texts), and so on. My concern with the growth of the dramatic text once it leaves the author’s hands is clearly concerned with reproduction of text within the material structures of society; it assumes that a dramatic text will be radically altered by ideology and practical constraints (or freedoms) in a community (e.g. playing the “ne” *The Jew of Malta* in 1592 would be a very different matter from playing the revived *Jew* after Lopez’s execution in 1594). Thus much leans on historical/textual dialogue and cultural materialist class and “race” conceptions of production (and reproduction) of the text. But I have also been concerned to investigate a cultural formalism that arises from the study of texts (particularly non-canonical texts) as holistically and deliberately formed structures, which—while their cultural meaning at any moment in time and at any location will differ, sometimes radically—remain singular artifacts in the literary, historical, and cultural imagination of both Renaissance persons and modern readers. They are imaginary, in one sense, because the process of mutability means that they always elude the grasp of anyone outside of it itself, any alien presence. Like the center of Englishness, the center of a dramatic text’s meaning remains an ideal to be striven for while we acknowledge its non-existence as a stable form. A cultural formalism, then, as I outline it here, and as I have used it, would seem to avoid the worst cases of applying history—one that assumes any *status quo* to really exist—to interpret texts that, when read carefully, seem to do everything they can not to conform to contemporary historical imperatives. The text, formally cohesive and coherent, is alienated from itself

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1 An example would be Mary Janell Metzger’s use of received historical norms, which she uses to highlight aspects of “race” and gender in *The Merchant of Venice*, but which do not in fact apply. To take just one instance from this essay, Metzger emphasizes the sixteenth century attitude to disobedient
incrementally and continuously by cultural forces. Like the alienated character, the text remains essentially the same, but the trappings put on the form, the perception of the form by others, and the revelations through self-scrutiny change radically.

If anything, sixteenth-century texts may have played an important familiarizing part in investigating “Englishness” insofar as they rehearsed the English language. Part of Mullaney’s evocation of the “rehearsal of cultures” lies in the playing out, and disposing of, alien ethnicities, and another part lies in the very centers of English identity, such as the English language. In this dissertation I have referred to the impression among foreigners of English as a strange, mixed-up language; and so it was, and with its coarseness and Germanic history it contained strange, alien elements within itself—the language of the English was also alien. The aliens who clip the King’s English in Englishmen For My Money, then, might not be speaking such a strange tongue, after all, in that they are working with a language in which, for the English speakers, “The voice of the Other, of the barbaros, sounded in the throat . . . one’s own tongue was strange yet familiar, a foreigner within.” And for us to rehear the language is to remind us of these “early modern” alien stages of speech, text, and argument.

As we enter the texts of the sixteenth century, then, and as we engage with the “strange” and the “more strange,” we are under an obligation to the writers of the past and the readers of the future to identify when we are engaged in observation, when in appropriation, when our analyses make use of the alien and when we are positing the strangely familiar as alien. As our own sense of time seems to be such a localized one,

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For further reading:
with cultural and political movements and identities changing from year to year, and sometimes between our going to bed at night and waking up the following morning, we should be prepared for such flux in early modern England. It is easier to portray the sixteenth century, or even "the Renaissance," as a whole, but it seems likely to me—and I have tried at least to begin to show how this works—that the smallest shifts in the time and space in which texts are composed, printed, played, and circulated leave us with a quite different product to examine; and it is one which may inform us or deceive us about its historical geotemporal stage..

The alien is the alien because it is always out of reach; otherwise it would be the native. It is instructive that the word "alien" (sometimes alien) refers also to the act of transferring property or ownership, for certainly the shifting of texts and the relations of texts among each other and among the shaping cultures of a time entails the continual alienation, their re-ownership and their estrangement. Language is itself an alienating force—languages control entry of "foreigners," determine hierarchies within their native ranks, and, in the end, comprise those signs with no relation to the signified other than their difference from other signifiers. Endlessly reductive is language; endlessly alienated is the dramatic text.

If staging the alien alienates the stage, and the stage is already strange, then the re-alienated stage becomes "more strange," i.e. more familiar. The question remains how deeply and across what vast tracts of space and time, such dramatic mirrors reflect. If we keep reminding ourselves as we step through the looking glass that—despite our sophisticated critical tools—we are always among the alien, then we make a good beginning on a strangely-paved, but strangely rewarding, journey.
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