Scène
Européenne

Theta
Théâtre anglais

# Theta XIII

## Forms of the Supernatural on Stage: Evolution, Mutations

Textes réunis par
Richard Hillman

**Référence électronique**

[En ligne], Elisabeth Dutton, « The Oxford Ghost Walk: Staging the Supernatural in Oxford University Drama », dans *Theta XIII, Forms of the Supernatural on Stage: Evolution, Mutations*, éd. par Richard Hillman, 2018, « Scène Européenne, Theta, Théâtre anglais » mis en ligne le 09-07-2018,

URL : https://sceneeuropeenne.univ-tours.fr/theta/theta13

La collection
**THETA**
est publiée par le Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance,
(Université François-Rabelais de Tours, CNRS/UMR 7323)
dirigé par Benoist Pierre

**Responsable scientifique**
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**ISSN**
1776-1026



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# The Oxford Ghost Walk:

## Staging the Supernatural in Oxford University Drama*

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Plays written and performed in Oxford Colleges in the late medieval and early modern period abound in supernatural beings of all sorts—from the allegorical, for example in Barten Holyday's *Technogamia, or the Marriages of the Arts* (first performed 1617/1618, printed 1618), to the risen Christ and the demonic spirits of Nicholas Grimald's scriptural plays in classical style, *Christus Redivivus* (first performed 1540/1541, printed 1543) and *Archipropheta* (first performed 1546/1547, printed 1548), to the classical deities and Senecan revenge ghost of William Gager's *Dido* (first performed 1583). This paper will focus specifically on ghosts, a category of supernatural being not always easy to define. Classical gods are not ghosts, of course; nor, perhaps, are all supernatural beings in human form: in order to define a ghost, Stanley Wells suggests that a ghost appears of its own volition, whereas visions and apparitions are summoned by others, and ghosts must have some claim to objective reality—the ghosts in *Richard III* he allows as ghosts because they appear to both Richmond and Richard and so seem objectively real. So Wells, who is writing about Shakespeare, sees ghosts in *Richard III, Julius Caesar, Hamlet* and *Macbeth*.[1] By complete contrast, Simon Palfrey and Emma Smith characterise Shakespearean ghosts as expressions of the mental or moral states of others. The ghosts in *Richard III, Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* are principally markers of a protagonist's guilt: "It isn't so much the murdered who cannot rest in peace. It is the murderers. . . . The ghosts are less figures of the afterlife than projections of restless ambition or emotional desire" (Palfrey and Smith, p. 167). For Palfrey and Smith, in Shakespeare only Hamlet's ghost truly

* I would like to thank Richard Hillman for a number of helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

1 See Wells, pp. 255-70.

stalks beyond the land of the living and is a restless soul, arriving without warning and wandering at his own will. It thus seems necessary to think beyond the question of volition as alone defining the theatrical ghost.

Place seems to be important to ghostliness: Old Hamlet's ghost alludes to the torments of his life beyond the grave—indeed, his obsession with his former sensual sins and his present physical suffering make him paradoxically remarkably corporeal—and these torments imply a hell, or perhaps here a purgatory, from which he has broken loose, in the style of the true Senecan spectre. But the ghosts of *Richard III*, while some allude to the time and place of their death, do not tell us where they come from or go to, and this is part of our sense that they do indeed seem to be conjured up by a protagonist's mind, albeit not willingly or consciously. And if they are articulations of a protagonist's fears or desires, they perhaps move closer, in a sense, to the allegorical beings of morality drama, and come not from a supernatural world but a theatrical one. Wells writes:

> certain kinds of character or types of action call for a differentation that will set them off from the norm. One may think of happenings such as dumbshows, plays (or masques) within plays, processions, theophanies, and the like, and characters such as witches, jesters, and spirits who by no stretch of the imagination can be expected to behave like even the theatrical manifestations of ordinary human beings. The point of them is their otherness—that they are different even from other stage characters. (p. 255)

This final point, that these particular theatrical beings are different even from other stage characters, helpfully indicates the possibility of generic irregularity, a possibility explored by Janette Dillon in relation to Shakespeare's history plays. Dillon writes of the scene in *Henry VI, Part Two,* in which the rebel Cade enters a garden looking for something to eat, and his prosaic discussion of salads is interrupted by the arrival of Alexander Iden, the garden's owner, who in calm rhetoric praises the garden as an emblem of the good life; by evoking the Eden for which he is apparently named, Iden encourages the audience to reflect both on the contemplative order that a garden could represent and the state or commonwealth, often represented as a garden. Iden is at this point the presenter of a pageant. He is not, of course, a ghost, but he is certainly from another world. He is a generic disruption to the conventions of the history play,[2] as a ghost is a spatial and temporal disruption to the here-and-now, and a staged ghost is to a theatrical present.

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2 See Dillon, pp. 13-28.

This idea of the staged "different", of which the ghost is an aspect, may be in creative tension with the idea of "haunting", since, as Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass note, haunting is, prior to the 1590s, an allusion to the familiar, most particularly the familiar place. To "haunt" was simply to practise or to use habitually, or to associate with someone habitually (Jones and Stallybrass, p. 260); only in the 1590s, it seems, did the term come to refer to ghostly activity, and the first recorded uses in *OED* are Shakespeare's: from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray masters; fly, masters: help!" (III.i.93-94), in response to the fairy transformation of Bottom, and, from *Richard II*, "Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed" (III.ii.154).[3] So it seems possible that part of the fascination of the ghost on the early modern stage lay in rich contrasts and paradoxes: the supernatural being and fleshly existence; human desire and otherworldly judgement or torment; the familiar and the different, in relation to genre and, most importantly, in relation to place.

Jones and Stallybrass observe heightened interest in stage ghosts in the 1590s, and they offer as explanation the rise of the professional playhouse: "the haunting of ghosts emerges as part of a theatrical apparatus.... it requires the costumes, the trapdoors, the special effects of the new professional theater, a theater which ... profoundly displaces the familiar *topoi* or places of the dominant culture" (p. 261). A connected argument is advanced by Palfrey and Smith, who suggest that the "basic physical fabric" of Shakespeare's stage makes it appropriate for the staging of death (p. 125). In the secular playhouses the roof was called the "heavens", and the stark wooden boards represented a potentially desolate space in which an actor might be isolated, awaiting heavenly judgement and that of the audience—

> As in a theatre the eyes of men,
> After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
> Are idly bent on him that enters next. (*RII*, V.ii.23-25)

The stage was referred to as a "scaffold", also, of course, a platform for executions, and the trapdoor in the bare boards could stand for grave, or purgatory, or hell; thus, Palfrey and Smith suggest, Shakespeare often associated playing with death (p. 127): furthermore, "Another word for a player was a 'shadow'—a non-body, essentially insubstantial" (p. 127). As Macbeth declares, "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player" (*Mac.*, V.v.23). Yet, as Palfrey and Smith acknowledge, the name of the Globe connects the professional playhouse to medieval drama, in which the playing space is a microcosm

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3 Quotations from Shakespeare throughout this article are from *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Greenblatt *et al.*

suitable for stories dramatising the path through life to judgement: in medieval drama any space could be used to represent specific locations, often biblical or metaphysical, such as the hell-mouth (p. 125). So it is clear that, while the apparatus of the playhouse may have facilitated a particular manner of staging ghosts, the supernatural is far from particular to the playhouse: the point is rather, perhaps, that death and judgement might play differently in the empty "wooden O" (*HV*, Pro.13) than in a street or church. This might be the case not least because the very emptiness of the playhouse differentiated it from spaces the architecture, art, and artefacts of which might remind the viewer of his Christian doctrine—indeed, should do so, for medieval drama to work the magic of its assertion of immanence.[4] The playhouse stage could perhaps more readily accommodate plays with a pre-Christian world-view—particularly Senecan tragedy, which of course is one of the more vital genres in the early 1590s—and Shakespeare's plays, which exhibit a potentially unorthodox interest in in-between states: life within death, but also death within life.[5]

But the supernatural beings that appeared in Oxford drama haunted places of a very particular, defined and contained culture, and were realised with very different material resources from those of the professional playhouse. If the ghosts of professional revenge tragedy are formed and informed by their playhouse setting, what is the impulse behind the ghosts of the Oxford College drama, and how were they staged?

## I

I will focus here on two vernacular plays which have a common central character: Julius Caesar. The first, an anonymous tragedy, was published in London *circa* 1606 as *The tragedie of Caesar and Pompey or Caesar's reuenge* (STC 4339) and in a second edition of 1607, whose title page adds the information that it was "Priuately acted by the Studentes of Trinity Colledge in Oxford" (STC 4340).[6] *Records of Early English Drama (REED)* for Oxford suggests that it was written and performed at Trinity sometime between 1592

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4 Lerud explores the significance of performance place in scriptural drama, and the interaction between a town's physical landmarks and the narrative played out there.

5 The ambivalence, explored throughout Palfrey and Smith, is also noted, though characterised differently, by Shell, who suggests that the complexities of Christian doctrine are reflected in the generic development of the tragic-comedy: the mixed genre accommodates both Christian insistence on a happy—and thus comic—ending and the challenges of pre-destination that mark some men as fated for suffering and thus bear a striking resemblance to classical tragedy. So for Shell the 1590s interest in tragedy is doctrinally inspired, and so is the shift away from tragedy in the early 1600s: as stricter Calvinist doctrines were challenged, tragi-comedy became a dominant force. See Shell, pp. 175-222 (chap. 4).

6 References to this play, henceforth as *Caesar's Revenge*, are by line numbers in the Malone Society edition by Boas.

and 1596 (II: 804), but Wiggins gives a "best guess" date of 1605 (V: 183).[7] The second play I will discuss was printed in London in 1633 as *Fuimus Troes. Aeneid 2. The true Troianes, being a story of the Britaines valour at the Romanes first inuasion: Publikely represented by the gentlemen students of Magdalen Colledge in Oxford* (STC 10886).[8] The play was written by Jasper Fisher, who entered Magdalen as a commoner in 1607 and took a degree in arts before becoming Reader in divinity or philosophy: by the time his play was published he was Rector of Wilden, Bedfordshire.[9] *REED: Oxford* gives the performance date as between 1611 and 1633 (II: 811), and Wiggins's best guess is 1619 (VII: 156). The second play at least is thus somewhat later than the 1590s, but both plays contain ghosts that bear considerable similarities to their playhouse cousins: in both cases the playwright explicitly designates them as "Ghost".

*Caesar's Revenge* shows Julius Caesar in Egypt, offering to restore Cleopatra to the throne in exchange for Pompey, who has fled to her following his defeat at Pharsalus: Cleopatra, though made joint heir to the throne, has been deposed in favour of her underage brother, Ptolemy. Pompey is assassinated on Ptolemy's orders and his widow Cornelia kills herself; Caesar buries Pompey with honour and has the murderers executed. Caesar returns in triumph to Rome; Cato Senior, fearing that Caesar will become a tyrant, kills himself. Anthony [*sic*], who has fallen in love with Cleopatra, nonetheless decides to forget her when he is visited by his "good genius" (l. 1310 SD), who prophesies that Rome will bleed because of their love (ll. 1332-35). Cassius recruits Brutus for a conspiracy against Caesar. Caesar plans a military expedition against Parthia, and despite a prophecy that only a king can defeat the Parthians, refuses Anthony's offer of the crown; his wife Calpurnia dreams of his death, but Caesar nonetheless goes to the Senate, where he is assassinated by the conspirators. Anthony and Caesar's nephew Octavian plan to avenge his death but argue over precedence until Caesar's Ghost appears and persuades them to unite in the cause of revenge. They face the army of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi: Caesar's Ghost appears to Brutus; the battle goes against Brutus's side, and Cassius, fearing Brutus has been killed, kills himself; Brutus finds Cassius's body and also com-

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7 The issue of dating is caught up with the issue of the possible relationship between this play and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a topic that is treated in Bullough, ed., pp. 33-35, and discussed further below.

8 References to this play are to the 1633 edition, which has no page or line numbers, and thus are by act and scene number. There is also an online edition by Chris Butler with the primary title of *The True Trojans*.

9 Fisher was Rector of Wilden from 1631; he was later also created Doctor of Divinity. As well as this play, a number of his sermons were published: he may have been blind. For further biographical information see Butler, ed., p. 3.

mits suicide, watched by Caesar's Ghost, which then returns, satisfied, to the underworld of dead heroes.

The main narrative source for the play's plot is Appian's *Roman History*, which was also available in an English translation of 1578; the playwright draws further material from Velleius's *History of Rome*, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and Plutarch's *Lives* ("The Life of Pompey").[10] These classical sources are supplemented by material from vernacular playhouse drama, including works by Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Kyd, and Shakespeare's *Richard II* and *Richard III,* as well as, probably, *Julius Caesar*. In this last case, the uncertain dating of the anonymous play make it difficult to be confident of the direction of influence, but, as Wiggins notes, "Shakespeare the borrower requires a much greater hypothesis than Shakespeare the lender", not least because the Oxford playwright clearly borrows from the Stratford playwright's histories elsewhere, and although the *Caesar* play of neither writer was in print at the time of composition of the other, "Shakespeare's play was readily available in the repertoire of a commercial company that performed not only in London but occasionally in Oxford" (Wiggins, V: 183).

The Oxford play follows the playhouse revenge tragedy in many ways, and Caesar's Ghost comes from the underworld to call for vengeance in true Senecan fashion: Anthony and Octavian must execute Caesar's "iust reuenge" (l. 2016). Before Caesar's death and ghostly re-appearance, however, ghosts have haunted the stage in various guises. Brutus, though not literally dead, finds a prophecy "written on my seate"—"Brute mortuus es" (l. 1382)—and comments:

> I, thou art dead indeed, thy courrage dead
> Thy care and loue thy dearest Country dead,
> Thy wonted spirit and Noble stomack dead. (ll. 1383-85)

When Cassius tells him rather that he is "in a dream" (l. 1398), ignoring the suffering of Rome, his reply combines death and dreaming as a longed-for ignorance:

> O that I might in *Lethes* endles sleepe,
> Close vp mine eyes, that I no more might see,
> Poor *Romes* distresse and Countries misery. (ll. 1399-401)

Cassius urges, however, that Brutus must "live" and "wake his sleepy minde" (l. 1402), as well as the "dying sparkes of honors fire" (l. 1403), to rescue Rome by assassinating Caesar. Such an act will not simply restore freedom to Rome; it is also an act of vengeance: "Thy kins-mans soule from heauen commandes thine aide" (l. 1408)—the kins-

10 See Wiggins, V: 185.

man here being Lucius Junius Brutus, who expelled the tyrant Tarquin, and to whom the present Brutus asserts that he will never prove "A bastard weake" (l. 1416). This scene therefore sets up two figures seeking revenge from beyond the grave, though neither is the direct and expected one: Brutus stirring himself from idleness to action presents himself as "living again", a new life that will "with the Tirants death begin" (l. 1420); Brutus is urged on to this action by the earlier Brutus, who does not appear but rather is invoked by Cassius as a soul in heaven commanding help—"that lastly must by thee receiue his end" (l. 1408): apparently his soul, though in heaven, cannot rest while the threat of tyranny hangs over Rome. He is later mentioned again by Brutus as defeating Tarquin and providing a pattern for the defeat of an even worse tyrant:

> An other *Tarquin* is to bee expeld,
> An other *Brutus* liues to act the deede:
> Tis not one one nation that this *Tarquin* wronges,
> All *Rome* is stayn'd with his vnrul'd desires. (ll. 1551-54)

Similarly, in the next scene Caesar speaks for a ghost seeking vengeance: Crassus's ghost, he declares, "roues by the Stygian strond" complaining of the "sluggish negligence" of the Roman armies in claiming due "ransom" from the Parthians (ll. 1431-34). Disconcertingly, the typesetter has misread "Crassus" as "Caesar",[11] so when the play is read rather than seen, the *reader* encounters the living Caesar telling his entourage about Caesar's Ghost in the underworld. Thus Caesar's Ghost haunts the play even before Caesar has died: the typesetter's error becomes curiously prophetic of the fact that, despite numerous references to hauntings, Caesar's is the only ghost that will actually be allowed to appear. Thus all the earlier references to vengeful ghosts somehow anticipate Caesar's Ghost and prepare audience expectation of it.

When Caesar's Ghost does appear, "Out of the horror of those shady vaultes" (l. 1972), he first declares that he has come "to tell his wronges" (l. 1975) and narrates his triumphs over a long list of nations and tyrants. However, his vaunting is apparently interrupted by his realisation that his tale is of no avail, since at his height he was cut down by "Brutus base hand" (l. 2005). The realisation inspires a frustrated impulse to revenge:

> Giue me my sword and shild Ile be Reueng'd,
> My mortall wounding speare and goulden Crest.
> I will dishorse my foeman in the field,
> Alasse poore *Caesar* thou a shadow art,
> An ayery substance wanting force and might. (ll. 2007-11)

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11 The emendation to "Crassus" is suggested by Boas, ed., p. x.

The Ghost's vision of his military prowess poignantly melts into a realisation of his material impotence: he immediately resolves that Anthony and Octavian must avenge him, and at that moment the two enter, "Anthony at on dore, Octauian at another with Souldiers" (l. 2019 SD). The "Souldiers", who do not speak, perhaps stage a generalised audience for the Ghost's dramatic appeal through the exhibition of his wounds:

> See *Romaines*, see my wounds not yet clos'd vp,
> The bleeding monuments of *Caesars* wronges.
> Haue you so soone for got my life and death?
> My life wherein I reard your fortunes vp.
> My death wherein my reared fortune fell,
> My life admir'd and wondred at of men?
> My death which seem'd vnworthy to the Gods,
> My life which heap'd on you rewards and gifts,
> My death now begges one gift; a iust reueng. (ll. 2044-52)

Caesar's Ghost does the rhetorical work, stirring Anthony and Octavian to revenge, appealing also to Octavian's army and, implicitly, to the play's audience. His words are reified by wounds to his body, which bear witness to his violent murder and appeal also to those who benefitted from his patronage in life. The moment recalls Roman custom, as recorded, for example, by Plutarch in his account of Coriolanus, who exposes the wounds he has received defending Rome in order to win the support of the Roman people for his consulship. A version of the Coriolanus story was of course brought to the playhouse stage by Shakespeare, but in 1606-7, too late to have influenced *Caesar's Revenge*. However, Shakespeare also presents the potent effect of dead Caesar's wounds on the Roman people, exhibited not by Caesar's Ghost but by Mark Antony, as he addresses the crowd over Caesar's corpse.[12]

The moment also, perhaps, recalls images of Christ as the Man of Sorrows, displaying his wounds to appeal to the devotion of the viewer, and the related presentation of Christ in some lyrics and in the mystery cycles, where he speaks from the cross, enjoining the viewer to behold his wounds and repent:

> Thou man that of mis here has mente,
> To me tente enteerly thou take.
> On roode am I ragged and rente,
> Thou sinfull sawle, for thy sake.
> For thy misse, amendis wille I make;

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12 See Plutarch, *The Life of Martius Coriolanus*, *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, pp. 317-19, and Shakespeare, *Cor.*, II.i.231-36, and *JC,* III.ii.168ff.

My bakke for to bende here I bide.
This teene for thy trespase I take.
Who couthe thee more kindines have kidde
Than I?
Thus for thy goode
I schedde my bloode.
Manne, mende thy moode,
For full bittir thy blisse mon I by. (*Christ's Death and Burial* [York plays], ll. 118-30)

Christ, however, is on the cross at the moment of this speech: even if his appeal to the audience is atemporal, crossing from the time and place of scripture to the time and place of the audience, within the historical narrative he speaks while still alive. In the case of *Caesar's Revenge*, by contrast, attention is being drawn paradoxically to the bleeding wounds and thus the corporality of a ghost.

Caesar's Ghost incites his avengers, but also damns his foes. When he appears to Brutus on the night before battle, he immediately creates such despair that Brutus begs him to "end my life and sorrow all at once", though he is uncertain whether the Ghost is a "fiend below" or a fury (ll. 2283-93). The Ghost identifies himself again by his wounds—"Knowest thou not me, to whome . . . / Thou three and twenty Gastly wounds didst giue?" (ll. 2295-96)—but explains that it is Anthony who will kill Brutus on his behalf. Brutus seems then to recognise the Ghost, addressing him as "Caesar", but when he sees the Ghost again, on the field of battle, he reverts to "vgly fend" (l. 2502) and again entreats the Ghost to kill him (l. 2509). Here, however, he goes further, urging that the Ghost drag his body down to the "infernall Styx" (l. 2512) and torment it in numerous apparently diabolical ways: "Boyle me or burne, teare my hatefull flesh, / Deuoure, consume, pull, pinch, plague, paine this hart, / Hell craues her right" (ll. 2513-15). There, Brutus says, the hell-hounds with hungry mouths will seek not his body but the "endless matter" of his soul as prey (l. 2522): Brutus understands this rather conventionally Senecan Ghost as demonic as much as human, calling for a vengeance more than earthly.

Though not ghosts, two other supernatural figures stalk the stage. Firstly, as Caesar enters Rome in triumph, Anthony declares himself unmoved by the pomp and glory, thinking only of Cleopatra, who has "triumphed" over his "conquered heart"—and immediately "Anthonies bonus genius" enters, to challenge Anthony's attitude to such triumph. Such conquests leave Anthony a "womans souldiar", fit only for the "assaults" of night, choosing the soft pillow over the steely helmet and neglecting the disciplines of his youth (ll. 1311-16); Bonus Genius prophesies that Anthony and Cleopatra's love will end in "bloud and shame" (l. 1351), and Anthony responds to his admonishments by urging himself to wake from the "idle dreame" of his love and "Cast of these base effeminate passions" (ll. 1361-62). Here, then, is a curiously hybrid supernatural onstage figure.

The term "genius", which in Latin can refer to either a guardian deity or a person's wit or talent, is borrowed in late Middle English to signify the moral spirit who guides an individual through life: in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, Genius is the confessor priest of Venus, who guides Amans through his confession to self-understanding. Anthony seems to interpret his visitor in this way: "my Genius … / They say that from our birth he doth preserue" (ll. 1352-53). Shakespeare, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, gives his Antony a "spirit which keeps thee" (II.iii.17), evoked by a Soothsayer, who warns him away from Octavius Caesar. This play almost certainly post-dates *Caesar's Revenge*, but Shakespeare is drawing here on Plutarch's *The Life of Marcus Antonius*, in which the Soothsayer refers to "thy Demon … this is to say, the good angel and spirit that keepeth thee" (*Shakespeare's Plutarch*, pp. 215-16), and it is possible that the playwright of *Caesar's Revenge* draws on the same source. In addition, that the stage direction and Genius's own lines specify a *good* Genius may imply the possibility also of a *bad* Genius; this hints perhaps at the influence of morality drama and its appropriation in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, in which a Good Angel and a Bad Angel compete for the protagonist's soul. *OED* indicates that the *bonus genius* became, in the seventeenth century, a benevolent guardian spirit, often opposed by a malevolent one. This appears to be the use invoked in *Fuimus Troes*, where it seems a country, as well as a person, can have such a guardian spirit:

> Could Countries loue, or Britaines Genius saue
> A mortall man from sleeping in his graue:
> Then hadst thou liu'd great Nennius. (III.vii)

Anthony, however, provides a further interpretation of his supernatural visitor:

> hee comes as winged *Mercurie*,
> From his great Father *Ioue*, t'*Anchises* sonne
> To warne him leaue the wanton dalliance,
> And charming pleasures of the *Tyrian* Court. (ll. 1357-60)

Anthony's Bonus Genius is likened to Mercury, messenger of the gods, urging Aeneas to leave Dido and Carthage in order to fulfil his destiny of founding Rome. Thus Anthony both berates himself for falling into the same trap as Aeneas and implies for himself a similarly great destiny, ordained by the gods. The lines present ambiguous evidence, however, as to the staging of this visitation: does "he comes as winged *Mercurie*" imply that Bonus Genius is actually costumed as the messenger of the gods, with wings, perhaps a helmet and snaked staff, perhaps descending from above? Or is the similarity of the message conveyed the only comparison between the messengers? The latter seems more likely, since the gods do not otherwise appear in the play. Nonetheless, this supernatural visitation seems to represent a moment of generic disruption: Anthony is not

haunted by the ghosts of heroes calling for revenge, but by a moral spirit with a hint of the medieval, and by the ghost of his classical education, interpreting as he apparently does his own moral spirit in the light of Virgil's *Aeneid*. This particular haunting most likely stems from the playwright's attempt to present directly the "demon" that Plutarch, and Shakespeare after him, present indirectly, through the Soothsayer's words.

The second supernatural figure stalking *Caesar's Revenge* is Discord, who speaks the Prologue and introduction to each act. The appearance of this allegorical personification is marked by special effects, according to the initial stage direction: "*Sound alarum then flames of fire*". He explains that the bloody battles of the Romans have caused disturbance even among the elements: the stars tremble and the constellations hide in the sea, while the earth seems thrown off its axis. He calls on the heavens, the furies and the stars to destroy Rome, and to break apart "What Lawes, Armes, and Pride hath raised vp" (l. 38):[13] thus, appropriately of course, his apparent concern at the disruption of the natural order leads only to a wish for further violence and discord, and the punishment for Pride seems inevitably to require also the destruction of the rule of Law, since Law is enforced by might of Arms. Discord apparently remains onstage throughout the play, since there is at no point a stage direction for him to exit: he may thus be likened, perhaps, to the figure of Revenge who introduces and presides over Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, and is perhaps most readily imagined stalking an upper stage or gallery, such as exists in the dining hall of Trinity College where the play was probably performed. In the margins of early printed editions, Discord's speeches are marked as the Chorus: "*Chor. I*", "*Chor. II*", "*Chor. III*" and so on. There are repeated stage directions, "*Enter Discord*", as the character delivers commentary at the beginning of each act,[14] and that at the beginning of the second act also specifies "*Flashes of fire*". Perhaps, if Discord has never exited, these would in performance simply signal the moment when the watching character stands and comes forward to speak.

Near the play's conclusion, Discord begins a summation speech that sounds like an epilogue; now his hopes are fulfilled because

> Hell and Elisium must be digd in one,[15]
> And both will be to litle to contayne,

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13 This Senecan device is applied to overweening Rome by Robert Garnier in *Porcie*, where the Fury Mégère invokes discord in an opening monologue. See Hillman, p. 38.

14 A typesetter's error follows the stage direction, "*Enter Discord*", at the beginning of the second act with an attribution of the choric lines to Anthony, even though the lines actually declare: "I, being Discord hight . . . " (l. 632).

15 The line perhaps echoes Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, I.iii.61 (A-text), where Faustus claims that he "confounds hell in Elysium".

> Numberles numbers of afflicted ghostes,
> That I my selfe haue tumbling thither sent. (ll. 2541-44)

But then, as if to prove the point that the ghosts cannot now be contained in the underworld, Caesar's Ghost interrupts with an epilogue of his own, explaining that his thirst for revenge is satisfied, and, as is conventional in an epilogue, asking that the audience, observing the cycle of revenge complete, should clap: "Doe thou applaud what iustly heauens haue wrought, / While murther on the murtherers head is brought" (ll. 2547-48). If the audience do, in response, applaud, the applause is perhaps cut short by Discord, who challenges the Ghost's presentation of the action of the play as divine justice and retribution: for Discord, the play's violence does not offer ordered resolution but simply a proliferation of violence in which he takes great delight. Furthermore, Discord's version of the epilogue refutes an Aristotelian idea of tragedy as inspiring pity alongside terror:

> Caesar, I pitied not thy Tragick end:
> . . . . . .
> Nor doe I that thy deaths with like repayd,
> But that thy death so many deaths hath made:
> Now cloyde with blood, Ile hye me downe below,
> And laugh to thinke I caused such endlesse woe. (ll. 2549-54)

As these lines are spoken by the personification of Discord, the audience need not, perhaps, see in them any serious ethical challenge to ideas of the moral purpose of tragedy; however, they do present one possible audience response, one that simply delights in watching violence. Given the possibility thus presented that this play may be enjoyed at this rather unedifying level, the smooth surface of the beatific vision with which Caesar's Ghost does, then, finally close the play cannot be entirely untroubled: the audience may struggle to believe in the "fragrant flowry fields at rest" (l. 2560) to which the Ghost says he is now going; or they may be troubled by the idea that Caesar will now spend his "dateles houres" in "lasting ioy" with the "Heroes of the Goulden age" (ll. 2569-70) when his quietus is apparently bought with such carnage. At the least, the audience may be uneasy with an ending that, while it may offer reward to the virtuous, still allows Discord to revel wickedly in the destruction he has caused, particularly since, as he heads "downe below" to laugh, he seems to be almost the devil himself, not defeated but laughing in hell.

## II

The action of *Fuimus Troes* is framed by scenes in which two ghosts—of Brennus, a British military commander, and of Camillus, a Roman military commander—discuss

Caesar's military campaigns. Each argues for the superiority of his own nation. Then we see Caesar looking from the northern coast of Gaul, which he has conquered, to the white cliffs of Dover; he resolves to conquer Britain, too, and sends Volusenus with a proffer of peace that he confidently, and correctly, expects will be refused; Volusenus will also spy out the land. King Cassileban mobilises his troops against the planned Roman invasion; Caesar invades but suffers heavy losses while landing troops and is defeated by Duke Nennius, who nonetheless dies from a wound inflicted by Caesar's poisoned sword. At Cassibelan's triumphs, his nephew Hirildas is killed by Eulinus: when Cassibelan seeks to avenge Hirildas, Eulinus's uncle Androgenus turns against him and joins forces with Mandubrace, the dethroned prince of Troynovant (London), which Cassibelan has entrusted to the rule of Androgenus. Mandubrace, in revenge for Cassibelan having murdered his father and usurped his throne, allies himself with Caesar and encourages a second invasion. Cassibelan allows the Romans to land so that a land-battle can be fought; many of Caesar's ships are wrecked, but as other British kingdoms take Caesar's side, he gains the upper hand. A captured Druid tells Caesar that Brutus will seek to avenge the treatment of the British descendents of the Trojan Brute: he warns him to avoid the Senate. Cassibelan agrees to Caesar's terms for peace; Mandubrace is restored to his birthright, Cassibelan is to pay Rome tribute, and a tower is to be build in Troynovant as a monument to Caesar's triumph.[16] A time of universal peace is achieved as Britain is joined to the Roman Empire: the play concludes with Brennus and Camillus somewhat reconciled by the lesson that both Rome and Britain are heirs of Troy, blessed by the gods.

Whereas *Caesar's Revenge* presented Julius Caesar in a tragedy, this is usually considered a history play,[17] dramatising the prose histories of Caesar (*Gallic Wars*), Geoffrey of Monmouth (*History of the Kings of Britain*) and Livy (*Roman History*).[18] From Caesar, Fisher takes details of military strategy and the story of Mandubrace (V.20). From Geoffrey of Monmouth, Fisher adapts the stories of Cassibelan's triumph and defeat, of Nennius' death by Caesar's sword (though the notion that the sword is poisoned is not

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**16** There is also a subplot with romantic interests, but it is not relevant to the present discussion.

**17** It is categorised as such by *REED: Oxford* (II: 810) and by Wiggins, although the latter also notes (VII: 156) that the play refers to itself as a tragedy, and as a "story" on the title page.

**18** In addition to these main sources, Virgil's *Aeneid* is explicitly mentioned as the source of the play's name on the title page of the early printed editions; Horace's *Odes* and *Epistles* are cited in mottoes on the title page and at the foot of the text; Wiggins also notes (VII: 159) citations from Ovid's *Amores* and Suetonius's *Twelve Caesars*. There is also at least one direct Shakespearean reference, to *Richard III* (see I.i), and echoes of the *Henry IV* plays in the presentation of Rollano, who, although Belgian, seems an imitation of Falstaff. Fisher's treatment of his sources is discussed in more detail in Dutton.

in Geoffrey of Monmouth), and of Eulinus's accidental killing of Hirildas. From Livy, Fisher draws information about Brennus's defeat of the Romans and Camillus's military successes and political wisdom. Fisher does not simply "download" his sources:[19] he cuts and expands, rearranges and conflates, often following only a broad narrative, and sometimes adding details that manipulate the sympathies of the reader/audience. The major sources of *Fuimus Troes* are specified, intriguingly, in the cast list, which arranges its *dramatis personae* according to the sources in which they can be found. The ghosts and the gods are identified as coming from Livy's *Roman History,* Book V, the Romans and the British kings who fight with them from Caesar's *Gallic Wars*, and the Britons who stand against the Romans from Geoffrey of Monmouth: the clash of worlds and of armies is presented as an act of compilation, or perhaps even of competition between sources.

History plays employ theatrical magic to bring the dead to life, challenging boundaries between past and present and making dead heroes live: "a parade of dead monarchs and nobles briefly revives, and dies again" (Palfrey and Smith, p. 105). Palfrey and Smith argue that the procession of Richard's victims' ghosts before the battle at the end of *Richard III* can be considered the metonymic scene of historical drama (p. 105). The rapid procession of victims provides a concise recapitulation of the action of the play, but of course because they are ghosts, it is theatrically, not historically, that they revive and die again: they reappear on a stage they had apparently left, and then disappear forever. They cannot act, in the sense of fight or kill;[20] they can affect the action of a play only by urging the living on to victory (Richmond) or despair (Richard). The Ghosts of Brennus and Camillus will serve a function very similar to Caesar's Ghost in *Caesar's Revenge*, and to the ghosts of *Richard III*, who seek vengeance both by cursing Richard and by spurring on Richmond. In the Prologue to *Fuimus Troes*, firstly, Mercury incites them to spur on their own tribes:[21]

> with gastly lookes
> Incite your Country-men, when night and sleepe
> Conquer the eyes, when weary bodyes rest,
> And senses cease: Be Furies in their brest. (Pro.)

Then, Camillus indicates that the Ghosts of those killed by the Northerners must be "expiated with a fiery deluge" of Caesar's unleashing: they need to be avenged. As in

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**19** Dillon suggests that it was "the usual practice of historiography at that time" to "incorporate the writings of earlier historians wholesale and without question into the work in hand" (p. 19); dramatists were freer than other writers to select, adapt and rearrange material (pp. 20-21.)

**20** Of course, the ghosts include the young princes and Lady Anne, as well as martial nobles.

**21** In this he is strangely reminiscent of Discord in *Caesar's Revenge*.

*Caesar's Revenge*, in *Fuimus Troes* revenge seems to be an important motive, though it is perhaps more to be expected of tragedy than history: *Richard III*, of course, is sometimes labelled a tragedy (First Quarto) and sometimes a history (First Folio). However, *Fuimus Troes* finds its own ways to complicate the ethics of revenge.

In the second act of *Fuimus Troes*, we see the Ghosts fulfilling their role. The Ghost of Brennus urges Nennius to war with arguments based on family and honour. Nennius is encouraged to remember his ancestors, who spread Britain's fame far and wide: such a noble race should not be in thrall, and Nennius should repel the Roman invaders; Nennius's anticipated defeat of the Romans is described in allegorical terms that give the battle a significance beyond the immediate and political. Brennus urges:

> Play thou a second *Brennus*, let thy Lance,
> Like an Herculean clubbe, Two monsters tame,
> *Romes* Auarice and Pride; So come Life or Death,
> Let Honour haue the Incense of thy Breath. (II.vii)

The embodiment of avarice and pride as monsters to be beaten recalls the conventions of morality drama, and the injunction to "play a second Brennus" heightens the metatheatrical awareness: an actor representing a historical figure, including the actor speaking these lines, is always their "second", impersonating their action just as Nennius is to imitate the military feats of his predecessor and interlocutor. Here the analogy is strained by the very nature of the imitation required: Nennius's lance must be used for killing, just as Hercules's club was, but there seems something dissonant about asking the lance to be like the club—perhaps because the lance sounds so much more noble than the club, and because of the strange implication that a club is the only weapon for monster-taming. Furthermore, of course, the club is that of Hercules, who is neither the first nor the second Brennus, so the invocation seems overloaded with reference.

Finally, however, Brennus's Ghost urges honour as the goal of the soldier, and Nennius entirely buys into his argument, asserting that "the smallest drop of Fame" is worth "death and dangers", that he will happily follow the Ghost to "knocke at *Plutoes* gate", and echoing the Ghost's parting words in his own vow: "Come Life or Death, / Honour, To thee I consecrate my Breath." Brennus's Ghost thus not only provides the pattern for Nennius' action, but also writes his best lines.

Camillus's Ghost, by contrast, explicitly and insistently advocates revenge, telling Caesar that he has appeared in order to

> bid thee take a full Reuenge on this,
> This Nation, which did sacke and burne downe Rome.
> . . . . . .
> To thee belongs, To render Bad for Ill. (II.vii)

Although, as Caesar points out, the armies that sacked Rome were mainly Gauls, Camillus's Ghost is keen to render the British the target of Caesar's vengeance—specifically, he indicates that Brennus, brother to the British king, led the armies. Camillus's Ghost then urges on Caesar the courage of "three *Scipios*, / *Marius*, and *Sylla*", and seeks to breathe his own Spirit into Caesar: "O bee my Spirit doubled in thy breast". Thus the living Caesar becomes, paradoxically, another Ghost of Camillus—not by taking on external signs of identity but by being internally moved by Camilllus's spirit; and as Nennius becomes a second Brennus, the living men become proxies for the dead men who haunt them.

The battle between Caesar and Nennius thus enacts the mutual struggle that the Ghosts play out in their heroic rhetoric, but also in their competition over the telling of history. As the play concludes, Camillus and Brennus are very much the epilogue, summarising and commenting on the action they have witnessed, though each still argues for the superiority of his tribe. The shared couplets of their verses might imply the cut and thrust of argument, or perhaps here might give a rather comical sense that, as hard as the Ghosts try to argue, they are drawn into cooperative rhyme:

> *Camillus*. How brauely Cesar past the angry Maine?
> *Brennus*. How brauely was he backe repulst againe? (V.vii)

In any case, they seem more solid than supernatural—these are squabbling schoolboy ghosts, with the all-too-human worldly need to belong to the winning team. Finally, Mercury reprimands them and commands that they must be friends, since Jupiter has ordained a "Vniuersall peace".[22] But the argument between the Ghosts, whether comical or not, enacts an important point about history—that it looks different from different sides. If history is written by the victor, then when Mercury declares there is no victor, but only a draw, the history will remain contested.

Furthermore, as the Ghosts discuss what they have seen, there is a curious potential slippage between history and performance: are they admiring the skill of Caesar as military leader, or are they commenting on the "brave" quality of the performance in which he has been presented? It is perhaps not accidental that this moment also supplies the only reference in the play to the setting of its performance—Oxford:

> *Camillus*. How did they pierce through Isis dangerous flood?
> *Brennus*. But made her swell, and bank-rupt with their blood.

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22 This ending is strongly reminiscent of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, with its declaration of peace and evocation of the advent of Christ (V.vi.466-85): *Cymbeline* also, of course, features ghosts of ancestors in Posthumus's vision (V.v).

The comment brings the violent battles by which Caesar conquered Britain to the banks of Oxford's river Isis: the image of the river swelling with soldiers' blood depends for its effect on an extraordinary pun that carries potential moral weight. Clearly a river that is "bank-rupt" is one that has broken its banks: consultation of *OED* under "bank" and "bankrupt" confirms that the coinage is a hybrid, combining an Old English word from a Scandinavian loan, meaning the sloping earth on the side of a river, with the Latin derivation from *rumpere*, "to break". But the word "bankrupt" was actually first coined from the Italian *banca rotta*, a broken bench, and meant an insolvent person from the 1530s on, and the state of being unable to repay one's debts from the 1560s. Fisher here suggests a fake etymology that capitalises on an extreme contrast between the river that has broken its banks through excessive content and the state of being so empty as to be unable to pay any debt. Does this semantically heavy line hint, too, that conquest, which has so preoccupied these Ghosts and the history they observe, is diminished by bloodshed, that excessive bloodshed creates only empty ruin, that such slaughter is, in modern terms, morally bankrupt?

Or perhaps it is the men of Magdalen who have been bankrupted by the expenses of presenting the play of which this is the epilogue. If the mention of Isis references the location of the present performance, the blood that flooded the Isis is almost immediately given a theatrical frame of reference, in Mercury's lines:

> Ioue's will is finisht: And (though Iuno frowne,
> That no more Troiane blood shall die the stage)
> The worlds fourth Empire Britaine doth embrace.

The "fourth Empire" was Rome, which succeeded the empire of Greece and would in turn be overcome by the kingdom of Christ.[23] Trojan blood has merely dyed the stage red: the entire history of the Trojan war can be contained within its stage presentation; the wars themselves, perhaps, were merely short tragedies for the entertainment of the queen of the gods—or is it their theatrical re-enactment that delights Juno?

Of course, in *Fuimus Troes,* as in *Richard III*, *all* the characters of the history play are already dead—they are all spectral: "History is the preferred genre of the revenant" (Palfrey and Smith, p. 107). The Ghosts of *Fuimus Troes* draw our attention to the predicament of those who return to witness happenings from a time they cannot occupy,

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**23** The scheme of the "Four Monarchies" derived from Daniel's interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar: see the note to Epi.20 in Butler, ed.

and can do nothing directly to alter—also to the predicament, perhaps, of the audience, and to the nature of the history play and of history itself.[24]

## III

How were these ghosts staged? In *Fuimus Troes*, the first stage direction specificies that Mercury leads the ghosts of Brennus and Camillus "*in compleate armour, and with swords drawne*" (Induction). Mercury explains that he has brought this "paire of Martiall Impes" on Jupiter's orders from one of the "pleasant Groues" of "faire Elysian fieldes"—that apparently devoted to the souls of soldiers "clad in steele, / Whose glittering Armes brighten those gloomy shades / In lieu of Starry lights". Thus Mercury's lines draw attention to the armour of his ghostly charges. Jones and Stallybrass discuss armour in relation to tombs that display an armoured effigy above and a cadaver below:

> The surface (the armored body) is elaborately identified through complex heraldic devices; it is identified, of course, not as an "individual" but as a genealogical body, a body marked, on the shieds that surround it, by its kinship connections. The cadaver beneath is unidentified, unidentifiable; it is simply food for worms. . . . One recognizes Hamlet's father, in death as in life, by his armor. The Ghost wears, or we might almost say *is* . . . a suit of armor. (p. 250)

However, as Jones and Stallybrass acknowledge, the armoured Ghost presents considerable theatrical difficulty, being inevitably noisy and difficult to move around the stage: the Ghost of Hamlet's father is always in danger of provoking mirth as much as horror, and it is possibly for this reason that, at least from the nineteenth century on, he more commonly appears in his winding sheet (p. 246). Among Renaissance stage ghosts, Jones and Stallybrass suggest that Hamlet's father's Ghost is "unusual, if not unique" (p. 251) in returning in armour: the ghosts of Brennus and Camillus give the lie to "unique", but are perhaps also "unusual". In *Fuimus Troes*, the armour that comes from the world of the living, and that can reveal the identity of a ghost because it had identified his character when alive, here rather guarantees the supernatural character of these Ghosts, since it is identified as the uniform of the brave soldiers who have achieved this sector of Elysium. It is likely, then, that these were noisy, clattering Ghosts. The playwright perhaps authorises us to laugh, by having Mercury comment on the inappropriateness of the Ghosts' drawn swords: "sheath your conquering blades: in vaine / You threaten

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**24** A detailed analysis of the loaded political significance of *Fuimus Troes* for its first audiences is presented in Butler, ed., Introduction.

death: For Ghosts may not be slaine". For immortal spirits, armour is presumably similarly obselete.

In Act Two, Scene Seven, of *Fuimus Troes*, Brennus's Ghost visits Nennius, while Camillus's Ghost visits Caesar. Nennius is "*in night robes*" (SD), and Caesar comments that the Ghost "disturbs his rest", so it seems likely that this scene presents a diptych, in both halves of which a fully armoured supernatural Ghost encounters a natural man in a white shift. Potentially, the armoured Ghost may seem more substantial than the living man, whose white shift might recall the Ghost in a winding sheet. Brennus's Ghost enters first and bids Nennius, "Follow me". Nennius is reassured that the Ghost is friendly when it calls him by name, but clearly apprehends the danger of following supernatural beings: "I'll follow thee, though't be through Stygian lakes." Caesar, by contrast, enters with "*Camillus Ghost following*"; the Ghost speaks first: "*Iulius*, stay heere." The contrast between these two actions has comic potential: Brennus's Ghost, like Hamlet's, will command a man to follow, but Camillus's Ghost apparently cannot quite keep up with Julius Caesar, and rather than commanding him to follow must beg him to stop—so that the Ghost can catch his breath, perhaps. Perhaps there is also an allusion here to Caesar's ultimately fatal capacity to miss supernatural signs: he almost misses the Ghost following him, just as he will later (though not in this play) miss the point of the auguries and dreams that warn him against going to the Capitol on the day of his assassination.

As Jones and Stallybrass discuss, stage directions for ghosts are often much more precise about where they should appear and disappear than are the stage directions for other characters. This is because the nature of the Ghost is defined by its "local habitation" as well as by costume (Jones and Stallybrass, p. 249). In *Caesar's Revenge*, Caesar's Ghost describes himself as coming from the shades where "Centaurs, Harpies, paynes and furies fell, / And Gods and Ghosts and vgly Gorgons dwell (ll. 1973-74). Once his revenge is complete, however, he will go to an "eternall home" of a rather different kind—"sweete Elysium" with its flowery fields, where

> Mild *Zephirus* doth *Odours* breath diuine:
> Clothing the earth in painted brauery,
> The which nor winters rage, nor Scorching heate,
> Or Summers sunne can make it fall or fade. (ll. 2564-67)

Here he will dwell with the heroes of the Golden Age in "lasting ioy" (l. 2570). The offstage Elysium, like the offstage Hades, is created through the lines of the Ghost, on the authority of one come from beyond the grave to speak of these things.

Interestingly, to get to Elysium the Ghost will still "descend" (l. 2557)—this may reflect a sense of the topology of the classical afterlife, but perhaps also indicates the practicality of a trapdoor as a means of ghostly exit. If, as seems likely, the play was presen-

ted by the men of Trinity in Trinity's hall, "descent" could be achieved in one of two ways: descent from the minstrels' gallery to a playing area on the main hall floor, or descent through a trapdoor in a specially constructed scaffold area in the main hall. As Caesar's Ghost has earlier been following Brutus (l. 2501 SD), he cannot have been in the minstrels' gallery: thus a stage and trapdoor are probable. The construction of stages, both commissioned from college carpenters and improvised using dining tables, is well attested in Oxford drama.[25]

In *Fuimus Troes*, no stage direction indicates where, physically, the Ghosts enter or move, but Mercury later in the Prologue declares that he has brought Brennus and Camillus "to this vpper skie; / Where you may wander, and with gastly lookes / Incite your Country-men". The Ghosts are apparently raised up, and on a platform large enough for them to walk around on; this could be the minstrels' gallery, or it could be a scaffold constructed for the occasion. As Mercury ends the Prologue by urging the Ghosts to "Fly to your parties, and inrage their mindes", it seems possible that the Ghosts then watch the earthly action of the rest of the play from their celestial vantage points, one at each end of the platform to establish their allegiance to the Roman or the British side, though this is not, perhaps, what is implied by the stage direction, "*Exeunt*". The main content of the scene could then be read as a competition between Mercury and the Ghosts to establish place. Mercury describes the Other World from which he has come, in the "vaults" of the "big-bellied earth", where there are both dungeons, whips and flames for the Ghosts of the wicked, and Elysian fields for the spotless souls, including, as already cited, "Two pleasant Groues", with myrtle boughs for true lovers and glittering arms for soldiers. Brennus then describes the earthly route of his march against Rome, from the "vnbounded Ocean" and "cold climes" near the North Pole, across the "white-pated Alpes", to the Capitol, "cloath'd in skarlet of patrician blood". Camillus, finally, describes the Rome he won back, the City fattened and the Latin fields fertilised with the bodies of its enemies. None of these settings is actually the setting of the play: those described by Mercury are in another place, and those described by the Ghosts are in a different time. But since location is achieved in early drama through words, rather than elaborate stage sets, the audience is presented with a palimpsest of times and places, any or all of which could be the setting of a play, and all of which are relevant to the action that will in fact unfold. Furthermore, cumulatively they define and identify the Ghosts.

In the final scene of the play, after the plot's resolution and a merry song, there enters "*Mercury reducing the Ghostes of Camillus, and Brennus*". To "reduce", in Middle and early Modern English, means to "lead back" or "restore" (*re-ducere*); interestingly, the

25 See Nelson.

stage direction here may have been influenced by the words of Mercury in the opening scene, where he promises the Ghosts that he willl "backe reduce you to grimme Pluto's hall". The stage direction does not specify how the Ghosts are dressed here; they are most likely still in their armour. That there is a leading back rather than a leading down obviates the need for a trapdoor. *Fuimus Troes* could have been staged without a constructed scaffold, using only the minstrels' gallery and the floor space of Magdalen dining hall: the characters would move among the audience, on their level, and when the Ghosts appear to Nennius and Caesar, they too would walk among the audience.

When a ghost walks among the audience, his problematic corporality is again emphasised. The audience will hear all the more clearly the clinking armour of the ghosts of Brennus and Camillus; perhaps it is only the ghosts' rhetoric that gives them any power to chill. But perhaps also there is a crucial difference between the ghost who appears in a playhouse and the ghost who appears in an Oxford College play: the armoured ghost who clanks into a college dining hall is most markedly an intrusion into another world that is not, like the "wooden O" of the playhouse, empty, awaiting the actors' event, but rather is already occupied, defined and animated by the life of the audience. This ghost haunts—in the supernatural sense—the habitual haunts of the College members, who eat every day in the space that is suddenly appropriated by shadows. These shadows are ghosts, and also more generally actors: all of the characters of *Fuimus Troes* and *Caesar and Pompey* are dead, so all of their appearances are hauntings; the ghosts are simply the most extreme manifestations of the logic of the history play, and of the tragedy played out in a college hall. The shock of Caesar's Ghost exposing his wounds with a direct appeal, not just to the actors in the play with him, but to the College members watching the play, is a corporeal shock: the exposed body, and bleeding wounds, have no place in a dining hall. Perhaps, therefore, it is the materiality of the ghosts of Caesar, and of Brennus and Camillus which highlights their intrusion, and makes them chilling as well as potentially comical: to meet a historical figure in one's own space is surely a more powerful intrusion than to encounter one in the neutral or "other" space of the theatre.

It is possible that *Fuimus Troes* explicitly links itself to *Caesar's Revenge*: when the Roman spy, Cominus, is captured and chained by Cassibelan, he threatens that the King must "looke for due reuenge at *Caesars* hand" (II.v), a vengeful threat that perhaps also makes intertextual reference to the earlier Trinity College play. Furthermore, the localising allusion in *Fuimus Troes* to Oxford's river Isis is matched by a line in *Caesar's Revenge*: Julius Caesar, listing the places and peoples of his many bloody conquests, comments that "Isis wept to see her daugter Thames / Chainge her cleere cristal, to vermilian sad" (ll. 1278-79). Perhaps these plays are haunting each other; perhaps they are also haunted by the shadows of Shakespeare and Kyd; most strongly, they seem to suggest haunting by the classical texts from which their playwrights, performers and audiences

learned their Latin. The world of Caesar's *Gallic Wars* is itself a shared haunt, collectively imagined by all those habitually dining in the halls of Oxford colleges. And these plays, while occupying ancient times and places, are also hinting at the significance of their Oxford haunt as the impulse behind their ghostly presentations.

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