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Richard Hillman

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Contact : alice.loffredonue@univ-tours.fr

Sham Shadows on the Stuart Stage:
Between Scepticism and Spectacle

Pierre Kapitaniak
Université Paul-Valéry – Montpellier 3, IRCL

Sham shadows, or false apparitions of the dead, started to appear in English drama only in the first decade of King James's reign, that is, after the popularity of the "real" ghost figure had been well established on the London stages. The former are not necessarily a derivative from the latter, as a ready-made model for an apparition scam could be found in Plautus's *Mostellaria*. Let me quote a French lawyer who devoted a thousand-page volume to the question of apparitions in 1586 and who was translated into English some twenty years later in 1605:

> But it is not in our age and daies onely, that these pranckes have beene vsed, but even almost two thousand yeares ago, or thereabouts. Plautus in his Comedie intituled *Mostelaria*, faineth, how by a cunning sleight and devise of a servant, an olde man his maister, was made beleeve, as hee came home from out of the Country, that the spirits did haunt his house: and that therefore, both his sonne and he had forsaken and abandoned the same in his absence. And this the servant did, that he might the better cover and conceale the loose and dissolute behaviour of the sonne from the father, and the better to colour the sale which hee had made of the house. And what shall wee say of those, who counterfaiting themselves to bee spirits in an house (where themselves are domestically dwelling,) doe thereby cause the death of some other, by their lascivious and lewde behaviour. (Le Loyer, *Treatise*, fol. 80^{r})

Although there is no proper ghost appearing onstage, Plautus provides the idea of deceiving people using the widespread belief in ghosts and their haunting. That Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights perfectly knew their Plautus, and that play in particular, is attested by Shakespeare's borrowing of the servants' names Grumio and Tranio in *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The active impersonation of a ghost is to be distinguished from a character taken for a ghost by others, in that the former is a deliberate action. Although the motif of the false ghost is often combined with scenes where a character mistakes a living person for his or her ghost, it

is on this intended imposture that I wish to focus the present reflection. For this reason I have excluded from my study John Day's *Law Tricks* (1604), where one of the characters is merely content with playing an echo, with no intention of impersonating a ghost, and his trick leads to his being mistaken for a ghost by the other character speaking. Three kinds of guileful ghosts may be distinguished: the character impersonates either his or her own ghost, or the ghost of a dead person, or that of someone who is presumed to have died. Here is the list of plays staging such figures:

1607	Francis Beaumont	*Knight of the Burning Pestle*
1607	John Mason	*The Turke* (T)
1611	Cyril Tourneur	*The Atheist's Tragedy* (T)
1611	John Fletcher	*The Night-Walker*
1614	Robert Tailor	*The Hog Hath Lost His Pearl*
1615	S. S.	*The Honest Lawyer*
1617	John Fletcher	*The Mad Lover*
1619	Thomas Goffe	*The Courageous Turk* (T)
1633	Walter Montague	*The Shepherd's Paradise*
1637	William Berkeley	*The Lost Lady*
1637	Lodowick Carlell	*The Fool Would Be a Favourite*
1638	William Cartwright	*The Siege*
1638	Alexander Brome	*The Cunning Lovers*
1639	William Heminges	*The Fatal Contract* (T)
1639	James Shirley	*St Patrick for Ireland*
1640	Anon.	*The Ghost*

In all, the motif of impersonating a ghost occurs in four tragedies and twelve comedies.[1] I shall focus on the first four plays staging false ghost figures between 1607 and 1611, as the subsequent plays merely offer less elaborate variations on the models developed in those earlier plays. Although the motif later became largely associated with comedy, in the first decade of James's reign it appears rather indifferent with regard to genre. What first strikes one when reading these plays is that there is a major difference between tragedies and comedies as far as the motivation leading to such impersonation is concerned: in tragedies the main motive is revenge, while in comedies two motives are often combined—love and money. I shall therefore deal separately with the specificities of the two genres before showing that both may obey a similar logic.

1 I have marked the tragedies with a (T).

The Tragedies, or Avenging Apparitions and Anathematised Atheists

Little is known about the exact date of composition of the two tragedies. John Mason's *The Turke* was published in 1610, and performed by child actors at the Whitefriars, but is estimated to have been written between 1607 and 1608 (Gurr, p. 365). Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* was published in 1611, and its *terminus a quo* is also around 1607 (Harbage). It is therefore possible to consider the two plays as roughly contemporary.

The whole revenge plot of *The Turke* rests on a series of false apparitions of various ghosts that trigger and further the intricate threads of the revenge plot from act to act. Borgias, the governor of Florence, is the tutor to Julia, the young and rightful Duchess. Wishing to keep his power and to rid himself of the two suitors for Julia's hand—the Duke of Venice and the Duke of Ferrara—Borgias spreads the rumour of Julia's death. Simultaneously, we learn of the death of Borgias's wife, Timoclea, apparently poisoned by Mulleasses (the Turk of the tragedy), but in fact only drugged by a sleeping potion, as Mulleasses has his own political agenda and plots with Timoclea (who is in love with him) to cause her husband's fall. In Act Three, Timoclea disguises herself as the ghost of Julia and appears to the Duke of Venice to tell him that she (that is, Julia) was murdered by Borgias. Just after this scene, the apparition is exploited for more comical purposes, as Timoclea is surprised by the servant Bordello, who also takes her for a ghost (although the ghost is not identified). The comic effect is carried on in the next scene, when some servants make fun of Bordello's vision, only to see Timoclea appear again and make them all run away. The ensuing scene returns to a more serious apparition scene, in which Timoclea appears to the Duke of Ferrara: the effect of this vision is similarly to spur Ferrara to avenge Julia. In Act Four, wishing to kill her own daughter Amada out of jealousy over Mulleasses, Timoclea plays her own ghost to Amada and Julia and, once left alone with her daughter, murders her. As the next step in their plot, Mulleasses manipulates her to haunt Borgias, and she drives the latter to jump off a wall, leaving him for dead. To complicate the deployment of the motif even further, Timoclea in turn feels as if she were haunted by her daughter Amada's ghost, and Borgias, in hiding, exploits this fear to play an echo scene; then, when he appears before the distracted Timoclea, he is taken for his own ghost. After strangling Timoclea, Borgias is surprised by the servants, who cry "ghost" and start chasing after him. While trying to escape, Borgias arrives in front of Mulleasses, who threatens to kill Julia because she refuses to marry him. Although Mulleasses also takes Borgias for his ghost, he does not hesitate to stab him to death.

It is easy to see that the motif of false apparitions is at the very heart of the multiple plots in the play. This gives the impression that the author—who is not known to have written any other play (Eccles)—wanted to make the most elaborate use possible of a

single plot element, multiplying the characters who pretend to be ghosts, the dead or the presumed dead, as well as the witnesses who experience such visions.

A similar attitude may be perceived in Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy*, whose surviving dramatic work modern criticism has reduced to this single play, since *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607) has been definitely attributed to Thomas Middleton.[2] In the second act of Tourneur's tragedy, which is better known than Mason's, the real ghost of murdered Montferrers appears to his son Charlemont to inform him of his recent death:

> Return to France, for thy old father's dead
> And thou by murder disinherited.
> Attend with patience the success of things,
> But leave revenge unto the King of kings. (Tourneur, II.vi.20-23)

As Charlemont doubts his own senses, the ghost appears a second time in the presence of a soldier accompanying Charlemont, so as to objectify the apparition. After this first ghostly experience, Charlemont goes back home to discover that he has been declared dead, and when his fiancée Castabella sees him, she faints, taking him for a ghost. In the following scene, his uncle D'Amville (the atheist of the play) *pretends* to take him for a ghost. He has to resort to such a stratagem because of the presence of his son Sebastian and of the puritan Languebeau Snuffe, though he knows perfectly well that Charlemont is alive, as it is he who had spread the rumour of his nephew's death:

> [*Enter Charlemont. D'Amville counterfeits to take him for a ghost.*]
> *D'Amville*. What art thou? Stay! Assist my troubled sense.
> My apprehension will distract me. Stay!
> [*Languebeau Snuffe avoids [Charlemont] fearfully.*]
> *Sebastian*. What art thou? Speak!
> *Charlemont*. The spirit of Charlemont.
> *D'Amville*. O stay! compose me. I dissolve. (III.ii.17-21)

Languebeau Snuffe, a character from the subplot, offers a typically Protestant explanation of the apparition, rejecting the very possibility of the return of the dead:

> *Languebeau*. No, 'tis profane. Spirits are invisible. 'Tis the fiend i'the likeness of Charlemont. I will have no conversation with Satan. (22-24)

Sebastian overcomes his apprehension and strikes the ghost, only to find out that it is perfectly corporeal:

2 See Lake, *passim*, and Jackson, *passim*.

> *Sebastian*. The Spirit of Charlemont? I'll try that.
> [*Strike[s], and the blow [is] returned.*]
> 'Fore God, thou sayest true; th'art all spirit. (25-26)

With this pun on "spirit", the two men start to fight and are only interrupted by the irruption of the real ghost of Montferrers.

As in *The Turke*, the play provides a comic counterpart of the false apparition, when Languebeau brings a girl to a cemetery and puts on a ghost-disguise so as not to be bothered by passers-by. Unfortunately for him, his stratagem does not work, and the lovers are made to run away by Charlemont, who comes to spy on D'Amville. The latter surprises a dialogue between Castabella and D'Amville, and in order to save his fiancée, he pretends to be his father's ghost and makes D'Amville run away. In the following act, the real ghost of Montferrers comes to haunt D'Amville and finally makes him repent and believe in God.

Just as Mason plays with comic and serious false apparitions, so does Tourneur, further adding several levels of "reality" for his ghostly apparitions, which interact and create a subtle system of echoes and counterpoints, providing a comic counterpart to the "serious" apparitions of Montferrers' ghost. Languebeau's comic scene also introduces what is to be the main motive of false apparitions in the context of comedies, namely love and/or money, to which I shall presently return.

Atheism, Catholicism and False Supernatural

Both Mason's and Tourneur's tragedies are built around the central figure of an "atheist". D'Amville's irreligious outlook—for one must remember the looser meaning of "atheist" in the early seventeenth century[3]—is apparent from the title of the play, while Borgias confesses a similar attitude very early in *The Turke*:

> Religion (thou that ridst the backes of Slaves
> Into weake mindes insinuating feare
> And superstitious cowardnesse) thou robst
> Man of his chiefe blisse by bewitching reason.
> Nature . . . I stoope at thy renowne
> And thinke al's *vacuum* above a crowne,
> For they that have the soveraignty of things,
> Do know no God at all, are none but Kings. (Mason, I.iii.[80-94])[4]

3 See Hunter.

4 The line numbers in brackets are those added to the original edition as reproduced in the Literature Online database.

Both Borgias and D'Amville are the only ones to be referred to as atheists, and this happens only once in the course of each play. Borgias is denounced by his niece Julia as a "Detested Atheist" (II.ii.[116-18]), and D'Amville proudly professes his lack of faith by labelling himself a "confirm'd . . . Atheist" (Tourneur, I.ii.214). As these two plays are also the first to stage sham shadows, it is tempting to look for a connection. In both plays, the atheistic protagonists are directly associated with the false apparitions: Borgias fakes one himself, while D'Amville is the target of both true and false apparitions, and, moreover, fakes being taken in by one.

At a time when an anti-Catholic sentiment had been reawakened by the recent Gunpowder Plot (1605), the highly fashionable subject of apparitions became again charged with doctrinal undertones, as the belief in the return of the dead opposed Protestants and Catholics. After the Council of Trent, the question of ghosts had been a privileged battleground between the two confession, and the most telling example is the way in which the Parisian Franciscan friar Noël Taillepied returns the Tigurine minister Ludwig Lavater's ideas against him, by actually plagiarising three-quarters of his treatise, systematically rewriting, editing and distorting the conclusions of his opponent.[5] Among the notable edited passages are those in which Lavater generalises about Catholic priests and monks who often impersonate ghosts, either to lay their hands on wealth that would otherwise be inherited by the rightful heirs, or to obtain sexual favours from mourning widows or gullible women. And it is precisely such tales that Pierre Le Loyer refuses to believe, attacking those who have circulated them, like the reformed historian Johannes Sleidanus or the Basel-based printer Johann Bebel:

> A ces personnes il faut autant adjouster de foy, comme à un Plaute Comicque. . . . Et qu'est-ce que tels imposteurs taschent de gaigner dans les coeurs des simples par leurs bourdes ? Vrayment ils leur veulent à la longue faire croire qu'il n'y a point d'Esprits, par les fausses apparitions qu'ils en apportent, et de là les reduire en un pur Atheisme que les ames sont mortelles. (Le Loyer, *Discours*, p. 79)

In order to silence his adversaries, Le Loyer reduces their accounts to mere dramatic plots, resorting again to the archetypal figure of Plautus's *Mostellaria*. Even though the playwrights generally seem to take hardly any interest in theological theories about the ghosts (with the exception, perhaps, of Shakespeare in *Hamlet*), it is nevertheless likely that the post-Gunpowder Plot wave of anti-Catholic sentiment, coinciding with the publication of a partial translation into English of Le Loyer's treatise the same year, triggered a new vogue for false apparitions.

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5 See Kapitaniak.

At the time, accusations of atheism could quite easily be thrown at Catholics, as shown by the inclusive formula used by Josias Nichol in 1602: "Papistes, Atheistes, and all wicked enemies of the Ghospell" (cited by Hunter, p. 139). Thus, for Mason and Tourneur, writing before or in 1607, to associate the figures of atheists with sham shadows might establish a parallel between their irreligion and a propensity to deceive credulous people with false apparitions, further enriching a motif that both playwrights deployed extensively, as we have seen.

The Comedies, or Mischievous Manes and Matters of Matrimony

Like the two tragedies, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* was written in 1607, though published in 1613, and, like *The Turke*, it was performed by child actors at the Blackfriars. Although several quarto editions of the play mention Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher as its authors, Fletcher's collaboration has long been discounted by modern critics.[6] On the other hand, Fletcher is certainly the author of *The Night-Walker, or The little Thief*, which he wrote around 1611, though the play has survived only in a version that was later revised by James Shirley, including the haunting title of *The Night-Walker*, added by the reviser.

Beaumont's comedy does not offer so sophisticated and saturated a treatment of false apparitions as the two tragedies. There is only one such scene, which takes place in the last act. In the main plot of the play, Jasper Merrythought, an apprentice to the Merchant, is in love with the latter's daughter Luce, but the Merchant opposes the union, intending to marry Luce to Humphrey, a wealthier suitor. After a series of love tests and mishaps, Luce is locked up by her father, and in order to help her elope, Jasper spreads the rumour of his own death. He then sends a letter of apology for his former behaviour, in which he asks the Merchant to have his coffin brought to Luce so "that she may truly know [his] hot flames are now buried" (IV.201-2). Once alone with Luce, he hides her in the coffin, and she can thus leave the paternal house. As for Jasper, he pretends to be his own ghost to confront the Merchant:

> *Enter Jasper, his face mealed.*
> *Jasper.* Forbear thy pains, fond man; it is too late.
> *Merchant.* Heaven bless me! Jasper?
> *Jasper.* Ay, I am his ghost. (V.5-7)

Jasper then tells the impressed Merchant how he should behave, ordering him to chase his wealthy rival: "Repent thy deed, and satisfy my father, / And beat fond Humphrey

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6 See Beaumont, ed. Hattaway, Introduction, pp. ix-x; citations are taken from this edition.

out of thy doors" (V.33-34). The Merchant does so immediately. On closer examination, it is evident that the theme of this ghostly apparition is announced earlier in the play, when, at the end of the second act, Old Master Merrythought, Jasper's father, sings a proleptic ballad:

> *When it was grown to dark midnight,*
> *And all were fast asleep,*
> *In came Margaret's grimly ghost,*
> *And stood at William's feet*. (II.427-30)[7]

In fact, throughout the play, the passages from ballads sung by Old Merrythought provide a sort of chorus to the play, and logically a ghost ballad relates to Jasper's ghostly scheme. As in the tragedies, the apparition scene is not an isolated episode, as the scene is framed by two other episodes: at the end of Act Four, Luce mistakes Jasper for his ghost, as does Old Merrythought in the final scene. The motif of the false ghost thus resonates here with other moments in the comedy, playing on the variations of the ghostly figure, the ballad even hinting at a "real" ghost.

The Night-Walker begins as a domestic tragedy, when Maria is forced to marry Algripe for his money. Her lover Frank is unhappy about this, and, thanks to the help of his friend Jack Wildbraine, he manages to meet Maria secretly in her room just after her marriage. Yet Wildbraine betrays his friend, and when they are discovered together, Maria faints and, assuming she is dead, Frank swears to avenge her. A detail of the scene already announces the spectral motif, when Frank, waiting for Maria to join him, thinks he sees a ghost on her arrival: "Something comes this way, wondrous still, and stealing / May be some walking spirit to affright me" (I.[466-67]).[8]

In the following Act, Tom Lurcher, a thieving friend of Wildbraine, and a Boy (who is in fact Alathe, Lurcher's sister in disguise) get ready to burgle Algripe's house, making the best of the wedding festivities. Sent on a reconnaissance round the house, the Boy is surprised by the deadly silence that reigns there. While discussing the best disguise for the burglary, they discard "a devils face" (II.[52]), then "A winding sheet" (II.[56]), and finally opt for the outfit of a tall Turk:

> *Boy*. Where's the long Cloak?
> *Lurcher*. Here, here.

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7 This is actually a passage from the ballad of "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" (no. 74 in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ed. Child, II: 200), also known as "Sweet William's Ghost" (no. 77 [II: 226-34]). Cf. Hattaway, ed., n. to II.427-30.

8 The line numbers in brackets are those added to the 1679 edition, which is cited here, as reproduced in the Literature Online database.

Boy. Give me the Turbant
And the false beard, I hear some coming this way,
Stoop, stoop, and let me sit upon your shoulders. (II.[62-66])

Although the thieves do not disguise themselves as ghosts, the Nurse and the coachman, who are mourning Maria's death around her coffin, and are quite drunk already, hear noises and, seeing the tall shape, mistake it for a mixture of devil and ghost:

Nurse. Methinks the light burns blew, I prethee snuff it,
There's a thief in't I think.
Tobie. There may be one near it.
*Nur*se. What's that that moves there . . . ?
That thing that walks.
Tobie. Would I had a Ladder to behold it,
Mercy upon me, the Ghost of one oth' Guard sure,
'Tis the devil by his clawes, he smels of Brimstone,
Sure he farts fire, what an Earth-quake I have in me;
Out with thy Prayer-book Nurse. (II.[91-101])

The Nurse and Tobie run away scared, while the two thieves leave with the coffin, which they mistake for the chest filled with gold. The identification of the thieves with a gigantic ghost is further developed a few lines later, when Tobie finds himself alone and interprets yet another noise as follows: "The devil's among em in the parlour sure, / The Ghost three stories high, he has the Nurse sure" (II.[123-24]).

Once the thieves are alone, they discover their mistake and decide to bury Maria in the churchyard. Of course, Justice Algripe passes by the graveyard just when they set about their task, and the Boy improvises, pretending to be Maria's ghost and telling Algripe to repent. After Algripe runs away frightened, Maria comes to her senses and fidgets in the coffin, thus scaring the thieves, who run away in turn.

In the following act, Wildbraine is tortured by guilt and thinks he is haunted by ghosts. When Frank finally discovers that his friend betrayed him, he wants to kills him and is only prevented from doing so by the arrival of Maria, who decides to play her own ghost to stop the fight. Finally, in Act Four, Scene Three, Lurcher and the Boy return to see Justice Algripe, whom they had treacherously locked in a cellar in a previous scene, and their accomplices appear to him disguised as furies:

[*Enter two Furies with blacke tapers.*]
We are helhounds, helhounds, that have commission
From the Prince of darkenesse,
To fetch thy black soule to him. (IV.[362-64])

He repents, and the Boy arrives, disguised as an Angel, and tells him to give the money back to Maria's family and to Lurcher, whose lands he had stolen. He also orders Algripe to annul the marriage to Maria and to repair the injustice done to his previous wife. Even more than *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, the play is saturated with variations upon the motif of apparitions, principally of ghosts but also those of other supernatural beings such as devils, furies and angels.

These four examples—two tragedies and two comedies—show a very inventive treatment of this relatively new motif of a false apparition, which plays not only on the tradition of the real ghost character that had successfully developed over the past two decades, but also on diverse disguise conventions. In the early years of the seventeenth century, a few plays had introduced situations in which one character mistakes another for a ghost, thereby paving the way for the more active deception we have seen here. The novelty of the device may perhaps explain that these four quite contemporary plays multiply its variations with an enthusiasm that sometimes verges on saturation. There are rather few additional innovations in later plays, and the motif seems to establish itself more firmly in the comic genre.

Conclusion: Sham Shadows as Parody and Authority

Several false apparitions examined here, whether in tragic or comic contexts, turn out to be at the same time allusions to or comments on famous ghost figures, especially those in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*.

In *The Turke*, Venice's exchange with Timoclea when the latter is pretending to be her own ghost offers several echoes of the prince's confrontation with his father's ghost in *Hamlet*. Beside the structure of the scene, in which Timoclea appeals to Venice's love of her and reveals the identity of her murderer, several lines might remind the audience of its famous precedent. Timoclea's exclamation, "My uncle Borgias" (III.i.[73]), could go unnoticed alone, but the end of the scene sounds even more like *Hamlet*:

> [*Timoclea*] . . . Do it as ever thou didst Julia love.
> *Venice*. I will.
> *Timoclea*. Whilst I borne upon aire attend my blisse.
> *Venice*. Peace to thy soule: Adieu. [*Exit*.]
> *Timoclea*. Remember Julia. (III.i.[96-100])

Timoclea's plea sounds almost word for word like Old Hamlet's—"If thou didst ever thy dear father love" (Shakespeare, I.v.23)—and it clusters with the surrounding echoes of "My uncle" (41) and "Adieu, adieu, remember me" (111), to which might be added the mention of the "villain" by Venice (Mason, III.i.[81]) and by Hamlet (Shakespeare, I.v.106).

Two short examples will suffice to provide insight into the playfulness with which the false apparition scenes are written in *The Atheist's Tragedy*. The first echo of *Hamlet* may actually be noticed from the start, when the real ghost of Montferrers reappears to his son in the presence of the fellow soldier who tries to attack it (II.vi.66), just as Marcellus and Barnardo do when meeting the Ghost with Horatio (Shakespeare, I.i.139). An openly parodic echo of *Hamlet* occurs in Act Four, when Languebeau explains how he is going to disguise himself as a ghost to keep intruders away. When asked about the efficacy of his disguise, his paramour Soquette answers: "So like a ghost that, notwithstanding I have some foreknowledge of you, you make my hair stand almost on end" (Tourneur, IV.iii.65-66). Her reaction is reminiscent of Old Hamlet's description of the effect of his tale of murder on his son, which would make "each particular hair to stand on end" (Shakespeare, I.v.19).

Likewise, in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Jasper's long speech to the Merchant contains several echoes of two of Shakespeare's famous ghosts. Jasper's threatening of his future father-in-law is reminiscent of Banquo's ghost tormenting Macbeth during the banquet scene: a table full of guests, wine flowing abundantly, the ghost being visible only to the father, and the paralysing fear. At the same time, the allusions to the "great offences" and the "sad tale" also point back to Hamlet's ghost in Act One, Scene Five:

> never shalt thou sit, or be alone
> In any place, but I will visit thee
> With ghastly looks, and put into thy mind
> The great offences which thou didst to me.
> When thou art at thy table with thy friends,
> Merry in heart, and filled with swelling wine,
> I'll come in midst of all thy pride and mirth,
> Invisible to all men but thyself,
> And whisper such a sad tale in thine ear
> Shall make thee let the cup fall from thy hand,
> And stand as mute and pale as Death itself. (Beaumont, V.18-28)

The parodic dimension of such scenes suggests that even in tragedies, the primary objective is entertainment. The Shakespearean allusions support a reading of these scenes as dramatic conventions, deliberately presented as such to the audience and easily decoded as such by it. More generally, this metadramatic dimension further undermines any attempt at gauging popular beliefs about ghosts through dramatic production.

A closer look at the motives behind both tragic and comic false apparitions reveals an anthropological trait that unites the different cases I have examined. It is the authority of the deceased, which the living put to use in order to have an impact on what matters most for power, wealth and matrimony—the patriarchal lineage. Timoclea's and Bor-

gias's successive impostures aim at ensuring power through marrying; the aim of Charlemont's pretended apparition is to restore his father's estate and ensure his endangered marriage. The comedies focus even more overtly on matrimonial concerns—whether for love or for money, or both, as in the case of Jasper—which provide the ultimate motivation for such schemes.

Being souls of dead people returning for a certain term to haunt the living, ghosts are a privileged vehicle for a reflection on theatrical representation. As such they offer a meaningful parallel to the characters in plays, which are often remembrances of people long gone and which are performed onstage by actors. It is a well-known fact that in early modern English both ghosts and actors were termed *shadows*, whether returning from the undiscovered country or strutting and fretting their hour upon the stage. And even more than the genuine ghosts, the sham shadows offer the perfect metaphor for stage illusion, embodying the essence of actors, pretending to be who they are not, while making the dead live again.

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