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Dramatic Aspects of the Vices in Lyndsay's Satyre

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The recent attention to Lyndsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* has made advances in the study of its theatricality and also of the breadth of its achievement in moral and political spheres.[1] It is a play which gives us a broad reflection of its time and of people in different positions in that society, high and low. The title indicates that many characters are involved and also points to the desire to expose what was wrong. It is a remarkable achievement in that it addresses the ills of the kingdom as a whole and yet, in addition, it succeeds in reflecting interests at a local level. That the play is called a "satire" seems to me to be significant because it brings to mind a traditional process of exposure of faults and weaknesses by laughter going back to classical literature. That is what the play seems to aim at, and if this is so, its objectives are to be achieved by a comic process which is entertaining. But in saying this we need to notice that there are many different varieties of laughter, sweet or sour, which might be stimulated. It is also true that satire has a serious function: it turns upon an exposure of what is reprehensible and indeed what may be unpalatable, even shocking. Such an exposure is often seditious since it can strike hard at what is going on officially or politically.

1 See Walker, Twycross and Happé, "'What is ane King?'".

Besides this function as satire the mockery involved in this play is closely linked to the perception and portrayal of folly. Recent discussions of folly in the play have successfully underlined that its portrayal can point to contrasting effects, especially to the exploitation of the ingenuousness apparent in innocent victims by fools who are themselves foolishly corrupt.[2]

In this essay I would like to address the ways in which Flatterie, Dissait and Falset, the three vices of the *Satyre* who work as a distinctive group, as a kind of family, contribute to both the comedy and the seriousness which the play comprehends. In the end they have to be seen as foolishly evil but also dangerously potent, and that is my reason for discussing them under the general topic of the family of folly. In fact, they seem to me to exemplify certain ambiguities in the notions of folly, not least the possibility of being foolishly and reprehensively evil, but also a means by which innocence and virtue may be revealed through their own wickedness, as well as being the target of attack. But beyond this we may find that folly is egregiously performable and perceivable in acts as well as in words. Somebody being foolish is clearly perceived to be so if he or she works upon an audience and encourages them to watch and participate in comedy. Through this means the exposure of folly becomes entertaining. Much of our experience of drama involves a mixture of approach and rejection, and I think these vices in Lyndsay's *Satyre* have that quality, as the brilliant performances in the manifestation at Linlithgow in 2013 made apparent.[3] But we should bear in mind in thinking of these effects that in the end Lyndsay gives Foly the last laugh and that last laugh is a warning rather than a triumph. Lyndsay's satirical approach is born of a dissatisfaction and an anxiety which do not quite go away, as we shall see.

Why should we respond to and like the evil characters as much as we did at the Linlithgow performance? I think the answer to that question lies in part in the fact that theatre has many different forms and that the actuality, localisation and detail of those forms engage our curiosity. The very specificity of satirical reference is one of its chief weapons. Satire is more disturbing when it pins down precisely what it is attacking. I have already mentioned that Lyndsay is interested in the local detail as a satirical target, and even if sixteenth-century Scotland is

2 For conflicting elements, see Carpenter.

3 For films of the performances at Linlithgow see the website "Staging and Representing the Scottish Renaissance Court": <http://stagingthescottishcourt.brunel.ac.uk/> (accessed 15 March 2016).

not our native habitat, we are still drawn into it by the presentation of folly he sets before us, in part because in his localised detail of the suffering of the Pauper and his lost cows he hits at something which is both local and universal in its outrage. Much turns upon the particularity of the satire, and we react to the specific details of the Pauper's pitiable account.

The construction and adaptation of a theatrical means of achieving such an engagement is the essence of what I should like to consider here. To do this I shall need to look at some of Lyndsay's work outside this play and at the specifics of dramatisation of the processes of folly as exemplified in these vices. This means that the practices of sixteenth-century drama by others are relevant to his play, and that is especially interesting because of the absence of information about other plays in Scotland at the time, and the details that are available about what was going on in the way of theatrical performance elsewhere. However, there is one important caveat in that the three vices are not the whole story, because Lyndsay's play embraces many different dramatic styles and modes. Indeed, I have suggested in a different context that it succeeds partly by presenting a number of dramatic styles associated with other circumstances than those this work is concerned with.[4]

In what follows we shall have occasion to compare Lyndsay's achievement with a number of other dramatic methods. That he chose to make use of the three vices as a group inevitably associates his work with morality plays and interludes. The allegory these characters present is a manifestation of the evils of the court and especially those which involve speaking for evil ends, which is closely linked with a process of corrupt enrichment. They are not the only evil influences at work in the play, but their presence makes apparent the damage which can be done by these villains of the court, and their use of language to flatter, to deceive and to tell lies or represent falsely. It so happens that much of what we know about the early drama in England is focussed upon the court and its ills.

However, before considering Lyndsay's dramatic techniques in his play's portrayal of folly I should like to look at a few items from his non-dramatic poetry, in which there is much attention to dissatisfaction about life in the royal court at which he was a participant as well as an exposer. We can detect a deep emotional commitment to the court on his part, but also a long-standing sense

4 For French influence, particularly the *sotties*, see Mill and Happé, "Stage Directions".

of its corruption, its abuses and the need for reform. He served as a courtier for many years, and his loyalty was mixed with complaint. Indeed, one of the poems I wish to mention is specifically concerned with his dissatisfaction about not being adequately rewarded for his services. *The Complaynt of Schir David Lyndesay to the Kingis Grace*, written in 1529-30, gives an eloquent account of his grievances. It is noticeable that the discourse of the poem repeatedly returns to the evil effects of flattery which he sees as endemic in court life and which he does not wish to engage in himself, even though he sees that it undoubtedly brings rewards for those who do. At times he does question whether he should indulge in it himself: "I wald sum wyse man did me teche / Quhidder that I suld flatter or fleche [*coax, cajole*]" (ll. 29-30).[5] He refers to the benefits to be gained—"Men gettis na thyng / Withoute inopportune askyng" (ll. 57-58)—and demonstrates its ubiquity:

> Thare was no play bot cartis and dyce
> And ay Schir Flatterie bare the pryce
> Roundand and rowkand, ane tyll uther [*whispering and, tale-bearing to one another*]. (ll. 184-86)

He connects flattery with folly in a passage which may hint at what was to come in the *Satyre*. He pities the young and pure king, whom he sees being surrounded by enemies: "Bot sum to crak and sum to clatter / Sum maid the fule and sum did flatter" (ll. 235-36). At another point he complains that John McCrery, the King's fool, was a rival who succeeded in acquiring a reward that was justly Lyndsay's own. In doing this he makes it clear that he sees the king as innocent: it is those surrounding him that should bear the blame (ll. 281-97). Further indications suggest that he was thinking about his material in a similar way to what was to come in the play: "Oppressioun and all his fallowis / Ar hangit heych apon the gallowis" (ll. 385-86); and eventually he tells his readers that Folly is fled out of the town (l. 401).

At about the same time, in *The Testament and Complaynt of our soverane lordis Papyngo, Kyng James the Fyft* (1529-30), Lyndsay again notices that fools and flatterers are rewarded without merit: "And quhow fonde fenyeit fulis, and flatteraris / For small servyce opteinith gret rewardis" (ll. 388-89). He invents Sensualytie and Ryches, who are the daughters of Propertie (ll. 610-14), and Correctioun, who must be obeyed (l. 658). His character Chastitie escapes and goes to the priests,

5 References to the poems are to Williams, ed.

who reject her for her "flattrye" (l. 894). He repeats the idea that flattery leads to injustice: "Quhy sulde vertew throuch flattrye be refusit, / That men for cunning can get no rewarde?" (ll. 1013-15). His extensive account of the difficulties experienced by a line of Scottish kings is prefaced by a pessimistic judgement of court life: "So sen in court bene no tranquillytie / Sett nocht on it your hole fielycite" (ll. 407-8). But perhaps the most intriguing aspect for the subject of this essay is the persistent closeness of flattery and folly. This relationship underlies Flatterie and his group of foolish associates in the *Satyre*. But it is not an innocent folly.

In considering this disgust over the role of flattery, I would point out that in the years between Lyndsay's first presentation of his play as a brief interlude in 1540 and the fuller realisations of 1553 and 1555, his criticism of court morals seems to have developed and intensified. Sir William Eure's Notes for Thomas Cromwell describing what he calls the "Interlude" performed at Linlithgow in 1540 make no mention of satire as such, and it is possible that Lyndsay did not use this word for the early version.[6] But perhaps more significantly, Flatterie is mentioned as taking part in the interlude, and he is without the family given to him later in the *Satyre*.

I

One of the questions which has arisen in the study of the *Satyre* is that it appears to be rather solitary in its achievement. However, it has been shown by Sarah Carpenter that there were other plays in Scotland and that Lyndsay showed an interest in them over many years. Dramatic activities seem to have been an essential part of court entertainment, as they were in England. But what actually survives is thin and we have little in the way of plays which can help us to envisage a theatrical context for what Lyndsay was aiming to do. Perhaps, therefore, we must look at the English drama to suggest where he found some hints or models. The likelihood that he was interested in English drama is not entirely speculative. We do know that he visited London in 1535 to accept the insignia of the Order of the Garter on behalf of James V and that he met Henry VIII as well as receiving money from Cromwell. In 1543 he was again in England returning the Garter after the death of James.[7] It is possible that he might have seen, read or discussed

6 For references to *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* and supplementary documentation, see Hamer, ed. Eure's Notes are given at II: 2-6.

7 *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. IX, no. 165.

plays on these occasions, and in addition we cannot know what informal contacts he might have had with people interested in writing or in performing plays or in merely watching them. The first of the visits took place when John Bale and John Heywood were active, a critical time when the drama associated with the court was becoming a weapon of religious and political importance. Bale was supported by Cromwell at this time in writing and performing plays for religious and political objectives in a number of places outside London. Heywood had written satirical comedies which commented upon the royal policies and sought to influence them. A carefully managed indirectness brought attention to matters of significance, such as Ann Boleyn's pregnancy, which is referred to covertly in John Heywood's farce *John John*.[8] Heywood, like Lyndsay, continued to be closely connected with court entertainment for many years.

In composing the *Satyre,* Lyndsay invented a group of villains who are presented as being connected with one another and who rely upon their membership of a group in order to be successful. Such a combination is rich with theatrical opportunity. The device of grouping evil characters goes back a long way in the English drama—at least as far as *The Castle of Perseverance* (1400-25) where the evils (who are mostly deadly sins) are gathered into groups led by Mundus, Caro and Belyal. More effectively because they are used in a number of different ways, the evils of Newguise, Nowadays and Nought are closely related in *Mankind* (*c.*1470). They have a leader in Mischief, who manages them and exposes their evil significance, as well as their foolish behaviour when they are beaten. A generation later Skelton had recourse to a comparable group in *Magnyfycence* (1519-20), though here we find them working as individuals who at times show rivalry with one another—another productive dramatic device. Skelton cements their fellowship in evil distortion of court life by giving them names which seem to draw them together, but which are confusing by their very similarity: Clokyd Colusyon, Courtly Abusyon, Crafty Conveyaunce, and Counterfet Countenance. To these he adds another subgroup in the relationship between the characters Fansy and Foly, whose association we are told (l. 1066) went back to their school days together and who are contrasted by being manifestations of witty and ignorant folly. The presence of this second group is pertinent to what

8 Some of Heywood's additions to *La Farce de la Pasté,* which he translated for his own play, point to this topic, which must have been of great interest and speculation at court; see Happé, "'Rejoice ye in us'".

happens in the *Satyre*: that the performance and the observation of evil could be enhanced by the contiguity of groups embodying vices with those demonstrating folly.

Because of Lyndsay's visit to London 1535 we should note here that, whatever its form when first written in about 1518, the text of *Magnyfycence* we now have was not printed by John Rastell until about 1530. John Bale's *Comedy concernyng the Three Laws* (*c.*1536) was written within a few years after this publication, and we find that he has evolved a master of evil in Infidelity, who participates in the downfall of each of the three laws. In each of the episodes he is assisted by a pair of evils thematically appropriate to each of the three laws he is attempting to destroy: Idololatria and Sodomismus against the Law of Nature; Ambitio and Avaritia against the Law of Moses; and Hypocrisis and Pseudodoctrina against the Law of Christ. In a costume note at the end of the play these characters are described as "the frutes of Infydelyte" (sig. G1^{v}). These costumes are notable for their interrelationship with one another and for their reference to ecclesiastical vestments, which in itself is a form of satire. Bale's arrangement of allegory is meant to show how each of the laws is undermined by two evils able to corrupt it. This is made more significant by the way in which each component in the three pairs interacts with its complement. In Bale's arrangement into an allegory such interactions are part of his didactic programme to undermine traditional religion and to promote the Protestant reformation.

When we come to *Respublica*, a court play which has been questionably attributed to Nicholas Udall, we find an elaborate presentation of an allegory of evil characters. They are led by Avarice, who exhibits a perverted fatherly influence but also selfish dominance over another group of evil characters. These evils are again a destructive force in court life: Insolence, Oppression and Adulation. They are shown to be attacking the prosperity of the nation through their individual avarice. Adulation appears to be a variant for flattery. The play survives in a manuscript dated 1553, and it was intended for performance at court in the winter of 1553-54, but it is not clear from the court records whether it was actually performed. If the play was indeed written after the accession of Queen Mary, as seems more than likely, this would have been between the dates of the two known performances of the *Satyre*, and there is no evidence that Lyndsay saw it, or indeed whether the performance which was plainly envisaged ever came to pass. However, the conventions the play adopts, when considered with the examples I have already mentioned, do seem to have been generally employed,

and there is no doubt that they are perceivable as becoming more and more commonplace and conveniently useful in plays that followed in England in the second half of the sixteenth century. But we should notice that by calling his play a "satire" Lyndsay is giving particular emphasis to his dissatisfaction with the specific court in which he found himself, and also looking for an amendment of the evils exposed.

In *Respublica, The Castle of Perseverance* and *Mankind*, evil is spread among all the individuals in the conspiring groups and there is a thematic relationship between the individuals of each evil group: new fashion in *Mankind*, courtly abuse and profit-making by financial corruption in *Magnyfycence* and *Respublica*, while in *Castle* the evils are distributed in accordance with yet another potent and traditional grouping, the World, the Flesh and the Devil, as we have noticed. Bale's play has a more distinct religious and political motivation in its attack upon what he considered to be the evils of the Catholic church. The links between the individual characters are the essence of allegory, since they operate as figures for the relationship of the evils concerned.

We might suppose that these exploitations of allegorical groupings would be typical of other lost plays. There may have been a great number that might be relevant, as in the first half of the sixteenth century there are references to a regular supply of interludes being performed at court. Particularly striking is the evidence that usually payments were made to players through the Christmas period for their participation in such entertainment.[9]

II

Let us now look at how these vices are used in the plot of the *Satyre*. I suggest that their participation can be divided into five sections. In considering these we notice that there are large sections of the play in which they are not involved which we can leave aside for the moment, though sometimes the vices are onstage without direct action—as in the long sequence when they are sitting in the stocks. The first section (ll. 602-1169) introduces them to the audience, to one another and to other characters. We shall return to this in some detail, for it is a prolonged episode with several relevant aspects in it. It includes establishing a relationship between them and identifying their evil hierarchy. They take on

9 For many references to lost interludes at the English court see Streitberger.

aliases and disguises which deceive the King. From the point of view of theatrical history, this is one of the most remarkable passages in the play because of the extensive use Lyndsay makes of staging conventions discernible in English interludes. The episode shows them establishing influence over the King, who appoints them as his officers, as well as demonstrating their hostile reaction to Veritie's arrival. They seek to discredit her and are successful, in that she is put into the stocks, and they achieve this by pleasing the King in such a way that they can act against her with his connivance. While this episode is being played out the King falls into amorous temptation, but not as the result of their initiative, since other evil characters led by Solace are responsible for his seduction.

The second episode in which they participate directly comes in response to Correction, whose arrival is heralded by his Varlet (l. 1484). They express anxiety and fear as this unfolds and as a result they take refuge in allegiances to different parts of the community: Flatterie to the Spirituality, Dissait to the merchants and Falset to the craftsmen. Once again Lyndsay is quite specific in associating flattery with the misdemeanour of the spiritual estate. But this device does not serve them very well because it leads to dissention between them. Falset steals the King's box and the three of them fight over it, until Dissait seizes an opportunity and makes off with it for himself (l. 1581). Their alliance is thus manifestly self-serving.

The third episode is less distinct, but before the end of Part One of the performance Chastitie and Veritie, in the wake of Correction's assertion of his reforming influence over the King, expose the corruption of the vices in their absence and inform the King of their real names (ll. 1869-84). In Part Two, the exposure of the vices is continued in the fourth phase. The purging of the faults in the state which goes on as a result of the complaint of John the Commonwealth includes their fall (l. 2460). His indictment of them leads directly to their arrest by the Sergeants (Lawyers). Pauper follows this up by his appeal for their punishment (ll. 3963-64). In the fifth episode (ll. 2495-4301) the three vices are condemned to hang, and in their extensive death speeches Dissait and Falset describe the extent of their evil doing. But Flatterie escapes the noose because he betrays his "marrowis" (companions). He goes off to continue his evil work elsewhere. His departure is immediately followed by the arrival of Foly (l. 4302), who, as we shall see, brings an oblique comment on the misdeeds of the vices. To summarise the participation of this group of villains, we can conclude that they do provide a major element in the narrative, several times being the driving force in

the unfolding of events. They are one of the principal contributors to the evils which undermine the good of the nation. But the evils which Lyndsay is assailing as his satirical targets are not confined to these three. The sensual temptation of Rex Humanitas and the corruption of the clergy, which is partly sensual and partly avaricious, as well as the issue of the role of the king, are all themes of comparable importance in Lyndsay's evaluation of court life.

III

We have noticed the possibility that Lyndsay may have been acquainted with the English drama of his time, and that what has survived from it and much that is lost may have influenced his work. What is surprising about his presentation of the vices is that they share so many details of presentation and performance with comparable characters in the surviving interludes and moralities. As far as the evil characters in surviving English plays are concerned, it is clear that a large accumulation of conventions became available to dramatists, that they made consistent and persistent use of them, and that ultimately this led to the development of the conventional figure known as "the Vice". Such was the latter's theatrical prestige that he seems to have been almost indispensable to writers of interludes between 1530 and 1580. Presumably these characteristics were part of the entertainment offered by such plays and the recognition of familiar features imported from earlier experience would have added much to the stage effect. A great proportion of the characteristics of vices in English plays is discernible in Lyndsay's characters. The dramatists, including Lyndsay, seem to have taken the view that comic devices which were tied to evil were both good doctrine and successful theatre.

In the following discussion I shall mention some specific parallels in the characteristics and behaviour of evil characters between Lindsay's characters and those of other dramatists working in about the same time. Flatterie is the first of the villains to arrive (l. 601), following the King's seduction by Sensualitie. He appears alone on the stage talking directly to the audience. Within a few words he has connected himself with the devil. He has had a remarkable journey, coming from France over the stormy sea and into the Firth of Forth. He calls upon the onlookers to make room for him and he draws attention to his odd clothing "Begaryit all with sindrie hewis" (l. 604). He makes a connection with Christmas festivities and describes himself as a fool who had participated in

them. The bizarre clothing may itself be a hint at a fool's costume which would be instantly recognised. This link with folly, which we have noticed in the earlier non-dramatic poems, recurs a number of times subsequently. The features of appearance and performance are characteristic of evil characters in other plays. He greets the two other vices who now arrive. He has already told the audience that his name is Flatterie, and the two others are introduced by name as well: Flatterie instantly recognises Falset, and they anticipate the arrival of Dissait by name before he arrives. When he does, he also calls for room and delivers his name. Falset has already been claimed as a brother by Flatterie and it is not long before Dissait also asserts brotherhood. Possibly this is not meant as a blood relationship so much as a common purpose, one strengthened by the similarity of the names, which all indicate a kind of verbal deception.[10] The comic routines of these introductions are likely to have made the names memorable and to have established links between these characters. They immediately begin plotting to deceive the king, and to facilitate this Flatterie proposes that they disguise themselves and take false names.

This is another routine which became very common among evil characters, and it was frequently developed into a comic sequence as they hit upon their new names. Here the process is made more comic, but also more barbed, because Flatterie suggests that they adopt clerical clothing—not unlike some of the vices we have noticed in Bale's *Three Laws*. This anticlerical satire here anticipates much that is to follow, and the allusion is pressed home in that when they have decided upon their aliases, Falset proposes that they all be baptised anew, and they immediately perform some version of the rite with one another (thus Falset: "Hayif me and I sall baptize thee" [l. 781]). Apparently, they each kneel in turn, and in this comic version of a sacrament Dissait becomes Discretion, Flatterie, who is now disguised as a Friar, becomes Devotion and Falset is given the name of Sapience. After a fortifying drink they introduce one another under these aliases to the King. During this sequence, however, Falset forgets his alias and has to be introduced by Flatterie. This stupidity brings him near to folly and the foolish incompetence of evil. The King, although he is initially suspicious of Falset's forgetfulness, also shows culpable folly and is completely deceived by the excuse that Falset was in a trance "heich abone the Trinitie" (l. 877). Although his suspicions serve to underline the folly of the villains, he is quick to appoint

10 Later Dissait calls Flatterie "Father" (l. 1077).

them as his officers: Falset becomes Secretary, Dissait Treasurer and, with further irony, Friar Flatterie (alias Devotion) is appointed Spiritual Counsel—once again Lyndsay links flattery with the church. In a corresponding passage, the vices in *Respublica* decide to change their names. Avarice warns, "Els will some of you make good hanging stuff one daie" (l. 376). When Oppression asks Avarice to "christen" (l. 377) them, they argue about what he proposes, and in the ensuing muddle Adulation forgets that Avarice is to be addressed as Polycye (ll. 390-91). We note too that this incompetence makes folly ridiculous.

Although their identities and the evils they bring are now manifest to the audience, this demonstration of Vice-comedy in the *Satyre* is not over yet. The first episode is completed initially by their success in driving away Gude Counsaill, with the King's approval, and then by their attack on Veritie. To overcome the latter they seek the help of Spiritualitie on the grounds that Veritie is a heretic and carries the English New Testament. When they have put her in the stocks they return to Spiritualitie and the attention shifts away from them (l. 1181 SD). We should note that their attack is seen in terms of the evils prevailing among the clergy, and though Lyndsay may not have been Protestant himself, he was repeatedly emphatic in his criticism of the spiritual estate. This theme recurs much more strongly later in the play, to become one of the most weighty issues and one to which a great deal of dramatic time is devoted.

In the second and third episodes we see the impact of Correctioun's intervention upon them. It leads to a typical demonstration of their dissention, as they fall to fighting over the King's box which they have stolen and which Dissait finally carries off for himself. Quarrelling and fighting among groups of vices was a standard element, presumably to illustrate the shallowness of their relationship. On Correctioun's arrival they begin to split up, as they take refuge separately: Flatterie with Spiritualitie, Dissait with the Merchants and Falset with the Craftsmen. Refugees they may be, but their allegorical significance strongly suggests that they have found areas where the evils they represent might flourish in real life. Indeed, John the Commonwealth exposes the misleading of Merchants and Craftsmen by Dissait and Falset (ll. 2451-54). They lose their false names as well as their disguises. Correctioun, acting upon the complaints raised in the indictment by John the Commonwealth, has them put into the stocks.

By now the relationship between the three is breaking up, and this is made worse when Flatterie is exposed by the Sergeants. His friar's habit is removed and he too is condemned. However, he declares that he will help to hang his "mar-

rowis" and so his fate is different from theirs from then on. This is a variation on what commonly happens to Vices in interludes, for the conventions are that they are hanged, or that they craftily escape, disappearing in order to come back and work their evil on someone else. Because Flatterie was the first to appear and he now separates himself from his companions, he is plainly the leader, and central in Lyndsay's allegory of evil. His survival is linked with his pervasive influence throughout the narrative, as we have seen in the poems. The relationship within this family of villains is now lost and his two companions make their gallows speeches. Though the Vices in interludes do sometimes have a few words at this point, I have found nothing to match the size and eloquence of Lyndsay's Dissait and Falset. They are, perhaps like some introductory soliloquies, opportunities for a bravura performance, which depends in part upon the audience realising that they, the audience, are being made to wait for the characters' ends, a process which was cleverly exploited in the recent performance for its comic potential.

Although the death speeches of Dissait and Falset are both a kind of confessional, they are boastful of their achievements, giving a sense of the scope of their activities. Neither expresses much remorse. Dissait shows how the merchants and traders have depended upon him to sell their wares. This includes cheaper ingredients which falsify what they are supposed to be, for instance, rye-meal in soup. He praises the value of usury and the use of false measures and weights. He pinpoints a number of eminent people who have prospered by means of deceit.

Falset's speech is rather longer and more wide-ranging. He shows how the practices of many crafts and businesses have prospered from his teaching. In doing so he names many families who have benefitted from his ways. The action is spun out by Lyndsay when Falset looks at the hanging body of Dissait, whom he calls his father-brother (l. 4228). Once the noose is put round his own neck, however, his tone changes, as he now turns from enjoying his achievements to giving a grim warning to all who follow him. Much of this is pointed at covetous kings, wrongful conquerors and "all publick oppressours" (l. 4237). Among these he names a Pharaoh and Pontius Pilate. He now welcomes these and undertakes to prepare places for them in "hiddeous hell" (l. 4245). This promise seems to shift his identity more towards being a denizen of hell, a devil perhaps. But he finally complains of his wife's betrayal of him and dies boasting defiantly that he never made a better end (l. 4271). In this death speech of Falset Lyndsay shows theatrical expertise by elaborating the arraignment of his former associates and show-

ing that Falset is much pleased by the way he has managed to ensure his own survival. This interaction makes one wonder whether Falset is a person—he complains of his wife and her sexual misdeeds with priests—or an abstraction, or a devil. It seems likely that the allegorical mode and the theatrical devices associated with it make this effect possible.

Flatterie's introduction of himself on his first appearance mentioned his clothing of sundry hues and reminded the audience that he had appeared as a fool at Christmas (ll. 629-31). At the end of his performance, when Flatterie has betrayed his fellows, Lyndsay returns to this relationship by his unheralded introduction of Foly as a character, and more significantly as a commentator on events. In performance this may be quite a surprise, but we may perceive, in hindsight, that Lyndsay has prepared the ground. The sharp juxtaposition with the end of the vices is significant because in some ways it undermines the moral structure of which the vices with their punishment was a major part. Foly gives a demonstration of foolish concerns by describing his wife and his family, and he makes it clear that the vices are now to be seen as fools, along with everyone else in that infinite number targeted by Foly in his ensuing sermon. The moral lesson of the vices is threatened because of the proximity and inevitability of universal fools. Foly introduces a disturbing attitude to the reforms which have been promulgated in the Parliament. I suggest that Lyndsay is here following the idea and purpose of satire, which is to make the most of attack and to leave unresolved what will actually be done about it. Lyndsay has laid before the audience many changes through the Acts of his Parliament, but this final undermining of reform, stating the need for it but leaving open the issue of whether it will be sustained in real life, as distinct from the closed structure of a theatrical plot focused upon didactic ends, remains as a warning. At the end the play is reminding us that we are all fools, and that includes all ranks of society as well as the audience and the family of vices we have been considering. Flatterie, the leader of the vices who represents something Lyndsay saw as embedded and pernicious in court life as well as in the world outside it, escapes by means of the shabby trick of turning on his erstwhile comrades, so that he is now free to work his ways elsewhere.

This cynical desertion is another typical feature of interlude Vices, as in Ill Report's mockery of the elders in *The Virtuous and Godly Susanna* (by Thomas Garter; pub. 1569) and Iniquity's scorn for the doomed Ishmael as a "whoreson noddy" (l. 386) in the anonymous *Nice Wanton* (pub. 1560). Flatterie is now to serve the holy Hermeit of Lareit, we are told, "And leir [*teach*] him for till flatter" (l. 4301);

and literally his last word in the play is actually "flatter". Like some of the Vices in English plays, such as Ambidexter in *Cambises* (by Thomas Preston; pub. 1569), and the eponymous Common Conditions (anon.; pub. 1576), he lives to fight again. This means that the link between Flatterie and the spirituality has still not been completely severed. As an abstract character, he survives as though superhuman and indestructible. A little before Flatterie's escape, the Pauper's last words appeared to be cautionary. He asked the King to hang the other vices and drive Flatterie out of town. Rest, for him, was conditional on that being done (ll. 3996-97). And this survival seems implicitly connected with the fate of Foly. At the end Foly may tell us the truth, but he remains a danger from within, and Lyndsay finally achieves a remarkably complex portrayal of the relationship between evil and folly through his exploitation of stage conventions. The family of vices is a notable contribution to this intriguing ambivalence. Foly has the last speech and the last laugh. Dismissing the audience, he promises to pray for them, but apparently he will "rin incontinent" (l. 3374) to the tavern in order to do so.

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