

March 2024

The Drama of Last Things: Reckoning in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Drama

Spencer M. Daniels
University of South Florida

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/etd>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Scholar Commons Citation

Daniels, Spencer M., "The Drama of Last Things: Reckoning in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Drama" (2024). *USF Tampa Graduate Theses and Dissertations*.
<https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/etd/10178>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the USF Graduate Theses and Dissertations at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in USF Tampa Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

The Drama of Last Things:
Reckoning in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Drama

by

Spencer M. Daniels

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
with a concentration in Literature
Department of English
College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Florida

Major Professor: Nicole Discenza, Ph.D.
Emily Jones, Ph.D.
Patrick Finelli, Ph.D.
Thomas Williams, Ph.D.

Date of Approval:
March 8, 2024

Keywords: allegory, religion, death, salvation, theatre

Copyright © 2024, Spencer M. Daniels

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to family and friends who have passed away. May the these pages echo your names in remembrance for playing your part in the drama of last things and crossing the threshold into eternity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my loving wife, my wonderful children, and my supportive parents. Their daily inspiration and endless encouragement made this possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Chapter One: The Drama of Last Things.....	1
Theological Foundations.....	7
The <i>Ars moriendi</i> Tradition	15
What's to Come	27
Chapter Two: Redemptive Reckoning.....	31
<i>Castle of Perseverance</i>	38
<i>Everyman</i>	71
Chapter Three: Damned Reckoning.....	93
<i>Enough is as Good as a Feast</i>	99
<i>Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i>	114
Chapter Four: Conclusion.....	130
Looking Ahead: Indistinct Reckoning and Continuing Traditions.....	144
Bibliography	146

ABSTRACT

Historian Albrecht Classen's contention that "the culture of death . . . provides us with a measuring stick for human society at large" is particularly illuminating when analyzing death and Christian salvation near the religious chasm of the Reformation divide. My study focuses on reckoning as it is illustrated in late medieval and early modern allegorical English drama. The Christian belief in a soul's redemption or damnation after death was preceded by a crucial supernatural happening, a reckoning. Informed by God's judgment, this event became the crux of the *ars moriendi* (the art of dying) tradition that permeated medieval and early modern religious culture and became a reflection of the shifting religious climate in England. I argue that although the late medieval and pre-Reformation death-as-performance is more about the efficacy of the final moments, and the early modern and post-Reformation death-as-performance is more about illustrating the consequences of immoral living, the drama of reckoning endures as an inherently dramatic performance of dying with the same desired outcome: the performativity remains steadfast in a culture characterized by religious fluidity. In looking at the late medieval *Castle of Perseverance* and *Everyman*, I illustrate how dying well is privileged through imagery and appropriation. Similarly, my analysis of William Wager's *Enough is as Good as a Feast* and Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* reveals a focus on living well through theological leanings, socioeconomic contexts, and complexities of character. Ultimately, my study is a chronological exploration of how these plays dramatize reckoning, revealing a unifying parallel in human agency and a unique relationship between perceptions of the nature of sin, death, and eternal life.

CHAPTER ONE: THE DRAMA OF LAST THINGS

Whanne Myhel hys horn blowyth at my dred dom
The count of here conscience schal putten hem in pres
 And yeld a reknyng
Of her space whou they han spent,
And of her trew talent,
At my gret jugement
 An answeere schal me bryng.¹

Why death? Without attempting to play on clichés, the simple answer is that death speaks volumes about the living. Historian Albrecht Classen provides a succinct argument for privileging mortuary studies in suggesting that “the culture of death . . . provides us with a measuring stick for human society at large. Studying how people approach death, whether they accept it in the first place or try to negate and deny it, how they cope with death and come to terms with it proves to be a highly important cultural-historical aspect that deserves careful study.”² How individuals cope is often deeply rooted in spiritual belief systems that have, intentionally or not, both eased anxieties and created angst. Late medieval and early modern English cultures are no exception to this. In fact, analyzing death near the religious chasm of the Reformation divide reveals a heightened sense of unease. More specifically, thinking about early English drama and its own engagement with death results in a seemingly obvious thought: death is dramatic.³ Literary history reveals that late medieval and early modern English culture

¹ David Klausner, ed., *The Castle of Perseverance*, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2010): 3618-3622.

² Albrecht Classen, “Death and the Culture of Death” in *Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: The Material and Spiritual Conditions of the Culture of Death* (De Gruyter, Inc., 2016): 4.

³ See my conception of the *drama of last things* below for an unpacking of perceptions of *dramatic*.

embraced this notion and used it as a means to a heavenly end. This study focuses on two crucial spiritual elements of early English life, death and judgment.

Reflecting upon ways in which society engaged with the drama of salvation highlights change; modern, twenty-first century deathbeds are all too often spaces characterized by sterility, beeping machinations, indifference, and contested resuscitation rights. Modern medicine has gone to great lengths to improve the quality of life and, as a direct byproduct, to delay death. Our relationship with death is one of distance –the further away, the better. In a sense, dying has become synonymous with losing. How often have we heard of patients being “lost” on the operating table or loved ones “losing” their battles with cancer? Somewhere along the way, we changed the dramatic narrative of the death ritual. For quite some time historians have spoken of the medieval and early modern individual’s relationship with death, regularly attributing the closeness to death to sanitation, disease, and low mortality rates. However, this relationship can also be defined by looking at mortality in concert with the dramatization of death. Looking beyond health-related statistics and into spectacle-based rituals illustrates how people prepared for, staged, and performed their final scenes and reveals the heart of an intimate relationship with death. The final act of the drama of our lives has all too often become a spectacle of preventive measures and despondency. Despite a massive religious schism in the early-to-mid-sixteenth century, the drama of crossing the threshold remained as a religious and cultural spectacle, illustrating the importance of one’s end.

Throughout religious history, death and the afterlife have remained at the forefront of cultural ideologies. Late medieval English society saw theological foundations begin to shake with Wycliffe. These early religious desires for reform became more realized in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and England became a space characterized by constant variations in the

fluidity of cultural, political, and theological landscapes. One of the more contentious elements of this religious discourse concerned the theologies of death and salvation. Due in part to the Black Death, it is commonly noted that the people of late medieval Europe were intimately familiar with death.⁴ This familiarity continued, causing perceptions of death and dying to be at the forefront of late medieval and early modern English culture. Individuals were keenly aware of the importance of their soul's eternal resting place, and due to conflicting theological approaches, they often found themselves in a state of fear and uncertainty when it came to salvation.

This study will focus on the religious and literary history of death, specifically *reckoning*. I define reckoning, both as a term and concept, through its use in the morality play *Everyman* as a posthumous event in which the deceased comes before God to account for his or her life. Reckoning addresses two related states: the events that lead the dying to the grave and God's judgment of the deceased immediately following death. My focus on reckoning will pivot off the late medieval and early modern English *drama of last things*⁵ in both theological and literary contexts. For the purposes of my study, the *drama of last things* is a phrase that will reflect two distinct meanings: (1) I use *drama* in the modern sense that sees a situation as moving, exciting, and involving interesting or intense conflict of forces.⁶ It is in this particular sense that we tag feature films and television shows as *dramas*. I will argue that this meaning is inherent to the theologies of salvation. And (2) the *drama of last things* also refers to my claim that late

⁴ Jared Wicks, "Applied Theology at the Deathbed: Luther and the Late Medieval Tradition of the *Ars moriendi*," *Gregorianum* 79, no.2 (1998): 345.

⁵ In the Catholic tradition, "last things" refers to the final four stages of life and afterlife: death, judgment, Heaven, and Hell. For more on this, see Eamon Duffy, "D: Now, and At the Hour of Our Death," in *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University, 2005): 299-368.

⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "drama (n.), additional sense," May 2019, <https://doi.org/10.10193/OED/1033219139>; *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed, "drama, n.3," accessed May 22, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/drama>

medieval and early modern deaths reflected the idea of dying as a performance for an audience, whether that be the actual deathbed or a dramatization on stage. My own conceptualization of the drama of last things engages with theologian Rosemary Haughton's *Drama of Salvation*.⁷ Haughton's expansive discussion follows the life of an individual and illustrates how one's journey can be likened to a drama of sorts. Her detailed connections between the basic elements of production (actors, scenery, script, etc.) and the various stages in life provide a useful framework for my own analyses of these relationships at death. Similarly, theologians Raymond Schwager and John McClorey focus on life as a journey towards salvation.⁸ If we are to see life (as these theologians suggest) as a drama, a full-length, five-act play that culminates or concludes with an individual's death, then my focus is on Act 5 and the performance that takes place after the crossing of the threshold. Situated closely alongside the *drama of last things*, reckoning also has a certain dramatic quality that the theological discourses depend upon to tap into the angst of both pre-Reformation and post-Reformation believers over the state of their souls. There is a dramatic quality intrinsic in the theological discourses of reckoning, and the texts engage with and appropriate these theological traditions in distinct ways.

I argue that medieval theology and its literary engagement must be discussed in concert with early modern theologies and their subsequent literary engagement because the former continued to influence Tudor England. In addition, I will look at ways in which representations of dying shifted as authors engaged with the fluid theological and cultural climate in England. Ultimately, I contend that although the late medieval and pre-Reformation death-as-performance is more about the efficacy of the final moments and the early modern and post-Reformation

⁷ Rosemary Haughton, *The Drama of Salvation* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975).

⁸ Raymond Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation: Toward a Biblical Doctrine of Redemption* (New York: Crossroad, 1999); John A. McClorey, *Figures in the Drama of Salvation: Twelve Sermons* (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1933).

death-as-performance is more about illustrating the consequences of immoral living, the *drama of last things* endures as an inherently dramatic performance of dying with the same desired outcome. The performativity remains steadfast in a culture characterized by its religious fluidity. Furthermore, foci on the relationships among humankind, God, sin, and death and on the nuances of human agency are uniting threads that see early modern reaching back to its medieval past.

Indeed, there are a vast number of late medieval and early modern texts dealing with death, but in order to avoid the dangers of encompassing more than can be handled appropriately in a study this size, I have limited my scope to primarily focus on dramatic texts to allow for sufficient analysis. In addition, I see dramatic literature as particularly pertinent in discussing the relationships between literature and culture. Late medieval and early modern lay society was predominantly illiterate, and drama was one of the few mediums in which everyone could partake; this was a shared cultural experience. That is, “[d]rama is social, communal, and popular. Its rise and flourishing is always associated with some sort of group consciousness.”⁹ My discussion of these texts in relation to the religious climate in which they were written and performed will reveal how they are reciprocal – art imitates life and life imitates art. Lastly, for the scholar, dramatic texts offer a dual approach: they can be studied and analyzed both in what they do on the page and in what they do on the stage. One of the more oft studied and impacting mediums that spans the Reformation divide is drama. Furthermore, we can see the significance of drama and religion from biblical dramas (e.g., York Corpus Christi Plays) and the morality plays in late medieval England to later Jacobean drama in post-Reformation England. Although there are numerous theologies under the massive umbrella that is Christian religion, I find room

⁹ Arnold Williams, *The Drama of Medieval England* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1961), 1.

for further study in salvation, death, and the afterlife, three frequently contended themes in much of modern literary discourse, particularly drama.

Despite evidence of variances in historical texts, we must not see pre- and post-Reformation English culture as two distinct sides of a religious divide. In revealing clear parallels, I will show how theologies and textual engagement with those theologies soften the historical and religious boundaries. Heavily influenced by Lee Patterson's discussion of medieval studies' marginalization in both scholarship and academia, I see the English medieval and early modern periods as more fluid and less dichotomized. In this study I aim to move beyond periodic boundaries—by working within such constraints, we are “not challenging ... the crude binarism that locates modernity ('us') on one side and premodernity ('them') on the other, thus condemning the Middle Ages to the role of all-purpose alternative.”¹⁰ In *Cultural Reformations*, James Simpson and Brian Cummings challenge scholars to redraw the historical boundaries by looking for connections that cross borders in order to open up new avenues, dialogue through which the existing periods can be studied.¹¹ My study blurs the periodic boundaries that create divisions in our perception of what was actually a clearly transitional time. This fluidity has caused some scholars, including Kristen Poole and Jay Zysk, to dub this environment of religious diversity and instability as transreformational.¹² I will draw upon these conceptualizations of periodization to ensure that my argument is one that aims to connect

¹⁰ Lee Patterson, "On the Margin: Postmodernism, Ironic History, and Medieval Studies," *Speculum* 65, no. 1 (January 1990): 93.

¹¹ James Simpson and Brian Cummings, eds., *Cultural Reformations: Medieval and Renaissance in Literary History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹² See Kristen Poole, "Dr. Faustus and Reformation Theology," in *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion*, ed. Garrett A. Sullivan, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006): 96-107; Jay Zysk, "The Last Temptation of Faustus: Contested Rites and Eucharistic Representation in Doctor Faustus," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 43 no. 2 (Spring 2013): 335-367.

instead of separate. I will be creating links that address the importance of mirroring the fluidity of culture and religion during the time.

Theological Foundations

My idea of the drama of last things relies heavily on an articulation of the theological discourses from which I will regularly draw throughout my study. It is problematic to generalize or attempt to definitively categorize these varying beliefs—there were certainly individuals (e.g., Wycliffe) who questioned the doctrine and practices of the Catholic Church quite some time before the official English Reformation, and there were individuals who questioned the beliefs of the Church of England (e.g., William Perkins). For the purposes of this project, unless otherwise noted the term *Catholic(ism)* will be synonymous with *traditional* and *orthodox* religious beliefs, teachings, and practices of the medieval and early modern Church led by the Pope at Rome. However, I will clarify any references made to medieval dissidents such as Wycliffe. Similarly, unless otherwise noted the term *Protestant(ism)* will be used to express the overall religious beliefs, teachings, and practices of the Christian churches no longer governed by the Pope. When necessary, I will define my intent using specific strands such as the Church of England, Lutheran, Calvinist, Puritan, etc.

Although the Reformation was an altering schism that redefined the Christian tradition, we know it did not happen overnight. Instead, earlier theologians such as John Wycliffe began attacks on Catholicism and papal authority in the fourteenth century. It was the opposition of groups such as the Lollards that paved the way, playing an essential role in what would become Luther's polemic in the early-sixteenth century. Contrary to some perceptions, post Reformation religious culture was not an end to traditional religion; in actuality, the religious environment was in constant fluctuation, with the laity often vacillating between theologies, specifically when

it came to matters concerning their salvation. In *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace*, Brian Cummings argues, “English religion was a deeply divisive world in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but its lines of division were not clear.”¹³ Looking at eschatology in three of the dominant theologies of pre- and post-Reformation culture will show how these belief systems are bound up in a drama of last things and emotional angst. Salvation is inherently dramatic, and we can see that across trans-Reformation culture when looking at predestination, soteriological thought, and the afterlife through the theologies and doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and John Calvin.

Parallel to the unfaltering debates concerning the Eucharist was predestination, a pillar of church theology that differed greatly across the Reformation and by strands. The state of one’s soul understandably demands attention and creates drama. The theological concept of predestination existed in traditional Catholicism; however, much like other important beliefs, the development of reformed beliefs would show a change. For the purposes of this study, I will focus on the variations between Thomas Aquinas’s Catholic theology and Luther’s and Calvin’s reformed theologies. In *Summa Theologiae*, thirteenth-century philosopher and theologian Thomas Aquinas relates predestination to the providence of God and contends, “it is fitting for God to predestine men.”¹⁴ In traditional Catholic beliefs, as outlined by Aquinas, predestination was God’s plan for eternal grace Aquinas claims since God is omniscient, he must therefore have knowledge of the predestined.¹⁵ Catholic belief also incorporated the ideology of free will,

¹³ Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 287.

¹⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Alfred J. Freddoso (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018), Ia, q. 23, ad 1.

¹⁵ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: Reformation of Church and Dogma 1300-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) 4:148. I will be referencing Pelikan’s *The Christian Tradition* to summarize and engage with parts of my theological discussions. His study is a comprehensive, five-volume look at the history of the Christian religion.

particularly in relation to the acquisition of grace. Aquinas states, “Man has free-choice . . . otherwise counsels, exhortations, commands, prohibitions, rewards, and punishments would make no sense.”¹⁶ That is to say, man plays an essential role in his salvation. Aquinas’s determination of free will greatly impacts the notion of salvation for believers. However, it is ultimately through the justice, mercy, and grace of God and his forgiveness that a soul may be saved from damnation. Aquinas contends that God is just and quotes late-eleventh- and early-twelfth-century monk and theologian Anselm, who says, “When Thou dost punish the wicked, it is just, since it agrees with their deserts; and when Thou does spare the wicked, it is also just; since it befits Thy goodness.”¹⁷ Justice and mercy first appear as polar opposites; on the contrary, Aquinas suggests, “God acts mercifully, not indeed by going against His justice, but by doing more than justice. . . [h]ence it is clear that mercy does not destroy justice, but in a sense is the fullness thereof.”¹⁸ Yet Catholic theology sanctioned, and heavily relied upon, the accounting of one’s merits or works. Believers could rely only on their works to follow them to their soul’s reckoning and counted on these works as commodity to trade or cash in for mercy and eternal grace. Works and prayers were accumulated throughout one’s life in an attempt to avoid hell and a lengthy stay in purgatory.¹⁹ The theology of Catholic predestination and free will are conversely related to reprobation. Aquinas insists, “reprobation does not signify just foreknowledge, but adds something to it conceptually . . . [f]or just as predestination includes the intention (*voluntas*) to confer grace and glory, so reprobation includes the intention to permit someone to fall into sin and to impose the punishment for damnation for that sin.”²⁰ Aquinas

¹⁶ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 83, i, s.c.

¹⁷ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 21, i, ad.3.

¹⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 21, iii, ad. 2.

¹⁹ Kristen Poole, “*Dr. Faustus* and Reformation Theology,” in *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion*, ed. Garrett A. Sullivan, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 98.

²⁰ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 23, iii c.o.

references a text he terms “the book of life.”²¹ This supernatural text contained the names of those with admission into heaven and held a level of importance due to its relation with predestination. Aquinas notes that the book of life is a “recording of those who have been elected to life.”²² As noted, Reformation theologies would alter these perceptions.

Unlike what we will see in Luther, Calvin was not one to shy away from the theology of predestination and the “otherness” of God that includes His “punishing vengeance.”²³ Kristen Poole contends that “the theological ideas that ultimately came to dominate late-sixteenth-century religious life were not Lutheran, but Calvinist.”²⁴ Calvin builds upon traditional Catholic beliefs on free will and predestination (more so than Luther) in formulating his concept of double predestination. In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin likens predestination to “the eternal decree of God, by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation.”²⁵ According to this belief system, at the creation of the world God determined a certain number to be saved and a certain number to be damned, termed the elect and the reprobate. Similar to Aquinas, Calvin also mentions the book of life as the place where God’s members are written. Poole argues that the dually “exhilarating and terrifying” emotional response to this was due to the principle that there was nothing humans could do to alter God’s design.²⁶ The word double makes use of the opposing, other side, of God that designated reprobation and eternal damnation in hell as the other side of predestination. Calvin’s tenet

²¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 24, i, c.o.

²² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 24, i, c.o.

²³ Angus Fletcher, “*Doctor Faustus* and the Lutheran Aesthetic,” *English Literary Renaissance* 35, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 189.

²⁴ Poole, “*Dr. Faustus* and Reformation Theology,” 100.

²⁵ John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1846), 3.21.5.

²⁶ Poole, “*Dr. Faustus* and Reformation Theology,” 100.

differs from Aquinas's Catholic orthodoxy and Luther's reform. Aquinas sees predestination as the word of God's providential ordering of some to eternal life, whereas reprobation is the word for God's providential *permission* of the non-predestinate to sin and be damned. For Aquinas, God does not *actively* damn people; he *passively* lets people fall into damnation on their own volition.

Luther's position on predestination is situated between Aquinas and Calvin. Gordon Rupp edits the influential theological debates between Erasmus and Luther in *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation* and shows how Luther differed with the Catholic belief in free will by suggesting human will is ineffective in relation to eternal life; instead, our eternity depends solely on God's will.²⁷ Questioning human agency and the freedom of a Christian was not uncommon in Luther's time. In terms of salvific status (eternally), Luther believed that nothing a Christian does makes a difference. For example, we should not worship God because we are trying to get saved; Luther sees that as perverse and self-serving. Rather, we worship because God is God, worthy of worship and deserving of our thanks for justification. Similarly, we should not do good works to attain salvation; instead, Luther maintained we should do good works out of love for our neighbors. Luther believed his theology created the possibility of doing good for others on the basis of empathy. Of course, this notion is built on the assumption that Catholic good works are performed for one's own salvific benefit.²⁸ Angus Fletcher adds to the conversation in his article "*Doctor Faustus* and the Lutheran Aesthetic," arguing that unlike what we see from Calvin, Luther often chose not to address the "otherness" of God.²⁹ Instead, Luther

²⁷ Gordon E. Rupp and Philip S. Watson, eds. and trans., *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation*, (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1969), Retrieved from <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=nlebk&AN=41477&site=ehost-live>.

²⁸ Michael DeJonge, e-mail message to author, December 5, 2019.

²⁹ Fletcher, "*Doctor Faustus* and the Lutheran Aesthetic," 189.

encouraged his believers to avoid such debates, claiming it to be displeasing to God. While Luther is not credited for establishing the theology regarding justification by faith, he is certainly responsible for its “revolutionary advancement” in the mid-sixteenth century.³⁰ Luther defined justification as the forgiveness of sins and suggested that the Catholic doctrine of merit removed agency from Christ and placed it into the hands of sinners. For Luther, salvation had everything to do with Christ’s own right to deliver individuals out of sin and grant them eternal life.³¹ Luther condemned the Catholic Church’s economy of works and eventual selling of indulgences for salvation.³² In relating justification with faith, Luther argued that God saw faith as a primary determining factor of righteousness.³³ Again, Poole discusses how Luther’s theology centered on the individual’s faith and the grace of God, thereby calling for a personal relationship with God not contingent upon a priest or saints.³⁴ This personal relationship was grounded in scripture. Finally, Luther’s theology emphasizes the “conquest of sin, death, and the devil through Christ the victor.”³⁵ With supernatural players and one’s eternal life at stake, this conflict is inherently theatrical.

Predestination might seem to suggest an emptying of dramatic quality; however, it is quite the opposite because the inherent drama in predestination is born out of the evacuation of the known, creating the anxiety and trepidation of salvation. Additionally, the concept of free will plays a role in the drama of salvation in terms of predestination. For Aquinas and Catholicism, the drama existed in merits or works. For Luther, the drama in free will existed in its absence and replacement with God’s will. Finally, for Calvin, arguably the most dramatic, the

³⁰ Poole, “*Dr. Faustus* and Reformation Theology,” 98.

³¹ Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, 148-9.

³² For more on indulgences, see Jared Wicks, “Martin Luther’s Treatise on Indulgences,” *Theological Studies* 28, no. 3 (September 1967): 481-518.

³³ Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, 150.

³⁴ Poole, “*Dr. Faustus* and Reformation Theology,” 99.

³⁵ Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, 163.

drama is exemplified by the constant question of whether one fell in with the elect or the reprobate. Whether it is a spiritual economy of works or predestination, one was constantly looking for signs to discern salvation. Calvin's double predestination suggests the drama in the two sides of God, mercy and justice or love and wrath. In this sense, God's presence depicts both a protagonist and an antagonist in the drama of our salvation.

The terms *salvation*, *conquest*, *damnation*, *justice*, and *will* are all frequently utilized in the doctrines and theologies of Aquinas and Luther and evoke, among other emotions, wonder, terror, and excitement. Eamon Duffy contends, "It would be a mistake to deduce . . . that late medieval English religion was morbid or doom-laden."³⁶ Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars* is a comprehensive look at the English lay perception of the Catholic religion during the period. Similarly, Poole states modern critics have often deemed these ideas, particularly predestination, "'depressing,' but that is not necessarily how it was viewed in the sixteenth century."³⁷ Poole's assessment illustrates the contrasting side to gloom or melancholy. These theologies were not a one-sided emotional affair; instead, they offered concepts and terms such as *hope*, *grace*, *mercy*, and *love* as the opposing delightful and invigorating aspects of these systems of belief. We can see here how the dramatic language takes on the metaphoric protagonist and antagonist convention of drama, echoing classical dramatic techniques discussed in Aristotle's *Poetics* (fourth century BC).

Pre-Reformation theology approaches the afterlife in three different realms: heaven, hell, and purgatory. Poole suggests that traditional Catholicism "set forth an eschatological system that was, however complex in its various representations, quite simple in its basic structure."³⁸

³⁶ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University, 2005): 302.

³⁷ Poole, "Dr. Faustus and Reformation Theology," 100.

³⁸ Poole, "Dr. Faustus and Reformation Theology," 98.

After death, most souls went to purgatory; direct ascension to heaven was only permitted for the exceedingly pious (e.g., saints). In *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Aquinas directly deals with the concept of reckoning in his discussion of the moment after death where “immediately after its separation from the body the man’s soul receives its reward or punishment ‘according as he hath done in the body.’”³⁹ Following the separation, Aquinas speaks of an obstacle keeping souls from their final reward; souls must go through a purgation, and “[t]his purgation, of course, is made by punishments, just as in this life their purgation would have been completed by punishments which satisfy the debt.”⁴⁰

Reformed theology and traditional Catholic theology primarily differed on the belief in purgatory. Aquinas believes in an intermediate state (purgatory); however, eventually everyone will end up in either heaven or hell. Both Calvin and Luther deny any such intermediate state. Luther’s theology suggests that upon death and separation of the body, a soul (saved or damned) is put in a so-called sleep until the second coming of Christ. In *Death and Afterlife*, Terence Nichols sees Luther suggesting that the soul exists “as it were in a state of sleep, so that the person has no consciousness of the interval.”⁴¹ Luther believes everyone will awake to either heaven or hell at the general resurrection, the second coming. Conversely, Calvin’s doctrine suggests that from the moment of death souls are either in a blessed state of grace in heaven (the elect) or damned to hell (the reprobate).

There is not much more dramatic than the state of one’s soul upon crossing the threshold to the afterlife. Reformation culture was overwhelmed with the presence of death and what Christian theology terms the “last times.” Pelikan contends, “The sense of living in the last times

³⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, trans. Charles J. O’Neill (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1975), 4. 91. 2.

⁴⁰ Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4. 91. 6.

⁴¹ Terence Nichols, *Death and Afterlife: A Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2010), 72.

was widespread in these centuries . . . ever since the transformation of the apocalyptic vision in the early church.”⁴² Both pre- and post-Reformation drama recognized this obsession as a canvas for creating instruction, apprehension, and entertainment. In portraying a “story of spiritual conflict,” these plays enact the abstract internalized spiritual processes existing in reckoning, a subject matter well suited for the stage.⁴³ This space is where I situate my own analysis and interpretation of the theological discourses of Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin. I will use both the language and the conceptualizations of these specific theologies in my close readings to interpret ways in which the literary texts engage with these belief systems and ways in which these theologies are inherently theatrical. While I will discuss varying theologies, it is important to note a clear distinction between systematically developed theologies and literary presentations in texts like a play. As discussed, the religious setting in early modern England had much diversity, including strong Catholic influences, so it is rare to see a strict Lutheran, Calvin, etc. position represented. Indeed there are discussions to be had; however, I will avoid the trap of making demonstrative claims that any of these plays strictly adhere to a given theology, particularly in sixteenth-century England.⁴⁴

The Ars moriendi Tradition

In addition to theological discourses, deathbed texts are another important element to discuss in contextualizing reckoning. Examining the drama of last things and reckoning is incomplete without briefly treating the importance of dying well. Speaking to the significance of deathbed texts will help illustrate my conceptualization of the drama of last things by revealing the popularity of the *Ars moriendi* (the art of dying) tradition and how this tradition connects to

⁴² Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, 37.

⁴³ David Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 10.

⁴⁴ Michael DeJonge, e-mail message to author, January 14, 2024.

an individual's reckoning. Close readings and analysis of three specific deathbed texts will reveal how the drama of reckoning became a continuation of this tradition. In pre-Reformation England the *Ars Moriendi* was greatly influenced by Catholic beliefs in the afterlife. The *Ars moriendi* tradition stemmed from a highly influential fifteenth-century tract "compiled as a commentary and elaboration of the *Ordo visitandi*."⁴⁵ The *Ordo ad visitandum* (the Order of the Visitation of the Sick) comes from the Sarum rite, an order for public worship originating in the diocese of Salisbury and widely used in medieval England. Duffy contends that this is a genre that "insists on the importance of bringing the dying Christian to a knowledge of his or her condition, in order to evoke from them a declaration of faith and repentance."⁴⁶ Traditional Catholicism believed in a ritual to be performed on the dying when appropriate (i.e. gradual or foreseen death as opposed to sudden); this ritual, among other things, incorporated Extreme Unction (anointing). As we will see, this text went through various translations and reimaginings after the Reformation and well into late-seventeenth-century England. As stated earlier, my discussion of reckoning will reveal how earlier stagings are more focused on the efficacy of one's actions at death and later stagings are more concerned with holy living; similarly, here, we will see how the *Ars moriendi* tradition mirrors the same soteriological shift.

Ultimately, beliefs regarding the deathbed and afterlife differed across the Reformation divide; however, Catholics and Protestants were unified in cautioning against the heightened peril present at the deathbed.⁴⁷ As noted above, predestination and assurance varied among Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin, and we will see the variances played out in the discussion of the dramatic qualities of the deathbed scene. For Catholics, this was a physical space for

⁴⁵ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 314.

⁴⁶ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 310.

⁴⁷ For a comprehensive study of English deathbed texts, see Amy Appleford, *Learning to Die in London, 1380-1540* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

supernatural warfare where the dying could expect to be caught in the middle of the battle for their soul. When one's eternal resting place is at stake, there is a significantly elevated sense of anxiety fit for a stage production. We can see this evidenced further in the mid-fifteenth century *Book of the Craft of Dying*, an anonymous translation of the Latin death text *Tractatus de arte bene moriendi* (c. 1415). It appears in twelve copies from various parts of London and its grouping with other death and tribulation texts suggests it was available in booklet by the 1460s. The *Craft of Dying's* focus on efficacious dying is seen promptly in chapter one's "Commendation of death: and of cunning to die well." The author speaks to the differences between bodily and spiritual death: "[t]hough bodily death be most dreadful...spiritual death of the soul is as much more horrible and detestable, as the soul is more worthy and precious than the body."⁴⁸ Immediately, the reader is aware of the importance of dying well.

The focus shifted post Reformation, and the art of dying well was often prefaced by the importance of living well first. This is evidenced in staunch Puritan William Perkins's *Salve for a sicke man* (1595), which primarily focuses on godly living in sickness *and* in health. Perkins's objection/answer-style text begins by unpacking the meaning and purpose of death before revealing his primary concern, holy living: "for wee must iudge a man not by his death, but by his life."⁴⁹ He continues stressing this when he suggests that "wee ought more to be afraid of an impenitent and evil life, then of sudden death."⁵⁰ Perkins sees that the preparation for death is twofold: *general* preparation occurs throughout one's whole life and *particular* preparation occurs in sickness and/or at the deathbed. Essentially, this is how he divides his subject matter,

⁴⁸ *Craft of Dying*, 5.

⁴⁹ William Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man. or, A treatise containing the nature, differences, and kindes of death as also the right manner of dying well. And it may serue for spirituall instruction to 1. Mariners when they goe to sea. 2. Souldiers when they goe to battell. 3. Women when they trauell of child* (London: John Legat, 1611; Ann Arbor: Text Creation Partnership, 2005): 28

⁵⁰ Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 31.

spending approximately half of the two hundred-page treatise addressing the significance of living a holy life based on a theology of justification, not a theology of merit. For Calvinists, the drama at the deathbed was less indicative of a traditional psychomachia (battle for one's soul); instead, the drama was wrapped up in a long-awaited answer: reprobation or election.⁵¹ The popularity of deathbed manuals continued well into the seventeenth century, culminating in Jeremy Taylor's two-part text *Rules and Exercises of Holy Living* and *Rules and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651). Collectively, Taylor's treatise is over three hundred pages long, and although the first part (*Holy Living*) is dedicated solely to living a godly life, he dedicates the first two chapters of *Holy Dying* to the transience of life and the need for preparation "to be practised in our while life."⁵² The reader is cautioned against sinful living and exhorted to "be careful that he do not live a soft, a delicate, and a voluptuous life; but a life severe, holy, and under the discipline of the cross, under the conduct of prudence and observation, a life of warfare and sober counsels, labour and watchfulness."⁵³ Taylor continues the post-Reformation privileging of living well, particularly as it pertains to crossing the threshold. These three examples of printed and popular deathbed texts show that as the theological and religious climate began to shift, so did the ways in which individuals practiced and prepared for their imminent reckonings. In addition to supporting the underlying argument of my upcoming chapters, these deathbed texts also contain elements of a production-like framework.

My discussion of the drama of reckoning pivots from the idea that the deathbed was equally dramatic, both in content and theatrical convention. That is, the deathbed texts reflect that a dying individual's final scene mirrored the elements of a spectacle (plot/obstacles,

⁵¹ See p.000 (above) for my discussion of the dramatic in Calvin's double predestination

⁵² Jeremy Taylor, *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, ed. P.G. Stanwood (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 42.

⁵³ Taylor, *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, 42.

character development, dialogue, audience). This can first be seen in the way each text speaks to overcoming obstacles and the subsequent assumption that the dying (like an actor) must get into “character”—they speak to necessary motivations for the upcoming “scene” (character development). Going through the temptations and other preparations can be likened to an actor preparing for a particular role. The *Craft of Dying* speaks to five areas of temptation confronted at death: faith, desperation, impatience, complacency, temporality. These five areas of temptation contextualize the production and, albeit mental and emotional, become plot-based obstacles for the protagonist to overcome; essentially, they are battles that must be fought in the larger war at hand (the war against the devil for the individual’s soul). The devil tempts the dying with “greatest and grievous temptations, and such as they never had before in all their life.”⁵⁴

There is a real sense of urgency here that is treated differently in Perkins’s *Salve*. For Perkins, temptations are not a guarantee and those that are tempted should be aware that “God is then present by the vnspeakable comfort of his spirit [and] euen in the time of death the diuell receiues the greatest foyle, when he lookes for the greatest victorie.”⁵⁵ However, Perkins does speak to the importance of dying in faith and the need for an individual to arm himself against the fear of death, two particular focuses seen in the earlier text. In doing so, Perkins addresses overcoming obstacles and stresses that there are no boxes left unchecked by speaking to “the true and right manner of making particular preparation before death, which containes three sorts of duties: one concerning god, the other cōcerning a mā’s own selfe, the third concerning our neighbour.”⁵⁶ One noteworthy variance in preparation is Perkins’s focus on the dying’s temporal duties. That is, both reconciliation and estate matters are two important pieces of Perkins’s text.

⁵⁴ *Craft of Dying*, 10.

⁵⁵ Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 30-31.

⁵⁶ Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 94.

He insists that forgiving neighbors and loved ones (and asking for their forgiveness in return) is part of a dying individual's duties. In addition, the handling of any outstanding business or familial matters is also essential; this includes a brief discussion of will making. In terms of what I call plot-based obstacles, the primary element of contrast between these two is the sense of heightened tension and anxiety. For the *Craft of Dying*, temptations become *the* primary challenges that ultimately decide one's eternal fate. In *Salve*, Perkins lacks the same anxious tone and highlights a considerable theological difference between the Catholic and Calvinist deathbed in suggesting the scene does not have to be filled with the same sense of urgency if one has lived a holy life.

Similar to Perkins's approach, Taylor's *Exercises in Holy Dying* lacks the sensationalistic tone of the early *Craft of Dying*. However, like we have seen in the earlier texts, Taylor also speaks directly to the temptations of impatience, fear of death, and despair. In Chapter 3, he begins his instruction on dying well by addressing the temptation of impatience: "it is not to be expected, that a sick man should act a part of patience with a countenance like an orator, or grave like a dramatic person . . . [t]herefore, silence and still composures, and not complaining, are not parts of a sick man's duty; they are not necessary parts of patience."⁵⁷ Here, Taylor's instruction reflects character development as he encourages the cries of the dying; he urges the protagonist to cry out, giving him motivation for the final scene. However, Taylor is quick to rein it in and suggest that although "exclamations [are] entertainment of the spirit, and an abatement or diversion of the pain . . . [the dying] must take care that [their] complaints be without despair."⁵⁸ Again, he is speaking to the way in which the dying should respond to the situation at hand, and in doing so, Taylor reflects the need to advise the actor's inner motivations in their final role.

⁵⁷ Taylor, *Holy Dying*, 64.

⁵⁸ Taylor, *Holy Dying*, 65-66.

Even though the theological framework in which Taylor positions his instruction doesn't allow the dying any real agency, interestingly, Taylor still encourages them to perform by being boisterous and emotional. Although the three texts vary in the number of obstacles at the deathbed, the notion of a mental and emotional struggle between the dying, the devil, and God is a continuity that illustrates how these texts privileged dramatic elements like the importance of a character's state of mind and plot-like obstacles.

These texts also illustrate ways in which the English *Ars moriendi* tradition reflected spectacle through the use of dialogue. After revealing the need to overcome temptations and the need to be mentally and emotionally prepared, the *Craft of Dying* moves to “the interrogations that should be asked of them that be in their death bed, while they may speak and understand.”⁵⁹ Essentially, these interrogations become dialogue between two characters, the priest and the dying. Of course, there is one crucial assumption that is treated in each of the deathbed texts being discussed: in order to actively participate in a dialogue, dying individuals must “have reason with them and their speech.”⁶⁰ It is important to note the use of the word *reason*; here, the author is speaking of an individual's intellectual power and mental faculty.⁶¹ This suggests that the protagonist, albeit dying, is expected to play an active role in this production. Although the dialogue is interrogative based, and the protagonist's lines merely responsive, the moriens exudes agency.

Brother, art thou glad that thou shalt die in
the faith of Christ? The sick man answereth:
Yea.

⁵⁹ *Craft of Dying*, 22.

⁶⁰ *Craft of Dying*, 22.

⁶¹ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “reason (*n.*1), sense II.5.a,” September 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/5117557630>.

Knowst thou well that thou hast not done
as thou shouldst have done? He answereth:
Yea
Repentest thee thereof? He answereth:
Yea.⁶²

The text reveals that the dying person's ability to participate in this conversation is riddled with supernatural implications. Should they choose not to respond well, their soul is at stake. The word *reason* can also be connected to earlier, late-fourteenth century uses of the word (*resoun*) in the Wycliffite Bible. Wycliffe used this word to refer to "monetary reckoning; income; revenue."⁶³ As noted earlier, traditional Catholics firmly believed in the need for the dying individual to settle spiritual accounts with God upon death.⁶⁴ So, the use of the word here also mirrors the use of *reason* in traditional soteriological discourses at the time. Furthermore, this particular type of dialogue mirrors the call-and-response form that can be found in the origins of English drama early in the tenth century. *Quem Quaeritis* (c. 970), an addition to the traditional Mass that was inserted during Easter, serves as an example of this form and further reveals that Early English drama was born out of the liturgy where worshippers (audience members) were expected to actively participate. The dialogue like the excerpt above continues before shifting into a series of prayers that the dying individual must speak forth; altogether, the *Craft of Dying* contains some ten pages of what I consider to be dialogue-like oration.

Perkins's *Salve* reflects the Calvinistic shift away from priestly responsibilities and towards self-led prayer. Although he encourages the presence of a minister in aiding the dying,

⁶² *Craft of Dying*, 22.

⁶³ *OED Online*, s.v. "reason, I.1.b.," accessed September 28, 2020, <https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/view/Entry/159068?rskey=XScOBj&result=1#eid>

⁶⁴ I will talk about this at length in Chapter 2, in my later discussion of *Everyman*.

Perkins takes the call-and-response type dialogue and turns it into a monologue given to whomever will listen. The reliance on another character changes, but Perkins still highlights the importance of a vocalized confession: "...the sick party troubled in minde with the memory and consideration of any of his sinnes past, or any manner of way tempted by the diuell, shall freely of his owne accord open his case to such as are both able & willing to help him, that he may receiue comfort and die in peace of conscience."⁶⁵ In terms of dialogue, Taylor's *Holy Dying* falls somewhere in the middle, caught between the call-and-response of the earlier *Craft of Dying* and Perkins's speech-like address. Although Taylor does not include the call-and-response dialogue, he does give a specific script through the utterances of prayers. Like Perkins, Taylor places significant responsibility on the dying individual by encouraging him to pray a "prayer for Pardon of Sins, to be said frequently in time of Sicknes, and in all the portions of Old Age."⁶⁶ Throughout the text, he includes a number of prayers that are to be uttered by the dying; each prayer is titled and encouraged to be said aloud at specific points during the ritual. Furthermore, Taylor includes specific directions for "...the ministers and the standers-by, who are, in such case, to speak more to God for him than to talk to him."⁶⁷ He continues by giving strict directions to the minister, ensuring each duty is completed in a proper and timely manner. Although different, each instance illustrates that these spectacles relied on a type of dialogue to move the ritual along. Seeing the importance and use of dialogue in the three texts illustrates how they mirror dramatic conventions. The dialogic variances in each of the deathbed texts reveal a continuity that highlights the significance of prayer and the presence of an audience. A performance makes one crucial assumption: someone is doing while someone is watching.

⁶⁵ Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 108.

⁶⁶ Taylor, *Holy Dying*, 147.

⁶⁷ Taylor, *Holy Dying*, 171.

Much like a play, the deathbed ritual contained an audience. In the late medieval biblical plays, York cycle, and mystery plays the audience had an essential role in the production. This early dramatic convention is mirrored in the *ars moriendi* tradition in England, all the way until its decline in the late-seventeenth century. In addition to scripted lines and dialogue, the *Craft of Dying* also speaks to the presence of an audience.

Then let him say this thrice, *In manus tuas, Domine*, etc. Into thine hands, Lord, I commit my soul. And let the covent say the same. And if he may not speak, let the covent – or they that stand about – say thus: *In manus tuas, Domine, commendamus spiritum eius*, etc. Into Thine hands, Lord, we commend his soul.⁶⁸

As the interruptive suggests, the “covent” spoken of here is the audience, the individuals who stood around the deathbed. Like a production, the deathbed scene also relied heavily on the participants. In fact, if the dying individual was not able to speak their own lines, an audience member was permitted to take on the responsibility:

And if he that sick can not all these prayers, or may not say them for grievousness or sickness, let some man that is about him say them before him, as he may clearly hear him say them, changing the words that ought to be changed in his saying...and he shall be safe.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *Craft of Dying*, 23.

⁶⁹ *Craft of Dying*, 31.

As the excerpt suggests, the audiences' role was an active one; they acted as both viewers and players who shared high stakes responsibilities. Chapter 6 of the text attends to this more heavily by including ten prayers made specifically for those attending the deathbed. Participants were also expected to follow strict directions that charged them with handling essential prop pieces:

Also present to the sick the image of the crucifix;
the which should evermore be about sick men, or else
the image of our Lady, or of some other saint the
which he loved or worshipped in his heal. Also let
there be holy water about the sick; and spring often
times upon him, and the others that be about him,
that fiends may be voided from him.⁷⁰

Depending on the conscious state of the dying, props and images were used as symbols to evoke a specific emotional response. In a sense, this can be connected with the medieval devotional tradition known as affective piety. In this particular instance, the individuals surrounding the death bed were responsible for aiding in ushering the dying's soul into eternity. It is interesting to note that despite the essential role played by the audience, the *type* of audience member mattered. The text cautions against the dangers of carnal friends, children, and wives; their presence, along with thoughts about riches and other worldly goods, could very well become a spiritual hindrance.⁷¹ In the context of the deathbed, temporal nostalgia was a distraction that the devil hoped would derail the performance.

As we have seen, staunch Calvinist William Perkins places more emphasis on personal responsibility. The dying individual was charged with forgiving friends and family and settling

⁷⁰ *Craft of Dying*, 36.

⁷¹ *Craft of Dying*, 37.

legal matters. In addition, in regards to salvation, the dying was responsible for living a holy life in leading up to this moment in death. Although Perkins stresses individual responsibility, *Salve* does include multiple references to members present at the deathbed. Like in the *Craft of Dying*, Perkins also cautions against “friends that come to visit.”⁷² This warning is part of his belief that due to distraction, one should not wait until the deathbed to repent. In contrast to the earlier deathbed text, *Salve* does not discriminate against the *type* of audience member; in fact, Perkins declares, “that howsoever it be the dutie of the Ministers of the word principally to visit and comfort the sicke, yet is it not their duty alone: for it belongs to them also which haue knowledge of Gods word, and the gift of prayer.”⁷³ He continues his discussion of the audience’s role by instructing helpers to avoid the “common fault of men and women...who spend the time either in silence, gazing, and looking on; or in vttering wordes to little or no purpose saying to the sicke partie, that they are sorie to see him in that case.”⁷⁴ Taylor’s *Holy Dying* similarly places emphasis on those surrounding the deathbed. Although Perkins permits a more open invitation for the audience, Taylor insists the audience be familiar to the dying individual. That is, “let him not be wholly advised by strangers, who know not his particular necessities.”⁷⁵ Regardless of the type of audience, each text reveals the importance of this presence at the deathbed.

Whether a Catholic, a Calvinist, or a member of the Church of England, an individual’s dying soul heavily relied on their own participation and aid of audience members. The ways in which the English texts of the *ars moriendi* tradition reflect dramatic techniques and conventions reveals the underlying drama of last things. Although not a drama or spectacle in its theatrical

⁷² Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 56.

⁷³ Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 103-104.

⁷⁴ Perkins, *A salve for a sicke man*, 104-105.

⁷⁵ Taylor, *Holy Dying*, 170.

sense, the deathbed scene acted as a stage and demanded agency from its protagonists. This study will reveal how this final act would be completed in the drama of reckoning.

What's to Come

To effectively trace the drama of last things across two hundred plus years of pre- and post-Reformation texts, I will utilize multiple critical approaches. Each chapter will analyze the ways in which the various plays engage with the drama of reckoning, I will rely on close readings of primary sources. In addition, my study demands a systematic engagement with the religious and social culture of each text. In order to meet this demand, I will closely model the New Historicist method of using historical, religious, and cultural texts as a means to make parallels between medieval and early modern mortuary culture, religion, and textual representations. I will also speak to how literary and theological discourses interact with and shape each other. Connecting these lines helps to obscure divisive periodizations; illustrates a process that is cumulative, not evolutionary; and reveals how these texts both maintain and modify the conventions of the past.⁷⁶ My own conceptualization of the drama of last things will engage with and pivot from *theatrum mundi*, the classical analogy that sees the world as a theatre. In particular, theologian Rosemary Haughton's connections between the basic elements of production (actors, scenery, script, etc.) and the various stages in life provide a framework that will inform my own analyses of these relationships at death. In addition to Haughton, I will draw upon Sarah Beckwith's complex relationships between dramatic performance and religious ritual to support my own arguments. Peter Marshall and Ralph Houlbrooke's foundational texts will advise my historical discussions of death, while Alec Ryrie's analysis on early modern Protestantism and Eamon Duffy's study on Catholicism across the Reformation divide will

⁷⁶ Catherine Belsey, "Continuity and Change on the English Popular Stage," *Renaissance Drama* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 146.

inform my own contextualization and reflections on religious history during the periods. Due to the nature of my argument, my study will depend heavily on dramatic history. For this, I will rely upon David Bevington, Lawrence Clopper, and Stephen Greenblatt's comprehensive analyses of these particular periods. I will draw on performance theory in evidencing a continued performativity and in drawing upon the implications of reckoning. I conceptualize performativity in two particular ways: First, I see "performative" as an adjective, describing the nature of a dramatic or artistic performance. Second, I see performativity in a more philosophical and theoretical sense as an utterance and/or a speech act. This latter sense is more in line with language philosophers J.L. Austin and John Searle.⁷⁷ I will define my intent as I move between these two conceptualizations. Lastly, David Bevington's exploration of dramatic conventions from the medieval period through the end of the sixteenth century will influence my discussions of theatrical traditions seen in the texts being analyzed. These methods will be utilized in tracing instances of reckoning from medieval to early modern drama; I divide my discussion into two specific areas: (1) redemptive reckoning and (2) damned reckoning. These two lenses illustrate ways in which the drama of last things has supernatural implications and illustrates that the drama of salvation (our lives) is not complete until the final reckoning scene is played out.

"Chapter 2: Redemptive Reckoning," looks at the relationship between late medieval drama and redemptive reckoning, particularly seen in *Castle of Perseverance* (1420s) and *Everyman* (1500). Here, I reference and engage with the theology of Thomas Aquinas and reveal how these dramatizations of reckoning end with the protagonist's soul receiving a redemption. I argue that the focus on redemptive reckoning reflects the Catholic traditions of efficacious dying

⁷⁷ J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words: The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011); John Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

through clear reckonings. *Castle* stages a battle-like temptation that pits good vs. evil, winner takes the soul, and *Everyman* stages an end-of-life journey of sinful discard and preparation. Each play culminates with God's unabating power and the triumph of good over evil. As long as the protagonists have checked the appropriate boxes, the outcome is unobscured and their ". . . reckoning is crystal-clear."⁷⁸ While *Castle* focuses on one's end and dying well through the extended war metaphor, *Everyman* does so through the motif of memory. Regardless of their varying approaches, both plays reveal the importance of human agency in the efficaciousness of dying.

"Chapter 3: Damned Reckoning," focuses on early modern English drama, particularly reckoning seen in William Wager's *Enough is as Good as a Feast* (1560s) and Christopher Marlowe's *Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (1590s). Here, I reference and engage with the theology of Luther and Calvin and speak to predictability and predestination. I argue that the Reformation brought with it the tragic possibility of reprobation and failure within the context of the Christian religion. As a result, there was a shift in focus; these early modern instances of reckoning illustrate the protagonists' damnation. However, their damnations are directly related to the imbalances between sinful living vs. holy living. Instead of focusing on dying well, these two plays reveal the ramifications of sinful living. Despite the refocusing, both pre and post-Reformation plays highlight the role of agency—the human element to eternal salvation or utter damnation.

Finally, I will conclude with a brief chapter that analyzes some of the major variances in these plays. In doing so, I illustrate how these distinctions fall under overarching similarities,

⁷⁸ Clifford Davidson, Martin W. Walsh, and Ton J. Broos, eds., *Everyman and Its Dutch Original, Elckerlijc* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), 899.

particularly in the relationships among humankind, God, sin, and death and in the role of human agency. Indeed, these plays were written in very different periods; however, looking at them in concert with each other and through the lens of dramatizing reckoning reveal that these medieval predecessors surely inform what was to come in the not-so-distant early modern future.

CHAPTER TWO: REDEMPTIVE RECKONING

Now thy soule is taken thy body fro
Thy rekenynge is crystall clere.
Now shalt thou into the hevenly spere
Unto the whiche all ye shall cume
That lyveth well before the Day of Dome.⁷⁹

Medieval England was intimately familiar with death for a variety of reasons, and the relationship between religion and conventional, day-to-day life resulted in a proclivity for literary and dramatic representations of soteriological interests.⁸⁰ As a result, the medieval literary canon is profuse in extant texts that speak to supernatural concerns. In this chapter, I will focus on two late medieval English morality plays, *Castle of Perseverance* (1420s) and *Everyman* (1500).⁸¹ In addition to these two texts, I will also engage with Catholic doctrine by referencing the theological works of Thomas Aquinas. Again, my particular textual argument(s) and analyses of reckoning are based on the overarching religious climates of the periods. The English morality play tradition relied heavily on Catholic theology, and I will reveal ways in which this reliance informs the drama of reckoning. These two morality plays poignantly illustrate the Catholic emphasis on holy dying and efficacy of the deathbed, complete with sacramental language, ritual, and the undeniable focus on good works. They both illustrate less

⁷⁹ *Everyman*, 897-901.

⁸⁰ For more on my discussion of the medieval familiarity with death, see “Chapter 1: The Drama of Last Things,” p.000.

⁸¹ As noted in Chapter 1, I have limited my scope of dramatic texts to restrict my focus to compositions not based upon preexisting biblical or biographical chronicles. Doing so allows me to explore ways in which medieval authors are using their own convictions and assumptions in dramatizing reckonings.

interest in “man’s earthly life than in his spiritual welfare in the life to come.”⁸² In this way, these plays are two early examples of dramatizing soteriological thought.

The dramatization of reckoning begins with a redemptive clarity that is a reflection of the theological foundation and cultural climate of late medieval England. In this chapter I argue that this redemptive outcome, a clear reckoning, is a direct result of a focus on efficacious dying. More specifically, each play draws its audience’s attention to the importance of life’s end by using images and appropriation⁸³. *Castle of Perseverance* privileges efficacious dying through martial imagery, and *Everyman* focuses on the image of the account book in emphasizing remembrance in holy dying. Similarly, *Castle’s* appropriation of the medieval tournament tradition and *Everyman’s* appropriation of Thomas Aquinas’s theology of prudence also privilege dying well. Ultimately, these plays reveal individuals who have agency in their eternal lives by focusing on the free will to make the right choice at the right time, the end.

Late twentieth and twenty-first century scholarship has made noticeable strides in altering the long-held belief that the medieval period was a cultural dark age where literary production was limited and unimpressive. The English morality play emerged from an impressively vibrant medieval society and materialized from numerous religious and literary influences. Symbolically speaking, the moralities deal “with thematic actions common in the non-dramatic art of the Middle Ages—the dance of death, the debate of the soul and the body, the debate of the virtues after death—and with the basic conflict of soul.”⁸⁴ Unfortunately, our extant canon of drama

⁸² A.C. Cawley, “Introduction,” in *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*, ed. A.C. Cawley (London: Orion Publishing, 1993), xxi.

⁸³ Appropriation is a word often used with varying meanings and implications. I use appropriation as a term to suggest that the text or author being discussed has adopted or borrowed a previously existing concept, idea, happening, etc. and recontextualized or resituated it. Unless otherwise stated, my use of appropriation does not assume perversion or critique.

⁸⁴ David Leigh, “The Doomsday Mystery Play: An Eschatological Morality,” *Modern Philology* 67, no. 3 (Feb. 1970): 217-18, doi:10.1086/390168.

from this period is limited; however, the texts we have, whether whole or fragmented, point to a rich dramatic tradition born out of an overarching theological institution. Literary historians and scholars have agreed that the origins of English medieval drama can be traced back to the tenth century liturgical Easter Mass. The *Quem Quaeritis* (mid-tenth century) was a resurrection-related antiphonal song performed by choir members in a call-and-answer form. The song dramatized the dialogue between the angels and the three Marys at Christ's tomb and became progressively more theatricalized. In fact, the late-tenth century *Regularis Concordia*, a document compiled for the Benedictine Reform, includes stage directions and staging, costume, and properties notes for the song.⁸⁵ At this point, drama was closely associated with church ritual. Unsurprisingly, the visualization of biblical stories and their significant characters became more frequent and stylized, particularly during special events like Advent, Christmas, and the weeks leading up to Lent. One example of this includes *The Play of Adam*, a twelfth century biblical play written in Anglo-Norman French. In addition to being written in the vernacular, this play is significant because it illustrates the shift away from church-interior drama and towards a more accessible outdoor playing space. A separation between Church and drama had not been made yet.

From there, the scope of drama grew, even as the connection to the Catholic Church remained steadfast. More expansive biblical dramas, including one pageant-like cycle referred to as the *York Cycle* (c. 1415), became popular. This particular cycle consists of 47 surviving plays that, together, “comprise a narrative concerning the Christian history of the world from the Creation to the Judgment Day, with emphasis on the Passion and resurrection of Christ.”⁸⁶

⁸⁵ “*Quem Quaeritis*,” in *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, eds. Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013), 21.

⁸⁶ “The York Corpus Christi Play,” in *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, eds. Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013), 77.

Performed on movable stages, each play was produced by a particular guild instead of being overseen by the Church. The *York Cycle*'s civic and religious successes were important for the development of drama: the play signified "the growing participation of lay people in devotional culture and spiritual life, and of the urban middle classes in literary culture."⁸⁷ And, at this point, drama began moving further away from Church ritual. The fifteenth century saw even more theatrical development with the Towneley Plays, Chester Plays, and N-Town Plays, groupings of dramatic works that, for the most part, bring to life biblical stories. However, each grouping is significant: for example, the Towneley plays are often satirical and illustrate a connection with continental European literature, particularly French comedy.⁸⁸ In addition, there is evidence of the Chester Plays being performed well into the sixteenth century, an important point in arguing for the persistence of medieval literature and dramatic traditions. Lastly, the N-Town Plays include multiple plays that dramatize the life of the Virgin Mary, revealing ways in which drama was informed by other literary texts concerned with Mary, like Nicholas Love's *Blessed Mirror of the Life of Christ* (c. 1400) and Margery Kempe's *Book* (c. 1430s).⁸⁹ Hagiography was also a prevalent focus for dramatists during the period. English saints' plays like *Mary Magdalene* and *The Conversion of Saint Paul* animate the life and miracles of canonized biblical figures, and local parishes performed plays based on Christian saints like St. George, revealing ways in which the fifteenth century became a transition period in English drama: as the century wears on, we start to see more plays taking more creative freedoms in moving away from biblical-based narratives and toward non-biblical plays.⁹⁰ This is not to suggest the birth of a defined secular

⁸⁷ "The York Corpus Christi Play," 77.

⁸⁸ For an extensive source overview of early English comedy, see note on page 158: John R. Elliot Jr., "The Sacrifice of Isaac as Comedy and Tragedy," in *Medieval English Drama: Essays in Critical and Contextual*, ed. Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 157-176.

⁸⁹ "The Towneley Plays: *The Creation*," in *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, eds. Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013), 140-245.

⁹⁰ Glynne Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 103.

drama in England quite yet. It is important not to forget the overarching theological implications of these plays. For example, the saints were a pervasive religious influence, important for their “role as intercessors between sinful mankind and God in heaven in the spiritual life of those times.”⁹¹ Authors *did* begin writing Christian, morally charged thematic material that takes place outside of established scriptural narratives. This significant development can be seen in miracle plays like the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*, which illustrates the traditions of the “threat of disbelieving Jews,” in proving the validity of transubstantiation during Holy Communion.⁹² Regardless of scripture as source material, Catholic theology remained a ubiquitous framework on which medieval drama constructed itself. As we move forward in discussing the morality plays, it is important not to forget how the origins of medieval drama are deeply immersed in the religious climate.

Despite the active, rich dramatic textual history of the fifteenth century, literary scholars have often focused on the morality play, or moral interludes, for both their theatrical value and their theological implications. This dramatic tradition began as early as the mid-fourteenth century with *The Pride of Life* and remained popular well throughout the entirety of the fifteenth century. Unfortunately, scholarship is limited by the survival of only six extant texts, only one of which is attributed to a definitive author: *The Pride of Life* (c. 1350s), *Castle of Perseverance* (c. 1420s), *Wisdom* (c. 1460s), *Mankind* (c. 1470s), Henry Medwall’s *Nature* (c. 1490s), and *Everyman* (c. 1500).⁹³ Although the plays contain “individual manifestations and theatrical

⁹¹ Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, 103.

⁹² “The Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*,” in *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, eds. Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013), 335.

⁹³ The term *extant* is loosely defined here. *The Pride of Life* is a fragmented morality play; the plot has been reconstructed based upon the only surviving part of the text, a 502-line prologue-like bann. Due to the relative uncertainty of its true content and plot, I have omitted it from my argument. Although not as extensive as the manuscript damage in *The Pride of Life*, some of the other plays contain missing leaves and other small fragmentations. I will make note of any instances like this and address them as they pertain to my particular

contexts” that make each one distinct, they are similar in “that they offer their audiences moral instruction through dramatic action that is broadly allegorical.”⁹⁴ Of course, morality here is defined through a religious lens. Audiences are not merely being shown characters struggling with ethical decisions; the struggles are often rooted in soteriological assumptions. These plays were primarily allegories that focused on a single protagonist (usually a representation of humankind guided by various personifications of good) as he journeyed through various moral and religious conundrums set forth by personifications of evil. The morality play personalized the didacticism seen in earlier English medieval drama. While biblical plays and saints plays were “designed to edify through example of others,” moralities used the allegorical humankind character to narrow the focus and individualize the instruction.⁹⁵ A noteworthy reason for their success lies in their paradoxical quality: “[t]he setting of these moralities is nowhere, and yet everywhere, at no particular time, yet every instant of time is involved. Always in the present time, they are eternally relevant.”⁹⁶ The morality plays’ importance lies not only in the window they provide into a limited extant medieval dramatic tradition but also in the ways in which subsequent time periods illustrate their excellence through a lasting, regular engagement. Moreover, it is important to note that, like earlier medieval drama, the overwhelming majority of this dramatic tradition was structured around the theological pillar that permeated English culture during the medieval period: Catholicism.

As detailed in my brief theological discussion in Chapter 1 and seen here in my brief historical contextualization of medieval drama, the Catholic Church was the overarching religious

argument. For more on *The Pride of Life* and other fragmented plays, see Norman Davis and Osborn Waterhouse, *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments* (London: Early English Text Society by Oxford University Publishing, 1970).

⁹⁴ Pamela M. King, “Morality Plays” in Richard Beadle and Alan Fletcher, eds., *Cambridge Companion to Medieval Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 235.

⁹⁵ Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, 106.

⁹⁶ Leigh, “The Doomsday Mystery Play,” 217.

institution that supervised most aspects of medieval English society. At this point in England, it is impossible to discuss political, cultural, and literary history without also looking at religious history. Eamon Duffy's *Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* provides a comprehensive analysis of the influence of the Catholic Church and argues that it "exerted an enormously strong, diverse, and vigorous hold over the imagination and the loyalty of the people up to the very moment of the Reformation."⁹⁷ This *hold* that Duffy speaks of is vital to my discussion of reckoning. As we move through my analyses, it is important not to forget about how the Church influenced all aspects of English medieval life. In fact, Augustine's focus on Christian education (*trivium* and *quadrivium*) and intellectual ideals led to the establishment of rules of conduct governing the Christian way of life. These rules were cultivated in the monasteries of the sixth century and would eventually be animated in the seven Vices and their corresponding Virtues, two figurative concepts prevalent in the morality plays.⁹⁸ The relationship between Catholic theology, philosophy, and spectacle will be essential to the discussion of dramatizing reckoning.

Modern scholarship focusing on the morality play has been built upon the implicit understanding that the plays, by nature, are moral lessons on how one should live in order to obtain salvation and eternal life in heaven. The plays illustrate the ". . . spiritual biography of the microcosm of Man."⁹⁹ In this sense, they are a "drama of moral instruction" based upon Augustine's Christian curriculum.¹⁰⁰ Unsurprisingly, an overwhelming amount of scholarship has focused on the ways in which the morality plays embody this way of life, or, Christian way of *living*. Here, however, I will focus on the Christian way of *dying*. Indeed, arguing that the

⁹⁷ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 4.

⁹⁸ Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, 107.

⁹⁹ Cawley, "Introduction," xxi.

¹⁰⁰ Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, 107.

morality play, specifically *Castle of Perseverance* and *Everyman*, draws attention to dying and one's salvation is not particularly novel. However, my focus on how the plays dramatize reckoning and my analysis through the lens of efficacious dying will force us to move away from answering questions about holy living and towards the answer to the question, "how are we to die?"

Castle of Perseverance and *Everyman* are noteworthy because although they both engage with the overarching theme of a soteriological journey, how they approach this theme is different. *Castle*'s expansive look at the high-stakes conflicts during an individual's entire life journey and the doctrinal armament needed to win these battles is appropriately juxtaposed with *Everyman*'s narrower focus on the last act of life, the preparation for death, and the salvation of the soul.¹⁰¹ The two plays set themselves apart from other extant moralities in a variety of ways. For instance, they both feature stage deaths and clear reckonings that are not seen in plays like *Mankind*, *Wisdom*, and *Nature*. In addition, the serious tone in these two plays separates them from the comedic elements in *Mankind*, and the theological strictures provide a contrast to the intellectually analytical *Wisdom* and the underlying humanistic elements of science versus reason in *Nature*. These variances are what make *Castle* and *Everyman* ideal for analyzing the dramatization of reckoning across the Reformation divide.

Castle of Perseverance

Initially written and performed as early as the 1420s, *The Castle of Perseverance* comes to us in a 1440 manuscript very likely from one particular East Anglian scribe.¹⁰² The manuscript

¹⁰¹ King, "Morality Plays," 253.

¹⁰² *The Castle of Perseverance* is one of three medieval morality plays found in the Macro Manuscript (Folger Shakespeare Library MS V.a.354). Although impressively intact, the play is missing two leaves that likely amount to approximately 200 lines of dialogue. Due to textual clues, scholars generally accepted the play was written sometime in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. This particular edition comes from David Klausner, ed., *The Castle of Perseverance* and includes light modernization.

begins with a series of synoptic banns, public announcements that would have been broadcast around town days before the performance. The play proper opens with the Devil, the World, and the Flesh seated on three thrones boasting of their realms of control and their plan to cause Humanun Genus (Mankind) to fall into sin. Next, they introduce their henchmen, the Seven Deadly Sins¹⁰³. World supervises Greed; Flesh oversees Sloth, Gluttony, and Lechery, and the Devil governs Pride, Wrath, and Envy. After establishing the presence of evil and sin, the play moves to the birth of Mankind, who immediately points out his ignorance and helplessness in this life, and introduces his two companions, Good Angel and Bad Angel. After each angel tries to convince Mankind that his way of life is best, Mankind opts to follow the Bad Angel and the pleasures of the World. The Bad Angel introduces Mankind to the World, who sends Mankind to meet with Greed. Greed introduces Mankind to the other Seven Deadly Sins, and they all sit together on Greed's scaffold. Seeing this, the Good Angel calls in Confescio and Penitence, and they call out to Mankind to leave Greed. He initially declines; however, Penitence pricks him with a lance, and he decides to leave Greed. After Mankind comes down from the scaffold, the Good Angel suggests he go live in the Castle of Perseverance, where he will be protected by the seven cardinal virtues: Meekness (Humility), Abstinence, Chastity, Charity, Patience, Generosity, and Busyness (Industry). Once word gets out that he has put aside his worldly ways and taken shelter in the castle, all the evil powers come together to lay siege upon the castle. A large battle ensues, where each sin fights against its counterpart virtue. Eventually, the sins are defeated by the virtues. However, during the battle (essentially, a lifetime in terms of scope), Mankind has grown old. Greed quietly approaches Mankind and tells him that he should spend

¹⁰³ Although they do not appear in a particular classification in scripture, the seven deadly sins became an important part of Catholic theology. The medieval Catholic belief in seven capital vices originated with Pope Gregory I in the sixth century and were expounded upon by theologians, including Thomas Aquinas.

his remaining days enjoying the things World has to offer. Mankind leaves the castle to follow Greed once again. His pleasures are cut short when Death finds him and stabs him. As he lies dying in a state of sin, Mankind cries out for God's mercy.

After his death, Mankind's soul (Soul) emerges and is led to the Devil by the Bad Angel. However, Mankind's last plea for God's mercy has summoned the Four Daughters of God: Truth, Justice, Peace, and Mercy. Together, they approach God to discuss/plead for Soul's case for salvation. Truth and Justice tell God that Mankind's deathbed repentance is not enough for salvation. Peace and Mercy tell God that Christ's sacrifice needs to be added to make it enough. God favors Soul and tells the Daughters to remove him from Hell. The Soul is received into Heaven with God's mercy. The play ends with God stepping out of character and addressing the audience. He encourages them to take away their own moral but not to forget that from the beginning of our lives we should still consider the ending. As we will see, God's focus on the *ending* illustrates the play's propensity to privilege dying well over living well.

The early- to mid fifteenth century in England was characterized by a vibrant literary culture that existed alongside an equally dynamic political environment. *Castle* was written and performed during an active military climate that included (but not limited to) both the Anglo-Scottish wars and the Hundred Years' War.¹⁰⁴ Although the Anglo-Scottish wars ended by the mid-fourteenth century, England's conflict with Scotland was continuing to brew, as evidenced by the forthcoming mid-fifteenth century border wars. The political landscape also included an important monarchial change: Henry V's succession to the throne in 1413 preceded England's

¹⁰⁴ The Anglo-Scottish wars include what is known as the Wars for Independence, two distinct conflicts between Scotland and England. The First War began in 1296 and came to an end with a treaty in 1328; however, disgruntled nobles and the embarrassed English monarchy (Edward III) revived the war some four years later. The Second War began in 1332 and ended with another treaty in 1357. Both campaigns resulted in Scotland maintaining its independence.

reengagement in war with France, marking the third phase (Lancastrian) of the Hundred Years' War.¹⁰⁵

Situating *Castle* within the political and cultural context of late medieval England reveals the importance of one overarching, prevalent influence: war. *Castle's* dramatization of reckoning and focus on efficacious dying is directly related to the persistence of the battle metaphor that runs throughout the play. The play appropriates combative and war-like characteristics to crown a victor (God) who is awarded the ultimate prize (man's soul). As we will see, the protagonist "is the battleground on and for which the battle is fought or the castle besieged and defended."¹⁰⁶ Wars are comprised of smaller battles and other forms of high-stakes conflict that serve the greater, overall purpose of victory; an army can lose a battle and still win a war. However, there is no question that all battles, lost or won, look to the culmination: the triumph. The play uses the battle metaphor to focus on dying well—efficacious dying—in order to show God's victory over evil. Furthermore, this analogy is documented theologically as well. In Chapter 91 of *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Thomas Aquinas contends that in life "there is the state of being paid or docked; hence, the comparison to 'warfare' . . . as is clear in Job (7:1): 'The life of man upon earth is a warfare, and his days are like the days of a hireling.' But, after the state of warfare and the labor of the hireling, the reward or punishment is straightway due those who have fought well or badly. . . Immediately after death, therefore, the souls receive either reward or punishment."¹⁰⁷ In this regard, Humanum Genus's soul becomes the victor's prize. The play's use of the war metaphor begins during character introductions and extends all the way through to

¹⁰⁵ The Hundred Years' War is the name given to a number of conflicts between France and England between 1337 and 1453 (116 years). The war was primarily fought over monarchial claims to each country, with its origins going back to the Norman Conquest in the mid-eleventh century (William the Conqueror). After some early successes, England eventually lost their strongholds on the continent and the war ended shortly after.

¹⁰⁶ Bernard Spivack, "Falstaff and the Psychomachia," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (Fall 1957): 452.

¹⁰⁷ Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4. 91. 3.

the play's denouement. It is important to analyze how this metaphor is made evident by various combat-related imagery, by appropriation of the tournament tradition, and by the high-stakes conflicts themselves in order to understand how the play privileges efficacious dying and gives agency to its protagonist.

The play begins with two lengthy monologues performed by vice-like abstractions. The combative, aggressive language used by both characters immediately sets the scene for the impending war. Mundus's (World's) battle-charged speech directed at the audience speaks to his sinful fame and foreshadows the conflict ahead.

Mundus: Buske you, bolde bachelerys, undyr my baner to abyde
Where bryth basnetys be bateryd and backys ar schent. (161–162)
[Prepare yourselves, young men, under my banner to abide
Where bright helmets be battered and backs are broken]¹⁰⁸

The war at hand is characterized here as violent and only ends when “. . . thei be dyth to dethys dent” (put to death's blow, 169). Mundus shamelessly boasts of his prowess in capturing men and winning battles; he continues with a provocation:

Mundus: What boy bedyth batayl or debatyth with blad,
Hym were betyr to ben hangyn hye in Hell herne
Or brent on lyth leve. (189–191)
[What boy offers to do battle or debate with a blade,
It would be better for him to be hanged high in a corner of Hell
Or burned with bright lightning]

¹⁰⁸ All translations of *Castle* are my own with the assistance of Klausner's notes and glossary.

Mundus's rhetorical challenge and confidence in his role as the personification of worldly sinfulness lays the militaristic groundwork for what is to come. So far, we have not *seen* a battle, but at this point early on in the play, Mundus's language reveals there are certainly some to come. This declamation also serves to draw a metaphorical line in the sand, a delineation that is further marked by the introductions to follow.

Belial (Satan) follows Mundus with his own monologue, and although there are clear parallels in terms of violent language, Belial's introduction is directed more towards the outcome of the impending battle(s).

Belial: In care I am cloyed

And fowle I am annoyed

But Mankynde be stroyed

Be dykys and be denne. (205–08)

[In sorrow I am burdened

And foully offended

Unless Mankind is destroyed

By ditches and by valleys

Belial: Al holy Mankynne

To Helle but I wynne,

In bale is my bynne

And schent undyr schawe. (218–21)

[Unless to hell I entice Mankind entirely

In torment is my confinement

And confounded under forest]

Belial: On benche wyl I byde

To tene, this tyde,

Al holy Mankende. (232–34)

[On this bench will I bide

To harm, this time,

Entirely Mankind]

Each of these lines close Belial's three stanzas and reveals an interesting focus not seen in Mundus's own monologue. While Mundus is concerning himself with violent warning and foreshadowing of what is to come, Belial is primarily fixated on the result of the forthcoming war. Of course, his three stanzas also make revelations about his sinful nature in regards to pride and vengeance and even build upon the battle metaphor with his call to "Gadyr you togedyr, ye boyis, on this grene" (Gather you together, you boys, on this field, 227) and his reference to conventional military procedures in blowing his "bugyl" (bugle, 228). However, the fact that Belial goes back to discussing the importance of Mankind in each of his stanzas illustrates his own preoccupation with outcome. If Mankind is not in Belial's sinful care at the end of the war, he will be forced to accept ignominious defeat. And, an utterance like ". . . I am cloyed . . . [b]ut Mankynde be stroyed" (I am burdened . . . if Mankind is not destroyed, 205), is a clear marker that Belial is burdened by the thought of the battles' resolutions. In addition to laying the foundation for the extended war metaphor, these monologues are important for demarcating the sides (setting the field) and heightening the stakes by focusing on the potential outcome. They echo the importance of dying—it is the the end, when Mankind dies, that matters most.

High-stakes conflict and the overarching war metaphor are further revealed through the play's appropriation of the medieval tournament tradition. Steven Pederson's *Tournament Tradition and Staging The Castle of Perseverance* is a comprehensive study of how *Castle* embodies the tournament traditions of medieval England. My concern in particular is with Pederson's argument that the play appropriates the very popular besieged fortress tradition. While Pederson's primary focus is how the besieged fortress acts as evidence of his staging theory, I will use the besieged fortress tradition as evidence of an extended war metaphor that ultimately focuses on efficacious dying. As we will see, the play's parallels with the fortress besieged reveal the importance of victory, the outcome. *Castle* came along at the height of an important social happening, the English medieval tournament scene.¹⁰⁹

Medieval historian Glynne Wickham contends that the tournament "is second only to religion in uniting responsible men of all nationalities on matters of cultural thought and its artistic expression."¹¹⁰ My intent here is not to give an exhaustive historical survey of the tournament; however, understanding certain pieces of its origins will undoubtedly help in making connections between the besieged fortress and my own arguments. Although a popular form of entertainment on mainland Europe since the mid-twelfth century, the tournament tradition would not gain widespread popularity in England until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The tournament as popular spectacle and entertainment was born from the need to train for military endeavors, particularly knighthood. Originally, these exercises consisted of various types of chivalric combat (e.g. jousting) and were often lethal, but as time moved on (and

¹⁰⁹ By *tournament*, I am referring to the spectacle-like, ornamental pageants that involved a variety of combat-esque exercises often performed in front of a crowd for a special occasion. For more information on the characteristics of the English tournament tradition, see Steven Pederson, *The Tournament Tradition and Staging The Castle of Perseverance* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987) and Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300-1660* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

¹¹⁰ Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300-1660*, 15.

the Church intervened) the training grounds became regulated and procedures were put into place. The sting of fighting in a war-game “ was replaced by . . . highly stylized and ornamental pageants.”¹¹¹ The later tournaments “became exercises in the techniques of warfare, rather than actual combats,” resulting in spectacles that took place for a variety of special occasions, from honoring visiting dignitaries and celebrating military victories to noble marriages and births.¹¹² The eventual inclusion of attending ladies (early thirteenth century) became an integral part of the later tradition and in many instances refocused the tournament “in honor of and for the female observers.”¹¹³ Conventionally, each tournament ended with a celebration of singing and dancing. In addition, winners were awarded prizes, an important connection paralleled throughout the play. This important shift led to a more dramatic, arguably theatrical, tournament that epitomized the besieged fortress through the *pas d’armes*. The “elaborate and spectacular” passage of arms involved the siege of an obstacle (like a castle) and the defense of that obstacle for the well-being and safety of the presiding lady.¹¹⁴ As we will see, this basic formula is mirrored locally in *Castle’s* pivotal conflict scenes and overarchingly in the greater war for the soul of man. The appropriation of the besieged fortress tradition (and warfare in general) is made clear by analyzing the play’s crucial conflicts.¹¹⁵ We will see that “the motif of combat, including an obstacle to be defended, governs the entire action of the spiritual *pas*,” and more specifically, reveals a focus on the prize at the end, efficacious death.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Noël Denholm-Young, “The Tournament in the Thirteenth Century,” in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1948) 241.

¹¹² Pederson, *The Tournament Tradition*, 12.

¹¹³ Pederson, *The Tournament Tradition*, 12.

¹¹⁴ Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300-1660*, 17.

¹¹⁵ The play contains instances of varying conflict types. At specific times, these conflicts become actual battles with physical assault, weapon use, etc. However, the play also contains what I call *high-stakes conflicts*, conflicts that embody disputation and debate-like qualities but are still wrapped up and implicated in the overarching war metaphor—after all, not all battles in war are fought on the field. As I move through my argument, I will be explicit about which *conflict* type I am discussing.

¹¹⁶ Pederson, *The Tournament Tradition*, 21.

The play's initial high-stakes conflict comes towards the outset, after Humanum Genus introduces himself and the angels (both Bonus Angelus and Malus Angelus). Although not particularly noteworthy in terms of scope and action, this conventional back-and-forth confrontation is important because it brings to life the antagonism that Mundus and Belial discuss in their opening monologues, sets in motion the forthcoming clashes, and reveals the heightened stakes at hand—Humanum Genus's soul. Bonus Angelus begins by speaking directly to Humanum Genus to win him to the virtuous side:

Bonus Angelus: Nevyrthelesse turne thee fro tene

And serve Jhesu, Hevene kyng. (331–32)

[Nevertheless, turn from harm

And serve Jesus, Heaven's King]

Bonus Angelus: Have hym alwey in thi mynde

That deyed on Rode for mankynde

And serve hym to thi lyfes ende

And sertys thou schalt not wante. (336–39)

[Have him always in your mind

That died on the cross for mankind

And serve him to your life's end

And certainly you shall not want]

Malus Angelus interjects with his own retort before Humanum Genus can comment:

Malus Angelus: Pes, aungel, thi wordys are not wyse.

Thou counselyst hym not aryth! (340–41)

[Peace, angel, your words are not wise.

You counsel him not properly]

Again, before *Humanum Genus* can speak, *Bonus Angelus* counters:

Bonus Angelus: A, pes, aungel, thou spekyst folye.

Why schuld he coveyt werldys goode,

Syn Criste in erthe and hys meynye

All in poverty here thei stode? (349–52)

[Ah, peace, angel, you speak follies

Why should he covet world's goods,

Since Christ on earth and his followers

All in poverty here they lived?]

Instead of another counter aimed at *Bonus Angelus*, *Malus Angelus* addresses *Humanum Genus* directly:

Malus Angelus: Ya, ya man, leve hym nowth,

But cum wyth me, be stye and street.

Have thou a gobet of the werld cawth,

Thou schalt fynde it good and sweete. (362–65)

[Yes, yes, Mankind, believe him not,

But come with me, by narrow path and street

When you have caught a taste of the world,

You shall find it good and sweet.]

Humanum Genus finally responds:

Humanum Genus: Now syn thou hast behetyn me so,

I wyl go wyth thee and asay.
I ne lette, for frende ner fo,
But wyth the Werld I wyl go play,
 Certys a lytyl throwe. (393–97)
[Now since you have promised me so,
I will go with you and try it.
I will not stop, for friend or foe,
But with the World I will go play
 Certainly a little while.]

The full conversation contains more of this give-and-take style dialogue; however, the lines above give enough evidence of the conflict and its result in Malus Angelus successfully convincing Humanum Genus to turn towards worldly living. Humanum Genus's choice here shows his agency and is not unlike the convention of a lady bestowing a token to the knight of her choice. At this point, it is Humanum Genus that becomes the embodiment of the besieged fortress. There is no literal castle to defend; however, the human intellect takes on the role of the physical stronghold that is under siege. In fact, this high-stakes conflict is played out in the open stage. This confrontation is essential because it marks two firsts: Humanum Genus's first fall into sin and Satan's first win. Evil "wins the first round," but the implication is that there is still more to come.¹¹⁷ These firsts will likely not be lasts because this particular conflict is a microcosm of the war that encapsulates the entire production. Although saddened at the loss, Bonus Angelus implores Humanum Genus to look ahead:

Bonus Angelus: Man, thynke on thyn endynge day

¹¹⁷ Pederson, *The Tournament Tradition*, 21.

Whanne thou schalt be closyd undyr clay (407–08)

[Mankind, think on your ending day

When you shall be enclosed under clay]

The angel's focus on the greater war is a fitting end to the first high-stake conflict, a brief clash that juxtaposes the transience of life's individual battles with the reminder of death's finality and the collective war for the soul of man.

The next conflict is important because it involves physical assault and flips the field in its resolution—the righteous side comes in strong to fight back. The encounter occurs immediately after *Humanum Genus* has spent time being doted on by the various vices and sins. Following the pageant-like introduction of the Seven Deadly Sins, *Bonus Angelus* denounces *Humanum Genus*'s sinful life and essentially throws his hands up in defeat. However, *Confescio* (Shrift) enters and assures *Bonus Angelus* that *Humanum Genus* is not lost. Both characters approach *Avaricia*'s (Covetousness) scaffold, on which *Humanum Genus* sits, and they speak:

Confescio: These lotly lordeynys away thou lyfte

And cum doun and speke with Schryfte

And draw thee yerne to sum thryfte.

Trewly it is best. (1342–45)

[These loathsome rascals away you drive

And come down and speak with Shrift

And draw you quickly to [spiritual] prosperity.

Truly it is best.]

Humanum Genus declines Shrift's insistence:

Humanum Genus: Thou I schulde to Helle go,

I wot wel I schal not gon alone,

Trewly I tell thee.

I dyd nevere so evyl trewly

That othyr han don as evyl as I.

Therefore, syre, lete be thy cry

And go hens fro me. (1370–76)

[Although I should to Hell go,

I know well I shall not go alone,

Truly I tell thee.

I did never so evil truly

That others have done as evil as I.

Therefore, sir, cease your cry

And go hence from me.]

As we can see, *Humanum Genus*'s defiance grows stronger, resulting in *Confescio*'s appeal falling short. This first "attack" to regain the prize is unsuccessful and echoes the play's focus on the ending (of both life and the play): despite the unholy living, the true concern will be on dying well and the efficaciousness of that transition from this life to the next. However, the battle continues as a reinforcement shows up: enter *Penitencia* (Penance), with a lance.

Penitencia: Wyth spete of spere to thee I spynne,

Goddys lawys to thee I lerne.

Wyth my spud of sorwe swote

I reche to thyne hert rote.

Al thi bale schal torne thee to bote.

Mankynde, go schryve thee yerne. (1397–402)

[With the point of the spear to you I move rapidly,

God's laws to you I teach.

With my dagger of sorrow sweet,

I strike to your heart's root.

All your sorrow¹¹⁸ shall torment you to comfort.

Mankind, go confess quickly.]

At this point, the righteous side is no longer content to leave eternal matters to Humanum Genus's conscience. Additional warriors and effective weapons are called upon, characters that embody parts of the sacraments (Confescio/Shrift and Penitencia/Penance).¹¹⁹ The resulting effect is immediate; Humanum Genus notes that "A sete of sorwe in me is set" (a seed of sorrow in me is set, 1403). He begins to feel the guilt from his sinful lifestyle. The conflict here is resolved when Humanum Genus descends Covetousness's scaffold, confesses his sins, and receives absolution. This second high-stakes conflict is important because it helps extend the war metaphor by revealing the nature of vacillating victories, a revelation that will be seen again in the battle for the castle. While the first battle was a back-and-forth, dialogue-based confrontation (no physical blows), this conflict is a one-sided "attack" by the righteous and contains a notable element – use of a physical weapon. Essentially, "Mankind's resolute march to hell is arrested by the forces of virtue" when Penitencia stabs Humanum Genus with a lance, piercing his heart and obtaining victory.¹²⁰ At first glance, it appears the war is over. But our protagonist is still living;

¹¹⁸ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "bale (n.1), sense I.3," March 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4502925764>.

¹¹⁹ The seven sacraments were officially confirmed by the Fourth Lateran Council in the early thirteenth century. They consist of seven rituals/rites that act as signs of God's grace and continue to be a cornerstone of the Catholic Church. For more on the theology of the sacraments, see Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*: Pars Tertia, Questions 63-90; Supplementum.

¹²⁰ Edgar T. Schell, "On the Imitation of Life's Pilgrimage in *The Castle of Perseverance*," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 67, no. 2 (Spring 1968): 245.

there is still a fortress to be defended. Consequently, this conflict reiterates that however important life's individual battles may be, the focus must be on the end and the result of the greater war. The battle scene ends with Humanum Genus's realization that as the end nears, he will need to rely on a different kind of fortress:

Humanum Genus: Now, Syr Schryfte, where may I dwelle

To kepe me fro synne and woo?

A comly counseyl ye me spelle

To fende me now fro my foo. (1533–36)

[Now, sir Shrift, where may I dwell

To keep me from sin and woe?

A suitable counsel, kindly tell

To defend me now from my foes.]

Shrift responds to Humanum Genus's question and concern:

Confescio: To swyche a place I schal thee kenne

Ther thou mayst dwelle wythoutyn dystaunsce

And alwey kepe thee fro synnne,

Into the Castel of Perseveraunce. (1546–49)

[To such a place I shall direct you

There you may dwell without strife

And always keep yourself from sin,

Into the Castle of Perseverance.]

This reveals that both Humanum Genus and Confescio understand the importance and value of an added layer of defense. Humanum Genus is not going to live (or die) righteously without

help; God is not going to win the prize unless reinforcements are called upon to protect that prize. *Humanum Genus* and *Confescio*'s concerns for safety foreshadow the conflicts yet to come and continue to illustrate ways in which the play is appropriating the besieged fortress tradition in order to focus on the end of life and efficacious dying.

Although the play contains a number of conflicts throughout, the penultimate battle is particularly noteworthy, in terms of scenery, scope, and outcome. *Castle of Perseverance* is widely remembered and studied for its accompanying set design. Although not detailed in terms of modern set design, the manuscript illustration provides insight into how this fixed dramatic performance was to be staged, and, for our purposes, gives us evidence that the play extends the war metaphor beyond the dialogue. Much of modern scholarship has concentrated on the logistics of *Castle's* set design, questioning the placement of the audience members in relation to the actors and various scaffolding (stages) and looking at how this particular set design is implicated as evidence in medieval theatre at large.¹²¹ My focus, however, is on one particular set piece, the castle: “[i]n a feudal world the castle was the ultimate stronghold, to lose which was to lose all. Communities clustered around it. Little imagination was needed then for it to represent the city itself, prosperity, or safety.”¹²² According to the configuration, the castle is surrounded by a ditch and situated in the center of the circular design. Beyond the borders of the ditch, five scaffolds surround the perimeter. The set design ensures the castle is a focal point for the production, particularly the physical assault. In addition, the play's staging is also

¹²¹ Scholars have long debated the placement of the audience. Some place the onlookers around the circular perimeter in a theatre-in-the-round type of configuration. Others situate audience members on one particular side or within the circle itself. See the following sources for more on audience placement: Richard Southern, *The Medieval Theatre in the Round*, 2nd ed. (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1975); and Catherine Belsey, “The Stage Plan of *The Castle of Perseverance*,” in *Theatre Notebook*, 38, no. 1 (1974): 124-32.

¹²² Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300-1660*, 43.

emblematic and symbolic; the action is framed by the surrounding architectural allegory in which the play takes place.

After being welcomed into the castle by the Seven Cardinal Virtues, Humanum Genus sees Belial (the Devil), the Vices, and the Seven Deadly Sins marching towards the castle. More than ever before, Humanum Genus embodies the “passive prey [prize] of contending forces.”¹²³ The play reveals the ease of grafting spiritual and idealistic issues onto physical combats.¹²⁴

Meekness begins with a call to arms:

Humilitas: Now my sevene systerys swete,
This day fallyth on us the lot
Mankynd for to schylde and schete
Fro dedly synne and schameley schot. (2047–50)
[Now my seven sisters sweet,
This day destiny falls on us
To shield and guard Mankind
From deadly sin and shameful attack.]

Belial echoes with his own call to arms:

Belial: This day the vaward wyl I holde.
Avaunt my baner, precious Pride,
Mankynd to cache to karys colde.
Bold batayl now wyl I byde. (2060–63)
[This day the vanguard will I hold.
Forward my banner, precious Pride,

¹²³ Schell, “On the Imitation of Life’s Pilgrimage in *The Castle of Perseverance*,” 246.

¹²⁴ Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300-1660*, 14.

Mankind to drive to cares cold.

Bold battle now I will offer.]

Their charged words preface the battle and create an emotional angst. Belial's use of "vaward" (vanguard, 2060) and his command to "[a]vaunt my baner" (forward my banner, 2061) both echo militaristic conventions of a forward charging unit on the battlefield. The fight ensues, and evil is defeated by a cascade of roses, symbolizing Christ's passion, that the Virtues use as weapons.¹²⁵ While some of the play's conflicts are more symbolic, this battle "becomes fully dramatic as the forces of World, Flesh, and the Devil physically attack the castle (*pas*), the defenders being the Virtues and the challengers being the retinue of evil."¹²⁶ The Virtues act as knights and echo the Christian idealism the Church hoped to inspire: among other things, the ideals of the Church contributed to the passionate following of the cult of the knighthood.¹²⁷ The basic structure of the battle and its outcome align with the besieged fortress tradition: the battle is won by the Virtues, who successfully defend the individual inside from the enemy's siege outside. The battle is essentially a lifetime, an important point that the twice-given stage directions, "[*t*]unc *pugnabunt diu*," which translates as "[t]hen they will fight for a long time," help point out. The span is also made clear after the last siege, when Humanum Genus tells Coveytyse: "I gynne to waxyn hory and olde" (I begin to grow hoary and old, 2482). The passage of time is significant because it raises the stakes and heightens the outcome. Now that he is old, he has less time; the *war* is closer to its end.

¹²⁵ The passion of Christ (the events surrounding his trial, crucifixion, and ultimate death) became a very popular form of devotion in mid-to-late medieval English culture. The use of roses here brings to life the blood spilled for the sins of humankind. For more on this, see Patricia Ward's "The Significance of Roses as Weapons in *The Castle of Perseverance*," *Studia Mystica* 14.2 (1991), 84-92.

¹²⁶ Pederson, *The Tournament Tradition*, 20.

¹²⁷ For an extensive look at medieval knighthood and chivalry, see Richard Barber's *The Knight and Chivalry*, rev.ed., (New York: Boydell Press, 1995).

However, one particular detail separates the play from its adherence to tournament traditions: gender role expectation. The battle here is an example of where the gender roles in *Castle* break from the conventions of the tournament and perverts the tradition. The virtues are all female and are the ones who defend the physical fortress (the castle) and the prize inside (Humanum Genus). As we have seen, traditional tournament structure saw the male knightly figure defend the female character, the fair lady. Although Pederson and Wickham mention instances where the ladies themselves participated in the fighting, it was far from the norm. And, whereas the female figure might be seen joining in to help the male figure, literary traditions aside, the fair lady did not take control of the battle and defend the knight.¹²⁸ Although the role reversal does not alter the outcome or pull focus away from efficacious dying, it is certainly notable to see *Castle* pivot away from tradition. We will visit this break from tradition again in our forthcoming discussion of the Anima character and gender conventions. As the battle comes to a close, we are left with a seemingly victorious side, but Malus Angelus's cry to Mundus that whatever the cost, he must "[h]elpe now, or this we have lost," sets the next conflict in motion, ensuring there is more to come (2411).

The last two high-stakes conflicts stand apart from the ones analyzed above in how they emphasize the end through time. The first of the final conflicts immediately follows the castle besiegement and acts as a denouement. After seeing his army being beaten physically and unable to successfully penetrate the fortress, Mundus initiates another confrontation in one last effort to obtain the prize. He calls on Covetousness (Avaricia) to "[h]ave do that damysel, do hyr dawnt" (finish off that damsel¹²⁹, tame her, 2418). The World realizes the physical assault has failed and

¹²⁸ Pederson references Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, where the ladies fight with flowers. For more on the traditions of the "war for the soul" in relation to Prudentius, see Marc Mastrangelo's *Prudentius' Psychomachia* (London: Routledge, 2022).

¹²⁹ See gendering discussion below, beginning on p.000.

asks Covetousness to handle Humanum Genus once and for all. Covetousness accepts the mission, makes his way over to the castle, and calls Humanum Genus to come out. Once he appears, the audience sees a now old man. Avaricia encourages Humanum Genus to come down and speak with him so that he can guide him “to thedom and to thryfte” (to prosperity and to wealth, 2478). As we have seen earlier in the play, Avaricia’s weapon of choice is rhetorical promises of material goods. At first, Humanum Genus holds strong and argues that too much time has passed:

Humanum Genus: I gynne to waxyn hory and olde.

My bake gynnyth to bowe and bende,

I crulle and crepe and wax al colde.

Age makyth man ful unthende,

Body and bonys and al unwolde;

 My bonys are febyl and sore.

I am arayed in a sloppe,

As a yonge man I may not hoppe. (2482–89)

[I begin to become hoary and old.

My back begins to bow and bend,

I crawl and creep and become all cold.

Age makes a man fully feeble,

Body and bones and all weak;

 My bones are feeble and sore.

I am arrayed in a loose gown,

I may not hop as a young man.]

Initially, Humanum Genus uses time and age as an excuse to decline Covetousness's promise that he will ease his sorrow by providing gifts and lessons on prosperity and wealth. Essentially, there is no reason to leave the fortress; he is too old to have enjoyments outside. Covetousness responds by using the same argument of time:

Avaricia: Petyr! Thou hast the more need

To have sum good in thyn age. (2492–93)

[By St. Peter! You have more need

To have some good in your age.]

Covetousness is essentially saying that there is no time to waste then. He convinces Humanum Genus that he *does* deserve “sum good” before he dies. As we can see, both arguments hinge upon *time*, in which death is heavily implicated. Each character uses time as a rhetorical strategy in an attempt to persuade while also illustrating how the play is still looking ahead to a final conflict that will resolve the greater war at hand.

Alas, the success of the castle's defense is overshadowed by Humanum Genus's capitulation. Following a brief discussion with Covetousness, Humanum Genus uses his free will, leaves the castle, and goes to Covetousness's scaffold, where he places all his concern on material wealth:

Humanum Genus: Good Coveytyse, I thee prey

That I myth with thee pley.

Geve me good inow, or that I dey,

To wonne in werldys wyne. (2722–25)

[Good Covetous, I pray to you

That I might with you play.

Give me wealth enough, before I die,

To live in the world's comfort/joy.]

Covetousness obliges and gives Humanum Genus a cupboard full of riches. After receiving his treasure, Humanum Genus descends the scaffold and makes way to his bed. Death enters the playing space as Humanum Genus is attempting to secure his wealth and pierces him with his lance, echoing Penance's earlier assault on Humanum Genus and Christ's own wound given by a Roman soldier during the crucifixion. After calling out to the World for help and ultimately watching the World give his material wealth to an anonymous boy (Garcio), Humanum Genus succumbs to his fatal wound.¹³⁰ The conflict ends with yet another moral slippage, but this time the outcome is followed by the crumbling fortress. Humanum Genus is dead, and there is no longer a stronghold to be defended. Whether it be Humanum Genus embodying a fortress himself or the castle acting as a physical fortress, the prize is left unattended. However, keeping in line with earlier conflicts, one last occurrence complicates the Devil's victorious result. Before taking his last breath, Humanum Genus speaks out in a lengthy monologue:

Humanum Genus: Now I am sorry of my lyf. (2970)

[Now I am sorry for my life.]

He continues in his lamentation:

To Helle I schal bothe fare and fle

But God me graunte of hys grace.

I deye certeynly.

Now my lyfe I have lore.

¹³⁰ Mundus calls on a boy to enter. Although on stage for fewer than one hundred lines, the boy acts as a symbol that reiterates the brevity of material wealth and warns the audiences of the dangers of concerning oneself with such matters at death.

Myn hert brekyth, I syhe sore.

A word may I speke, no more.

I putte me in Goddys mercy. (3001–07)

[To Hell I shall travel

Unless God grants me his grace.

I die certainly.

Now my life I have lost.

My heart breaks, I sigh sore.

A word may I speak, no more.

I put myself in God's mercy.]

Humanum Genus's final words are important in that they are the *character's* last words, and they occur at the play's climax, directly influencing the forthcoming resolution. After this moment, Humanum Genus, as the audience has known him, ceases to exist. As we will see, his soul is the character that emerges next. And the efficaciousness of his final words become the point on which the resolution hinges. At this moment in the play (and in the greater analogy of life), the stakes have never been higher—the death has taken place, and the soul's eternal resting place, the awarding of the prize, is nigh. When we look at Humanum Genus's expression of mercy alongside the medieval Church's recognition of an act of perfect contrition, we see that there indeed is theological room for what Anima is doing in his final words:

. . . late medieval theology held that a sinner's faith in divine love, and sorrow for his failings because of their betrayal of that love, immediately restores him to grace.

Humanum Genus's cry for mercy reveals his faith, and the lamentations over his life illustrate his remorse. Given this perfect contrition, the penitent need only desire the full

sacrament of penance in order to be justified. If he should die in this frame of mind, he is assured of heaven.¹³¹

Humanum Genus's contention that he is bound for hell "But God me graunte of hys grace," speaks to his belief in divine love, a point evidenced by the theology of both grace and penance.¹³² In order to believe in God's grace, Humanum Genus must first have faith in God's divine love for humankind, a belief that love is part of God's essence and love "wills good in others."¹³³ Furthermore, his earlier utterances that he is "sory of [his] lyf," followed by his revelation that his "hert brekyth," illustrate the deep sorrow for his sin. This final expression sets the scene for the final conflict. Humanum Genus's call for mercy gives him agency—at this point he is not merely acting upon the influences of good and evil. Instead, he is creating *and* informing the final conflict.

As we have seen, the play's various conflicts reveal ways in which there is a distinct fixation with outcomes. The forthcoming final disputation is a continuation of this focus and is set in motion due to Humanum Genus's call for mercy in his last breath. The conflict is noteworthy both in its theological context and in its participants: the battle is no longer good versus evil—it is good versus good. Humanum Genus is dead, and Anima (Soul) emerges from underneath the bed on which Humanum Genus dies. To understand the urgency of this particular battle, we must look at the theological space in which it is situated. Humanum Genus's death results in the separation of the body and the soul, ensuring that, "since the souls immediately after they are separated from the body have a capacity for glory or punishment, they will

¹³¹ Thomas Rendall, "The Times of Mercy and Judgment in *Mankind*, *Everyman*, and *The Castle of Perseverance*," *English Studies in Canada* 7, no. 3 (Fall 1981): 263.

¹³² Aquinas has multiple in-depth discussions of Grace, Penance, and Contrition. For more on Grace, see *Summa Theologiae*: Pars Prima, Question 95; Pars Prima-Secundae, Questions 112-114; and *Summa Contra Gentiles*: Book Three, Part II, Chapters 148-157. For more on Penance and Contrition, see *Summa Theologiae*: Pars Tertia, Questions 87-90; Supplementum and *Summa Contra Gentiles*: Book Four, Chapters 70 and 72.

¹³³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, q. 20, art 1.

straightway receive one or the other.”¹³⁴ Upon rising, Anima is approached by Malus Angelus, who insists that he be punished and taken to hell, regardless of his call for mercy. However, the conflict is complicated by the traditional Catholic belief in purgatory. According to Aquinas, souls are unable to receive their ultimate reward right after their release from the body *if* their “purification is not entirely perfected”; that is, a soul must go through a purging process that “is made by punishments” if they die in a sinful state.¹³⁵ Regardless of his cry for mercy before final breath, Humanum Genus failed to make restitution for his greed, and Anima is forced to go through a purgation process that includes physical abuse:

Malus Angelus: For thi coveytyse have thou that!

I schal thee bunche with my bat

And rouge thee on a rowe. (3118–20)

[For your covetousness take that!

I shall strike you with my bat

And rough you up in order.]

Theologically speaking, Anima is receiving what she deserves for her actions. Malus Angelus and Anima exit to the Devil’s scaffold, clearing the space for the final conflict. The soul embodies the prize and, at this point, is carried off by evil; it appears the Devil will be victorious.

In addition to the conflict, the emergence of the Anima character (and the subsequent rhetorical conflict) brings to light a particular gendering element. Gendering the soul and all its spiritual and cultural implications go back as far as classical Greece, as evident in Plato, and continued in a variety of medieval texts, from religious writings to morality plays.¹³⁶ The

¹³⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4. 91. 5.

¹³⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4. 91. 6.

¹³⁶ There has been extensive scholarly treatment of the soul as female. For more, see Rosalie Osmond’s *Imaging the Soul: a History* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2003) and Caroline Walker Bynum, “Chapter V: ‘...And

variances between *anima* and *animus* carried their own assumptions and implications. While both connect with rationale, reason, and thought, *anima* is more closely associated with the “seat of emotion,” a conventional stigma tied to medieval women.¹³⁷ *Castle’s* Anima echoes the traditions seen in literary texts like the homily *Sawles Warde* (late twelfth century), the monastic guide *Ancrene Wisse* (early thirteenth century), and William Langland’s narrative poem *Piers Plowman* (late fourteenth century), among others.¹³⁸ These representations of the female soul draw on courtly images that see the soul as a lady protected within a castle. *Castle’s* Anima mirrors this as the prize has now been reimagined as the fair lady to be rescued. As we have seen, *Castle* reflects the tournament traditions of the period, and the emergence of Anima only solidifies these connections. However, the play finds room to separate itself from some of these conventions. Earlier, we looked at how the play deviated slightly from the tournament tradition through gender role reversal. Again, here the expectation of tradition is not met: instead of the overtly masculine knightly figure saving the fair lady from evil, we are presented with the Four Daughters of God, an all-female rescue squad of sorts. The play breaks convention, and the audience is given a female defensive front to shield the female prize.

The final conflict focuses on the “reward of eternal life” and so places extra attention on the end and efficacious dying.¹³⁹ An individual’s life has its spiritual highs and lows, but it is ultimately how this journey ends that makes the eternal difference. The additional focus placed upon this moment is evidenced by the next four hundred lines, a supernatural rhetorical dispute

Woman His Humanity’: Female Imagery in the Religious Writings of the Later Middle Ages,” in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 151-179.

¹³⁷ *The Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, s.v. “anima,” accessed September 5, 2023, <https://logeion.uchicago.edu/anima>

¹³⁸ See Alcuin Blamire’s *The Case for Women in Medieval Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) for more on the summary of prevailing assumptions of women in medieval England.

¹³⁹ Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4. 91. 6.

that features the Four Daughters of God: Misericordia (Mercy) and Pax (Peace) debate Justicia (Justice) and Veritas (Truth), with each side presenting their evidence for Humanum Genus's eternal fate.¹⁴⁰ The high-stakes conflict seen here with the Four Daughters follows convention in adhering to the standards of rhetorical debate (i.e. – back-and-forth, for/against, etc.) and mirroring the traditions of fighting for a prize; however, the conflict is distinct in the way it complicates the demarcation of sides. So far in the play we have been dealing with good versus evil—a clear and logical distinction. Now, the conflict is taken up by members residing on the same side of the separation. Here, the play moves away from the traditions of the tournament while also keeping the overarching war metaphor in tact. The Four Daughters disagree on what is most important: while Misericordia and Pax see saving Anima as the ultimate goal, Justicia and Veritas privilege law and order.

This final conflict heightens the already raised tension (provided by Anima's being dragged to hell) and provides more evidence for efficacious dying. Both Veritas and Misericordia reference theology in their addresses. Veritas begins by reiterating the dangers of “welthe and wele” (wealth and goods, 3288), particularly in relation to forgetting God. Her justification for Anima's damnation falls in line with the warnings of traditional theology by referencing Humanum Genus's materialistic pursuits (covetousness), which speaks to his lack of piousness in life. The seriousness of avarice, or covetousness, was well-known during the period. In *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas argues “the avid desire for riches . . . [is a] special sin . . . that is

¹⁴⁰ The colloquy of the Four Daughters of God is rooted in Psalm 84.10-11 (Vulgate numbering; 85.10–11 modern) and was common in medieval English literature. Versions of this theological debate can be found in *Piers Plowman*, *Mankind*, *Everyman*, and others. For more on this, see: Kari Sajavaara “Introduction,” in *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Chateau d'Amour*, ed. Kari Sajavaara (Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 1967), 25-100.

the root of all sins.”¹⁴¹ For Veritas, dying in such a state of covetousness is a serious soteriological problem. Misericordia responds shortly after:

Misericordia: Lord, thou that man hathe don more mysse thanne good
If he dey in very contricioun,
Lord the lest drope of thi blod
For hys synne makyth satysfaccioun. (3366–69)
[Lord, although that man has done more ill than good,
If he die in true contrition,
Lord, the least drop of your blood
For his sin makes satisfaction.]

Misericordia’s response also falls in line with theology by referencing contrition and the importance of Chirst’s own sacrifice on the cross.¹⁴² Her insistence that Humanum Genus’s last cry for mercy proved his faith in divine love and his sorrow for his sinful ways reveals the power in perfect contrition. As we can see, the conflict between the two daughters above is both theologically framed and problematically significant in that neither character is *wrong* in their arguments.

The dispute continues as Justicia references Vices and Virtues, and Veritas responds with a commentary on nature of mercy. First, Justicia makes his address:

Justicia: Man hathe forsake the Kynge of Hevene
And hys Good Aungels governaunce
And solwyd hys soule with synnys sevene
By hys Badde Aungels comberaunce.

¹⁴¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 84, art 1.

¹⁴² See above, p.000 for brief discussion of contrition.

Vertuis he putte ful evyn away
Whanne Coveytyse gan hym avaunce. (3418–23)
[Man has forsaken the King of Heaven
And his Good Angel's governance
And sullied his soul with the seven sins
By his Bad Angels temptation.
Virtues he put entirely away
When Covetous began to advance.]

Like Veritas, Justicia focuses on Humanum Genus's sinful life by referencing his repeated missteps in ignoring Bonus Angelus's influence and giving into the seven deadly sins. Aquinas deemed the seven deadly sins *capital* sins and argues that "a vice is called capital because other vices originate from it."¹⁴³ In this sense, these vices further incriminate Humanum Genus. Furthermore, Justicia echoes Veritas's point of avarice in reminding us that Humanum Genus shunned the Virtues in walking away with Covetous. Misericordia's response highlights a potentially problematic outcome for the essence of mercy:

Misericordia: For if Man be dampnyd to Hell dyrknes,
Thanne myth I wryngyn myn honed
That evere my state schulde be les,
My fredam to make bonde. (3448–51)
[For if Man be damned to Hell's darkness,
Then must I wring my hands
That ever my condition should be inferior to yours,

¹⁴³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 84, art 3.

My freedom put in restraint.]

Misericordia responds by speaking to the very nature of mercy and the peril of Anima's damnation: if an individual is to call out for mercy (even in a last breath on the deathbed) but is subsequently denied, one of the theological pillars of Christianity is suddenly rendered powerless. Misericordia later reiterates the importance of mercy by pointing out the limitless quality of God's mercy. She states that it is "wythout begynnyng / [a]nd schal be wythoutyn endyng" (without beginning and shall be without ending, 3466–67). Misericordia's argument here forces the audience to imagine a world where mercy does not exist before capturing them in the vastness of it. At first glance, this appears to be quite messy. It would have perhaps been easy for the dramatist to end the conflicts (the play) with Humanum Genus's death, subsequent clear reckoning, and God's concluding monologue. However, the final high-stakes conflict that takes place here in this supernatural space heightens the tension of Anima's eternal resting place by putting more focus on efficacious dying.

After Pax's final words imploring for the correct judgment to be made, Pater (Father) responds:

Pater: My jugement I wyl geve you by
Not aftyр deservynge to do reddenе,
To dampen Mankynde to turmentry,
But brynge hym to my blysse ful clere
In Hevene to dwelle endelesly.

At your prayere forthi.
To make my blysse perfyth
I mеnge wyth my most myth

Alle pes, sum treuthe, and sum ryth,

And most of my mercy. (3564–73)

[My judgment I will give according to your proposal

Not according to deserved punishment,

To damn Mankinde to torments,

But bring him to perfect bliss

In Heaven to dwell endlessly.

According to your prayers.

To make by bliss perfect

I mingle with my most might

All peace, some truth, and some justice,

And most of my mercy.]

Pater officially resolves the conflict with his intent to “bring him [Anima] to perfect bliss” to “dwell endlessly” in Heaven. Pater recognizes the sinful life of Humanum Genus by referencing his “deservynge” punishment; however, instead of fixating on the unholy living during Humanum Genus’s life, Pater focuses on the holy dying at his life’s end. Mirroring Humanum Genus’s own last words, Pater closes his response by privileging the power of mercy.

The conflict is brought to a close with God’s ultimate judgment, and in this case, Anima’s redemptive reckoning. At first glance, the God of *Castle* appears overly lenient and forgiving. However, if we recall the Catholic belief in perfect contrition discussed above, the outcome is indeed deserved. In addition, this theological belief is reflected in the mid-fourteenth century *Book of the Craft of Dying*, where it points out that “all who die in God are blessed, [including]

the wicked who die in a state of true repentance and contrition . . .”¹⁴⁴ As we can see, the theological context in which this final conflict is situated places emphasis on the importance of efficacious dying.

Although there are no accompanying stage directions or notes in the original manuscript, Pater’s last lines act as the epilogue. Conventionally, medieval dramas concluded with an epilogue that saw one of the influential characters addressing the audience with moral or spiritual takeaways in hopes of leading audience members “through interpretation toward steps to salvation.”¹⁴⁵ In *Castle*, this is done in Pater’s approximately 40 lines, where he reminds the audience that everyone will be subject to a reckoning and instructs them on how to avoid Hell. He ends with this:

Pater: To save you fro synnyge
Evyr at the begynnyge
Thynke on youre last endyng! (3646–48)
[To save you from sinning
Ever at the beginning
Think on your last ending!]

These last three lines evidenced above are particularly noteworthy because of His change in point of view. For the first 30+ lines, Pater speaks more vaguely in the third person. However, here at the play’s end, Pater shifts to second person. The audience is unable to remain indifferent to a vague directive—the *someone* who must always think on the ending is now *you*. This shift adds a level of intimacy and immediacy. Pater’s final words, the final words of the play, act as

¹⁴⁴ Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 150.

¹⁴⁵ Jill P. Ingram, “Forms of Investment: Mummings, Prologues, and Epilogues,” in *Festive Enterprise: The Business of Drama in Medieval and Renaissance England* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2021), 46.

evidence of always keeping the end in sight. His emphasis on “the begynnyge,” is particularly interesting because it goes against human nature’s tendency to live in the moment. However, Pater implores the audience to think to their deaths.

Humanum Genus’s last cry for mercy was enough for Anima’s reckoning and God’s ultimate victory in the overarching war. Battle imagery early on in the play and the appropriation of tournament traditions through high-stakes conflict ensure that the war metaphor is sustained throughout. As briefly referenced earlier on, “the objectification of man’s moral armament as a castle is familiar in sermons and . . . [aligns with] the medieval tendency to illustrate man’s relationship with God through feudal and familial analogues.”¹⁴⁶ However, looking at these devices in concert with the theology of reckoning reveals a determined focus on efficacious dying, a point evidenced by the protagonist’s death taking place some six hundred lines before the play’s end. The play’s extension emphasizes the importance of salvation by recharacterizing its protagonist in spirit form and reinventing the playing area as a supernatural space. Of course, the focus on dying well is ultimately realized by Humanum Genus’s free will and agency in crying out for mercy in his last breath, the very action that begins the series of events leading to eternal salvation.

Everyman

Although written almost one hundred years later and made up of a mere 900 lines, *Everyman*’s narrower scope focuses on many of the same theological matters treated in *Castle of Perseverance*, particularly efficacious dying. Written in Middle English during the Tudor reign (c. 1500), *Everyman* survives in four printed copies (two fragmentary) from c.1510–c.1535.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Pamela M. King, “Morality Plays,” 239.

¹⁴⁷ The version used here comes from Clifford Davidson, Martin W. Walsh, and Ton J. Broos, eds., *Everyman and Its Dutch Original, Elckerlijc* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007). This text is based upon the John Skit print, *The Somonyng of Everyman*. London: John Skot, [c.1525–30]. British Library, Huth 32 (STC 10605). It is

The play is not attributed to any specific author; however, modern scholarship is all but certain the play is a translation from a Middle Dutch play entitled *Elckerlijc*.¹⁴⁸ Although there is not a definitive record of performance until 1901, *Everyman*'s survival in four print copies "argues for widespread popularity of the play. . ." ¹⁴⁹ Scholars speculate there were likely more copies now lost. In addition, they believe there were also performances; after all, the play's manageable cast list and length would have made it conducive to small-scale production. The printed copies suggest that *Everyman*'s endurance was largely due to its dissemination as a treatise "on dying and on spiritual life," subject matters "quite consistent with the taste of the time."¹⁵⁰ Whether performed for an audience or read as a religious treatise, existing records reveal *Everyman*'s varied reach.¹⁵¹

The play begins with God's reflection on humankind's sinfulness. He calls upon Death to visit earth and set things straight by punishing those who lead sinful lives and rewarding those who lead pious lives. The next scene introduces Everyman, who enters finely dressed and unaware that Death is upon him. Everyman is surprised and concerned for his spiritual well-being; he complains that he is not ready and attempts to bribe and plead with Death. Death declines but does allow Everyman to bring some company. The next few scenes focus on Everyman's attempt to find individuals to accompany him. First, he asks Fellowship, Kindred, Cousin, and Goods to be by his side for the journey. Each declines, and Everyman is left with the realization that these are fair-weather friends. Next, he asks Good Deeds to travel with him;

believed this is the closest version to the original English translation. When warranted, the editors have made corrections based upon other editions and cited them in the notes.

¹⁴⁸ For further scholarship on the relationship between *Everyman* and *Elckerlijc*, see "Introduction," *Everyman and Its Dutch Original, Elckerlijc*.

¹⁴⁹ Davidson, Walsh, and Broos, "Introduction."

¹⁵⁰ Davidson, Walsh, and Broos, "Introduction."

¹⁵¹ Although scholarship has determined the origins of the play to be Dutch, the four extant copies suggest that the English translation and adaptation was well known throughout England and certainly reflect the social and religious climates of the period.

however, Good Deeds is not strong enough to make the journey due to his lack of concern for her well-being throughout his life. Instead, Good Deeds offers her friend, Knowledge, who agrees to go with Everyman. Following this, Everyman and Knowledge go to the House of Salvation, where they find Confescio. Here, Everyman asks for forgiveness and receives penance and contrition (sacramental duties). As a result, Good Deeds regains strength and decides she can make the journey. At the request of Good Deeds and Knowledge, Everyman calls on Discretion, Strength, Beauty, and Five Wits to join him on the journey. Each one of them tells him they will be his adviser, his help, and his comfort. Everyman is satisfied and believes he has everything he needs to go on this journey. Knowledge informs Everyman that he must first go to Priesthood to receive the remaining sacraments and extreme unction. After doing this, Everyman continues his journey until he begins to feel tired; he needs to sleep in the earth (die). Beauty, Strength, Discretion, and Five Wits all leave him at this juncture, and he is left with Good Deeds and Knowledge. Knowledge tells Everyman that although he cannot go with him, he will stay to find out what becomes of him. Everyman laments his situation and cautions the audience against relying on transient friends. Following this, Everyman and Good Deeds disappear into the grave. An Angel appears with Everyman's account book and indicates his soul will be received due to his singular virtue. A Doctor appears and gives the Epilogue, reminding everyone that not all things can go with us into death.

Due to the obvious fact that the *Everyman's* action takes place during the protagonist's march to death, I need not focus my argument on ways in which the play privileges dying well and life's end. Instead, I will argue that the play utilizes a particular overarching motif to reveal the importance of dying well. That is, tracing instances of *memory*, as defined in the context of the virtue Prudence, throughout *Everyman* will reveal ways in which the play privileges

efficacious dying by giving the protagonist agency in his own reckoning. Much like *Humanum Genus*'s last-second decision to call for mercy before his last breath, we will see how *Everyman* is given the tools to make the right decisions as he marches to his death.

As noted in my first chapter, theological perceptions and beliefs in dying, both in England and on the continent, permeated late medieval culture. One of the most important elements connecting death and Christianity during the period was the notion of *remembrance*. Remembering the dead (*memento mori*) was an integral part of Catholic theology that can still be seen in the “massive channeling of resources into the decoration or rebuilding of churches, chapels, and colleges in the later Middle Ages.”¹⁵² Wealthy individuals and their families routinely funded various architectural endeavors; “their benefactions were prompted by a concern to erect before God a permanent witness to their piety and charity, which would plead for them at the Judgement Seat of Christ.”¹⁵³ This preoccupation with remembrance largely stems from the rise of purgatory in the twelfth century.¹⁵⁴ In medieval Catholicism, purgatory was a transitional or temporary place where souls were purged of minor sins.¹⁵⁵ The element of temporality was partly a responsibility of the living. That is, intercessory prayers of the living on behalf of the dead, or lack thereof, had a direct impact on the time and suffering endured by the soul.¹⁵⁶ Unsurprisingly, remembering the deceased became an important part of conventional

¹⁵² Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 302.

¹⁵³ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 302.

¹⁵⁴ The theology of purgatory is undoubtedly complex. It is not my intent to overlook its rich history. My discussion here is merely to provide context for the permeation of memory as it pertains to the deceased in late medieval England. For a comprehensive discussion, see Jacques Le Goff's *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) and Eamon Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

¹⁵⁵ Eileen Gardiner, “Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven,” in *Handbook of Medieval Culture: Fundamental Aspects and Conditions of the European Middle Ages*, vol. 1, ed. Albrecht Classen (Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 654.

¹⁵⁶ Dominique DeLuca, “*Bonum est mortis meditari*: Meanings and Functions of the Medieval Double Macabre Portrait,” in *Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Time: The Material and Spiritual Conditions of the Culture of Death*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 259.

living during the period. Despite the overwhelming focus on remembering the dead as a means to shorten a purgatorial stay, *Everyman*'s focus on memory connects with efficacious death and the protagonist's clear reckoning. This particular relationship between memory/remembrance and holy dying is exhibited through the lens of Thomas Aquinas's convictions of Prudence.

Aquinas's philosophy on Prudence is initially brought up in his discussion of Virtue in "Prima Secundae" in *Summa Theologiae*, where he argues for its classification as one of the four cardinal virtues (Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Courage).¹⁵⁷ However, it is not until "Secunda Secundae" that Aquinas gives specific attention to Prudence and crowns it as the most important of the virtues. For Aquinas, Prudence is knowing how to act and therefore is a part of an individual's practical intellect (reason). It enables us to differentiate between what is virtuous and what is not in order to choose the right course of action to a particular end.¹⁵⁸ Like each of the cardinal virtues, Prudence is broken down further into distinct parts, including a category that focuses on the integral parts (Question 49). Here, Aquinas outlines the essential, "necessary components without which a Cardinal virtue . . . cannot function properly."¹⁵⁹ The integral parts of Prudence include memory, understanding/intelligence, docility, shrewdness, reasoning, foresight/providence, circumspection, and caution. For the purposes of the argument here, I will focus on the first integral part, memory. Although there are eight parts listed, Aquinas privileges memory by placing it first and giving us practical strategies for building it up, attention not given to every part. Medieval philosophers and theologians "advocated memory training as an essential aid for prudent Christian behavior. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas both rationalize memory as a part of prudence, by explaining memory as reminiscence, which is found in the

¹⁵⁷ See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IIa IIae, q. 61.

¹⁵⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IIa IIae, q. 47.

¹⁵⁹ John D. Love, "Aquinas's 'Integral Parts of Prudence' as a Resource for Human Formation," *New Blackfriars* 100, no. 1090 (November 2019): 705.

rational part of the soul.”¹⁶⁰ As we can see, memory was important to medieval culture, so it is “not surprising that Aquinas has [specific] instructions for this component of prudential decision-making.”¹⁶¹ As Aquinas defines it, Prudence is about how to conduct one’s life; therefore, the virtue focuses more on holy living, not holy dying. However, the play appropriates Aquinas’s articulation of memory as it pertains to Prudence by placing it within the context of *Everyman*’s death march. *Everyman* narrows the pilgrimage-like plot by focusing on the final stage. More specifically, if we focus on Aquinas’s strategies for memory building within the context of *Everyman*’s death march, we will see that memory is giving the protagonist agency. *Everyman* is using memory to ensure a good, holy death. And, as we learn at the end, this makes all the difference.

Two of Aquinas’s strategies for building up memory include keeping the desired end at hand and repetition. More specifically, Aquinas instructs us to “proceed with solicitude and apply [our intellect],” to things we want to remember, “since the more something is impressed on the mind, the less it slips away.”¹⁶² In the case of *Everyman*, death must be impressed on the mind in order to die well. Evidence of this comes early in the play and acts as a warning, a religious adherence: be careful that one does not forget one’s own end. The play’s opening echoes the closing of *Castle of Perseverance* as the Messenger cautions the audience:

Messenger: This story sayeth: man in the begynnyng,

Loke well and take good hede to the endyng. (10–11)

[This story sayeth: man in the beginning,

¹⁶⁰ William Engel, Rory Loughnane, and Grant Williams, “Introduction,” in *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England: A Critical Anthology*, eds. William Engel, Rory Loughnane, and Grant Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 7.

¹⁶¹ Love, “Aquinas’s ‘Integral Parts of Prudence,’” 706.

¹⁶² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 49, art. 1.

Look well and take good heed to the ending.]¹⁶³

Evidenced by its positioning both here and in *Castle of Perseverance*, this proverb was indeed familiar. And, we cannot overlook its meta-theatricality in how it is used as a reminder of the importance of the play's own end. However, there is soteriological urgency lying in the preface, "[t]his story sayeth," and the lines' placement in what is essentially the Prologue. The preface boldly suggests that after all is acted out, said, and done, the lesson can be stripped down to its core: never forget the ending.

Of course, imploring that we *remember* makes the important assumption that we are likely to *forget*, something that Everyman will surely be criticized for. Aquinas addresses this directly in Question 47, Article 6 and points out that although Prudence can be impeded or diminished by forgetfulness, it is not something that can be completely lost.¹⁶⁴ As we see in the play, the relationship between memory and forgetfulness is referenced repeatedly:

God: My lawe that I shewed whan I for them dyed

They forgot clene, and sheddyng of my blod so redde. (29–30)

[My law that I showed when I for them died

They forgot entirely, and the shedding of my blood so red.]

God's admonishment here focuses on what humankind, as sinners, has done wrong. Everyone is grouped together, guilty for our failure to remember. Of course, the uniqueness of the allegory ensures the criticism of "them" is directed at both Everyman and the observing audience. The importance of maintaining focus as an element of agency and the dangers of forgetfulness are further evidenced by Death. After being called upon by God, Death enters and sees Everyman:

¹⁶³ All translations of *Everyman* are my own with the assistance of Davidson, Walsh, and Broos's notes and glossary.

¹⁶⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IIa IIae, q. 47, art. 16.

Death: Loo, yonder I se Everyman walkynge.

Full lytell he thynketh on my cummynge.

His mynde is on fleshely lustes and his treasure,

And great payne it shall cause hym to endure

Before the Lorde, Heven Kynge.

Everyman, stonde styll. Whether arte thou goynge

Thus gayly? Hast thou thy Maker forget? (80–86)

[Lo, yonder I see Everyman walking.

Full little he thinks on my coming.

His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure,

And great pain it will cause him to endure

Before the Lord, Heaven's King.

Everyman, stand still. Where are you going

So cheerfully? Have you forgotten your Maker?]

Death points out Everyman's insufficient remembrance, commenting upon how "lytell he thynketh," and questioning whether or not he has forgotten his Maker. This criticism suggests that Everyman has not lived by the proverbial warning discussed above. He has lost focus and allowed worldly, materialistic goods to fog his mind and cause forgetfulness. Death presses on by aggressively asking Everyman whether he has forgotten God. Following this, Death continues with his accusations:

Death: Ye, certaynly.

Though thou have forgete hym here,

He thynketh on thee in the heavenly spere. (93–95)

[Yes, certainly.

Though you have forgotten him here,

He thinks on you in the heavenly sphere.]

Death's spiritual diagnosis is complete; he is certain that Everyman has forgotten God. However, this admonishment comes with an important theological caveat: Death makes a point to reiterate that regardless of Everyman's memory (or lack thereof), God still remembers him.

Soteriologically speaking, clear or unclear reckoning, God is not a God of forgetfulness. Of course, remembrance in this sense has the potential to be redemptive or damning. After realizing Death's purpose, Everyman confesses to his forgetfulness: "O, Deth, thou cummest whan I had thee leest in mynde" (O, Death, you come when I had you least in mind, 120). He admits his own fault here, and by doing so, reiterates the assumptions of both God and Death. The realization that death is nigh forces him to see the implications of his failure to remember Christ and the forthcoming end of his life. The play appropriates Aquinas's strategy of repetition through the continual references of the value in remembrance.

Everyman soon learns another lesson in remembrance when he becomes the forgotten one. In his desperate need to bring company with him to his death, Everyman acts on his agency and seeks out Fellowship, who agrees to accompany him. However, after hearing of the danger and the fatality of the journey, Fellowship declines. Everyman tries again to convince him:

Everyman: Gentyll felawe, helpe me in my necessytye.

We have loved longe and now I need,

And now gentyll Felawshyp, remembre me. (284–86)

[Gentle fellow, help me in my necessity.

We have loved long and now I am in need,

And now noble Fellowship, remember me.]

In his ironic plea to “remembre me,” Everyman echoes Christ’s own words of remembrance at the Last Supper.¹⁶⁵ The dangers of relying too much on friends (Fellowship) is realized when Everyman quotes an early proverb: “In prosperyté men frendes may fynde / Whiche in adversytte be full unkynde” (In prosperity men friends may find / which in adversity are full unkind, 309–10).¹⁶⁶ Fellowship’s eventual abandonment of Everyman is a tough lesson in the spiritual value of remembrance. These passages provide evidence for a recurring motif that draws on the relationship between remembrance and forgetfulness and begin to point to the value of memory in efficacious dying.

The play’s cautionary treatment of memory and forgetfulness does not focus solely on what is lost. Everyman is given instruction on what *should* be remembered, especially at death.

Five Wits: The blessyd Sacramentes seven there be:

Baptym, Confyrmacyon, with Pryesthode good,

And the Sacrament of Goddes precyous flesshe and blode;

Maryage, the holy Extreme Unccyon, and Penaunce.

These seven be good to have in remembraunce,

Gracyous Sacramentes of hye dyvynyte. (722–27)

[The blessed Sacraments seven there be:

Baptism, Confirmation, with Ordination good,

And the Sacrament of God’s precious flesh and blood;

¹⁶⁵ The story of the Last Supper is found in the New Testament gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke and tells of Jesus’s last meal with his disciples. It is particularly important to Christian theology because Jesus implored his disciples to remember Him through the bread and wine given at the table, an event that would become the sacramental commemoration known as the Eucharist.

¹⁶⁶ The origin of this proverb is likely found in Ecclesiasticus 6:10. See note to line 309 in Davidson, Walsh, and Broos, eds., *Everyman and Its Dutch Original, Elckerlijc*.

Marriage, holy Extreme Unction, and Penance.

These seven are good to have in remembrance,

Gracious Sacraments of high divinity.]

Five Wits gives Everyman instruction on remembering the Sacraments, a memory directly responsible for a clear reckoning. These instructions provide Everyman with a useful strategy to act on his agency. According to Aquinas, a sacrament is “a sanctification conferred on man with some outward sign.”¹⁶⁷ The grace of God is directly tied to this. Essentially, they are physical rituals or rites that “are necessary unto man’s salvation”—Five Wits’s direction for what *not* to forget is a matter of eternal life or eternal damnation.¹⁶⁸ The play ends with the Doctor’s cautionary monologue, ensuring the audience grasps the principal outcome and is left with what should be remembered:

Doctor: This memory all men may have in mynde.

Ye hearers take it of worth olde and yonge

And forsake Pryde, for he deceyveth you in the ende,

And remembre Beautye, Fyve Wyttes, Strength, and Discreccion.

They all at the last do Everyman forsake,

Save his Good Dedes, there dothe he take. (902–07)

[This memory/moral men may have in mind.

Yea hearers value it greatly old and young

And forsake Pride, for he deceives you in the end,

And remember Beauty, Five Wits, Strength, and Discretion.

¹⁶⁷ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Sup, q. 34, art 3.

¹⁶⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, III. q. 61, art. 1; for more on the Grace of God, see *Summa Theologiae* Ia IIae, q. 110.

They all at the last forsake Everyman,
Save his Good Deeds, there he takes.]

The Doctor reproduces the play's commencement, where the Messenger implores the audience to focus on "the endynge" (11). His departing words insist that the audience keep this "memoryall . . . in mynde" (902). Regulating and standardizing spelling was still in its infancy at this point in English history, so textual variations often exist. Interestingly, the Huntington print copy of the play uses "morall" instead of the "memoryall" used here. These variations suggest a combining of both *memory* and *moral*, creating a *moral memory* of sorts.¹⁶⁹ Again, we see the importance of remembrance and repetition in how the "intended visual effect, whether on stage or in the imaginations of readers, was to create a kind of memory theater to which the mind would return again and again as a way of being reminded in symbolic terms of human mortality."¹⁷⁰ The play's treatment of privileging memory and cautioning forgetfulness is illustrated through the various ways in which Everyman is both admonished for his lack of agency and instructed to direct his agency. The instances in the text align with Aquinas's strategic plan for remembering the end, becoming important lessons that lead to a focus on efficacious dying.

Aquinas's strategies for making "progress in remembering well," also include instruction on the formation of "unwonted images."¹⁷¹ Focusing on uncommon images that strike us with wonder forces the mind to linger longer and more intensely. Aquinas sees this as essential, "for simple and spiritual ideas slip away from the mind unless they are . . . tied down to it" by images.¹⁷² This critical approach to remembering is realized in *Everyman* through the

¹⁶⁹ *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. "memorial (*adj.*), sense 3," July 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/9959367093>.

¹⁷⁰ Davidson, Walsh, and Broos, "Introduction"

¹⁷¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 49, a 1.

¹⁷² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 49, a 1.

metaphorical account book. The idea of an accounting book that contains a record of an individual's good works provided a material metaphor for a complex abstract theology. The account book symbolizes a number of soteriologically related images: death, damnation, salvation, reckoning, good works, etc. Early on in the play, God tells Death that "[c]harytye they all do clene forget" (charity they all do clean forget, 51), suggesting that humans lack the lasting image of charitable goods/works. As we will see, Everyman is accused of forgetting about images like these. In this way, the account book embodies Aquinas's perception of an unwonted image, as packed as it may be, and provides Everyman with additional agency.

The theology of merit is a long standing pillar of traditional Catholicism. The Church Fathers articulated their own perceptions of the theology that would eventually be confirmed in the sixth-century Council of Orange. Although there are variations within Aquinas's own theology of merit (namely the role of Grace and God's ordinance), the conventional belief remained the same: individuals are urged to do good works (e.g., penances, perform charitable acts, etc.) in order to receive merit from God. However, works alone are not enough to receive eternal life; the works must be accompanied by faith. It is important to note that individuals are only able to perform good works by the grace of God. Essentially, Aquinas sees that God's grace gives us the ability to perform good deeds, which is considered our "work." Then, at our soul's reckoning, those deeds are brought before God and judged, ultimately determining our eternal fates. In this way, eternal life (or damnation) becomes the "compensation" for our labors.¹⁷³ As Aquinas reiterates in his own articulation, the theology of a soul's reckoning at death could be better understood in terms of universal practical finance. In *Everyman*, the account book motif

¹⁷³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 114.

works as an image of a book and as an image of recorded memory, both hinging upon the necessity for clarity.

The words *accounte* (book) and *rekenynge* (reckoning) occur “more than twenty-five times in the play, often together, and always at moments of high urgency, where most meaning is being gathered in fewest words.”¹⁷⁴ In fact, the title page itself defines the play as a “somon . . . to come and gyve a counte” (summon . . . to come and give an accounting). The first occurrence within the play comes early on as a part of God’s instruction to Death:

God: Go thou to Everyman
And shew hym in my name
A pylgrymage he must on hym take
Which he in no wyse may escape,
And that he brynge with hym a sure rekenynge
Without delay or any taryenge. (66–71)
[Go you to Everyman
And show him in my name
A pligrimmage he must take upon himself
Which he in no way may escape,
And that he bring with him a clear reckoning
Without delay or any tarrying.]

As we can see, the verb “rekenynge” is used in place of the nouns *book* or *account*. Initially, this appears to take away from the desired image by making it more abstract in regards to an event or

¹⁷⁴ V.A. Kolve, “*Everyman* and the Parable of Talents,” in *Medieval English Drama: Essays in Critical and Contextual*, eds. Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 317.

happening; however, God specifies that there is something Everyman must “brynge with hym,” referencing a physical object that should also be present at the time of death. In addition, God’s use of the word “sure” is synonymous with *accurate*, an essential part of a financial record. So, the first instance of the image’s impression is characterized by finality, physicality and quality. The second occurrence of the image takes place during Death’s conversation with Everyman.

Death: On thee thou must take a longe journey.

Therefore they boke of counte with thee thou brynge,
For turne agayne thou cannot by no waye;
And loke thou be sure of thy rekenynge,
For before God shalte thou answeere and shewe
Thy many bade dedes and good but a fewe,
How thou has spente thy lyfe and in what wyse. (103–09)

[You must take upon yourself a long journey.

Therefore your book of count you must bring with you,
For returning again you cannot by any way;
And look you be sure of your reckoning,
For before God shall you answer and show
Your many bad deeds and but a few good,
How you have spent your life and in what ways.]

In Death’s explanation of what is to come for Everyman the image is given a tangibility not seen in the initial circumstance. Here there is direct reference to an object as the “boke of counte” that (again) Everyman must “brynge”. Furthermore, Death indicates that Everyman will be required to “shewe” God what is recorded in the book, a list of deeds. The palpability brought out in this

particular manifestation helps establish an infrequent image for both Everyman and the audience.¹⁷⁵ After all, the play's first few words remind audiences that from the beginning, they should be thinking on ". . .the endynge." The fairly simple and common proverb is apparently so often overlooked and forgotten that the pressing image is reiterated time and again throughout the play.

The abstract concept of a supernatural book that records deeds done in life is becoming more realized, even by Everyman himself.

Everyman: To thynke on thee it maketh my herte secke,
For all unredy is my boke of rekenynge.
But twelve yere and I might have abydyng,
My countynge boke I wolde make so clere
That my rekenynge I sholde not nede to fere. (133–37)
[To think on you makes my heart sick,
For all unready is my book of reckoning.
But twelve years if I might have delay,
My counting book I would make so clear
That my reckoning I should not need to fear.]

The image of the book is referenced again and made even more concrete as Everyman begins to realize that the contents of his book are lacking—he does not have an unclouded record of his good deeds to ensure his clear reckoning. In terms of Aquinas's strategy, this particular image is doing double duty as a reminder of what needs to fill the pages (good deeds) and as a reminder of what is to come at the end of life (reckoning). This occurrence is characterized by its focus on

¹⁷⁵ This type of image aligns with Aquinas's strategy, discussed above. See *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. "wont (n.1), sense a," September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3698033300>.

what is *not* there, an unclear recorded memory. So far, the record is “so blotted with sins,” that it will surely “be of little help.”¹⁷⁶ We see this again shortly after, when Everyman reiterates that his “wrytynge is full unredy” (writing is full unready, 187). At this point, the audience has been presented with an image that is interestingly referenced as both an abstraction and a physical object; however, due to Everyman’s forgetfulness, the image is incomplete in that the book has only obscured virtuous inscriptions. Everyman’s discussion with Kindred and Cousin gives more insight into the contents of the book itself.

Kindred: What counte is that whiche ye must render?

That wolde I knowe. (336-37)

[What account is that which you must render?

That would I know.]

Everyman responds to Kindred’s question:

Everyman: Of all my works I must shewe

How I have lyved and my dayes spente,

Also of yll dedes that I have used

In my tyme syth lyfe was me lente

And of all the vertues that I have refused.

Therefore, I praye you, go thether with me

To helpe to make myne accounte, for saynt charytie. (338–44)

[Of all my works I must show

How I have lived and my days spent,

Also of ill deeds that I have done

¹⁷⁶ Rendall, “The Times of Mercy and Judgment in *Mankind*, *Everman*, and *The Castle of Perseverance*,” 258.

In my time since life was lent to me
And of all the virtues that I have refused.
Therefore, I pray you, go there with me
To help to make my account, for holy charity.]

Kindred's first line is particularly interesting because he asks for clarification on the "counte" that Everyman must give. His own ignorance provides further evidence that although the idea of an account at the end of one's life was scriptural and widespread, individuals needed to be reminded of this unwonted image. Cousin's last few lines also echo the need to press this unwonted image in his admittance that he cannot go with him because he has his own account to make ready (373-376). Everyman's own lesson in memory and remembrance through this unwonted image reminds Cousin that he has work to do also. Everyman's response to Kindred reveals that Everyman's current book holds an unbalanced accounting of his life. Everyman needs to clarify his good deeds in order to outweigh the "vertues [he has] refused" (342). His sinful life is further evidenced in his later discussion with Goods, a character that embodies material wealth. Goods references the need for clarity when he tells Everyman that material wealth has obscured his account and made "blotted and blynde" (419). However, there is hope for Everyman, and the reference to "saynt charytie" at the end of the passage above acts as a clue about what kind of good deeds, once distinct, are required to be inscribed in his book.

The first glimmer of hope and further evidence of agency is given upon the arrival of Good Deeds, a walking abstraction of the memories needing to be recorded in the book. Everyman's forgetfulness and sinful living have "bounde" (bound, 487) Good Deeds, and she is unable to "stonde verely" (stand truthfully, 498). The importance of this image heightens the soteriological dilemma that surrounds Everyman. Essentially, "he cannot achieve salvation

unless he is loosed from the weight of his sins and his Good Deeds released from her bondage to assists him to his salvation for without her he is lost.”¹⁷⁷ In admonishing Everyman for his missteps, Good Deeds gives insight into what needs to be done in terms of elucidating the account book:

Good Deeds: Ye, syr, I may thanke you all.

Yf ye had perfytely chered me,

Your boke of accounte full redy now had be. (500–02)

[Yea, sir, I may thank you all.

If you had perfectly nurtured me,

Your book of account full ready now would be.]

Good Deeds’s use of “chered” here implies that Everyman’s fault was a lack of support and fostering. The moral that tending to and nurturing those in need (i.e. charity) is paramount is both localized and universal—Everyman should take care of Good Deeds just as he should others in need.¹⁷⁸ After Everyman is introduced to Knowledge, who ensures he confesses and receives penance, Good Deeds is “made hole and sounde” (made whole and sound, 625) and is able to “abyde with [Everyman] in every stounde” (remain with Everyman in every moment of trial, 633). The two characters confirm:

Everyman: Good Dedes, have we clere oure rekenyng?

Good Deeds: Ye, indede, I have it here. (652–53)

[Good Deeds, have we cleared our reckoning?

Yes, indeed, I have it here.]

¹⁷⁷ Davidson, Walsh, and Broos, *Everyman and Its Dutch Original, Elckerlijc*, note to line 487.

¹⁷⁸ For more on the role of charity in *Everyman* and the nuances of the word ‘cheren,’ see Denise Ryan’s “‘If ye had parfytely chered me’: The Nurturing of Good Deeds in *Everyman*,” *Notes and Queries* 240, no. 2 (June 1995): 165–68.

The once obscured recording, the image of blurred memory, is now clear, and Everyman has used his agency in order to approach his reckoning with a confidence not seen up until this point. The image continues to be impressed upon the audience as Everyman meets his death. Good Deeds comforts him by urging him to “[f]ere not” (fear not, 876) and by assuring him that she will “speke for thee” (speak for you, 876). The final reference to the account book and the accompanying image of recorded memory is delivered directly to the audience in the concluding monologue:

Doctor: If his rekenynge be not clere whan he do cume.

God wyll saye, “*Ite maledicti in ignem eternum.*”¹⁷⁹

And he that hath his accounte hole and sounde

Hye in Heven he shall be crounde. (914–17)

[If his reckoning is not clear when he comes.

God will say, “Go, wicked one, into the eternal fire.”

And he that has is account whole and sound

He in Heaven shall be crowned.]

This closing reference provides a complete image of the book and its greater purpose in salvation by referencing both its abstract purpose in “rekenynge,” and its physical purpose in keeping an “accounte hole and sounde”. Doing so reiterates the importance of, and strategy for, building up memory. As we can see, the image begins as more or less an abstraction, a metaphoric and allegorical device that aligns with Catholic theology. However, as the play progresses, the image begins to be seen as a physical object whose efficacy hinges upon a clarity in recorded memory.

¹⁷⁹ This line can be found in Matthew 25:41 and is part of the Parable of Talents, a lesson given by Jesus to his disciples. For an extensive discussion, see V.A. Kolve, “*Everyman* and the Parable of Talents,” in *Medieval English Drama: Essays in Critical and Contextual*, eds. Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 36-340.

The Angel that appears to take Everyman to heaven emphasizes this when she tells him that “[t]hy rekenynge is crystall clere” (your reckoning is crystal clear, 898). Although the play does not include any specific stage directions or prop lists related to the book, there is a very *real* “unwonted” image that appears throughout the play and placed at the forefront of Everyman’s reckoning.

Analyzing the motif of memory throughout *Everyman*, specifically through the lens of Aquinas’s philosophy of Prudence, reveals how Everyman is given agency in ensuring he is able to die well. At first glance, the protagonist seems to be merely a helpless pawn in a greater, supernatural journey to death. However, the permeation of memory illustrates how one can use strategy as a tool for efficacious dying. Repetition and image formation become part of the tactics in the art of dying well. In this way, the play sets itself apart and “reverses the accepted morality play focus on defining evil so that the audience may better recognize and avoid it, and concentrates on defining the good.”¹⁸⁰ Indeed, there are allegorical characters like Goods, Cousin, Kindred, etc. that exist to caution Everyman on their substance in his life; however, these companions “are not false vices, they are simply irrelevant, existing on a superficial plane.”¹⁸¹ The moralistic essence of the play rests on the motif of memory as a necessary means to a *good* end.

Castle of Perseverance and *Everyman* stand out from other extant dramatic texts during the period in the way they dramatize the soul’s reckoning. Indeed, *Castle’s* scope is much wider in terms of life’s journey from birth to death in comparison to *Everyman’s* limited focus on the individual’s death march. And *Perseverance’s* focus on efficacious dying is realized through the overarching war metaphor, while *Everyman’s* emphasis on dying well is illustrated through the

¹⁸⁰ King, “Morality Plays,” 254.

¹⁸¹ King, “Morality Plays,” 255.

use of memory. Regardless of their scopes and individual approaches, both plays use images and appropriation: battle imagery and the account book work in concert with the tournament tradition and Aquinas's theology of prudence to draw attention to one's end. The plays conclude with clear, redemptive reckonings, and in doing so, they follow the theological conventions of late medieval England. Of course, this is not to say that individuals were not aware of damnation and the real possibility of despairing. There are "medieval descriptions of the terrors of hell . . . [however,] for the most part, the medieval Church chose to emphasize the promise held out by the time for mercy over the fears raised by the coming judgment."¹⁸² The *promise* being referenced here is directly connected to the stipulation of dying well—following theological protocol resulted in efficacious dying. That is, individuals (i.e. *Humanum Genus* and *Everyman*) ultimately had free will and agency. Instead of focusing on the wrong choices made in one's life, these plays reveal the importance of making the right choice at the right time, at the end of life. As we will see in the next chapter, the Reformation altered perceptions of dying and refocused the dramatization of reckoning while still holding onto notions of human agency.

¹⁸² Rendall, "The Times of Mercy and Judgment," 266.

CHAPTER THREE: DAMNED RECKONING

The stars move still. Time runs. The clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.¹⁸³

Written and performed in a climate of religious vacillation and uncertainty, an overwhelming majority of sixteenth-century allegorical dramas of reckoning result in the protagonists' damnations. In this chapter I argue that these sixteenth-century plays contrast with the medieval plays discussed in the previous chapter in that they focus on damned reckoning and the possibility of failure due to sinful living. We will see ways in which reckoning changed, but that very change was made possible by the foundations laid by earlier texts and performances. This chapter primarily focuses on two mid-to-late sixteenth century plays. I begin by looking at William Wager's interlude, *Enough is as Good as a Feast* (c. 1560s) before focusing on Christopher Marlowe's *Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (c. 1590s). In addition to these close readings, I also engage with the beliefs of two major theologians, Martin Luther and John Calvin. These figures were responsible for much of the religious change prevalent throughout early modern England. Luther's initial admonishment of many Catholic practices laid the foundation for Calvin's own theological convictions that became popularized as the century wore on. Part of my analysis focuses on how these particular doctrines are wrapped up in the drama of reckoning. Ultimately, I contend that both plays draws its audience's

¹⁸³ Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragedy of Doctor Faustus*, in *Doctor Faustus: A Two-Text Edition*, ed. by David S. Kastan (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), B 5.3.142-143.

attention to the importance of holy living through theological leanings, socioeconomic implications, and complexities of character. While attending to this, I also argue that there is a clear continuity with these allegorical dramatizations and the dramatic and theological conventions of the not-so-distant medieval past through human agency.

As noted in the previous chapter, miracle plays, mystery plays, morality plays, and saints' plays reached the height of their popularity by the end of the fifteenth century. Towards the turn of the century, we start to see a dramatic shift beginning with Henry Medwall. Medwall's two known plays include *Nature* (c. 1495) and *Fulgens and Lucrece* (c. 1497). Although *Nature* falls in line with late medieval traditions of the morality play (complete with a repentant protagonist at the end), Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrece* is the first extant secular play in English history. The extant work of late-fifteenth/early-sixteenth dramatist John Skelton further illustrates the gradual reshaping of English drama. Skelton's *Magnyfycence* (c. 1515) is a morality play that moves away from focusing on the soul of an individual. Instead, *Magnyfycence*'s politically satirical plot follows the rule of a king as he navigates the landscape of the royal court. The refiguring of English drama continued into the 1530s with the satirical (arguably political) plays of John Heywood and his contemporary, John Bale, the playwright considered to be the most impactful in the first half of the sixteenth century. Interestingly, Bale's plays harken back to the traditions of biblical drama and the morality plays seen in the late medieval period. However, Bale recreates these earlier traditional dramas to fit within the burgeoning Protestant paradigm. Bale's *Three Laws of Nature* (c. 1530s) and *Kynge Johan* (c. 1538) are both morality plays that focus on the his "reinterpretation of history along Protestant lines."¹⁸⁴ Of course, Bale's religious polemic must be contextualized within the English political climate during the eventful reign of

¹⁸⁴ Peter Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare* (London: Longman, 1993), 127.

Henry VIII, a very important component that we will look at in both of the plays in this chapter. So, as we will see with the two plays considered in this chapter, the sixteenth century brought new dramatic features but did not cut all ties with its medieval past. Combining late medieval and early-sixteenth century dramatic conventions is further seen and developed in the mid-century interlude (defined below).

In choosing Wager's *Enough* and Marlowe's *Faustus*, I mirrored my method of selecting late medieval dramatic texts in the second chapter; therefore, I omitted biblical plays, miracle plays, and saints' plays.¹⁸⁵ There exists quite an impressive corpus of interludes during the mid-to-late sixteenth century. And these plays fit into a variety of types: political satires, moral plays, classically influenced tragedies, and biblical dramas.¹⁸⁶ In order to best illustrate how the drama of reckoning shifts, it is best to look at similar dramatic conventions; therefore, I look at interludes that drew heavily upon the morality and allegorical traditions of the past. As noted, the morality plays (both old and new) were very popular during the sixteenth century, and as a result, we have been left with many extant plays.¹⁸⁷ There are approximately five mid-to-late-century interludes (non-biblical) that feature the reckoning of a protagonist. For example, plays like William Wager's own *The Longer Thou Livest* (c. 1560s) and Thomas Lupton's *All for Money* (c. 1570s) contain principal characters that are, in one way or another, ushered off into hell. However, Wager's *Enough* is unique in that the protagonist's death and subsequent reckoning are performed on stage. As a result, audiences became a part of the deathbed scene, much in the

¹⁸⁵ My purpose in omitting biblical plays, miracle plays, and saints' plays is to narrow my focus to original compositions not based upon preexisting biblical or biographical chronicles. Dramatizing reckonings from non-established Christian narratives allows me to explore ways in which the authors are using their own convictions and assumptions in staging the outcomes.

¹⁸⁶ While recognizing the anachronism as a caveat, literary scholarship has permitted these loose categorizations.

¹⁸⁷ For a comprehensive list, see Peter Happé, "Chronology," in *English Drama Before Shakespeare* (London: Longman, 1999), 253-263; and T.W. Craik, "Dates of Principal Plays Discussed," in *The Tudor Interlude: Stage, Costume, and Acting* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1962), 141-49.

same way as the late medieval moralities. In addition, we will also see how Wager's dual protagonists are implicated in the complexities of reckoning.

The last quarter of the sixteenth century saw the birth of professional playhouses and the public stage, making theater regularly available to the English population. Specially built theaters led to a new era in English drama that saw a new way of life develop on the stage through greater human and financial resources.¹⁸⁸ The widening of audiences (expanding from the royal court and wealthy aristocrats to encompass the average English citizen) and the opportunities in staging (moving from banquet halls and makeshift public spaces to specifically constructed stages) gave playwrights the ability to stretch the limits of settings, characters, plots, and other theatrical elements.¹⁸⁹ For example, Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1580s) became a foundational play that influenced the development and popularity of the tragedies in the way it brings Senecan tragedy to the English stage in a particularly violent and vengeful manner. The public stage also contained a significant familiarity with the not-so-distant interlude. For example, Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* (c. 1580) and Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe's *Knack to Know a Knave* (c. 1590) were both moral comedies that harken to the morality play past but place less focus on the psychomachia-like elements. Although both plays do contain characters who experience a reckoning or judgment, the former contains two primary characters that are sentenced to hell by a judge (not God) but never actually transported there, resulting in the absence of a supernatural space like heaven or hell. And in *Knack*, the reckoning occurs early on in the play and is dramatized through a secondary character. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* is unique in that it adheres more strictly to the traditions of the allegorical morality-play

¹⁸⁸ Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 181.

¹⁸⁹ Indeed, the late medieval biblical and morality plays were staged for the average individual; however, plays that did not fall into these categories were reserved for a more exclusive audience until the emergence of the public stage.

past in a time when drama was working through newer identities. As a result, the play is ripe for analysis in my discussion of the drama of reckoning, particularly through religious implications and Faustus's internal struggles.

As we have seen in the two previous chapters, the critical conversation for medieval and early modern religion and drama is vast and well-covered. Yet, even with the rich past and current scholarly interest in the period, there remains a void in discussions involving reckoning. Both late medieval drama and the two plays discussed in this chapter adhere to the conventions of the allegorical morality play. Despite the passing time, post-Reformation morality plays, particularly mid-century interludes, followed the same didactic purpose. Therefore, focusing on pre- and post-Reformation morality plays will ensure a lateral comparison for our discussion of reckoning. However similar, there exists one fundamentally theological difference between the two periods: failure. Characters such as Everyman and Humanum Genus/Anima (seen in the previous chapter) are absolved, and their reckonings are redemptive; for these symbolic abstractions, the nurturing along the way was successful in changing the nature of the characters and enlarging God's kingdom. As we will see in *Enough* and *Faustus*, the nurturing is not enough to alter the nature of sin and depravity; as a result, they illustrate how sinful living is a means to enlarging Satan's kingdom. Within the Protestant theological scheme, "it is possible for [the authors] to explore man's pilgrimage to hell-mouth."¹⁹⁰ I argue this is taking place in these two plays. This is not to suggest that Catholicism did not allow for this same possibility. However, the belief in Purgatory (and the belief that most Christians ended up there) led to a redemptive mind-set that we saw in the medieval dramas: if one sins, they can still turn it around, in this life or in Purgatory. In Reformation thought (particularly Calvin), the absence of a

¹⁹⁰ R. Mark Benbow, "Introduction," in *Regents Renaissance Drama Series: The Longer Thou Livest and Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, ed. R. Mark Benbow (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1967), x

supernatural space where one could be punished and eventually cleansed resulted in a “do or die” theological thought process. The sinning individual is likely outside of God’s grace and is going to hell. Implicit in the notion of predestination is a polarizing God of judgment. Fear and the real dangers of human depravity were moved to the forefront. Wager’s and Marlowe’s sixteenth century morality plays portray the possibility of failure within the context of Christianity. These authors and audiences were living during the Reformation, and the fact of reprobation was a very real, tragic possibility for them. We will take a closer look at how each play appropriates the structure and characters of its medieval past while also pivoting in a different direction with damned reckoning.

In England, the term *interlude* was used quite vaguely to describe various types of performances from the early thirteenth century onward; it was not until the Elizabethan government became directly involved in regulating and controlling plays in the 1540s that the term would become more specific and bureaucratic. My use of the term *interlude* here is broad and refers to the mid-sixteenth century English categorization of play that was written to be performed in a specific space, whether that be a hall or a court, before the existence of public playhouses.¹⁹¹ Modern scholarship has wavered in its affinity for early and mid-century English drama. Many early critics “considered [it] something that merely happened, artless in the basic sense of containing no thoughtful organizing principle of its own purpose.”¹⁹² Regardless, the mid-century interlude was indeed a popular form of entertainment that, among other things, laid the foundation for the coming public stage. Traveling acting troupes were popularized, and as we

¹⁹¹ For more on the term, see Peter Happé, “Chapter 9: Interludes,” in *English Drama Before Shakespeare* (London: Longman, 1999), 135-162; and David Bevington, “Chapter 2: Criteria for a Popular Repertory,” in *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 8-25.

¹⁹² Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 2.

will see, these plays engaged with important political and socioeconomic issues (e.g. societal stratification, royal corruption, rack renting, poor-law administration, etc.).¹⁹³ When considering the interlude successfully brought together political, social, and religious elements, we should not be surprised that they became instruments of propaganda. Wager's *Enough* is a principal example of how these elements come together, particularly in regards to the drama of reckoning.

Enough is as Good as a Feast

Written and performed in the late-1560s/early-1570s, William Wager's *Enough is as Good as A Feast* was an interlude composed fresh off the heels of numerous political and religious reconstructions.¹⁹⁴ Thanks in part to Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (1563), Mary I's reign was not yet a distant memory, and Elizabeth I's reign was still in its infancy. In addition, the Church of England sought to make its theological and doctrinal beliefs more concrete with the publication of *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion* (1562), a work that aligned more with growing Calvinist sentiments. The religious climate during this decade provided a heightened sense of anxiety that Wager combated with familiarity. *Enough* was written in what would have been an easily recognizable structural format, the allegorical morality play. Furthermore, the play's religious undertones echo Scripture by utilizing homiletic materials seen in William Tyndale's *Exposition upon the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Chapter of Matthew* (1532). Finally, audiences would have been familiar with Wager's Protestant treatment of predestination. It is in this familiarity where we find a continuity with the past as well as a shift in the implications of sin. In addition to being a Reformation troupe dramatist, William Wager assumed many different roles,

¹⁹³ Ineke Murakami, "Wager's Drama of Conscience, Convention, and State Constitution," *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 306.

¹⁹⁴ The play exists as a single copy from the original quartos. This particular edition I use here is a reprint from both the British Museum and the Huntington Library. Generally speaking, the text provides no bibliographical issues and contains speech prefixes and stage directions. There are two instances where lines were either omitted or dropped. The play relies on rhyme scheme and makes use of couplets, quatrains, and rhyme royal. Spelling and punctuation have been carefully modernized. For more information, see Benbow, "Introduction," ix-xxii.

including grammar school governor, rector, lecturer, and state-appointed commissioner and licenser. Not surprisingly, Wager was known to have influential connections, and there is evidence that suggests Wager was likely a noted dramatist in the Earl of Leicester's (Robert Dudley's) company.¹⁹⁵ The conservative political and social ideologies of a Calvinist-leaning Puritan like Wager were born from a generation that "weathered tremendous dangers—the peasant rebellions, religious martyrdoms, and political conspiracies . . . cast shadows on daily English existence from the late 1530s to the early 1550s."¹⁹⁶ At this point in English dramatic history, the notion of a play being used as political strategy was well established. Earlier in the 1530s, Thomas Cromwell commissioned John Bale to write plays in support of Henry VIII. This is an example of how drama was seen as a means of persuasion, and by the mid-sixteenth century, religious plays moved away from a devotional focus and even further towards a particular political leaning.¹⁹⁷ By Elizabeth I's reign, drama-based propaganda took on an additional element with the publication of scripts, which made it possible for reformist playwrights and patrons to make their texts available to any willing playing troupe.¹⁹⁸ As we will see, the political and socioeconomic climate of mid-sixteenth-century England is bound up in the implications of sinful living.

Wager's *Enough* commences in conventional morality play tradition with the Prologue's contextualization of the upcoming characters and events and cautioning the audience against the forthcoming behavior. Right on cue, Worldly Man enters with a monologue boasting of his success and wealth before beginning a conversation with Heavenly Man and Contentation. Their lengthy discussion regarding the sins of greedy living results in a surprise when Worldly Man

¹⁹⁵ Paul White, *Theatre and Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 70.

¹⁹⁶ Murakami, "Wager's Drama of Conscience," 306.

¹⁹⁷ Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 93.

¹⁹⁸ White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 72.

agrees to turn away from his life of sin and towards godly living. Once they exit, the vices take the stage (Temerity, Inconsideration, Precipitation, and Covetous), and after gloating of their successes at derailing the life of good, pious people, Covetous vows to bring Worldly Man back to his sinful ways. Despite the virtuous Enough's warnings about Worldly Man's new friends, Worldly Man speaks to the importance and necessity of Policy and Ready Wit (Covetous and Precipitation disguised) in one's life. Using corrupt exegesis and playing on Worldly Man's affinity for wealth and greed, Covetous successfully pulls Worldly Man back into sinful living. The plot continues with the introduction of three new characters, tenant, Servant, and Hireling. A lengthy scene unfolds where each of these workers complains about the unreasonable and unethical treatment they are receiving from their landlord, Worldly Man. Covetous and Worldly Man show no mercy to these three and vow to keep adding to Worldly Man's wealth regardless. While Worldly Man is reassuring himself of his greed, Prophet speaks from off stage and warns Worldly Man of his imminent spiritual danger. Shortly after, Worldly Man groans of feeling ill and decides to rest. While he sleeps, God's Plague enters and causes sickness and disease to overcome Worldly Man. After a brief comical scene involving Covetous and Ignorance, they wake Worldly Man, who tells them about a dream he had regarding God's Plague and sickness. Left alone with Covetous, Worldly Man goes into a discussion about his worldly goods once he dies. Following a grim diagnosis from a physician, Worldly Man is convinced he is going to die. He begins to draft a will; however, he is unable to get past the first line before he dies. Shortly after, Satan enters and delivers a monologue that focuses on increasing his kingdom, sinful living, and the good work of Covetous. He encourages the audience to live sinful and wealth-driven lives before picking up Worldly Man and exiting with the corpse over his shoulder. The

play concludes with the virtues (Contentation, Heavenly Man, Enough, and Rest) uttering short, epigraph-like words of caution and wisdom to the audience.

At first glance, particularly in regards to structure and underlying moralistic value, Wager's *Enough* follows in the same vein as the late medieval morality plays. However, a close reading and analysis of religious and political context, characters, and dialogue will reveal how Wager's treatment of reckoning shifted from earlier dramatic illustrations. It is first essential to look at how Wager uses the religious and socioeconomic climate to illustrate the importance of godly living and the ramifications of a life lived in sin. The implications of dramatizing reckoning are caught up in the religious and political culture of mid-sixteenth century England. The didactic effect of Worldly Man's damned reckoning is a reflection of the waning religious vacillation that characterized England from the turn of the century up until Elizabeth I's reign. By the 1570s, the Church of England had become increasingly Calvinistic in its theology. As a result, there was a permeating significance on double predestination. And, "[a]lthough the English Reformation tended to emphasize 'election' rather than 'reprobation,' the fact of double predestination is always implicit."¹⁹⁹ While the late medieval morality play uses mercy and reassurance to induce audiences to repentance, Worldly Man's death and subsequent reckoning illustrate how the religious climate placed an emphasis on justice and fear as persuasive elements to repentance.²⁰⁰ In his opening lines, Heavenly Man instructs us on the relationship between man and God and contends that "all men here on earth ought to live in his fear" (126).²⁰¹ As the play unfolds, the audience quickly learns that Worldly Man remains fearless, and as a result, his life spent in acquiring wealth comes to an abrupt and damned end. As I discussed at length in my

¹⁹⁹ Benbow, "Introduction," xv.

²⁰⁰ White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 75.

²⁰¹ William Wager, *Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, ed R. Mark Benbow (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 80-146. For my primary texts, I will follow each quote with parenthetical line numbers.

first chapter, the religious rupture that defined the English Reformation brought about a very important refocusing, particularly in terms of Luther's beliefs in soteriological thought and his denunciation of the Catholic conceptualization of merit. This refocusing was further developed by Calvin and termed double predestination.²⁰² For a number of Wager's audience members, sinful living was reprobate living, a realization that makes several appearances throughout the play. Worldly Man's inevitable regress that later occurs at the hands of Covetous is a clear marker of reprobation. The virtuous Enough character tries in vain to preach to Worldly Man, warning him that his decision to succumb to the temptations of Covetous comes "from a worldly lust which doth you blind" (830). This language echoes Calvin's own belief that "whom he [God] has created for dishonour during life and destruction at death, that they may be vessels of wrath and examples of severity, in bringing their doom, he at one time deprives of the means of hearing his word, at another by preaching of it blinds and stupifies them the more."²⁰³ Worldly Man's blindness to Enough's admonitions falls in line with Calvin's characterization of the reprobate. We can see Calvin's notion of double predestination in the later conversations of the Tenant, the Hireling, and the Servant. In anger and disgust over rent-gouging, the Tenant is confident of Worldly Man's forthcoming reckoning:

Tenant: Thou fool (saith Christ) this night will I fetch thy soul from thee,

And then who shall have the things that thine be?

Well, let him alone, I hope all will prove for the best;

Even as he leadeth his life so shall he find rest. (1051–54)

²⁰² For more on this, refer back to "Chapter 1: The Drama of Last Things," p.000.

²⁰³ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1846), 3.24.12.

The Tenant's passion-filled retort to Worldly Man's failure to sympathize with him is both vindictive and foreshadowing. Further along, during Worldly Man's effort to rest a while, God's Plague enters. God's Plague would have been a familiar character type "who recalls Death in [*Castle of*] *Perseverance* and the Messenger in *Everyman* and the medieval Dance of Death."²⁰⁴ The entrance and presence of God's Plague marks the beginning of the death sequence and Worldly Man's subsequent reckoning. In addition to physically afflicting Worldly Man, God's Plague assures him of his predetermined fate:

God's Plague: Thou shalt depart from thy house and land,
Thy wife and children beggars thou shalt leave,
Thy life thou shalt lose even out of hand,
And after death thy just reward receive. (1227–30)

As the play moves towards its end, the characters on stage, coupled with the events at hand, complete a deathbed scene. As mentioned in Chapter 1, deathbed texts were prevalent well into the seventeenth century, and despite the religious changes taking place, the varying Protestant theological strands made room for deathbed instruction. Wager places his afflicted protagonist on his metaphorical deathbed at the center of the scene. Staying in line with customary deathbed depictions, Worldly Man is surrounded by his friends (Covetous and Ignorance). Conventionally, the dying person was flanked by close friends and/or family members who were responsible for praying and aiding the priest. However, Wager perverts this familiar scene with Ignorance's suggestion that a doctor be called in lieu of the conventional deathbed overseer, the clergy (traditionally, a priest):

Ignorance: Is it not best that I call hither a physician,

²⁰⁴ Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 156.

That he may of your sickness declare the disposition? (1313–14)

The *Book of the Craft of Dying*²⁰⁵ directly addresses the dangers of medicine and privileges the role of the priest:

But this counsel is now for-slothed almost of all men, and is turned into the contrary; for men seek sooner and busier after medicines for the body than for the soul. Therefore every sick man . . . should . . . [receive] spiritual medicines, that is to say the sacraments of the Holy Church.²⁰⁶

As suggested here, the priest's primary role was to administer the sacraments to the dying individual. Although the presence of a physician would not have been completely out of the ordinary, Worldly Man's inability to see that he has replaced the godly conveyor with the limitations of worldly medicine is more evidence of his reprobation. In a vain attempt to diagnose and treat the illness brought upon by God's Plague, the Physician furthers the fatalistic discourse: "But you are past help in this world in man's judgment" (1368). He follows this doom a few lines later: "In 105ursedess thou has lived, even so thou wilt end" (1376). This line also makes a direct reference to the results of sinful living: just as Worldly Man has lived in sin, so will he die in sin as well. The deathbed scene here also "exploits the emotion of fear, a noteworthy element of Calvin's theology."²⁰⁷ As noted above, Worldly Man's fear of God is not strong enough to keep him from sinful living. However, his fear of death is quite prevalent:

Worldly Man: Write quickly, for of my life I am afraid.

O must I needs die? O must I needs away? (1,398–99)

²⁰⁵ For more on this text and my discussion of deathbed texts, see "Chapter 1: The Drama of Last Things," p.000.

²⁰⁶ "*The Book of the Craft of Dying*," 33.

²⁰⁷ Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 156.

For Calvin, fear of death was an emotional response not fitting for a true Christian. In “Chapter IX: Meditating on the Future Life” of his *Institutes*, Calvin uses Scriptural evidence to contend that we are to “look forward with joy to the day of death and final resurrection; for Paul distinguishes all believers by this mark.”²⁰⁸ So Worldly Man’s fearful utterings indicate that he is not in the desired mindset at his deathbed. This evidence is furthered by his unyielding focus on completing a will. Once convinced that he is indeed dying, Worldly Man looks to Covetous and Ignorance to help him draft a legal document that will ultimately protect his assets, including his wife and children. This overt misstep reveals Worldly Man’s inability to see beyond his materialistic greed. In a frantic attempt to get the words written down, Worldly Man begins dictating. As was customary, the will would have begun with a traditional call to God. However, Worldly Man dies before he can utter the name of Christ. Ignorance pleads for Worldly Man to finish his sentence: “In the name—in, in, in—in the name, what more?” (1402). Worldly Man makes a futile attempt to respond with “Of—” before falling down and dying (1403). The deathbed scene concludes with Worldly Man’s reprobate death, emptying the stage for Satan’s entrance and his subsequent reckoning. Wager’s use of deathbed traditions and the emotion of fear appropriate the conventions of earlier morality plays and the theological framework in which they existed. However, for Wager the damned protagonist’s sinful living was overwhelming in the end. Wager’s theological leanings and the religious climate in which they are expressed illustrate the importance of a daily, constant focus on godly living. Worldly Man’s reckoning comes as a result of his inability to refrain from sinful living, an important distinction also reflected in the play’s political and social nuances.

²⁰⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.9.6.

As noted earlier in this chapter, Wager's *Enough* was written and performed in a vibrant political and social climate, an essential contextual element in revealing the ramifications of Worldly Man's sinful living. The political and socioeconomic environment in which Wager's generation came of age coupled with the growing propagandic effects of drama both on stage and in print resulted in plays like *Enough*, where we see connections in sinful living between semi-abstract characters and their real-life counterparts.

Pre-Reformation morality plays concerned with reckoning and efficacious dying were largely void of heavy political and social subtext. However, because drama's propagandic value was on the rise and a variety of wealthy and powerful individuals took advantage of this, from the monarchy and other nobility to wealthy merchants, Wager had room to illustrate his own beliefs in the dangers of a very specific type of sinful living; in doing so, he "demonstrates vividly how the formula of the morality play could be adapted . . . to the polemical purposes of the English Reformation."²⁰⁹ In its most basic sense, *Enough* is a play about the perils of wealth and greed. However, upon closer analysis, we can see how Wager's commentary on the current state of political and socioeconomic affairs brings a real, tangible element to sinful living. This element acts partially as a mirror held up to the audience, ensuring the connections being made between the two were not lost. This vision of godly living includes important economic and social expectations.

Wager's most comprehensive socioeconomic commentary focuses on rent gouging and its relationship with sinful living. As a conservative Puritan, Wager openly condemned the corrupt financial goings-on that he saw prevalent in England, particularly the social implications

²⁰⁹ David Bevington, "Staging the Reformation: Power and Theatricality in the Plays of William Wager," in *Interludes and Early Modern Society: Studies in Gender, Power and Theatricality*, vol. 9, ed. Peter Happé and Wim Husken (New York: Rodopi, 2007), 374.

that accompanied insurmountable rent rates; this is most evident in the scene involving the Tenant. The Tenant opens the scene with his complaints against Worldly Man (his landlord):

Tenant: Chave dwelt there this zix and thirty year,
Yea these vorty, ich may tell you well near,
And ich never paid above yearly vive pound:
And by our Lady, that to be enough chave vound.
Well, now I must give him even as much more,
Or else ich must void the next quarter or bevore.
O masters, is not this even a lamentable thing,
To zee how landlords their poor tenants do wring? (975–82)

Despite Wager's use of Cotswold speech²¹⁰ for comedic effect, the Tenant's lines here speak to the injustices of sinful living. The implications of Worldly Man's greed result in social and financial suffering, a very pertinent issue for the conservative Wager. The economic grievances are further evidenced by the Tenant's criticisms of immigrant workers:

Tenant: And especially strangers—yea a shameful zorte,
Are placed now in England and that in every port—
That we, our wives and children, no houses can get
Wherein we may live, such price on them is zet. (985–88)

Worldly Man's price gouging becomes a political issue as well. The Tenant laments the fact that greedy landlords will just as well rent to unwise immigrants who will pay the higher price. Here, Wager is alluding to the influx of Flemish immigrants into England in the mid-sixteenth century.

²¹⁰ In this edition of *Enough*, Benbow notes that this is an old dramatic tradition of Gloucestershire dialect. Although Wager is not consistent, the initial *f* and *s* become *v* and *z*, and the dialectal forms *ich*, *cham*, *chill*, *chave* are used for *I*, *I am*, *I will*, and *I have*.

Their presence created a degree of socioeconomic imbalance, resulting in political and social unrest.²¹¹ The stream of immigrants forced the government to gather censuses and subsequently institute a policy “restricting . . . immigration using such criteria as nationality, trade and availability of housing, and [enforcing] a numerical quota system.”²¹² Similar sentiments about foreigners are voiced in George Walpull’s *Tide Tarrieth No Man* (c. 1570s) and Thomas Lupton’s *All for Money* (c. 1570s). The audience would have easily recognized the Tenant’s complaints; and as a result, Wager’s political and socioeconomic commentary ensure sinful living is more realized.

The end of this same scene reveals Worldly Man’s abuse of power in refusing to budge on doubling the Tenant’s rent:

Worldly Man: No, by my faith sir, you get it [financial reprieve] not today.

You shall tarry my leisure. I will pay you when I see cause. (1144–45)

The jarring, flippant dismissal of the Tenant reflects the reality of Wager’s world. Although the government was actively making economic and political moves to relieve the financial woes of the lower classes with acts like the Statute of Artificers, individuals like Wager remained skeptical.²¹³ He, among others, felt “the advancement of commerce [had] done little to alleviate the suffering of the poor and . . . [only promoted] greed and exploitation in areas of trade and housing.”²¹⁴ Wager’s distrust comes from an ideology that sees the individual as the catalyst for change. This can be seen throughout the play with Worldly Man’s reliance on Policy:

²¹¹ See Peter McClusky’s *Representations of Flemish Immigrants on the Early Modern Stage* (New York: Routledge, 2020).

²¹² Ronald Pollitt, “‘Refuge of the Distressed Nations,’ Perceptions of Aliens in Elizabethan England,” *Journal of Modern History* 52, no. 1 (March 1980): D1017.

²¹³ The Statute of Artificers helped define the labor code and settle disputes over wage earnings. In addition, the Crown passed new legislation regarding interest rates with the Usury Act of 1571. For more, see Paul White’s “Chapter 3: Reformation Playwrights and Plays,” in *Theatre and Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 67-99.

²¹⁴ White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 95.

Worldly Man: Policy and Ready Wit: now the truth is so,

There is no man living that can spare you two.

I trust God worketh for me happily indeed

To send me all such things whereof I have need. (761–64)

Wager disguises Covetous as Policy, thereby making it a chief vice character that is largely responsible for Worldly Man's sinful living. For staunch Calvinists like Wager, there was general skepticism "that 'policy' [could] change social conditions. [T]hey perceived covetousness, ambition, and oppression as ultimately 'spiritual' evils, the responsibility of which resides with individual sinners, not with the 'system.'"²¹⁵ Wager saw the individual as responsible for living a godly life: one cannot expect the overarching political institution to alter conditions. This belief system is related to the "Calvinist doctrine of the calling which taught that the manner by which a man pursues his divinely 110ursed110ted vocation in the social order is a direct reflection of his spiritual condition."²¹⁶ Wager's commentary and polemical attack on the current socioeconomic state of mid-sixteenth century England illustrates that in order to live a godly life, one must look beyond their own existence and avoid economic practices that brings unnecessary hardships.²¹⁷ For Wager, acknowledging a personal responsibility was important in living piously.

Mid-century London was rife with ambitious and aspiring London citizens "craving for cultural capital and prestige."²¹⁸ In the minds of conservatives, these individuals were easy prey to a vice like Covetous. Exploitation of the poor becomes a prominent consideration in Wager's vision of sinful living. The political and socioeconomic context provides a degree of tangibility

²¹⁵ White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 96.

²¹⁶ White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 96.

²¹⁷ Bevington, "Staging the Reformation," 375.

²¹⁸ Murakami, "Wager's Drama of Conscience, Convention, and State Constitution," 312.

to the events in the play. Albeit primarily subtextual, Wager's political and social leanings implicitly make the connection between real-world individuals, their social and political agendas, and sinful living. He is implying that individuals supporting systems and policies that he (and his cohort) are against could very well see themselves as part of the reprobate, open to physical afflictions like the plague and spiritual afflictions like damned reckonings.

Finally, Wager's complexity of character separates the protagonist(s) from pre-Reformation moralities and reveals the ramifications of living a sinful life. The mere presence of a dual protagonist (Worldly Man and Heavenly Man) gives the moral more substance and "defines the conflict more sharply."²¹⁹ As we have seen, morality plays like *Everyman* and *Castle of Perseverance* focus their efforts on one particular protagonist that becomes the universal negative (then positive) example; however, Wager's use of polarizing protagonists ensures the play instructs by means of both positive and negative examples, simultaneously. Of course, this echoes Calvinistic perceptions of double predestination, but it also reveals the complexity with which Wager approaches the importance of living a godly life. The Prologue is where we get our first characterization of Worldly Man:

The Worldly Man is frolic, lusty and strong
Who will show his qualities before you;
Stout he is and in any wise will not bow. (88–90)

The Prologue reveals the protagonist's disposition, and after he enters, Worldly Man's own monologue further cements his materialistic desires and sinful living. He boasts that he has "riches and money at [his] pleasure," and only seeks to increase his wealth (96). Immediately

²¹⁹ Benbow, "Introduction," xvi.

after Worldly Man's characterizing speech, Heavenly Man enters and reveals himself with his antithetical words:

Heavenly Man: God careth for his, as the prophet David doth say,
And preserveth them under his merciful wing—
The heavenly I mean, that this will do obey
And observe his holy commandments in all thing. (121–124)

In order for his moral to be theologically framed and personally identifiable, Wager promptly establishes the vast difference between the two characters: they are the first two characters to speak. The presence of Heavenly Man, the pious inverse of Worldly Man, is a direct reflection of the concept of elect and reprobate. This idea is realized when he suggests that Worldly Man is doomed due to his greed, "Being infected with ambition that sickness uncurable" (199).

Heavenly Man contends that there is no coming back from such a diagnosis, foreshadowing Worldly Man's relapse and further distancing himself from his antithesis. Heavenly Man exists so the audience has someone to contrast with Worldly Man. While late medieval morality plays allegorize those viewing the play into one character, Wager suggests the audience could be one of *two* characters. In doing so, he "narrows the focus . . . by replacing the traditional hero Mankind with Worldly Man and Heavenly Man."²²⁰ In addition to creating dual protagonists that symbolize good and evil, Wager's Worldly Man goes beyond mere abstraction. This is not to say that the symbolism is lost and the allegory is not fully recognized; on the contrary, Worldly Man's tangibility and relatability ensures the moral blow is not softened. Wager's choice to further actualize Worldly Man is directly related to the socioeconomic subtext that runs through the play. As discussed above, Wager's notion of sinful living is in part a reflection of the greater

²²⁰ Benbow, "Introduction," xix.

social and economic climate of mid-sixteenth century England. Worldly Man does not embody the conventions of morality play 113ursed113errs like cutpurses, ruffians, and vagabonds; instead, he embodies esteemed bourgeois who fall prey to ambition and become actors in real-life dramas.²²¹ This is further evidenced by the ways in which Worldly Man acts as a “middling ‘citizen’” who has the same ability to commit sinful, tragic acts as the tyrant does.²²² Wager’s “everyman” becomes a distinct man, making him more relatable to a mid-sixteenth century English interlude audience. Worldly Man’s familial relationships also add another level of complexity to his character. In addition to mentioning his wife and children, Worldly Man also speaks to his late father:

Worldly Man: As by my own father an example I may take.

He was beloved of all men and kept a good house

Whilst riches lasted, but when that did slake,

There was no man that did set by him a louse. (109–112)

Worldly Man aims to follow his father’s own path but alter the ending. He appears to recognize the missteps of his father’s life and vows to “. . . take heed of such” (117). Wager adds depth to the character here with the addition of filial responsibility; and in doing so, renders a complex character with a personal history that draws sympathy even when he is living sinfully.²²³ There is little doubt that the audience members saw parts of themselves or others in both the doomed Worldly Man and his godly counterpart Heavenly Man because the wrongdoings and the contrasting piety are framed in real-world concerns.

²²¹ Murakami, “Wager’s Drama of Conscience, Convention, and State Constitution,” 315.

²²² Murakami, “Wager’s Drama of Conscience, Convention, and State Constitution,” 315.

²²³ Murakami, “Wager’s Drama of Conscience, Convention, and State Constitution,” 317.

It is not difficult to see that Wager's dramatic writing instructs, an obvious connection with his grammar school governorship and his various lectureships. However, more specifically, Wager's moral instruction is poignantly "related to daily living and the ultimate fate of the spectators."²²⁴ In comparison to the medieval plays from the previous chapter, Wager is more concerned with the individual journey one takes and how the implications of piety in theology, socioeconomic issues, and character are wrapped up in a Christian's daily life. And, if a Christian is not cautious of these important elements of daily living, they are at serious risk of experiencing a damned reckoning.

Tragical History of Doctor Faustus

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* was written and performed at the turn of the sixteenth century, during the blossoming of England's public stage. Interestingly, despite the new theatrical climate, Marlowe's *Faustus* harkens back to the traditions of the morality play (some two hundred years earlier) by providing "a spiritual biography of its protagonist from birth until death and from innocence to damnation."²²⁵ Due to its convoluted textual history and the ways in which it can affect my analysis, it is important that I make room for a brief contextualization: the play exists in two versions, the A-text and the B-text. Although written about 1590, the play was not published until 1604; this 1,517-line edition is commonly referred to as the A-text. In 1616, a second edition of the play was published; this second edition is commonly referred to as the B-text and is around 600 lines longer than the first edition. These two editions, as well as evidence of outside authorial additions, make the play's textual history a complex one. Although scholars tend to agree that the A-text is more authorial and the B-text

²²⁴ T.W. Craik, *The Tudor Interlude: Stage, Costume, and Acting* (London: Leicester University Press, 1962), 100.

²²⁵ Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe*, 258.

more suited for performance, both editions are essential in studying Marlowe's *Faustus*.²²⁶ In using both, I will speak to how Faustus's tragic internalized reckoning must be viewed in concert with the externalization brought out in its theatricality. The editions here modernize the spelling and punctuation. Aside from following both Bevington and Rasmussen in repositioning two comic scenes (A-text), the Kastan edition used here is conservatively emended.²²⁷

The play's adherence to the conventions of the morality play and its contrasting elements with Wager's *Enough* make it a pertinent source for analysis on the shifting realizations of staging reckoning. The public stage brought with it an even greater move away from religious-driven drama; a play like *Enough*, written by a devout cleric and based upon sermons by well-known Protestant figure William Tyndale, would be replaced by plays built upon classic and other secular sources. In addition, Marlowe's Faustus is not regularly contrasted against a pious character like we see with Heavenly Man. The absence of a dual protagonist places more focus on the sinfulness of Faustus himself and the lesson's learned through action and self-awareness. Although a morality play, *Faustus* serves as evidence for this shift: Marlowe was far removed from being a clerical author (like Wager) and used the secular legend of Faust as the primary source for his play.²²⁸ I make this argument to illustrate that even though late-sixteenth-century English drama changed in terms of physical space, scope, and structure, the focus on sinful living

²²⁶ For more nuanced and comprehensive analyses of the play's textual history see Eric Rasmussen's *A Textual Companion to Doctor Faustus* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993) and Michael Warren's "Doctor Faustus: The Old Man and the Text," in *English Literary Renaissance* 11, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 111-147.

²²⁷ David S. Kastan, "Editorial Procedures," xiii.

²²⁸ There is an extensive critical discussion regarding the accusations of Marlowe's supposed atheistic leanings. These largely biographic conversations are not pertinent for my particular argument and focus. For more on this, see David Riggs, "Marlowe's Quarrel with God," in *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Paul Winfield White (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1998), 25-33. In addition, for more on Marlowe's sources, see Sara Munson Deats, "Doctor Faustus: From Chapbook to Tragedy," in *Doctor Faustus: A Two-Text Edition*, 209-225.

and damned reckoning was not lost during this transition.²²⁹ If we remember, the religious climate that informed Wager's writing was quite unsettled: here, I am referring to the rule of Henry VIII (particularly the mid-1530s) up until the early years of Elizabeth I's reign (1560). Of course, this also includes the rule of Mary I. Although Marlowe's England was further removed (some 30-60 years) from the contentious religious climate of the early-to-mid sixteenth century that helped shape Wager's *Enough*, the environment was far from being theologically stable: essentially, we have a Catholic king, Henry VIII, who becomes the first Protestant King of England after a dispute with the Pope, then a Catholic queen focusing on returning her country to its Catholic traditions, followed by a Protestant queen looking to reestablish her late father's Protestant monarchy. Furthermore, during each reign, individuals are being exiled (or fleeing) and even being executed for faith that differs from the governing body. Unsurprisingly, *Doctor Faustus* "lies at a cultural and theological nexus, where residual modes of Catholicism intersected and competed with emerging concepts of Protestantism."²³⁰ In addition to focusing on the ways in which Marlowe uses varying theologies, my discussion will also address how Marlowe turns Faustus into a unique exemplification of the dangers of sinful living, from the inside out. Marlowe's *Faustus* is unique "in that all conflicts, struggles, delights, decisions, and pains are packed within one man," a man who falls victim to his own mental capacities.²³¹

Doctor Faustus opens with a lengthy Prologue that provides context for what is to come. Right away, we learn Faustus is a very educated man that becomes frustrated with the baseness of his knowledge. He calls on his friends, Valdes and Cornelius, to join him in discussing his

²²⁹ These changes ushered in the flourishing of public performances. The construction of playhouses, freestanding amphitheatres dedicated to staging plays, in the last decades of the sixteenth century brought with it more elaborate scene design and staging that allowed for larger, more expansive productions. In addition, the commercialization of the theater also blossomed into professional acting companies supported by wealthy patrons.

²³⁰ Poole, "Dr. Faustus and Reformation Theology," 96.

²³¹ Douglas Cole, "Doctor Faustus and the Morality Tradition," in *Doctor Faustus: A Two-Text Edition*, 312.

desires to expand upon his knowledge; ultimately, Faustus elects to practice necromancy and subsequently calls upon the devil. Mephistopheles, one of Lucifer's demons, answers the call. Following Mephistopheles and Faustus's discussions and a brief back-and-forth among Faustus, the Good Angel, and the Bad Angel, Faustus reaches an agreement with Lucifer and signs his soul away in blood. The remainder of the play is filled with moments of grandeur, indecisiveness, comedy, and drama before ending with tragedy. After twenty-four years have passed, the devil comes to collect Faustus's soul. In what is arguably one of the most tragic scenes in dramatic history, Faustus is reckoned and dragged to hell. The play concludes with the Chorus's brief reminder of the dangers of aspiring to knowledge.

As noted earlier in my discussion of the religious climate during Wager's mid-to-late sixteenth century period, the Church of England began adopting Calvinist theology as the century wore on. By the last quarter of the century, the influence of Calvinism could be seen in various spaces, from the Presbyterians in Scotland to the staunch beliefs of both the Puritans and Pilgrims. As we can see, Marlowe was living and writing in a predominantly Calvinist England. However, we find both ideological undertones and overtones of traditional Catholicism and several branches of Protestantism, a hybridity that "demonstrates how the early modern theater is a space of contested rites in which religious aesthetic conjunctions, confrontations, and conjurations could be staged in all their confessional, theological, and theatrical complexity."²³² Scholars and historians have regularly analyzed the degree of religious ambiguity and the resulting implications, particularly focusing on Faustus as a reprobate.²³³ However

²³² Jay Zysk, "The Last Temptation of Faustus: Contested Rites and Eucharistic Representation in *Doctor Faustus*," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 43, no. 2 (Spring 2013), 337.

²³³ See Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985); Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, 2nd ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); John Cox, "Devils and Power in Marlowe and Shakespeare," *Yearbook of English Studies* 23, no. 1 (1993): 46-64; Marjorie Garber, "'Here's Nothing Writ':

“magnificently ambiguous[ly]” Marlowe stages “precious matters [of] salvation, faith, doubt, and despair,” there remains a looming certainty when the fog clears—a reckoning will come.²³⁴

Whether it be according to strands of Calvinistic, Lutheran, or Catholic theology further mixed in with atheistic leanings, Faustus is ultimately judged and his soul reckoned. Marlowe reveals that regardless of theological leanings at one’s death, sinful living results in damned reckoning.

The play’s final moments offer an informative glimpse into the ways in which Marlowe blends theologies: *Faustus*’ dramatic portrayal of reckoning is articulated through a hybridized religious confession that decides Faustus’s eternal fate. Marlowe is not content merely mirroring the traditions of the morality play; instead, we are presented with a protagonist uniquely “poised between the confessional slippages of Catholicism and Protestantism,” including both Luther and Calvin.²³⁵ Faustus begins his dramatic soliloquy and ambiguity with a reprobate-like despair that has been echoed throughout the play: “And then thou must be damned perpetually” (5.2.134). In addition to Calvinistic sentiments, critics like Clifford Davidson suggest moments like this also reveal Luther’s emphasis on the bondage of the will.²³⁶ Disagreeing with Erasmus and the Catholic belief in free will, Luther believed that our will was bound to sin, and only God’s redemption could set it free. In terms of willpower, Luther believed individuals did not have the ability to choose between good and evil.²³⁷ Merely five lines later, we have Faustus’s imposition of free will: “That Faustus may repent and save his soul” (5.2.140). Here, we see contradiction and evidence that “vacillat[es] between a theology based on free will and God’s forgiveness and

Scribe, Script, and Circumscription in Marlowe’s Plays,” *Theatre Journal* 36, no. 3 (1984): 301-320; and Pauline Honderich, “John Calvin and *Doctor Faustus*,” *Modern Language Review* 68, no. 1 (1973): 1-13.

²³⁴ David Bevington, “Doctor Faustus,” in *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine E. Maus, and Eric Rasmussen (New York: Norton & Company, 2002), 245.

²³⁵ Zysk, “The Last Temptation of Faustus,” 359.

²³⁶ Clifford Davidson, “Doctor Faustus of Wittenberg,” *Studies in Philology* 59, no. 1 (1962): 514-532.

²³⁷ Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther engaged in opposing theological polemics on the doctrine of free will. See Gordon E. Rupp and Philip S. Watson, eds. and trans., *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation*.

a theology based on Calvin's conception of double predestination."²³⁸ Faustus continues the Calvinist theological exemplification while also alluding to Lutheranism in his realization: "The devil will come, and Faustus must be damned" (5.2.143). A hopeless, predestined utterance indicating his eventual fate also incorporates the Lutheran belief that "[r]ational doubt of faith was a necessary precursor of salvation, for it reminded the worshipper that the perspective of Spirit could not be comprehended from the way of Flesh, and that final certainty about the afterlife was impossible."²³⁹ So, what appears to be a clear indication of reprobation and staunch Calvinistic leanings also reveals shades of the Lutheran faith. Marlowe uniquely situates Faustus and his subsequent reckoning in a religious blend of sorts.

We can further see the way Marlowe blends the theology in the way Faustus reflects on his situation during a vision that occurs solely in the A-text: "See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament" (5.2.74). Faustus's vision of Christ's streaming blood echoes the writing of mystics like Richard Rolle (fourteenth century) and Margery Kempe (fifteenth century), and the medieval traditions of affective piety influenced devotional practices. In addition to referencing and inverting Faustus's blood-signing scene from earlier in the play, the vision also correlates to Eucharistic theology. In the A-text, Faustus suggests: "One drop would save my soul, half a drop. Ah, my Christ" (5.2.74). This line plays a role in the religious signification of body and soul, another dramatic ritual debated throughout the Reformation. The Eucharist was a recurring point of contention across the theological spectrum. Catholics and reformers differed on the notion of transubstantiation at consecration. Catholics believed in a transformation that resulted in real presence, where the substances of bread and wine were replaced with Christ's own body and blood. However, early reformers like Zwingli insisted that

²³⁸ Poole, "Dr. Faustus and Reformation Theology," 102.

²³⁹ Fletcher, "Doctor Faustus and the Lutheran Aesthetic," 196.

the bread and wine acted as symbols of the body and blood of Christ. Sixteenth century English reformers fell somewhere in between the two positions, teaching some form of real presence: Church of England clergyman Richard Hooker insists that the bread and wine “hath in it more than the substance which our eyes behold, this cup hallowed with solemn benediction availeth to the endless life and welfare both of soul and body, in that it serveth as well for a medicine to heal our infirmities and purge our sins as for a sacrifice of thanksgiving.”²⁴⁰ Regardless of the differences, Catholics and Protestants both believed in Christ’s blood having redemptive power, a conviction held by Faustus as well.

In terms of theology, the final scenes reflect the ambiguity of transformational culture in late-sixteenth century England. As a result, Marlowe’s uniquely orchestrated final act helps bridge the gap between traditional and modern. The theology and religious culture of the time creates the emotional angst that becomes the drama of reckoning in *Doctor Faustus*. Marlowe suggests that sinful living, even in religious ambiguity, results in damnation. Faustus’s utterances often embody various theologies, particularly when it comes to his eternal fate. Whether it be through his own admission or the implications of Christ’s blood, the audience is at times sure of his reprobation; however, Marlowe’s use of the Good and Evil Angels and the Old Man offer hope that Faustus may yet be redeemed. Nevertheless, one thing is clear: Faustus dies and is dragged to hell. There is no theological question needing an answer here. Regardless of how he got to the point of death and whether he had opportunity for repentance or not, Faustus’s tragic fate is universally Christian: sinful living leads to hell. Marlowe’s use of Catholic and Protestant theologies, particularly in Faustus’s last few moments, reveal an important singularity: late-

²⁴⁰ Richard Hooker, “Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V,” in *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker with an Account of His Life and Death by Isaac Walton*, vol. 2, arranged by Rev. John Keble and revised by Rev. R.W. Church and the Rev. F. Paget (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), 361-362.

sixteenth century England provided paths (emphasis on the plural) to a clear reckoning. Prior to the Reformation, the vast majority of individuals followed the path laid out by the Catholic tradition. However, as the sixteenth century wore on, individuals were presented with alternatives. Faustus is a unique example of the way in which theological possibilities could weigh heavy upon the mind, particularly at one's death.

By the end of *Doctor Faustus*, the audience is left with a new kind of character, a tragic figure whose tragedy is primarily realized by the complexities of his own mental capacity. Marlowe focuses on the way Faustus's sinful mind functions and, in doing so, mirrors the reality of being human. These mental complexities are made most evident early on, when Faustus questions Mephistopheles on the nature of hell.

Faustus: Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

Mephistopheles: Within the bowels of these elements,

Where we are tortured and remain for ever.

Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed

In one self place, for where we are is hell,

And where hell is, there must we ever be. (2.1.113, 115–19)

Faustus is not content with the theological interpretation of hell; he is seeking a different answer. Just as he believes there is more knowledge to be gained, he also believes there is more to hell than his education has taught him. Mephistopheles's response to the question reveals the sinful nature of Faustus's mind and foreshadows the internal struggles yet to come. According to Mephistopheles, hell is a state of mind. This is even clearer when looking at the words *bowel* as the general interior of the human body and *element* as the raw material of which a thing is

made.²⁴¹ So, in this sense, heaven and hell exist inside of us, and for Faustus specifically, hell is inside his mind. Marlowe echoes Luther and Calvin; both theologians believed that sins like despair illustrated ways in which hell existed as a state of mind. Snyder points to Luther's exegesis of Hebrews 4:15 and Calvin's arguments in *Psychopannychia* (1534 treatise) in suggesting that both saw hell as "the condition rather than the location of those doomed by God to destruction."²⁴² Faustus's mind is the abstract space that feeds his appetite for sinful living. Wager's Worldly Man is not characterized by his intelligence and his pensive desire for more knowledge. Instead, he desires material wealth, a sin that is reflected in his outward daily living, whether it be through his accumulation of riches and treatment of those below his stature or through spiritual neglect at his own death. On the other hand, Faustus reflects the potential for sinful living that is not necessarily manifested in physicalities; Marlowe reveals that inner thoughts, ambitions, desires, etc. can be as sinful as transgressions seen and felt by the world around us. Faustus is his own worst enemy—sometimes it is not merely what we *do* that is sinful, it can just as well be who we *are* and what we *think* that is sinful.

The Chorus's characterization of Faustus in the Prologue is early evidence of his sinful mentality, particularly through their prideful description:

Chorus: Till swoll'n with cunning of a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
And melting heavens conspired his overthrow. (1.1.20–22)

²⁴¹ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "bowel, (*n.*1), sense I.1.c," September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/2447347056>; *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "element, (*n.*), sense I.i.2," September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1017205218>.

²⁴² Susan Snyder, "The Left Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition," *Studies in the Renaissance* 12, no. 1 (1965): 18-59.

At first glance, it appears the Prologue is merely alluding to the classic moral tale of Icarus (later appropriated for religious purposes) and accusing Faustus of a common sinful fault, pride. In fact, Pride makes an appearance later in the play during the pageant of the Seven Deadly Sins. Faustus aims to be better, not in a self-esteeming journey for confidence and literacy, but in a conceited flight for knowledge and power. However, there is a deeper level of sinful thinking on display here, particularly when looking at the use and meaning of the words “cunning” and “self-conceit.” Marlowe’s use of *cunning* reflects the traditional medieval meaning, knowledge.²⁴³ And, in addition to referring to something conceived in the mind, *conceit* also refers to an opinion or judgment.²⁴⁴ Not only is Faustus guilty of pride, but he is also sinful in the way in which he thinks of himself—his perception of own existence is part of his downfall. Marlowe characterizes his protagonist as someone who is sinning in ways not seen in earlier moralities. Yes, Faustus is proud of his accomplishments, but the Chorus makes a point to declare that he is “swollen with the knowledge of an idea about himself.”²⁴⁵ In this regard, Marlowe points to an existential pride in his tragic hero.

The Chorus builds up their characterization of Faustus’s sinful persona in speaking to his hunger for more knowledge:

Chorus: And glutted more with learning’s golden gifts,

He surfeits upon 123ursed necromancy. (1.1.24–25)

Although the Chorus again characterizes Faustus as sinful due to his pride, their reference to gluttony illustrates a more significant corrupt mentality. Gluttony is also one of the traditional

²⁴³ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “cunning (n.1), sense 1,” September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/2736081552>.

²⁴⁴ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “conceit (n.), sense II.5.a,” September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4585605237>.

²⁴⁵ Happé, *English Drama Before Shakespeare*, 215.

Seven Deadly Sins and is conventionally associated with the overconsumption of food. However, in *Faustus*, Marlowe uses it as an excessive consumption of knowledge; Faustus is *fattened* with learning, knowledge, etc. In addition, the Chorus uses “surfeits,” a word closely related to gluttony. The word *surfeit* was commonly thought of as a sickness resulting from overeating.²⁴⁶ Marlowe’s employment of “surfeits” intensifies the meaning of “glutted” and characterizes Faustus’s mental state as a sickness.

Worldly Man was physically afflicted due to his sin; in contrast, Faustus’s mental affliction is brought on by his prideful aspirations and appetency for knowledge. Marlowe makes clear connections between eating food and “eating” knowledge: “[d]igestion . . . signifies the assimilation of wisdom. By referring to glutting, surfeiting and appetite throughout *Doctor Faustus*, Marlowe suggests that Faustus has abused his mind.”²⁴⁷ In defining the relationship between pride and gluttony, Marlowe is suggesting that Faustus internalizes what is often seen as an externalized sin. The Prologue sets the scene for what is to come; it “not only anticipates the hero’s misdirection of mind, the corruption which ensues, and his great loss; it intimates that Faustus has begun to injure his mind before his dramatic journey even begins.”²⁴⁸ As the characters enter and the dialogue begins, the audience is given insight into the mental struggles that will befall their tragic hero.

Another important evidential piece of Faustus’s internal struggle involves the presence of the Good and Bad Angels. As I have pointed out in the previous chapter in my discussion of the *Castle of Perseverance*, the Good and Bad Angels were common character types in the long-standing allegorical morality tradition. They were theatrical tropes that externalized various

²⁴⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “surfeit (v.), sense 4.a,” December 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1171331978>.

²⁴⁷ Judith Weil, *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin’s Prophet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 53.

²⁴⁸ Weil, *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin’s Prophet*, 54.

characters' interior thoughts. Although Marlowe uses these two characters to reveal Faustus's inner turmoil in much the same way, their uniqueness in the play comes from the lack of agency in their existence. The Good and Bad Angels in *Perseverance* have a very influential role in that they both call on vices and virtues to progress the play and have key roles in the protagonist's reckoning (the Bad Angel carries him off to the devil). However, here the angels are implicated in Faustus's mental struggles through their intangible presence only. They have lines, are played by real actors, and are physically present on stage, but they do not change the course of dramatic action. The two characters first enter midway through Act I, Scene 1:

Good Angel: O, Faustus, lay that damned book aside

And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul. (1.1.70–71)

Bad Angel: Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art

Wherein all Nature's treasury is contained. (1.1.74–75)

These few lines reiterate their purpose as internal guides. Their brief appearance (approximately eight lines in its entirety) here is characterized by a lack of acknowledgement—although Faustus is onstage, he does not engage in their counsel. In addition to establishing their presence, Marlowe also foreshadows their lack of agency—they will remain as mental abstractions in Faustus's mind, but they will not have a participatory role in the play's action. The ongoing internal war throughout the play is often dramatized through the Good and Bad Angel. These supernatural visitations are physical embodiments; however, they are “partly suggested as objective realizations of psychological conflict.”²⁴⁹ Later in the play the angels become more involved:

Good Angel: Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

²⁴⁹ Nicholas Brooke, “The Moral Tragedy of Dr. Faustus,” in *Critics on Marlowe: Readings in Literary Criticism*, ed. Judith O’Neill (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969), 93.

Faustus: Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of them?

Good Angel: O, they are a means to bring thee unto heaven!

Bad Angel: Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy. (2.1.15–18)

Here in Act II, Faustus now responds to the two characters. Their presence becomes more realized due to Faustus's engagement with their antagonistic guidance. Despite the conversation, there is not an indication that these two characters are more than merely the externalization of Faustus's inner struggles. Throughout the rest of the play, they appear, disappear, and reappear a number of times; however, they never engage with any of the other characters and rarely communicate with one another. This indicates that "a large measure of the action takes place not so much between beings as within a single one of them, Faustus himself; of whom the Good and the Evil Angel, for example, are parts."²⁵⁰ In addition to further defining their role, these lines also act as evidence of Marlowe's focus on daily living.

Faustus's line about contrition, prayer, and repentance evokes a poignant response from the Good Angel. The angel insists that feeling remorse for a sin, praying to God, and repenting of that sin is a series of pious actions that a Christian undertakes on a daily basis in order to have eternal life. Interestingly, the Good Angel omits the sacraments of confession and penance, both essential to Catholic theology of forgiveness. Instead, the angel adheres to a Protestant path of forgiveness, and by doing so, stays in line with Marlowe's focus on sinful versus holy living *within* Faustus's mind. Those three important duties of Christian living can be practiced internally. Furthermore, in terms of daily living, the Good and Bad Angels also act as representations of Faustus's conscience, and a conscience consists of inner voices that

²⁵⁰ James Smith, "Faustus as Allegory," in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Doctor Faustus*, (ed.) Willard Farnham (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1969), 24.

accompany individuals day in and day out, throughout their lives. In this regard, they exist as evidence of a focus on the dangers of daily sinful living.

Aside from exchanges with his servant, friends, scholars and the characters in Act IV (both the A and B texts), Faustus's interactions happen with apparitions. Much of the action in the play is purposefully composed of conjuring episodes that are characterized by their illusory and hallucinatory origins. And although the Act IV scenes involving the Emperor, Horse-Courser, and the Duke and Duchess are not completely imaginative, they are unnaturally constructed for a specific purpose: these occurrences are fashioned in response to keeping Faustus appeased and his insatiable ego fed. Mephistopheles and Lucifer want Faustus to believe in his own power; his mind must remain in the proper state in order for his soul to be forever in hell. The first of these episodes comes during the contract signing scene. Faustus begins to be distracted by congealing blood; as a result, Mephistopheles resorts to deceptive illusion:

Mephistopheles: I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind.

Faustus: Speak, Mephistopheles; what means this show?

Mephistopheles: Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind withal

And to show thee what magic can perform. (2.1.81–84)

The next episode acts in much the same way when Faustus demands a wife.

Faustus: Nay, sweet Mephistopheles, fetch me one, for I will have one.

Mephistopheles: Well, thou wilt have one? Sit there till I come.

I'll fetch thee a wife in the devil's name.

Enter [Mephistopheles] with a Devil dressed like a woman, with fire-works.

Mephistopheles: Tell me, Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife?

Faustus: A plague on her for a hot whore! (2.1.140–46)

Despite Mephistopheles's request for Faustus to set aside his desires for a wife, Faustus persists. Consequently, Mephistopheles conjures a devilish spirit that is clearly unsatisfactory in the eyes of Faustus. Albeit comedic, this brief interaction illustrates ways in which Faustus is presented with playfulness that keeps him pacified and distracted enough not to ask again. Another one of these episodes comes at the behest of Lucifer and immediately follows a partial, brief relapse in which Faustus begins to doubt his sinful decision(s):

Lucifer: Faustus, we are come from hell to show thee some pastime. Sit down,
and thou shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.

Faustus: That sight will be as pleasing unto me as Paradise was to Adam, the first day of
his creation. (2.3.96–101)

In this pageant-like episode, the Seven Deadly Sins appear as spirits in an attempt to entertain Faustus. Each of these brief episodes reveals how Marlowe uses Faustus's mind as a space for sinful living. And, in the end, the devil comes for his soul. A scholar, or learned figure, is characterized by what is accomplished intellectually; a tradesman, by comparison, is characterized by tangible accomplishments. In *Enough*, Worldly Man had money and other material things to show as proof of his sinful living. However, Faustus only has his knowledge and thoughts (abstractions) to show as proof of his sinful living. Although a man of Faustus's status would have accumulated material wealth, he doesn't value these things the way Worldly Man does. Subsequently, whereas Worldly Man's sinful actions hurt others (the Tenant, the Hireling, etc.), Faustus's sinful actions only end up hurting himself. The brief comedic scenes in the play are not enough evidence to suggest that Faustus's sinful living causes harm in the same way that Worldly Man's does harm. In fact, as I have mentioned above, some of those comedic scenes are merely illusion.

These pieces of evidence suggest that Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* is a morality of the mind: "[i]ts thematic structure and peculiar ironies, although magnified through the allegorical and theological motifs we associate with medieval cosmos, are at a deeper level exploring a pattern of psychological hubris, delusion, and self-diminishment."²⁵¹ The English Renaissance brought with it a flowering of and for knowledge that was not as easily and readily disseminated in late medieval England. The sixteenth century saw the world shrink through exploration, science, and medicine. The availability to learn and the capacity for what could be learned grew. As a result, we can see Marlowe's rewriting of the morality play to expand the spiritual and intellectual confines in which it could exist. Of course, the irony is that Faustus's classic education and wealth of knowledge prevented him from recognizing the sinfulness of his own mentality. It is not only about whether he is reprobate and unable to repent or just exercising his free will in choosing *not* to repent; instead, as a morality of the mind, Faustus's damnation is about what his *mind* is telling him he cannot do, be saved. His tragic pensiveness points to the dangers of sinful living, even in the deep recesses of our minds.

These two sixteenth-century plays have illustrated the ways in which the drama of reckoning's focus shifted. *Everyman* and *Castle of Perseverance* adhered to the Catholic traditions of efficacious dying. Similarly, as we have seen here, Wager's *Enough* and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* mirrored their own religious and cultural climate in speaking to the importance of sinful living versus holy living. These sixteenth-century moralities distance themselves from their predecessor in a shift in perspective: Worldly Man and Faustus die as a result of their sinful living. In *Enough*, God's Plague afflicts Worldly Man—he becomes ill and dies because of the choices he does not make. In *Faustus*, the devil comes to take Faustus to hell because of the

²⁵¹ Douglas Cole, *Christopher Marlowe and the Renaissance of Tragedy* (Westport: Praeger, 1995), 147.

choice he makes. In moving further away from God, the protagonists are responsible for their deaths. *Humanum Genus* and *Everyman* are presented as humans that progress from life to death under the assumption that the chronological narrative has already been established: they are dying for no other reason than that it is their time to die. So the agency of the protagonists here (*Faustus* and *Worldly Man*) not only suggests the importance of holy living, but it also implies that sinful living can result in premature death.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

Two aspects dominate and frame all human life and come and go for everyone . . . We are all born at some point in time, and we will die at some point later in time. Life and death intertwine so intimately . . . through a myriad of cultural performances.²⁵²

At the start of this project, I discussed my intent to remove the notion of barriers separating the late medieval and early modern periods. My analysis of the drama of reckoning illustrates a cultural and religious fluidity: understanding the dramatization of soteriological beliefs in sixteenth century England benefits from looking at its staging in concert with its literary and dramatic medieval past. These plays are evidence for continuity through their engagement with the people and culture that created them, both past and present. The subject of death and salvation can best be comprehended by looking at connections that cross borders and by pushing aside the idea of boundaries and the dichotomy of medieval versus Renaissance.

I focus on death because it is a leveler—late medieval and early modern English society was as divisive, as exclusive, and as socially distinct as our current twenty-first century culture. Death is a unifier; it comes for everyone. Ironically, the reality of this inevitability was embraced more in the English past than our own modern ages. Accidental, sudden death aside, the deathbed became a pervasive performance that turned every individual into a tragic actor with supernatural motivations and eternal implications.

²⁵² Albrecht Classen, “Death and the Culture of Death” in *Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: The Material and Spiritual Conditions of the Culture of Death* (De Gruyter, Inc., 2016): 1.

As I have argued, the allegorical dramatization of reckoning shifted between the late medieval and early modern periods. The redemptive, clear reckonings seen in *Castle of Perseverance* and *Everyman* are replaced by damned reckonings in *Enough is as Good as a Feast* and *Doctor Faustus*. The earlier plays illustrate a determined focus on holy dying, choosing to give less attention overall to the protagonists' sinful lives: for these plays, the importance of dying well and receiving a clear reckoning takes precedence over cautioning against sinful living. However, the later plays shift focus to that of sinful living. The sins and shortcomings of their lives are placed at the forefront and follow them to their deaths, resulting in damned reckoning. A chronological exploration of how these plays dramatize reckoning reveals a unique relationship between perceptions of the nature of sin, death, and eternal life. More specifically, the implications bound up in God's presence and the character and agency of humankind signal an expanding distance between God and humankind.

One of the ways these plays reveal connections and threads that cross periodic boundaries is through the transitory way they approach the relationship between sin and dying. In *Castle of Perseverance*, the audience is presented with an allegorical pilgrimage that follows Humanum Genus from birth to death. The scope of this play is not entirely contingent upon sinful living; that is, the protagonist's death is presented as both natural and sin-related, an interesting distinction not apparent in the other plays. As we have seen, the play references Humanum Genus's death alongside commentaries on his age. For example, in convincing Humanum Genus to leave the castle, Covetousness (*Avaricia*) encourages him to "have sum good in thyne age" (have some good in your age, 2493).²⁵³ This is further evidenced after Humanum Genus leaves the castle:

²⁵³ See p.000 in "Chapter 2: Redemptive Reckoning" for a discussion at length.

Avaricia: Now, Mankynd, be war of this
Thou art a-party wele in age
I wolde not thou ferdyst amys.
Go we now knowe my castel cage. (2700–03)

[Now, Mankind, be aware of this
You are somewhat advanced in age
I would not want you to fare ill;
Let us go become acquainted with my castle cage.]²⁵⁴

Again, Covetousness reiterates Humanum Genus's age. In doing so, he directs him to his castle (scaffold), implying that Humanum Genus is susceptible to illness from being outside. In this sense, for Humanum Genus, death is brought on by natural aging and having lived a full life.

However, the appearance of Mors (Death) shortly after Humanum Genus decides to leave the castle at the request of Avaricia (Covetousness) reveals a more consequential relationship between sin and dying. In his monologue, Mors primarily speaks to his own nature as a universally feared individual that comes for everyone, regardless of status, etc. Towards the end, however, he focuses his attention on Humanum Genus:

Mors: To Manykynde now wyl I reche;
He hate hole hys hert on Coveytyse.
A newe lessun I wyl hym teche
That he schal bothe grwcchyn and gryse. (2830–33)
[To Mankind now I will proceed;
He has set his heart entirely on Covetousness.]

²⁵⁴ All translations of *Castle* are my own with the assistance of Klausner's notes and glossary.

A new lesson I will teach him

That he will both complain and tremble.]

Mors's words here reveal a causality: due to his final stance with Avaricia, Humanum Genus is pierced with Mors's lance and taught a lesson. Despite the self-characterizing sweeping generalities that Mors gives prior to these final words, there is a direct connection made between the sin of Humanum Genus and his subsequent death. Of course, as argued at length in Chapter 2, regardless of the reason for his death, the primary concern here is *how* he spends his last breath. Interestingly, the relationship between sin and death in *Castle* is a complex one that focuses on both old age and sin as causes for death. The relationship between sin and death goes through a different imagining in *Everyman*.

In *Everyman*, we are given a more limited allegorical pilgrimage. Instead of the totality of life seen in *Castle*, the audience is provided with an end-of-life journey, a death march. In addition to the variance in scope, *Everyman* is different from *Castle* in its perspective on the relationship between sin and dying. While Humanum Genus has also grown old, *Everyman*'s death comes purely as consequence. Early on in the play, God delivers a lengthy monologue that gives justification for summoning Death:

God: Everyman lyveth so after his owne pleasure,

And yet of theyr lyfe they be not sure.

I se the more that I them forbere

The worse they are from yere to yere.

All that lyveth apperyth faste;

Therefore I wyll in all the haste

Have a rekenyng of every mannes persone. (40–46)

[Everyman lives after his own pleasure,
And yet of their life they are not secure.
I see the more that I tolerate
The worse they are from year to year.
All that lives degenerates quickly
Therefore I will in haste
Have a reckoning of every man's person.]

God's words imply that this is personal. Everyman has lived a life unpleasing to God, and it is time for him to face Death as a consequence. God continues by calling humankind "traytours" (traitors, 55) that "thanke me not for the pleasure . . . [or] . . . theyr beyng that I them have lente" (do not thank me for the pleasure or their existence/life that I have given them, 56–57). A few lines later, God makes his intent clear when he reiterates that "[o]n every man lyvyng without feare, [I] . . . must do justice" (61–62). There is a direct cause and effect: because Everyman has forgotten God and chosen to live in sin, he must meet Death.

At first glance, God is vindictive, an angry overseer who is looking to punish Everyman. However, God also offers a rationale of sorts:

God: For and I leve the people thus alone
In theyr lyfe and wycked tempestes,
Verely they wyll become moche worse than bestes. (47–49)
[If I leave the people alone
In their lives and wicked turmoil,
Truly they will become much worse than beasts.]

God's vindication is coming from a place of care and concern. He does not want to see Everyman get worse. So, in justifying death as a consequence of sin, God is showing love. Aquinas speaks of God's love at length, arguing that "in God there is love: because love is the first movement of the will and every appetitive faculty."²⁵⁵ The relationship between sin and death in *Everyman* is more nuanced than that seen in *Castle's* natural death. The God of *Everyman* contends that Everyman's sin is directly related to his death; however, the consequence is born out of God's love and desire to see good. And, in this particular play, *good* is the ability to die well, resulting in a clear reckoning. Again, the dramatization of this relationship shifts as the religious climate is shaken in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

As discussed at length in Chapter 3, the religious climate of mid-to-late sixteenth century England was volatile. The reality of the religiously charged English culture is also seen in the way these early modern playwrights approach the relationship between sin and death. In William Wager's *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, the audience is presented with a more despairing cause and effect than seen in *Everyman*. In the last quarter of the play, after he has refused to be merciful and forgiving to the Tenant, Servant, and Hireling, Worldly Man, the materialistic, wealth-hungry protagonist, hears the warnings of the Prophet:

Prophet: But that servant that liveth idly without care
And looketh not diligently upon his office,
His master shall come suddenly, or he be aware,
And shall minister to him according to justice. (1202–05)

The Prophet's words speak directly to the consequence: sudden death comes to those whose lives are inundated with sinful living and a self-inflicted unawareness. The play has clearly presented

²⁵⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, q. 20, art 1.

the *cause*. A mere twenty lines later, the *effect* is revealed when Worldly Man falls ill and sleeps, and God's Plague enters. In his monologue, God's Plague echoes the words of the Prophet:

God's Plague: I am the plague of God properly called,
Which cometh on the wicked suddenly;
I go through all towns and cities strongly walled,
Striking to death, and that without all mercy. (1243–46)

Again, the effect of Worldly Man's sin is characterized as sudden, merciless death. The final result of Worldly Man's chosen life is realized after he dies prematurely while trying to complete his will. As we can see, Worldly Man struggles with many of the same issues as both Humanum Genus and Everyman. However, Humanum Genus chose eternal life instead. And Everyman chose to die well in God's decision to expedite his death. In *Enough*, the audience is presented with an allegorical character that embodies a particular sinful life. Due to his sinful blinders, Worldly Man cannot see the inevitable: his sin is going to cut his life short. The play does not end as a redemptive moral; instead, we are presented with despairing caution, a damned reckoning.

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* continues the despairing notion that sinful living is directly related to death; however, Faustus's death is not necessarily sudden as seen in Wager's *Enough*. Early on in Act II, Scene I, at the behest of Mephistopheles, Faustus drafts a contract that articulates the terms of his agreement with Lucifer. Among other particulars, this contract places a limitation on Faustus's life:

Faustus: Then hear me read it, Mephistopheles: [*Reads.*]
I, John Faustus . . . do give both body and soul to Lucifer . . .
And furthermore grant unto [him] that, . . . twenty-four years

being expired, . . . full power to fetch or carry the said John

Faustus' body and soul, flesh, blood into their habitation . . . (2.1.99–105)

This contract ensures that, unlike Worldly Man's sudden illness and subsequent death, Faustus should foresee his death far into the distance. Regardless of whether or not Faustus believes the contract to be legitimate, Lucifer (via Mephistopheles) does indeed come calling at the end of the play. By his own admission, Faustus sees what is taking place as a result of his own sinful choices. In his last discussion with the Scholars, Faustus responds to their inquiry regarding his ailment by telling them that a "surfeit [excessive indulgence]²⁵⁶ of deadly sin . . . hath damned both body and soul" (5.2.11–12). Between the signing of the contract and the first mention of its end, Faustus's number of sins grows, and the weight of his decision to call upon the devil and practice necromancy impresses further upon him. Despite the attempts of the other characters (particularly the Old Man) to get him to call for mercy and redemption, Faustus's sins, both external and internal, have blinded him.²⁵⁷ Like Worldly Man, Faustus cannot get out of his own way. However, unlike Humanum Genus's natural death and God's direct call for Everyman and Worldly Man's deaths, Faustus's death comes at the hands of Lucifer. Although not necessarily a shortened life or a sudden death, Faustus's end comes as a result of his sinful living—his borrowed time has come to an end.

The distinctions are evident. The uniqueness of the earlier plays, *Castle* and *Everyman*, mirrors my primary contention in the previous chapters: these plays focus on dying well. The sins of the protagonists are characterized as egregious; however, Humanum Genus and Everyman make the right choices at their deaths, resulting in clear reckonings. Similarly, the

²⁵⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "surfeit (*n.*), sense 5," December 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1104632116>.

²⁵⁷ See my discussion of the relationship between Faustus's sin and his mind in Chapter 3, beginning on p.000

later plays, *Enough* and *Faustus*, focus on living well. The appalling sins of Worldly Man and Faustus are revealed to be the causes of their deaths. These characters refuse to heed the advice of the pious, choices that ultimately lead to their damned reckonings. Although different, when discussed in concert with one another, the plays reveal a connection: there is a clear relationship between sin and death, whether in this life or the next. Whether redemptive or damned, the protagonists in the later three plays flesh out this relationship as distinctly consequential—their deaths were caused by their sins. Although Humanum Genus's death comes due to a combination of time and sin, his eternal life *is* determined by how he handled dying in sin. In this way, there is still a cause and effect, a consequence, regardless of the supernatural space on which it is played out.

The variances in the relationship between sin and death illustrate altering allegorical perspectives of God and humankind. For the most part, in *Castle*, God (Pater) allows the life of Humanum Genus to play out, regardless of sin, repentance, and the vacillation between. Indeed, Mors (Death) is a character that comes to take his life; however, there is no mention of God sending Mors to cut short the life of Humanum Genus. So, while sin is referenced as a consequence, the protagonist's death can very well be seen as an age-related natural death that follows a long-lived, conventional life. God only becomes active *after* Humanum Genus's death. In *Everyman*, God is immediately active in that he uses Everyman's sin to justify calling for Death. God shows even more influence when he illustrates his love by giving Everyman the opportunity to die well. In *Enough*, God mirrors his actions in *Everyman* and calls for the illness and subsequent sudden death of Worldly Man.²⁵⁸ However, the same love and mercy seen in the earlier plays are not offered here for Worldly Man. In *Faustus*, God is absent. While his essence

²⁵⁸ Although a God character does not appear in the play, God's Plague introduces himself as being directly called upon by God.

exists in the characters of the Good Angel and the Old Man and he is referenced and called upon, God does not receive an active role. Instead, Lucifer (via Mephistopheles and other devils) becomes the spiritual entity responsible for Faustus's death. Reflecting on these distinctions reveals a shift in allegorical representation: God as overseer of natural life, God as a disciplining but loving father, God as a justice keeper/enforcer, and God as a non-participant. However, this is an incomplete picture without also looking at shifting allegorical perceptions of humankind.

In the *Castle of Perseverance*, the audience is presented with an allegorical representation of humankind. This character, Humanum Genus, is born, subjected to both spiritual and physical conflicts that involve both good and evil, killed on stage, taken to Hell, and ultimately redeemed by God to live an eternal life. In his opening monologue, Humanum Genus speaks of being born into confusion and anxiety with two embodiments of conscience (Good Angel and Bad Angel) attempting to gain his attention. In lamenting his ignorance and apprehension, he asks God to help him “folwe, be street and stalle / [t]he aungyl that cam fro Hevene hall” (follow, in street and dwelling, the angel that came from Heaven's hall, 316–17). Immediately, we are introduced with a character striving for the pious path while also alluding to the vacillating spiritual nature of humanity. The allegorical familiarity is further evidenced in moments where Humanum Genus is chastised, duped, and even referred to as a “wrechyd man,” (wretched man, 2553) alongside moments of vulnerability, regret, and redemption. As the play progresses, Humanum Genus spends most of his life vacillating between sinful and holy living, revealing the conventional ebb and flow of one's spiritual journey. However, the crux of the journey comes at its end, when his cry for mercy at death becomes the point of focus for his redemptive reckoning. Ultimately, and unsurprisingly, the play privileges persevering—Humanum Genus's character survives the trials and tribulations and makes the right choice in the end.

In *Everyman*, the same allegorical figure enters as a sinful human and is slowly purged of soteriological unnecessary before dying and receiving a clear reckoning. As noted above, Everyman, as humankind, is introduced by God as being spiritually “blynde” (blind, 25) and “[d]rowned in synne” (drowned in sin, 26). Upon entering, Death echoes similar critiques in saying that Everyman’s “mynde is on fleshely lustes and his treasure” (mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure, 82) instead of God. From the play’s start, the allegorical protagonist is harshly judged, so much so that his only hope in redemption is death. Instead of the vacillating nature of humanity presented in *Castle*, the audience is presented with the sinfulness of human nature and God’s doubt that Everyman can right his own wrongs in this life. Indeed, as the play progresses, Everyman begins to make better decisions and to embody the spiritual virtuousness lacking at the start. His gradual understanding of what must be let go in order to balance his account book leads to his clear reckoning. The humankind character so admonished early on in the play is now seen as an “excellent electe spouse” (excellent elect spouse, 894) that possesses “synguler virtue” (singular virtue, 895)²⁵⁹. While the play begins with a flawed protagonist who is not given much hope, the audience is left with an efficacious transformation born out of God’s love and, like *Humanum Genus*, Everyman’s perseverance. The redemption is two-fold: Everyman’s character is vindicated and his spiritual soul granted eternal life.

In Wager’s *Enough is as Good as a Feast* the nature of the allegorical protagonist changes from the universal humankind seen in the earlier medieval plays. Instead, the audience is presented with a character named directly after his primary vice. The ambiguity inherent in

²⁵⁹ The image of Christians and the Christian church as the spouse(s) of Christ is seen in various places in the New Testament, with Ephesians 5:22-23 being the most referenced. The marriage metaphor of Christ as husband and Christians as wife plays upon the early conventions that see Christ as the head and Christians as the piously submissive. At this point, Everyman is being heralded for falling in line with the Scriptural trope. For more on this, see Anna R. Solevåg, “Marriage Symbolism and Social Reality in the New Testament: Husbands and Wives, Christ and the Church,” in *Symbolism of Marriage in Early Christianity and the Latin Middle Ages: Images, Impact, Cognition*, (ed.) Line Cecilie Engh (Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 91-110.

Humanum Genus and Everyman is replaced with a clarity and explicitness that immediately speaks to the nature of the character: Worldly Man is a walking sin. Upon entering, he characterizes himself as a “man endued with treasure . . . [that] will have more in spite of them all” (92–96). Worldly Man embodies greed and apathy, and despite his own recognition, he is seemingly ignorant of the spiritual danger that accompanies someone who is “infected with ambition that sickness uncurable” (199). The Heavenly Man character is used as a means for contrast; as a result, Worldly Man’s inherent sinful persona is more realized.²⁶⁰ As the play progresses from scene to scene, the actions of Worldly Man continue to serve as evidence of his materialistic mindset and indifference to those in need (e.g. the Tenant, Hireling, etc.). Although there are instances where characters like Contentation and Heavenly Man attempt to sway Worldly Man, the audience never sees repentance. Unlike the instances of repentance and piety as character development seen in both Humanum Genus and Everyman, Worldly Man shows no ebb and flow or pious progression. Instead, he holds firm to his chief concerns of money and wealth, even to his very end. At the play’s conclusion, the audience is left with the distressing message of Satan and the lengthy cautionaries of the virtues. The tragedy here is not the fall—Worldly Man was always going to be just that, worldly. *Enough’s* tragedy is that Worldly Man negatively influences the lives of others (the Tenant, Hireling, and Servant), victims of his sinful life. There exists no transformatory character who heeds the advice of spiritual piety and ultimately perseveres. From beginning to end, Worldly Man is boastful, greedy, and inconsiderate; he is unlikeable, a clear allegorical example of what *not* to do or who *not* to be.

Finally, Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* presents the audience with an allegorical character unique in his accomplishments yet also familiar as a curious individual. Like Everyman, the play

²⁶⁰ See my discussion of the dual protagonist in Ch. 3, beginning on p.000

begins with condemnatory rhetoric; in the Prologue, Faustus is compared to Icarus in pride and “self-conceit” (Pro.19). He has “fall[en] to a devilish exercise, . . . cursed necromancy” (Pro.23–25). Similar to *Everyman* and *Enough*, the audience is not offered the opportunity to make their own judgments. From the outset, Faustus is not given much hope, a sentiment he confirms throughout the play as he refers to himself as damned, carrying a heart that is “so hardened [he] cannot repent” (2.3.18). As the play develops, so does the character of Faustus, both in a moralistic and spiritual sense and a plot-driven sense. Faustus begins as a bored, knowledge-hungry scholar on the verge of blasphemy before transforming into a lustful glutton-for-power deeply immersed in sinful behavior. As the play comes to an end, Faustus turns into a mentally and spiritually broken man full of fear and regret. Much like Wager’s *Worldly Man*, Faustus is also prideful and greedy, failing to persevere or earn redemption. In contrast to *Enough*, Marlowe omits the antithetical, contrasting character; the audience is not given a Heavenly Man to emulate. Despite the pressing hopelessness that permeates throughout the play, the tragedy here *is* bound up in the fall: “[c]ut is the branch that might have grown full straight” (Epi.1). The Chorus leaves the audience with the rhetorical question asking “what could have been?”

When looked at in concert with one another, the plays reveal a distancing in the allegorical perspectives of God and humankind. As time moves on, the character developments reveal an allegorical humankind that uses their own agency to move further away from God. *Humanum Genus* vacillates but never ventures very far; in the end, he makes the correct choice and is redeemed. God plays an active role in *Anima*’s reckoning. *Everyman* appears as more sinful and distanced, but his agency in adhering to the proper spiritual lessons ensure he dies well and is redeemed. While *Humanum Genus* does fall into sin, he is not characterized as inherently or overly sinful. *Everyman* is quickly characterized as a sinful being who has forgotten God, but

he is given hope. God's call for Death occurs so that Everyman does not fall further into the traps of sin. Right now, God produces an exit strategy to ensure the allegorical humankind does not get too far from salvation. Worldly Man is presented as inherently sinful. He moves about only concerned with material wealth, exploiting those in need and refusing any righteous advice offered from the virtuous characters. God's role is only implied through the plague character. Ultimately, Worldly Man's choices result in a sudden illness and a subsequent death. Lastly, Faustus is presented as a highly educated individual who has begun to allow his mind to wander into sinful territory. He takes sin a step further by blaspheming, maintaining an ongoing relationship with devil/demon, and despairing. The severity of selling one's soul to Satan is quite a distancing from God not seen in the other plays. Like Worldly Man, he repeatedly pushes aside attempts to repent. For the most part, he has convinced himself (and perhaps the audience) that he is beyond redemption. The sinful choices that he makes compound upon his mind and ultimately bring him to damnation. The relationship between humankind, sin, death, God, and salvation becomes more and more strained—humankind becomes inherently more sinful; death becomes more premature; God becomes more distanced; and, as a result, salvation becomes harder to attain.

Despite distinctions in the relationships discussed above (sin, death, God, humankind, and salvation) these plays focus on one overarching and unifying similarity: human agency. They reveal that passing decades, complete with a culture-altering religious schism, did not completely remove the notion of human agency in salvation. Regardless of the variances in the theologies regarding human agency among Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin, these plays, act as illustrations of spiritual decision making.²⁶¹ Human agency informs the soul's final destination, whether that be

²⁶¹ See Chapter 1, pgs. 000 for my theological discussion.

through making the correct/incorrect spiritual decision(s) or through moving further away from God. As referenced in my discussion of the *Ars moriendi* traditions in Chapter 1, individuals have duties to perform and expectations to meet—the active choices made at one’s death or throughout one’s life have spiritual consequences.²⁶² Although written and performed in a religious climate heavily influenced by Luther and Calvin, the early modern *Enough* and *Faustus* harken back to the allegorical traditions of human agency seen in late medieval dramas of *Castle* and *Everyman*. In this way, the early modern plays make room for something familiar in a vacillating religious milieu. In the case of *Castle*, choosing to make the right decision, even at the last minute, makes all the difference. In *Everyman*, choosing to make the correct preparations also makes all the difference. In *Enough*, continually making the wrong decisions and failing to make the right one (at the right time) make all the difference. In *Faustus*, continually making the wrong decisions and choosing to believe there is not a choice make all the difference. Interestingly, Worldly Man and Faustus become the overly sinful and utterly hopeless Everyman that God is trying to prevent in the opening monologue of *Everyman*. If God failed to intervene in the beginning of *Everyman* and allowed the protagonist to continue sinning, would Everyman not have transformed into a Worldly Man or a Faustus, sinners refusing or unable to use their own agency to ensure clear reckonings and their own salvation?

Looking Ahead: Indistinct Reckoning and Continuing Traditions

Literary history and scholarship have time and again proven that one thorough analysis and argument only makes room for further analyses. In the spirit of looking ahead, my discussion brings up another question: what of the early modern dramatizations of reckoning that are not allegorical and/or do not fit within the confines and strictures of Calvinist, Anglican, or Lutheran

²⁶² My discussion of the *Ars moriendi* tradition in “Chapter 1: The Drama of Last Things” begins on p.000.

theologies? The drama of reckoning existed on a spectrum; it is not fair to assume that all protagonists' deaths and their subsequent reckonings neatly fell into one of two theological and determinate categories. Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (1580s) illustrates humanist depictions of reckoning. The lengthy introductory monologue by the Don Andrea (as a ghost) is abounding with classical Greek references as it details his soul's journey after death. In addition, the seventeenth century saw plays that spoke to the shifting religious milieu with anti-Catholic productions like Barnabe Barnes's *The Devil's Charter* (1606), Jesuit dramas like Joseph Simon's *Mercia* (1620s), and revived saints' plays traditions in Thomas Dekker and Philip Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr* (1620s). Broadening the theatrical scope will reveal that the nature of these plays, whether referencing classical conventions or reimagining both Protestant and Catholic traditions, complicates the dramatization of reckoning and the staging of last things. An exploration of indeterminate or indistinct reckoning as it appeared in non-allegorical dramatizations and an investigation of continuing damned and redemptive reckonings could very well reveal similar connections to the not-so-distant past while also pointing to a unique relationship between humankind and their own understanding of mortality.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appleford, Amy. *Learning to Die in London, 1380-1540*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Translated by Charles J. O'Neill. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975. dhspriority.org/thomas/english/ContraGentiles.htm.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. Translated by Alfred J. Freddoso. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018. www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/summa-translation/TOC.htm.
- Austin, J.L. *How To Do Things With Words: The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Barber, Richard. *The Knight and Chivalry*. Revised ed. New York: Boydell Press, 1995.
- Belsey, Catherine. "Continuity and Change on the English Popular Stage." *Renaissance Drama* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 141-160. doi:10.1086/694327.
- Belsey, Catherine. "The Stage Plan of *The Castle of Perseverance*." *Theatre Notebook*, 38, no. 1 (1974): 124-132.
- Belsey, Catherine. *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama*. London: Methuen, 1985.
- Benbow, Mark R. "Introduction." In *Regents Renaissance Drama Series: The Longer Thou Livest and Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, edited by R. Mark Benbow, ix-xxii. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1967.

- Bevington, David. "Doctor Faustus." In *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, edited by David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine E. Maus, and Eric Rasmussen, 245-249. New York: Norton & Company, 2002.
- Bevington, David. *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.
- Bevington, David. "Staging the Reformation: Power and Theatricality in the Plays of William Wager." In *Interludes and Early Modern Society: Studies in Gender, Power and Theatricality*. Vol. 9, edited by Peter Happé and Wim Husken, 353-380. New York: Rodopi, 2007.
- Blamire, Alcuin. *The Case for Women in Medieval Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- "The Book of the Craft of Dying." In *The Book of the Craft of Dying and Other Early English Tracts Concerning Death*, edited by Frances M. Comper, 1-54. London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1917.
- Brooke, Nicholas. "The Moral Tragedy of Dr. Faustus." In *Critics on Marlowe: Readings in Literary Criticism*, edited by Judith O'Neill, 93-114. London: Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. "Chapter V: '...And Woman His Humanity': Female Imagery in the Religious Writings of the Later Middle Ages." In *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion*. 151-179. New York: Zone Books, 1992.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1846. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/535>.

- Cawley, A.C. "Introduction." In *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*, edited by A.C. Cawley, xii-xxiii. London: Orion Publishing, 1993.
- Classen, Albrecht. "Death and the Culture of Death." In *Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: The Material and Spiritual Conditions of the Culture of Death*, edited by Albrecht Classen, 1-57. Boston: De Gruyter, Inc., 2016.
- Cole, Douglas. *Christopher Marlowe and the Renaissance of Tragedy*. Westport: Praeger, 1995.
- Cole, Douglas. "Doctor Faustus and the Morality Tradition." In *Doctor Faustus: a Two-Text Edition*, edited by David S. Kastan, 304-312. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.
- Cox, John "Devils and Power in Marlowe and Shakespeare." *Yearbook of English Studies* 23 no. 1 (1993): 46-64. doi:10.2307/3507972.
- Craik, T.W. "Dates of Principal Plays Discussed." In *The Tudor Interlude: Stage, Costume, and Acting*, 141-149. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1962.
- "The Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*." In *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, edited by Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian, 335-355. Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013.
- Cummings, Brian. *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Davidson, Clifford. "Doctor Faustus of Wittenberg." *Studies in Philology* 59, no. 1 (1962): 514-532. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4173389>.
- Davis, Norman and Osborn Waterhouse, eds. *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*. London: Early English Text Society by Oxford University Publishing, 1970.
- Deats, Sara Munson. "Doctor Faustus: From Chapbook to Tragedy." In *Doctor Faustus: a Two-Text Edition*, edited by David S. Kastan, 209-225. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.

- DeLuca, Dominique. “*Bonum est mortis meditari*: Meanings and Functions of the Medieval Double Macabre Portrait.” In *Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Time: The Material and Spiritual Conditions of the Culture of Death*, edited by Albrecht Classen, 239-262. Boston: De Gruyter, 2016). doi:10.1515/9783110436976.
- Denholm-Young, Noël. “The Tournament in the Thirteenth Century.” In *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke*, edited by Richard William Hunt, William Abel Pantin, and Richard William Southern, 240-268. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1948.
- Dollimore, Jonathan. *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*. 2nd ed. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*. New Haven: Yale University, 2005.
- Elliot Jr., John R. “The Sacrifice of Isaac as Comedy and Tragedy.” In *Medieval English Drama: Essays in Critical and Contextual*, edited by Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson, 157-176. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.
- Engel, William E., Rory Loughnane, and Grant Williams. “Introduction.” In *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England: A Critical Anthology*, edited by William Engel, Rory Loughnane, and Grant Williams, 1-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. doi:1017/CBO9781316091722.
- Davidson, Clifford, Martin W. Walsh, and Ton J. Broos, eds. *Everyman and Its Dutch Original, Elckerlijc*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007. <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/davidson-everyman-and-its-dutch-original-elckerlijc>.

- Fletcher, Angus. "Doctor Faustus and the Lutheran Aesthetic." *English Literary Renaissance* 35, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 187-209. <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/stable/24463679>.
- Garber, Marjorie. "'Here's Nothing Writ': Scribe, Script, and Circumscription in Marlowe's Plays." *Theatre Journal* 36, no. 3 (1984): 301-320. doi:10.2307/3206949.
- Gardiner, Eileen. "Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven." In *Handbook of Medieval Culture: Fundamental Aspects and Conditions of the European Middle Ages*. Vol. 1, edited by Albrecht Classen, 653-673. Boston: De Gruyter, 2015. doi:10.1515/9783110267303.
- Happé, Peter. *English Drama Before Shakespeare*. London: Longman, 1993.
- Houghton, Rosemary. *The Drama of Salvation*. New York: Seabury Press, 1975.
- Honderich, Pauline. "John Calvin and *Doctor Faustus*." *Modern Language Review* 68, no. 1 (1973): 1-13. doi:10.2307/3726198.
- Hooker, Richard. "Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V." In *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker with an Account of His Life and Death by Isaac Walton*. Vol. 2. Arranged by Rev. John Keble and revised by Rev. R.W. Church and the Rev. F. Paget. 1-598. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888.
- Houlbrooke, Ralph. *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Ingram, Jill P. "Forms of Investment: Mummings, Prologues, and Epilogues." In *Festive Enterprise: The Business of Drama in Medieval and Renaissance England*. 45-70. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2021.
- Kastan, David S. "Editorial Procedures." In *Doctor Faustus: A Two-Text Edition*, edited by David S. Kastan, xiii. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.

- King, Pamela M. "Morality Plays." In *Cambridge Companion to Medieval Theatre*, edited by Richard Beadle and Alan Fletcher, 235-262. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Klausner, David N., ed. *The Castle of Perseverance*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2010. <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/klausner-the-castle-of-perseverance>.
- Kolve, V.A. "Everyman and the Parable of Talents." In *Medieval English Drama: Essays in Critical and Contextual*, edited by Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson, 316-340. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.
- Kyd, Thomas. *The Spanish Tragedy*. In *The Works of Thomas Kyd: Edited from the Original Texts*, edited by Frederick S. Boas, 295-337. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955.
- Latham, R.E., D.R. Howlett, and R.K. Ashdowne, eds. *The Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*. 17 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1975–2013. *Logeion*. <https://logeion.uchicago.edu/>.
- Le Goff, Jacques. *The Birth of Purgatory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Leigh, David. "The Doomsday Mystery Play: An Eschatological Morality." *Modern Philology* 67, no. 3 (February 1970): 217-18. doi:10.1086/390168.
- Love, John D. "Aquinas's 'Integral Parts of Prudence' as a Resource for Human Formation." *New Blackfriars* 100, no. 1090 (November 2019): 698-714. doi:10.1111/nbfr.12504.
- Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation*. Edited and translated by Gordon E. Rupp and Philip S. Watson. Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1969.
- <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=nlebk&AN=41477&site=ehost-live>.

- Marlowe, Christopher. *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*. In *Doctor Faustus: A Two-Text Edition*, edited by David S. Kastan, 5-122. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.
- Mastrangelo, Marc. *Prudentius's Psychomachia*. London: Routledge, 2022.
doi:10.4324/9780429261992.
- McClore, John A. *Figures in the Drama of Salvation: Twelve Sermons*. St Louis: Herder Book Co., 1933.
- McClusky, Peter. *Representations of Flemish Immigrants on the Early Modern Stage*. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Murakami, Ineke. "Wager's Drama of Conscience, Convention, and State Constitution." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 305-329.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4625113>.
- Nichols, Terence. *Death and Afterlife: A Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2010.
- Osmond, Rosalie. *Imaging the Soul: a History*. Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2003.
- Patterson, Lee. "On the Margin: Postmodernism, Ironic History, and Medieval Studies." *Speculum* 65, no.1 (January 1990): 87-108. doi:10.2307/2864473.
- Pederson, Steven. *The Tournament Tradition and Staging The Castle of Perseverance*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine. Reformation of Church and Dogma, 1300-1700*. Vol. 4. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

- Perkins, William. *A salve for a sicke man. or, A treatise containing the nature, differences, and kindes of death as also the right manner of dying well. And it may serue for spirituall instruction to 1. Mariners when they goe to sea. 2. Souldiers when they goe to battell. 3. Women when they trauell of child.* Ann Arbor: Text Creation Partnership, 2005, <http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A09461.0001.001>.
- Pollitt, Ronald. ““Refuge of the Distressed Nations,’ Perceptions of Aliens in Elizabethan England.” *Journal of Modern History* 52, no. 1 (March 1980): D1001-1019. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1881127>.
- Poole, Kristen. “*Dr. Faustus* and Reformation Theology.” In *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion*, edited by Andrew Hadfield, Patrick Cheney, and Garrett A. Sullivan, 96-107. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- “*Quem Quaeritis*.” In *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, edited by Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian, 21-23. Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013.
- Rasmussen, Eric. *A Textual Companion to Doctor Faustus*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993.
- Rendall, Thomas. “The Times of Mercy and Judgment in *Mankind*, *Everyman*, and *The Castle of Perseverance*.” *English Studies in Canada* 7, no. 3 (Fall 1981): 255-269. doi:10.1353/esc.1981.0031.
- Riggs, David. “Marlowe’s Quarrel with God.” In *Marlowe, History, and Sexuality: New Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Paul Winfield White, 25-33. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1998.

- Ryan, Denise. “‘If ye had parfytely chered me’: The Nurturing of Good Deeds in *Everyman*.” *Notes and Queries* 42, no. 2 (June 1995): 165–68.
doi:10.1093/notesj/42.2.165.
- Sajavaara, Kari. “Introduction.” In *The Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste’s Chateau d’Amour*, edited by Kari Sajavaara, 25-100. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 1967.
- Schell, Edgar T. “On the Imitation of Life’s Pilgrimage in *The Castle of Perseverance*.” *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 67, no. 2 (Spring 1968): 235-248.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27705517>.
- Schwager, Raymond. *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation: Toward a Biblical Doctrine of Redemption*. New York: Crossroad, 1999.
- Searle, John. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- Simpson, James and Brian Cummings, eds. *Cultural Reformations: Medieval and Renaissance in Literary History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Smith, James. “Faustus as Allegory.” In *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Doctor Faustus*, edited by Willard Farnham, 23-34. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
- Snyder, Susan. “The Left Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition.” *Studies in the Renaissance* 12, no. 1 (1965): 18-59. doi:10.2307/2857068.
- Solevåg, Anna R. “Marriage Symbolism and Social Reality in the New Testament: Husbands and Wives, Christ and the Church.” In *Symbolism of Marriage in Early Christianity and the Latin Middle Ages: Images, Impact, Cognition*, edited by Line Cecilie Engh, 91-110. Amsterdam University Press, 2019.

- Southern, Richard. *The Medieval Theatre in the Round*. 2nd ed. New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1975.
- Spivack, Bernard. "Falstaff and the Psychomachia." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (Fall 1957): 449-459. doi:10.2307/2867552.
- Taylor, Jeremy. *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, edited by P.G. Stanwood. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- "The Towneley Plays: *The Creation*." In *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, edited by Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian, 140-145. Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013.
- Wager, William. *W. Wager: The Longer Thou Livest and Enough Is as Good as a Feast*, edited by R. Mark Benbow, 80-146. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.
- Warren, Michael. "Doctor Faustus: The Old Man and the Text." *English Literary Renaissance* 11, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 111-147. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43447048>
- Ward, Patricia. "The Significance of Roses as Weapons in *The Castle of Perseverance*," *Studia Mystica* 14.2 (1991), 84-92.
- Weil, Judith. *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin's Prophet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- White, Paul. *Theatre and Reformation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Wickham, Glynne. *Early English Stages, 1300-1660*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1972.
- Wickham, Glynne. *The Medieval Theatre*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

- Wicks, Jared. "Applied Theology at the Deathbed: Luther and the Late Medieval Tradition of the Ars Moriendi." *Gregorianum* 79, no. 2 (1998): 345-368. <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/stable/23580121>.
- Wicks, Jared. "Martin Luther's Treatise on Indulgences." *Theological Studies* 28, no. 3 (September 1967): 481-518. doi:10.1177/004056396702800302.
- Williams, Arnold. *The Drama of Medieval England*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1961.
- "The York Corpus Christi Play." In *The Broadview Anthology of Medieval Drama*, edited by Christina M. Fitzgerald and John T. Sebastian, 77-79. Ontario: Broadview Press, 2013.
- Zysk, Jay. "The Last Temptation of Faustus: Contested Rites and Eucharistic Representation in Doctor Faustus." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 43, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 335-367. doi:10.1215/10829636-2081996.