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Theorising the Will in Early Modern English Literature

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how the faculty of the will was conceptualised in early modern English literature. The attempt to understand its function and purpose was a crucial concern for a vast range of Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, largely because of the important role the notion of the will played in the development of classical philosophy and the reformation of Christian theology. Providing a coherent definition of the will, its powers and associated functions in the human subject did, nonetheless, pose a significant problem for many early modern writers. Although scholars have documented the impact that notions of will had in the theology of the period, an analysis of the way in which the will was represented in the drama of Elizabethan and Jacobean England is missing from current academic criticism. This thesis seeks to remedy this gap in scholarship by clarifying the conceptual difficulties involved in theorising the powers of the will in the philosophy of the age, and by demonstrating how these difficulties are represented and played with in the period's drama.

This thesis contributes original knowledge to the field of early modern studies by illustrating: the role that notions of will take in shaping the didactic framework of the morality tradition in late sixteenth-century drama; how the will was used to establish and explore notions of malevolence and acts of moral transgression in early modern plays; the part theories of the will played in shaping how notions of death and human fate were signified in early modern texts. Ultimately, this thesis suggests that the literary representation of the faculty of the will should be understood to be a vital and essential part of early modern intellectual culture.

NOTE ON TEXTS

Classical Sources

Classical Latin and Greek authors have been cited throughout this thesis. Modern scholarly editions of the works of Aristotle, Augustine, and Plato have been used as they are largely unadulterated from the inclusion of additional theological commentary which typifies many of their early modern equivalents. On the other hand, I have also used a large selection of early modern texts which refer to translations of Plato and Aristotle as reconciled with Christian doctrine. The inclusion of both modern and early modern texts, in this respect, serves to illustrate how these concepts were understood in early modern England and the degree of accuracy with which they have been read back into early modern texts by contemporary scholars.

Early Modern Sources

This thesis discusses a wide range of early modern drama. Where possible, I have cited from recognised scholarly editions of plays. For instance, Macdonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill's *The Selected Plays of John Marston* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino's *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), R. B. McKerrow's, *The Works of Thomas Nashe* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), and Gary Gunby's *The Works of John Webster: An Old Spelling Critical Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) have been referenced throughout this thesis. I have chosen to use Arden's third and second series editions when referring the work of William

Shakespeare. Where modern editions of early modern plays have not been available, older sources have been utilized. This primarily applies to the moral interludes cited from J. S. Farmer's *Early English Dramatists: Five Anonymous Plays* (London: Early English Drama Society, 1908).

I have also made use of the EEBO (Early English Books Online <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>) resource. EEBO is an online repository of facsimiles taken from texts contained in the Short-Title Catalogue I (1475–1640) and II (1641–1700), The Thomason Tracts (1640 and 1661), and the Early English Books Tract Supplements. Digital facsimiles are useful to scholars when it is unfeasible to visit the home library of a particular book, or where a modern edited edition of the text is missing. I do, however, appreciate that these facsimiles are still surrogates of the original text and may therefore omit certain details that are contained within the printed source text. References made to this repository have been noted explicitly within the bibliography. I have placed the acronym 'EEBO' followed by the details of the specific host library after the place and date of publication for each text cited from this resource. STC (Short Title Catalogue) numbers have also been supplied in the bibliography to further clarify which specific source text I have quoted from. Original signature marks and pagination from source texts have been kept in all possible circumstances, and additional footnotes have been provided with texts which switch between signature marks and page numbers. I have made the effort to transcribe quotations directly from these digital facsimiles to avoid the unintended typographical anomalies that may be included in the associated TCP (Text Creation Partnership) files which sometimes accompany the facsimile images hosted on the EEBO site.

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INTRODUCTION

The ultimate purpose of this thesis is to provide a historicised analysis of the will in order to demonstrate the significance of its conceptualisation as an internal faculty of the human subject in the literature of early modern England. It would be apposite, then, to begin by identifying some base definitions of what is meant by the word "will".[1] This is necessary to illustrate the polysemic nature of the word, and to understand the context of its use in early modern writing.

The noun "will" is currently defined as: (1) a desire, wish, longing, liking, inclination, disposition (*to do* something); (2) a synonym of volition, intent and purpose; (3) the movement or attitude of the mind which is directed with conscious intention to perform some physical or mental action; (4) the faculty or function which is directed to conscious and intentional action; (5) carnal desire and sexual want; (6) or, the embodiment of intention, usually given as a physical document that contains parting bequeathals or instructions.[2]

It is apparent that the use of the word "will" as a noun is informed by a cluster of overlapping and interrelated meanings. Taking these primary uses into account, it may be sensible to suggest that the will broadly represents the intention to fulfill a desire through action, the faculty or power which causes and directs a desired action,

[1] I use double quotation marks here and throughout this introduction simply to indicate that the word "will" (as a noun) is the primary focus of discussion.
[2] "Will, n.1". Gloss 1a, 5b, 5a, 6a, 2, 23a, *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. These definitions derive from the Old English noun of *willa* (will) which denotes the cause or root of willed actions, as well as a desire, wish or want.

as well as the embodiment of a particular goal itself. Furthermore, it would seem that the close relationship these definitions share stems from the word's association with the exercise of a personal power, or faculty, which precedes and determines an action or activity.

These contemporary definitions of the will are largely analogous to how the will, as a noun, was classified in early modern English writing, though its realisation and application was wide-ranging and often problematic. The following examination will emphasize the fact that defining the nature of the will and its powers was a particularly tricky task for early modern writers: it specifically aims to clarify the difficulties involved in theorising the power of the will as a faculty, and how these difficulties are mirrored in the literature of early modern England. In order to fully appreciate how the will was thought of in early modern England, it will be appropriate to first outline the history of its conceptualisation as a root cause of human action.

The Problem of Definition

Determining what the will is, what it is responsible for, or if it even exists has formed the basis of numerous philosophical discussions from antiquity to the present. Such topics formed an important part of early Greek and Roman thought on fate and moral responsibility[3], medieval theories of theological determinism[4], Renaissance and

[3] See: Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (c. 334 BCE) and *De Anima* (c. 334-322 BCE); Plato's *Republic* (c. 421-409 BCE) and *Phaedrus* (c. 372-364 BCE); Cicero's *De Fato* (c. 44 BCE); Seneca the Younger's *Moral Essays* (c. 56 CE) and his *Moral Letters to Lucilius* (c. 62-5 CE); Epictetus' *The Discourses* (c. 108 CE).

[4] See: St Augustine's *City of God* (c. 426) and *Confessions* (c. 398); Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy* (c. 524); St Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* (c. 1265-74), as well as his commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima* (c. 1268).

Reformation debates on freedom and morality[5], late seventeenth and early eighteenth century moral philosophy[6], through to modern cultural theory, philosophy[7] and even neuroscience.[8] The prominent place that theorizations of the will take in the history of philosophy is largely due to the concept of the will being used in the attempt to 'clarify human action', as well as to give account of 'the human self and of the relationship of human beings to the wider world of nature'.[9] Such efforts to define the nature of the will have, however, been dogged by conceptual indeterminacy, due to fundamental disagreement over what the will or willing actually constitutes.

The suitability of the words 'will' and 'willing' to designate acts of 'sheer volition' have been and continue to be criticised, whether the will is associated with cognition, emotion or intentional bodily response.[10] As W. F. R. Hardie suggests, it is the will's role as an 'indispensable preliminar[y] or constituen[t] of action' which has caused such disagreement among philosophers who have endeavoured to understand the nature of action and freedom.[11] Such disagreement is understandable when considering the range of ways that the will has been used in theories of mind, freedom, power, subjectivity, and ethics, though as Pink and Stone rightly suggest,

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[5] See: Lorenzo Valla's *Dialogue on Free Will* (c. 1435-48); Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola's *900 Theses* (1486); Desiderius Erasmus' *De Libero Arbitrio* (1524) and Martin Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio* (1525).

[6] See: Descartes' 1641 work *Meditations on First Philosophy* (especially Meditation IV) and his *Principia Philosophiae* (1644); Thomas Hobbes' *The Elements of Law* (1640) and *Leviathan* (1651); Baruch Spinoza's *Ethics*, Parts I and II (1687); John Locke's *An Essay on Human Understanding* (c. 1689); David Hume's *A Treatise on Human Nature* (1738); Immanuel Kant's *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Moral* (1785) and *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788).

[7] G.W.F. Hegel's *The Philosophy of Right* (1820); Arthur Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (1818); Friedrich Nietzsche's *Daybreak* (1881), *The Gay Science* (1882), *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), and *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1891); Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Occasion* and *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921); Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943); Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* (1976).

[8] Sean Spence's work *The Actor's Brain: Exploring the Cognitive Neuroscience of the Free Will* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) is a note-worthy example of contemporary investigations into the will and its freedom in modern neuroscience.

[9] Thomas Pink and M. W. F. Stone, eds, *The Will and Human Action* (London: Routledge, 2004), 1.

[10] Albrecht Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity* (University of California Press, 1982), 20.

[11] W. F. R. Hardie, "Willing and Acting", *The Philosophical Quarterly* 21.84 (July, 1971): 194.

'disagreement about what ought to be understood by the term *will* is really a dispute about the nature of this drive'.[12] However 'slippery' the will's 'lexical correspondence' may be, the word 'will' was and is still used as a key piece of terminology in conceiving of human psychology, subjectivity and actions.[13] It would be helpful then to briefly outline how this lexical slipperiness influences debates surrounding the nature of the will in early modern England and how these debates will shape the critical focus of this thesis.

Brad Inwood offers an exceptionally useful explanation of how the will may be classified in his article 'The Will in Seneca the Younger'. Taking example from Anthony Kenny's *Aristotle's Theory of the Will*, Inwood argues that there are primarily two conceptions of the will at work when we describe this faculty which is thought to inhabit the human subject: firstly, that the will signifies a single, mental power or capacity that we have knowledge of and able to exercise; secondly, that the will signifies the collective operation of a number of pre-existing powers or abilities (a blend of rationality, desire, choice, wishing and the working of the intellect or reason) which seem to suggest the presence of something called 'will'.[14] Inwood describes this first definition as *traditional will*, and the second as *summary will*.

Traditional will is depicted as a faculty rooted in the mind or soul which is the sole generator of our volitions. According to this theory, the will is assigned a definitive role as the source of deliberative action in the human individual. The form and meaning attributed to the will in this definition derives largely from the work of St Augustine (354-430 CE) and Christian interpretations of Greek philosophy in the medieval period. Indeed, Augustine's part in shaping the characteristics of this theory

[12] Pink and Stone, *The Will and Human Action*, 2.
[13] Brad Inwood, "The Will in Seneca the Younger", *Classical Philology* 95.1 (Jan. 2000): 44.
[14] Inwood, "The Will in Seneca the Younger", 44-46.

of traditional will is so great that it demands further clarification.

The will is incredibly important to Augustine's interpretation of our nature. In respect to human action, Augustine assigns an extraordinary freedom and power to the will:

> Our wills, therefore, exist, and themselves do whatever we do by willing and which would not be done if we were unwilling. Moreover, even when anyone undergoes something against his will because of the will of other men, it is nonetheless a will that prevails.[15]

Here, the will is at the source of human action. For Augustine, this inherent power to will or not to will is fundamental for the soul to operate towards either righteous or perverse ends. Augustine continues to suggest that our understanding of moral responsibility is primarily informed by the operation of the will.

> What is important here is the quality of a man's will. For if the will is perverse, the emotions will be perverse; but if it is righteous, the emotions will be not only blameless, but praiseworthy. The will is engaged in all of them; indeed, they are all no more than acts of the will.[16]

Augustine suggests, here, that the will influences the nature of our emotions. The operation of the will can, thus, show how corrupt an individual has become, or how virtuous we may be through its proper use. Consequently, the power that Augustine assigns to the will here differentiates his theory of human action and responsibility from his Stoic and Sceptic predecessors.[17]

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[15] Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Book V, Chapter X, 205.
[16] Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter VI, 590.
[17] Augustine, *The City of God*, Book V, Chapter IX 'Of the foreknowledge of God and the free will of man, against the definition of Cicero'. In this section, Augustine addresses Cicero's refutation of Stoic philosophy by discussing the will's role in fate, and if fate truly exists. Cicero's own use of *voluntas* is only understood to designate 'choice', rather than this notion of traditional will. See David E. Hahm, "Plato, Carneades, and Cicero's Philus", *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series 49.1 (1999): 171.

Augustine assigns the will a role in his theology and his comprehension of the moral psychology of man that was either missing from or not fully developed in early Greek and Roman thought. Most importantly, his conception of the will is recognised as being distinct and innovative because he assigns a range of important characteristics to the will.[18] Sorabji notes that Augustine's theory of the will differs in respect to Aristotle's notion of *boulêsis* (a rational desire of wishing, distinct from but still placed under the jurisdiction of reason); Plato's theory of *thumos* (desire for honour) as a kind of will-power which is distinct from but never opposes reason; Epictetus' notion of *prohairesis* (deliberative choice) as a fundamental part of all action, and Seneca's use of *voluntas* (choice) to describe the impulse which is assented to through the use of our reason. The conclusions Sorabji comes to in regard to the origin of the popular theory of the will as a distinct faculty in the individual (Inwood's *traditional* will) serve an important function in distinguishing the significance of Augustine's particular conception of the will. As Sorabji states, other scholars have attempted to show how Aristotle's notion of *prohairesis* and Seneca's use of *voluntas* come close to this *traditional* will, but Augustine is widely accepted as the first to combine previous notions of choice, desire and action into this unified, *traditional* theory of the will as a distinct and fundamental part of the human subject.[19]

[18] The following analysis is derived from Richard Sorabji, "The Concept of The Will", in *The Will and Human Action*, ed. Thomas Pink and M. W. F. Stone (London: Routledge, 2004), 18-20.
[19] See C. H. Kahn, "Discovering the Will: From Aristotle to Augustine", in *The Question of Eclecticism*, ed. J. M. Dillon and A. A. Long (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 237-38.

Augustine's major innovation was to synthesise previous Greek and Roman theories of action into the singular concept of the will. Firstly, Augustine describes how the will is part of the rational soul and that it is a power which is distinct from reason.[20] Secondly, he equates the operation of the will with freedom, as is seen in his work *On the Free Choice of the Will.* Thirdly, he proposes that the liberty assigned to the will must be taken into account if we are to understand the nature of morality. The fourth dimension to Augustine's composite conception of the will is that it has the ability to command our actions in terms of will-power. This can be seen in his work *Against Julian* Book V, Chapter V, 20-21. Fifthly, Augustine proposes that the will is involved in all action (as seen in the previous quotation from *City of God*). Augustine's sixth and final innovation, as Sorabji argues, is that he attributes the weakness of our will to the trait of pride, and thus the origin of evil. This single faculty (the will) is then conceived of as possessing a range of associated abilities and responsibilities. Doing so allows Augustine to connect the function of the will to memory, imagination, lust, faith, belief and the emotions. In short, Augustine theorises the will as being a vital part of how we understand the physical, psychological and moral tendencies of the human individual.

[20] Augustine, *City of God*, Book V, Chapter XI.

It is generally accepted that this conception of the will as a unified and coherent part of the subject is not to be found in early Greek and Roman texts.[21] Aristotle is remarked as having a conception of voluntary action which is related to but does not equate to the *traditional* will. His conception of *boulêsis* (rational wish or desire for an end) and *prohairesis* (deliberate desire for the means to this end) may come close, but he does not mention a single concept that conceives of voluntary action as a combination of both *boulêsis* and *prohairesis*.[22] Thomas Aquinas projects the existence of this *traditional* will into Aristotle by translating *boulêsis* (a rational want or wish) as 'will', but Aristotle does not go beyond proposing a *summary* conception of the will.[23] Augustine on the other hand argues that this faculty of the will exists to unify our voluntary powers.

By taking Greek and Roman theories of action into account, Augustine conceives of our ability to form determined actions as a single faculty or power. The *traditional* version of the will then takes a cluster of associated mental processes and condenses them into one faculty, where voluntary action may be understood to stem from. It is also mainly through Augustine and Aquinas' reading of Aristotle that we, and Renaissance writers, inherit the notion of a separate and distinct faculty of the will. This *traditional* will is thus only deemed traditional because it reflects contemporary, assumed ideas about what the will is; it is not traditional in the sense that it holds prior status to Greek or Roman ideas about powers of willing or volition.

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[21] Cf. Sorabji, "The Concept of The Will", 6-28; Inwood, "The Will in Seneca the Younger", 44-60; T. W. Irwin, "Who Discovered the Will?" *Philosophical Perspectives* 6 (1992): 453-73; Charles Chamberlain, "The Meaning of Prohairesis in Aristotle's Ethics", *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 114 (1984): 147-57.

[22] Kahn, "Discovering the Will", 240.

[23] Inwood makes note of this in his analysis of Irwin's article, proposing that Irwin's interpretation of *boulêsis* as rational desire in Aristotle's *NE* represents *a* theory of the will, but not a theory which he would deem traditional. Inwood, "The Will in Seneca the Younger", 45 n. 9. I discuss the *summary* will below.

Inwood's notion of the *summary will*, on the other hand, is conceived as a theory of willing that does not rely on a single mental faculty to determine voluntary action. Rather, s*ummary* theories of will signify the complex interaction of reasoning, desire and choice that occurs in the subject. Even the validity of the word "will" in *summary will* theory may be regarded as questionable, since theories of this type do not conceive of human deeds as being governed by a solitary faculty of the will. This collective enactment of mental processes defines early Greek and Roman notions of voluntary action.

There are a number of Greek terms which have been associated with this summary theory of the will. They include *boulêsis* (a rational wish or desire), *prohairesis* (deliberative choice or intention), *thumos* (desire for honour) and *hekousion* (voluntariness).[24] These terms serve to distinguish the existence of a series of connected but individually distinct mental processes. According to the model of *summary will*, voluntary action stems from the communication made between these possible mental processes and their subsequent interaction with the intellect or reason. Thus, the operation of this group of intellectual powers figures the nature of volition for the human subject as being determined without the need for a unified source of willing.

Bearing these two definitions of *traditional* and *summary will* in mind will aid, in some cases, to clarify how the will is being accounted for in the literary and philosophical texts that this thesis examines. In the majority of the texts that I explore the traditional will is presented as dominant, but this is not to say that the faculty of the will and its relationship to the other faculties of the soul is expressed in a clear and

[24] Prior to Augustine, the Latin term *voluntas* is also used to indicate powers which would suggest a kind of willing, but never in the semantically dense and uniform manner that Augustine uses it.

unambiguous manner in the period. This thesis will trace how the so called "traditional" definition of the will is conceived of, questioned and played with in the period. As I will argue, there was a large amount of theoretical indeterminacy associated with the will in the literature of early modern England. The majority of this disagreement or confusion arises when trying to classify the nature of the will and its operation. For instance, defining the characteristics of the will becomes extremely problematic when trying to account for the close ties that the will has to our other mental and physical functions. Explaining or justifying the relationship that the will has to the intellect was one of the major causes for the conceptual indeterminacy associated with the power of the will.

The intellect and the will are primarily represented as being in opposition to each other. Either the will is deemed to be a superior faculty, or the intellect is shown to be the dominant force in the mind. The supremacy of either the will or the intellect is understood differently in a range of competing philosophies. For example, philosophical Voluntarists would assert that the will is a superior power to the intellect or reason, when conceiving of the construction of the mind. The will, in this respect, should be used and depended on to achieve our goals and to guide our moral judgment. This attitude towards moral and person governance is advocated by a number of Italian Renaissance philosophers and Platonists of the early modern period.[25]

A remarkably clear application of this Voluntarist position can be seen in Francisco Petrarca's *De Ignorantia* (1367), where he states that 'the object of the will,

[25] See Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola's *900 Theses* (1486), Marcilio Ficino 'Five Questions Concerning the Mind' from Book 2 of his *Letters* (1495), and Pietro Pomponazzi's *The Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul* (1516). These Italians philosophers and essayists are largely reacting to the scholasticism that dominated university teaching and cultural thought in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

as it pleases the wise, is to be good; that of the intellect is truth. It is better to will the good than to know the truth'.[26] On the other hand, Intellectualists, or Rationalists, understand the intellect or reason to be a nobler faculty in the structure of our psyche. The reason or the intellect, in this respect, is deemed to have authority over the will and should be employed to deter the will from leading the human subject into vice and corruption. An example of this position can be found in John Woolton's *A Treatise of the Immortalitie of the Soule* (1576), where Woolton suggests that 'The minde or reason is muche like unto a king, and the will unto a privie counselour'.[27] There should be a harmonious relationship between the two faculties, but Intellectualists contend that the power of reason should always hold the most authority and influence in this internal hierarchy. Further to this, Intellectualists commonly argue that we cannot and should not rely on the will to achieve the good, because of its complete corruption or its general propensity to stimulate morally transgressive behaviour. What this thesis will indicate is that a number of early modern philosophers, theologians and writers seem to waver between these Voluntarist and Intellectualist positions.

Debate over whether the will or the intellect was a nobler part of the soul was often conducted by trying to assess the bearing that each faculty's operation had over the individual. A classic example of this kind of discussion can be found in works which investigate or elaborate on human incontinence, or weakness of will, in the

[26] Francesco Petrarca, "De Ignorantia" in *Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, trans. Hans Nachod, ed. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Kristeller, and J. H. Randall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 105.
[27] John Woolton, "A Treatise of the Immortalitie of the Soule*"* in *The Frame of Order: An Outline of Elizabethan Belief*, ed. James Winny (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957), 76.

human subject.[28] Two archetypal questions, which derive from Platonic and Aristotelian ethics, inform this particular investigation into the nature of personal conduct. The first of these questions is: 'can a man knowingly pursue evil?' The second considers what causes moral incontinence.[29] Posing such questions allows us to consider the nature of and restrictions placed upon personal freedom and decision making. Unsurprisingly, notions of willing and will-power are often involved in the inquiry into these ethical problems.

Evaluating the ability that the will has to commit or abstain from evil actions was crucial for Elizabethan and Jacobean writers who attempted to explain its nature, and their evaluation is generally of two kinds: there are those who propose that we possess free will, and those who propose that human action is preordained or out-with the control of individual human agents. Free will is understood as the power of independent choice and the intention to act in spite of external influence. Those who hold this view are frequently linked to the philosophy of Voluntarism, as well as those who understand the will to hold significant power over human action and choice. Determinists, on the other hand, are those who argue that physical or mental events are predetermined and ultimately inevitable. This philosophical outlook is described as Determinism, or sometimes Causal Determinism. These two ideologies (free will and determinism) can also be blended into a variety of different philosophical

[28] This debate entails the examination of actions which seem to go against one's better judgment – a topic which has been incredibly popular in Western philosophy and studies of ethics since the Socratic School. See: G. W. Mortimer, ed., *Weakness of Will* (London: MacMillan, 1971); Risto Saarinen, *Weakness of Will in Renaissance and Reformation Thought*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Tobias Hoffmann, ed., *Weakness of Will from Plato to the Present* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008). One renowned literary example of this debate can be seen when Guyon, the knight of temperance of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, resists the temptations of the enchantress Acrasia (the personification of ethical incontinence, or the weakness of will). In Spenser's text, Guyon symbolically destroys the allure that Acrasia signifies.

[29] Plato explores this first question in *Protagoras* (351-8) through the figure of Socrates, while Aristotle examines the power and nature of incontinence (*akrasia*) in Book VII of his *Nicomachean Ethics*. See Saarinen, *Weakness of Will in Renaissance and Reformation Thought*, 7-12.

positions.[30]

This thesis will not primarily concern itself with whether or not English Renaissance writers thought of the will as free. Arguments concerning the topics of free will and predetermination form such a central part to religious debates in the period that it would be particularly unfruitful for a thesis attempting an overview of the range of qualities attributed to the will in literary texts to focus solely on this topic.[31] Instead, I will incorporate aspects of these arguments where necessary and when they are applicable to the texts that this thesis will examine. Some of the Tudor moral interludes that will be explored in this thesis make rather explicit judgments on the inability of the will to act freely in the individual. On the other hand, plays like Marlowe's *Faustus* (1604) and John Marston's *What You Will* (1601) seem to frame their dramatic narratives around the difficulty that individuals face in ever truly knowing if the will is free to operate in the individual or not, or if it may be employed to achieve salvation. As is seen when Lampatho, a gallant in Marston's play, reflects on whether the soul 'had free will / Or no' (2.2.164), he comments that while he wracked his brains his 'spaniel slept' and 'at length he wak'd and yawn'd, and by yon sky, / For aught I know he knew as much as I' (2.2.169-71).[32] Lampatho's

[30] The standard variations are understood as the following: Compatibilists, Incompatibilists, Soft Determinists, Hard Determinists and Libertarians. These philosophical positions blend ideas of free will and determinism together. See Robert Kane, ed., *Free Will* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 1-29 for an astute summary of these positions. An important debate of this subject is found in Erasmus and Luther's disputation on the freedom of the will. Cf. Desiderius Erasmus, *De libero Arbitrio* (1524) and Martin Luther, *De Servo Arbitrio* (1525).

[31] The Anglican Church in early modern England, as D. A. Penny suggests, is characterised by its incorporation of aspects of voluntarism and determinism that it accepts into its fold via the doctrines of Anabaptism, Arminianism, Pelagianism, as well as Lutheran and Calvinist principles. Calvinism may have had a great sway over religious policy in Elizabethan England, but the freewill movement in England seems to have been a 'genuine part of the moderation and compromise which came to characterize both the Elizabethan Settlement in religion … and the Restoration Church of the next century'. D. A. Penny, *Freewill or Predestination: The Battle over Saving Grace in Mid-Tudor England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1990), 215-16. See also Daniel Eppley, *Defending Royal Supremacy and Discerning God's Will in Tudor England* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2007), and Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[32] John Marston, *What You Will*, ed. M. R. Woodhead (Nottingham: Nottingham Drama Texts, 1980).

exasperation, caused by his sense of his own ignorance, demonstrates how certain dramatists portrayed the will as a fascinatingly mysterious and often unknowable quantity. I will take into account how plays in the period, like Marlowe's and Marston's, may make specific reference to the debate surrounding the freedom of will without ever providing a conclusive answer to whether the will is free or not.

Overall, this thesis places particular emphasis on how and why the will is often defined by a combination of different or competing characteristics and functions, in a range of philosophical and dramatic works in the period. By doing so, I hope to provide an analysis of the variety of features attributed to the will which reflects the many competing ways it was conceptualised in the writing of the period, beyond its definition of merely being free or not. With this objective in mind, it would be fitting to convey how my line of argument relates to current academic understanding of the will and the part it plays in the writing of this period.

Early Modern Studies and the Will

I would agree with Joel Altman's observation in his work *The Improbability of Othello* that the will had an influential role in shaping the spiritual inflection of classical philosophy in the English Renaissance. Not only did theories of the will blossom in early modern England in its theology and philosophy, but its continued conceptualisation in the literature of the period also 'fostered a new tension between the labile and fragmented self ... and the self's desire for inward repose and

definition.'[33] In this study, Altman uses the writings of Francisco Petrarca and St. Augustine to contextualise the importance of Iago's erotic manipulation of the will, arguing that Iago's promise to 'plume up' his will in 'double knavery' (1.3.392-93) displays how the use of persuasively duplicitous rhetoric may help to achieve the desires of the will to stimulate a state of 'psycho-sensuous self-composition'.[34] Though identifying the 'prominence of will' in the formation of early modern selves, Altman's only addresses the role the will takes in informing the art of rhetorical manipulation in one Shakespearean drama.[35] The crux of his work is not focused on defining the will outside these boundaries. Thus *The Improbability of Othello* briefly touches upon examining the nature of the will in early modern culture, but this investigation only plays a minor role within the larger scope of his study of Shakespearean rhetoric.

Altman's work represents a common theme in critical work which chooses to address the subject of the will in this period. The popularity of Shakespearean criticism in the field of early modern studies has meant that the majority of studies that do concern themselves with addressing the problem of the will centre around Shakespeare's work.[36] This is in part due to the grandiloquent punning upon the will that occurs in sonnets 135 and 136, as well as the amount of criticism dedicated to deriving biographical information from these poems. An example of this punning can be seen when the speaker of sonnet 136 suggests that '"Will" will fulfil the treasure of

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[33] Joel Altman, *The Improbability of Othello: Rhetorical Anthropology and Shakespearean Selfhood* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 153.
[34] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Othello*: *Arden Third Series*, ed. E. A. J. Honigmann (London: Thomson Learning, 2006), and Altman, *The Improbability of Othello*, 156.
[35] Altman, *The Improbability of Othello*, 167.
[36] See: Joel Fineman, *The Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Lisa Freinkel, *Reading Shakespeare's Will* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Kathryn Schwarz, "Will in Overplus: Recasting Misogyny in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*", *ELH*, 75.3 (Fall 2008): 737-66.

thy love, / Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one' (5-6).[37] Shakespeare's sonnets play with the density of meanings associated with the will, including the writer's name. It is also apparent that notions of fulfilment, death, eroticism, superfluity are connected to the concept of the will in these sonnets as the speaker describes his frustrations in satisfying his own will as well as his lovers'.

Many critics have addressed these crucial aspects of the representation of the will in these sonnets. Kathryn Schwarz, for example, comments that the last twenty-eight sonnets of the sequence portrays the will as 'a faculty and a name, a sexual synecdoche and an intentional fallacy, [the] will circulates in unpredictable and incommensurate ways'.[38] As the speaker of sonnet 136 suggests, 'My will one' (6) 'is reckoned none' (8). Here, the will of the speaker is positioned in a state of nothingness, subsumed into the 'large and spacious' (5) will of his lover.[39] In sonnets 135 and 136, the will is employed to articulate the lack of power that the speaker holds over his will. '[B]roken boundaries and failed autonomy' are symbolised in will's realisation in these sonnets as an 'indiscriminately transitive condition of desire'.[40]

Agreeing largely with Joel Fineman's assessment of the will as indicating a fractured subjectivity in the speaker, Schwarz posits that '[s]ubjectivity … does not mean having a will of one's own'.[41] For the speaker, giving voice to a potential sexual union that may occur through the will comes 'at the cost of the unity of himself'.[42]

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[37] William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 136", *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (London: Thomson Learning, 2007). Also see Thomas Wyatt, "The Ballad of the Will", *The Complete Poems: Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. R. A. Rebholz (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981). We may understand this poem to be a precursor of Shakespeare's own "will" sonnets.
[38] Schwarz, "Will in Overplus: Recasting Misogyny in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*", 738.
[39] The masculine autonomy that may be inferred through the use of the male will is, as Schwarz argues, gradually exposed as being factitious and untenable in the sonnets.
[40] Schwarz, "Will in Overplus: Recasting Misogyny in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*", 741, 748.
[41] Schwarz, "Will in Overplus: Recasting Misogyny in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*", 748.
[42] Fineman, *The Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets*, 293.

This consequence arises primarily because 'intention and desire become unreasonably entangled not only in the speaker's will, but in the will that implicates all subjects'.[43] Lisa Freinkel similarly examines the will in Shakespeare's poetry, but the aim of *Reading Shakespeare's Will* is not to understand the 'representation of subjects but the construction of authors'.[44] The focus of Freinkel's argument, as opposed to Fineman and Schwarz, is divided between an interpretation of the intention behind Shakespeare's final will and an analysis of his poetic voice: she attempts to analyse the construction of the 'theological author', rather than the 'secular subject'.[45]

Exploring the dissembling nature of the will that these authors identify in Shakespeare's sonnets will inform part of my discussion on the broader depiction of the will in this period. My aim is to elaborate on the potency, and impotency, of this faculty as a foundational power of the human subject. Doing so will allow me to build on Schwarz's and Freinkel's aim to clarify the almost intangible qualities of the will, but rather than investigating the uncertainties of early modern authorship through the realisation of the will in Shakespeare's works, I will detail the range of ways that a number of early modern texts struggled to conceive of the will as a concept with tangible attributes and powers. More specifically, I will elucidate how the hypostatisation (the action of regarding a concept as a substance) of the will in the writing of the period serves to trouble the clarity of its meaning as a faculty of the

[43] Schwarz, "Will in Overplus: Recasting Misogyny in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*", 757.

[44] Freinkel, *Reading Shakespeare's Will*, xix. Freinkel's study concentrates on a theological interpretation of poetic practice in early modern England and investigates the uncertainties of early modern authorship through an examination of the material realisation of the will. The "will" sonnets and Shakespeare's own will are treated by Freinkel as the tangible results of trying to express the almost intangible qualities of the will.

[45] Freinkel, *Reading Shakespeare's Will*, xix. Freinkel contends that Shakespeare's poetry provides a 'response to Luther' by investigating the 'fantasies of authorial presence' (xxi-xxii), arguing that exegesis after Luther only highlights the folly and corruption of our will. The underlying futility of trying to author desire or spirituality is brought to the fore when the will is used to create meaning within texts. The fantasy of authorial presence is, thus, said to be symbolised by the fluctuating meaning assigned to the will in Shakespeare's writings.

self. Although I concentrate on illuminating the ways the notion of will was used in the philosophy and drama of the period, an effort will also be made to acknowledge comparative uses of the will in Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry. Sadly, I will not be able to invest as much time into exploring the representation of the will in the age's poetry, but I will include references to verse where relevant so as to enrich the criticism I make of the period's writing.

To return to the critical context: particular attention has also been placed upon examining how theories of the will influence the construction and depiction of identity and individual agency in Shakespearean drama.[46] Notions of will and willing have been drawn upon by studies to investigate the freedom that certain Shakespearean characters have to enact their desires, as well to speculate on Shakespeare's own experience of will-power as an author and actor. Mary Kietzman's investigation, like Freinkel's, for example, is based upon explaining 'the nature of Shakespeare's own authorship', in addition to discussing 'the measure of agency actors possessed in the interpretation and performance of their parts in dialogue'.[47] Unfortunately, this investigation does not clearly address how the will is represented as a faculty of the individual, or indeed as a personified character.[48] As opposed to Kietzman's reading, this thesis will stress how we may understand early modern

[46] See: Bradin Cormack, "On Will: Time and Voluntary Action in *Coriolanus* and the *Sonnets*", *Shakespeare*, 5.3 (2009): 253-70; Mary Jo Kietzman, "Will Personified: Viola as Actor-Author in *Twelfth Night*", *Criticism*, 54.2 (Spring 2012): 257-89; Natasha Korda, "Dame Usury: Gender, Credit and (Ac)counting in the *Sonnets* and *The Merchant of Venice*", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 60.2 (Summer 2009): 129-53; Kathryn Schwarz, *What You Will: Gender, Contract, and Shakespearean Social Space* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

[47] Kietzman, "Will Personified: Viola as Actor-Author in *Twelfth Night*", 259-60. The critical focus of this investigation is centred on explaining how Viola-Cesario's performance demonstrates the extent to which 'acting may be a way to control and shape passion so as to transform subjectivity by harmonizing affective and intellectual knowledge' (269).

[48] The author does not address how the 'self-abnegating actor-author who pours herself out by submitting to experience, the audience, and the constraints of performing a particular character' impacts upon the depiction of will or volition in *Twelfth Night*. Kietzman, "Will Personified", 281.

conceptions of the will beyond a mere expression of Shakespeare's authorial intent. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role that the will takes in representing modes of volition and subjectivity in a range of early modern plays. In doing so, I will seek to develop Bradin Cormack's proposal that the will has a 'capacity to undo itself' beyond its representation in Shakespearean drama.[49]

The following chapters will also take into account how the will was often seen to be gendered in the period. Specifically, they will engage with Natasha Korda's and Kathryn Schwarz's argument that the legal, social, and sexual politics of the age help to construct the basis for female subjugation, and that this oppression is enforced through the feminisation of the will.[50] In doing so, I will also clarify how the will was seen to operate in female characters in a range of early modern plays. This thesis will thus seek to expand upon the useful commentary Schwarz gives about how faculty theory and misogyny inform the literary representation of the will by analysing the depiction of the will in characters including and out-with the Shakespearean canon. Furthermore, I will detail how the feminisation of the will signifies but one way in which it was conceived of in the period. Rather than solely examining examples of 'feminine volition' to interrogate the basis of 'social order' and social practice', this thesis will detail the broader confusion behind the attempt of early modern texts to theorise the nature of the will.[51]

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[49] Cormack, "On Will: Time and Voluntary Action in *Coriolanus* and the *Sonnets*", 253. Cormack argues that the operation of the will in the characters of *Coriolanus* and the *Sonnets* illustrates the 'temporality of agency' because of its capacity to move through shifting states of freedom and bondage (253).

[50] Depicting how the 'feminine will becomes the means of social contract' for early modern females forms the primary focus of Schwarz's text, as she aims to detail how '[f]eminine will exposes the double meaning of self-motivated work. Informed purpose both engineers and unravels the seamlessness of subjection'. Schwarz, *What You Will*, 21. Korda's article has a similar objective, but her particular argument is shaped around examining the role of female money-lenders and their relationship to usury in the period. Particular emphasis is given to a historical analysis of actors' wills and the restrictions placed upon female agency in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

[51] Schwarz, *What You Will*, 16.

This thesis will also elaborate on the significance that wills and testaments had in shaping the representation of the will in the drama of early modern England. Last wills and testaments have been treated as significant historical resources in studies which seek to 'reconstruct the religious preferences and practices' of society at the time of the English Reformation for a number of years.[52] Wills have been used in this capacity mainly because they seem to allow scholars an insight into collective and individual attitudes towards death and personal piety in the religious turbulence of pre- and post-Reformation England.[53] Moreover, extracting information from the preambles, inventories, and dedications in individual wills has been vital to the process of defining social and legal conventions towards inheritance, marriage and the legal dynamics surrounding family life in early modern English society in particular.[54] The increasing diversity of such scholarship indicates the significant role that wills and testaments have taken as cultural artefacts by which to define the features of Reformation societies.

Lutton remarks that '[a]s indices of the relative character of belief and practice, and contrasting patterns of piety within specific settings, last wills and testaments have scarcely begun to be exploited' in the context of studies of pre- and

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[52] Robert Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: Reconstructing Piety* (Woodbridge: The Royal Historical Society, Boydell Press, 2006), 11-12. In this pivotal study of religious piety in Pre-Reformation England, Lutton suggests that 'the last will and testament has been one of the most important sources for the study of late medieval piety in town and countryside' (11).

[53] As Lutton indicates in n.33 of page 11, the 'First English study to make extensive use of wills' was W. K. Jordan. *Philanthropy in England, 1480-1640: A Study of the Changing Pattern of English Social Aspirations* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1959). For a recent engagement with this topic, see Samuel Cohn, Jr., "Renaissance Attachment to Things: Material Culture in Last Wills and Testaments", *Economic History Review*, 65. 3 (2012): 984-1004.

[54] See Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 504-23; Barbara. J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); R. A. Houlbrooke, *The English Family 1450-1700* (London: Longman, 1984), 228-252; Caroline Litzenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire, 1540-1580* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 167-87; Tim Stretton, *Women Waging Law in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

post-Reformation England.[55] Indeed, the growing interest in wills and last testaments seen in historical and cultural studies has yet to flourish in respect to the investigation of the dramatic portrayal of wills in early modern drama.[56] I would suggest that the important role the will takes for the study of religious practices applies just as much to the study of religious attitudes in pre-Reformation England, as it does to the analysis of Reformation culture. In the following, I will explore how the creation and execution of wills and testaments are figured as moments of memorialisation which encapsulate the troubling realisation of the human will. The type of interplay that is presented as existing between the faculty of will and a last will and testament can be seen in *The Merchant of Venice* (1600), when Portia despondently states: 'I may neither choose who I would nor refuse who I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father' (1.2.22-25).[57] Here, Portia's desire to choose her own suitor clashes with the influence that her father exerts over her in death.[58] Although previous work has addressed the significance that legal wills and related notions of personal legacy had in shaping the understanding of the will in Shakespeare's plays, there is a general lack of scholarly work which concentrates on exploring the literary representation of wills, testaments and legal diction in the writing of the period.[59] This thesis seeks to remedy this situation by investigating the

[55] Lutton, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion*, 19.
[56] As mentioned in the introductory chapters of this thesis, some works have addressed this area of investigation: Lisa Freinkel, *Reading Shakespeare's Will* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Kathryn Schwarz, *What You Will: Gender, Contract, and Shakespearean Social Space* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Frank Whigham, *Seizures of the Will in Early Modern English Drama* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1996).
[57] William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice: Arden Second Series*, ed. John Russell Brown (London: Metheun, 2006).
[58] Korda aligns Portia's 'safeguarding of her estate' in *The Merchant of Venice* with an emergent 'ethos of virtuous, Christian exactitude' in early modern England. Korda, "Dame Usury: Gender, Credit and (Ac)counting in the *Sonnets* and *The Merchant of Venice*", 143.
[59] Where an investigation into the role of coverture and male control over inheritance in the period forms the central purpose of Korda's study, Cormack identifies Shakespeare's sonnets as types of 'legal elegy' which may help to disclose 'what it means for an action to be voluntary and not' (Cormack, "On Will: Time and Voluntary Action in *Coriolanus* and the *Sonnets*", 263).

role the faculty of the will has in shaping the nature and execution of last wills and testaments in a range of early modern plays.

The main purpose of this investigation is thus to explore how the will is depicted beyond and including Shakespeare's work. Thankfully, there are a small number of studies that share this objective. In *Seizures of the Will*, for example, Frank Whigham focuses on how the use, attainment or "seizure" of the will influences the politics of inter-personal desire in a variety of non-Shakespearean, early modern English plays. He contends that when a lover's will is dominated and conquered by another's will, such moments 'foreground mobile states of seizure – possession, imposition, loss – of control'.[60] These '"seizures of the will"', described as moments of 'self-construction or identification' by Whigham, are said to illuminate the vulnerability of romantic power-relations in early modern English plays, as well as portraying the 'systematic challenges or transformations of deployments of gender, kinship, and service relations' at work in early modern culture.[61]

Although Whigham identifies that 'historicist analysis must engage the conscious and concrete utility of the category of the *will* for early modern England', *Seizures of the Will* never truly takes the time to comment on the explicit nature and function of the will beyond its fetishised, transgressive state in this period. Rather, Whigham's text includes a range of subtle and astute close-readings of *Arden of Faversham*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, *The Duchess of Malfi* and other plays to depict how the 'hypertrophy of will' and the taboos associated with the will's employment facilitate acts of 'self-definition'.[62] Whigham, I suggest, recognises the influence the

[60] Whigham, *Seizures of the Will in Early Modern English Drama*, 7.
[61] Whigham, *Seizures of the Will in Early Modern English Drama*, 1, 10.
[62] Whigham, *Seizures of the Will in Early Modern English Drama*, 201.

will may have over defining ideas of selfhood in early modern drama, but his study does not address how the will is constituted as a psychological category or a concept of power in early modern intellectual culture. This kind of omission is commonplace in the few studies that exist which focus on the role the will took in early modern culture.[63] Christopher Tillmouth's work *Passion's Triumph Over Reason* addresses the theorisation of the will as a psychological faculty in a greater level of detail than Whigham's does, but Tillmouth's investigation focuses upon the representation of desire and passion from Elizabethan to Restoration literature, rather than the will. Furthermore, the majority of Tillmouth's work concerns itself with illustrating the 'intellectual traditions' of the late seventeenth-century, rather than the Tudor and Stuart periods.[64] Tillmouth's work on the moral imagination is intriguing and illuminating in many respects, though it does not provide an extended investigation into the part the concept of the will played in the literature of Elizabethan and Jacobean England.[65]

As opposed to works like Tillmouth's, I do not extend my analysis into Caroline literature or use sources out-with the Tudor and Jacobean periods, as I wish to contextualise the depiction of the will in literature written before the rise of the empirical and rationalist philosophy which dominated late seventeenth-century

[63] See Dennis Higgins, "Intellect-Will in the Poetry of the English Renaissance" (PhD Diss., Claremont Graduate School and University Centre, 1964); John Racin, "The Will in Renaissance Literature", in *Selected Papers from the West Virginia Shakespeare and Renaissance Association 1* (1976): 65-77; Christopher Tillmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason: A History of the Moral Imagination from Spenser to Rochester* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[64] Tillmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason*, 257. This study is geared towards an analysis of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and the writings of the second Earl of Rochester (1647-1680).

[65] Like Tillmouth's work, Higgins' study places major emphasis on poetry written after the Jacobean period. The thrust of his work focuses upon the relationship of ancient theology and the 'ideological matrices of the intellect-will' solely in *The Faerie Queene* and *Paradise Lost* (Higgins, "Intellect-Will in the Poetry of the English Renaissance", 28). Higgins' study shares characteristics with John Racin's article which emphasizes the importance of Voluntarist psychology in understanding Renaissance literature. However, this article presents a rather fleeting analysis of the freedom or bondage of the will to choose a path of wickedness or righteousness.

thought. This break from Aristotelian logic, metaphysics and natural philosophy had a tremendous impact on how later seventeenth-century philosophy and other literary works theorised the human soul and psyche. Exploring how the philosophical developments in the mid to late seventeenth-century influenced the representation and role of the will in later literature would be fascinating, but doing justice to such an enterprise would require far greater space than is permitted here. I instead aim to highlight the unique and largely ignored literature of Tudor and Jacobean England which conceptualised the will before the wider intellectual shift towards the new scientific method that typifies much of Restoration and Enlightenment intellectual culture.

Tillmouth's concern with the philosophical traditions of the early modern period is unsurprisingly shared by a number of other works. Dolora Wojciehowski's text *Old Masters, New Subjects: Early Modern and Poststructuralist Theories of Will* marks an important trend in studies which explore theories of the soul and related concepts in the early modern period. This text aims to 'analyze early modern theories of will and subjecthood, and to explore their relation to poststructuralist thought'.[66] Wojciehowski chooses to focus on the work of Francisco Petrarca (1304-74), Martin Luther (1483-1546), Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), Teresa of Avila (1515-82) and Galileo (1564-1642) due to what she argues is their paradigmatic theorisations of the will. These figures and their distinct engagement with theories of the will are used to highlight 'the decenteredness of the human subject, and the political ramifications of the self's illusions of mastery and control'.[67] In doing so, Wojciehowski attempts to show how '[e]arly modern theories of the will bear a striking resemblance to

[66] D. A. Wojciehowski, *Old Masters, New Subjects: Early Modern and Poststructuralist Theories of Will* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 9.
[67] Wojciehowski, *Old Masters, New Subjects*, 10.

contemporary theories of the limitations of will, subjecthood, and linguistic expression'.[68] Early modern anxieties over self-mastery and the 'modern dialectic of will' are read by Wojciehowski as exhibiting similar rhetorical forms.[69] This endeavour, sadly, does not include any discussion of early modern English texts, or how this period in English literature influenced and was influenced by European intellectual discourse surrounding the theory of the will. Instead *Old Masters, New Subjects* is preoccupied with discussing the topic of the freedom of the will in relation to different theological outlooks.

This text exemplifies a general propensity in critical studies which investigate the construction of the soul in early modern intellectual thought. Such texts tend to overlook the importance that conceptions of the will had in Tudor and Jacobean literature. This is mainly because such scholarly investigations into the history of the soul and the will either skip this period, or merely give passing comment to it.[70] Studies concerning the construction of human morality and selfhood in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century also tend to neglect the vital role that the will takes in these associated theories.[71] For example, Marshall Grossman states in his critical

[68] Wojciehowski, *Old Masters, New Subjects*, 10.
[69] Wojciehowski, *Old Masters, New Subjects*, 12.
[70] See V. J. Bourke, *Will in Western Thought: An Historico-Critical Survey* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964); Tobias Hoffman, ed., *Weakness of the Will from Plato to the Present* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008); Geoffrey Mortimore, ed., *Weakness of Will* (London: Macmillan Press, 1971); Martin Pickavé and Lisa Shapiro, eds., *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Thomas Pink and M. W. F Stone, ed., *The Will and Human Action: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2004); Risto Saarinen, *Weakness of Will in Renaissance and Reformation Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[71] H. E. Braun and Edward Vallance, eds., *The Renaissance Conscience* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); P. S. MacDonald, *History of the Concept of Mind* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); T. G. Sherwood, *The Self in Early Modern Literature*, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2007); Stephen Gaukroger, ed., *The Soft Underbelly of Reason: The Passions in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1998); Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Joshua Scodel, *Excess and the Mean in Early Modern English Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); M. C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

compendium *Reading Renaissance Ethics* that 'The nexus between character and action is choice'.[72] In this text, Grossman places great emphasis upon 'what was at stake in Renaissance writing' by providing 'formally attentive, aesthetically sensitive and historically engaged' readings, but this collection, like Wojciehowski's work, does not account for how the will functions in theories of ethical choice in English Renaissance texts.[73]

In spite of this trend, a few recent studies have tried to engage with the fascinatingly troublesome notion of the human will in early modern English literature.[74] These particular texts touch upon the use and importance of the will in shaping discourses of subjectivity, morality, reasoning and memory in early modern culture, but sadly do not provide extended analyses of the variety of theories associated with the faculty of the will that were prevalent in the period. A more detailed study of the theorisation of the will in early modern English literature will, I suggest, complement the work already undertaken in such studies, and enrich our understanding of the intellectual climate in early modern England. This thesis aims to offer such an investigation.

[72] Marshall Grossman, "Introduction: Reading Renaissance Ethics", in *Reading Renaissance Ethics*, ed. Marshall Grossman (New York: Routledge, 2007), 6.
[73] Grossman, "Introduction: Reading Renaissance Ethics", 4.
[74] Paul Cefalu, *Moral Identity in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006); John O'Brien, "Reasoning with the Senses: The Humanist Imagination", *South Central Review: Reason, Reasoning, and Literature in the Renaissance*, 10. 2 (Summer 1993): 3-19.

Chapter Outline

This thesis is broken into two sections: 'Context' and 'Performance'. The first part outlines how the philosophical and religious writing of Tudor and Jacobean England conceived of the nature and function of the will. Here, I argue that thinking about the will was a significant feature of treatises which sought to explain human psychology, morality, and the nature of the individual in general. The second part of this thesis serves to analyse how a range of plays in Elizabethan and Jacobean England incorporated notions of the will as part of their own dramatic structure. In this section, I argue that plays offer alternative interpretations of the attributed qualities and functions of the will in the human subject from those which feature in philosophical and theological writing of the period. Taking these alternative representations of the will into account, as well as noting the similarities and differences between them will help me to illustrate the variety and importance of the theorisation of the will in early modern England.

The first chapter, 'Theories of the Early Modern Will I,' investigates the theorisation of the will in the physiological and psychological tracts of the age and will demonstrate how the will was thought to exist in and interact with the body and mind. I use a range of medical and moral treatises to comment on the will's place in this body-mind relationship for this task. An analysis of Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Minde* (1601) forms the conclusion of this chapter and will draw attention to the difficulty writers in the period had in conceiving of the nature of the will and its associated functions in human subject.

Chapter two, 'Theories of the Early Modern Will II,' builds on the discussion within chapter one by documenting how the moral philosophy of early modern

England also made a distinct effort to clarify what powers the will had, as well as what its proper use should be. Classical and Italian Renaissance conceptions of the will are read alongside a number of early modern English moral treatises in order to identify a unifying theme between them. I will explain how these works tried to account for the structure and hierarchy of the human soul by deliberating on how and why the will should function to achieve the goal of the highest good. Similar to the conclusion of chapter one, I will outline how these works of moral philosophy struggled to justify how the will should be used in the human subject. These two opening chapters argue that the potentially unfixed location and inconsistent operation of the will jeopardised the function and moral integrity of the human soul. The reading of Nicholas Breton's little known poetic dialogue *The Wil of Wit, Wits Will, or Wils Wit, Chuse You Whether* (1580) that is provided in chapter three serves to exemplify the troublesome and rather unstable status that the will was deemed to have in the period.

Breton's imaginative dialogue reflects on how the will may work to divide and undermine the basis of morality and identity in the subject. This characteristic of the will is explored and expanded upon in the second section of this thesis, which examines how the will was conceived of and used in the drama of early modern England. Chapter four, 'The Morality Tradition and the Will' opens this second section by analysing a range of Tudor interludes to highlight how the notion of the will was employed for morally instructive purposes in early modern drama. My investigation of *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570) and Ulpian Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (1568) explains that the function of the will promoted by these plays (to help achieve the good) is actually undermined through the course of each interlude. These plays suggest that proper moral order should be attained by controlling the

capacity for the will to act in a wayward or malicious manner, but how we should regulate and use this faculty is left rather unresolved. Controlling the will to impose a sense of order in the subject is shown to be a tricky, if not futile, exercise.

Developing the association that the will has to waywardness and sin forms the focus of chapter five, 'The Ill-Will in Renaissance Comedy'. This chapter investigates how the undesirable qualities of the will (its unruliness and ability to induce malevolent behaviour) inform its personification in three early modern English comedies. The anonymous *Wealth and Health* (1557), John Marston's *The Malcontent* (c. 1603) and Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night, or What You Will* (c. 1602) are examined in order to show how their respective characters of "ill-will" (called, respectively, Ill-Will, Malevole and Malvolio) are signified in a manner which contradicts their symbolic function. These characters should typify the capacity of the will to be used for transgressive purposes, yet their deeds serve to demonstrate the inability for the will to realise its potentially transgressive function. Each play, as I suggest, employs a character of ill-will to ensure the restoration of social and moral order. In addition, not only do I argue that plays of the period represent the will in this corrupted symbolic characterisation to rid it of its malevolent potency, but also that the possibility for the will to engender wayward or immoral actions is principally associated with the restraint of personal liberty.

The close connection that exists between notions of malevolence and autonomy is developed in chapter seven, 'Dramatising the Transgressive Will'. This chapter outlines how the ability of the will to stimulate morally transgressive actions was depicted to be a potent but largely disempowering aspect of the human condition in Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre. I emphasise how the will is frequently employed to threaten systems of social, political, or divine order in a variety of early modern

plays, and show that the attempt to do so is commonly portrayed to be disastrous for the characters involved. This chapter will unfold to detail the ways in which Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613) and Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590) prove to be exceptions to this rule.

The characters of Salome and Tamburlaine, I argue, are unique because they both successfully enact their will by fully embracing its potential for malevolence. I will stress the significance of how the will is utilized to provide a sense of liberty for Salome and Tamburlaine, and that the will provides a framing device for their respective fates in spite of its connection to social disorder, sin, despair and the futility of human existence in these plays. Commenting on the association between acts of transgressive willing and human mortality in these plays will provide a fitting backdrop against which to examine the representation of personal legacies and last wills in my final chapter.

The relationship between the will and human fate that is established at the end of chapter seven will be used to foreground an examination into the role that the will takes to symbolize human mortality and the transferral of personal legacies in chapter eight. This final chapter will provide a brief overview on the history of the legal and cultural status of the last will and testament in early modern England, in order to further emphasise the prominent role that the will plays in depicting the nature of fate and human existence in the period. An examination of Thomas Nashe's *Summer's Last Will* (c. 1592) forms the central focus of this chapter.

Nashe's play incorporates multiple notions of the will into its dramatic narrative to satirise the status of personal legacies as well as the very nature of the will itself. The main character, Will Summers, makes clear to the audience that he is impersonating a deceased jester, and that he is using this persona to fulfil his own will

to prove himself to be the most important character in the play. We are immediately told how he aims to fulfil this personal will by ridiculing the character Summer and the legitimacy of its last will and testament. The play appropriately develops to expose how the character Will, his personal will, as well as Summer's last will are as redundant and transitory as each other. Such a scenario shows how the will is used, in various forms, to illustrate the purposeless nature of human existence. Examining the fate of Will Summers will assist me in demonstrating the predominant connection that the will had to superfluity and vacuity in the drama of the period. Investigating a play which uses notions of will and willing as a means to memorialise human existence as well as to evaluate the legacy of the will's purpose in the world will provide a fitting conclusion to this thesis.

This thesis is constructed in a manner so as to demonstrate how important theorising the will was for Elizabethan and Jacobean writers. The chapters I present are arranged to emphasise the place that the will was thought to have in early modern intellectual culture, and to show how theories of the will are incorporated into and influence dramatic conventions in the period. Defining the scope of the potential function of the will proves to be an intriguing area of exploration for theologians, philosophers and dramatists alike, and one which offers up a rather negative portrayal of both the faculty of our will, as well as the purpose of its use. This thesis may, then, help to provide an even greater understanding of the crucial role that notions of the will had in shaping ideas about the human soul, psyche and the cruel nature of existence in early modern writing.

CHAPTER 1

THEORIES OF THE EARLY MODERN WILL I

Writers who aim to theorise the qualities of the human will in this period, whether it is for practical purposes or for popular entertainment, seem to focus on resolving two key questions: what relationship does the will have to the other internal faculties of the soul, and what is the goal of its function? Addressing such questions should allow for a greater understanding of the nature of the will to be gained – from this endeavour the individual may come know how to control the will, for example. Prince Hamlet's soliloquy in 3.1 of *Hamlet* offers a description of the will rather fitting to the kinds of issues that my thesis will investigate. He suggests that death, the 'undiscovered country' from which 'no traveller returns, puzzles the will' (3.1.78-80).[1] The threat of the unknown may cause the will to be confused or puzzled in what it should perform. I would develop Hamlet's proposition by suggesting that it is not only the potential actions that the will can perform which are somewhat mystifying, but that the concept of the will itself was puzzling for writers in Tudor and Stuart England. Defining the nature and power of the will is fundamental for all of the texts explored in this thesis, but in what follows I will show how the will is often depicted in contradictory terms due to its natural capacity to behave in an erratic fashion, and because of a lack of clarity in the terms used to categorise the status the will holds.

[1] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: Arden Second Series*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London: Thomson Learning, 2005).

Will is the Word

Although it would take Samuel Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary of the English Language* to provide an extensive attempt to formalise the English language, early modern English scholars did produce a range of vocabulary books and dictionaries. These early dictionaries were, however, largely limited to bilingual vocabularies and glossaries of translated terms. The period did not produce any definitive English dictionary, but Robert Cawdrey's 1604 *Table Alphabeticall* is remarked as being the 'first work designed expressly for listing and defining English words for English speaking people'.[2] Unfortunately, Cawdrey's *Table Alphabeticall* is far from concise and does not include an entry for "will".[3] In fact, he does not include any words beginning with W into his *Table* at all. It would be fruitful, then, to briefly examine some earlier bilingual vocabulary books to determine how the word "will" was used and understood.

In his Latin to English *Dictionary* of 1538, and the subsequent revisions in the 1542 *Bibliotheca Eliotae*, Thomas Elyot depicts an unwavering and concise translation of the Latin word '*voluntas*', as 'will'[4], or 'wylle'.[5] We may understand this translation of *voluntas* as signifying Inwood's "traditional" definition of the will, as discussed previously. Elyot's identification of the Latin word *voluntas* with the English 'will' is a definition that finds agreement within a later sixteenth-century lexicon by John Baret, where Baret describes his first definition of the will as such:

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[2] John Algeo, *The Origins and Development of the English Language: Sixth Edition* (Boston, MA: Wadsworth, 2010), 157.
[3] See Robert Cawdrey, *A Table Alphabeticall, conteyning and teaching the true writing, and vnderstanding of hard vsuall words*. (London: 1604).
[4] Thomas Elyot, *The Dictionary of Sir Thomas Elyot, Knight* (London: 1538), Ee5^{v}.
[5] Thomas Elyot, *Bibliotheca Eliotae* (London: 1542), Nn3^{v}.

'Will: affection: minde. *Voluntas*'.[6] This particular classification is a little more expansive as to what other concepts should be associated with the term, when compared with Elyot's text, since Baret makes the effort to categorise the place the will takes within the self (the 'mind') as well as how it is manifested (in 'affection'). The connection that the will has to the affections and the mind is similarly found in John Florio's entry on the will in his 1598 Italian to English dictionary, *A World of Wordes*: 'Volontà, will, good will, affection, mind'.[7] Thus, the primary meaning of the word 'will' in these dictionaries is displayed through its use to denote a faculty of the human subject, and this faculty is one primarily associated with the mind, soul or voluntary powers.[8]

The extra gloss on the translation of *voluntas* (when will is represented as affection, or mind) in Baret's work is also of particular note. Baret's *Triple Dictionary* expands on this initially murky use of the word 'minde' when he depicts 'willingly' as being defined as 'readely: with ready good minde'.[9] This particular use of 'minde' in combination with 'readely' and 'ready' evokes a sense of positive, deliberated action that is to be attached to the use of will. In other words, the mind must in some way be 'good' if something is done willingly. This description of the word 'willingly' illustrates the importance of the correlation between these two words 'affection' and 'minde'. The 'will' is presented primarily as the result of external influence upon the

[6] John Baret, *An Aluarie or Triple Dictionary*, (London: 1574), Kkk3^{v}.
[7] John Florio, *A World of Wordes* (London: 1598), 455.
[8] When acting as a main or modal verb, the word "will" also carries a strong connection to the noun's meaning as a property of the human subject which drives action. As Lass proposes, the verb "will" shares lexical correspondence with the Old English noun of *willa* (will) which denotes the cause or root of willed actions. Roger Lass, ed., *The Cambridge History of the English Language: Volume III 1476-1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 233. Gert Ronberg also makes the point that, when acting as a modal auxiliary verb, the will carried a 'much stronger' sense of 'volition, desire or intention' that it does in current use. Gert Ronberg, *A Way With Words: The Language of English Renaissance Literature* (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), 70.
[9] Also, see the entry on the will in John Rider, *Riders Dictionarie* (London: 1617), Dd4^{v}-Dd5^{r} for a similar documentation of the will's associations.

mind by the senses which then provoke internal correspondence between the mental faculties of the human subject. Most importantly, it is the *process* of collaboration between external stimuli and the mind which shapes how the will is used as a word, as well as the particular presentation of our affections. The enactment of the will stems from the mind determining the validity of a potential action's merits, whether the performance of these actions is described as the result of free will, good will, ill-will, something done unwillingly, willingly, or merely displaying a lack of will.[10] To 'will' in accordance with these definitions, then, seems to be a result of cooperative activity between the body and the mind which, in turn, stimulates action, or deliberates upon performing an action. Attempting to classify the properties of the will can lead to a reflection upon *how* and *why* we are moved to these actions. This process defines willing, and it is this process which is explored in different ways in early modern English writing.

Locating the Will

The endeavour to understand the motions and emotions of the individual was a common feature of early modern writing, but explaining the relationship between the will and the body, soul and mind was a task fraught with difficulties.[11] Juan Luis Vives' *An Introduction to Wisdome* (1544) provides a particularly useful example of

[10] Baret, *An Alvarie or Triple Dictionary*, Kkk3[v]. Baret's expansion upon the use of the will in other phrases from gloss 215 to gloss 224 demonstrates the variety of forms that the will took.

[11] See Thomas Moulton's *The Mirror or Glass of Health* (1531), Thomas Elyot's *The Castel Of Health* (1539), Andreas Vesalius' *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543), Thomas Vicary's *A Profitable Treatise of the Anatomie of Man's body* (1548), Pierre La Primaudaye's *The French Academy* (1586), Helkiah Crooke's *Mikrokosmographia* (1615), and Guillarme Du Vair's *The True way to Virtue and Happiness* (1623) are all exceptionally vivid in their accounts of, and postulations concerning, the connection between physiology and psychology.

the problems associated with this task. In his attempt to define the nature of the soul, Vives elucidates that the will may act to disturb the natural order of the body, soul and God's world.

> There be two partes in the soule, the one that vnderstandeth, remembreth, and sauereth thynges as they are, vsynge reason, iudgement, and wytte, and is called Mens, that is, the Mynde, the superiour parte, by whiche alone we are knowen to be menne, made lyke vnto god, farre passynge all other lyuynge creatures.
>
> The other parte, whiche is called wyll, is voyde of reason, brute, fiers, cruell, more lyker a beaste, than a man, wherin dwelleth these motions whiche be named either affections, or perturbations, arrogancy, enuy, malyce, ire, feare, sorowe, desyre neuer satyfyed, and vayne ioye. This is called the inferiour and vyler parte, whereby we lyttell or nothynge, doo differ from beastes, at the leaste, we goo farre from god, which is without all sickenes and all affections.
>
> This is the order of nature, that wysedome gouerne all thinges and that all creatures, whiche we see, obey vnto manne, and that in man, the body be obedient to the soule, & the soule vnto god. If any thynge breake this order, it offendeth.[12]

Determining the power that the will possesses in the individual is fundamental to Vives' effort to depict the moral construction of 'man'. Vives' theory, regarding the complexion of man's soul, places 'reason, judgement, and wytte' in the 'mynde', but he fails to comment on where the will would dwell in the physical or psychological space of man. In spite of this indeterminacy, the will is still presented as holding great influence over our actions: the wit may teach 'man's wil what good is to be folowed', yet the will 'is of soo great power that there is nothynge in the mynde' that is not 'forced to obey wyl, if she stand at strife, and wyl, yeld no part of her right to her aduersarie'.[13] Even though the will has a power to overrule wit's authority, the unruliness of our will must be contained by the wit since the will poses the main

[12] J. L. Vives, *An Introduction to Wisdome* (London: 1544), C2^{v}-C3^{r}.
[13] Vives, *An Introduction to Wisdome*, C3^{r}-C3^{v}.

threat to the individual's ultimate goal of achieving the good. Thus, the will must be controlled, for fear that we may, as Vives proposes, 'go farre from God'.

In his influential work on Vives' philosophy, C. G. Noreña argues that Vives' major concern 'was not to give a definition of man's position in the cosmos nor discuss the great themes of freedom and immortality, but to observe the internal mechanism of man's operations'.[14] However, in Vives' attempt to rationalise man's nature, discussed previously, the will is still left without a definitive physical dwelling place or even a metonymic representation. The misrule of the will is deemed a root cause for our deviation from the good, and it is this transgressive potential that makes it possible for man to break or disturb the natural order of body and soul that God has constructed.[15] Structure and order are ideas that the will seems to be set in opposition to.

Controlling the will is important for keeping the body and soul pure, even though clearly defining the will's relation to these things, as evidenced by Vives' work, may be tricky. One way of providing an explanation for the relationship between bodily and mental processes in the period was found in humoural theory, but both classical and early modern versions of humoural theory tend not to specify a distinct role for the will to take in their systems of bodily order.[16] Although Thomas

[14] C. G. Noreña, *Juan Luis Vives* (The Hague: Nijoff, 1970), 290.
[15] Albeit, this is an offense which is both *expected* as well as being representative of a formal, constitutive part of human nature.
[16] One of the most referenced sources of knowledge on the topic of the human body was Claudius Galenus (129 CE–c. 216 CE). His work signifies 'an effort to relate the humours of the body to the temperament'. E. C. Evans, "Galen the Physician as Physiognomist", *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 76 (1945), 291. Galen 'adopts a physicalist or materialist conception of the psyche' and by doing so, he sought to verify a psychology based on physical embodiment, though this theory does not account for the role the will may take in the relationship between body and mind. Christopher Gill, "Galen and the Stoics: Mortal Enemies or Blood Brothers?", *Phronesis* 52.1 (2007), 104. One of the most important attempts to use this kind of theory in sixteenth century England can be found in Thomas Elyot's work concerning medical and moral advice, *The Castle Of Helthe* (1539).

Elyot's manual of medical and moral advice *The Castle Of Health* (1539) was fundamental in establishing a model for the genre of the vernacular medical morality text that was to be 'influential for at least a century, and which produced echoes even in medical textbooks concerned more narrowly with "physic"', Elyot gives little mention of how a theory of will would fit into his particular humoural conception of man.[17] This conceptual discrepancy continued, for the most part, in the majority of medical and moral treatises that were to follow Elyot's work.[18] Nevertheless, the notion of man's will would become a more important feature of these explanatory texts as the study of anatomy became a fuller part of medical knowledge.[19] Two hugely influential texts on anatomical theory in this period are Helkiah Crooke's 1615 manual of moral anatomy entitled *Mikrokosmographia: A Description of the Body of Man*, and Robert Burton's 1621 moral psychological work *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Unlike Elyot's text, these two works depict the will as being a crucial factor in either augmenting or stabilizing our physical and psychological temperaments.

Both Crooke and Burton use the will to explain various voluntary and involuntary movements as well as the processes at work in the human body. Crooke

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[17] Paul Slack, "Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men: The Uses of Vernacular Medical Literature of Tudor England", *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 250. Establishing the correlation between the organic and sensitive operations of man through an understanding of the four elements and four humours was central to Thomas Elyot's work on physical well-being. Elyot describes how the four elements mix in various degrees to make up everything that has 'corporeal substance'. Elyot, *The Castel of Helthe* (London: 1534), 1v. These elements also combine to create our particular physical 'complexion' and psychological characteristics. Elyot, *The Castel of Helthe*, 2[r].

[18] See, for example, Thomas Vicary, *A Profitable Treatise of the Anatomy of Man's Body* (London: 1577), Andrew Boorde, *Dyetary of Helth* (London: 1542), William Bullein, *The Gouernment of Healthe* (London: 1558), and Thomas Cogan, *The Haven of Health* (London: 1584). Of these treatises, only Thomas Cogan and Vicary mention the will. Cogan refers to the body's 'will to make urine'. Cogan, *Haven of Health*, 244. Vicary more interestingly mentions how bodily movement is governed by 'the wil of the soule'. Vicary, *A Profitable Treatise of the Anatomy of Man's Body*, 13.

[19] Andreas Vesalius' *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543) was a presiding factor in the slow eradication of humoural theory in favour for a more anatomical, and precise, knowledge of the human body.

outlines how our 'animal motions' are governed by the soul in accordance with our 'will and appetite'.[20] He defines the will as 'double': it is deemed to express itself in both instinctive and deliberate actions.[21] The will in this guise is equated with Aristotle's *prohairesis* as Crooke describes how 'animal motion is *proaireticall*, or with choice being intented, remitted or intermitted according to the arbitriment of our will'.[22] Crooke proceeds to associate the will with the animal faculties of the subject which reside in the brain: 'We resolue and conclude therefore that the braine is the seate of all the Animall faculties as well Sensatiue as Principall'.[23] Working in tandem with 'knowledge', our will is judged to comprise but one part of the 'intellectual part of power' of a 'divine' and 'immaterial' soul which also 'comprehendeth … all incorporeall things.[24] Crooke's definition of the will associates this faculty to the animal powers of a brain which control the body, while equally attributing the operation of the will to the intellectual portion of an incorporeal soul. The double role the will plays in the body and soul is described in a similar manner in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

Burton expresses how the rational soul is comprised of the understanding ('the rational power apprehending') and the will ('the rational power moving').[25] Like Crooke, Burton equates the will with a version of Aristotle's 'rational appetite'.[26] The will is again determined to be a faculty associated with an 'incorporeal' soul which has a direct connection to physicality through its primary function to move the body.[27]

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[20] Helkiah Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia* (London: 1618), Book 8, Question 54, 713.
[21] Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, Book 6, Question 10, 422.
[22] Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, Book 7, Question 9, 519.
[23] Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, Book 7, Question 1, 504.
[24] Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, Book 1, Chapter 1, 3-4.
[25] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford: 1621), 40.
[26] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 43.
[27] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 40.

Our will, as Burton describes, has two primary actions: to 'will and nill'.[28] In our power to act, to resist the will of others, or to be unwilling ('nill') our wills are associated with the higher, rational part of the soul. But in spite of the association the will has to rationality, acts of willing are also depicted by Burton as allowing the 'rebellious' 'sensitive and moving appetite' to hold authority over the actions of an individual.[29] Consequently, the will is determined to be one of the primary, higher powers of the soul, but is also responsible for voluntary movements of the body and may be forced to sate the baser desires of our 'inordinate appetite'.[30]

Crooke and Burton similarly propose that there is a link between human physiology and psychology. They describe the will as a faculty which is connected to the higher functions of an immaterial soul, but which is also constantly drawn into the body in order to operate the majority of our actions. Conceiving of the proper place and function that the will was to take in the body and soul became an important part of these new anatomical analyses of the body, yet, as I have shown in these brief examples, determining the will's place in the structure of the body and the soul was not without ambiguity in these new models of corporeality and selfhood. Crooke and Burton both describe the will to be located within and out-with the body, as well as it being both of and not of the higher, rational part of our soul. Their depictions of the will, thus, illustrate the difficulties in trying to determine the qualities and location of this faculty in the soul.

Debates concerning the functioning of our organic and intellective composition were wide-ranging in early modern England and have provided a

[28] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 44.
[29] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 44.
[30] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 43.

compelling area of study for contemporary criticism.[31] Though commendable, such investigations tend not to address the importance of the will or role that it takes in the representations of the body and the self in early modern English literature in any great detail. I would suggest, however, that providing commentary on how we should understand the confusing relationship that the will has to the body, mind and soul in this period is vital if we are to appreciate the instability at the heart of descriptions of the human soul and subject in the period.

In *The Cambridge History of Philosophy*, Katherine Park attempts to explain how the nature and status of the soul in early modern thought should be understood. Park argues that early modern philosophers viewed the hierarchy of the human subject's soul in the following terms:

> Separate but related, the faculties occupied a static hierarchy of dependence and nobility, ranging from the lowest faculty of nutrition to the highest faculty of intellect … The lowest, called the vegetative soul, included all the functions basic to all living things: nutrition, growth and reproduction. The second, the sensitive soul, included all of the powers of movement and emotion and ten internal and external senses. The intellective soul, finally, included not only the vegetative and sensitive powers – the organic faculties – but also the three rational powers of intellect, intellective memory (memory of concepts, as opposed to sense images) and will.[32]

Park outlines a theoretical structure of the soul which is based on trying to establish a sense of internal hierarchy within it – a common goal of writing concerning

[31] A diverse amount of recent critical material concerning the developing understanding of the body and psychology in the early modern period is also available. See: Michael Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn, eds., *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540-1660* (London: Reaktion Books, 1990); Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Sarah Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead Body in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[32] Katherine Park, "The Organic Soul", in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles. B. Schmitt, Quentin Skinner and Eckhard Kessler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 467.

psychology in early modern Europe.[33] This particular model describes the organisation of the tripartite soul, illustrating how its powers were thought to be structured in an orderly manner in respect to their importance for the proper functioning of the individual, yet as I have shown, Crooke and Burton theorise the will as something that directly informs our existence in the immediate physical world as well as the relationship we have to the immaterial realm. For Crooke and Burton, the will was thought to function and exist in a state of flux. Park, by contrast, proposes a rather rigid understanding of the will which denies the potential for the will to be something that fluctuates in its capacities and its affiliation to the various faculties and demands of body and mind**.**

Whatever the difficulties in the ordering of the place of the will were, examining the physical construction of the human subject was thought to yield knowledge about the arrangement of its character. In the period, the disciplines of Humoural psychology and physiology, what Gail Paster terms 'psychophysiology', were key to achieving this goal.[34] These systems were instrumental for early modern writers to interpret how certain psychological characteristics within the self were fashioned and augmented, but, as I have briefly shown, the will can act to undermine the ideals of internal order and hierarchy that these systems are based upon. To deny these potential fluctuations and ambiguities in power, position and performance in the psychophysiology of the individual is to ignore the vast extent of early modern English writing which does explore the nature of the will. As, for instance, Vives' work illustrates, the will has a natural capacity to disturb the order and hierarchy of

[33] Park arranges this construction of the soul in tabular form, and grounds her claims upon a Christianised, Aristotelian notion of its structure as depicted by the German philosopher Gregor Reisch in his 1517 work *Margarita Philosophica* (The Philosophical Pearl).
[34] Gail Paster, *Humouring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 12.

our body and soul. Though this is the case, Park's conception of the will is one that generally endures in academic criticism. It is not entirely inaccurate, but this understanding of the will does not properly account for sheer conceptual confusion in early modern writing when trying to determine the nature of the will and its function.

I would stress that the rather rigid, hierarchical account of the faculties promoted by Park is challenged by texts which explore the powers of our will in the period. The texts I use to validate this claim will illustrate the inherently mutable nature of the will. I suggest that the will acts and is understood in the period as something far more malleable and difficult to place in terms of a hierarchical construction of being. Thomas Wright's 1601 work *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* will help me to demonstrate how the will acted as somewhat of a rogue element in the loosely hierarchical structure of being.

Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in General*

Thomas Wright's work is didactic in nature. He opens his treatise by stating that every work should aim for some kind of 'good', whether it is to 'instruct the wit with doctrine, move the will to virtue' or 'to delight the minde with pleasure'.[35] This endeavour is deemed to be particularly important since 'the passions likewise augment or diminish the deformity of actuall sinnes, they blinde reason, they seduce the will, and therefore are speciall causes of sinne' (2). By gaining a deeper knowledge of our passions and the extent to which they affect the motions of our

[35] Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (London: 1621), 2. References to this work will hereafter be cited in text.

bodies and minds, we may eventually learn how to control them.

The Passions of the Mind's purpose resembles 'the chief object that all the ancient philosophers aimed at … *nosce teipsum*, know thy self' (6). This investigation into self-knowledge can only be achieved by considering how the passions affect our physiology as well as our soul. Wright argues that his treatise 'affordeth great riches to the Physician of the soul, so it importeth much the Physician of the bodie' because it tries to explain 'how an operation that lodgeth in the soul can alter the bodie' (4). He claims that natural and moral philosophy must be addressed in order to adequately complete this task since both disciplines 'wade most profoundly in the matter of our passions':

> The naturall Philosopher contemplating the nature of men and beasts sensitive soules (for Passions are common to both) consequently enter into discourse about the actions and operations thereof … The morall Philosopher, describing maners, inviting to virtue, disswading from vice, sheweth how our inordinate appetites must be brideled with fortitude and temperance, he declareth their natures, their craft and deceit.
> (2-3)

In taking on both the role of natural and moral philosopher, Wright tries to detail how the passions may influence the function of the sensitive soul (the seat of emotion and sense) as well the ethical judgments that a person may make. In addition to this, Wright's work proposes that the passions inhabit the 'highest and chiefest part of the soul', in its most 'reasonable part', and that we are to find these passions 'principally in the Will' when they infiltrate the reasonable soul (31). Therefore, to understand the self we must then seek to appreciate how the passions function in the body as well as all parts of the soul. Defining the passions' relationship to the will is a fundamental part of this objective.

Wright posits that the life of a spiritual man should be directed towards

eradicating sin. We must 'chasten' our body in order to 'bring it into servitude', but to do so we must first understand how our passions may corrupt our souls (5). Wright subsequently directs the reader to consider how every man may know 'the nature of his enemies, their stratagems, and continuall incursions, even unto the gates of the chiefest castell of his soule, I meane the very witte and will' (5). The will is proposed to be a fundamental part of man's soul here: it is something which should protect the soul from its enemies as well as something which should be protected against the incursions of dangerous passions. In this exploration of the potential attacks upon the 'castell of the soul … the very witte and will', we are invited to contemplate the body as the soul's repository, and the soul as a unified object. Wright proposes a conception of the soul based upon a metaphor (this 'castell') which suggests order, hierarchy and structural integrity. Our wit and the will are seen as the figureheads of this order, however the characteristics that Wright ascribes to the will actually serve to undermine the integrity of the soul's proposed constitution.

The predicament at the heart of Wright's work is not where to place the seat of the passions, since they may be found in 'the hearte, both of men and beastes' (33); rather, the problem for Wright is how to account for the way that the will forms part of an immaterial soul which is fundamentally tied to the material operation of the passions in our body. Being residents of the 'chiefest castell of the soul', the wit and the will are situated at the highest, most noble point in the human subject's 'castell' of bodily and mental functions. Passions are born in the heart and are able to infiltrate the rational soul through the will. On the other hand, the 'will may affect whatsoever our passions doe follow … Nevertheless I must confesse that these affections which reside in the will, differ much in nature and qualitie from those that inhabite the inferior partes of the soule' (32). Unlike the passions which reside in the heart and are

associated with the ‘sensitive appetite’, the will and its passions are ‘independent of any corporall subject’, though the body may still have an immense influence over the will (32). This influence is clarified later when Wright remarks that the ‘eie is the stirrer and director of the Will’ and by receiving information from the senses, the wit serves to act as the will’s ‘guide’: ‘the will, which of its selfe, beeing blinde, and without knowledge, followeth that the wit representeth, propoundeth, and approveth as good’ (57). There is a division of power in the soul as the will must (being blind) follow the direction of the wit to achieve that which is good, but Wright intimates that this interdependence causes conflict.

Since the will has a direct connection to the passions, Wright argues that the will may be drawn ‘unto inordinate appetites’, moved by ‘waves and billows of apparent reasons’ which would draw the will from its high state to appease the ‘sensitive appetite’ (58). This would act to diminish the will’s ‘libertie and freedom’ (58). Such vulnerability would seem to suggest that the will occupies a lower state in the reasonable soul in relation to the wit, since the will can be drawn out of the safety of its castle by the workings of the passions, blinding it to the just reasoning of the wit. Wright suggests that the will is divided by two contrary inclinations on occasions of misguidance: ‘the one to follow reason, the other to content the senses’ (58). Just as the reasonable soul is divided in its powers, so the will itself is divided in its own potential operation.

Although Wright associates the will with an inherent waywardness, the will is also given a great deal of responsibility to ensure the proper and just operation of the soul in the individual. He describes the will as being the ‘governesse of the soule’, but ‘being afrayde to displease sense, neglecteth the care she ought to have over it’ (58). She (the will) is likened to an ‘uncareful magistrate’ neglecting the good of the

commonwealth to 'avoyde some particular men's displeasure' (58). In this form, the will is portrayed as the most vulnerable part of the reasonable soul as well as its prime mover. To throw our understanding of the soul's order into further disarray, we must bear in mind that Wright also states that the soul has sole power over the primary function of our bodies. He suggests that the operation of the reasonable soul is like an 'Empresse' who should 'govern the body, direct the senses, and guide the passions as subjects and vassals' (13). In this formulation, the soul governs the body, and the will then governs the soul. Through such a definition, the will would seem to have a tremendous influence upon shaping our actions and identity, but instead Wright's particular conception of the will serves to illustrate the power the will has to destroy order in the individual, rather than to maintain it.

Wright conceives of the will as female: she is 'the governesse of the soule' (58).[36] This title of governess may suggest rule and order, but our will is actually shown to be quite vulnerable, because it may receive 'some little bribe of pleasure' from the passions which would undo the control this feminised will should have over the senses (58). The will presented to exist as the antithesis of reason, intelligence, wisdom and wit because of its close affiliation with inordinate passions. By describing the will in these terms, Wright offers a conception of this faculty which is commonplace in the philosophical and theological tracts of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[37] It may come as no surprise to those familiar with early

[36] The Latin *voluntas* is a feminine noun. This may also account for why early modern writers often theorised the will as being female.

[37] In his searching treatise of man's subjectivity *The True Nature of Man's Owne Self*, Phillipe de Mornay also describes the will as female: 'The affections are not moderated by the judgement, deliberation, or honest councell: the will, as mistresse of the affections, forbids the *motive power*, that she transport not the members to perpetuate unreasonable or pernicious things'. Phillipe De Mornay, *The True Nature of Man's Owne Self* (London: 1602), 146. As the mistress of the affections, the will is responsible for the 'infinite multitudes of mishaps' (38) that can befall the self, but it is a role which is in constant danger of being redirected by itself (the wants of the body and mind) to the degradation of the soul and body alike.

modern instructional tracts that the uncertainty attributed to the operations and nature of the will, alongside the perception of its detrimental effect upon subjectivity and order, is connected to femininity by Wright.[38] As he describes, women are 'extremely addicted to follow their owne desires' with passions so strong as to be 'crossed of their willes', and that 'we may well conclude, that Passions desires keepe neither sense, order, nor measure' (74-75). Our will has, by implication, the capacity to thwart our efforts to be temperate. Immoderate passion dissolves internal order, and our intemperate, womanly wills perturb our soul, allowing it to 'swell with pride and pleasure' (59).

We are then in danger of being transformed into something unnatural by the influence our passions have on the will.

> By this alteration which Passions work in the Wit and the Will, we may understand the admirable Metamorphosis and change of a man from himself, when affects are pacified, and when they are troubled.
> (58)

Here, Wright proposes that the working of the wit and will together may transform a man from his original form through 'metamorphosis'. This internal alteration is apparently enabled by the growth of the 'passions' which act to 'undermine the mountains of Virtue' (59) in the landscape of our soul.[39] Wright likens this metamorphosis to the effect of Circes' potion, transforming 'men into beastes' (59).

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[38] This theorisation finds a complimentary edict in William Gouge's domestic treatise *Of Domesticall Duties* (London: 1622). Gouge composes a conjugal regulatory discourse of the female body, whereby in 'vertue of the matrimoniall bond the husband is made the head of his wife' (272). Being symbolised as the head, the husband becomes leader of the household and of his wife. He is her superior and is responsible for enforcing her subjection unto him since, 'the husband, by vertue of his place, carrieth the image of Christ (even as Christ is head of the Church)', and 'That the husband by vertue of his office is a protector of his wife (and he is the saviour of the body)' (268).

[39] Our soul is also likened to a stormy or calm sea depending on whether the passions are disturbed. Wright's penchant for using physical metaphors to describe the internal faculties often obfuscates meaning.

This connection to witchcraft explains the drastic shift that may be seen in our character, further emphasising how the will may be influenced to induce wholly negative consequences for the individual. Man should then aim to be devoid of these disturbed passions in order to retain internal order. Deviation from our original state of being is thus deemed to be repugnant.

Time and again, the wayward potential of our will threatens to undermine the tenuous state of constancy and order that is found in man's soul.

> This internall Combate and Spirituall Contradiction, every spiritual man daily perceiveth, for inordinate Passions, will he, nill he, cease not almost hourely to rise up against Reason, and so molest him, troubling the rest and quietnesse of his Soule.
> (69)

Whether the human subject wills it or not ('will he, nill he'), the passions will not cease to 'rise up against reason' and trouble 'his soule'. Although the will resides in the soul as a 'governesse' (58) to move the body as an 'empresse' (13), the will is never shown to truly rule the soul or the body. Furthermore, the will's actions and apparent weakness are to blame for man being metamorphosized into a beast. For a man to be unchanged and temperate in nature his will must be subdued and devoid of connection with unruly passion. By suggesting that the will is feminine Wright establishes a connection between the will and the perceived natural propensity of women to be unruly. This depiction of the will does, however, place the feminine will in a peculiarly contradictory position. The will (a female) must rule the soul to stop the individual becoming womanly or beastly so that the will may achieve its natural goal of 'all goodnesse' (32). Moreover, this text proposes that we all possess female wills which are naturally intemperate, but they should never act in a womanly manner as this would render them destitute, and our bodies and souls corrupt. What Wright

fails to describe is just how the will should be unwomanly, and thus how it may be successfully unmolested and resolute in its operation in the human subject.

We are thus presented with a depiction of the will which is conflicted in its representation of the will's division of power, its influence and its place within the hierarchy of the soul. Let us also remember that the wit is said to be the 'director of the will' (57), even as the will is said to govern the very soul itself as its governess. The soul is also said to have the propensity to 'follow the temperatures of the body' (38). So the disposition of the body can affect the soul, leading it on occasion to commit various moral and immoral acts but, on the other hand, the soul is also said to be the 'empresse of the body' (13). Rather than clarifying the attributed powers of the will, Wright depicts the will in a confused and somewhat contradictory manner. Furthermore, the will is depicted as a part of the soul which is repeatedly presented as being vulnerable to the manipulation of the other powers found in the soul. Contrary to the metaphor of the castle which Wright uses at the beginning of his investigation to describe the wit and will, the will is crucially shown to lack the defenses required to resist to the negative influence of the passions.

Understanding the subject through the function of the body and soul may have been crucial for Wright to explain how we gain a deeper knowledge of ourselves, but his attempt to account for the function that the will takes in the matrix of being destabilises the apparent certainties that he deduces from psychological and physiological investigation. Wright's original aim was to produce a work which aimed at 'some good' (1). Instead, what his investigation into the passions has shown is that physical, psychological and moral order can be readily thrown into turmoil in a number of ways by the operation of the will.

CHAPTER 2

THEORIES OF THE EARLY MODERN WILL II: THE WILL AND THE GOOD

The previous chapter closed by discussing Thomas Wright's particular theory of the will. In Wright's reading the will is presented as the cause of moral corruption and disorder in the human subject since it may succumb to the influence of the passions. What is crucial for Wright is that the will should govern and equally be governed in order to protect the soul from the molestation of inordinate passions, that our will should play a crucial role in the moral temperance of the self. Wright proposes that the will should impose authority and order in the subject even though it is vulnerable to external influence and is prone to be misled. The will is deemed to be equally powerful and vulnerable in such a state.

Wright's theory of the will largely coincides with the idea of the Augustinian, "traditional" will that was outlined in the introduction to this thesis. As suggested previously, St. Augustine's supreme influence on later ideas of the will is based upon his conception of this faculty in man as a ubiquitous agent in the occurrence of all action.[1] When conceived as such a vital part of the subject, the will is often recognised as being responsible for an individual's actions and choices. Indeed, understanding the responsibility that the will possesses is a crucial component of early modern ethical theory, but the debates of the period which concern themselves with the notion of the will and its pious or heretical operation are explicitly tied to a diverse

[1] Sorabji, "The Concept of the Will", 18-19.

range of competing interpretations of Greek and Roman theories of morality. This current chapter will examine how these classical sources influence writing concerned with the idea of morality in early modern England, and will identify some of the key characteristics that are attributed to the will when conceiving of its purpose to function for the moral benefit or destitution of the human subject.

Understanding what is good, right and virtuous, and what constitutes vice and immoral behaviour, formed the central tenets of philosophical and theological doctrines in the universities and churches of early modern England. As Jill Kraye describes:

> The attempt to establish the proper relation between Christian and classical moral doctrines and the effort to determine the supreme good of man were two of the most important issues in Renaissance ethics … Aristotelian, Platonic, Stoic, and Epicurean ethics each gave different answers to the question of *summum bonum*, and each had different areas of conflict and agreement with Christianity.[2]

The idea of *summum bonum* was fundamental in shaping ethical doctrine in moral philosophy and Christian theology alike. Early modern discussion concerning the characteristics of the Latin term for the supreme good (*summum bonum*) derived largely from translations and interpretations of Aristotle's Greek terms *to agathon* (the good) and *eudaimonia* (happiness) by scholars in Renaissance Italy. Leonardo Bruni's new Latin translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (c. 1416-17) was crucial in shaping this debate. His work marked a key step in the move from the coarse prose of the pedantically detailed, Scholastic translations of Greek philosophy to the more lucid versions of classical works by humanist scholars. But in spite of the

[2] Jill Kraye, "Moral Philosophy", in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. C. B. Schmitt, Quentin Skinner and Eckhard Kessler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 325.

clarity of Bruni's translation, his interpretation of *to agathon* as *summum bonum* was both fervently quarrelled over and appropriated by scholars in equal measure well into the sixteenth-century.[3] As we see in the *Nicomachean Ethics* itself, however, Aristotle figures a subtle differentiation between *to agathon* and *eudaimonia* that tends to be conflated.[4] Recognising the distinction between the two terms is important to how the ultimate goal of the will was depicted in early modern philosophy.

In *Nicomachean Ethics* 1094a 1-3, Aristotle determines that every action and choice aims at the good (*to agathon*): 'Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and choice, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim'.[5] This impulse towards the good (denoted in 1104b 30-31 as the beautiful, the pleasant, and the advantageous) would direct the human individual towards the *telos* (end, purpose or ultimate aim) of the highest good. This end, or objective of the good, is depicted explicitly as happiness (*eudaimonia*) in 1095a 19 and 1097b 23-25. *Eudaimonia* (the highest or supreme good as happiness) is thus achieved through the action towards *to agathon* (the good), whatever these good objectives may be or entail. It is the attainment of this supreme good, governed by good action, which proves fundamental to the appropriation of Aristotle's ethics into Christian theology in the scholastic tradition, as the happiness of the highest good came to be equated with the supreme good of Godly love. Evidence for this may be found in one of the first English vernacular translations of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, published in 1547 from an Italian

[3] His rendition of the *Nicomachean Ethics* provided an intellectual catalyst for how Aristotle and other classical philosophers were viewed in the burgeoning humanist intellectual culture of early modern Europe. D. A. Lines, "Humanist and Scholastic Ethics", in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 314.

[4] For example, Kraye introduces Aristotle's *to agathon* blankly as 'the supreme good' before going on to depict it as *eudaimonia*. Kraye, "Moral Philosophy", 316.

source.[6] This abridged version of Aristotle's text begins with a outline of what the concept of the good is – a description which is consistent with the original Greek – but later develops into equating the 'happynes' of man 'as a thing sent from God' since 'he is the beginning & cause of algoodnes'.[7] This kind of refashioning may also be seen in a popular Latin commentary on Aristotle's works by the scholar John Case, where he states that both the will and intellect are required to understand God to be the source of the highest good and supreme happiness.[8]

Aristotle's depiction of *eudaimonia* and *to agathon* was largely subsumed by Christian philosophers and theologians into a Christian doctrine of *summum bonum* which proposed that 'God was the source of man's ultimate happiness'.[9] This occurred mainly because Aristotle's works were used as the basis of instruction for a range of disciplines and professions well into the seventeenth-century in most European Universities.[10] Before the translation of Plato's works from Greek into Latin, Aristotle's works were seen as the most appropriate pedagogical resource because his writing had 'excellent internal organisation', and possessed 'demonstrative rigor … explanatory clarity and terminological precision'.[11] But however apt Aristotle's larger body of philosophy was for the curricula of

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[5] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Ingram Bywater, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, W. D. Ross, and J. O. Urmson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1094a 1-3. This text will be referred to throughout.

[6] A thirteenth century summary of the *Nicomachean Ethics* by alchemist and medical physician Taddeo Alterotti (ca. 1210-1295).

[7] John Wilkinson, *The Ethiques of Aristotle, that is to saye, precepts of good behauoure and perfighte honestie* (London: 1547), Bi^{v}.

[8] '*Hoc autem accurate tum fiat, cum deo & summo bono & infinito vero per voluntatem & intellectum conemur adhaerere*'. John Case, *Speculum Moralium Quaestionum in Vniversam Ethicen Aristotelis*, Oxford: 1585, Book VI, Chapter 1, 242.

[9] Kraye, "Moral Philosophy", 316-17.

[10] See C. B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983) and P. F. Grendler, "The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation", *Renaissance Quarterly* 57.1 (Spring, 2004): 1-42.

[11] Luca Bianchi, "Continuity and Change in the Aristotelian Tradition", in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 50.

Renaissance and reformation universities, his role as the eminent philosopher of the European Renaissance was beginning to be reconsidered by many humanist scholars and philosophers, mainly because the *Nicomachean Ethics* made little mention of the application or existence of *eudaimonia* beyond our physical life.

Although Aristotle's version of the supreme good (as complete happiness, *eudaimonia*) in his ethics was justified in order to make it agree with Christian doctrine by his apologists, the fact that *eudaimonia* could be achieved in *this* world without the intervention of a divine force was a facet of his work that many of his Christian supporters struggled to account for.[12] Providing a rationalisation of the *telos* of human existence, without mentioning what would happen after death, was a key factor in the flourishing and continuing development of Platonic philosophy throughout Renaissance Europe. The Platonic version of *summum bonum* was conceived of as a good which reached beyond the mere contemplation of this world, aiding the soul's ascent to heaven. This was justified by interpretations of Plato's work which understood *summum bonum* to be achieved through the use of the rational as well as the irrational parts of the soul.[13] Aristotle's conception of happiness was, rather, centred upon the working of the intellect to move the agent towards *summum bonum* without the need of a distinct theory of the will.[14] Contrarily, the Platonic philosophy that emerged from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries was founded on ethics which interpreted Plato's "summary" version of the will as agreeing with an Augustinian version of the will as a singular faculty in the individual, and which

[12] Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177a 12-18 and 1178a 8-9. It was a philosophical deficiency by which Martin Luther deemed the ethics of Aristotle as the worst enemy of grace in his 1517 *Disputation Against Scholastic Theology*.
[13] See Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. Robert Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 245c-248e, as well as Kraye, "Moral Philosophy", 352.
[14] A supreme happiness that does not involve the divine mover, and which does not extend to a connection to this monad.

crucially regarded the will as central to the human subject's achievement of *summum bonum*.

As we see in his invective against Scholastic thought, *De Ignorantia* (1367-70), Francisco Petrarca criticises Aristotelian ethics on two counts. Firstly, Aristotle is critiqued for failing to fully recognise the importance of the motions of the will. Secondly, Petrarca chastises the Greek philosopher for not properly acknowledging the will as a distinct faculty in our psychology. Petrarca argues that we must acknowledge the existence and attributed properties of the will in order to define our relationship to moral virtue, and ultimately, to understand our connection with God:

> It is one thing to know, and another to love; one thing to understand, and another to will … what is the use of knowing what virtue is if it is not loved when known? What is the use of knowing sin if it is not abhorred when it is known? If the will is bad, it can, by God, drive the lazy wavering mind toward the worse side, when the rigidity of virtue and the alluring ease of vice become apparent.[15]

Petrarca vehemently rejected those who would ignore the power and pre-eminence of the will, which is, he argues, essential for us to comprehend the nature of vice as well as the importance of love. What is key for Petrarca is that to understand our own subjectivity as governed by the dominion of God, we must give precedence to the will as a factor in our being. This is due to the fact that, for Petrarca, the will leads us to desire and gain knowledge of God. In consideration of this fact, he suggests that

> the object of the will, as it pleases the wise, is to be good; that of the intellect is truth. It is better to will the good than to know the truth … In this life it is impossible to know God in His fullness; piously and ardently to love Him is possible.[16]

[15] Petrarca, "De Ignorantia", 103-4.
[16] Petrarca, "De Ignorantia", 105.

In Petrarca's ethical doctrine, the will is fundamental to the conception of *summum bonum* since it leads the individual to the highest good, and is seen to be, in this respect, superior to the intellect. Thus, Pertrarca and other Christian Platonists justify the high status they attribute to the will by articulating how it helps to guide the soul towards the supreme good: the contemplation of the love for and of God.

The essential position that the will takes in shaping the goal, or *telos*, of human existence was also argued for by one of the most prominent exponents of Platonism, Marsilio Ficino (1433-99).[17] For Ficino the working of the will is fundamental if we are to achieve the proper ends of life. He theorises that the will, as a function of the rational appetite, works in tandem with the intellect to satisfy the desire of possessing the 'truth and infinite goodness which is the source of all others, that is, God'.[18] The excellence of life is to be found in striving towards God, 'the mover which alone turns the soul toward the infinite', by the 'free nature of the will'.[19] But rather than being completely free, the will itself gains its excellence as a part of the soul by working specifically towards achieving its infinite end in the 'tranquil and secure possession of all good, and … perfect joy' by God's influence upon the intellect.[20] As such, the will is free in so far as it should use its "freedom" to attain everlasting joy by following God's design, and this entails being regulated by the power of the intellect.

Ficino proposes that 'the will desires the good to the extent that the intellect offers it', and that the will 'hastens unceasingly from one object to the other until it

[17] Ficino was a man whose Platonism and theory of Platonic Love had a profound influence on the work of John Colet (1467-1519), an English Renaissance clergyman and scholar whose own Platonic teachings were admired by Erasmus.
[18] Marsilio Ficino, "Concerning the Mind", in *Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Kristeller, J. H. Randall, trans. J. L. Burroughs (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 191.
[19] Ficino, "Concerning the Mind", 210-11.
[20] Ficino, "Concerning the Mind", 212.

finally finds rest in union with God, the infinite totality of Goodness'.[21] To achieve *summum bonum*, then, the individual relies on the intellect helping the will to achieve its *telos* of attaining a union with God. In short, God manipulates the intellect and will to work in tandem to know, desire and gain the perfect joy of God's own love. Ficino's Christian Platonism then, like Petrarca's, exalts the function of the will, since it operates as a conduit through which the individual, with God's aid, may attain knowledge of the divine.

Ficino's theory of Platonic Love (an idealised notion of love which was signified by the irresistible search for perfect beauty in the spiritual, intellectual and physical) proved to be his distinctive contribution to English intellectual culture. In particular, it was his translation of Plato's *Symposium* which 'made of Plato a philosopher of love and beauty, which he had never been before'.[22] These ideas were transmitted into early modern English writing mainly through a strain of French amatory poetry.[23] In this creative medium, as Sears notes, 'all the known love traditions are fused to show how love between individual persons derives from the love between the individual and God'.[24] Combining the ideas proposed by French Platonic verse with the tropes of Petrarchan love poetry, thus gave English poets the opportunity to draw upon a range of Platonic concepts in order to craft their own verse.[25]

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[21] P. O. Kristeller, ed., *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 259, 262.
[22] Jane Sears, "Ficino and the Platonism of the English Renaissance", *Comparative Literature* 4.3 (Summer, 1952), 225.
[23] As Sears notes, many English court poets were, however, influenced by French Platonic poetry in dealing with the idealised lover as the intellectual and physical Idea of beauty (for instance, Spenser, Greville, Sidney, and Chapman). In their poetry we may find a fusion between complementary strands of Petrarchan and Platonic thought.
[24] Sears, "Ficino and the Platonism of the English Renaissance", 227-28.
[25] See Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595) and *Four Hymnes* (1596), and Philip Sidney's *New Arcadia* (1590).

The interpretation of Plato's philosophy by Ficino and his contemporaries significantly influenced how a notion of *summum bonum*, which praised the status and function of the will, was integrated into Christian ethical doctrine in European Renaissance culture. The work of Petrarca, and the French poetry inspired by Ficino's reading of Plato had a tremendous impact on the literary landscape of early modern England. On the other hand, the Reformed theology that spread through northern Europe in the period, which placed emphasis on the utter corruption and destitute nature of the will, clashed with the Christianised reading of classical philosophy that was a key component of this continental ethical and poetic heritage. Theories of will took a prominent place in early modern English writing which attempted to discern the nature of morality and how to reach the highest good of salvation, but the role the will had to play in achieving *summum bonum* was greatly contested.

The Will and English Early Modern Moral Writing

It is indubitable that the moral philosophy read and produced in sixteenth and early seventeenth-century England was greatly affected by the theological and philosophical upheaval in early modern Europe. Influenced by a variety of competing social and ethical ideologies, both the imaginative and philosophical literature of early modern England has been shown to display a diverse and often esoteric intellectual heritage, yet the critical literature analysing the period's philosophical concerns often focuses (justifiably) on the developments of the scientific method in England, as exemplified in the work of William Gilbert (1544-1603), William Harvey (1578-

1657) and Francis Bacon (1561-1626).[26]

The proliferation of the inductive mode throughout Europe, coupled with the immense influence of Descartes' (1596-1650) mechanical philosophy, tends to overshadow the contribution to the intellectual culture of England by late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century philosophers and theologians. More specifically, English philosophy from this period is often overlooked because of its theoretical hybridity or its dissimilarity from the empirical and materialist philosophy of the late seventeenth-century.[27] I would suggest that treatises on morality and ethics are a vitally important part of early modern literary culture, and that such treatises often make a concerted effort to theorise the concept of the will.

Like the Platonists of Renaissance Italy, many writers of moral philosophy in Elizabethan and Jacobean England portrayed the will as a vital part of human existence because of its ability to influence how the individual might achieve *summum bonum.* It is often the case that writers who attempt to account for the teleological function of the will (to achieve or know the supreme good) also endeavour to clarify how the inherent waywardness of the will interferes or influences its goal, and how it may never achieve its goal to lead the individual to the supreme

[26] Frances Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979) and Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, trans. Mario Domandi (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1963) are two exemplary expositions on the vibrancy of the application, dissemination and manipulation of philosophical theories in the English and Italian Renaissance. Mid-sixteenth century England's contribution to the philosophy of early modern Europe was seen to be in decline, or consisting of derivative work, albeit punctuated by works of merit such as the John Dee's "Mathematicall Preface" to his 1570 translation of Euclid's *Elements of Geometrie* and William Kempe's translation of Ramus' *Arithmetic* in 1592. See C. B. Schmitt, *John Case and Aristotelianism in Renaissance England* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983), 24.

[27] Critical discourse surrounding the philosophical history of this period still either tends to focus upon the formation of such intellectual pillars of the Renaissance as Montaigne, Bacon and Hobbes (with little in between) or, it favours the contribution of Italian Platonists as the chief factor in the development of the early modern period. See. P. A. French and Howard Wettstein, eds., *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Volume XXVI: Renaissance and Early Modern Philosophy* (Boston, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), and P. R. Blum, ed., *Philosophers of the Renaissance* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010).

good without the intervention of God. One work which tackles such a problem is Richard Hooker's *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical* (1593).

In *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, Hooker provides a response to the Presbyterian attack on the foundation of the Elizabethan church that was presented in Thomas Cartwright's *Admonition to Parliament* (1572). Fundamentally, Hooker's *Lawes* presents itself as supporting the notion that the will has some freedom to operate, and that its operation may lead the individual towards the good. This theological position that was opposed to Cartwright's own beliefs, 'whose Presbyterian views were informed by Calvin'.[28] In accordance with 'Reformed tradition', Cartwright understood the will to be unable to achieve the good without the helping grace of God, believing that human individuals lacked the capacity to distinguish between good and evil through the use of their intellectual faculties.[29] Hooker primarily responds to this attitude by clarifying how the will and reason may lead the human subject towards the good, doing so by justifying the liberty that both the will and reason have to operate.[30]

Hooker describes that '[t]here is in the will of man naturally that freedome, whereby it is apt to take or refuse any particular obiect whatsoeuer being presented vnto it'.[31] The freedom which Hooker assigns to the will is, nonetheless, determined by the influence and governance of the power of human reason:

> Choice there is not, vnlesse the thing which we take, be so in our power that we might haue refused and left it … To choose is to will one thing before

[28] M. K. Harmes, "Calvin and the English Episcopate, 1580-1610", *Anglican and Episcopal History* 81.1 (March 2012), 25.
[29] Nigel Voak, *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 159.
[30] Although Hooker had attempted to defend the liturgy and polity of the Church of England in this text, his effort failed to fully satisfy 'disciplinary reformers' or 'Elizabethan Puritans'. L. W. Gibbs, "The Life of Hooker", in *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. Torrance Kirby (Leiden: Brill, 2008) Gibbs, 24.
[31] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical* (London: 1593), 61.

> another. And to will is to bend our soules to the hauing or doing of that which they see to be good. Goodnesse is seene with the eye of the vnderstanding. And the light of that eye, is reason. So that two principall fountaines there are of humaine action, Knowledge and Will; which will in things tending towards any end is termed Choice.[32]

The purpose of the will is to choose the good. In order to choose the good the will needs the power of reason. So the preservation of man's ethical purity resides in the power of reason to lead the will to the good, for '[i]f reason erre, we fall into euill, and are so farre forth depriued of the generall perfection we seeke'.[33] Such governing parameters would, however, serve to contradict the notion of the liberty Hooker attributes to the will.

The natural objective that the will should seek to achieve, as Hooker suggests, is the good. In spite of this, the will may act contrary to the judgment of reason, or be acted upon by the desires of the body. Thus he notes the opposition of bodily and reasonable inclination: 'The obiect of appetite is whatsoeuer sensible good may be wished for; the obiect of wil is that good which reason doth leade vs to seeke'.[34] He goes on: 'Reason therfore may rightly discerne the thing which is good, & yet the will of man not incline it selfe therunto, is oft as the preiudice of sensible experience doth ouersway'.[35] Rather than being completely under the control of the reason, the will is shown to exhibit a natural propensity to disobey or ignore the knowledge of the good that the reason provides. This is partly due to the 'inferiour' power of the appetite, and for the reason that '[t]he search of knowledge is a thing painful; & the painfulnes of knowledge is that which maketh the will so hardly inclinable thereunto'.[36] Consequently, any action or choice made by the will which disregards reason for the

[32] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 59-60.
[33] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 62.
[34] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 60.
[35] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 61.

lesser (sensible) good provides an example of the 'singular disgrace of nature, & the vtter disturbance of that diuine order' which the human is capable of.[37] Hooker conceives of the place that the will takes in the soul by outlining its natural wilfulness to subvert the divine hierarchy of nature and moral order, and by proposing that its fundamental function (to achieve the good) can only be realised through its obedience to reason.[38] As theorised here, the power of the will is deemed to be bifurcated due to its capacity to subvert as well as conform to the good.

Deviating from reason's rule is represented as either indicating the natural propensity of the will to deviate from the good, or as an indication that the will has fallen under the power of the appetite, yet Hooker suggests that reason's main role is to inform the characteristics of willed actions, even when the will is influenced by the desires of the appetite:

> [A]ppetite is the wils sollicitor, and the will is appetites controller; what we couet according to the one, by the other we often reiect: neither is any other desire termed properly will, but that where reason and vnderstanding, or the shew of reason, prescribeth the thing desired.[39]

The appetite may direct how the will functions, and equally, the will may ignore the appetite's council. Whatever desire the will acts upon it cannot, as Hooker suggests, be thought of as an act of will without the 'reason or understanding' deciding what 'the thing desired' would be. Justifying the operation of the will through such

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[36] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 61.
[37] Richard Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 61.
[38] The disorder caused by the will is also commented on by Richard Barckley, who suggests that 'reason should obey God, and our senses and desires should be obedient to reason' but that 'the senses' often 'over-ruleth reason, and desires leadeth our will: the body commandeth the soule, and the carte is before the horse.' Richard Barckley, *A Discouse of the Felicitie of Man, or his Summum Bonum* (London, 1598), 565.
[39] Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 60. The hierarchy of power between these two powers is vague. Though the will controls the appetite, the appetite can serve to instigate motion and action on behalf of its, apparent, master.

parameters would serve to strip it of any identity out-with the function for moral guidance that is delegated to it by the power of reason, and would equally make the reason partly responsible for allowing morally questionable desires to be acted upon.

Although the sanctity of the reason's actions may be brought into question here, Hooker still incorporates his definition of reason into a larger theory of salvation. For Hooker, human salvation depends on the operation of the will to act in 'obedience vnto the will of his creator' by following the guidance of reason, but he notes that the will may be easily led astray.[40] The uneasy nature of human action is exacerbated by the fact that even reason, the will's guide, may be used incorrectly by the individual: 'And herein that of Theophrastus is true, they that seeke a reason of all things do vtterly ouerthrow reason'.[41] As he states, even reason may not be relied upon. Reason, like will, is deemed to be a faculty which is fallible, but in circumstances of doubt, Hooker assures the reader that 'the greater good is to be chosen before the less'.[42] Our will and reason should be involved in the effort to select this 'greater good' but, as Hooker's own reasoning suggests, these faculties do not always work for the benefit of the individual.

Although Hooker repeatedly stresses the important role that reason has in directing the moral choices that individuals make, he ultimately identifies the inherently wayward nature of the will as the defining feature of human action:

> From the sundry dispositions of mans will, which is the roote of all his actions, there groweth varietie in the sequele of rewards and punishments, which are by these and the like rules measured: Take away the will, and all actes are equall: That which we doe not and would doe, is commonly accepted as done.[43]

[40] Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 81.
[41] Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 63-64.
[42] Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 64.

Where Aristotle blames man's universal state of ignorance for ill-deeds, Hooker proposes that human action and sin are determined by the function of our will.[44] This faculty serves to define the boundaries of how we understand our own morality. We cannot know good or evil without the will, just as without the freedom of the will to act we cannot properly demarcate sin.

As Marco Orrù argues in his article 'Anomy and Reason in the English Renaissance', Hooker dissented from Protestants who promoted the total depravity of human nature by stressing that 'an act lacking the will of an agent cannot be considered a sin or a transgression of the law. For Hooker, laws are based on human reason and presuppose the furtherance of a reasonable good'.[45] Orrù states that Hooker should be regarded in the 'tradition of Aristotle and Aquinas', providing an 'intellectual bridge between the early Oxford Reformers and the Neo-Platonists of Cambridge'.[46] Both Hooker and Aristotle try to explain the recalcitrance of human nature by deliberating upon the efficacy of human reason, although I would contend that Hooker explains his theory of natural law and the qualities of morality by demonstrating that the will is needed to achieve the ultimate goal of the good. As I have previously noted, the role of the will in achieving *summum bonum* is something that Aristotle does not recognise. Salvation, for Hooker, depends on the will functioning to achieve the highest good, but in trying to justify the part the will plays in Christian ethics, Hooker demonstrates how the both the reason and will are fundamentally flawed. Rather than providing a clearly defined explanation of the

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[43] Hooker, *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical*, 69.
[44] See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book III, Chapter I.
[45] Marco Orrù, "Anomy and Reason in the English Renaissance", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47.2 (April-June 1986), 186.
[46] Orrù, "Anomy and Reason in the English Renaissance", 187.

freedom the will holds in the human subject, Hooker's definition of the human soul inadvertently depicts how susceptible the will is to the influence of other forces.

Interestingly, later supporters of Hooker's work, such as William Covell, were keen to stress that the will strays from the path of the good because of the corresponding fallibility of human reason. In his defence of Hooker's work, Covell argues that reason 'guideth, as it were by a direct path, the will vnto that which is good ... yet we neither say that Reason can guide the will vnto all that is good'.[47] Defending Hooker from posthumous criticism by those who would accuse him of proposing that 'the will of man' had 'obtained grace by freedom' rather than freedom by grace, Covell proposes that Hooker's *Laws* advocates that 'the fault of mans errour in election, aris[es] out of the slouth of reason, not out of the nature of the good'.[48] Thus, as Covell stresses, what *Of Lawes Ecclesiastical* inadvertently highlights is that the will may provide the framework for human ethics, but it may also fashion our downfall through misuse, unruliness or misguidance by the power of our reason.

Justifying the precarious nature of human psychology and morality also forms part of more obscure works by writers in the period. William Jewell's work *The Golden Cabinet Of True Treasure: Containing the Summe of Morall Philosophy* (1612), for example, reiterates the some of the ideas concerning the powers and composition of the will as proposed in Hooker and Wright's work.[49] Positing a fairly orthodox position, Jewell writes that our will 'conjoins' itself to the faculties of the understanding in 'the pursuit of virtue' so that it is 'able to rule and gouerne the sensuall parts which are vnder her'.[50] This cohesion, enabled by the power of our

[47] William Covell, *A Just and Temperate Defence of the Five Books of Ecclesiastical Policie. Written by M. Richard Hooker* (London: 1603), 34.
[48] Covell, *A Just and Temperate Defence of the Five Books of Ecclesiastical Policie*, 37.
[49] Jewell's work is formed as a translation of an unknown French text.
[50] William Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure* (London: 1612), 57, 58.

reason, illuminates the noble and pious path that the will should take: reason ensures that the will is directed towards a virtuous end by encouraging its 'inclination to the good'.[51]

Similar to Thomas Wright, Jewell depicts the will as female in nature. Jewell similarly uses a language of regal authority to describe the quality of the will's relationship to reason within the human soul, indicating that reason should not be understood to be 'Princess and commander' over the will but, rather, it should be as known as 'mistresse' to guide the will's powers.[52] Even though this particular power dynamic would suggest that reason holds some sort of control over the will, the will is still capable of ignoring the nobility of its partnership with reason and pursuing the 'sensual and earthly' pleasures of 'filthy sensualitye'.[53] Such a choice made by the will would only serve to invert the ordered hierarchy of the soul: 'in lieu of her commander, [the will] shall bee her [sensuality's] seruant, and heereby become both base and brutish.'[54] The will should join with reason through reason's good counsel, but the will, as within Wright's work, is given the license to ignore the power that reason has over its operation.

Like Hooker, Jewell describes the will as having a sense of liberty. It is deemed to be an 'absolute and free facultie' that earnestly desires 'onely which is *verè bonum* truly good'.[55] Jewell argues that we are given this sense of freedom by God to remind us of our inherently irascible nature:

> Is not this a great punishment of God, that man out of his owne free will, (for want of knowing and vnderstanding himselfe) should make himselfe a seruant

[51] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 56.
[52] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 56. Note that the reason is also feminised by Jewell.
[53] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 58.
[54] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 58.
[55] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 17, 18. The italics and grave mark on the Latin *vere* are included in Jewell's text.

> and a slaue vnto those things, whereof hee (if hee would eschewe Vice, and imbrace Vertue, so to vse his goods and fortunes with moderation) might haue the mastery and full command?[56]

It is primarily 'want … and vnderstanding of himself' which makes man 'a seruant and a slaue' to improper desires. By reflecting upon the 'excellencye' of our soul, we should realise that the possibility for excellence is out of our reach without God's aid.[57] The noblest victory in the human subject's life, Jewell argues, would be for reason to 'gaine the preheminence ouer our vnruly wils'.[58] 'Reason's force' should be directed to 'vanquish' those 'passions and affections' that draw the self into 'wicked actions' but in Jewell's reading the will has an innate freedom to ignore the example set by reason.[59] Thus, Jewell emphasises that the will is given to humankind as a divine gift whose presence illuminates the primary flaw in human subjectivity: we are in want of control, understanding and grace because of the will's freedom to sin.

The freedom that Jewell attributes to the will is one which obviously contrasts with much of Protestant ideology, yet irrespective of theological difference, the will is fundamental in understanding and theorising aspects of morality and the good in a range of texts in this period. Even the Protestant William Perkins proposes that though 'Papists' may falsely 'ascribe to mans will a naturall power to that which is truly good' there still remains in man a 'libertie of will in humane actions and in ciuill duties'.[60] Albeit, the will cannot achieve what is truly good without God's intervention 'to cleanse the heart from euill thoughts, to restraine the will and

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[56] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 143.
[57] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 56.
[58] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 146.
[59] Jewell, *The Golden Cabinet of True Treasure*, 146.
[60] William Perkins, *A Treatise of Man's Imagination Shewing his Naturall Euill Thoughts: His Want of Good Thoughts: The Way to Reforme Them* (University of Cambridge: 1607), 163-64.

affections from wicked delights'.[61] Perkins again proposes that the faculties of man's being are inherently corrupt but are still needed to stimulate action in the individual. In these terms, willed action is possible, but just not willed good.

In his attempt to develop 'a theology of morality which reconciled traditional values, the insights of the reformers and the tensions of individuals during a period of social change', Perkins places particular emphasis on accounting for the power of the will in man.[62] He considers the will to be a necessary part of the being, since it functions to highlight the inability of the individual to achieve *summum bonum* without the aid of God. This is primarily because of the power the will possesses to pervert human thought and action. Even so, Perkins is careful to remind the reader that the higher faculties of mind are just as base or corruptible as the will itself: 'The minde & vnderstanding part of man is naturally so corrupt, that so soone as he can vse reason: he doth nothing but imagine that which is wicked, and against the lawe of God'.[63] Perkins recognises the power the will has in performing actions but does not expand upon its qualities further than explaining the redundancy of its role in matters of moral choice. In Perkins' view, goodness is still the projected end of the function of the will but it cannot achieve the good without God's intervention.

Moral philosophy during this period was thus concerned with the role the will could, or should, take. Theorising the extent of its influence took pride of place in many works which attempted to reconcile classical philosophy with questions of

[61] Perkins, *A Treatise of Man's Imagination,* 195.
[62] Ian Breward, ed., *The Work of William Perkins* (Appleford: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970), 68.
[63] Perkins, *A Treatise on Man's Imagination*, 21. As Perkins describes, 'the minde must first conceiue before the will can desire, or the affections bee delighted, or the members of the bodie practise any thing' (183), since 'there cannot be an action before there be a thought' (173).

salvation.[64] In doing so, many ethical works of the period, like the ones explored in this chapter, attempted to explain the place that the will took in the hierarchy of the soul. Some even went as far as to exalt the status of the will. In particular, Walter Raleigh celebrates the will as a source of human supremacy: 'our will, which we use to stir us up to seek God and heaven … is a part of the reasonable soul; this is one point by which we are men, and do excel all other creatures living upon the earth'.[65] Equally, Pierre Charron describes the will to be a 'great part of the reasonable soule ... because upon it dependeth almost our whole estate and good'.[66] John Case's *Mirror of Moral Questions* (1585) correspondingly contends that the will is an incredibly important part of the soul, presenting the will as the queen of all the faculties in his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.[67] Haly Heron's *A New Discourse of Moral Philosophy* depicts the will with similar respect, and in the section 'Of Stabilitie' actually denounces reason's perceived higher status within the hierarchy of the soul. Interestingly, Heron proclaims that we can find virtuous strength in our will and thereby denies that our will is naturally corrupt.[68] Claims like Heron's may have been in the minority in the period, but works such as his do highlight how important positive conceptions of the will were in moral treatises in Tudor and Stuart writing.

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[64] See, for example, John Case, *The Mirror of Moral Questions* (Oxford: 1585). Case is deemed to be the most influential English Aristotelian of his time – Case's *Mirror of Moral Questions* 'went through eleven editions in England and Germany…compared with the seven issues of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and *Shepherds Calendar* during the same period'. Schmitt, *John Case and Aristotelianism in Renaissance England*, 3.

[65] Walter Raleigh, "A Treatise of the Soul", in *The Works of Sir Walter Ralegh, Kt*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1829), 586-87.

[66] Pierre Charron, *Of Wisdome: Three Bookes* (London: 1608), 69. Further to this, Charron proposes that it is solely the power of the will which defines the human being, since 'it only is truly ours, and in our power; all the rest, understanding, memorie, imagination may be taken from us, altered, troubled with a thousand accidents: not the will' (69).

[67] '*Voluntas est nobilior intellectu … quia voluntatem reginam omnium potentiarum in animo definit Aristoteles*'. The will in nobler than the intellect … since Aristotle defines the will as the queen of all the powers in the soul. Case, *Mirror Of Moral Questions*, 390.

[68] Haly Heron, *A New Discourse of Moral Philosophy* (London: 1579), 134.

Investigating the role the will may take in achieving or hindering proper moral ends also plays a prominent part in popular English education and rhetorical treatises. For example, Roger Ascham ruminates on the will in his 1570 educational treatise *The Scholemaster*. He argues that prospective students must have a purity of body and mind in order to 'serve learning' properly by 'goodness of witte, and appliable by readiness of will'.[69] Education is only possible once the mind and the will have been engaged, though the will is once again determined to be the seat of potential moral corruption:

> There be in man two speciall thinges: mans will, mans mynde. Where will inclineth to goodness, the mynde is bent to troth: where will is carried from goodness to vanitie, the mynde is sone drawne from troth to false opinion. And so, the readiest way to entangle the mynde with false doctrine, is first to induce the will to wanton living.[70]

Where the will goes, the mind will follow, either to 'goodness' or 'false doctrine'. This relationship, as described by Ascham, is one that affords the 'will' the pivotal role in creating 'troth' or 'false opinion' in the 'mynde'. No good may be produced when the 'will is carried from goodness to vanitie'. According to Ascham's proposition, if the will attends to the pleasures of the body, its actions would only breed 'wanton living' and would entangle the mind in false doctrine.[71] Hence, our physical and mental states are vulnerable to the will acting in a corrupt fashion.

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[69] Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster* (Menston: The Scholar Press Limited, 1967), 7^{r}.
[70] Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, 27^{v}.
[71] Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, 27^{v}. See also: 'For, if ye suffer the eye of a yong Ientleman, once to be entangled with vaine sightes, and the eare to be corrupted with fond or filthie taulke, the mynde shall quicklie fall seick, and sone vomet and cast vp, all the holesome doctrine, that he receiued in childhoode, though he were neuer so well brought vp before'. Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, 13^{r}-13^{v}.

This threat of corruption is also addressed by Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesy* (1595), wherein he states that human potential is limited 'since our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it'.[72] Original sin and the subsequently tarnished will of man are to blame for the limits placed on a person's ability to reach perfection. Sidney argues that the individual must recognise that achieving the good may involve a laborious process of discovery:

> Nay truly, learned men learnedly thought that where once reason hath so much overmastered passion as that the mind hath a free desire to do well, the inward light each mind hath in itself is as good as a philosopher's book; since in nature we know it is well to do well, and what is well, and what is evil, although now in the words of art which philosophers bestow upon us; for out of our natural conceit the philosophers drew it. But to be moved to do that which we know, or to be moved with desire to know, *hoc opus, hic labor est*.[73]

If we do master our passions through the use of reason as Sidney suggests, where will our wills take us? The 'free' desire' to do well can only be realised through action, but our deeds are inherently limited by our 'infected will'. This faculty may keep us from reaching the perfection we may hope to reach, in spite of 'our natural conceit' to 'do well'. Sidney suggests that the individual possesses an innate, *a priori* knowledge to know 'what is well, and what is evil', but how one should reconcile the aptitude of the will to divert the path of reason from the desire to do well is left unaccounted for. Instead, Sidney reminds the reader of the struggle that faces the human subject in understanding 'what it is well to do well, and what is well, and what is evil', in the phrase *hoc opus, hic labour est*: "this is the task, this is the work", or, "this is the toil,

[72] Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, ed. R. W. Maslen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 86.
[73] Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, 95.

this is the labour". We are imperfect beings incapable of willing perfection, yet we must endeavour to aim towards the good. That is the task.

Documenting the relationship that exists between reason and will is a popular area of interest for early modern writers. Their exploration of the use and meaning of the will is central to how morality, and the hierarchy and operation of the soul, were theorised in the period. Poetry in the Tudor and Stuart ages also made similar attempts to comment on and define the nature of the will, regularly coming to the conclusion that the attempt to know or even control the will was futile. Thomas Wyatt's poem 'The Ballad of the Will' illustrates the kinds of problems facing those who wish to account for or reflect on the characteristics of the will:

> What thing I will, I shall not.
> Wherefore my will is vain.
>
> Will willing is in vain,
> This may I right well see.[74]
> (3-6)

Here, Wyatt's speaker realises that the 'willing' of his own will is futile; because of this he suggests that possibly '[m]y will is not my own' (10). The speaker recognises that the will is incapable of helping him to achieve what he most ardently desires, and concludes by stating that '[m]y will I will refrain' (22). The significance of the potential the will has to undermine its own operation corresponds to the speaker's earlier sentiment that 'Will willing is but vain' (24). Understanding the will in such terms is a common feature of English early modern poetry.[75] Commenting on the deficiencies in the individual's ability to use the will in order to achieve personal

[74] Thomas Wyatt, "The Ballad of the Will", in *The Complete Poems: Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. R. A. Rebholz (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981).
[75] See, for example, William Shakespeare's sonnets 135 and 136, Robert Sidney's "Sonnet XVII", and Elizabeth I's "Now Leave and Let Me Rest".

desire was also a prominent feature of meditative verse of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, which often figured the will as 'the ultimate redemptive faculty' in man. In particular, Anthony Raspa argues, the work of Heywood, Southwell, Alabaster, Donne, Crashaw, and Revett exalted the status of the will, in a similar fashion to Walter Raleigh, but also crucially emphasised 'the failure of the poet to attain the universal heights demanded of him by the will'.[76] Similar to the theory of the will proposed by Richard Hooker, for these meditative poets, the will was understood to be a faculty which reminded the individual of their lack of divinity.

Taking these examples into account, I would propose, as Pierre De Primaudaye astutely argues, that we must recognise how important defining the will was for rationalising the physical, psychological and moral construct of the human subject in early modern intellectual culture.

> Amongst all the philosophical discourses of the soule, written by these great personages, this error is verie great, when they attribute such a strength and power to reason (which they say is resident in the soule as a lampe to guide the vnderstanding, and as a queene to moderate the will) as that by it alone a man may wel and iustly gouerne himselfe.[77]

For Primaudaye, like many early modern philosophers and essayists, 'to know our selues, and the ende of our beyng' is to reflect on the construction and operation of the soul.[78] Primaudaye, however, argues that this type of self-reflection should involve placing a greater emphasis on discerning the powers of the will and its affiliation to the other faculties of the soul. He states that reason does not operate as

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[76] Anthony Raspa, *The Emotive Image: Jesuit Poetics in the English Renaissance* (Fort Worth: Texas University Press, 1983), 62.

[77] Pierre De La Primaudaye, *The French Academy* (London: 1586), 24. This edition of Primaudaye's text uses both signature marks and page numbers. There are some inconsistencies with the signature marks given beyond the prefatory material in the text, so page numbers will be used for the majority of the references to the latter portion of Primaudaye's work.

[78] Primaudaye, *The French Academy*, A4^{r}.

the sole 'guide' over the powers of the subject, that it does not rule the soul, but that the soul is supposedly constructed of and controlled by two principle parts: 'vnderstanding and will'.[79] The understanding is said to be the 'gouernour and captaine of the soule, and … the will dependeth of it', yet 'man's first sin' has altered the original nature of the understanding and the will so that 'both parts of the soul are corrupted'.[80] The will is proposed as a foundational part of our being which can potentially function to reach the good, even though its wayward nature may also draw the soul into vice. For Primaudaye, it seems that attempting to classify what the will actually *is* and the extent of its power is often obstructed by its capacity to fluidly move between achieving the good and the corrupt. Its nature, thus, seems to be defined by the state of flux that it exists within.

Primaudaye's argument exemplifies the kind of discussions surrounding the will that have been explored throughout this chapter. In the brief analyses of moral philosophy that I have presented, the will is said to act: as a general independent force to effect and stimulate action; to undermine or subvert the power of reason in the soul; to jeopardise its own function for the good; to render the hierarchy of the soul indistinct or ambiguous. These qualities inform the constitution of the will and serve to question the purpose of its role in the individual subject, as well as the purpose of our existence. Yet, as I have also shown, the hierarchy of operations in the human subject are often seen as fluid or unfixed due to the disposition of the will. Texts such as the ones I have discussed struggle to justify the operation of the will in the hierarchy of being. Attempting to explore and theorise the nature of will in relation to its ethical goal highlights just how volatile the nature of the will is.

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[79] Primaudaye, *The French Academy*, 25.
[80] Primaudaye, *The French Academy*, 25.

As I have also attempted to highlight throughout this chapter, texts which seek to explain the abstract nature and powers of the will often use metaphorical comparison to figures of power or subjugation to illustrate their point. Figures of governesses, queens, controllers, servants pervade early modern discourse surrounding the theorisation of the will. It is not surprising that analogies are often involved when attempting to define the nature of this faculty and its association with the other functions of the soul or mind since the will itself is a rather abstract concept. But as well as this personification in moral philosophy, the will's role in the human subject is also readily and repeatedly engaged with in poetic language in the more overtly imaginative literature of early modern England.

In the following chapter, I will explore a text which dramatises one of the most prominent tropes associated with the representation of the will in the writing of the period: the will's association with the intellect. Nicholas Breton's 1597 work *The Wil of Wit, Wits Will, or Wils Wit, Chuse You Whether* provides a telling example of the period's concern with trying to theorise and represent the elusive concept of the will. Breton's text seeks to provide an answer to the questions being asked of human nature in the philosophical texts discussed in this chapter by creating a narrative around the relationship that exists between the higher faculties of the mind. But as I will demonstrate, even with this attempt to explicate through dramatisation, it still remains unclear whether the intellect or the will is to govern the ethical *telos* of man in Breton's work.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROBLEM OF THE WILL

The will is a faculty of the human subject whose qualities are crucially important for the governance of the soul, to delineate the boundaries of morality and systems of order, as well as to help us to conceive of the outcome of our actions and our eventual fate. It may be presented in early modern England as a rather volatile or rogue part of the human subject, but the notion of the will is shown to have a wide variety of uses and roles in the literature of this period, especially in those texts which focus on personifying this abstract faculty.

A number of imaginative dialogues produced in the latter half of the sixteenth-century depict conversations which occur between faculties of the psyche.[1] These discourses usually use a dialectical mode, where two apparently dichotomous parts of the intellect/soul (usually reason/wit/intellect and will/passion) argue for their validity and authority in the human subject. Works such as these usually begin with each faculty arguing for their position as the positive pole in the binary formation, stipulating that their nature is directly opposed to the other figure of the duo. The primary function of these dialogues seems to correspond with the objective of the philosophical and theological treatises explored previously: they wish to account for each faculty's seemingly discrete function in the psyche as well as explaining how they interact with one another. Nicholas Breton's *The Will of Wit; Wit's Will, or Will's Wit* provides a particularly pertinent example of the problems that writers faced

[1] Other notable examples being: Wisdom and Will, seen in John Fischer's 1558 collection of fictive dialogues *3 Dialogues in Verse*; Reason and Passion in Book II of Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* 1590.

when attempting to conceive of the notion of the will.

The Will of Wit; Wit's Will, or Will's Wit is comprised primarily of six discrete discourses.[2] Though the text provides moral examinations on such diffuse subjects as martial discipline, sexual equality, the proliferation of happiness, and the human psyche, the work as a whole is unified by a common advocacy of moral temperance. *The Will of Wit* conveys this morally didactic message by emphasising the importance of companionship for the human subject to achieve ethical purity, and is unified under the banner of the title piece *The Will of Wit.* The particular narrative depicts the metaphorical constitution of the mind through the interaction of the characters Wit and Will. As Breton pronounces in the introductory poem to the work as a whole, wit and will's work is to be 'agreede' (A4^{r}) between each other: these two powers must operate together for the benefit of the human individual.[3]

Breton suggests in his epistle to the reader that it was 'Gods good helpe, and good fortune' that allowed the 'little wit that [he] had, meeting with good Will' (A3^{v}) to create this work. The author then implores the reader to not think too harshly of the operations of his own wit and will which are displayed in the production of the various discourses. He uses this fairly orthodox rhetorical mode of authorial humility to simultaneously promote and defend the purpose of his work, as we see when he comments: 'but if I haue bin more wilfull then wise, to trouble your wittes, with a

[2] *The Will of Wit* forms the opening section of this work, where the other distinct parts are as follows: (2) *The Authors Dreame*; (3) *The Scholler and the Souldiour*; (4) *The Miseries of Mauille*; (5) *The Praise of Women;* (6) *A Dialogue between Anger and Patience.* Though the text itself refers to having five discourses, the dialogue between anger and patience forms a discrete part of the text as it is made completely distinct from the section entitled *The Praise of Women*. The sixth, and final, discourse is then succeeded by an apparently genuine tale of the author's recovery from ill health through the comfort and physical aid given to him by a friend. Such autobiographic details are interspersed throughout the work, providing an insight into the author's own journey to ethical enlightenment as well as denoting the passing from one section to another.

witlesse peece of worke, pardon me for this once' ($A3^{v}$). It is this authorial power, to actually write and publish his work, which is transferred to the reader in the choice they make to 'chuse, read and judge' the nature of Breton's own work. Thus, Breton's reflection on the (supposed) inadequacy of his own will and wit, appeals to the use of the reader's own judgement to discern how the relationship of Wit and Will should be understood.

The short dedicatory poem which prefaces *The Will of Wit* further encourages the reader to consider what constitutes the proper operation of the wit and will in the human subject:

> VVHat thing is Will, without good Wit?
> Or what is Wit, without good Will?
> The one the other doth so fit:
> As each alone can be but ill.
> But when they once be well agreede:
> Their worke is likely well to speede.
>
> For proofe behold good Bretons will,
> By helpe of Wit, what it hath writ:
> A worke not of the meanest skill,
> Nor such as shewes a simple Wit.
> But such a Wit, and such a Will:
> As hath done well and hateth ill.[4]
> ($A4^{r}$)

These lines propose that Breton's writing is 'proofe' of the activity of his own 'will' which is 'well agreede' with wit to create a 'worke' which 'hateth ill'. The poem validates, and in turn is validated by, the idea that the proper employment of the wit and the will relies on their operational harmony, and that this harmony will help to

[3] Nicholas Breton, *The Wil of Wit, Wits Will, or Wils wit, chuse you whether* (London: 1597). This text begins by using signature marks, and then switches to the use of page numbers. Although the page numbers used in *The Wil of Wit* are consistent, their use becomes less so as the text progresses. I have chosen, therefore, to cite sig. marks throughout this particular chapter.

achieve the good. This prefatory verse thus exemplifies a lesson on temperance and equality that the reader should come to understand in Wit and Will's subsequent dialogue. However, I will suggest that their relationship is in fact characterised in Breton's text by ambiguity rather than operational unity.

Will and Wit: The Split Subject

Breton's figurative representations of Wit and Will inhabit a fairly banal allegorical world almost completely devoid of detail or setting.[5] We are introduced to the structure of their world initially through Will's opening lament. Here, he reflects on the relationship he has to his own psyche without his companion, Wit:

> Oh my wit, I am from my Wit, and haue beene long. Alas the day. I haue bin almost madde, with marching through the world, without my good guide, my freende, and Companion, my Brother, yea, my selfe. Alas, where is hee? When shall I see him? How shall I seeke him, and whither shall I walke? I was too soone wearie of him, and am now weary of my selfe without him.
> (B1^{r})

Will mourns the absence of Wit since the only sense of self Will can envision at this juncture is one that involves his companion. His collaboration with Wit defines his sense of being. Consequently, the pain that he feels stems from his lack of purpose in the world without his 'guide'. Being reunited with Wit would provide a remedy for

[4] These dedicatory stanzas, composed by one 'C. A.', form parts of the prefatory material in Breton's text.
[5] This lack of setting contrasts with the rich and detailed internal worlds of the mind and dreamscapes in, for example, *A Floorish upon Fancie and The Toyes of an Idle Head* (1577) and *Strange News out of Diverse Countries* (1622).

the misery Will feels in this state of functional suspension, yet the emptiness Will feels only occurs because of his decision to follow a path without the aid of Wit, since Will had previously become 'wearie of him'. Will recognises this deficiency in his allegorical constitution when he acknowledges that his own 'wit' suffers from the disconnection from his brother 'Wit'. In doing so, Will recognises that he needs to have a wit to properly function, but this wit is now missing. This leads Will to question the point of his existence. He knows that he needs his companion, but as he asks: 'How shall I seeke him, and whither shall I walke?' How can Will find his brother without the wit to do so, and without proper guidance? The consequences for such an intriguing scenario are, however, immediately dealt with by the introduction of Wit, dampening the mystery and exploration of how Will would survive or operate without his 'Brother'.

Wit and Will are shocked to find one another, but they soon engage in a conversation which details how they came to be separated, and how Will was saved from the Ditch of Despair.

> WILL
> Now suddainly there appeared vnto me, an olde aged man, who tooke me by the hand, with these words: Arise thou sluggish wanton, walke no longer out of thy way: turne thee backe from this straye pathe, experience doth teach thee: what is Will without Wit? Prayer hath procured thee pardon, the high and onely God hath giuen thee Grace, by Grace goe seeke, that is worth the finding: looke where Wit is too him, and make much of him: With ioye of that worde, I awaked, and with shame of my Folly in leauing thee, I hung the head: with sorrowe whereof, I was almost of life depriued: but now by thy sweete welcome, wholy reuiued: now awake (I shoulde say) I sawe none but thee: and now while I liue, I will followe thee.
>
> WIT
> Why, was it heere you slept, or haue you come farre since you waked?
>
> WILL
> No, no, heere did I sleepe, heere is the place of paine so vnpleasant: but nowe I see thee, I haue receiued comfort, for that I know thou

> canst leade me to Wisedome, who will soone shew me the way to Paradise.
> ($B2^{v}$-$B3^{r}$)

The aged character, Experience, leads Will to recognise the folly in his actions and entreats Will to seek Wit out. By reuniting, Wit and Will may reach their ultimate goal of 'paradise', but what they would do afterwards or how they would achieve their reconnection is left unaccounted for by Experience and Will alike. Even the idea of the paradise that is mentioned is left in abstraction, since Will does not mention how their unification would grant them the 'endlesse blisse' ($B3^{r}$) that they would apparently obtain by being together. No clue is given to how these faculties would work to will as one entity. If we are intended to read this discourse to lead us to reflect upon the intended temperance of our own wisdom and desire, the obscure correlation between these two characters of Wit and Will does not help matters. We do, fortunately, receive a more rounded account of what this paradise entails when Wit explains to Will how he was separated from his partner.

Wit mentions that he parted from Will in the Lane of Learning. Though actively exploring and revelling in an idyllic world while lost, Wit has been greatly affected by Will's absence: 'Oh, there was a place of pleasure: if in the world there bee a Paradize, that was it: Oh that thou haddest beene with mee' ($B4^{r}$). In spite of Will previously describing his need of Wit to achieve Paradise, it seems that Wit had apparently found it by himself without the aid of Will at all (albeit he wishes that his brother were there to experience it with him). Although this would imply that Wit would be able to achieve bliss without Will, Wit is extremely perturbed by this situation and does not enjoy paradise for what it should be. This may suggest that paradise, for these two faculties, can only be achieved when both Wit and Will are together. Conceiving of the ideal scenario where they would potentially both find

paradise together marks the beginning of Wit and Will's rapid-fire examination into the motives behind their original separation.

Wit states that his journey left him wise to the moderation of all things, as he had the experience of finding 'no place so pleasant, that has a corner of annoyance' ($B4^{v}$). This knowledge leads him to the epiphany that even in seemingly perfect situations 'care is to be had in all things, at all times, and in all places' ($B4^{v}$). Through such an insight, Wit entreats Will to 'Learn to leave self-judgement' ($B4^{v}$) and to follow him off into peace. By suggesting that Will should not give time to self-analysis, Wit provokes an argument which details how each brother understands his own identity.

In the course of Wit and Will's debate, Will is blamed for being 'wearie' of Wit's company. Wit accuses him of being 'wanton' and 'wilful' to achieve something outside the grasp of his own individual powers, but Will cannot provide an answer or a justifiable defence to Wit's accusations because he lacks the intellectual power to do so. But as the dialogue continues, the cause of their separation becomes apparent:

> WILL
> But what? or why?
>
> WIT
> but because you did not see your selfe.
>
> WILL
> Yes indeede, but I did: I did see my selfe and you too.
>
> WIT
> Indeede, but you did not: for if you had seene me, you would not so haue lost mee.
>
> WILL
> Yes, but I did see you, but when I had looked on you a while, I looked on my selfe so long, till you were out of sight, and then I looked after you and could not see you.
>
> WIT

> Well, but then you sawe mee not, and so you lost mee: but since you now haue found me, follow me neere, stay but a Buts length behinde mee, least I suddainely steppe a flights shotte before you, and then a furlong further, you neuer ouertake mee.
>
> WILL
> But soft, runnes wit so fast, will is wearie.
> (B4^{v})

Ignorance and self-reflection apparently causes Will to lose Wit. We are made aware that Wit and Will's relationship depends on proper communication, but as this passage suggests Wit and Will struggle to establish effective correspondence when together. This operational dysfunction goes towards spoiling their chance of attaining a mutual state of bliss. As we see, the conceit of sight and reflection that Wit uses to explain their situation ('you did not see your selfe') only serves to confuse Will: Will is unashamedly perplexed by Wit's reasoning and makes his partner aware of this fact: 'runnes wit so fast, Will is wearie'.

Will's struggle to keep up with his partner's reasoning is further exemplified in Wit's own argument as to how they should travel and live together in unison. Wit suggests that they should not look to travel in total equality nor look to overtake each other, but should keep close to each other: 'stay but a Buts length behind me' – Wit is aware that Will may become wayward again and get lost (he may overtake him by a furlong). The language of reflection and mimicry employed by Wit to explain their estrangement is aptly mirrored in Will's response to Wit's accusations. Will argues that the strength to change this situation, and possibly the blame for their separation, lies, rather, in Wit's hands: 'wil had beene good, had not wit beene bad: wil had not lost wit, had wit lookt vnto him: Wil would doo well, if wit woulde doo better: wil woulde learne, if wit woulde teache him' (C2^{v}). Will appropriately simplifies the context of his argument, and in these somewhat deferential sentiments, he manages to

consolidate the rift between himself and Wit. Both Wit and Will agree that their companionship must be upheld for both their sakes, mutually deciding to 'bee merrie, shake hands, sweare company, and neuer part' (C2^{v}). These characters celebrate this resolution in the form of a song which handily offers some further explanation of how Will is constituted as well as how the faculties will achieve the bliss they desire.

Wit opens proceedings by posing this question: 'what art thou will?' (C3^{r}). We are made aware that Will is born of 'wylde lustie wanton blood', taught the 'lesson' of 'love' authored by desire, and read in the 'lines of sweet delight' (C3^{r}). Will is said to be schooled in the 'wilderness of wo' and appointed a nature by 'Fate' itself, whose own 'secret will' is 'to worke fond Louers woe' (C3^{r}). Learning this, Wit then questions Will over his role in the misery of lovers and love as well as Will's own unhappiness. Will, unfortunately, yet again displays his inability to fully comprehend his fate or his power without external aid and struggles to adequately answer Wit's questions of him.

Following Wit's questioning of him, Will begins to reflect on his inability to understand himself and the role he must play in the world. Specifically, he wishes for the powers of wisdom that Wit is imbued with: 'Oh Lord that Will were wise' (C3^{r}). Wit wants to fulfil Will's wish, but he can only promise to prove to Will that he will act as a more virtuous and useful advisor than he has previously, since the way Wit employed himself formerly only provoked Will's ire. Unlike the natural philosophy discussed previously, the weakness attributed to the will in Breton's text does not stem from its feminisation or its connection to lust and base passions, even though Will's ability to work 'woe' in young Lover's is stressed by Wit. Breton chooses instead to focus on Will's apparent lack of reason as his primary negative attribute, although Will displays enough acuity of mind to reprimand Wit offering exceedingly

banal wisdom: Will later states that he wishes Wit to avoid extolling such banal adages like 'Faint hart neuer woon faire Lady' ($C3^{v}$), as it was such idle sentiments which caused Will to wander from his council in the first place. Wit's predilection for romantic notions ironically proves him to have the more 'rude will' (2.3.24), in Friar Lawrence's terms, than Will himself.[6] Taking Will's advice on board, Wit professes that he will aim to avoid such sentiments: 'Wee wil to Care, and intreate him, to lend vs his helpe, for without him in deede we shall make an ilfauoured ende' ($C4^{r}$). The aid of Care should, as Wit states, help consolidate their renewed companionship, since Care works 'In graine, to gleane the good from ill' to comfort the worst of woes: 'the griefe of minde' ($C4^{r}$).[7] The two faculties may then facilitate each other's bliss for the benefit of all involved, through due care and attention to each other.

Wit and Will justify their renewed partnership by devoting their collaboration to 'prooue in all actions to shew our cheefest Iewell, our faithfull heart to God and her Maiestie' ($D1^{r}$). This statement shifts their goal from experiencing endless bliss together to exalting the Queen. The *telos* of their collaborative operation would then advance beyond their original desire for happiness into the 'preseruation of her most excellent Maiestie' and 'the pleasure of God' ($D1^{r}$-$D1^{v}$). We must also recognise that this rather unsubtle praise of the Queen is dependent upon their effective and successful collaboration. The operational uncertainty that Wit and Will have been associated with throughout the text is further enhanced in their concluding plan of

[6] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*: *Arden Third Series*, ed. René Weis (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).
[7] Wisdom is Care's father, and Device (or Purpose) his mother. Care takes chief hierarchical position in the power relationship between the abstracted qualities of the psyche, as Wit professes: 'Care is the King of Kings, vvhen all is done' ($D1^{r}$).

action: they suggest that their 'heart' is faithful to God and her Majesty, but who possesses this single heart is left unanswered.[8]

Wit and Will conclude their dialogue by resolving to work towards attaining virtue, and they also encourage the reader to work towards the 'profit of themselves, and good example to others' (D1^{v}). The discourse between Wit and Will ends at this point, with the final pronunciation given to the reader by Will as follows: 'From our heart ... *ingenii voluntas*' (D1^{v}). *Ingenii voluntas*: wit's will, or the will of wit. The genitive case of the Latin noun *ingenium* (meaning the natural capacity of intelligence, or wit), here, shapes the syntax of the parting phrase. This sense of possession implied by the phrase's syntax seems to eradicate the invitation given to the reader in the title of the text to 'chuse you whether'. It seems like the resolution to decide who possesses whom is taken out of the reader's hands by the final judgment that Will is in fact Wit's possession after all. Will himself provides this conclusion but no evidence is given to the faculties' actual collaboration in the text, apart from this final agreement to collaborate. Their estrangement, as highlighted at the beginning of the discourse, is thus left relatively unresolved.

Will's own operational lack is promoted throughout this discourse, and Wit is seen to provide the necessary skill for their eventual alliance. The choice for the reader to 'chuse you whether', to choose which faculty is the possessor and which is the possessed informs the whole of the discourse, yet the opportunity for personal choice or judgement that is presented to the reader seems to be set at odds with the underlying didactic purpose of the work: Will is *supposed* to agree to obey Wit in

[8] To achieve their goal, Wit and Will must leave this forbidding allegorical world and go into Wit's 'closet of conceit' (D1^{v}). This heart seems to symbolize their harmonious operation, as well as to provide the evidential basis for the purity of the desire behind their pious, and humble, intentions. This evidence, however, can only be found within a hidden sub-structure to this world, or within the work they would produce together (such as the dialogue the reader has already read).

order to achieve the good. This scenario should prove a 'good example to others' (D1^{v}). Achieving the good thus involves realising the deficiencies and waywardness of the Will. Even when Will successfully chastises Wit for his part in their separation, Will uses his own inherently erratic character as a rhetorical shield against Wit's accusations: for 'wil had beene good, had not wit beene bad … wil woulde learne, if wit woulde teache him' (C2^{v}). There must be a harmonious union between the faculties of the soul as this will tame the Will and will allow for the higher faculties of the psyche to strive for virtuous ends. *The Will of Wit; Wit's Will, or Will's Wit* promotes this goal to be achieved through Will's suppression of his wilful disposition as well as his subordination to the powers of Wit. The reader must follow Will's example and seek to cultivate their devotion to virtuous living.

The notion of the good is presented by Breton as driving the subject. Achieving this aim is supposedly the Wit and Will's primary goal, though the chief problem of Breton's work is found in representing the 'will' as a character, or personification of a set of traits. Wit's interrogation of Will's parentage and reason for being only yields the fact that Will seeks 'Content, by hooke or crooke' because 'the fates appoint it so' (C3^{r}). He lacks the ability to reflect on and justify his nature to Wit. Due to this failure of self-knowledge, Will professes to Wit: 'Oh Lord that Will were wise' (C3^{r}). Will lacks the wisdom to understand the world that he is placed in, as well as the extent of his own being, and only has a vague conception of why he exists, and only finds refuge in the realm of man's mind once he agrees to follow Wit into his 'closet of conceit' (D1^{v}). They would then exist inside man's mind within the sub-structure of Wit's own personal space (his closet), but this only comes to be once Wit has convinced Will to stay with him. Will apparently has no natural home other than man's mind in general. Further to this, both characters are said to have come into

existence through the power of their own dreams, even though they recognise that these dreams are ones that mankind has facilitated.[9] Man's mind then houses Wit and Will, yet it is also depicted as a space in which these mental faculties may lose themselves. Breton, therefore, conceives of the mind as a space which may generate its own disorder, and may only find purpose through the chance collaboration of the Wit and Will.

The purpose of this discourse is to direct the reader to reflect upon the successful use of their own Wit and Will to achieve the good. This would seem to be enabled by the sense of liberty granted to the reader at the beginning of the piece to 'chuse' the structure of Wit and Will's relationship. Although as we progress through Wit and Will's dialogue, discerning their relationship and true characteristics becomes increasingly difficult. If we read this discourse as one which accords with Ficino's Platonism (that the will desires the good to the extent to which the intellect offers it) Breton may be arguing that our own operations should be governed by the Wit. But how can the Wit operate without the will, as the opening of this discourse suggests: 'what is Wit, without good will'? (A4^{r}). The conclusion of the narrative and the didactic imperative of its opening are set at odds with the freedom of choice that the title of the piece suggests. Breton's work also seems to propose that the good can only be achieved through harnessing the power of the will. Governing the human faculty of the will seems to be in the capacity of an individual's wit, but it is the character of Will who assents to the terms that Wit offers in Breton's work. Finding the will and harnessing it for the good is, crucially, only achieved by a will which is willing to be

[9] See Breton, *The Wil of Wit*, 6^{r}. Wit and Will were in a state of dreamlike contemplation of their own being until they 'did awake with the fall'.

ruled by our intelligence, but this goal is put in jeopardy because of the inherently wayward nature of the will itself.

In this particular manifestation, the will appears to be depicted as an inner construct of the mind which is fundamental for achieving the good, even though the power of our will is constantly set at odds with its own attributed waywardness. The will, in this respect, is depicted as a part of the psyche which is crucial to the formation of selfhood but which has no real fixed place in the mind: it is somewhat of a vagrant in the mind or soul of man. Breton's work also credits the wit and the will with governing the *telos* of our being, even though there is deemed to be a tension between these faculties when working towards this virtuous end. Even if the subject is judged not to have the power to achieve *summum bonum* without external aid (for example, God's grace), the necessity of the will in directing the agent towards a noble end is constantly stressed.

The governance of the will is vitally important if the good is to be achieved, as the will is not to be trusted. But the successful governance of this faculty is largely undermined by the lack of clarity in its conceptualisation. The associated difficulty in conceptualising this internal power stems from attempts to situate it in the body or mind of man, as well as to account for how it may be used in a successful manner. How then is the will supposed to be controlled if its actions are erratic and its nature and its role in the human subject are in dispute? We are presented, then, by *The Will of Wit* with a segment of the psyche which is hypostatised in order to properly define its function, yet the will is placed in a position where its natural function, its wilfulness, must be negated or compromised for its "proper" function as part of the virtuous self to be exercised. Thus, in his imaginative exploration of the psyche and its inner-workings, Breton largely depicts the will in a manner similar to the natural

philosophy and theological writing explored in the previous chapters – its operation is shown to be both necessary *to* but problematic *for* an individual's goal to achieve the good.

Throughout chapters one and two, I have suggested that the theoretical and literary formation of the will is one that is tied to issues of ethics and personal identity. The will, as an internal faculty of the individual, took a central role in much theological and philosophical work which explored human nature in early modern England. Furthermore, it was consistently theorised as something which has a prime role in the action and ethical constitution of the subject, yet the will is rarely afforded the status of the intellect, reason or wit in the hierarchy of man's soul. Whatever power of the soul the will is placed in antithesis to, it is deemed to be the lesser faculty. This is apparent even if the will is given the power to achieve the good, which is often the case.

In light of this situation, I noted the ambiguity surrounding the place and function of the will in man's being. Whether in Thomas Wright's moral treatise *The Passions of the Mind in General* or Nicholas Breton's imaginative work, the role and authority the will has in the soul and body of man is rather confused. It would seem that the operation and mere existence of the will threatens the hierarchy of the soul, and impedes its ability to work towards virtuous ends. This operational indeterminacy is shown to have a direct impact on how the primary moral function of the will is conceived in early modern England, as chapter two shows. Nicholas Breton's work *The Will of Wit* helps to further illustrate the crucial role the will was thought to have in helping the human subject to attain the good. Conversely, this text also highlights how the volatile nature of the will may jeopardise the achievement of this goal, and demonstrated the difficulties involved in determining the function and nature of the

will in the imaginative literature of this period.

Contrary to Montaigne's (ironical) wish that fewer people would concern themselves with the investigation of volition, concepts of the will were abundantly used to help conceive of, and subvert, models of order in the writing of early modern England.[10] Writing of the period is strewn with a variety of uses, references to, and conceptions of the will. I seek to further demonstrate this period's preoccupation with conceiving of the nature of the will in the following examination of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. I open this investigation by analysing how the concept of the will functions in the late sixteenth-century Tudor interlude.

[10] See the final paragraph of "On the Inconstancy of Action" in Michel De Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin, 2003), 380. This assertion does, however, come with a sense of intentional irony as Montaigne had spent the essay discussing the principles of our actions.

CHAPTER 4

THE MORAL INTERLUDE AND THE WILL

This chapter examines the representation of the will in two Tudor morality plays: Ulpian Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (1568) and the anonymously authored *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570).[1] I argue that the instructive aim of these plays relies upon conceiving the will in diverse states: for example, the will is depicted in them as a personal faculty of the human subject, the personification of this faculty, the divine will of God, a collective social will, as well as a legal testament. Where Fulwell's play highlights the redundant nature of the will to change the predetermined fate of its characters, *The Marriage of Wit and Science* personifies the will to show how gaining control over this faculty is pivotal for a proper moral education. Both plays detail the potential of the will to corrupt an individual, but only *The Marriage of Wit and Science* conveys how the will may be used for the benefit of an individual. What is common to these plays is that the will is presented as a useful part of the human subject only when its tendency to incite wayward behaviour is restrained and controlled by God's will. Indeed God's will is shown to function as the dominant force and the primary source of meaning for the human will in both plays.

[1] *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570) is a play which is associated with the other educational "Wit" moralities, *The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom* (1579) and *Wit and Science* (1539). The relationship between these plays will be briefly commented upon during the course of this chapter.

The False Will in *Like Will to Like*

P. W. White argues that *Like Will to Like* belongs to a genre of Tudor interlude which

> Decr[ies] the evils of excessive commercialism … [voicing] the opinion of these moralists and their patrons that the advancement of commerce has done little to alleviate the suffering of the poor and dispossessed and only compounded social and economic problems by promoting greed and exploitation in the areas of trade and housing.[2]

Despite White's argument, I would suggest that *Like Will to Like* does not convey such an altruistic tone. This play, rather, legitimises one aspect of the 'suffering' of the poor and roguish characters who are tempted into criminal acts by depicting the punishment they receive as being enforced by the will of God. The 'evils of commercialism' are indeed made apparent but I would argue that this play displays the damning lure of material greed through the 'coexistence of corrective comedy and retributive tragedy'.[3] I will claim that these comedic and tragic elements of the play are realised through the use and manipulation of the will in its various forms.

Like Will to Like provides an illustration of the gradual transition in sixteenth-century dramaturgy from 'the early moralities featuring entertaining Vice characters to later drama with its celebrated human characters like Tamburlaine, Faustus,

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[2] P. W. White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 95. White terms these plays "money" plays. So called "money" plays of the 1560s and 70s concern themselves with social and economic reform, depicting the 'suffering and oppression caused by covetous practices' and the impact such reform has on man's class and moral status. White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 97.

[3] Robert Potter, *The English Morality Play: Origins, History and Influence of a Dramatic Tradition*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 117. *Like Will to Like* perhaps lacks the quality of *pathos* in its portrayal of its hapless, miscreant characters and the range of 'gross absurdities' to fully qualify it as a 'mongrel tragicomedy', at least in Sidney's terms. Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, 112.

Richard III and Hamlet'.[4] The play itself mixes abstract personifications of vice and virtue (seen in the characters of Honour and Severity) with the more plausible human characters of Ralph Roister and Tom Tosspot, for example. While the depth of their characterisation is limited, the inclusion of these human personalities illustrates the way in which the development of the Tudor interlude reflects the subtle shifts in moral, social, theological and aesthetic values in early modern society.[5] On the other hand, this play is also indebted to morality plays of the late medieval period that performed a 'homiletic function of warning to the unrepentant sinner'.[6]

The play's moral function is emphasised in the title page description which states:

> Wherein is declared not only what punishment followeth those that will rather follow licentious living than to esteem and follow good counsel: and what great benefits and commodities they receive that apply them unto virtuous living and good exercises.[7]

Although those who would peddle vice and immorality in the play are punished, those who follow 'licentious living' are disciplined in a decidedly comic fashion. As the

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[4] J. D. Cox and D. S. Kastan, eds., *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 341.

[5] As White notes, viewing such plays as being solely "evolved" from variations upon a central Mankind (*humanum genus*) hero would impose a 'misleading pattern of evolutionary development of popular drama leading up to Shakespeare'. White, *Theatre and Reformation*, 75. Even though 'where once the morality featured a single and mutable central figure, the moral comedies begin to multiply and differentiate their heroes', we must keep in mind that this manipulation of form and character usage is 'not by any means a Calvinist innovation'. Potter, *The English Morality Play*, 109. Many of the saint plays and records of English folk drama have been destroyed, so tracing the development of Tudor play construction with any precision is a difficult task. It is also a difficult task in placing the specific place and date of performance for plays like these. For an example of this problem, see the scarcity of details mentioned in the entry for *Like Will to Like* in Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson, eds., *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue. Vol II: 1567-1589* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 34-37.

[6] Potter, *The English Morality Play*, 20.

[7] Ulpian Fulwell, "Like Will to Like, Quoth the Devil to the Collier", in *The Dramatic Writings of Ulpian Fulwell*, ed. J. S. Farmer (London: Early English Drama Society, 1906), 2. Farmer's facsimile version of Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* is without lines numbers. I will hereafter be quoting from the page numbers assigned by the publisher of this facsimile.

Prologue suggests, the comedic element of the play functions as a vehicle to 'move you to be merry' (3). This is done so that the drama may be seen as 'godly and full of pleasant mirth' (2), 'as it were in a glass' to view the 'advancement of virtue, and vice the decay' (4). The Prologue uses this metaphor of vision (that the audience should view the actions of the characters 'as it were in a glass') to encourage a specific reaction in the people who see the play – that they will henceforth avoid vice and ill-living. Entertaining the audience is defined as a key feature of the play's homiletic message. Consequently, this pre-emptive direction (as shown above) acts to complement the play's primary intention to be instructive and corrective, hoping to show that 'like will to like always' (32). *Like Will to Like*, in this respect, presents its titular proverb as holding a certain truth: we will naturally associate ourselves with people of a similar disposition and temperament. This proverb proves to be accurate for the characters of the play, something made possible by the perilous characteristics of the human will.

The apparently simple truth that 'like will to like' is introduced to the audience at the very beginning of the play by the entrance of Nicholas Newfangle: '[SD] Here entereth Nichol Newfangle the Vice, laughing, and hath a knave of clubs in his hand which, as soon as he speaketh, he offereth unto one of the men or boys standing by' (4). The Vice, as a component of the morality, operates by capitalising on perceived human vulnerability. To successfully fulfil such a role, the Vice tempts men away from virtue, trying to win another soul for Hell, 'resembling the Devil in his cunning, his seductive duplicity, and his wickedness'.[8] Nichol Newfangle plays exactly this role:

[8] Wendy Griswold, "The Devil's Techniques: Cultural Legitimation and Social Change", *American Sociological Review* 48.5 (Oct. 1983), 671.

> Ha, ha, ha, ha! now like unto like: it will be none other,
> Stoop, gentle knave, and take up your brother.
> Why, is it so? and is it even so indeed?
> Why then may I say God send us good speed!
> And is every one here so greatly unkind,
> That I am no sooner out of sight, but quite out of mind?
> Marry, this will make a man even weep for woe,
> That on such a sudden no man will let me know,
> Sith men be so dangerous now at this day:
> Yet are women kind worms, I dare well say.
> How say you, woman? You that stand in the angle,
> Were you never acquainted with Nichol Newfangle?
> Then I see Nichol Newfangle is quite forgot,
> Yet you will know me anon, I dare jeopard a groat.
> (4-5)

True to his characterisation as the Vice of the play, Nichol's immediate engagement with the audience is brash and malicious. Here, Nichol attempts to demonstrate his familiarity with his audience, as well as the similarity between himself and the playgoers, by handing a knave of clubs to its supposed 'brother' in the front of the crowd. Nichol's description of the 'unkind' audience member suggests that his advances have been rejected, but he is unrelenting in his goal and continues his instigation of the crowd by accusing a woman who stands in 'the angle' that she knows his name, though this woman's reaction implies that 'Nichol Newfangle is quite forgot'. Both the men and the women of the audience are tainted by Nichol's accusations and are asked to reflect upon the status of their own moral integrity, as well as the control they have over their own wills. Whether in amused acceptance or renunciation of Nichol's suggestions, the spectators' wills are actively manipulated by his insinuations. *Like Will to Like*'s didactic structure is built upon this notion of guilt by association.

Nichol tries to demonstrate the accuracy of the proverb "like will to like" through these initial actions: the spectators should prove themselves to be similar to

him by simply being in his presence. His onlookers are shown, however, to be dismissive of his advances and ignorant of who he is. In this opening scene, as Robert C. Jones suggests, 'we are being accused of being knaves like Nichol, and his lines show that our response each time he accosts us must be an embarrassed (if amused) rejection of his insinuations of familiarity'.[9] The audience's rejection of him leads Nichol to protest that he has been 'forgot' and that his reputation is 'out of mind'. Although the audience's initial reaction to Nichol foils his plan to demonstrate that 'like unto like', Nicol vows that they will 'know' him 'anon'. His subsequent actions do indeed prove the proverb of the play to be true, as he proceeds to dupe and damn a variety of roguish characters through the course of the narrative.

Nichol's deceptive tricks stem from Lucifer's following command: 'Wherefore my mind is, sith thou thy part canst play, / That thou adjoin like to like always' (8). Hence, Nichol is charged with the task of binding the other roguish characters of the play to him in order to prove their mutual, sinful nature. Indeed, his success in doing so proves the proverb of the play's title to be true, as we witness the fools and other knaves of the play inadvertently damn themselves through Nichol's subterfuge. His first victim is Tom Collier, a man 'who gladly returns Nichol's greeting as an "old acquaintance" and welcomes his introduction into the Devil's company', thus bearing out the play's full proverbial title, *Like Will to Like Quoth the Devil to the Collier*.[10] Coalmen were proverbially associated with the devil for their blackness and supposed penchant for dishonest dealing, as displayed in *Twelfth Night* when Sir Toby pronounces of Malvolio: ''tis not for gravity to play at cherry-pit with

[9] R. C. Jones, "Jonson's Staple of News Gossips and Fulwell's 'Like Will to Like': 'The Old Way' in a 'New' Morality Play", *The Yearbook of English Studies* 3 (1973), 75-6.
[10] Jones, "Jonson's *Staple of News* Gossips and Fulwell's 'Like Will to Like'", 76.

Satan. Hang him, foul-collier!' (3.4.117-19).[11] This type of associative, pre-determined evidence of sin is repeatedly pronounced in *Like Will to Like*. Appropriately – with Lucifer's opening lines 'Ho! Mine own boy, I am glad that thou art here!', Nichol accuses a member of the audience of being the recipient of the devil's cordial welcome: 'He speaketh to you sir' (6). It is this type of interaction which reinforces the moral of the play. Upon issuing the order for Nichol to 'adjoin like to like alway' (8), Lucifer makes to leave the stage, and turns to the audience in order to find a companion for his journey home: 'Is there never a knave here will keep the Devil company?' (12). Such an offer is given by the devil under the assumption that, naturally, there are none amongst the audience who would consent to Lucifer's proposition. After a pause Nichol remarks 'Farewell, godfather, for thou must go alone' (12). Again, the play is trying to shape, in some respect, the audience's will to seek out the good and warn them of evil habits and people through these comedic set-pieces. The audience should then distinguish themselves as being unlike the miscreants and rogues who fall prey to Nichol's evil schemes, instead associating themselves with the pious and virtuous characters of the play who rebuff Nichol's advances (Virtuous Life, Good Fame, Honour and God's Promise).

To emphasise this, the play presents the character Virtuous Living as a paragon for all that is good in this particular dramatic world. He and the other noble characters of the play exhibit traits that may vanquish the 'enormity of vice' that the audience bears witness to (52). When Nichol reminds Virtuous Living of who he is and proposes that he is an 'old friend', Virtuous Living appropriately scorns him and denies ever being acquainted with Nichol (32). This brief interaction between Nichol

[11] William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night, or What you Will: Arden Second Series*, ed. J. M. Lothian and T. W. Craik (London: Thomson, 2007). The link between Malvolio's own name, vice and the will shall be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter of this thesis.

and Virtuous Living provokes the latter to state that 'like will ever to his like go' since 'vice and virtue cannot together be united' (32), and in doing so, Virtuous Living inadvertently aids Nichol's attempt to validate the accuracy of the play's title. As opposed to Nichol's own malicious plan, Virtuous Living's acts to 'advance virtue and vice to overthrow' so that the audience may 'have a place' in heaven with the Lord, rather than to dupe them into vice (53). While the noble characters of the play provide a pious and righteous example of personal conduct for the audience to mimic, *Like Will to Like*'s audience is encouraged to imitate the qualities of personified characters whose excessive piety makes them seem rather wooden, and lacking any obvious human characteristics.[12] The ineffectual qualities of these pious characters are typified in play's chief hero, Virtuous Living: a character so pure as to be devoid of any human qualities (possibly with the exception of pride).

Despite being portrayed as paragons of Christian virtue, Virtuous Living and his companions, as the Lord's representatives on earth, do not manage to save anybody in need during the play. These characters merely laud their own virtues, leaving the miscreant characters to be damned. Even though Virtuous Living acknowledges that 'assistance from above doth make them like so right to be' (53), the play shows how it is not his place or in his power to intervene to save any of the human characters. Good Fame, God's Promise, Honour, and Virtuous Living do not serve as a cure for the sins that are witnessed in the play. They, rather, assist to warn the audience of the fate that lies in wait for those who ignore their guidance and the teachings of Christ.

[12] Good Fame, God's Promise, Honour, and Virtuous Living are all presented in such a way. Their virtue is never put in doubt, much like Nichol's adherence to the mischief and misconduct that he and his fellow miscreants represent.

The finale of *Like Will to Like* helps to emphasise the play's homiletic message by suggesting that the audience should reflect on the redemptive power of Christ's 'grace' to 'fashion … us anew' (54). As the virtuous characters proclaim in their final song, eternal life is promised 'If we ourselves like him [Christ] do frame, / In fear of his most holy name' (54). This conclusion correlates with the prologue's remark at the beginning of the play that *Like Will to Like* will 'show good example' 'as it were in a glass' for the audience to see the 'advancement of virtue, of vice the decay' (4-5). The play would then act as a 'glass', a mirror, of virtue for the audience to take example from, since what it attempts to present is a reflection of Christ's holiness. This image of Christ's purity and holiness frames the play's narrative structure, but it is also used to 'frame', to shape, how the audience should behave after seeing the drama. Using Christ's image as a rhetorical device in order to contemplate the wretchedness of man's nature is a common theological trope found in literature of the period, most notably employed during the period in Calvin's proposition that Christ 'is the mirror wherein we must, and without self-deception may, contemplate our election'.[13] So, the audience of *Like Will to Like* are given the task of trying to imitate the perfection of Christ by disciplining their will, though they are also

[13] See John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill. Translated by F. L. Battles (London: Westminster Press, 1960), 970.This trope stems primarily from St Paul's references to seeing Christ in a glass in 1 Corinthians, and within a mirror in 2 Corinthians 3:18. Adrian Streete, *Protestantism and Drama in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) Streete, 148. As Streete also notes, John Calvin in the *Institutes* and William Perkins in *A Declaration of the True Manner of Knowing Christ Crucified* (1611) both use this concept to stress the hopelessness of mankind to achieve salvation without God's grace. The original version of *The Marriage of Wit and Science* as well as the 1570 revision of the play makes use of the mirror scene.

instructed that it is only God's 'grace' that can ensure the salvation of 'Christian Men' (53-4).[14]

Virtuous Living and his compatriots urge the audience to use their will for noble goals, but the events of the play merely convey how little control humankind may have over the will. Simply put, the faculty of the will is presented to the audience in *Like Will to Like* as signifying the presence and potency of human sin. Because of this, the will must be protected from the potential negative influence of others such as Nichol, yet Nichol's freedom to deceive the roguish characters of the play emphasises the fact that those who need Virtuous Living's aid the most are destined never to receive it. We may then interpret the failure of external authority (represented by Virtuous Living) to intervene or provide succour in this play as providing a criticism of the usefulness of 'saintly intermediaries' as well as ordained church ministers.[15] The association that the will has with notions of falsity and the lack of redemption is aptly intensified by Nichol's particular plan to prove that 'like will to like' through the use of a fake will and testament in order to carry out Lucifer's orders. This scheme further accentuates the portrayal of the will as an aspect of the human subject which is vulnerable to corruption.

[14] The effort to shape one's will to mirror the will of God was crucial for a number of early modern writers. Writers also posited, contrary to Calvinist doctrine, that attempting to understand our will may lead us to a greater understanding of the positive characteristics of will. A remarkably succinct account of such a scenario can be found in Benot de Canfield's work, the *Rule of Perfection* (1609). De Canfield proposes that since 'the will of God was made the will of man, the will of God is the will of man'. Benot de Canfield, *The Rule of Perfection* (Roan: 1609), 18.

[15] Penny, *Freewill or Predestination*, 27. Real concern was expressed about 'the quality of ministers appointed to benefices' in the late sixteenth century – accusations of 'damnable ignorance', idleness, illiteracy and general poor behaviour were commonly aimed at church ministers during the time. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England*, 44. Christopher Haigh also succinctly notes, that after the fervour of Reformation in England from 1550-c. 1580, a large proportion of the general laity as well as many of their parish ministers displayed a common neglect of piety, and a general ignorance over matters of basic Christian knowledge, such as the catechism. Christopher Haigh, "Success and Failure in the English Reformation", *Past & Present* 173 (Nov. 2001): 28-49.

Nichol bases his actions around false promises, and one of his chief works of trickery is achieved when he cons Ralph Roister and Tom Tosspot out of their meagre possessions through the use of a counterfeit will and testament. Nichol creates the scenario in which a country manor and the ground surrounding it would be 'given and so bequeathed to the falsest by will' (19).[16] In other words, whoever proves to be the better swindler, trickster, or conman, will then win the deed to the property. Nichol manages dupes all of the rogues in the play as they barter, gamble, or hastily spend their money in order to fulfil the requirements of this false claim to patrimony, proving him, appropriately, to be the 'falsest by will'. In this regard, Nichol's actions validate the title of the play ('like will to like always') through the use of two duplicitous wills.

When Ralph Roister and Tom Tosspot are told by a gleeful Nichol that they have been tricked, they despair. Tom remarks that he 'thought it would be so'; Nichol retorts by diffusing Tom's apparently wise comment by stressing that 'this must you have, wher' you will or no' (43). Though Tom might have predicted the outcome, Nichol demonstrates they have little control over their own lives, in spite of their attempts to 'will or no'. This situation again emphasises the Protestant ethic which informs so much of the play – their wills are completely controlled by more powerful, external forces. Ralph's particular reaction to the situation is particularly grave: 'I will rather cut my throat with a knife, Than I will live thus beggarly and poor. By Gog's blood, rather than I will it assay, I will rob and steal, and keep the highway' (43). The force of Ralph Roister's will to adhere to the role assigned to him as a roister (a drunken lout and thug) is the only thing that keeps him from committing suicide.

[16] This play shares some characteristics will Ben Jonson's *Volpone*. The connection between the two will be explored in the final chapter of this thesis.

Ralph's reaction illustrates the double bind these knaves are in: they are damned if they do, and damned if they do not try to use their will. Nichol's false will (both as a personal faculty and legal testament) highlights this dire situation, and his machinations to financially cripple these two miscreants, and have the other pair (Pierce Pickpurse and Cuthbert Cutpurse) hanged, eventually leads him to propose to his victims: 'Now, my masters, learn to beware; / But like will to like, quoth the devil to the collier' (43).[17] Thus, the drama concludes by promoting a sense of unity and balance in its dramatic world through the repeated use of the proverb "like will to like".

What, then, is to be learned from this play in regards to the representation of the will? Nichol leads the rogues of the play to moral and financial destitution by the fake will (the false claim to patrimony) that he invents. Represented as both the motive faculty and patrimonial deed, the will in *Like Will to Like* is literally constructed and controlled by vice. It is shown to be false, ineffectual, as well as being an indicator of our potential damnation. We may then understand the play to portray the will in accordance with article ten of the Thirty-Nine Articles 1563, which propose that man has 'no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have good will'.[18] The play implicitly invites its audience to question if their own will would function to achieve a good and virtuous end. *Like Will to Like, Quoth the Devil to the Collier* leaves little scope for anything other than God's will to have a positive influence upon

[17] Nichol leaves the play by riding off to Spain 'on the devil's back' (52). The play's anti-catholic overtones are emphasised by this ending.
[18] David Cressy and L. A. Ferrell, eds., *Religion & Society in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1996), 72.

the fate of the human subject, yet, somewhat appropriately, God seems to be absent from the lives of those who require salvation.

Indeed, God's representatives on earth do not manage to help any of the humans in the play. Recognising the weakness of the will in men, Virtuous Living suggests that Nichol and the knaves associated with him are 'wicked imps' who 'lean to vice most vile and detestable' (34). On the other hand, Good Fame, God's Promise and Honour help Virtuous Living to enforce a message of moral purity to 'give thanks to [God] with all humbleness, / And persuade with all men their lives to amend' (36). God's Promise states that this is done because it is 'God's promise and will' (37). Virtuous Living and his companions actively collaborate to protect their own purity in the face of vice, whereas the rogues of the play are trapped by the sinful nature of their own selfishly competitive wills to fulfil the requirements of Nichol's false will. The interlude's brief representation and investigation of the will pointedly questions the influence that the will has over human action, and in doing so reflects an ethic of salvation which depicts the will as an important, but markedly flawed feature in the human subject.

Like Will to Like provides an interesting intellectual engagement with how the will is represented and, seemingly, enforced through literary and dramatic devices in early modern England. Fulwell's work seems to be structured to lead its audience to reflect on the constitution of their own will in that the play asks the audience if they could will themselves away from their own prospective destiny, although, it leaves them to reflect whether this is even possible, or if they even possess the power to do so. It might be sensible then to understand this segregation of character types in terms of a Calvinist interpretation of predestination: that God has purposefully chosen the elect and also simultaneously determined who is damned. What is of note in this

drama is that God's elect are represented as non-human personifications of righteousness, while the damned are mostly petty criminals or simply impoverished human characters. Succumbing to the wayward nature of the will is presented, through the use of more realistic characters, as being far more plausible than mimicking the standards set by Virtuous Living and his companions. The vulnerability of the human will is also appropriately displayed to the audience through the use of Nichol's false, patrimonial will. This situation aptly demonstrates that the will itself is the primary reason it is itself capable of being led astray: the will created by Nichol (through Lucifer's instruction) allows Fulwell to wittily illustrate the corrupt nature of the human faculty of the will.

As we witness in *Like Will to Like*, placing faith in the promise of a will yields only divine punishment for the human characters duped by Nichol. Significantly, the will is used in this play to highlight the corrupt nature of certain characters, as well as to challenge the audience's individual relationship to their own will. Even though *Like Will to Like* portrays the actions of the will as bound to a pre-determined fate and being incapable of leading us to salvation without God's grace, the play still encourages the audience to attempt to regulate and fashion this faculty in accordance with Christ's example. Through such a depiction, the will serves to indicate how the actions of the virtuous and the roguish characters may only consolidate their original temperaments, rather than to change them for the better or worse. The function of the will, with or without divine intervention, is accordingly portrayed as having only the power to confirm what is already known: the performance of the will changes nothing. This issue of redundant power, linked to the constitution of the will, can also be traced through the "Wit" interludes (a series of instructive plays deriving from a single original source).

The "Wit" Interludes

The "Wit" plays consist of: John Redford's *Wit and Science* (1539), Sebastian Westcott's *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570) and *The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom* (1579) often attributed to Francis Merbury.[19] These three extant interludes share many traits other than their comparable titles. Specifically, they all aim to distinguish a secular, educational ideal that may be pursued for the benefit and prosperity of youth. This pedagogical aim is conveyed through relatively similar narrative arcs and comparable verse structure.[20] Wit, the protagonist of all three plays, is charged with the goal of gaining Lady Science/Wisdom's hand by his parents.[21] Through this task, the audience is shown the power of Wit's untamed will to lead him away from the goal of joining with Science, and how it eventually leads him into the arms of Idleness. Characters such as Study, Care, Diligence, and Good Nurture tame the follies of 'Wit' that arise from his lack of personal discipline over an uncontrolled will and illustrate how Wit's precociousness is the key reason for his delinquent

[19] T. N. S. Lennam attributes John Redford's successor at St. Paul's cathedral, Sebastian Westcott, as the author of the later version of *The Marriage of Wit and Science*, and suggests that this play was first presented at Court by the boys of St. Paul's cathedral in 1567/8. See T. N. S. Lennam, "'The Ventricle of Memory': Wit and Wisdom in 'Love's Labour's Lost'", *Shakespeare Quarterly* 24.1 (Winter, 1973), 58. An air of uncertainty does, however, still surround the authorship of these two latter plays. The manuscript version of *The Marriage of Wit and Science* 1570 (Malone 231.1) is stored in the Bodleian Library, with the note 'sometimes attributed to Francis Merbury' attached. Such an occurrence, that Merbury would be the author of two plays of similar genre, title and date of print, would not be such a stretch of the imagination if not for the fact that he was registered in St. Pancras as being baptised on the 27th of October, 1555 (making Merbury around 12 or 13 at the time of its first performance and even younger during the period of its composition). It is generally accepted that Merbury was the author of *Wit and Wisdom*, yet Lennam struggles to justify why a rude, farcical, and 'derivative' educational morality play was made by a man who became devout preacher, tutor and schoolmaster. T. N. S. Lennam, "Francis Merbury, 1555-1611", *Studies in Philology* 65.2 (April 1968), 210.

[20] Redford's *Wit and Science* is largely arranged in pentameter verse, whereas *Wit and Science* and *Wit and Wisdom* use a mixture of Alexandrine lines and fourteeners. Also, where Redford's play is set rigidly in rhyming couplets (excluding certain songs) its two derivatives also incorporate lines of alternating rhyme.

behaviour and acts as the primary hindrance to his task. This lack of self-discipline proves to be Wit's biggest weakness and is most prominently emphasised when he faces Science's monstrous enemy, Tediousness/Irksomeness.[22]

When Wit confronts the monster without due preparation and proper consideration of his dependence on virtuous company, he is slain. Following his defeat, Wit is miraculously revived by his righteous companions so that he may conquer Tediousness/Irksomeness and wed Science. However, after his revival Wit feels disillusioned at the scope of his task and falls prey to idle pleasure, succumbing to Idleness and eventually being charmed into a deep slumber.[23] Idleness subsequently blackens Wit's face and changes his attire to that of a fool while Wit sleeps. Wit's new attire masks his true identity to Science, who shuns him as a lusty fool. Wit is unaware of this change in appearance until he is faced with his reflection in Reason's mirror, which he sees when he cannot convince lady Science of his actual identity. This episode of literal self-reflection enables Wit to see how his precocity has undermined his status, convincing him to properly commit to the instruction of his elders. His subsequent obedience to instruction and virtuous existence brings about his victory over Idleness and allows his successful marriage to Lady Science.[24] Thus, Wit completes his pre-ordained task by obeying the commands and examples of those wiser than him. Each play finishes by reminding the audience what constitutes the

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[21] Science's father, Reason, encourages Wit to gain the hand of his and Experience's daughter in *The Marriage of Wit and Science* 1539; Wit's mother, Nature, prompts Wit to seek Science, the daughter of Reason (father) and Experience (mother) in *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570); Severity and Indulgence (husband and wife) push their son, Wit, to gain Wisdom's hand in *Wit and Wisdom*.

[22] The monster Tediousness appears in the 1539 and 1570 versions of The *Marriage of Wit and Science*; Irksomeness appears in *The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom* 1579.

[23] In *Wit and Wisdom,* Wit is actually slain after being made a fool of by Idleness. This victory over Irksomeness comes early on in the play, unlike the other "Wit" plays.

[24] Though this slaying of Idleness/Irksomeness varies between the three plays, Wit can only achieve his goal after he recognises the weakness of his temperament when he faces his ridiculous reflection in Reason's mirror and vows to restrain his wilful desires.

fruitful union of Wit to Science/Wisdom. When the happy couple are wed, they encourage those watching to use the play, much akin to *Like Will to Like*, 'for a glass' to reflect on the power that Idleness holds over their own lives (2.6.61).[25]

Although the role of Wit's will is crucial to all three plays, it has been largely ignored in the little criticism of these interludes that has been written. *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570) provides a particularly interesting case, as it has been generally interpreted as being a rewritten version of Redford's play, where 'the plot is the same and so are most of the roles'.[26] Most of the roles are the same, but there is a crucial change. The wayward will of the character Wit, only implied within the other "Wit" plays, is fully realised within the allegorical structure of this particular delinquency play. Wit's will is represented in later version of *The Marriage of Wit and Science* through its *actual* personification.

Roberta Mullini's recent work on the "Wit" plays marks the significance of Will's presence in the play as an important difference from its 'direct hypotext', though Will's role is noted as being relevant by Mullini because he is a 'love messenger between Wit and Science'.[27] In contrast to this reading, Will's importance in his role as an obstinate, if effective and entertaining, messenger between Wit and Science is enough for Lennam to conjecture that instances of the play entitled *Wit and Will* listed in the court revels 1567-8 signifies one of the earliest performances of *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570).[28] Such was Will's dramatic significance for the staging and reception of *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (1570), he argues, that this

[25] "The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom", in *Early English Dramatists: Five Anonymous* Plays, ed. J. S. Farmer (London: Early English Drama Society, 1908).
[26] Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 221.
[27] Roberta Mullini, "Playing the Monster: Changing Conventions in the Wit Plays", *Theta VIII: Théâtre Tudor* (2009), 206.
[28] Lennam, "'The Ventricle of Memory': Wit and Wisdom in *Love's Labour's Lost*", 58.

play was remembered for the relationship between Wit and Will in the court revels rather than its proper title. Though apparently important enough to be remembered by at the time of its performance, Will's function in this interlude has been sorely under-appreciated. The following examination attempts to redress this situation.

The Marriage of Wit and Science (1570)

The Marriage of Wit and Science emphasises the importance of educational instruction to ensure moral wellbeing, doing so by constantly directing its audience to reflect upon the dangers of idleness and the potential of the Wit's wayward will to lead him away from marrying Science. Wit, firstly, introduces his woes to the audience and then deliberates upon how he should regulate himself in spite of his own errant nature, detailing how Nature (his mother) will provide a source of guidance for him. This act of self-reflection, aided by Nature, is performed so that Wit may properly distinguish his intellectual powers as well as his own sense of identity: 'Wherefore my suit is this: that it would please your grace / To settle this unsettled head in some assured place' (1.1.34-6).[29] Wit's mother (Nature) considers Wit's 'peerless brain' to be 'not yet in perfect plight', but claims it shall be 'wrought' to mirror the 'perfect piece of work' that Nature foresees Wit becoming, 'As in a glass beforehand with my sight' (1.1.13-16).[30] Nature, here, anticipates Wit's future identity to correspond with her own perfectly tempered character. She, therefore, acts

[29] "The Marriage of Wit and Science", in *Early English Dramatists: Five Anonymous Plays*, ed. J. S. Farmer (London: Early English Drama Society, 1908). All future references will be to this edition of the text.
[30] 'Plight' is here used in its more archaic form to indicate a state of engagement or undertaking.

as a paradigm of moral temperance for Wit. Consequently, the formation of Wit's sense of being will only truly be complete when he resembles his mother in character.

The prominence of Nature's control over Wit is further demonstrated when Wit divulges the feelings he has for Science to his mother. Nature recognises that Wit is troubled by something 'fixed' in his 'breast', and encourages Wit to explain 'whereto thy heart inclines' in order to put his 'heart at rest' (1.1.18-20). This invitation allows Wit to declare his need for guidance:

> sovereign queen and parent passing dear,
> Whose force I am enforced to know and knowledge everywhere,
> This care of mine, though it be bred within my breast,
> Yet it is not so ripe as yet to breed me great unrest.
> ...
> I feel myself in love, yet not inflamed so,
> But causes move me now and then to let such fancies go,
> Which causes prevailing sets each thing else in doubt
> Much like the nail, that last came in, and drives the former out.
> (1.1.25-28, 31-34)

As Wit suggests, the longing he feels towards Science (this 'care' of his) is 'bred' in his 'breast'. Wit states that 'I feel myself in love', and that this feeling 'sets each thing else in doubt'. He subsequently deems this longing to be the cause of his 'unsettled head', and because of this he looks to his mother for aid (1.1.36).

The way Nature influences Wit's future is crucial to how he understands the feelings he has. Pleading for her guidance, he wishes that she could

> …lead me through the thick, to guide me all the way,
> To point me where I may achieve my most desired prey,
> For now again of late I kindle in desire
> And pleasure pricketh fourth my youth to feel a greater fire.
> (1.1.38-41)

We must ask then what exactly are the defining qualities of Wit's 'desire' and desired prey? Why has he chosen this lady, and is this his choice, or the choice of convention?

In other words, as Nature herself asks, 'who taught thee her to love, or hast thou seen her face?' (1.1.48). Wit can only respond to this inquiry in an ambiguous fashion: 'Nor this nor that, but I heard men talk of her apace' (1.1.49). When asked directly, Wit knows not 'how to compass my desire, / And since for shame I cannot now nor mind not to retire, / Help on, I you beseech, and bring this thing about' (1.1.59-61). The youth cannot recall why he loves Science, nor can he envisage renouncing his love of her, so he reasons that he must possess her. Contrary to Breton's Wit, somewhat ironically, the Wit of *Marriage of Wit and Science* does not possess the mental capacity to conceive of his own desires.

Where Wit's 'care' for Science (which breeds this unrest in him) stems from is rather ambiguous at first, though we are made to understand that Nature has been willed by God to exert some influence over Wit:

> To thee, son Wit, he will'd me to inspire
> The love of knowledge and certain seeds divine
> Which ground might be a mean to bring thee higher,
> If thereunto thy self thou wilt incline.
> (1.1.98-101)

God's will is conveyed to Nature, and she then tries to instil this divine will in Wit. Thus, the proper conduct and virtuous life that Wit should achieve is outlined by the 'lord above' through Nature's mediation (1.1.83). Nonetheless, this objective may only be achieved if Wit has the inclination to do so ('if thou wilt incline').

Wit's journey to true knowledge and discipline can only be undertaken with time and 'toil' and only, as Nature suggests, 'if thou will' (1.1.144-47). Though Nature depicts Wit's fate as something to be strived for through the diligence of his own will, Wit's fate is shown to be influenced directly by the will of others. The control that Wit may achieve over his will should apparently be won through the force

of his own will, yet Nature has already provided Wit's will through the example she receives from 'the lord above'. When Wit is told of God's plan for him, Wit ponders whether 'at our birth God doth on us bestow' skills, traits, and inclinations that help to shape our fate (1.1.111). Nature confirms Wit's hypothesis by stating that 'there are' indeed plans made by God before an individual's birth (1.1.112). These circumstances suggest that the uncanny inclination Wit feels towards pursuing Science has been imparted to him by God, and is now being encouraged by his mother. Wit is placed in a contradictory situation here. The protagonist that we are meant to associate ourselves with is defined by the disposition and extent of his will, however the control and licence Wit has over his will is shown to be rather negligible. Following God's will is crucial for Wit. His fate may then seem to be predetermined, but the play suggests that the power of the will plays a crucial part in ensuring Wit's moral salvation.

Wit's will is integral to the pedagogical message of the interlude, and the play's depiction of Wit's will illustrates the extent of his reliance on God (via Nature) to provide a will for him. Wit's will (given to him by God through his mother) is then supplemented in the form of a servant named Will who Nature offers to Wit as a means to achieve his will: 'I bless thee here with all such gifts that Nature can bestow … Take therewithal this child, to wait upon thee still: / A bird of mine, some kin to thee: his name is Will' (1.1.156-58). The inclusion of the personified character Will (Wit's servant) serves to further trouble the control that Wit is supposed to have over his will.

The complexity of Will's character is made apparent immediately. Nature requests that he should '[b]e ruled by Witte, and be obedient still', for as Nature comments: 'Force thee I cannot' (1.1.170-71). Will's ability to refuse or ignore orders

is further demonstrated in his initial interaction with his supposed master, Wit. Presented as a page boy who is pluckily stubborn in his unwillingness to conform to Wit's control over him, Will states: 'Trust not to that; peradventure yes, peradventure no … If you bid me run perhaps I will go' (1.1.162-164). We may think that Will is being unhelpful or showing a dislike towards Wit here, but Will is merely performing the function that his name connotes; Will embodies the mind's erratic behaviour and must therefore be shown to act in a similar fashion. Although Will proposes to mar Wit's marriage after Wit threatens him with a beating for his preliminary insubordination, Will eventually states in all honesty that he aims never to 'depart' from Wit's service (2.1.45). Will is shown to be obedient to Nature's command, to be Wit's own will, in this act. Nevertheless, serving Wit's will still makes Will fearful, since his task to help Wit join with Science may result in him becoming completely docile: 'I am not disposd as yet to be tame, / And therefore I am loth to be under a dame' (2.1.51-2). Apprehensive that he may be forgotten and left unused in Wit's sober life of marriage, Will complains that '[a]ll your care shall be to hamper poor will' (2.1.72). So, Wit's own will to have Science is a compulsion that has been implanted within him by Nature, and is one which Will himself is afraid of, but he is eventually persuaded to serve this master who is 'good, gentle, sober and wise' (2.1.75), for he and Wit both desire only to be dear to each other as a 'brother' (2.1.105). Will's will thus gradually becomes Wit's will through Will's obedience to the rule of Nature and Wit.

Similar to Breton's treatment of Wit and Will, the promise of companionship is fundamental to Wit and Will's relationship here, as we are shown that Wit may only gain control of Will by treating him with respect:

WILL
I praye you sir call me your man, and not your boy.

WIT
Thou shalt be what thou wilt all in all.

WILL
Promise me faithfully that if your wife brawl
Or set her father to check me out of measure,
You will not see me abused to their pleasure.

WIT
Give me thy hand take here my faith and troth,
I will maintain thee, howsoever the world goeth.
(3.1.12-18)

After seeing how upset Will became when Wit called him his boy and treats him as an inferior, Wit suggests that Will shall have the power to 'be' whatever he wants, since he is the embodiment of the human faculty of the will. Wit, then, agrees to let Will name himself and act according to his naturally wilful disposition.

As displayed in the previous quotation, the play portrays the two personified intellective faculties as being interdependent, since they both rely on each other to be happy: for Wit, it is gaining Science, and for Will it is being close to Wit. These two individual goals, however, overlap and clash. Both 'Wittes wyll' (Will acting as Wit's servant) and 'wilfull wit' (Wit being described as wilful), as Experience suggests, may act to bar Wit from achieving his task (3.2.23).[31] This warning serves to suggest that Wit must tame both his will and Will himself to win Science's hand, even though Will was sent by God to rule Wit's internal will. Wit's internal will lacks ability to reach his predestined goal without the aid of God's will being conveyed in the form of the character Will, but Will's miscreant behaviour seems to pose a similar threat to Wit achieving his desires. In spite of the difficulties faced by Wit in gaining control

[31] Experience warns Will that he should wary of his (Will's) own disposition as well as Wit's wayward nature in trying to achieve Wit's task.

over what might be termed his internal and external wills, the play develops to show how both versions of the will are tamed through the authority that Wit learns to exert over them (through the help of his allies). This may suggest that, in line with reformed theology, the internal faculties of the individual may only operate to achieve the good with the intervention of God. What is surprising about this achievement is the major role that the character Will plays in showing how Wit may take control of and discipline the wills he encounters. In this respect, the will, contrary to Calvinist doctrine, is shown to directly aid the Wit to achieve salvation through instruction.

The fluctuation between who controls whom in Wit and Will's partnership is paramount to the moral didacticism of the play, since the audience is supposed to take example from Wit in their own lives, yet Wit's bond to Will serves to question the power he has over Will as well as to highlight the overall importance Will has in achieving Wit's will. The conclusion of the play proves a key part of this goal, as it demonstrates how Will (with the help of Recreation) revives the fallen and dejected Wit after his first battle with Tediousness. In doing so, Will stops Tediousness' plan to turn the fallen Wit into a paradigmatic object for others to learn from. As Tediousness states when looking over Wit's temporarily conquered body: 'Here lies a pattern for them all, to look at and to see. / To teach them to conspire against my force and might' (4.2.16-17). Will and Recreation resurrect Wit through a song, pronouncing that he must recover, for he 'hast not hit, / The top' of his 'desire' (4.3.16-17). As such, Will proves his important role in helping Wit to achieve his will. Despite the aid that Will provides, when Wit is awakened he curses 'the wight, that will'd me first thereto' (4.3.51) and claims that: 'Causles I perishe here, and cause to curse I haue. / The time that erst I lyued to loue, and now must die her slaue' (4.3.43-44). Wit feels that his will has not been his own and believes himself doomed because

of it. Although Wit protests against the influence of outside forces which shape his fate, Will's pivotal responsibility in leading Wit to achieve his predetermined goal is reinforced here, as Will (the character) successfully persuades Wit to continue in his quest to win Science's hand again. Will therefore proves instrumental in saving Wit's life and persuading him to once again to achieve the will that God has chosen for him.

Only once Will sets Wit on his path to defeat Tediousness can Will be tamed and put to proper use by Wit. Will should then be controlled by Wit in order to collaborate with the characters Diligence, Instruction and Study so they that may defeat Tediousness as a unified force. This rather paradoxical scenario places Will back into a position of subordination to Wit, but this only occurs once Will has illustrated Wit's own failings and the likelihood of Wit's will (Wit's internal faculty) being duped by Idleness. Wit's self-reflection (initiated by Will) enables him to regulate his own wayward nature so that he may slay Tediousness. Will sets this process in motion by agreeing to Wit's command to 'do as thou art bid' (5.4.27), beginning the final battle between Wit and Tediousness where Will is instrumental in felling the monster.

The uncertainty about whether Wit, Will, or Wit's will, wields the greater power in this play is almost overwhelming. The audience is constantly asked to reflect upon the wayward nature of youth and the dangerous activities of an untamed will. As the conclusion of the play suggests, discipline and obedience to the teachings of Reason, Experience, and Nature will remedy wanton behaviour so that the human soul may be saved. The play teaches this lesson by illustrating how Wit's will out-with his pre-determined task to wed Science is simply inconsequential. Nature provides Wit with his goal to wed Science (the will passed down from God) as well as the character Will. We also witness how the character Will is brought under control through Wit's

inclination to gain Science's hand, and how Wit subsequently gains control over Will through the use of the will that he is compelled to achieve. In short, Nature has provided Wit with a will and with Will which both help realise the will which was not his at first, but was God's.

Wit's will is deemed superfluous to Nature and God's plans. His mother forces these "wills" upon him (the character Will and God's will) in order to achieve her own desires for her son to be obedient to her. Thus, although this play hinges on the workings and characteristics of the will, what the will actually constitutes is presented in ambiguous terms. Moreover, God's will is the only example of a will which is clearly defined. Will (the character) may help Wit to achieve God's will, but Will has to be persuaded to do this by Wit himself. Will is not simply the manifestation of God's will; Will seems to possess a version of the flawed, human will with its own desires which must be appeased. Helping Wit to achieve his goals, therefore, allows both Will and Wit to attain an understanding of God's divine will.

The human will is portrayed in this play as an unruly subordinate to the powers of the intelligence, even though the scope of the will's influence undermines any definitive hierarchy of power dynamics within the self. As we also witness, the will, in making an individual wilful, is often paradoxically involved in saving the subject from the corruption that its own nature might cause, as was previously illustrated in Nicholas Breton's, *The Will of Wit*. This is shown through the influence the character Will has in helping Wit to defeat Idleness and Tediousness, since it is this assistance which ultimately allows Wit to complete his preordained task. *The Marriage of Wit and Science* on the other hand presents Will as a character which has been created and used to realise a will which is not Wit's will in the first place: the goal Wit achieves was never truly his own. The will is thus shown to be a power

which can be harnessed for the fulfilment of desire, though this play also inadvertently displays how Wit's will derives solely from external forces. In addition to this, Will's use for the erotic satisfaction of Wit is actually promoted in this text, as opposed to what occurs in Breton's *Wit of Will*, since the coupling of Wit and Science is equated to the ultimate goal of a humanist education. By depicting the will as such, *The Marriage of Wit and Science* both displays the usefulness and redundancy of the will as a power in the human subject.

Control over the self is only achieved through recognising the wayward nature of our will and its capacity to pervert the proper use of our mental faculties without the aid of Study, Care and Diligence. *The Marriage of Wit and Science* does not deem any other use of the will to be acceptable, as the play portrays *only* the success of this youth, Wit. This interlude tries to define the will as a subordinate power in the soul so that the audience may clearly determine its proper operation, but for a brief time the independent operation of the will is shown to be crucial for the salvation of the soul.[32] The will cannot then be purely understood as a negative construct in this play, rather, it is depicted as something which leads Wit to salvation; even Wit's own internal will is shown to be unruly without Will's intervention. While Wit is hailed as a hero and achieves his desires, it is the delinquency of *his* internal will, rather than Will, which stifles Wit's efforts towards educational salvation. Will is crucially shown to instruct Wit how to manage his own will, though what is promoted at the heart of this drama is the inadequacy of our wit and will to lead us to virtue without proper instruction. This type of interlude would try to 'convince its spectators that humanist knowledge resembles divine grace, that the story of learning repeats the story of redemption' as

[32] This is seen when Will revives Wit, setting Wit on the correct path towards learning and piety.

demonstrated in the medieval morality tradition.[33] *The Marriage of Wit and Science* can then be seen to act as a soteriological allegory in which the benefits of education are likened to salvation, and that the discipline gained over the will is a crucial part of this method of learning.

The comedic and homiletic components of such plays as *Like Will to Like* and *Wit and Science* attempt to galvanise their audiences into a process of self-reflection by using youths and vagabonds to illustrate what consequences lie in wait for those who would abuse the power of their own wit and will. This invitation to self-evaluation is crucially presented to the spectator through a strict framework of discipline, reinforced by the use of mirror metaphors or mirror-scenes within each play. The prologue of *Like Will to Like* entreats its listeners to view the 'advancement of virtue, of vice the decay' (4-5) so as to glimpse Christ's holiness; in *The Marriage of Wit and Scienc*e's case, the mirror-shaming that Wit is subjected to acts as a means to promote the moral didacticism at the heart of the interlude, showing how the mental faculties should be obedient to the pedagogical aims of humanism by delineating the erratic and often foolish qualities of our interior faculties. Breton's *Wit of Will* and the interlude *The Marriage of Wit and Science* share similar concerns in this respect, and may be understood as being humanist psychomachias which use the narrative device of, to borrow David McInnis' terms, 'mind-travel', not to depict a pleasurable 'psycho-physiological experience of distant lands without leaving their home' but to outline the turbulent landscape of the human psyche and the vulnerability of its inhabitants to inequity for their respective audience.[34] Indeed, the

[33] Kent Cartwright, *Theatre and Humanism: English Drama in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 55.
[34] David McInnis, *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) 20.

reader's or the audience's own personal idiosyncrasies must either be renounced or be reshaped to conform to the moral template given to them by these works: their wills must be used for only virtuous means.

Tudor moralities, such as *Like Will to Like* and *The Marriage of Wit and Science*, deal explicitly with the conceptualisation and manipulation of the will for the benefit of the ethical temperance of the audience. But in doing so, these plays demonstrate the uneasy relationship that we may have to our own wills, as well as the considerable influence they have over human action and fate. The conception of the human will depicted in these interludes also raises some fundamental questions about its function: how are we to achieve discipline over this abstract 'will' if we cannot control it, or if we are ignorant as to what it is and how it works? These plays base their didactic aims upon the operation of the will without giving any authoritative definition of what the human will *is*. It is, rather, the overwhelming power of God's will which is emphasised in these interludes, as it is shown to directly determine the fate of each play's characters. The primary features given to the human will are that it is wayward in nature, and that its errant disposition is explicitly placed in subordination to God's own will. Illustrating the conceptual ambiguity surrounding the nature of the human will may then be fundamental to the ideological thrust of these works: the authority and overwhelming power of God's will erases any need for us to know or explicitly define what the human will is; or we are asked to recognise that such attempts are fruitless, and potentially blasphemous.

As I argued in the first section of this thesis, the will was conceived by a range of early modern philosophers and theologians as a concept that can influence a person's fate, since it was understood to be fundamental in directing an individual towards the good. This moral objective associated with the operation of the will is

also displayed in the drama of the period, as is visible in these late Tudor moralities' attempts to demonstrate the role the will plays in helping or hindering our route to salvation. *Like Will to Like* and *The Marriage of Wit and Science* propose that the will should be used to achieve virtuous goals and that with God's intervention it might direct us towards salvation. The will may also be used, as shown in *Like Will to Like*, to merely verify the corrupt nature of the subject who employs it, since its use may also damn, rather than save, the individual. Through offering different scenarios of how the will may be used, these moralities toy with the notion that we should simultaneously employ and renounce the faculty of the will. The will is given a vital role to safeguard or attain moral integrity but it must act against its own nature as a faculty of the subject which is innately wayward. I would contend, then, that these texts direct us to form our actions around a will which is not itself: a will which does not act like a will. In order to ensure our moral integrity, we must employ a version of the will which does not resemble its originally corrupt form.

CHAPTER 5

THE ILL-WILL IN RENAISSANCE COMEDY

Tudor moralities depict the will as a component of the individual which helps to establish and uphold moral order, although, as I proposed in the previous chapter, the ability of the will to corrupt the soul can undermine its ultimate purpose of leading the individual towards the good. These Tudor interludes, thus, serve to elucidate the danger that the will poses to the salvation of the human subject. The following chapter seeks to further develop how this wayward potential of the human will was represented in the drama of the late Elizabethan period, by examining its personification as an aspect of our nature which is "ill" in the interlude *Wealth and Health*, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, and John Marston's *The Malcontent*. By providing a reading of these plays, I will argue that the potential of the will to stimulate morally transgressive actions is not heightened or enhanced by its personification. Rather, it is actually shown to be nullified when presented in a personified form. Demonstrating how characters of ill-will are used to resolve the comedic narratives of these plays will contribute to this thesis' attempt to construct an account of the unique and often contradictory ways that the will was conceived of in early modern drama.

Representing the Ill-Will

A number of Tudor moral plays personify the will.[1] These works characterise the will as exhibiting a variety of familiar qualities which correlate with the range of qualities associated with the faculty will in the period – being free, wayward, unruly, obstinate, or easily led into immoral practices. Each of these plays incorporates a "will" character that is unique to its specific dramatic world, but one trait is common to these various representations of the will: the personified will is depicted as having the potential to be wicked, or to be used for ill deeds. Nonetheless, this potential rarely amounts to this personified faculty being exemplified as unequivocally corrupt or evil. In fact, I would propose that between the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods only three plays clearly personify the will to be inherently malevolent in nature.[2]

Of the three clear occurrences where a "will" character is typified as "ill", only one appears in a Tudor interlude – the anonymously authored moral interlude *Wealth and Health* (1557). The two other plays which use a personified character of ill-will are late Elizabethan, commercial plays: William Shakespeare's comedy, *Twelfth Night, Or, What You Will* (c. 1602), and John Marston's satire *The Malcontent* (c.

[1] Such plays include, for example, *Hyckescorner* 1515-6 (Freewill), *The Marriage of Wit and Science* 1570 (Will), *Free Will* 1573 (King Freewill), *The Three Ladies of London* 1584 (Will) and its sequel *The Three Lords of London* 1590 (Will).

[2] This information was gathered with the help of Thomas L. Berger and William C. Bradford, Jr, *An Index of Characters in English Printed Drama to the Restoration* (Englewood, California: Microcard Publishing, 1975). Berger and Bradford use W. W. Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1962) as a reference point for their index. William Strode's Commonwealth era, tragi-comedy *The Floating Island* (1655) also incorporates an Ill-Will character (Malevolo), but the current chapter of this thesis concerns itself with these three earlier plays. Characters similar to, but not clear analogues of, the ill-will can also be found in *Four Cardinal Virtues* c. 1541-7 (Wilful) and the 1592 play, *Arden of Faversham* (Blackwill). A variety of "Mal-" characters also appear through the 1600s. For example: Malfato (ill-shaped/ deformed) features in John Ford's *The Lady's Trial* (1639); Malheureux (ill-fated/unhappy/wretched) is made part of John Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605); Malvento (ill-wind/bad speech) appears in Thomas Decker's *Match Me in London* (1630). However, only Malvolio and Malevole's names directly invoke the will in the formation of their names, as both translate as "ill-will".

1603). In spite of the many individual differences between the plays, it is possible to identify three key features that are common to each of them. Firstly, all three works incorporate characters whose names suggest a malicious or "ill" realisation of the will. Secondly, each play founds its dramatic structure on exploring the power of disguise and the pitfalls of mistaken identity. The respective characters of ill-will form a key part of these plots: Ill-Will pretends to be the good-will of the human race, Malvolio encounters and is deceived by a number of characters in disguise, and the assumed persona of Malevole is himself a disguise for the protagonist of *The Malcontent* (the deposed Duke Altofronto). Lastly, all three ill-will characters play part in dramas which conclude in a comedic fashion. The potential for these characters of ill-will to actually engage in misrule or perform evil deeds is, unsurprisingly, diminished by the fact that they perform their roles within comic narratives.

Although these works share a variety of comparable features, there are a number of important differences to be noted in how each represents their figure of ill-will. The blending of different genres within each play, for example, has a notable impact on how these characters behave and what meaning we may draw from their use to satirise the flawed nature of human identity and ethics. I would agree with Bernard Spivack's claim that moralities, like *Wealth and Health*, were increasingly 'turning their attention to issues of the Reformation, to political problems, to humanistic ethics', gradually replacing the single generalised human subject with 'a world of particulars'.[3] Nevertheless, many characters in the morality tradition still lacked what Alan Sinfield describes as 'an impression of subjectivity, interiority, or

[3] Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, 141, 227.

consciousness, and a sense that these maintain a sufficient continuity or development through the scenes of the play'.[4] The characters of *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent* seem to be portrayed in this more developed, naturalistic mould, and appear to be presented as more authentically human in their desires and motivations, though Marston and Shakespeare still draw upon the features of the morality tradition to shape Malvolio and Malevole's identities. As Huston Diehl argues, 'even though the characters in Renaissance drama are more highly individualised than their medieval predecessors,' drawing a distinction between these two modes of characterisation would ignore the fact that dramatic characters in early modern drama are frequently rendered as a 'fusion of real and ideal'.[5] So where Ill-Will may be understood to perform a largely symbolic role, Malvolio and Malevole are each figured as a 'fusion' of an individual identity and an idealised embodiment of the wayward nature of the will. Moreover, as I will argue, we may understand this particular 'fusion' to be a unique variant of the malcontent character type. Detailing how these characters are used, manipulated and eventually purged from each play, will help to clarify an often overlooked, yet vitally important, way in which the wayward potential of the will was conceived of in early modern drama.

[4] Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 62. This assertion relates to both the purely personified characters who represent abstract moral qualities and internal faculties, as well as the more human characters seen in plays like Fulwell's *Like Will to Like*.

[5] Huston Diehl, "Iconography and Characterization in English Tragedy, 1585-1642" in *Drama in the Renaissance: Comparative and Critical Essays*, ed. Clifford Davidson et al. (New York: AMS Press, 1986), 11-12.

Wealth and Health

Of the numerous Tudor morality plays, *Wealth and Health* is the only play where the capacity of the will for misrule is represented in an unambiguous manner. The character Ill-Will is presented to the rest of the cast as 'your evil will – / Your will, and your will, and your will … the maddest will … For I am a child that is past grace; / Ill-Will – I am called that in every place' (284-85).[6] Ill-Will's character is diametrically opposed to the helpful and noble version of the will found in *The Marriage of Wit and Science*. Unlike the character of Will in Breton's *The Will of Wit*, Ill-Will has a clearly defined sense of agency and purpose within this particular dramatic world. Instead of collaborating with the faculty of Wit to help him achieve salvation, *Wealth and Health*'s Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit play the parts of vices who work in partnership to 'devise / That each man [in England] may Wealth, Health, and Liberty depise' (297).[7] Thus, Ill-Will threatens the entire nation with moral destitution, not merely the individual subject. By corrupting the characters of Wealth and Health, Ill-Will would ruin the financial and physical security of England and her inhabitants. This particular interlude, then, stresses the immediate danger that these corrupted faculties of the individual may pose to moral order, rather than illustrating the means by which the wit and will may become wayward or maladjusted, as enacted within *The Marriage of Wit and Science*. Be this as it may, Wealth and Health do not initially recognise the threat Ill-Will poses.

Wealth and Health are both initially duped by Shrewd Wit and Ill-Will

[6] "Wealth and Health", in *"Lost" Tudor Plays*, ed. J. S. Farmer (London: Early English Drama Society, 1966). This edition does not use any act, scene, or line numbers, so page numbers will be referenced from this point on.

[7] Every character in this play is representative of abstract concepts applicable to the whole country. No everyman character is present in this play to which these characters to be connected.

because they think that the faculties of the wit and will are important and, therefore, necessary parts of their being. The influence that Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit are able to exert over Wealth and Health is exemplified in Health's personal reflection:

> What were we if we lacked Will?
> And without Wit we should live ill;
> Therefore, Will and Wit I will keep still:
> I promise you I love them.
> (291)

Many of the characters in this play recognise the importance that wit and will have for the human subject, but they cannot at first distinguish between these specifically negative conceptions of the wit and will, and the more neutral configuration of these faculties that they are familiar with. Remedy does, however, make Wealth and Health realise that Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit 'deceiveth great and small' and that their influence would put 'Liberty, in prison and great tribulation' (306-307). With Remedy's intervention, Health eventually comprehends that 'the devil and Ill-Will is both of one complexion' and that 'man's mind is so variable, and glad to report ill' that Ill-Will may 'reign' with ease, if left to its own devices (307). Once Ill-Will's and Shrewd Wit's corrupt natures have been identified, Remedy proceeds to banish these characters so 'Wealth, Health, and Liberty may continue here alway' (308).[8]

Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit are subdued by the forces of good in this interlude primarily because they threaten to 'destroy Wealth, Health, and Liberty by sin' (302). This sin is seen to be potent because it would serve to corrupt the wits and wills of all the characters in the play. As noted earlier, Ill-Will wishes to be representative of everyone's wills: 'I am your evil will – / Your will, and your will, and your will'

[8] The play ends by rejoicing in Elizabeth I's reign, so 'here' should be read as meaning England.

(284). Unlike Wealth and Health, Liberty initially understands the statements made by Ill-Will to be 'strange' since, as he suggests, 'in our wills is great diversity; / For one is not like another' (284). Ill-Will must be subdued, therefore, because it acts to corrupt the multitude of different wills presented in the play, and by extension in England, reducing the distinctiveness of all wills to be uniformly sinful, like his own. On the other hand, the moral narrative arc of this play does not allow Ill-Will the ability to achieve his goals, as Remedy reverses the effect Ill-Will has upon Wealth and Health by banishing Ill-Will. This resolution is structured upon the eradication of Ill-Will and Shrewd Wit, though for this conclusion to take place the other characters must recognise how dangerous these corrupt articulations of the wit and will are to the individual. *Wealth and Health* reflects upon how the purity of the soul should be preserved by emphasising the ephemeral nature of Ill-Will's and Shrewd Wit's reign over the human subject. This ending somewhat echoes the didactic focus of *The Will of Wit* and *The Marriage of Wit and Science*, yet *Wealth and Health*'s moral is founded upon purging this particularly malign version of the will, as opposed to emphasising the symbolic cohesion of the will to another faculty of our being. As Health and Liberty suggest, the will is presented in the play as an important and unique feature of the human subject, but moral self-discipline may only be achieved if we are mindful of the potential the will has to act in a malevolent manner.

Ill-Will's actions may be depicted as threatening the entire nation of England, but it is suppressed in a decidedly comic fashion. As the frontispiece of this interlude suggests, the play is supposed to be viewed as being 'very merry and full of pastime' (274). The comic framework of the play serves to limit the maliciousness of Ill-Will's actual deeds – his plots against the virtuous characters of the play are shown to be ineffectual, and his only success at causing trouble proves to be his sustained teasing

of a perpetually intoxicated Dutchman by the name of Hance.[9] Ill-Will never reaches his potential to be the explicitly 'evil will' that he professes himself to be, but his place in *Wealth and Health* does demonstrate another key facet of the representation of the will in early modern drama: personifications of the ill-will seem only to appear in comedies, and these characters do not achieve the mischief or evil that their names suggest. Indeed, ridiculing the malicious iteration of the will seems to be a core feature of this moral interlude's instructive function. These features may also apply to the depiction of the "ill-will" characters Malvolio and Malevole in the two later plays, *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent*, though, as I will suggest, these later plays deride the notion of the ill-will for ulterior purposes. While Malvolio and Malevole are both constructed as personifications of the ill-will, their characterisation is not so strictly bound to the homiletic conventions of the morality tradition. The ill-will they serve to represent is made part of, to borrow Belsey's phrase, the 'imaginary interiority' of their more psychologically complex identities.[10] Nonetheless, the ill-will that Malvolio and Malevole serve to represent is fundamentally shaped and ultimately determined by the malevolence and malcontentedness that their Latinate names signify.

Ill-Will: What's in a name?

Malvolio and Malevole's names indicate the ill-will they bear towards others. As John

[9] Hance's representation illustrates the play's disdain for the alien. See A. J. Hoenselaars, *Images of Englishmen and Foreigners in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1992), 40-41.
[10] Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Methuen, 1985), 48.

Florio describes in his Italian to English Dictionary *A World of Wordes*, the word 'Malévolo' means to be 'spitefull' or someone 'that oweth ill will'.[11] Malevole and Malvolio are presented to their respective audiences in accordance with Florio's translation, since they are both shown to be spiteful because of the subservient roles they must perform in each play. This spite typifies the ill-will they symbolise, quite unlike *Wealth and Health*'s Ill-Will who is presented as a character who jovially revels in the mischief he causes. Their names also distinguish them from other discontented characters of the age such as Prince Hamlet or even the personification of revenge itself, Vindice, in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, since Malevole and Malvolio's discontentedness stems, I contend, directly from their symbolic function as dramatic personifications of the will.

The representation of the characters Malvolio and Malevole in *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent* suggests that having an ill-will and being of an unhappy disposition are coextensive. Discontentedness drives Malvolio's attempt to attain, and Malevole's attempt to reclaim, a more prestigious place in society. This may be due to the fact that the notion of the human will was used to describe the trait of malcontentedness when 'malcontent' first entered the English language through translations of Romance languages by early modern writers. An early and possibly foundational example of this can be seen in Lucas Harrison's 1571 *Dictionarie* where he states that to be 'avec malcontentment' is to be 'in displeasure' or perturbed by something done 'unwillingly'.[12] The use of the will also figures in the *Dictionarie'*s translation of 'Malueüillant, *an ill willer'* (a malevolent) and 'Malueuillance, *ill willingnesse*' (malevolence).[13] To be described as a 'Malueüillant' and 'avec

[11] Florio, *A World of Wordes* (London: 1598), 212.
[12] Lucas Harrison, *A Dictionarie: French and English* (London: 1571), S4^{r}.
[13] Harrison, *A Dictionarie*, S4^{v}.

malcontentment' involves the use of the will in Harrison's English translation, though where a malevolent is distinguished as one who wills ill, a malcontent is defined as one who is aggrieved because they have been forced to do something unwillingly.[14] It would seem that Harrison's translations give a quite fitting description of the ill-will that Malvolio and Malevole stand for: they are both malcontented because of the position they are forced to take in society against their wills, and this situation in turn fuels their malevolent nature. But instead of presenting the ill-will as a destructive force which poses a legitimate threat to moral order, as seen within *Wealth and Health*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent* forgo this kind of depiction in order to emphasise the *positive* role that the ill-will may take in resolving social and political discord and, in fact, undoing discontent.

Twelfth Night

Like the malcontent who, in Harrison's terms, is in displeasure because of his unwilling performance of a deed or action, Malvolio is said to be in possession of a 'distempered appetite' (1.5.90) because he must consort with those who aggravate him while performing his duties as a steward for Olivia.[15] The other inhabitants of the

[14] See also John Florio's translation of the Italian 'mal contenti' into 'not contented' in *His Firste Fruites Which Yeelde Familiar Speech* (London: 1578), 98v. The appropriation of this morpheme ('mal') in the English language is obviously important for the prosperity of the malevolent and malcontented character-type in early modern drama and poetic satire. The philological evidence shown would provide an important addition to Nigri's suggestion that the trope of the malcontent first enters English culture after the 1578 sacking of Menen, Belgium by a party of Catholic Walloon soldiers who were self-styled "Malcontents". Lucia Nigri, "The Origin of the Malcontent", *Notes and Queries* 59.2 (June 2012): 37-40. It may be that the formation and representation of the malcontent type in early modern literature is also facilitated by its semantic connection to the will, specifically ill-willing, in addition to political events, as shown in Harrison and Florio's texts.

[15] William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night, or What you Will: Arden Second Series*, ed. J. M. Lothian and T. W. Craik (London: Thomson, 2006). All future references to the play will refer to this edition.

estate understand the source of Malvolio's ill-will to be connected to his inflated sense of self-worth, his 'self-love' (1.5.89), and it is this egoism which is punished in the play. Maria's counterfeit billet-doux is shown to be completely effective in making 'a contemplative idiot' (2.5.19-20) of Malvolio, and helps to expose the full scope of his vanity. But rather than merely being a device that is used to ridicule Malvolio, Maria's letter provides an example of how *Twelfth Night*'s 'central preoccupation' is to show how 'communication itself' is a medium which is 'so full of concealment, disguise, misunderstanding and mishearing, and so generally at complete cross-purposes'.[16] The inherent falsity of Maria's letter provides a way in which to exhibit Malvolio's interpretative transgressions: his subsequent reasoning and manipulation of this letter emphasises both the instability of communicative practices within the play, as well as crucially allowing Malvolio to demonstrate the debilitating nature of his own willing. Examining the representation of 'language in all its imperfections' in *Twelfth Night* may, then, allow us to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the peculiarities of Malvolio's ill-will, as well as the greater role that notions of the will take in this play as a whole.

Although considerable value is invested in letters and messages in the play, written correspondence is shown to be an ineffective means to achieve personal desire for many of the characters.[17] The cautionary advice Feste gives to 'not desire to see

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[16] R. S. White, "Estranging Word and Self in Twelfth Night", *Word and Self Estranged in English Texts, 1550-1660*, ed. Philippa Kelly and L. E. Semler (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 111-13.

[17] As we see in Fabian's discussion with Feste, Fabian longs to have knowledge of Malvolio's private feelings: 'FABIAN Now as thou lov'st me, let me see his letter. / FESTE Good Master Fabian, grant me another request. / FABIAN Anything. / FESTE Do not desire to see this letter (5.1.1-4). Reading Malvolio's letter induces a sense of guilt in Fabian, leading him to 'confess' the part he and his counterparts had in the 'sportful malice' of Malvolio's torment (5.1.364). This confession may be made to save himself from the malice of Malvolio, but the letter still operates as a threat to, rather than a facilitator of, Fabian's happiness. Sir Andrew Aguecheek also falls prey to the falsity of the written word and letter, when he is directed to address Cesario 'in a martial hand' in order to win the

this [Malvolio's] letter' (5.1.4) is an appropriate warning for Fabian, but this instruction is perhaps most applicable to Malvolio's own situation: hoping to find himself in Maria's riddle leads him to personal anguish. Sir Toby's remarks to Maria (after her successful duping of Malvolio) give a just indication of how the written letter operates – it represents a 'dream', a mere 'image' (2.5.193-94) of what is true. The only opportunity he has to attempt to escape the symbolic function of his name is represented through his manipulation of what he believes, or wishes, to be representative of his own name: M.O.A.I. As Stephen Orgel proposes, the nature of Malvolio's dramatic character is 'defined, encapsulated, determined' by his name – it constitutes his 'essence'.[18] He may wish to rise above his role of steward to become Olivia's lover, but he cannot escape the bonds of his own name as one who wills-ill against others. Hence, written correspondence serves to: order the discourse of desire which pervades *Twelfth Night*; emphasise Malvolio's inability to transgress his social position in Olivia's court; expose the horrid reality of the role Malvolio is pre-determined to play; accentuate the futility of his attempt to escape the prescribed nature of his identity.

In accordance with Harrison's translation of 'malcontentment', Malvolio's malcontented nature is distinguished by the fact that he remains in his prescribed social position 'unwillingly', and by the fact that the work he carries out for Olivia in her estate helps to produce the feelings of ill-will which his name signifies: as a steward, Malvolio tries to maintain an orderly household, but is irritated by the

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admiration of Olivia (3.2.40). In Sir Andrew's case, both deeds associated with the letter prove to be false: Sir Andrew does not truly desire to fight Cesario, and Sir Toby never truly intends to deliver Sir Andrew's written challenge.

[18] Stephen Orgel, *The Authentic Shakespeare and Other Problems of the Early Modern Stage* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 9.

'tinkers' who inhabit it (2.3.89).[19] His barbed questioning of Toby and Andrew over their drunken antics at the beginning of the play may be interpreted as foreshadowing the results of his own attempt to surpass his social rank: 'My masters, are you mad? Or what are you?' (2.3.87). Malvolio views the lack of appropriate decorum in his apparent superiors as incomprehensible – their behaviour makes Malvolio query Toby and Andrew's very identities. Fittingly, it is Malvolio's own lack of propriety displayed in his later attempt to surpass his role as a steward which serves to strip him of his rank and dignity, reducing him to an object of mockery.

Considering these details, we may understand Malvolio's desire for upward-mobility as threatening 'to extinguish the interconnected glow from which a steward's lustre might parasitically emanate', as well as the discontent by which he is characterised.[20] Trying to rise above his station and most importantly to be *happy* in this new social rank not only challenges the very order which he as a steward seeks to uphold, but it also threatens to dissolve the source of the ill-will which defines his character. Yet where Viola can honestly state 'I am not that I play' and 'I am not what I am' while still maintaining her disguise, Malvolio may not avoid the role he has been set to perform (1.5.185 and 3.1.143). Attempting to create meaning out of M.O.A.I only underscores how language and communicative practices within the play function to undermine the liberty he has to shape his own identity. Feste's subsequent proposition to Cesario rings all the more true in respect to Malvolio's eventual fate: 'I can yield you [no reason] without words, / and words are grown so false, I am loath to prove / reason with them' (3.1.23-25). Malvolio repeatedly falls victim to the falsity

[19] Harrison, *A Dictionarie*, S4r.
[20] Barbara Correll, "Malvolio at Malfi: Managing Desire in Shakespeare and Webster", *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58.1 (Spring 2007): 76-77.

of ‘words’, and even struggles to prove ‘reason with them’ with the letter he produces for Olivia while kept in the ‘hideous darkness’ (4.2.31) of his temporary prison.

Taking these circumstances into consideration, Jonathan Goldberg contends that Malvolio is ‘[e]ntirely possessed by the letter’, and that he ‘can only reclaim himself by investing himself in writing’.[21] I would, however, question the extent to which the idea of *re*possession or reclamation that Goldberg suggests is applicable in this instance. Malvolio’s desire to reclaim his *social* status from the madness attributed to him would somewhat validate Goldberg’s contention, but Malvolio does not abandon the malcontentedness and malevolence which he is characterised by in this undertaking. The ill-will he feels towards his captors defines his dramatic role, and is something that never leaves him: what he signifies cannot be reclaimed since it has not been lost to begin with. Instead, he, like Ill-Will in *Wealth and Health*, ‘refuses to be reformed by the comic action’ of the play, and is presented as equally ineffective in achieving his own desires.[22] Malvolio’s ill-will proves only to be exacerbated by his imprisonment and the goading he receives when occupied in his gloomy lodgings, as his final words in the play attest: ‘I’ll be reveng’d on the whole pack of you!’ (5.1.377). Malvolio may then be symbolic of a perpetually ill, but a completely tame, will.

Engaging with the fantasy of the letter thus fuels the continued vitality of the malevolence which serves to undermine Malvolio’s attempts to forge a new identity for himself. Not only does Olivia’s earlier judgement of Malvolio as being ‘sick of self-love’ (1.5.89) shape how we understand his temperament, but her instruction to him to dismiss Cesario establishes a critical connection between the lack of power

[21] Jonathan Goldberg, “Textual Properties”, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 37.2 (Summer, 1986): 217.
[22] Karen Newman, *Shakespeare’s Rhetoric of Comic Character: Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy* (New York: Methuen, 1985), 108.

that is associated with his ill-willing and the often ignored secondary title of the play: 'Go you Malvolio ... what you will to dismiss it' (1.5.107-10). Here, the audience's invitation to openly interpret the content of the play (the *What You Will* of the title) finds a dramatic analogue within the language of the play itself. However, the vows of intended action that Malvolio proclaims after reading the love letter only serve to accentuate the futility of his aspirations: 'I will be proud, I will read politic / authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off /gross acquaintance, I will be point-device the very / Man' (2.5.161-64). Malvolio makes of this letter what he wills, and appropriately emphasises his resolution to enact every instruction given to him through the anaphoric repetition of the phrase 'I will'. The happiness he derives from this letter is established in the promises he makes to himself concerning his future willing, but this message is built upon falsehood – it does not represent the truth. To do 'what you will' certainly does act as an 'invitation to personal tragedy' for Malvolio, as Cahill notes, but it once more highlights the inescapable redundancy of Malvolio's attempts to transgress the boundaries of his prescribed personal and social identity.[23] *Twelfth Night* invites the audience to exercise control over the will, yet using the example of Malvolio only seems to reveal the dangers of personal interpretation.

The faculty of the will, even without explicit connection to its purely negative focus, is also shown to have significant bearing upon the rest of the drama. As displayed in Viola's reflection on male desire, the will is referred to in order to illustrate the deficiencies of love: 'Our shows are more than will: for still we prove / Much in our vows, but little in our love' (2.4.118-19). Men, as Viola intimates,

[23] Edward Cahill, "The Problem of Malvolio", *College Literature* 23.2 (1996), 63.

profess greater feelings of love than they can accomplish.[24] More specifically, Viola recognises the dangers associated with the operation of the will in the human subject by illustrating the limits of the will to perform what is desired of it.[25] Feste, on the other hand, relies on the power of his will to defend his absence from Olivia's household: 'Wit, and't be thy will, put me into good fooling!' (1.5.30). Echoing the collusion of the wit and will seen in Breton's 'The Will of Wit' and *The Marriage of Wit and Science*, Feste pleads with his own wit to 'will' the successful entertainment of Olivia so that he may prove his worth. Feste's successful willing of his wit into 'good fooling' allows him to retain his post, and his aptitude for fooling puts him in a position to taunt and psychologically torture Malvolio later in the play. I would propose, then, that the operation of the will in *Twelfth Night* also acts to display the impotency associated with masculine desire, and in doing so, serves to intensify the feelings of ill-will that Malvolio expresses and serves to represent. Thus, Malvolio's ill-will also seems to be placed in an utterly subordinate role, somewhat ironically, to the potency of other peoples' wills.

As I have suggested, the ill-will that Malvolio represents is completely undermined in the play, and his value to the play's dramatic outcome is seen as secondary to the romantic success of the other characters: his existence does not seem to warrant conclusion, and he cannot escape the constraints on his identity that he encapsulates. Lacking the power to change his social status, Malvolio is shown to

[24] It is telling that Viola criticises the flaws of the male will while assuming a male guise. As the subsequent chapter emphasises, the will was commonly portrayed by male writers of the period as a negative feature of the individual which was commonly associated with female misrule or moral laxity.
[25] The will's capacity to highlight our lack of personal power is similarly conveyed in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* when Troilus states that 'This is the monstruosity in /love, lady – that the will is infinite / and the execution confined; that the desire is / boundless and the act a slave to limit' (3.2.78-80). It is, however, man's lack of sincerity rather than his genuine, but utterly hyperbolic, bravado which is emphasised in Viola's analysis of the human will.

become a slave *to* rather than an agent *of* his own willing. Marston's Altofronto, on the other hand, is allowed far more freedom to perform his role as Malevole, the ill-will. Via the guise of Malevole, Altofronto manages to employ his ill-will to regain political power, though the use of the ill-will in this play is also depicted as having transitory significance.

The Malcontent

Malevole is presented as the physical manifestation of Giovanni Altofronto's malice towards those who conspired to strip him of his dukedom and banish him from Genoa. His ire is directed towards Pietro Jacomo, the current Duke who helped to expel Altofronto from the state, and Mendoza, a minion of Pietro's wife. Altofronto's new identity (as Malevole) allows him to manipulate the actions and fate of others in the play, but the 'free speech' (1.3.183) that his 'disguise doth yet afford' (1.3.181) is not simply theatrical posture, as Champion describes.[26] Alternatively, I would suggest that the ill-will that Malevole signifies is shown to become an inherent feature of Altofronto's own character. Altofronto effectively wills his alter-ego (Malevole, the ill-will) into being so as to successfully remove himself from the lowly social position he has been 'unwillingly', in Harrison's terms, been forced to take.[27] Where Malvolio is singularly constituted by his ineffectual ill-will, Malevole exists as a performance of Altofronto's malcontentedness. Even though Altofronto eventually abandons this

[26] John Marston, *The Malcontent*, in *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, ed. Macdonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), and L. S. Champion, "The Malcontent and the Shape of Elizabethan-Jacobean Comedy", *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 25.2 (Spring, 1985): 368. All future references to *The Malcontent* will refer to Jackson and Neill's edition.
[27] Harrison, *A Dictionarie*, S4^{r}.

disguise, I would contend that as the play develops Altofronto's personality is actually portrayed to be the more idealised and less contrived of the two characters presented. Yet unlike *Twelfth Night*, *The Malcontent* establishes a series of connections between the nature of the ill-will, disguise, and language in order to show how the ill-will may be successfully employed to achieve one's desires. *The Malcontent* condones the use and existence of the ill-will in Altofronto (a former duke) in order to re-establish a hierarchical political system based on ducal authority; *Twelfth Night* promotes a similarly rigid paradigm of social order by ridiculing Malvolio's goal to rise above his station.

As opposed to Malvolio, who is unwittingly victimised by deceptive practices (the use of disguise by Feste, as well as Maria's letter), Altofronto is able to self-consciously examine the influence that artifice and falsity have in the world by adopting the persona of Malevole:

> Hope, hope, that never forsak'st the wretched'st man,
> Yet bidd'st me live and lurk in this disguise!
> What, play I well the free-breath'd discontent?
> Why, man, we are all philosophical monarchs
> Or natural fools.
> (1.4.29-33)

Here, Altofronto questions the very nature of the 'play' he is engaged in through this bitter reflection upon his personal circumstance: 'What, play I well the free-breath'd discontent?' The frustration Altofronto conveys in this complaint to his servant Celso illustrates how his emotional investment in this role as an ill-willing malcontent has dissolved the boundaries between the persona he must perform and his true temperament. He may find playing the fool 'loathsome' (5.2.49), but as he later suggests 'better play the fool lord than / be the fool lord' (5.2.51-52). His need to make this foolish 'play' part of his life further exacerbates his discontentedness and

confirms his identity as a malcontent, yet the narrative of *The Malcontent* unfolds to show how this disguise enables Altofronto to engineer his return from political exile and rid himself of his discontent. Ill-will, as such, enables the revenge he takes, but it is, ironically, facilitated by the intervention of Duke Pietro, the man who first deposed Altofronto.

Pietro's first order is to issue Malevole the 'free liberty' to 'trot about and bespurtle whom thou / pleasest' (1.2.13-14). The Duke regards Malevole's malcontentedness as a necessary counter-point to the flattery of his other attendants, as Pietro believes the sycophancy of his followers serves only to mask his own 'weaknesses' (1.2.35). Altofronto takes this invitation to act and speak freely as an opportunity to indulge in his alter-ego so that he may plot against Pietro without suspicion through a deliberate exercise of self-control.[28] What compounds the irony of this situation is that the tools of disguise and duplicitous rhetoric that Altofronto employs to enact his ill-will are also later used by Pietro himself, on Malevole's instruction, when Pietro is deposed by Mendoza. It transpires that both Altofronto and Pietro seek to revenge a malicious conspiracy made against them by enacting a devious scheme of their own, but the freedom they have to execute this plan is somewhat restricted by the personas they seem forced to assume. In this respect, like Malvolio, the ill-willing that Pietro and Malevole are associated with indicates their marginalised position in court and their lack of social or political authority.

[28] Pietro's initial understanding of Malevole's foolishness is enhanced by Malevole's feigned rambling in 1.3.49-73. Malevole's use of anacoluthon and aposiopesis in this scene has been understood to indicate the play's clashing 'cacophony of styles, idioms, and theatrical dialects' and Malevole's internal hysteria. See Kiernan Ryan, "'The Malcontent': Hunting the Letter", in *The Drama of John Marston: Critical Re-Visions*, ed. T.F. Wharton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 155. Malevole presents his foolish persona to Pietro by conjuring up densely tangled, and highly suggestive, images apparently derived from his own unconscious, but we must consider how these images are, after all, mere 'fubbery!' (1.3.55) and are invented by Malevole to veil the true stability of his mind to Pietro.

Without the military or judicial power to openly overturn his deposition, deception is shown to be integral to the success of Altofronto's plan to regain his duchy. In spite of this, Altofronto still brazenly denounces those who act to deceive others:

> PIETRO
> O, let the last day fall! Drop, drop on our cursed heads!
> Let Heaven unclasp itself, vomit forth flames.
>
> MALEVOLE
> Oh, do not rant, do not turn player.
> There's more of them than can well live one by
> another already.
>
> ...
>
> PIETRO
> All is damnation, wickedness extreme.
> There is no faith in man.
>
> MALEVOLE
> In none but usurers and brokers,
> they deceive no man; men take 'em for blood-
> suckers, and so they are.
> (4.4.4-6, 18-22)

The potential for individuals to be false leads Altofronto, ironically, to claim that there is no faith in man apart from usurers and brokers because 'they deceive no man'. Pietro and Altofronto's mutual duplicity has allowed them to recognise that acts of falsity cause humankind's own 'damnation', proving the human subject to be wicked in the 'extreme'. The only real truth we may derive about the world is that it is utterly corrupt, however only Altofronto, as Malevole, is able to fully manipulate the power that the ill-will represents in this play. The effectiveness of Altofronto's will is exhibited in his self-conscious appreciation and exploitation of the duplicitous nature of the court's political matrix through the use of his own deceptive practices, unlike Malvolio, who instead becomes the victim of such practices.

It has been suggested that Altofronto's hypocritical reaction to Pietro's 'rand' (quoted above) 'indicates the essential falsity of verbal extravagance'.[29] The connection that Altofronto makes between actors and excessive verbiage may indeed remind us that we are 'witnessing something artificial but to disclaim artificiality', but this is not done without a sense of irony.[30] For all the insistence on Altofronto's split personality, his doubling, or his hysteria, his actions and language constantly evoke a meta-theatrical acknowledgement of the boundaries between playing and being. He is embroiled in a world of play, desperately trying to maintain his ill-will so that he may achieve his prime will to become the singular Altofronto again. Artificiality is not being disclaimed, but actively engaged with. His idealised, though politically ineffectual, former self (Duke Altofronto, the "high-front" of his past) is one which he wishes to publicly display, but his true identity is substantiated by the success that his malevolent actions have while he is forced to assume the role of Malevole. Malevole's persona (as the embodiment of ill-will) is not, then, simply theatrical posture, nor does it act to disclaim the artificiality of this disguise. Instead, Malevole's ill-will shows how it is Altofronto's identity which is deemed to be the more contrived personality. Like the bloodsucking 'usurers and brokers', Malevole's malevolent actions define Altofronto's being and prove him to be the truer representation of Altofronto-Malevole: in doing so, his ill-will is shown to be the prime source of meaning and power in the play.

The significance of the ill-will that Malevole represents is crucially displayed in 1.4.38-43 when Altofronto professes to his loyal servant Celso 'discord to malcontents is very manna / When the ranks are burst, then scuffle, Altofront … Tis

[29] E. M. Yearling, "'Mount Tufty Tamburlaine': Marston and Linguistic Excess", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 20.2 (Spring, 1980): 259.
[30] Yearling, "'Mount Tufty Tamburlaine: Marston and Linguistic Excess", 259.

gone; 'tis swallow'd like a mineral / Some way 'twill work. Phewt, I'll not shrink; / He's resolute who can no lower sink'. Altofronto emphasises how his metaphorical consumption of discord ('manna') sustains him and will allow him to work his discontent upon the world. Celso may view Altofronto's internalisation of discord as a dangerous act but as Malevole he is resolved to revel in the chaos that his own malevolence will create. This symbolic act affirms how malevolence and malcontentedness are the defining traits of Altofronto's identity, and serves to foreground the power that Malevole's ill-willing has to remedy the moral and political disorder that was generated in Altofronto's usurpation.

Embracing the power of the ill-will ultimately allows Altofronto to depose his and Pietro's rival, Mendoza – a man who also wishes to employ his will for the benefit of his political aspirations. To achieve his usurpation of the Dukedom and the acquisition of Pietro's wife, Mendoza trusts in his capability to accomplish anything that he wills through his knavish actions.[31] Thus, when reflecting on his desire to assassinate his foes and usurp the throne at the beginning and end of the play, Mendoza adamantly proclaims that 'I can and / will' (1.5.1-2, 5.5.19). Mendoza, like Altofronto, understands the manipulative power of dishonesty and acts of deceit, yet the influence that his own will holds is shown to be completely ineffectual when compared to Altofronto's use of the ill-will, as demonstrated in the concluding scene of the play:

> PIETRO
> Peace! Next change; no words.

[31] In a flagrantly ironic moment, Mendoza proclaims to Aurelia: 'Alas, I am too honest for this age' (2.5.63). The dishonest nature of such a statement is emphasized by Mendoza's private reflection upon the fact that he may be the sole or arch deceiver in the play: 'I see God made honest fools to maintain crafty knaves' (2.5.98).

MARIA
Speech to such, ay, O, what will affords.

Cornets sound the measure over again; which danced, they unmask.

MENDOZA
Malevole! *They environ* MENDOZA, *bending their pistols on him*

MALEVOLE
No.

MENDOZA
Altofront, Duke Pietro, Ferneze, Ha!

ALL
Duke Altofront! Duke Altofront! *Cornets, a flourish*

MENDOZA
Are we surprised? What strange delusions mock
Our senses? Do I dream? Or have I dreamt
This two days' space? Where am I?

They seize upon MENDOZA.

MALEVOLE
Where an arch-villain is.
(5.5.116-125)

Altofronto's presence signifies a disturbing new reality for Mendoza. As we witness in the revelation of Malevole's identity, 'what will affords' is accomplished both with and without linguistic actualisation. No 'words' are enough, as Pietro suggests, to truly encapsulate the intensity and significance of the coming revelation. Altofronto disowns his identity as Malevole, but this act in itself confirms the superior nature of his will when compared to Mendoza's.

Harnessing the power of the ill-will has allowed Altofronto to manipulate his representation in the world, as it is shown to be essential to sustaining the artifice he invests in, but it also has been *willingly* discarded. Altofronto, in this situation, generates and visibly discards his own sense of ill-will in order to extinguish the ill-will of others and (re)construct his own idealised persona. Just as within *Wealth and Health* and *Twelfth Night*, the character of the ill-will is removed from the play once it has served its purpose to reaffirm a state of proper political and social order.

However, *The Malcontent* concludes to demonstrate how sources of malevolence need only be publically undermined and purged from court – Altofronto's internalisation of the ill-will is left unpunished. He is, thus, shown to be the arch-deceiver of the play, as well as a superior hypocrite.

I would argue, therefore, that malcontentedness and malevolence – and in turn the ill-will – give structure to a play which has been said to actively discard 'all the masks it has assumed' and which is 'written in such a way as to unravel its rationale as it proceeds, to cancel the validity of the universe it has fabricated'.[32] Such forces of illusion are supposed to stem from the apparent artifice of the play's own dramatic mode, as well as the language which supports its explicit theatricality.[33] The anti-realist techniques employed in *The Malcontent* do indeed promote the play's openly 'constructed nature of reality' but I would contend that the ill-will which ensures the drama's resolution gives it some semblance of order.[34] Contrary to Ryan's argument, it is the strength of Altofronto's malevolence, as I have indicated, which acts as a source of constancy for the individual in a world which is filled with illusory characters and characteristics. His use of the ill-will is figured as the utterly dominant system of power, since his recovery of the throne is defined by the mode of willing which he creates, internalises, and only publically disowns. Ultimately, Altofronto's ill-will provides meaning and harmony in *The Malcontent* even though its dramatic

[32] Bernard Harris, ed., *The Malcontent* (London: Benn, 1967), xx, and Ryan, "*The Malcontent:* Hunting the Letter", 158. Ryan quotes from this passage in Harris' introduction to bolster his own argument.
[33] '[H]onesty' as Maquerelle suggests to Malevole's estranged wife, 'is but an art to / seem so' (5.3.15-16). Malevole relies on the 'art' of falsity which language is able to offer him: this linguistic play allows him to forge and maintain his persona. This may result, as Pietro suggests, in Malevole's soul being 'at variance within herself' (denoting his somewhat monstrous nature) but it is this very aberrational quality which allows Malevole to wield power in the play (1.2.32).
[34] Ryan, "*The Malcontent*", 158.

performance proves only to be transitory.[35]

Understanding the Performance of the Ill-Will

It would seem that, through the course and context of these two later commercial comedies, characters of the ill-will fail to do sufficient harm or create enough suffering to warrant their attributed names. This deficiency in evil or malevolent actions occurs even though both characters are given official licence to do whatever they will. Olivia asks Malvolio to do 'What you will' (1.5.109) to dismiss the Count's advances. Altofronto, in the guise of Malevole, is given almost equal licence to enforce his own will in *The Malcontent*, as Duke Pietro assigns him with the 'free liberty' to 'trot about and bespurtle whom thou / pleasest' (1.2.13-14). Yet where Altofronto is able to manipulate the court by embracing the power his ill-will holds, Malvolio is rooted in a realm of signification which presents the ill-will as a limit to personal freedom. In this respect, Altofronto is able to purge himself of the 'displeasure' of being a malcontent through the force of his ill-will, curing himself of the situation he was 'unwillingly' placed within.[36] What connects these characters is that they both serve as apparent epitomes of ill-will, though the malevolence they enact, even when given licence to perform it from prominent sources of authority, is diminished by the end of each play. As in *Wealth and Health*, the depiction of this

[35] It is completely apt that the induction to the third quarto edition of the play from 1604 play begins with the professional player – come character – William Sly doing exactly as he pleases on the stage. As he suggests, he 'hath seen this play often, and can give them intelligence for their action' (Marston, *The Malcontent*, 'Induction', lines 14-15). Sly's role here mirrors the nominative determinism that is to rule over the role that Altofronto assumes as Malevole – William Sly is wilful, subtle and dominant over the initial dramatic proceedings.

[36] Harrison, *A Dictionarie*, S4^{r}.

apparently negative inflection of the will in *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent* does not represent the truly transgressive potential of this faculty.

We may, then, draw a number of conclusions from this examination. Personifications of the ill-will in early modern drama are: infrequent, and only appear in comedies; restricted in the ill-will or malevolence they may accomplish; used as a dramatic tool in order to achieve a play's comic resolution; banished, belittled, or discarded once their use is fulfilled. In addition to these shared traits, each play places emphasis on the malevolence and malcontentedness of their ill-willed characters in order to then question the meaning of these characters' identities and, thus, the legitimacy of the ill-will that they should serve to represent. *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent* seem to engage with this dramaturgical motif in a more nuanced manner than *Wealth and Health*, as they (deliberately or not) present characters who act in accordance to the translations of ill-willing, malevolence and malcontent given in Lucas Harrison's *Dictionarie*, and do so by undermining the meaning that Malvolio and Malevole's Latinate names would seem to signify. Moreover, the rather paradoxical depiction of the ill-will that is established in *Twelfth Night* and *The Malcontent* also forms an important part of how these plays portray the basis of human identity and communicative practices (such as speech and writing) to be false or unstable.

Indeed, the performance of the ill-will as a personified character in these comedies demonstrates how a small range of plays in the period are able to conceive of the will in a contradictory manner that is unique to their own dramatic narratives, but which is also broadly typical of the incongruous depiction of the will that is found in the philosophical discourses and later moral interludes of early modern England. When the will is represented as a fundamentally negative concept (as the ill-will), its

potentially unrestrained and wayward operation is largely limited. In other words, the dramatic personification of the ill-will, as a character, is not indicative of the transgressive potential that the will itself was commonly theorised to hold. The ill-will in this respect is not ill at all. By taming the malevolence that ill-will should serve to represent, these plays show another way in which conceptions of the will were associated with a sense of semantic instability in early modern writing. Feste's suggestion that 'Nothing that is so, is so' (4.1.8-9) appears rather fitting when we consider how the ill-will is presented in these dramatic works.

Even though representations of the ill-will in a personified form are rather rare, examining the function of Ill-Will, Malvolio, and Malevole may enhance our understanding of how the concept of the will was portrayed in early modern culture. It is notable that *Wealth and Health* is the only surviving morality play which includes a character of Ill-Will when so many other Will-type characters feature in other Elizabethan interludes. The configuration of the ill-will as a nuanced variation of the popular malcontent character type, as presented in two notable comedies of the period, should stand as further testament to the unique, but significant, position that concepts of the will took in early modern drama. As I also explored in the opening chapters, the majority of early modern writers did not conceive of the corrupt potential of the will as something that could be used for positive means. We may then view Marston's play to be exceptional not only because it includes an ill-will character in its narrative, but also for the fact that it centres around exploring the beneficial role that Malevole plays in restoring moral and political order.

Judging from these few unique plays, it would seem that giving the ill-will an independent signifier allows for the disturbance that these characters create to be resolved more easily and decisively than the source of their signification: the will.

Indeed, the capacity of the will to perform to the full extent of its corrupt potential is more readily exhibited in tragic plays in the period, and it is this issue which will be detailed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

DRAMATISING THE TRANSGRESSIVE WILL

A large number of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays are distinguished by excessively violent, sexual, or otherwise challenging subject matter. I have suggested throughout this thesis that the will is commonly perceived to have the potential to cause the human subject to act in morally reprehensible ways. It may come as no surprise, then, that concepts of the will figure prominently in framing the transgressive content of such works.

Unlike the previous chapter, the following examination will investigate a number of dramas which develop to display how the will may work towards fulfilling its corrupt potential. Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613) and Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590) will be scrutinised in order to clarify how the association of the will with evil or transgressive impulses was depicted in the drama of the period. Investigating the role the will takes in stimulating transgressive acts is vital if we are to appreciate the various factors that were thought to enable and restrict the ability of the will to act in a wayward manner. This exploration of *Mariam* and *Tamburlaine* will be preceded by a brief examination of some other early modern plays which contain events of a morally subversive nature that are explicitly caused by the operation of the will, but which reveal the will to be, ultimately, limited by an external force. Such an analysis should help to foreground the unique nature of the representation of the will in *Tamburlaine the Great* and *The Tragedy of Mariam*, as I

suggest that they allow the nefarious potential of the will to be realised without any infringement upon its operation.

Transgressive Willing

The ability of the will to stimulate moral transgression informs its popular representation as an inherently volatile part of the human subject in early modern culture. George Chapman's couplet 'Of our Will' provides a succinct account of how the corrupt potential of the will is depicted in the period: 'The empire of the Will is ever saved / Except lost by itself, when 'tis depraved' (1-2).[1] Chapman's couplet proposes that the potential of the will to operate in a 'depraved' fashion serves to damn the individual, and that this ability to incite iniquity is the sole cause of the will's, and thus the human subject's, ruin.[2] This description applies equally to how will is signified in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, but in spite of its common characterisation as a personal faculty whose function typically endangers the individual, the will is also often presented as being utilised as a force for self-empowerment. Works such as *The Marriage of Wit and Science* and *The Will of Wit* show how the will may be controlled for the good of the individual to lead a pious life. Even so, it must also be acknowledged that such morality plays, which illuminate the will in more positive light, do still emphasise the ease with which the will may function to corrupt the human subject or be purposefully used for personal gain,

[1] George Chapman, "Of Our Will", *The Works of George Chapman: Poems and Minor Translations*, ed. A. C. Swinburne (London: Chatto and Windus, 1857).

regardless of the nature of the actions involved. Harnessing the corrupt potential of the will in order to achieve personal desire usually proves to be disastrous for the characters who attempt to exploit that potential in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. The tantalising yet damning attributes of the will can be traced through a range of plays, though they are possibly most shockingly apparent in Marlowe's *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (c. 1604).

In his hubris, Faustus fantasises that the future actions of his infernal attendants will 'resolve' him 'of all ambiguities' by allowing him to 'perform what desperate enterprise I will' (1.1.82-83).[3] Satisfying his will is shown to be key when deciding the terms of his contract with Lucifer, as this contract will, he thinks, form the means by which he will found his life of 'desperate enterprise'. When discussing the conditions of his pact with Mephistopheles, Faustus states that he wishes to 'live in all voluptuousness' (1.3.93) with the aid of Mephistopheles, who should be 'always obedient to [his] will' (1.3.98). Here, Marlowe highlights not only the extreme nature of Faustus' 'desperate' actions, but also the hopelessly fatal quality of his willing. Indeed, the scope and potency of Faustus' will proves to be superseded by the whims of demons and the ultimate authority and judgement of God.

Faustus' willing transgression of heavenly law is significant because it touches upon a limit which, as Jonathan Dollimore suggests,

> renders God remote and inscrutable yet subjects the individual to constant surveillance and correction; which holds the individual subject terrifyingly responsible for the fallen human condition while disallowing him or her any

[2] Note also the territorial metaphor used to describe the will in the opening line. Depicting the will as a physical space in need of governance and protection is one that is also seen in a number of tracts in the period. See Wright, *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1621), and Mornay, *The True Nature of Man's Owne Self* (1602).

[3] Christopher Marlowe, "Dr. Faustus A-Text", C*hristopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

> subjective power of redemption ... [it is] identifiably Protestant in origin: despairing yet defiant, masochistic yet wilful.[4]

Masochistic may be a useful term to describe how the faculty of the will is used for transgressive purposes in early modern plays. Enticing as it is dangerous, the potential of the will to incite moral ruin, violence, or disorder is generally shown to be curtailed, punished or rectified in those dramatic narratives where it appears. As is seen in Marlowe's work, Faustus' will is the cause of his *hamartia* and he is duly punished at the conclusion of the play for this fault. Such an ending shows how Marlowe draws upon structural principles of the morality play, but shapes his particular drama to include an 'anti-traditional ending' in which the titular character fails to achieve salvation.[5] Marlowe's emphasis on Faustus' wilfulness enables the conclusion of the play to be both anti-traditional, in terms of genre, and completely orthodox, in terms of the punishment of the blasphemous deeds that his will helps to instigate.

Dr Faustus may stand as a distinctive examination of the extent to which man may violate God's will, but it is not alone in depicting how the transgressive power of the will is punished should it act in opposition to the will of a powerful figurehead. In fact, the capacity of the will for ethical subversion is so regularly depicted as to make it a common trope, rather than a radical or unexpected feature of early modern drama. It is often the case, as per Chapman's couplet, that the will is portrayed as shaping a character's transgressions as well as frequently providing the primary means by which they are doomed. Ferdinand's final lament in *The Duchess of Malfi* (c. 1614) proves

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[4] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1984), 115.

[5] Anne Lancashire, "Timon of Athens: Shakespeare's Dr Faustus", *Shakespeare* Quarterly 21.1 (Winter 1970), 35. Marlowe's work presents the power the will possesses to deliver the individual from damnation as tantalisingly opaque.

to be particularly salient in this respect: 'Whether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust / Like Diamonds, we are cut with our owne dust' (5.5.71-72).[6] Another illuminating example of how the transgressive quality of the will is conceived to be the cause of its own ruin can be also found in Shakespeare's *Othello*.

In his manipulation of Roderigo, Iago pronounces that: ''Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are the gardens to which our wills are gardeners ... the power and corrigible authority' of self-determination 'lies in our wills' (1.3.320-327).[7] The will may act to shape the identity and the deeds of the human subject, though as Iago also suggests, Roderigo's plan to drown himself is but a 'lust of the blood and a permission of the will' (1.3.335-36). Hence, the will serves to constitute selfhood, and is equally the main threat to its existence. In spite of this danger, Iago suggests that for Roderigo to have control over himself that he should 'Come, be a man' (1.3.336). This state of being, this projected ideal of manliness, should liberate Roderigo from his pain and would lead him to achieve what he would desire, albeit, the permission of Roderigo's will also threatens to separate him from his life and the notion of manliness that Iago creates. Being or becoming a man must involve mastery over the will, but in order to do this Roderigo must attempt to harness a faculty which is indubitably volatile.

Gaining control over the will would set Roderigo apart from Othello, since as Iago proposes 'These Moors are changeable in their wills' (1.3.347). To successfully gratify his desire for Desdemona, Roderigo must be resolute in the discipline of his will, even though this effort of self-control is shown to be inherently futile. Iago aptly manipulates Roderigo's understanding of the will and its qualities, and controls the

[6] John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, in *The Works of John Webster: An Old-Spelling Critical Edition, Vol. 1*, ed. David Gunby et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

instruction and enactment of it.[8] Iago's resolution to 'plume up' his will 'in double knavery' (1.3.392-93) so that Othello may be brought to see Desdemona as possessing 'a will most rank' (3.3.237), accentuates the corruption and falsity associated with the function of this personal power. 'Hell and night' may bring Iago's 'monstrous birth to the world's light' (1.3.402-3) but it is a monstrosity which is fashioned and characterised by the operation of the will to gratify a perverse revenge. Ultimately, the play reveals that employing the will as a governing principle of one's actions and identity proves to be fatal for Iago and disastrous for Othello and Desdemona, as well as painfully pointless for Roderigo.

The will operates in Othello as a depraved and limiting principle of individuality, rather than one which liberates and enforces our 'corrigible authority'. Iago's manipulation of Roderigo exemplifies how devastating the operation of the will is for many of the play's characters. More specifically, Iago aims to use his own will, and the wills of others, as a means by which to portray the quality of feminine willing to be 'rank'. As we witness, his employment of the will eventually forces Desdemona to question the fidelity of her own 'will' as it looks to 'trepass 'gainst his [Othello's'] love' (4.2.154). The will was often feminised in early modern moral philosophy to justify the morally wayward nature of the will as was noted in chapter two, and its use as a framing device with which to depict the quality of Desdemona's supposed adultery is also indicative of a common theatrical trope of the period: the will was frequently associated with the suppression of female liberty, and was often used to define the actions of women as morally reprehensible.

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[7] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Othello: Arden Third Series*, ed. E. A. J. Hongimann (London: Thomson Learning, 2006).

[8] See 2.1.219 and 2.1.261. Roderigo assents to Iago's instruction that he should allow his 'soul' to 'be instructed' and 'ruled' by Iago.

Characterised as stubborn, immoderately lustful, ignorant, and false, various notions of the will were utilised to display the unruly or debased nature of women who aimed to satisfy their own sexual or political desires. For instance, in his attempt to determine the extent of the Duchess' sexual exploits, Ferdinand, in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, poses this exasperated question to Bosola: 'Do you think hearbes or charmes / Can force the will?' (3.1.72-3). The Duchess' stubbornly wilful nature apparently is an innate component of her being, since what has caused her to fulfil her desire for another man (Antonio) 'lies in her rancke blood' (3.1.78). Aptly, the Duchess in *The Duchess of Malfi* is punished for attempting to pursue her will for Antonio by allowing him to form her will and testament as a token of her desire for him.[9]

A similar depiction of the dangerous qualities of the female will is presented in Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (c. 1621). Following his appraisal of 'the licentious swinge' of Bianca's 'own will' (1.1.92), Leantio depicts the quality of lust in the world to be 'like an insurrection in the people / That, raised in self-will, wars against all reason (1.3.45-46).[10] The obstinate nature of Bianca's will and its connection to licentious behaviour is further emphasised when she and Leantio's Mother observe the Duke and Cardinal's procession:

> MOTHER
> Take this stool
>
> BIANCA
> I need it not
>
> MOTHER
> Use your will, then.

[9] Here, the Duchess' power of will informs her will and testament. The connection between the two types of will (faculty and testament) will be explored in the following chapter.
[10] Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

(1.3.100-101)

Relying on her will to provide a solid foundation to achieve her desires is disastrous for Bianca. The Cardinal's open request for Bianca to 'restrain / Her ignorant, wilful hand' (5.2.249-50) before she quaffs from the poisoned cup exemplifies how female autonomy, no matter how self-destructive, is commonly denigrated as an abhorrence of the will and its potential to stimulate transgressive behaviour.[11] Flamineo's exclamation in Webster's *The White Devil* (1612) is entirely fitting in this respect: 'What damn'd imposthume is a woman's will!' (4.2.145).[12] The transgressive quality of the female will thus usually derives from its potential to disturb or challenge patriarchal order, though its use often does little to destabilise the egregious structures of power that it is frequently employed to challenge. This may be unsurprising to those familiar with Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, but recognising the limits enforced upon these wills is vital if we are to properly identify what constitutes truly transgressive examples of willing.

Characters such as *The White Devil*'s Vittoria, *The Duchess of Malfi*'s Duchess, *Women Beware Women*'s Livia, Bianca, Isabella, and *The Changeling*'s Beatrice-Joanna are all shown to fall victim to systems of power which facilitate the satisfaction of male lust but which commonly act to subjugate and punish wilful women. To quote Kathryn Schwarz: 'willful women operate within the space of institutional authority, and shore up the paradigms they seem to challenge ... masculine dominion forges a totalizing structure, which women disrupt only through

[11] As Troilus suggests, in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, Cressida's falsity and her willingness to be 'plagued' by her own intemperance is produced by her apparent inability to control her will (5.2.111). This version of Cressida is thus rationalised by Troilus as being 'false' (5.2.185). William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida: Arden Third Series*, ed. David Bevington (London: Arden, 2006).
[12] John Webster, *The White Devil*, in *The Works of John Webster: An Old-Spelling Critical Edition, Vol. 1*, ed. David Gunby et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

local, ephemeral incursions'.[13] These characters' wills are deemed to be transgressive in regard to what they execute (from murder to facilitating rape and incest) but, as with Faustus, the punishment they find for their transgressions is rather orthodox. Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (1622) provides a telling example of such a scenario.

Much of *The Changeling* centres upon a conflict of wills, all of which seek to enact control over or exploit Beatrice-Joanna's body. This power struggle arises primarily from Beatrice's father, Vermandero, attempting to wed Beatrice to a suitor Alonzo de Piracquo. Joining these two together in marriage is depicted as being a crucial part of Vermandero's will to gain a 'complete' (1.1.205) gentleman for a son-in-law, though his will is portrayed as being contrary to his daughter's:

> VERMANDERO
> He shall be bound to me,
> As fast as this tie can hold him, I'll want
> My will else.
>
> BEATRICE
> [*Aside*] I shall want mine if you do it.[14]
> (1.1.222-24)

Beatrice defies her father's plans to determine the fate of the 'dear companion' of her 'soul, Virginity' by choosing a husband for herself (1.1.197-98).[15] It would seem that the only hope she has of achieving her will to wed another is, as De Flores rightly comments, if she is complicit in some act of transgression against her father and his expectations of her: 'I'm sure both/ Cannot be served unless she transgress' (2.2.58-59). By harnessing the power of her will, Beatrice could potentially lead herself to

[13] Schwarz, *What You Will: Gender, Contract, and Shakespearean Social Space*, 13-14.
[14] Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Changeling*, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

sexual and personal liberty. Yet, gaining this liberty is based upon a plot to murder her original suitor, Alonzo. In order to realise this will, to 'transgress' both moral and patriarchal law, Beatrice is forced to enlist De Flores' help. She comes to this conclusion after reflecting upon the authority she possesses to oppose her father's wishes. What she lacks, as she exclaims, is 'the soul of freedom' of a man to 'oppose' and 'remove' her 'loathings' from her 'sight' (2.2.110-14); male will serves to control the will of Beatrice.

De Flores agrees to serve Beatrice in order to satisfy his lust for her, but letting De Flores achieve his 'will' poses a threat to Beatrice's own transgressive will, as well as her safety.[16] She fails to resist the patriarchal conception of her identity as a sexualised object, and her will is, thus, depicted as being responsible for its own failure. The destructive potential of this will is emphasised at the conclusion of the play, when Beatrice presents herself as the source of defilement and corruption in the play to her father: 'I am that of your blood ... taken from you / For your better health' (5.3.150-51).[17] She proposes that it is beneficial that she should be exposed as sinful, and that the only hope she has to escape the disgrace she feels will be found in death: 'all forgive! / 'Tis time to die, when 'tis a shame to live' (5.3.178-79). Tragically, Beatrice does not even get to determine the means and nature of her own demise since De Flores takes the decision to give Beatrice her mortal wound. Once again, the

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[15] Beatrice wishes to instead wed the handsome Alsemero.

[16] See De Flores' lines in 1.1.238-41: 'I know she hates me, / Yet cannot choose but love her. / No matter: if I but vex her, I'll haunt her still, /Though I get nothing else, I'll have my will'. The penetrative focus of De Flores' will is presented to the audience through his thrusting of his fingers into Beatrice's discarded gloves in the stage direction between 1.1.238: [*He thrusts his hand into the glove*].

[17] As D. M. Farr describes 'step by step the logic of circumstances drives her to her own self-dismissal as a corruption in her father's blood'. D. M. Farr, "The Changeling", *The Modern Language Review* 62.4 (Oct. 1967), 592.

female will is punished for its operation in trying to achieve sexual or political liberation from patriarchal systems of order.[18]

Beatrice is presented as a person whose search for sexual independence is ultimately undermined by the morally and socially transgressive acts she wills for herself. Her failure to expel De Flores from her service shapes her fate, illustrating the futility of trying to use her body in order to enforce her will.[19] *The Changeling* displays how order is restored to Vermandero's court once justice is served to those complicit in the murder of Alonzo de Piracquo and the source of corrupted willing has been erased – this being a wilful woman.

A number of plays explore the ability the will has to fulfil its malevolent potential but as I have suggested a variety of limits or constraints are shown to be placed upon the operation of the will. Where Faustus' ability to fulfil his will is limited by the lack of control he has over Mephistopheles and Lucifer (because they fall ultimately under the authority of God), Beatrice-Joanna is restricted in her ability to achieve her will because of her lack of political and erotic freedom in a patriarchal culture. Characters who attempt to use the will for transgressive purposes must not only struggle against moral, social, and political constraints, however: a number of plays also depict the inherent inability of the will to accomplish its potential for subversive actions because of its own defective nature. A play such as Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* offers a particularly germane example of the kinds of operative limits attributed to the will in Tudor and Jacobean drama.

[18] As we see in Diaphanta's murder and Isabella's fidelity to her husband, commanding one's sexuality in accordance with patriarchal expectations is crucial in determining the fate of female characters in the play. Diaphanta's eventual willingness to act as Beatrice's double on her wedding night, and Isabella's cunning resistance of Antonio's advances shows how the play punishes those women who transgress the boundaries of prescriptive female propriety, and how it ensures the safety of those who remain faithful to patriarchal order.

The attempt to exploit and control the power of the will is shown to be potentially disastrous for the moral integrity as well as the individual agency of the human subject throughout *Troilus and Cressida*. Ulysses' exposition on how universal chaos is generated in 1.3 provides but one illustration of the will's destructive influence:

> Then everything includes itself in power,
> Power into will, will into appetite;
> And appetite, an universal wolf,
> So doubly seconded with will and power,
> Must make perforce an universal prey
> And last eat himself up. Great Agamemnon,
> This chaos, when degree is suffocate,
> Follows the choking.
> (1.3.119-26)

When proper degree and reason are ignored, the monstrous power of the will is unleashed to disrupt states of order. Ulysses' use of anadiplosis ('power into will, will into appetite') establishes the will as the central rhetorical component of his rationalisation of the human subject's potential to invert personal and collective hierarchies of power. The will empowers this wolfish, autophagous aspect of our being, although as Ulysses' warning suggests, its nature is paradoxical: allowing the will to operate without restraint actually limits its function – it is so excessively potent that it destroys itself.[20] Without order, appetite and will would enable the individual

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[19] The conclusion she comes to in respect to the results of her willing is comparable to Livia's own desperate final sentiments at the conclusion of *Women Beware Women*: 'My own ambition pulls me down to ruin' (5.3.135).

[20] The diction of consumption that Ulysses employs here informs how misplaced conceptions of power, pride and desire are depicted later in the play. See Agamemnon's manipulation of Ajax through flattery: 'He that is proud eats up himself' (2.3.152), and Thersites' use of this metaphor of consumption when he views Troilus and Diomedes' battle: 'I think they have / swallowed one another. I would laugh at that miracle - / yet, in a sort lechery eats itself' (5.4.32-4).

to cannibalise his or her own identity, power and self-worth in a contradictory act of *dis*empowerment. All social and personal degree and order would be destroyed in such an act – indeed, the associated dangers of using the will are recognised by Greek and Trojan alike.

Following Ulysses' counsel, Nestor comments on how Ajax has 'grown self-willed' (1.3.188) and bears the same sense of pride and open contempt for the Greek 'state of war' as Achilles (1.3.191). Hector also admonishes Paris and Troilus for indulging the 'hot passion' of their 'distempered blood' (2.2.169): a corruption of integrity that affects everyone who would indulge 'their benumbed wills' (2.2.179) beyond proper degree. Here, Hector's accusation that Paris is not able to make 'free determination / 'Twixt right and wrong' (2.2.170-1) is based upon the fact that Paris' will has not been desensitised to the influence of excessive passion. In addition to these examples, Achilles is also chastised for his lack of 'observance or respect of any, / In will particular and in self-admission' (2.3.162-3), as is Troilus for his own reliance upon his 'particular will' (2.2.53) to give value to the world. For Greek and Trojan alike, the will is figured as necessitous *to* but incredulous *of* the proper arrangement of psychic and moral order. Its use helps to reveal the tragic limitation of all human endeavour: 'that the will is infinite / and the execution confined; that the desire is boundless / and the act a slave to limit (3.2.78-80). Thus, the will may fuel the desire for infinite action or sin, but our own inadequacies as well as the defective

nature of the will stops us from meeting the full extent of its demands.[21]

Examining the features of transgressive willing in the drama of this period, then, demonstrates a range of detrimental features attributed to the performance of the will. When it is shown to be used for morally subversive means, the will is commonly depicted as being: ultimately punished because of its depraved status; chastised because of its questioning of the prejudice at the heart of patriarchal authority; the root cause of its own destruction or failure to function; deficient in its ability to fulfil transgressive desires because of its erratic nature. Taking these inhibiting features into account not only evidences the debilitating role that the will is often shown to have in drama in the period, but also serves to emphasise what is truly radical about the few plays that allow for, or experiment with, the idea that the will might function beyond this common set of operational limits. One play which flouts such dramatic conventions is Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*.

The Tragedy of Mariam

Like *Women Beware Women*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The White Devil*, *The Changeling*, and a host of other early modern plays, the integrity of collective and individual systems of order are threatened by women who endeavour to utilise the

[21] The will's association with a debilitating sense of limitation, seen here in Ulysses' and Troilus' speech, can also be traced in other early modern plays. George Chapman's *The Tragedy of Bussy D'Ambois* (c.1604) and John Webster's *The White Devil* similarly depict the futility of attempting to employ the power of the will, or simply display the lack of power the will possesses to successfully function. Where the character of Bussy D'Ambois comprehends that his love for his mistress Tamyra will amount to his own self-willed death ('My motion must be a rebel to my will / My will to life' in 5.2.75), *The White Devil*'s Flamineo emphasises the extent of Brachiano's obliviousness to his impending death by ironizing the lack of power that Brachiano's will has to direct him away from danger: 'Your will is law now, Ile not meddle with it' (5.2.75).

faculty of the will in *The Tragedy of Mariam*. What distinguishes this play from others like it is that it includes a female character who successfully uses her will to challenge patriarchal order and seize control over her own liberty. Rather than being a passive threat to patriarchal hierarchies of power, Salome manages to actively exercise her own autonomy through the successful use of her will.

The tragedy centres upon Mariam, the second wife of King Herod, who is coming to terms with the false accusation of infidelity levelled against her by Salome (Herod's sister) while Herod is absent from court. The play opens with Mariam reflecting on the turbulent nature of her relationship with her husband and the oppression she has experienced under his rule. Thinking Herod killed in battle, Mariam wrestles with the potential opportunity to free herself from his control, but even before Herod's eventual return, Mariam is conspired against by Doris (Herod's previous wife) and Salome. With Herod's homecoming in Act Four, Salome achieves her spiteful wish to have Mariam killed by convincing Herod that Mariam has been unfaithful to him. By the conclusion of the play, Herod realises his tragic mistake in allowing Salome to make his vision of Mariam's purity 'unsecure' (4.7.158).[22] The play closes with Herod chastising himself over his rash decision to have Mariam put to death, but Salome escapes punishment for her actions. Her will, though depicted as abhorrent to moral order, operates in defiance of the orthodox theatrical punishment of wilful female characters, or those who use their will for ill purposes, in the period.

The Tragedy of Mariam significantly depicts how the objects of male desire may have an appetite for, and actively seek, personal liberty from male oppression. As Danielle Clarke notes, the play's female characters

[22] Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry*, ed. M. W. Ferguson and Barry Weller (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

> are not unequivocal paragons of virtue or embodiments of vice, but figures who struggle to reconcile what is expected of them with what they expect of themselves … and recognize the uneasy combination of marginality and centrality that they occupy in early modern life.[23]

This realisation of femininity and female agency stops the play portraying any simple paradigm of women being "other" to men, though the female characters still struggle to express their own identities in a patriarchal society.[24] What facilitates Mariam, Doris and Salome's challenge to the patriarchal order which frames this play are their various attempts to harness the force of the will. The dangerous potential that the female will holds is however readily recognised by the male characters of the play.

Constabarus' reaction to Salome's bold demand for 'a divorcing bill' illustrates the fear that males in the play have of the potential for female desire to invert natural order:

> Are Hebrew Women now transformed to men?
> Why do you not as well our battles fight,
> And wear our armour? Suffer this, and then
> Let all the world be topsy-turved quite.
> (1.6.46-50)

Constabarus imagines the downfall of worldly harmony to be a consequence of untamed female desire, echoing Pierre Charron's sentiment in his treatise *On Wisdome,* that the 'world [is] turned topsie turuy' when the will is 'corrupted and

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[23] Danielle Clarke, "'The Tragedy of Mariam' and the Politics of Marriage", in *Early Modern English Drama: A Critical Companion*, ed. G. A. Sullivan, Patrick Cheney and Andrew Hadfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 249.

[24] Naomi Miller, *Changing The Subject* (Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1996), 49. Miller suggests that this play engages with issues of feminine speech and identity that 'repeatedly surface in the male-authored social comedies of early modern England, yet with the difference that women are not represented simply as "other" than men, and as such useful for focusing conceptions of masculine identity, but rather emerge as deeply divided within and among themselves'. Miller, *Changing the Subject*, 49.

seased on by the force of the passions'.[25] Moreover, the image of transformation that Constabaras employs may be likened to the one Ulysses uses to depict the destructive power of the will. In both instances, the internal disposition of the individual is demonstrated to be vulnerable to the wayward dynamism of the will. It may change us into beasts, wolves, or in Salome's case, men. By threatening to collapse dichotomies of man/animal and male/female, the will poses a direct threat to normative states of being yet, as Salome shows, the will is also displayed as being beneficial for those astute enough to employ it (although its proper purpose is never fully delineated). Beatrice-Joanna also recognises the beneficial power that the will holds, yet unlike Salome, Beatrice's use of the will for morally transgressive actions leads to the destruction, rather than attainment, of her personal liberty. Constabarus' fears and his prejudices over the nature of women are also echoed by the play's Chorus.

Cary employs the Chorus in order to reinforce the authority that the oppressive authority that the patriarchal elite hold within the play as seen at the end of Act Three, where the Chorus proposes

> 'Tis not enough for one that is a wife
> To keep her spotless from an act of ill:
> But that from suspicion she should free her life,
> And bare herself of power as well as will.
> 'Tis not so glorious for her to be free,
> As by her proper self restrain'd to be.
> (3.3.97-102)

The Chorus' criticism of wives applies to both Mariam and Salome, as they both wish to be formally separated from husbands they hate. What is to be noted in this instance is the vehemence with which the Chorus argues against the use of the will. Women

[25] Charron, *Of Wisdome*, 64.

should, apparently, stop or restrain (if we take this 'bare' also to mean 'bar') themselves from using the 'power' and 'will' that they possess. Echoing Ulysses' grave premonition that the collusion between power and will disturbs the great chain of being, the Chorus here warns how the use of an unrestrained will may pose a threat to moral order.

Herod too is shown to fear the female will. He is suspicious that he will be usurped because of Mariam's infidelity, and proposes that Mariam has an 'outrageous will' (4.4.6). Constabarus and Barabas' progeny similarly agree that the wickedness of a 'devilish wife' (4.6.78) is to be found in the construction and implementation of her desire: 'Your loves are set on nothing but your will' (4.6.69). Akin to the portrayal of the female will seen in *The Changeling*, *Women Beware Women*, and *The White Devil*, the will is identified here as something which poses a challenge to male rule and idealised notions of female propriety. Wives and women should not have freedom to enact their will, but should restrain themselves and so be devoid of personal liberty. Salome, Doris and Mariam are thereby presented by the Chorus and the majority of the male characters in the play as being immoral, since all three women actively engage their wills.[26] However, Salome, contrary to the orthodox representation of wilful women in much of Tudor and Jacobean drama and unlike Mariam herself, does not fall prey to the potential hazards of actually employing this personal faculty.[27]

[26] See Mariam's reflection in 1.1.52-54: 'Yet cannot this repulse some falling tear, / That will against my will some grief unfold'. This address highlights the struggle Mariam faces in the attempt to execute her will. Ultimately, the play depicts her will to be something which cannot be fulfilled and is undermined by the wills of others. Mariam also becomes the target of Doris' intention for revenge 'Revenge I have according to my will' (2.3.37), as well Salome vow to 'work my will without delay' (1.4.35) in order to punish Mariam for the racial prejudice she shows to Salome.

[27] As Sohemus despondently states after informing Mariam that Herod is alive: 'Great queen, you must to me your pardon give, / Sohemus cannot now your will obey' (3.3.21-22). Mariam must now obey the will of her husband, as well as being the target of Doris and Salome's willed vengeance.

Mariam's will is superseded by Herod's but, as his sister, Salome's political privilege seems to protect her from any physical or legal punishment for her actions.

As previously noted, Constabarus worries that Salome's use of the will may help her to divorce him. When imagining a world where females are granted the autonomy to openly enact their wills, Constabarus mockingly portrays women as being 'transformed to men' (1.6.47). Salome disregards any negative connotations that this transformation may bring, but instead founds her intent to rid herself of Constabarus on the independent use of her will. She states: 'I mean not to be led by precedent, / My will shall be to me instead of Law' (1.6.79-80). This displacement of law for personal will allows Salome to threaten "proper" degree, in accordance with Ulysses' view of universal order in *Troilus and Cressida*, but unlike the conclusion arrived at by Ulysses, her use of the will does not lead to her self-destruction.

Salome's actions explicitly resist the kind of prescriptive propriety that married women were encouraged to follow in the period. A wife, as Robert Cleaver wrote, should 'reverence her husband', 'submit herself and be obedient unto him', and 'as the church should depend upon the wisdom and discretion and will of Christ and not follow what itself listeth: so must the wife also submit and apply herself to the discretion and will of her husband'.[28] Salome defies these notions of proper conduct: she acts to release herself from the constraints of coverture by utilising her will as a personal law which allows her to rid herself of Constabarus and gain Silleus as a lover, as well as to ruin the marriage of her brother Herod and Mariam. Her will is demonstrated to have direct influence of the will of Herod, exacerbating the discriminatory basis of patriarchal monarchical rule. In this respect, Salome facilitates

[28] Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Householde Gouernment* (London: 1598), 218, 225.

the oppression of female liberty by, paradoxically, successfully subverting the system of power which acts to subjugate females within the play. Her use of the will, then, simultaneously illustrates the empowerment and disempowerment of female autonomy.

Salome's drive to 'show my sex the way to freedom's door' (1.4.50) is fuelled by her personal desire for a new lover as well as the racist taunts that Mariam and Alexandra (Mariam's servant) level against her. As a result of the impudent nature of their accusations, Salome vows that 'for my will I will employ my wits' (1.4.36). Similar to Wit and Will's collaboration in *The Marriage of Wit and Science* and Feste's use of his wit and will in *Twelfth Night*, Salome's employment of her will and wit allows her to achieve her desires, though her particular use of the will is employed to end an innocent woman's life. It is the mixture of this hate and, as Constabaras duly notes, 'Silleus' love' that makes Salome 'thus Reverse all order' (1.6.83-4). Hence, Salome's transgression of moral order is explicitly facilitated by the use of the will as a personal law.

Women's ability to disturb natural order in this play seems, then, to stem from their desire to exercise their will.[29] In an entirely fitting lament, Herod wrestles with his conscience for putting an innocent Mariam to death and curses Salome for deceiving him:

> Accursed Salome, hadst thou been still,
> My Mariam had been breathing by my side:
> Oh, never had I, had I had my will,
> Sent forth command, that Mariam should have died.
> (5.1.159)

[29] Mariam's inner turmoil and confusion regarding the limits of her own subjectivity are also conveyed through the language of volition and self-restraint. See also 1.1.51-4, 1.1.59-60, 1.2.122 and 4.3.59-60.

As *the* elite male in the drama, Herod always had power to change the course of his wife's fate. It is rather his jealous abuse of Mariam that leads to her demise – cruelty produced by Salome's obviously more potent enforcement of will. Herod is left in apparent agony after denying Mariam the initial freedom she desired and deserved, and resorts to blaming another woman for separating him from the ability to enforce his own will. This conclusion highlights the extent to which Herod's will shifts and is susceptible to outside influence, as opposed to Salome's: she uses her cunning to achieve a goal from which she never wavers. Her will is shown to be resolutely transgressive and completely successful in its performance.

Salome is thus left the victor in the battle of wills that the play presents, enacting a malevolence which is performed in direct contrast to the serenity that her name would suggest.[30] We may then recognise Cary's Salome as a character who clearly exhibits a far more successful use of ill-will than Malevole and Malvolio, as she uses her will to plot murder, defy kingly power, and to divorce herself from her husband in favour of taking another lover. By successfully harnessing her will Salome both defies the patriarchal ideologies of order, propriety and morality that shape the narrative of this tragedy, as well as the orthodox retribution that usually befalls those who dare to employ their will for subversive means.

Cary's depiction of Salome disregards the dramatic trope that holds that female control of the will is an unsustainable abuse of power. Moreover, Salome's use of will as a personal law also proves exceptional when compared to a similar depiction of will standing as law, as voiced by the goddess Nature in Lyly's satire *The Woman in the Moon* (1597).[31] Lyly's play reproduces a Greek creation myth about

[30] Her name derives from the Hebrew word *shalom* (שָׁלוֹם) meaning 'peace'.
[31] See, again, Salome's words in 1.6.79-80: 'I mean not to be led by precedent, / My will shall be to me instead of Law'.

the birth of the first human woman on earth (Pandora) and the cause of her, and thus all women's, association to wilfulness. In this play, Nature's proclaims that she will use her 'commanding will' (1.1.92) to create the first woman on earth as a paragon of moral and intellectual virtue, and that this decision should 'stand for law' (1.1.120).[32] We are then shown how this decree is defied by her subjects (the planets) who act to corrupt Pandora, causing her to become 'self-willed' (1.1.149). This defiance influences Nature to decide that Pandora should serve to be 'inconstant' (5.1.327), and that her own actions will ensure that the future population of women on earth are turned 'stark mad when they cannot have their will' (5.1.332).

I would contend, then, that Salome's fate proves to be exceptional in respect to other wilful women in Tudor or Jacobean plays, as well as to male characters who attempt to employ the will for morally transgressive means.[33] Furthermore, I would argue that the control Salome exerts over Herod's misguided "divorce" of Mariam shows how his subversion of the marriage bond is an act which pathetically mimics Salome's disposal of Constabaras. Salome's unobstructed exit from the play reflects cynically on the weakness of Herod as an absolute monarch; her departure and Herod's foolish cruelty enhances the *pathos* felt for Mariam and undercuts the 'patriarchal authority in which absolute monarchy is grounded'.[34] Salome's will, therefore, is shown to exert ultimate control within the play, as she employs it as a potent political tool by which to achieve her sexual desires without incurring any

[32] John Lyly, *The Woman in the Moon*, ed. Leah Scragg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).
[33] I agree with A. E. Bennett's suggestion that '[u]nlike other machiavels or Vice figures of the period, Salome suffers no ultimate revelation of the depths of her deceptions, no hubristic fall into disgrace and death'. A. E. Bennett, "Female Performativity in 'The Tragedy of Mariam'". *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 40.2 (Spring 2000), 305.
[34] K. L. Raber, "Gender and the Political Subject in 'The Tragedy of Mariam'", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 35.2 (Spring, 1995), 338.

penalty for her vindictive machinations.

As has been demonstrated in this chapter, the potential for the transgression of accepted ethical and social bounds seems be a natural component of the will. The will presents an enduring problem for the stability of moral order, yet, as the plays mentioned so far in this chapter suggest, the very wish for personal liberty and individual desire, whether ethically suspect or not, hinges upon the operation of the will. Salome's exceptional position in early modern drama is displayed in her cunning circumvention of the fate that usually befalls those who attempt to utilise the will for personal gain. Her successful appropriation of the will thus shows that the corrupt potential of the will can be employed for the benefit of the female subject, rather than merely exacerbating the powerlessness or futility associated with its use. Cary's play does so by exposing the weakness of a monarch's will in comparison with that of a woman, albeit a woman of elite social status. This conclusion crucially demonstrates how the very trait of being wilful which is stereotypically associated with women in early modern culture enables a female character to simultaneously achieve sexual liberation and castigate the system which enforces such a prejudice.[35]

Conceiving of the potential that the will holds to incite moral corruption as a positive feature is highly uncommon in the drama as well as the literature of the period, but *The Tragedy of Mariam* is not alone in depicting the wayward power of the will in such a manner. Marlowe similarly represents Tamburlaine as harnessing the will as a foundational principle of individuality with which to express his autonomy and fulfil his subversive desires. What distinguishes Tamburlaine's will as particularly transgressive is that the transgressions it fuels seem to be without limit.

[35] Mariam does however fall victim to this act of defiance.

Tamburlaine the Great and the Will's Ends

Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* provides a compelling dramatic investigation of what happens when an excessively transgressive will acts without hindrance. As is shown in *Tamburlaine Part One*, Tamburlaine is explicitly shaped by the power of his own will: 'Well said, Theridamas! Speak in that mood / For "will" and "shall" best fitteth Tamburlaine' (I: 3.3.40-41).[36] Tamburlaine's self-assurance is founded upon the knowledge that his acts of will are absolute. He loves to 'live at liberty' (I: 1.2.26), and the dominant and unwaveringly successful enactment of his will enables him to sustain the personal independence to do as he wills throughout both parts of the play.

The unconditional dominance of Tamburlaine's will sets him apart from his foes, demonstrated initially in the inability of Mycetes and Bajazeth (his adversaries in *Tamburlaine Part One*) to resist the advancement of Tamburlaine's army. Seeking to retain their own sovereignty, Mycetes and Bajazeth attempt to employ their martial strength and rhetorical skill to defeat Tamburlaine, but their effort to utilise these traits only serves to exemplify the superior nature of Tamburlaine's own will in respect to theirs.

Tamburlaine Part One opens with Mycetes, the King of Persia, acknowledging that he lacks the rhetorical skill to express his anger that his throne may be under threat from Tamburlaine. Mycetes commands his brother Cosroe to properly articulate his concerns to the court, although in summarising the situation that the Persian emperor faces, Cosroe belittles the king's power. In spite of this

insult, Mycetes decides to let him live, pronouncing that 'Mycetes wills it so' (I: 1.1.27). Though lacking the ability to explain the threat that Tamburlaine poses to his court in 'a great and thundering speech' (I: 1.1.3), Mycetes still relies on the force of his own words to signify how Cosroe may live or die by his willing. Mycetes then orders Theridamas to apprehend Tamburlaine, proclaiming that Theridamas' 'words are swords' (I: 1.1.74) that will help to conquer his foes. Attempting to illustrate the power he wields through such unequivocal declarations only serves to undercut the capacity Mycetes possesses to enact his will through rhetorical authority. As Cosroe and Theridamas' betrayal of Mycetes shows, Mycetes possesses neither the power to execute his brother, nor the ability to arm Theridamas with words potent enough to defeat Tamburlaine.[37]

Mycetes seems to recognise and invest in the notion that rhetorical skill can be employed to enforce one's will, though the subsequent events in the play illustrate the complete disconnect that exists between Mycetes' proclamations and the successful execution of his will. Tamburlaine, on the other hand, does not have such a deficiency. Initially, he expresses no need or desire to 'play the orator' (I: 1.2.129) since as Tamburlaine's follower Techelles states: 'Our swords shall play the orators for us' (I: 1.2.132). The 'words like swords' with which Mycetes arms Theridamas

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[36] Christopher Marlowe, "Tamburlaine the Great", in *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). All future references to "Part One" and "Part Two" of the play will cite this edition of the text.

[37] Cosroe explains to Menaphon that there is already a plot 'laid by Persian noblemen / And captains of the Median garrisons / To crown me emperor of Asia' (I: 1.1.110-2). The impotency of Mycetes' pronouncements are emphasised again when Theridamas completely fails to enforce Mycetes' will. His challenge of Tamburlaine equates to a paltry inquiry to Tamburlaine's whereabouts: 'Where is this Scythian Tamburlaine' (I: 2.152). After this moment, Theridamas is completely enamoured by Tamburlaine's personality, as well as being won over by the wealth and promise of a crown Tamburlaine offers him.

are shown to be completely inferior to Tamburlaine's actual swords, as well as the persuasive speech Tamburlaine is able to utilise.

Mycetes' inferiority is further accentuated by the effect of Tamburlaine's eventual use of 'working words' which 'assure' (I: 2.3.25) his followers and temporary allies 'of kind success' (I: 2.3.60). These 'working words' enable Tamburlaine to successfully persuade Cosroe and Theridamas to join his cause. This event shows Mycetes' investment in the power of his will to be unfruitful, as he simply does not wield sufficient martial power or rhetorical skill to fulfil it: 'But I will have Cosroe by the head ... Tell you the rest, Meander; I have said' (I: 2.2.11-13). Indeed, he fails to kill Cosroe, and lacks the oratorical aptitude to convince his followers that his proposed actions will occur. Rhetorical deficiency therefore completely limits Mycetes' realisation of his will.

The reach of Bajazeth's will also pointedly falls short of Tamburlaine's in *Part One*. Somewhat echoing Mycetes' own failings, Bajazeth demonstrates the division between what he desires and what he is able to do by attempting to issue a command to Tamburlaine (through his servant Basso):

> The high and highest monarch of the world,
> Wills and commands (for say not I entreat)
> Not once to set his foot in Africa
> Or spread his colours in Graecia,
> Lest he incur the fury of my wrath.
> (I: 3.1.26-30)

The conviction that is displayed in Bajazeth's pronouncement that he both 'wills and commands' Tamburlaine to halt his conquest should enhance the persuasiveness of Bajazeth's order, since weakness or conditional requirements are not shown to be part of this 'command'. Like Mycetes, Bajazeth invests in the notion that such decisive

pronouncements indicate the presence of an indomitable will. The imperious diction of definitive willing used here is repeated later in the scene when Bajazeth states: 'I will the captive pioneers of Argier' (I: 3.1.58). This order, this 'will', relates to Bajazeth's desire that the water supply to Constantinople be cut off by these 'captive pioneers of Argier', yet Bajazeth's reliance on his will is seen to be misplaced, 'For "will" and "shall" best fitteth Tamburlaine' (I: 3.3.40-41), and no one else. It would seem that royal commands do not equate to universal law, since Bajazeth and Mycetes' wills are exposed as conditional to the operation of Tamburlaine's own will.

Tamburlaine's ability to successfully enact his will is further evidenced when he eventually meets Bajazeth. When they encounter each other, Bajazeth expresses the wish to take Tamburlaine's phallic *will* away from him: 'I swear / He shall be made a chaste and lustless eunuch / And in my sarell tend my concubines' (I: 3.3.77-78). Tamburlaine responds to this assured 'shall' by stressing the force of his own 'will' and 'shall':

> I will not tell thee how I'll handle thee,
> But every common soldier of my camp
> Shall smile to see thy miserable state.
> (I: 3.3.84-86)

Tamburlaine, here, expresses the confidence he has in his power to act in spite of Bajazeth's declaration. The self-assurance that Tamburlaine places in his will is reiterated when he describes the qualities of Bajazeth's bleak imprisonment in his cage: 'This is my mind, and I will have it so' (I: 4.2.91). Tamburlaine's absolute 'will' and 'shall' is shown to curb the will of the nobility that he encounters, validating the dominance and superiority of Tamburlaine's will through the course of the play.

Tamburlaine's aggrandised will has been observed to form the central conceit of this play, and he is typically regarded as being an overly ambitious, narcissistic parvenu who consistently exhibits a 'brutal self-will'.[38] As Park Honan suggests '[t]he play, in general, celebrates the power of the unfettered human will'.[39] Furthermore, as H. B. Rothschild argues, Tamburlaine's actions reveal to the reader and audience that our own wills are subject to the influence of external forces and conditions. A gap exists 'between our willing and our doing', whereas Tamburlaine's will is free from conditional limitation so that 'willing and doing are synonymous'.[40] Words such as 'shall' and 'will' suggest the certainty of future enactment, and this sense of self-assurance becomes a defining part of Tamburlaine's language. In Tamburlaine's grasp, the will sheds any contingencies associated with its operation or nature. Indeed, exploring the varying interpretations of Tamburlaine's excessive and transgressive will should provide us with a greater understanding of the importance that this particular representation of the will has in early modern literature.

One pivotal way that Tamburlaine's aggrandised will has come to be understood is in its existence as a power drive (a "will-to-*something*"). Joseph Khury, for example, treats him as a kind of Nietzschean *übermensch* who enforces a "will to"

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[38] J. S. Cunningham and Eithne Henson, eds., *Tamburlaine the Great* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), 25.

[39] Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet and Spy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 170. Tamburlaine is commonly characterised by his 'will to possess the property and authority of those who oppose him', and that the hostile world which he inhabits 'is born from the will of a single person and in the extreme fantasies of a single person'. Mark Thornton, "Tamburlaine: An Elizabethan Vagabond", *Studies in Philology*, 84.3 (Summer, 1987), 316; Paola Pugliatti, *Shakespeare and the Just War Tradition* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 73. J. H. Birringer similarly suggests that Tamburlaine's martial triumph is cemented by an 'astonishing conflation of will, intention, command, resolution, and prophecy'. J. H. Birringer, "Marlowe's Violent Stage: 'Mirrors' of Honor in Tamburlaine". *ELH*, 1.2 (Summer, 1984), 227. E. A. Snow also notes that 'all of Marlowe's work, is about the fulfilment of the will'. E. A. Snow, "Marlowe's 'Doctor Faustus' and the Ends of Desire", in *Two Renaissance Mythmakers*, ed. Alvin Kernan (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977, 70.

[40] H. B. Rothschild Jr., "The Conqueror-Hero, the Besieged City, and the Development of an Elizabethan Protagonist", *South Central Review* 3.4 (Winter 1986), 64.

drive, demonstrated in his determination to exercise his will to achieve power.[41] This view is also shared by Allyna Ward who proposes that Tamburlaine's 'insatiable appetite for destruction' is achieved through 'his will to power'.[42] Attempts have also been made to link Tamburlaine's sadistic amorality/immorality to a Lacanian interpretation of the human subject. Through a reading of Lacan via Slavoj Žižek, Mathew Martin argues that Tamburlaine avoids becoming the 'Sadean subject' who is constrained by executing a will which is not his own (a 'heterogeneous will' of the Other) by forming himself *as* the "Other" through the cruelty he enacts.[43] Becoming a scourge of God, Martin posits, allows Tamburlaine to establish the validity of his own identity through becoming the ultimate evil Other in his dramatic world. Doing so, apparently, allows for Tamburlaine to successfully enforce his various desires through the strength of his transgressive will.

David McInnis likewise invests in the notion of Tamburlaine's will as a power-drive by interpreting the application of Tamburlaine's dominant willpower as being a 'will-to-travel'.[44] But rather than judging Tamburlaine's conquering of lands and acquisition of wealth and glory as demonstrating a will-to-power, McInnis argues that Tamburlaine revels in the simple spectacle of reflecting on 'travel for its own sake'.[45] Tamburlaine's voyages and conquests are proposed as providing 'an outlet through which the average disenfranchised Elizabethan could indulge fantasies of

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[41] Khoury also suggests that Tamburlaine's language is proto-Nietzschean. See Joseph Khoury, "Marlowe's Tamburlaine: Idealized Machiavellian Prince", in *Seeking Real Truths: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Machiavelli*, ed. Patricia Vilches and Gerald Seaman (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 353.
[42] A. E. Ward, "Lucanic Irony in Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine'", *The Modern Language Review* 103.2 (April 2008), 322.
[43] M. R. Martin, "'This Tragic Glass': Tragedy and Trauma in 'Tamburlaine Part One'", *Staging Pain 1580-1800: Violence and Trauma in British Theater,* ed. James Allard and M. R. Martin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 22.
[44] McInnis, *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England*, 53.
[45] McInnis, *Mind-Travelling*, 54.

power and liberty'.[46] Tamburlaine's will then provides the audience with an opportunity to vicariously enjoy the excess and exoticism of his travels. McInnis' theorisation of the will taps into a similar associated ideal of freedom and liberty that Khoury, Ward and Martin attribute to Tamburlaine. Pleasurable travel, however disassociated from deliberate and brutal imperialistic tendencies, is still understood as an exertion permitted by the liberty of a wholly pervasive and powerful will. Tamburlaine's particular will is once again regarded as liberating or empowering, instead of being a negative attribute of the human subject.

Conceiving of an idealistic mode of self-willing to explain Tamburlaine's actions also forms a part of Stephen Greenblatt's analysis of Marlovian protagonists. In an appropriately titled chapter 'Marlowe and the Will to Absolute Play', Greenblatt suggests that Marlowe's characters are motivated by 'their will to self-fashioning', and argues that all of Marlowe's heroes seem obsessed with the effects of zealous acts of willing.[47] From this conclusion, Greenblatt asserts that for Edward II and Tamburlaine 'the will exists, but the object of the will is little more than an illusion'.[48] The illusive nature of the will's 'object' is said to stem from Tamburlaine's 'repetition compulsion' of continually conquering and enslaving his foes.[49]

By repeatedly testing his own strength, Tamburlaine's own 'will to play' apparently demonstrates his appetite for 'self-destruction in the interest of the anarchic discharge of its energy'.[50] For Greenblatt, Marlowe instils this 'will to play' into characters like Tamburlaine whose 'playful energy and their haunting sense of

[46] McInnis, *Mind-Travelling*, 55.
[47] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 212.
[48] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 217.
[49] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 210.
[50] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 220.

unsatisfied longing' bring them to an abyssal '*absolute* play'.[51] This, Greenblatt suggests, marks Marlovian protagonists' self-fashioning as unique because this illusory project of theirs to 'relentlessly pursue this absolute' exposes the pointlessness of 'truly wanting anything'.[52] Applying this theory of the 'will to play' to Tamburlaine, then, would help to illustrate the potency of the will in Marlowe's work and would go some way towards explaining why Tamburlaine's self-centred enforcement of personal power would be seen to bring him towards self-destruction.[53] The will to play, in this sense, becomes a personal power-drive which is made the foundational feature of his character because of the lack of resistance that exists between Tamburlaine's desire to enforce his will and the execution of it.

To summarise, 'playing', in Greenblatt's interpretation, is deemed to be the voluntary reaction of characters whose personal circumstances allow them definitive control over their wills without suffering from its capacity to defy the commands of the human subject, or to stimulate wayward behaviour. However, proposing that Marlovian characters have the ability to successfully regulate their will has been criticised by R. A. Logan who notes that Greenblatt fails to specify the difference between the will to play and the will to absolute play, concluding that both terms are used rather indiscriminately by Greenblatt as a way of signifying a character's willingly self-destructive tendencies. Instead, Logan places emphasis on investigating patterns of 'uncontrollable wilfulness' within Marlowe's plays.[54] Taking Logan's critique into account, I propose that we may understand Tamburlaine's capacity to will as highlighting the rather paradoxical power dynamics associated with his use *of*

[51] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 221. Greenblatt's italics.
[52] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 218-19.
[53] R. A. Logan, *Shakespeare's Marlowe: The Influence of Christopher Marlowe on Shakespeare's Artistry* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 85.

and subservience *to* his will's eventual progress towards annihilation. Although many critics posit various interpretations as to what Tamburlaine's absolute "will to *something*" consists of or does, we must recognise that Tamburlaine's aggrandised will is shown to be constrained by certain limitations. This is an important feature of how Tamburlaine's will is presented in the play, and is what makes his particular will distinctive in early modern drama.

Such limitations are imposed upon Tamburlaine by 'Nature', as it 'doth teach us all to have aspiring minds' (I: 2.7.18-20). Because of this influence, '[o]ur souls ... wills us to wear ourselves and never rest' until we reach the 'perfect bliss and sole felicity' of our desires (I: 2.7.21-28).[55] We are all compelled by natural inclination to strive towards the fulfilment of the objective of our soul, which wills us towards an 'earthly crown' (I: 2.7.29). By accepting the force of Nature's will, our souls engender the process of 'climbing after knowledge infinite' (I: 2.7.24). This project is, nevertheless, undermined by the impossibility of attaining the 'infinite' knowledge of the 'wondrous architecture of the world' (I: 2.7.22) and beyond. However, by revealing his particular goal as being an earthly crown, Tamburlaine's willing is as quickly amplified as it is made anticlimactic.

Tamburlaine pronounces that an earthly crown is the object of his will, but his lust to conquer new lands outlives his attainment of Mycetes, Cosroe and Bajazeth's royal titles. The project of Tamburlaine's will figures him as '[b]loody and insatiate' (I: 2.7.11). Tamburlaine may be viewed as both a death dealer and one who claims to make a 'servant' (I: 5.1.111) of 'imperious Death' (I: 5.1.117), yet as we witness, his

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[54] Logan, *Shakespeare's Marlowe*, 87.
[55] The combined use of the plural 'souls' and the present tense 'wills' has been understood by critics of the play as being a 'standard Elizabethan' syntactical feature. See Cunningham and Henson, *Tamburlaine the Great*, 77.

servant 'the ugly monster Death' (II: 5.3.67) eventually 'comes stealing on' (II: 5.3.71) to finally impose itself upon Tamburlaine. Death, once deemed to be timorous or enslaved to Tamburlaine's might, curbs the transgressions of Tamburlaine's will in *Tamburlaine Part Two* by providing an 'ultimately irresistible' threat to his life.[56] But despite the power that death holds to curtail Tamburlaine's will, its presence in both parts of the play acts to consolidate the legacy of Tamburlaine's will. Instead of being eradicated by death's influence, Tamburlaine's will is shown to live on beyond his own mortality in the influence he is able to exert upon his sons.

In cutting his arm and spilling his blood for the first time in war, Tamburlaine announces: 'now I look like a soldier' (II: 3.2.117). The wound that he inflicts upon himself acts to represent the legacy of his own auspicious martial power: harming his own 'charmed skin' (I: 1.2.179) can only come about by his choice. This act of self-inscription effectively eulogises the martial glory he has attained in life, and teaches his sons 'to bear courageous minds / Fit for the followers of great Tamburlaine' (II: 3.2.144-45). Tamburlaine thus generates a symbol of his absolute will by inscribing this emblem of war and valour onto his arm. In this act, he is shown to literally "wear" a self-inflicted scar of his own aggrandised will upon himself, further emphasising his absolute investment in the power that his will holds.

This act serves to echo his exclamation in *Part One* that our soul 'wills us to wear ourselves and never rest / Until we reach the ripest fruit of all … / The sweet fruition of an earthly crown' (I: 2.7.26-29). Rather than emphasising the bathos present in Tamburlaine's logic to 'never rest' until he reaches 'the sweet fruition of an earthly crown', the significance of this self-willed command is that it is neither

[56] C. G. MacKenzie, *Deathly Experiments: A Study of Icons and Emblems of Mortality in Christopher Marlowe's Plays* (New York: AMS Press, 2010), 35.

hyperbolic nor bathetic. Tamburlaine transgresses the boundaries of his original pronouncement, showing it to be an inaccurately pessimistic portrayal of what his actions will entail. He is shown to never 'rest' even after he manages to achieve an earthly crown and dominion over a variety of kingdoms, continuing to weary himself as he accumulates greater power.

I would suggest that wearing the scar of his own self-inflicted wound both demonstrates the strength of Tamburlaine's indomitable will and foregrounds his eventual decline.[57] The ironic quality of Tamburlaine's statement that 'sickness or death can never conquer me' (II: 5.1.220) is accentuated by his previous assertion that what sits at the point of his sword is death: 'For there sits Death, there sits imperious Death' (II: 5.1.111). His self-inflicted wound – a mark of his own self-possession – therefore, paradoxically, marks the point where death and sickness penetrates his charmed skin. This wound symbolises the totality of the glory he has acquired in life, the presence of death that will soon overcome him, as well as indicating which of his sons are worthy enough to inherit the 'incorporeal spirit' and 'flesh' (II: 4.1.112-13) of their father.[58] Tamburlaine thus inscribes his own legacy onto himself: this is the true fruit that Tamburlaine's will bears.

Scarring the flesh allows Tamburlaine to emphasise the supremacy of will as a substantial reality – to make himself tangible, as Lindley suggests Marlovian protagonists are prone to doing.[59] Nevertheless, Tamburlaine still has to confront and

[57] The wound he inflicts upon himself signifies the presence of Tamburlaine's human condition – he will eventually succumb to death. His fate is aptly foreshadowed by the deaths for which he is responsible and fails to separate himself from in his dramatic life. This situation is emphasised by Zenocrate's (his partner's) open casket being transported with Tamburlaine until his end.

[58] Tamburlaine also makes use of a map at the end of life so that, as he suggests, 'my boys may finish all my wants' (II. 5.3.125). These objects act as pedagogical tools for his sons to imitate his will.

[59] Arthur Lindley, "The Unbeing of the Overreacher: Proteanism and the Marlovian Hero", *The Modern Language Review*. 84.1 (Jan. 1989), 7.

accept that his life may be manipulated by something other than this 'romantic hero's superior will'.[60] His body, as Garber notes, serves as the 'final and inescapable enclosure' of his uniquely absolute will.[61] Tamburlaine's death demonstrates that the aggrandised, absolutised will cannot be made tangible without causing the destruction of his own physical being. In this regard, his fate conveys that such a totalising will, no matter how transgressive or transcendental, must eventually come to an end and submit to the limitations set upon it by his mortal condition.

Tamburlaine's case of willing is interesting not because it is illusory or used to fashion the man himself, as Greenblatt suggests, but because it is perpetually successful. If we are to fall into this rather limiting expression of Tamburlaine's will as a "will-to-*something*" then we must realise that the will is repeatedly used because it always manages to achieve something. I would therefore be hesitant to wholly agree with Martin's argument that what is sought by the will is completely absent or untenable.[62] Tamburlaine's life is constructed from constant achievement. Free from moral obligation and completely attuned to personal desire, Tamburlaine's will is drawn into a linear progression of martial dominance across the globe because it is so exceptionally successful. The will's goal, under these circumstances, seems to be to merely exist and continue to be enacted. In his own words, Tamburlaine possesses an excessive 'resolution' which 'exceedeth all' (I: 4.1.48), and ultimately constructs his identity as an emblem of his own truly extraordinary will.

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[60] R. A. Martin, "Marlowe's Tamburlaine and the Language of Romance". *PMLA* 93.2 (March 1978), 258. Tracing the path of conquest from Scythia to his final resting point, Tamburlaine makes the observation that he has travelled and conquered all the way 'to Asia, where I stay against my will, / Which is from Scythia, where I first began' (II. 5.3.142-3). The propulsion of his will concludes here, marking the only time in the course of the drama where Tamburlaine's will is curbed.

[61] Majorie Garber, "Closure and Enclosure in Marlowe", in *Two Renaissance Mythmakers*, ed. Alvin Kernan (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 9.

[62] If forced to express Tamburlaine's will in such terms, I would only go so far as to conceive of it as a "will to will".

The wound Tamburlaine gives himself signifies the extent of his affinity with the power of the will: it is an act which transforms his body from being the vehicle of an abstract and wholly idiosyncratic example of personal willing into that of a will and testament. This deed cements the continuation of Tamburlaine's legacy beyond the retribution that he apparently receives for his acts of sacrilege: challenging the 'God that sits in heaven, if any god' (II: 5.1.199-200) by burning the holy text of the Koran seems to invoke divine retribution upon Tamburlaine. Heavenly punishment may represent the sole threat to Tamburlaine and his ability to perform his will, yet as I have previously argued, his affiliation to death and mortality is symbolically provoked prior to this event when Tamburlaine's inscribes a wound upon himself with a sword which 'imperious death' sits upon (I: 5.1.111).[63] Tamburlaine's defiance of divine authority and will merely exacerbates his close acquaintance with death, acting as the stimulus to bring his life to an appropriate conclusion. Furthermore, by destroying one divine text and defying the will of a God, Tamburlaine manages to preserve the potency of his body as a text where his own dominant and defiant will is inscribed. Irrespective of which God is argued to be responsible for his demise, Tamburlaine's death actually frees him from the restrictive objective of the will to perpetually dominate everyone and everything he encounters. In this respect, it would seem that the strength of his will to shape himself as a will and testament is paradoxically shown to be most potent when it is freed from the imperative of his will to conquer new lands.

[63] A popular site of scholarship remains trying to reconcile the proximity in time between Tamburlaine's burning of the Koran with his declaration that he feels 'distempered suddenly' (II. 5.1.216). Lindley neatly summaries the basic argument as this: 'Tamburlaine burns the Koran, Tamburlaine falls sick and dies: *post hoc*, [ergo] *propter hoc*'. Lindley, "The Unbeing of the Overreacher: Proteanism and the Marlovian Hero", 12.

The successful mixture of Tamburlaine's powerful and morally transgressive will is an uncommon one in the literature of the period; he is not Faustus. The Scythian has no problem in deciding if he 'can' or 'will repent'.[64] Tamburlaine's classical paganism, in a society dominated by the teaching of Mahomet and the 'holy Alcoran' (II: 1.1.138), shows him to be unrestrained by ethical dilemmas that emerge from religious belief. Utterly free in power but ultimately restrained by physical limitations, Tamburlaine's situation may only seem to confirm the first part of Troilus' judgement of human desire: 'that the will is infinite and the execution confined' (3.2.78). Conversely, Tamburlaine's will is not bound by propriety, ability, or by the will of another, and his initial poverty does not restrict the goals he wishes to achieve. There seems to be no restriction placed upon how he shapes his identity or achieves his desires, unlike the vast majority of other Elizabethan and Jacobean characters who attempt to employ the will for transgressive purposes. Tamburlaine's will is exceptional because it so powerful: he manages to achieve so much that the determination of his life is actually restricted by the unconditional triumph of his will. Hence, *Tamburlaine* explores the restrictions of personal volition that arise from owning a will that can achieve anything it chooses.

Tamburlaine and Salome against the Orthodox

Tamburlaine's and Salome's willed actions are equally dominant in their respective narratives, as they both successfully harness the corrupt potential of the will for the

[64] Cf. The shift in Faustus' diction of repentance in 2.3.78 of the A and B-text of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*.

goals they wish to achieve. Their fruitful use of the will is, thus, something that is not explored or accounted for in most early modern plays, or in the literature which concerns itself with theorising the faculty of the will.[65] They stand as characters who defy Sidney's understanding of the limited quality of human action: that 'our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it'.[66] Our wills should justify the movement towards the good but this very faculty is often shown to prevent the individual from reaching the good they may hope to attain. Although the good Salome and Tamburlaine wish to achieve is personal gain, rather than moral purity or salvation of the soul, no division exists between what these characters envision and what they actually realise through the use of the will. Salome and Tamburlaine are not snared, as Sidney would suggest, in the 'web of will, whose end is never wrought'.[67]

The exceptional qualities of Tamburlaine and Salome's wills are intensified by their association with foreign ethnicities, as well as by their profane behaviour within religious systems of belief unorthodox to Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Salome is a Jewish woman who Mariam depicts as being a 'mongrel: issued from a rejected race' (1.3.30). She is seen to be racially inferior to Mariam, since Salome is descended from the race of Edomites – a people who trace their lineage to Edom, whose dispute and 'conflict with Israel was considered by the Old Testament to contravene and challenge divine will'.[68] This custom of challenging divine will is an appropriate attribute of Salome's behaviour, as she dares to defy 'Moses' laws'

[65] As was noted in the introductory chapters of this thesis, Haly Heron and Pierre de la Primaudaye's mutual insistence of the will as a beneficial portion of the individual's psyche/soul is a rarity in the period. See: Heron, *A New Discourse of Moral Philosophy*, and Primaudaye, *The French Academy*.
[66] Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, 86.
[67] Sidney, "Thou Blind Man's Marke", in *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. W. A. Ringler, Jr. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), line 4.

(1.4.39) by striving to initiate and complete a divorce from her husband by her volition and on her own terms, in favour of being an 'Arabian's bride' (1.4.20) in marrying Silleus.

Tamburlaine is similarly considered to be of base Scythian stock in comparison to the Muslim and Christian nobility he kills, subjugates and enslaves, though unlike Salome, Tamburlaine actively supports the enforcement of divine rule. He describes himself as the 'scourge and wrath of God' (I.3.3.44) rather than a defiler of God's law. Although Tamburlaine's allegiance is initially tied to the Roman God Jove, we are eventually made to realise that Tamburlaine views himself as the godhead of his own destructive will:

> There is a God full of revenging wrath,
> From whom the thunder and the lightning breaks,
> Whose scourge I am, and him I will obey.
> (II.5.1.181-83)

As Cunningham and Henson propose, 'the characteristic assertion of his role as scourge emphasises not his obedience to a god, but rather his own peremptory will as an extreme destroyer and avenger'.[69] In massacring Christians and Muslims alike as 'a self-styled scourge', Tamburlaine 'both invokes and repudiates divine authority, imitating God even in rebelling against him'.[70] He defies divine will by representing himself as the enforcer of a godly will which is his own.

These characters are presented as non-English, heretical, or defiant of their

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[68] Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2000, 59. Cf. Ezekiel 25.13 and Jeremiah 49.7-22.
[69] Cunningham and Henson, *Tamburlaine the Great*, 8. Tamburlaine's use of the indefinite article 'a' in the previous quote reinforces the indistinct nature of this 'God'.
[70] Cunningham and Henson, *Tamburlaine the Great*, 10.

own native religions, and are shown to commit their heinous acts of will in an antiquity disassociated from the regal lineage and heraldry of English history. Furthermore, Salome and Tamburlaine's transgressive wills operate in a classical past far removed from the geographical locales of English history plays, or the circumstances of a contemporaneous city comedy. It may be, then, that the most uniquely transgressive wills in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama are linked to characters who are both presented as sinful as well as alien, whose wills are depicted to be utterly foreign and absolutely profane – modes of wilfulness that may only be sustained in entities from exotic lands, long since dead.

From this analysis, I would propose that the will was used in this popular medium as a dramatic tool with which to define the limitations of human desire and transgressive tendencies in early modern drama, and that when dramatic characters attempt to execute the corrupt potential of the will, their efforts to do so are usually suppressed or destroyed. What is stressed in such depictions of the will is the individual's innate inability to ever truly fulfil the extent of their wishes. Tamburlaine and Salome defy the usual punishment that waits for those characters in early modern plays who attempt to use their will for morally subversive means.[71] As such, their wills exist as transgressive expressions of personal agency which are incredibly rare. Salome's casual disappearance from the play, and Tamburlaine's death do however denote another distinguishing feature of even the most unique dramatic example of transgressive willing – that the function of the will, no matter how egregiously

[71] Although Tamburlaine succumbs to illness, symbolically accelerated by his defiance of will, I would agree with Leila Watkins' observation that the Tamburlaine plays do not present a God who seriously punishes the 'arrogance and cruelty of a person like Tamburlaine – his carefully tended sickbed experience is hardly comparable to the violent deaths he inflicts on others throughout the plays'. Leila Watkins, "Justice *Is* a Mirage: Failures of Religious Order in Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine' Plays", *Comparative Drama* 46.2 (Summer 2012), 176-77.

extreme or indulgent, must still come to an end.

Salome's and Tamburlaine's dynamic appropriation of the will allows them to frame how their own ends are configured. This, in turn, helps to shape how the ultimate ends of willed action and desire are signified in each play, as well as how the conclusion of each play is structured. As I have denoted, a particularly important feature of *Tamburlaine the Great* is its focus on how the faculty of the will is used to conceive of notions of finality, and to represent the formation of personal legacy. The connection that exists between the function of the will and the creation of legacies as wills and testaments will be developed in the final chapter of this thesis. In what follows, I will clarify how the close relationship between the representation of the faculty of the will, death and will-making is portrayed in a selection of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. By doing so, I argue that this particular representation of the final or ultimate purpose of the will links its operation to a sense of futility.

CHAPTER 7

MEMORIALISING THE WILL

Examining the profundity and significance of the word-play that occurs between the will (faculty) and will (testament) in early modern plays will shape the content of the ensuing chapter. Doing so will help to highlight the fact that the connection that exists between the will as a faculty of the human subject and the will as a legal document goes beyond their status as homonyms and homographs.

Early modern plays often employ notions of the faculty power of the will in order to call attention to the anxieties surrounding the execution of last wills and testaments, as well as to highlight the problems that may arise in their interpretation. I propose that a range of Tudor and Jacobean plays use last wills as dramatic devices to emphasise the ephemeral nature of existence, in order to accentuate the ultimate futility of human action, and to question the very purpose of the faculty of the will. A study of Thomas Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* will form the core of this investigation, but I will first elucidate the broader cultural significance that wills and testaments held in the period. Giving a brief account of the legal and cultural status of the legal will in early modern England will help to properly foreground my investigation into plays which incorporate notion of the will as part of their dramatic narrative.

Wills and Testaments in Early Modern England

Notions of inheritance and succession were of particular importance in Tudor and Jacobean England. The frequent changes in monarchical rule that occurred throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, coupled with the ensuing shifts in religious doctrine that came with each succeeding sovereign, greatly affected the nature and legal status of last will and testament. From Henry VIII to James VI, English common law and religious policy underwent revisions that altered the significance of nuncupative wills (wills made orally in the presence of witnesses) as well as the formulation of written wills. Some of the most significant amendments occur in the latter years of Henry VIII's reign.

Henry VIII's implementation of the Statute of Uses (1536) marked a fundamental step towards the reformation of medieval land laws. Before the years of change that came in Henry VIII's supremacy, 'medieval common law made little provision for the settlement of landed property, and none for the device of real estate by will' outside the principles of patrimony.[1] The statute of 1536 was forcibly passed by Henry VIII to stop land owners apportioning their legal estate to feoffees in an effort 'to escape the burdens of feudal tenure' and the payment of royal revenues.[2] In such an arrangement, the Statute of Uses 'subjected landowners … to all the liabilities and disabilities of legal ownership; and worst of all, it took away from them the power of devising their lands'.[3] The implications of this statute were not popular; four years later, the Statute of Wills (1540) was offered as a compromise and allowed for 'the

[1] E. W. Ives, "The Genesis of the Statue of Uses", *The English Historical Review* 82.325 (Oct. 1967), 673.
[2] Ives, "The Genesis of the Statue of Uses", 674.
[3] W. S. Holdsworth, *An Historical Introduction to the Land Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 157.

majority of landowners' to have 'the right to devise their freehold land as they wished', free from the restrictions of previous inheritance laws which limited the passing of chattel property and lands to immediate family.[4] The consequences of such reforms were to be seen most immediately in the short years of Edward VI's rule.

As Houlbrooke suggests, not until the Reformation was it laid down, in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, that people were encouraged to arrange their chattel and immovable property when in health.[5] We find evidence of this in the section entitled *The Order for the visitacion of the sicke*, where it is stated that after the sick 'manne' has made 'amendes to hys uttermoste power' that he should 'then make his will. (But men must be oft admonished that they set an ordre for theyr temporall goodes and landes, whan they be in helth.)'[6] From the suggestions given in the Book of Prayer, Church ministers were encouraged to make the unprecedented attempt of removing 'will-making from its traditional deathbed setting'.[7] In particular, John Hooper, a devout reformer and bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, suggested that all his ministers

> were to exhort their parishioners, four times a year, to make their last wills while they were in good health and perfect memory … Such a precaution would not only give them quietness of mind, but [it would] also ensure their own control over their will-making and lessen the risk of disputes after their deaths.[8]

[4] E. A. J. Honigmann and Susan Brock, *Playhouse Wills 1558-1642: An Edition of Wills by Shakespeare and his Contemporaries in the London Theatre* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 13.
[5] Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 82.
[6] Brian Cummings, ed., *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 75. This advice was also kept near verbatim in the 1559 edition of the text.
[7] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750*, 82.
[8] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750*, 82.

Although Hooper's example was 'seldom imitated by later bishops ... the advice was taken up in sermons and other works of Christian counsel which called for the settlement of worldly affairs well before death'.[9] This type of provision was still seen to be prudent throughout the reigns of Mary I, Elizabeth I, and James I and VI, and was notably emphasised in William Gouge's pivotal instruction manual *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622). Gouge explicitly states that the 'fit time' for making a will was while a person's 'vnderstanding' was 'good', and while their 'memorie' was 'perfect'.[10] Religious and scholarly attitudes towards this aspect of will-making appeared to be uniform through the Tudor and Jacobean periods, but this piece of wisdom did not seem to be implemented by the laity of early modern England in the manner expected of them by the clergy or writers like Gouge. In his essay "Attitudes to Will-Making in Early Modern England", Marsh proposes that 'many testators were sick when they made their wills', though they were at least 'sound of mind' when giving their testation.[11]

Judging by studies made on the process of will-making in English communities, it would seem that the majority of testators were men of wealthier classes, since 'the poor were far less likely to come to the notice of the probate courts

[9] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750*, 82.
[10] Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, 571. As is seen in Shakespeare's own will, Shakespeare only had a draft of his will prepared in January of 1616 by his lawyer, Francis Collins. This will was later revised on the 25th March 1616, albeit rather hastily, as evidenced by 'the messiness of the will' due to the amendment of sheets 2 and 3, and the complete rewriting of sheet 1. At the time of his death, his will remained in a draft form without a fair copy. See E. A. J. Honigmann, "Shakespeare's Will and Testamentary Traditions", in *Shakespeare and Cultural Traditions. The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association, World Congress, Tokyo, 1991*, ed. Tetsuo Kishi, Roger Pringle and Stanley Wells (Newark, N.J: University of Delaware Press, 1994), 131.
[11] Christopher Marsh, "Attitudes to Will-Making in Early Modern England", in *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, ed. Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans and Nigel Goose (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press, 2000), 164.

than the better-off'.[12] It has also been suggested that lay scribes took 'an increasingly large share of the business of will-writing' from clergy members, marking a shift in the technical production and composition of written wills.[13] Such scribes did, however, rely on templates of last wills and testaments set out in texts such as Thomas Phayer's *A Booke of Presidents* (1586), Henry Swinburne's *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and Last Wills* (1590), and William West's *Symbolaeographia* (1592) to formulate the structure of a testator's will.

Phayer's text is one of the first works to set out what an acceptable template of a will should be.[14] *A Booke of Presidents* and West's *Symbolaeographia* offer the reader templates of good and 'perfect' wills from actual wills made by inhabitants of London, and both texts equally feature model testaments which emphasise how the respective testators are making their will while strong and in able mind.[15] Where Phayer and West incorporate these templates into a larger body of work which offers legal advice on a variety of subjects, Swinburne's text is an incredibly detailed instruction manual whose sole purpose is to explain the legal minutiae of wills and the implications of their construction, validity, and execution. In his work, Swinburne also offers a helpful definition of the essence of a testament as 'a just sentence of our

[12] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750*, 85. Houlbrooke also notes how the population of female testators was significantly lower than that of their male counterparts, but when eligible, they were more likely than most men to make wills. See A. L. Erickson. *Women and Property in Early Modern England*. Routledge: New York, 1993 for further information regarding this issue.
[13] Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750*, 125.
[14] The text was originally published c. 1540 with the title *A New Boke of Presidents.* With each new addition, known simply thereafter as *A Book of Presidents* (precedents), the text came to incorporate what the proper form of a will should take. The 1586 version of the work was the first version of the text to provide a 'good president of a testament'. Thomas Phayer, *A Book of Presidents* (London: 1586), 175^{r}.
[15] William West, *Symbolaeographia* (London: 1605), section 642, Oo3^{v}. The will that West includes in the portion of his text comments on the weakness of the testator's body and its 'vile' character. In this respect, West's example will does not conform to one aspect of Church advice about making one's will in health, but it does adhere to the protestant commonplace of viewing one's body and flesh as imperfect versions of the 'incorruptible' and 'immortal' bodies that will be bestowed upon the faithful on the day of 'resurrection'.

will; touching that we would have done after our death'.[16] Although Swinburne notes how the composition of the written testament should mirror the 'will' of the testator, his text does not give any single template for what an exemplary will should look like. Rather, *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and Last Wills* is an exemplary legal handbook of the period – one which offers an extremely thorough account of how to correctly compose a will in accordance with ecclesiastical and civil law. The influence of these guiding texts and handbooks consequently meant that wills of the late Elizabethan period 'like most legal documents' were designed to conform to a type of professional standardisation.[17]

Scholars have thus had to take into account scribal influence, legal templates, and the desire of clergy members to formalise the structure of wills influence when interpreting the individual features and overall proportion of the wills made in English communities.[18] Although wills may ostensibly provide a lucid insight into a testator's personality, their religious preferences, and possible patterns of piety in local populations, interpretative caution must be employed when analysing the preambles of these documents.

In respect to the creation of and stipulations contained within preambles, Duffy is keen to note that 'wills tell us more about the external constraints on testators than they do about shifting private belief'.[19] It would be unwise, then, to judge a testator's last will and testament as an uncensored expression of their individual faith.

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[16] Henry Swinburne, *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and Last Wills* (London: 1590), 3v. The relationship between the performance of the human subject's faculty will and the nature of the written will presented in this text is frequently played with in the drama of the period.

[17] Honigmann and Brock, *Playhouse Wills 1558-1642*, 18.

[18] It is also plausible that religious change, the 'diminution of clerical influence', and the fact that 'the number of the poor and propertyless grew much faster than those of the better off' caused the decline in will-making in the years after Henry VIII's death. Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England 1480-1750*, 86.

[19] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 507.

For instance, Duffy argues that '[t]here was no theological reason' why orthodox Catholics should not make increasing use of formulaic wills 'when in the course of the Reformation, it became expedient to do so'.[20] Hence, the omission of the naming of saints, 'the expression of reliance solely on the merits of Christ' and 'the repudiation of the value of good works' may indicate prudence to the 'possible and the approved', rather than reflecting a 'deep-seated change of heart' in the religious attitudes of early modern testators.[21]

It would seem that in some instances the preambles of wills reflect the willingness of testators to conform to scribal authority and templates of approved piety, rather than conveying the unadulterated last wishes of individuals at liberty to express their particular devotion to God. In this way, wills and testament may actually represent the wills of their testators in the form of willed self-censorship. Nevertheless, as Duffy stresses, attempting to gauge the acceptance and spread of religious doctrine through the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century from the preambles of wills is a task fraught with interpretative difficulties. It is evident, then, that a number of constitutional, religious, and economic factors affected the status of wills during this period. Bearing in mind the impact that Henry VIII's Acts of Succession (1533-43) had upon shaping the succession crises of the Tudor and Stuart dynasties, it is possible to see how the politics and policies associated with last wills and testaments had a significant effect upon the lives of the royalty and the general populace of early modern England.[22]

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[20] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 507. We must also take into account that the form of the preamble may also 'reflect the attitude of a scribe, rather than that of the testator'. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 509.

[21] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, 505, 523.

[22] These crises were born out of the Henry VIII's ability 'to designate the succession by his last will', circumventing standard rules of royal succession and inheritance. Mortimer Levine, *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question, 1558-1568* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), 151.

Research in this area has tended to focus on the significance that real wills and testaments had in the broader culture of early modern England while scholarship associated with the interpretation of fictional wills remains rather sparse. It would be appropriate, then, to provide a brief overview of the distinct ways in which dramatic texts represented and staged last wills and testaments. Doing so will help to confirm how the plays of the period reflected wider attitudes towards the variety of ideas associated with the will in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. In addition to this, I will demonstrate how early modern plays often used last wills and testaments as narrative devices in order to undermine the perceived purpose of wills as legal texts which document the legacy of human individuals.

One example of a play which focuses on the influence of a last will and testament upon the political landscape of the English nation is the collaborative play *Sir Thomas Wyatt* (c. 1602). This drama deals with the impact of Henry VIII's death in light of the Acts of Succession, emphasising the consequences that the execution of his will has upon future monarchical rule. Specifically, it depicts the troubles associated with the succession of Edward VI through to 'the ominous ascent of the Catholic Mary Tudor, against whose marriage to Philip II and whose denial of religious freedom' Sir Thomas Wyatt speaks.[23]

As well as tackling state politics, plays of this period addressed wills of a more personal nature. For example, the topic of the timeliness of will-making, as proposed in the 1549 Common Book of Prayer, is depicted in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602). In 3.4, Slender constructs a pun which makes light of the recommendation that wills should be made early, rather than on one's death bed. Responding to Anne

[23] A. J. Hoenselaars, "Shakespeare and the Early Modern History Play", in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's History* Plays, ed. Michael Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 29.

Page's question of 'What is your will?', Slender exclaims the following: 'My will! 'od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest indeed! I / ne'er made my will yet, I thank God; I am not such a sickly / creature, I give God praise' (3.4.55-58).[24] Where Slender's attitude to will-making is made in jest, Languebeau Snuffe's warning to the baron Montferrers in Act Two, Scene One of Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1611) is presented in all seriousness: 'you shall do well if you be sick to set your / state in present order. Make your will' (2.1.135-6).[25] The dialogue of these characters, though made in very different circumstances, attests to the creation of wills in sickness, rather than in health – views which would have stood in direct opposition to the recommendations of the clergy.

The advice of the Common Book of Prayer, on the other hand, is taken on board in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. This play depicts the Duchess creating her will in good health and 'in perfect memory' (1.1.362). The Duchess states that it would be better to make her will 'smiling ... Than in deep groans and terrible ghastly looks' because such illness would lead her to part with her 'guifts' in 'violent distraction' (1.1.366-67). Although she conforms to the advice of church ministers and of writers like Gouge, she avoids employing a member of the clergy or even a lay-scribe to help form her will. Instead, she uses the moment as an opportunity to seduce Antonio, utilising him as an 'Over-seer' (1.1.369) of her testation, eventually bequeathing herself to him in marriage. Given the connection that notions of willing have to sexuality and desire, it is unsurprising to find that *The Duchess of Malfi* and other plays of the period readily depict the creation and execution of wills in erotic

[24] William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor: Arden Third Series*, ed. Giorgio Melchiori (London: Cengage Learning, 2000).
[25] Cyril Tourner, *The Atheist's Tragedy, or, The Honest Man's Revenge*, ed. Irving Ribner (London: Methuen & Co, 1964).

terms. Indeed, the prominent connection between eroticism and the last will and testament can also be traced in a number of Shakespearean plays, namely *Julius Caesar*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *The Merchant of Venice*.

The Merchant of Venice uses the device of a last will and testament to shape the narrative of courtship in which Portia is forcibly made to play a part. As Portia describes, 'the word choose' is not one which indicates liberty, but rather signals how her particular desires are superseded by the conditions of her father's last will: 'I may neither choose who I / would nor refuse who I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will / of a dead father' (1.2.20-2). The imposition of male control over female will as sexual desire was, as discussed in the previous chapter, a common feature of the plays of the period, and the instruction that Portia's father gives for a casket lottery to determine who will become her husband seems to be a particularly pertinent example of the sexual inequalities inherent in the rules of patrimony. Portia is forced to conform to the demands of her deceased father and is made to remember the 'virtuous' (1.2.24) qualities of her father in doing so. The only hope she has to achieve her own desires is to employ her own 'will and skill' to 'maneuver skillfully' within the 'strictures' of law which frame the nature of Portia's identity as a possession of her father and her future husband, Antonio.[26]

The commemoration of male legacy is also construed in decidedly erotic terms in *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*. Disgruntled at the view they are forced to face while under Caesar's 'huge legs' as 'he doth bestride the narrow world / Like a colossus' (1.2.136-38), Cassius and his co-conspirators displace their wounded pride and

[26] Korda, "Dame Usury: Gender, Credit and (Ac)counting in the 'Sonnets' and 'The Merchant of Venice'", 140.

perceived powerlessness into homicidal tendencies.[27] Caesar's colossal *will* seems to be the cause of his enemies displeasure: it completely eclipses the fame and political authority that his rivals may hope to enjoy, leaving them to reflect upon the ignobility of their status as 'underlings' (1.2.140) and the possibility that they are destined only to find 'dishonourable graves' (1.2.137). Cassius's hyperbolic description of Caesar's power is, therefore, not merely an effective piece of rhetoric as it also fittingly foreshadows the potency that is posthumously attributed to Caesar's will, and prefigures how the commemoration of his legacy is construed in decidedly erotic terms.

The eventual enactment of Caesar's will (realised through the conditions of his last will and testament) occurs because he poses a threat to the Roman republic. As Brutus later expresses, Caesar's will seems to be the chief threat to the integrity of the Roman republic: 'Crown him that / And then I grant we put a sting in him / That at his will he may do danger with' (2.1.15-17). Brutus' description of Caesar, here, emphasises the danger of licensing Caesar's will with the authority of a crown. This collective desire for Caesar's death is actualised, appropriately, through the manipulation of his will.

> CAESAR
> Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.
>
> DECIUS
> Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause,
> Lest I be laughed at when I tell them so.
>
> CAESAR
> The cause is in my will.
> (2.2.69-71)

[27] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar: Arden Third Series*, ed. David Daniell (London: Thomson Learning, 1998).

Caesar is initially defiant about coming to the senate, but Decius changes his mind by offering an altered interpretation of Calphurnia's portentous dream. The awful significance and accuracy of Calphurnia's prophesies are inverted by the imposition of male influence over the representation of memory. Decius' rhetoric directly affects how her memories are interpreted by Caesar, causing Caesar's will to lead him to his demise.[28] Nevertheless, I would propose that Caesar's death does not merely confirm the ineffectiveness of his will in comparison to his conspirators', but rather, in Anthony's hands, Caesar's will, enforced through his testamentary bequests, is shown to exert tremendous influence throughout the rest of the play.

In describing the posthumous, testamentary will of Caesar, Anthony renews the power formerly stripped from Caesar's personal will through an erotic reappropriation of his memory:

> But here's a parchment, with the seal of Caesar.
> I found it in his closet. 'Tis his will.
> Let but the commons hear this testament –
> Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read –
> And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wound,
> And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,
> Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
> And, dying, mention it within their wills,
> Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
> Unto their issue. (3.2.125-134)

Anthony describes Caesar's will as *so* moving that the plebeians present would be incited to appropriate both Caesar's body and memory as property which they would bequeath in their own 'wills' as a 'rich legacy' for their own progeny. In such an act,

[28] The ease with which Caesar's will is manipulated here is echoed in Cinna the Poet's reflection on the power that his dreams have over directing his own will: 'I dreamt tonight that I did feast with Caesar, / And things unluckily charge my fantasy. / I have no will to wander forth of doors, / Yet something leads me forth' (3.3.1-4). Though ominous memories may serve to warn of impending doom, both Caesar's and Cinna's wills are shown to be easily swayed by their own curiosity.

Anthony is able to manipulate his audience's collective remembrance of Caesar to perpetuate the notion of Caesar's nobility. This prospective, united act of will-making is based, significantly, upon an erotic connection made between the lips of the commoners and the bloody body of Caesar.

Anthony appropriately puts his own lips and mouth to use in memorialising Caesar's legacy. Although he expresses a feigned rhetorical humility that he would lack the skill to properly employ 'sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths' to 'speak' for him (2.2.216-17), when urging the crowd to inspect Caesar's corpse, he more than adequately demonstrates his effectiveness at putting 'a tongue in every wound of Caesar' (3.2.219-220). By exhibiting the emperor's pierced mantle, Anthony manages to imbue the holes in Caesar's cloak with meaning, doing so by actively reimagining the events which took place for the benefit of his enraptured audience:

> Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:
> See what a rent the envious Caska made:
> Through this, the well-beloved Brutus stabbed,
> And as he plucked cursed steel away,
> Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it ...
> (3.2.168-172)

Anthony entices his audience to memorialise Caesar by interpreting a memory of his death that neither party was privy to. Creating such a memory is fittingly enacted by using the absent spaces in Caesar's mantle: each new hole acts as a space in which to emphasise and reemphasise the injustice of Caesar's fate. The heavily erotic imagery of tonguing, kissing, and penetration, all serve to 'stir up' the plebeians 'in a sudden flood of mutiny' (3.2.202), cultivating *pathos* in order to imbue Caesar's will with a power by which to utterly convince his audience of the merits of the fallen Roman.

This act as Gail Paster proposes 'reinvests Caesar's body with a portion of its original phallic power', though his wounds do more overtly display their affective power in this speech as bodily orifices which signify a fetishised 'female silence'.[29] However, it may be that Caesar's '"will" … his maleness', as figured by the internal drive which informs his last will and testament, plays a greater role in renegotiating the landscape of the Roman body politic within the play than Paster accounts for.[30]

Such is the potency of Anthony's memorialisation, and his attempt to inflame their passions, that he proposes that the plebeians 'have forgot the will I told you of' (3.2.229). Ironically, the excessive eroticisation of Caesar's will, generated through the symbolic use of his feminised body, leads the excited crowd to forget the very source of their excitement. Issuing this reminder allows Anthony to reemphasise the value that the will and testament holds in commemorating the body and memory of Caesar, and is finalised by providing details about the nature of Caesar's last bequest. As Anthony explains, Caesar has left

> His private arbours and new-planted orchards
> On this side Tiber. He hath left them you
> And to your heirs for ever: common pleasures
> To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.
> (3.2.237-40)

The last portion of this will ostensibly offers up these pastoral walking spaces for the enjoyment and recreation of all citizens of the republic, though the 'common pleasures' of Rome's people may also be interpreted as signifying the act of re/procreation itself. It is this testamentary bequest which encourages the plebeians to

[29] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993), 110-11.
[30] Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, 112.

indulge in the regenerative, and possibly generative power of "recreation", allowing for the wills of Cassius and Brutus to be curbed, and for Anthony to enshrine the popular memory of Caesar in the phrase: '"This was a man!"' (5.5.76). Caesar's original, internal power of will is depicted as being vulnerable to external influence, yet in the oration of Caesar's testament, Anthony cultivates the significance and influence of the original internal drive which shapes the content of Caesar's testamentary will. In death, Caesar's will is attributed with a potency that is inaccessible to him in life: a power of posthumous willing realised, crucially, through acts of erotic memorialisation. As such, Caesar's will both offers new erotic recreation for Rome's common masses, and recreates the memory of him as a figure of humility and generosity through Anthony's sexualised performance of his will.

Where a father's last will and the memory of his nobility frames the political freedom and limits of desire of a daughter and her suitor in *The Merchant of Venice*, the erotic commemoration of Julius Caesar's will and testament fashions the downfall of his murderers. Renegotiating the attributed force and function of the faculty of the will and the testamentary legacy in erotic terms is also a crucial element to the dramatic structure of *Troilus and Cressida*. However, this play places a more concentrated focus on how the power of the will may, in accordance with moral discourses of the period like Thomas Wright's, problematise normative visions of order, power, agency, identity and reality for many of the play's characters. Pandarus' epilogue in particular forms a fitting conclusion to how the will operates in this drama. Echoing Troilus' exposition on love – that 'the will is infinite and the execution confined; that the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit' (3.2.78-80) – Pandarus exclaims that the 'poor agent is despised' in the world because 'our endeavour be so desired and the performance so loathed' (5.11.35-39). This lament

originates from Troilus' curse that Pandarus should have to live in 'ignomy and shame' (5.11.33) of his indecent behaviour. Through this declaration, Troilus constructs a legacy for Pandarus' name as being connected to these illicit attributes: he wishes that Pandarus be remembered because of his deviant erotic habits.

Accepting his fate and the ignominy that his name would now signify, Pandarus is presented as attempting to conclude the play by offering the audience some prediction of what his future should hold – but he cannot do so. He instead promises to finalise his own legacy in 'some two months hence' where 'hence my will shall here be made' (5.11.52). The promise to perform his will at a *later* date is an act that primarily attempts to validate his role in the play's conclusion: his intent to produce a testamentary will in a proposed sequel of *Troilus and Cressida* would suggest that he wields the authority to provide a formal conclusion to the current play, and insinuate that its sequel would serve to represent a testamentary record of the outcome from the 'diseases' (5.11.56) he feels in his 'aching bones' (5.11.35). Be it shame, a lack of personal restraint, or actual venereal malady, Pandarus' "disease" is afforded no cure in this open-ended epilogue. Ultimately, his attempt to author a projected ending for his malady, as well as create a testament for himself, is undermined by the limited agency he is given in this particular dramatic world.

By trying to create a testament for himself in this scene, Pandarus seeks to project the classical past into the theatrical present, only to situate the final goal of his will in a dramatic future that will never come to pass. Even so, he reflects upon the fact that actually performing his will would have little effect, since 'some galled goose of Winchester would hiss' (5.11.54) from the 'brothers and sisters of the hold-door trade' (5.11.51) of the audience members. Here, Pandarus postpones the enactment of his final will because of the apparently sullied nature of the audience.

His promise to 'bequeath' his 'diseases' (5.11.56) to the audience (in the event that his will is enacted) is shown to be a redundant gesture, as the audience are already implicated to be diseased. Thus, Pandarus tries to impose order upon the play through a will that is entirely speculative, and one which would be of little import if it was realised. Pandarus' false promise serves to further emphasise how *Troilus and Cressida* depicts the will as actively undermining systems of order and individual power: the 'poor' human agent is despised on account of its relationship to the will, and it must perish because of this disease.[31]

As depicted in *The Merchant of Venice*, *Julius Caesar* and *Troilus and Cressida*, the testamentary will's function – to preserve the memory of Portia's father, Julius Caesar, and Pandarus – relies upon eroticising states of absence or annihilation. Testamentary remembrance is shown in *Julius Caesar* and *Troilus and Cressida* in particular to derive meaning from moments of destruction. Sensuality and eroticism seem to simultaneously enforce and undermine the significance of the will, as well as its power to shape modes of memorialisation in each play.

Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1607) also figures the last will and testament in erotic terms, but unlike *The Duchess of Malfi* and the Shakespearean plays mentioned, *Volpone* utilises the idea of false testation as a central dramatic device. Jonson's comedy centres around how Volpone derives personal pleasure, as well as profit, from duping Voltore, Corbaccio and Corvino into believing that they have each been chosen to be the sole heir of Volpone's estate. These scams are executed by Volpone's servant, Mosca, who presents himself as a witness to the writing or oral

[31] As both Pandarus' epilogue and the introductory epistle to the reader suggest, the play itself is shaped by the imposition of the will. See the *A Never Writer to an Ever Reader* at the play's introduction where the supposed author explains that the publication of the play is due to the enactment of the 'grand possessors' wills' (Preface, line 34).

execution of Volpone's will. Mosca then crafts an individual lie about the conditions of Volpone's last will for every character he cons. Following Mosca's advice, Corbaccio redrafts his own will to disinherit his son so that Volpone would be the 'sole heir' (1.4.95) of his fortune.[32] Mosca states that such an act would convince Volpone of Corbaccio's immense loyalty and kinship, and that Volpone would subsequently feel obliged to bequeath all of his own wealth to Corbaccio 'out of conscience, or mere gratitude' (1.4.108). Mosca likewise convinces Voltore that Volpone's wish for him to be his beneficiary was 'confirmed this morning; / The Wax is warm yet, and the ink scarce dry / Upon the parchment' (1.3.45-47). Furthermore, Mosca dupes Corvino into believing that Volpone, in his last words, named him as the recipient of his inheritance.[33] While Mosca gains Corvino's confidence, Volpone slips off to attempt to seduce Corvino's wife, Celia. Indeed, Mosca's deviousness and Volpone's unapologetically false will-making highlights some of the practicalities of, as well as the fears, surrounding oral and scribal modes of will-making in the period.[34]

Using the will to commit fraud also features prominently in Ulpian Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (1568). As I argued in chapter four of this thesis, Nichol Newfangle successfully manipulates the wills of the other knaves in the play through the use of a last will and testament. The contents of this last will suggest that a country estate will be bestowed upon whoever proves to be the most cunning and deceiving in their crimes: it will be 'given and so bequeathed to the falsest by will' (18), but it transpires

[32] Ben Jonson, *Volpone, or, The Fox*, ed. Brian Parker and David Bevington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).
[33] Corvino as 'Whom should he would have his heir?', for Mosca to simply reply '"Corvino"' (1.5.32).

that the last will and testament to which Nichol refers is actually fake.[35] Moreover, Nichol's actions prove him to be the most deceitful, and his fulfilment of Lucifer's commands serves to illustrate the corrupt nature of the human faculty of the will. I would argue that the primary reason why the rogues act upon Nichol's tantalising proposition is that at the time of the play's conception testators finally had the power to bestow their estate upon people other than their direct family. So both *Like Will to Like* and *Volpone* illustrate scenarios where the will is used as a central narrative device in imagined schemes of fraud, further exemplifying the dangers associated with the faculty of the will and its role in shaping the process of will-making.

Anxieties over the execution of the last will and testament were not merely limited to false testation or counterfeit wills. Where *Volpone* and *Like Will to Like* dramatise the problems caused by invalid written or oral wills, Middleton's *The Phoenix* (c. 1603) and the anonymously authored *The London Prodigall* (1607) emphasise the problems of prodigality for matters of inheritance. Each play explores the familial politics surrounding the passing of titles and estates onto sons who are initially deemed to be unworthy of their father's legacy. However, these dramas are equally resolved by showing how each son actually deserves to receive their inheritance: *The London Prodigall* depicts the reformation of the prodigal son, Matthew Flowerdale, who repents utterly for his wanton ways; Prince Phoenix's

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[34] Thomas Middleton's *Michaelmas Term* (1605) also depicts the use of false testation and a feigned death as plot devices. Acting in a similar manner to Volpone, Quomodo (a draper) hatches a plan to write a will and fake death 'in order to monitor the passage of his legacy' and to ensure the 'cozening of a young country gentleman named Richard Easy of his lands in Essex'. Chloe Porter, "A Little Pig's Will: Anthropomorphism, Materiality, and the False Testator in Early Seventeenth-Century Fictional Wills", *Journal of Northern Renaissance* 5 (2013), paragraph 9, accessed March 05 2015, http://www.northernrenaissance.org/a-little-pigs-will-anthropomorphism-materiality-and-the-false-testator-in-early-seventeenth-century-fictional-wills/

[35] Nichol's actions thus prove him to be the most deceitful, and his fulfilment of Lucifer's commands serves to illustrate the corrupt nature of the human faculty of the will.

actions prove his essentially virtuous nature to his father, thus ensuring his inheritance of his father's Dukedom.

As this brief summary shows, it is apparent that a number of early modern plays took time to reflect upon the status and cultural significance of last wills and testaments. The plays of the period seem to exploit the association between the written will and the faculty will by representing the last will and testament as a manifestation of a testator's power of will in accordance with Henry Swinburne's sentiment that the legal will and testament is 'a just sentence of our will'.[36] Fulfilling the demands of these last wills highlights another way that the operation of the individual's will was shown to be susceptible to manipulation by the erratic and flawed nature of the faculty will itself. Furthermore, the dramatic representation of will-making touches on numerous anxieties associated with the creation of legacies, their legitimacy, and the familial politics associated with inheritance. In this closing section, I wish to place particular emphasis on the use of the last will and testament as a dramatic device in Thomas Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament*. I will show how this play employs multiple notions of the will (as a dramatic character, a faculty power and a legal document), in order to illustrate the redundancy of every act of human willing.

Summer's Last Will

Summer's Last Will and Testament (c. 1592) provides a dramatic response to the

[36] Swinburne, *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and Last Wills*, 3[v].

bleak socio-economic circumstances that gripped late sixteenth-century London.[37] Written 'for performance in the magnificent fifteenth-century banqueting hall at the archbishop's palace' in Croydon during a particularly virulent outbreak of the plague in London, the play dramatises the relationship between the personified season of Summer and his servants (the other embodied seasons) as Summer attempts to make his last will and testament.[38] The drama largely focuses on Summer's effort to itemise the possessions that should be passed on to his immediate successors, Autumn and Winter.

Summer, as the ruling season in the world, spends the bulk of the play interrogating his attendants over what they accomplished during the summer months. His rather sober temperament is contrasted with the mischievous jollity of the other "summer" character, Will Summers. Will, like Summer, casts judgement upon the other seasons as they explain how they have spent these months wasting Summer's legacy. Portrayed as being largely antagonistic to the rest of the cast, Will Summers also provides much of comic relief in the play by heckling Summer's attendants over their actions, as well as occasionally railing at the audience.

The persona of Will Summers is based on the qualities of Henry VIII's court jester, Will Summers, and is played by a professional actor apparently named "Toy".[39] Toy (Will) takes this role in order to exact revenge upon the playwright for

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[37] Nashe was briefly under the patronage of Archbishop Whitgift during 1592, and as P. W. White suggests, it is very likely that Nashe wrote the play for performance that year. P. W. White, "Archbishop Whitgift and the Plague in Thomas Nashe's 'Summers Last Will and Testament'", in *Religion and Drama in Early Modern England: The Performance of Religion on the Renaissance Stage,* ed. J. H. Degenhardt and Elizabeth Williamson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 140. The play was supposedly presented to celebrate Whitgift's overturning of the more strict policies surrounding popular festivities by his predecessor Edmund Grindal.

[38] White, "Archbishop Whitgift and the Plague in Thomas Nashe's 'Summers Last Will and Testament'", 140.

[39] Toy represents both a metatheatrical figure, as well as the name of a possible actor who first played the part. Another Will Summers character is presented in Samuel Rowley's, *When you See Me, You Know Me, or The Most Famous Chronicle History of King Henry VIII* (London, 1605).

not giving him, as he describes, 'the best part' (87-8) in the play: the role of Summer itself.[40] This situation causes Will Summers to announce to the audience that he cares 'not what I say now, for I play no more then you heare' (85-6). Some of his dialogue, he admits, is even given 'extempore' (without premeditation or even cued notes) (87). Being so aggrieved, he threatens to 'play the knaue in cue' (94) and to 'sit as a *Chorus* and flout the *Actors* and him [the author] at the end of euery Sceane' (91-2). This is done primarily to appease his own sense of vanity so that even when playing the role of a fool, he will be able to influence the performance of the play as 'indecorum incarnate'.[41] These metatheatrical techniques help to denigrate the objective of the play and thus the legitimacy of Summer's attempt to account for and execute his legacy, as well as intensifying the influence that Will wields over the drama. Indeed, as Will declares in his opening, vitriolic diatribe, 'I know they will not interrupt me, for fear of marring all' (92-3). Will is certain that the rest of the cast will be too frightened to disturb his railing for fear of ruining the whole performance.

Confident in his own capabilities, Will attempts to exert his own will over *Summer's Will*, using his rhetorical recklessness as a means to threaten proper dramatic decorum and to jeopardise the presentation of the play. Such is the triumph of Will's bold (though premeditated) ploy to control the action of the drama that one performance of *Summer's Last Will* gave cause for Sir John Harington (1561-1612) to name the play as 'Wil somers will', rather than *Summer's Last Will*.[42] Even though he

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[40] Thomas Nashe, *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, in *The Works of Thomas Nashe, Edited from the Original Texts by Ronald B. McKerrow, Vol. III*, ed. F. P. Wilson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958). This edition of the play does not have any corresponding scene or act numbers. Line numbers will be used hereafter.

[41] G. R. Hibbard, *Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 102.

[42] This is a textual note made by Harington in his version of the playlist. See Marie Axton, "Summer's Last Will and Testament: Revel's End", in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 266.

is denied the chief role of Summer (the monarch of all seasons), Will does reclaim some authority in the play by assuming the role of an alternative, cantankerous Summer so that he may execute his own aggrieved will. Taking on this part, Will acts to evaluate Summer's life, his demise, and to eventually pass judgement on the quality and features of the will that Summer leaves to the world.

Will's assessment of Summer's legacy is primarily conveyed in the form of railing or jesting, the success of which depends on his extensive rhetorical abilities. His capacity to shift between a natural, colloquial idiom and the heightened language he is forced to speak in the prologue highlights the fluid social role that he performs throughout the drama. I would agree with Holbrook's reading of Will's character as "realistic" because he performs the part of an outsider to elite society, but one who also makes inside jokes about courtly and aristocratic life.[43] While Will's informality and playfulness allow for a connection to be made between himself and his audience (founded upon his knowledge and preservation of courtly ideals), they also flagrantly flout elitist formalities of decorum and genteel verbiage: '[r]ather than opposing courtly fabulation, Will's "realism" is a socially specific perspective made available to a privileged audience'.[44] Will Summers thus exerts power in the play through the use of his dominant 'discursive facility' – his rhetorical flair enables his freedom to converse freely in both elevated and common registers.[45] Moreover, Will's social fluidity is contrasted with Summer's own rigidly formal character, which is portrayed as being bound to the strict conventions of his high station. Summer is also shown to

[43] Peter Holbrook, *Literature and Degree in Renaissance England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), 66.
[44] Holbrook, *Literature and Degree in Renaissance England*, 66. As mentioned previously, the play's first audience was most probably an elite coterie invited to Archbishop Whitgift's Croydon Palace in 1592.
[45] Holbrook, *Literature and Degree in Renaissance England*, 68.

suffer from the constant reminder of his inevitable fate, but while Summer's will (as a personal legacy) signifies his eventual doom, Will Summers presents his improvised dramatic persona as well as his rhetorical skill as tools by which he will gratify his own desires. Will's will is therefore achieved in mocking the failed attempts by Summer to exert control over the bequests of his own last will and testament.

Summer declares that his will should be enacted when the 'decay' (108) that he suffers causes his 'death-day' (140), but before Summer even outlines the role he will take in the play, Will Summers provides a rather cynical interpretation of Summer's inevitable passing. 'What can be made of Summers last will / & Testament?' (77-8) he jeers at the audience after censuring the author as a 'Coxcombe' (74). He answers for them by suggesting that the audience may derive just as much from the play as was taken from 'Gyllian of Brayn / -fords will, where shee bequeathed a score of farts amongst / her friends' (78-80). It transpires that this scatological joke is a rather appropriate way with which to present Summer to the audience, since the season has been touched with plague 'that reigns in most places in this latter end of summer' and 'must come in sicke' (80-2) to execute its legacy.

The performance of Summer's will is ultimately dependent on how well his attendants have managed the gifts given to them in the summer months, so before he makes his 'final testament' Summer needs to take stock of his possessions. Summer expects his attendants to have shown restraint in regards to their expenditure, and for them to give something back to Summer when summer ends. In order to assess what remains of his legacy, Summer calls his officers to explain their actions: 'of the wealth I gave them to dispose, / Know what is left, I may know what to give' (151-52). The characters of Ver (Spring), Solstitium, Sol, Orion, Bacchus and Harvest account for how they have acted in the first half of the year. Unfortunately for

Summer, where he would like to find moderation in the use of the resources bestowed upon his servants, he actually discovers that his offerings have been liberally consumed.

Admonishing Ver's own immoderate spending, Summer denounces him as a 'monstrous vnthift … the seas vast throate, in so short tract of time, / Deuoureth nor consumeth halfe so much' (237-39). Harvest is similarly accused, but his reply to Summer's accusation of excessive spending illuminates the panic and greed that lies at the heart of the latter's attempts to reclaim what he believes to be his own. Harvest asks 'what would you / haue more? Eat me out of my apparell if you / will, if you suspect mee for a miser' (887-89). Harvest has nothing but his own clothes left to offer Summer because the world that Summer rules over relies on Harvest's spoils to sustain itself. Such a response demonstrates the necessity of Harvest's liberality. Realising the importance of Harvest's status leads Summer to eventually apologise for his previous criticism of him, as he declares that Harvest 'doest me the best seruice of all' (921). It seems then that Harvest, rather than Summer, has been acting in the world's best interests by allowing the riches given to him to be spent. Equally, it transpires that Harvest's spoils were never Summer's to reclaim. Summer's will appears to be founded on uncertain ground because the offerings he tries to take back are not his to repossess and as he slowly comes to realise, he may actually have nothing to bequeath in his will. *Summer's Last Will*, like a range of other plays of the period, explicitly challenges the ultimate purpose and legitimacy of will-making. In the attempt to reclaim crops from the seasons so that he may finalise his legacy, the impulse behind Summer's objective, as Hutson suggests, is presented in such a way as to undermine 'the concept of man as autonomous master of his "own" circumstantial

and spiritual resources'.[46] Hence, Summer's endeavour to control the features of his legacy is shown to be rather pointless.

While this play is replete with merriment, promoting a 'festive solidarity across class differences' in parts, what is made apparent in Summer's futile and rather deluded examination of his servants is 'the inequities and injustices of a system that addresses problems of hunger and poverty only during holiday'.[47] Human willing is shown to have little power to remedy this famine, and will-making by seemingly authoritative individuals is shown to be ineffectual against the passage of time as well as the actions of others. In this respect, the play places focus on Will Summer's own selfish will as a means to both expose the plight of those who will suffer from a poor harvest and the plague, and to satirise the attempts of the lordly Summer to control the shape his own legacy.

The incompatibility of Summer's desires with the reality of English pastoral life is further emphasised in his severe reaction to the actions of Winter's servants (Backwinter and Christmas). Christmas is criticised by Summer as being a 'snudge' (1722), a miser who should serve to be a 'god' of 'hospitality' (1634) rather than being the bitter churl that he is. On the other hand, Backwinter is banished by Summer and told never to return to his 'fertile bounds' (1792) because of the vindictiveness Backwinter shows against the inhabitants of the earth and 'what so e'er brings mankinde any good' (1769). Where Summer previously chastised his servants for displaying a lack of frugality, he seems equally concerned with the excessive miserliness of the seasons who will eventually inherit the earth, since Backwinter's

[46] Lorna Hutson, *Thomas Nashe in Context* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 160.
[47] C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 65; White, "Archbishop Whitgift and the Plague in Thomas Nashe's *Summers Last Will and Testament*", 151 respectively.

and Christmas' attitudes pose a threat to the future health and happiness of the world. Hoping to demonstrate that he is able to wield at least some power over the fate of the earth, Summer shapes his final will to punish Christmas and Backwinter for their malicious attitudes.

Summer's eventual passing provides an allegorical illustration of the similarity between the ephemeral nature of Summer's life and human existence. This is best exemplified by the sombre tone of the play's final dirge, which is entitled 'Adieu, farewell earth's bliss' (1574). As the song details, 'The world uncertain is … All things to end are made' (1575 and 1584). The refrain that occurs in each verse 'I am sick, I must die: / Lord, have mercy on us' (1579-80) conveys the utter dejection and inevitability of Summer's departure, in addition to foreshadowing the necessity and simultaneous futility of his will-making. This song emphasises how Summer's jurisdiction and power over the world are only temporary, and that it is only the 'good Lord' who should be relied upon to deliver the world 'From winter, plague & pestilence' (1878). 'All things' are indeed made to end, but whether or not God will intervene in the world is ultimately unknowable. Summer's last will is thus completed when he and his attendants realise that the fate of the natural world is in the hands of a higher power. Death's inevitable entry into the world undermines Summer's last effort to control the future through the force of his will, accentuating the hopelessness of his endeavour to enact change within the world.

The representation of Summer in this play is informed by the foreknowledge of his eventual demise; his final resting place will be 'Silence' (1869), as he himself suggests. The conclusion of the play, therefore, corresponds to an observation made previously by Ver (one of Summer's attendants) about the transitory nature of the world:

> it was made of nothing,
> and it must to nothing. Wherefore, if wee will doe the will
> of our high Creatour (whose will it is that it passe to
> nothing), we must helpe consume it to nothing'.
> (256-59)

Unable to reap any of the wealth he previously bestowed upon his minions, Summer realises that he must come to nothing after bequeathing the last of his gifts before being obliged to leave the world to 'dwell in desolation' (1868). His will is forced to adhere to the will of God who determines that Summer must 'pass to nothing'. Summer's subservience to God's will exemplifies another way that the will and testament was used to expose the personal folly associated with the operation of the faculty of the will, as well as the nature of will-making. Such notions of nothingness, non-existence and eradication, used to encapsulate Summer's lack of power, are also shown to be crucial for the representation of another will: Will Summers.

While contemplating his missed opportunity to play the chief role of Summer at the beginning of the drama, Will decides to assume the role of a knavish 'ghost' who makes 'so much vse of this word *without* / in everything' (13-14). Will is presented to the audience initially as lacking the necessary equipment and apparel to play his part correctly since he is 'without money, without garters, without girdle, with-/ out a hat-band, without poynts to my hose' (11-12). He appears to be 'without' the role he wanted, as well as being 'without' the proper costume that will allow him to play this lesser role, yet this lack of visible dramatic authority works in Will's favour. The deficiencies in his costume, combined with the grievances he has over the part he is forced to play, serve to irritate him further and provoke him to more wittily

rail upon the players and audience. Unlike Summer, Will Summers uses his apparent shortcomings – his nothingness – to legitimise and enhance the authority of his power to will what he desires within the course of the play. Will's will is enhanced by his own vacuous nature, in stark contrast to how Summer's own will is represented.

At the end of the prologue he has been forced to deliver, Will Summer states that 'Vain glozers, gather what you will. Spite, spell backwards what you canst. As the Parthians fight, / flying away, so will we prate and talke, but stand to nothing that we say' (70-72). After delivering these lines, Will immediately mocks the author's sardonic suggestion that nothing said in the play should be taken seriously, posing this question to the audience: 'How say you, my masters, do you not laugh at him / for a Coxcomb?' (73-74). Will Summers seems to ridicule the rhetorical defence that the author constructs against any detractors of the play, or those who would misinterpret the meaning of it, continuing to ask the audience 'What can be made of Summers last will / & Testament?' (77-78). As previously noted, Will suggests that the audience should view this play as having the same merits as 'a score of farts' (79). This opinion would actually seem to be compatible with the appraisal the author presents in the prologue – that the drama is of little consequence and that nothing should be taken from the play. Furthermore, Will Summers' subsequent actions seem to accentuate how both the nature of the play as well as his own identity may be understood to be devoid of apparent meaning – standing for 'nothing'. He is content to be part, not of a play, but of a 'shewe' (75). Even so, what Will Summers demonstrates in his part of this 'show' is his dexterity in presenting himself as an insignificant character whose words and actions are shown to be nothing of the sort. Will is presented as a self-willed character who derides the will of Summer by harnessing the notion of nothingness: he founds his identity upon his connection to 'nothing' and consequently

imports meaning to Summer's will because of it.

Will Summer's jesting is an important factor in emphasising how the particularities of Summer's own will are of little consequence. It transpires that Summer's last deed is to imprison Backwinter for the benefit of those who live on earth. Such an action seems to be an admirable aspect of Summer's will, but Will pours scorn on Summer's decision to banish Backwinter and scoffs at the threat Backwinter represents to the world:

> This *Backwinter*
> playes a rayling part to no purpose; my small learning findes no reason for it …
> so he [the author] brings him in stamping and raging as if he were madde, when his father is a iolly milde quiet olde man, and stands still and does nothing.
> (1806-07, 1810-13)

Will Summers can find no dramatic purpose for Backwinter's actions. Winter, Backwinter's father, is also judged to be inadequate in this situation because he fails to stop his son's churlish behaviour – he 'stands still and does nothing'. In Will's eyes, Winter's failure to chastise his son's misbehaviour highlights Winter's inability to play the role of father. Again, where doing nothing or having no real purpose illustrates the failings and inauthentic nature of other characters, Will Summers seems to revel in the apparently inappropriate role he himself assumes. Nevertheless, the influence he is able to exert through his will, while assuming the role of Will, does have its limitations.

By interrogating and railing on Summer's servants, Will Summer acts as a farcical double of Summer himself. While Will is free to chide Summer's attendants, Will is shown to lack any authority over the figures that Summer commands. This deficiency is clearly displayed when Summer's servant Bacchus forces Will to drink

'against [his] will' (1061). We may interpret Will as suffering Bacchus' demands in good humour, but Will still comments that the quantity of ale Bacchus offers him would enough to 'burst' him (1056). Ultimately, Will *must* concede to Bacchus' command to 'doe what you / are born to do' (1058-59) but following Bacchus' orders results in Will being soaked in beer. Having been treated in such a manner, Will proceeds to reflect upon the pointlessness of immoderate drinking and the licentious nature of tavern life, while cursing Bacchus for dubbing him 'Sir Robert Tospot' (1071). Summer perceives Will's forced intoxication as an example of the despicable nature of his servants and the lack of control he seems to have over their actions: 'Ile call my servants to account said I? / A bad account: worse servants no man hath' (1142-43). Bacchus' unrestricted revelry thus illustrates how both Will Summers' will and Summer's will simultaneously strive in vain against the inevitable progress of the seasons and the lesser spirits which inhabit a world whose fate is deemed to be beyond their control.

Nashe presents Will Summers as a character who lacks the dramatic role and costume in order to fulfil his egotistical will, and these deficiencies fuel his ill-will against Summer and his attempt to enact his final will. His malice is illustrated throughout, as he acts to criticise Summer for achieving nothing, notes how his will has amounted to nothing, and remarks that Summer will become nothing in death. Furthermore, his role, just as his costume, will be 'put off' once 'the play / be done' (90-91). Acting in accordance to Ver's sentiment that 'if we will doe the will / of our high Creatour … we must help consume it [the world] to nothing' (257-59), Will Summers, the faculty of the will, and the will as a physical testament are all connected here with notions of nothing or the absence of power. Will himself concludes the play by exclaiming that he must seem to be a barbarian since no one understands him:

'*Barbarus hic ego sum, quia non intelligor ulli*' (207). What is to be understood from Will's role in the play is that his relationship to a lack of propriety and costume actually serves to validate his dramatic function. Being '*without* / in everything' (13-14) allows him to be the 'ghost' (6) of a man who acts to question the legitimacy of Summer's existence, as well as the dramatic purpose of the other characters of the play.

Like many of the other plays discussed previously, *Summer's Last Will* unfolds to admonish the attempt to maintain control over the execution of the faculty of the will, but does so by tracing the will's connection to the ephemeral nature of human existence via the dramatic device of the last will and testament. If we are to view this play in light of Swinburne's sentiment, that the last will is 'a just sentence of our will', then we may understand Nashe's drama to emphasise how the human subject is sentenced to be relatively powerless to alter the course of its fate.[48] Equally, setting Will Summer's pseudo-realistic character against the symbolic portrayal of Summer accentuates how creating a fitting legacy for oneself may be truly beyond the scope of man's influence.

Will's performance of a dead man, a 'ghost' fool who seeks to demonstrate the futile qualities of mortal life, ironises Summer's attempts to construct a will that will fulfil his desires beyond the reach of his own existence. Toy's actions as Will, however, also serve to show how his own will may be just as futile and meaningless as Summer's will. But rather than detracting from his dramatic significance, Will's powerlessness gives his character purpose within the play – a purpose which is appropriately enabled by the ephemeral quality of his dramatic persona as a figuration of a will. Will's actions are crucial in showing how the concept of the will – as a

faculty and as a physical testament – is used to define the conclusion of human existence. The will (ironically – particularly in the case of the last will and testament) is thus deemed to be important because it shows us how the meaning and control we wish to have over our lives will inevitably be expunged.

Interestingly, the association between death and finality shapes how the significance of the will (as a faculty power and a legal document) is represented in both *Summer's Last Will and Testament* and, to return to a play discussed in the previous chapter, *Tamburlaine the Great.* In these plays the representation of the will exposes the duality of its nature: its completion is desired by the human subject but the outcome of its operation may expose the futility of willing itself. The use of the will in *Tamburlaine the Great* and *Summer's Last Will and Testament* shows how the will, in both forms, symbolises the ultimate limitations of human action and the inescapable nature of mortality. By playing with notions of wills, these plays emphasise the role that multiple concepts of the will take in defining life and death in the human individual's world, conveying the importance of this concept to shape the meaning of existence.

Throughout this thesis, I have exposed the ways in which early modern English writers conceived of the nature of the will, the powers attributed to it and its purpose. This closing chapter has stressed how the will as both individual power and legal document is given meaning, paradoxically perhaps, through the human subject's inevitable removal from existence. Taking these factors into account, I would not only suggest that the will was used as a dramatic device with which to contemplate the various anxieties associated with personal legacy and the erotic politics of inheritance,

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[48] Swinburne, *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and Last Wills*, 3[v].

but that it is also used to memorialise the redundancy of its own execution.

CONCLUSION

THE LEGACY OF THE WILL

'Theorising the Will in Early Modern English Literature' is an attempt to clarify the confusing position that the will held in the writing of the period. The previous chapters have shown how important theories of the faculty will were for the philosophy of the period, the problems which occur in its conception, as well as how dramatic writing in early modern England was an important site for playing out some of the complexities associated with notions of the will.

In chapter seven, I argued that a key function of the will in the writing of the period was to symbolise the conclusion of the human subject's existence. It would be fitting to end this thesis by looking to another fictional early modern will in order to outline the full extent of the meanings associated with the multiple conceptions of the will that have been discussed. John Donne's poem 'The Will' will be examined for this purpose.

John Donne 'The Will'

'The Will' tells of an unidentified speaker's final address to 'Great Love' (2), specifying who shall inherit the speaker's possessions after he breathes his 'last gasp' (1).[1] The poem is comprised of six stanzas which detail what gifts the speaker will

[1] John Donne, "The Will", in *John Donne: The Major Works*, ed. John Carey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

bequeath when he dies. Its unifying theme is that the speaker's offerings are wholly inappropriate for those who would receive them. Where the first six lines of each nine-line stanza catalogue the various recipients of the speaker's possessions, the last three lines detail the connections between the recipients of the speaker's gifts.

> Before I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe,
> Great Love, some legacies; here I bequeath
> Mine eyes to Argus, if mine eyes can see;
> If they be blind, then, Love, I give them to thee;
> My tongue to Fame; to ambassadors mine ears;
> To women or the sea my tears.
> Thou, Love, hast taught me heretofore,
> By making me serve her who had twenty more,
> That I should give to none but such as had too much before.
> (1-9)

Here, the speaker remarks how Love has *made* him 'serve her who had twenty more'. His passionate attentions, bestowed upon this unknown 'her', are surplus to requirement, just as his 'tears' are superfluous to 'women' and 'the sea'. Where the sea has no need of more salt water (since it is comprised of such), 'women' require no more tears cried for them since so many have been shed for them already.[2] Although each stanza presents a distinct variation on the conceit that the speaker's gifts are superfluous, the principal focus of the poem is to detail the speaker's subservient position to the personification of 'Love'. The speaker dedicates each stanza to Love, suggesting that it alone has influenced the reasoning behind how he will depart from the world. This dedication to Love binds the metaphorical continuity of each stanza together.

The first five stanzas show how the speaker wishes to 'undo' 'the world' by

[2] There is also the possibility that these lines could indicate that women are so full of false tears already that they do not require any more given to them.

dying (46-7). Love's dominance over this will (that is, the poem which can be read as a last will and testament) and over the speaker's sense of volition (his faculty will) is emphasised by the initial depiction of the wasteful and unreasonable gifts that the speaker will give in death. These bequests serve to signify the pain of loving 'where no love received can be' (17). It would seem, then, that the speaker's will is undermined by his subjugation to Love (this is accentuated in his opening request to Love to 'let' him 'breathe' his particular 'legacies'). The speaker's apparent subservience to Love is, however, turned on its head in the closing stanza where he attempts to regain control over his sense of will.

At the end of the fifth stanza, the ultimate purpose of these deliberately impractical gifts is revealed: they are apparently given to spite Love and to scorn the influence that it has wielded over the speaker.

> Thou, Love, by making me love one
> Who thinks her friendship a fit portion
> For younger lovers, dost my gifts thus disproportion.
>
> Therefore I'll give no more; But I'll undo
> The world by dying; because love dies too.
> Then all your beauties will be no more worth
> Then gold in Mines, where none can draw it forth
> And all your graces no more use shall have
> Than a sundial in a grave.
> Thou Love taught'st me, by making me
> Love her, who doth neglect both me and thee,
> To invent, and practise this one way, to annihilate all three.
> (43-54)

In the concluding remark of the fifth stanza, the speaker gives justification for his proposed actions – he will 'give no more', but will 'undo / the world by dying'. We see here that the vitality of the speaker himself runs in parallel to the form of this literary will. By ending the will the speaker is attesting to the end of himself: 'this one way, to annihilate all three'. In this enactment of authorial intention, to both create

and end his will, the speaker seeks to undo Love's control and teachings.

The witty conclusion of the poem crucially proposes that the speaker does indeed have the power to shape the circumstances of his own death, by giving the world the gift of death in his literary will. Its final stanza conveys how this self-destruction should be understood as an act which is undertaken by the speaker so that he may recover liberty over the quality of both his faculty will as well as the written (or spoken) will. The unreciprocated physical desire felt by the speaker for his mistress is created by Love, yet this rejection has enabled the speaker to recognise and act to rectify the subservient position he has been forced to take. Such a realisation stimulates the speaker into one final act of giving – one which causes the destruction of himself, his desires and Love itself.

'The Will', then, is as much a will and testament to the speaker's life as it is a testament of the speaker's wish to recuperate his control over his will through the use of his literary wit. It acts as an elegiac marker of the speaker's own ingenuity, since the validity of his testament is only fully realised once he renounces his mistress, Love itself and the whole world, revealing that the final gift he bequeaths will be universal death. The transitory nature of the speaker's life, as well as the fickleness of his previous desire, is renounced by this poetical will, but such a conclusion marks the debilitating consequences of attempting to sever the self from Love's desires: the effort to restore his freedom to a state before Love's intervention will be as much use to him in his passing as 'a sundial in a grave'. This literary will would therefore serve to annihilate the very world that it inhabits in order to stress its own significance.

Echoing the actions of Summer and Tamburlaine, when faced with the threat of eradication, Donne's speaker focuses on shaping a legacy for himself through the force of his will. Controlling the operation and representation of the will is vital to

how the speaker's past, present and future identities are constructed. The validity of the speaker's will (signified by the poem itself and the repossession of the will he seeks to achieve through it) is justified through the poem's didactic function: its completion shows how the speaker has used the lesson given to him by Love to teach himself about how he should recover his identity. Like Summer and Tamburlaine, the speaker here has the foresight to acknowledge that he will perish, yet in contrast to Summer the speaker here actively embraces death and his own human weakness, since it will confirm the potency of his will, and last will.

This poem is important for this thesis for a number of reasons. As I argued in the opening section, writers who address the issue and the complexity of the will in this period often struggle to reconcile the intended purpose of the will with the potential waywardness of its operation. Similarly, as chapter four proposed, the didactic function of many Tudor interludes and morality plays was to instruct the individual as to how and why they should seek to control their will. The difficulty in controlling the will, as shown in *Like Will to Like* and *The Marriage of Wit and Science*, is once again depicted in the performance of the speaker's will in Donne's 'The Will'. In this poem, the subjugation of the speaker's will to the demands of Love eventually teaches him how to achieve liberation from desire, though this can only be realised by the eradication of his will from the world.

'The Will' also shows how the speaker constructs his testament in malice, using this written will to convey the pain and spite he feels because of Love. Recognising the potency of human desire, 'The Will' shows how order must be imposed on the will so that the individual may reap the benefits of its use, but this effort comes at the price of the speaker's own life. Such a conclusion parallels the arguments I proposed in chapters five and six, where I suggested that trying to impose

control over the will to free oneself from subjugation or oppression may actually help to illustrate the lack of power individuals hold over their own lives. This ill-will gives meaning to the circumstances of the speaker's eventual fate, but just as the ill-will is eradicated from the dramatic world of early modern English plays, the attempt to use the will to achieve personal liberty results in self-destruction in Donne's poem.

Furthermore, as was explored in chapter seven, the speaker's final act in Donne's poem is to use the will to define his legacy. This poem (as a written will) acknowledges the constraints placed upon the faculty will, and is created in order to anticipate the speaker's eventual annihilation from the world by authoring the conditions of his own death. In this act the speaker seeks to reclaim control over the meaning and signification of his present and future identity. Defining the qualities of one's own will is presented as being the central concern of this poem, highlighting the primary importance of the human will to give meaning to existence. Taking all of these factors into account, we may then understand 'The Will' as a text which offers a significant engagement with the taxonomy of the word "will", and one which exemplifies the importance of the will to the formation of early modern notions of desire, power, authority, order, and death.[3]

As I have argued throughout, the will is a somewhat contested concept in Elizabethan and Jacobean writing, but defining its various characteristics forms an important part of both canonical and non-canonical early modern literature. I have shown how imaginative and non-imaginative works of the period seem to revel in the problems

[3] I would strongly contest J. B. Leishman's assessment of Donne's poem "The Will": 'This, although formally very characteristic, and an astonishing example of that prodigious wit which Donne's contemporaries so admired, is not, I need scarcely insist, a very serious poem, or even a very important one'. J. B. Leishman, *The Monarch of Wit: An Analytical and Comparative Study of the Poetry of John Donne* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1951), 233.

that arise from the use of the will, and how they are invested in the difficult task of trying to define its nature. Dramatic and non-dramatic literature of the period portrays the will as a primary faculty in the human subject's soul which operates to shape human action and which informs the nature of morality and salvation, yet determining what the faculty will is and how it works was a considerable problem for writers of this period.

Although writers like Wright, Hooker, Jewell and Perkins attempt to classify the nature, location and hierarchical position of the will in relation to other intellectual powers within the human subject, their efforts largely serve to illustrate how the will was judged to be an internal faculty associated with a rather ambiguous set of characteristics. The will, as proposed by these writers, had a pivotal part to play in fashioning an individual's moral actions and spiritual fate. Conversely, the will was also simultaneously described as being extremely vulnerable to its own erratic operation, or that its function was inherently subservient to the nature of God's own will. Such ambiguity is exacerbated by the fact that these works fail to define this faculty without inconsistencies or contradictory claims arising in their arguments. For the most part, early modern writers seem to agree that the will should be governed by reason or the intelligence, but this thesis has shown how the literature of the period presents the primary feature of the will as waywardness. Because of this, the will is often represented as a rogue agent in the soul or psyche, whose actions undermine the tenuous hierarchy of internal powers that exists in the human subject. The will is a required but dangerously destructive aspect of being human.

The 'Performance' section of this thesis indicated how the will was used as a common literary them, in various forms, to explain the nature of the human subject and the quality of its moral transgressions. Unlike the depiction of the will in the

Platonic philosophy of Renaissance Italy, it is rare to see the will portrayed in a positive manner in Tudor and Jacobean writing. Writers and dramatists of the period generally recognise the ability that the will has to potentially lead the individual to the good or even salvation by following the will of God, but the broadly Protestant theatre of England tends not to present the will as a beneficial quality of the self. Tudor interludes depict the importance of using the will for the good, but however positive this conception of the will may seem, plays such as *Like Will to Like* and *The Marriage of Wit and Science* show how the effort to learn self-control over the will may be futile. Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists in particular seem to be less concerned with illustrating how the will may be used as a tool for the good than with exploring how its potential for malevolence and sin may illuminate the iniquitous qualities of humanity.

Twelfth Night and *The Malcontent* make particular use of the popular representation of the will as a corrupted faculty. Malevole's and Malvolio's actions demonstrate how the "ill-will" is associated with the restriction of personal liberty, rather than with freedom. I also proposed that the personification of the malevolent potential of the will in these plays served to undermine Malvolio's and Malevole's ability for transgressive actions. Utilising the will for malevolent purposes is nonetheless a regular feature of early modern writing. Its use may undermine normative political and sexual hierarchies, or disturb the proper function of the soul, as evidenced in the depiction of the will in Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Mind in General*, as well as the range of plays mentioned in chapter six. The transgressive or malevolent use of the will, in this respect, is seldom shown to yield positive results for the individual. *The Tragedy of Mariam* and *Tamburlaine the Great* prove to be exceptions to this rule, since both plays portray how a certain sense of

liberty may actually be granted to the individual who harnesses the power of the will for malevolent purposes.

The final chapter engaged with another common feature of the literary depiction of the will in early modern drama: plays which use the will and testament as a dramatic device acknowledge how the both the written will and the faculty will may be used to signify *potential* action as well as the *completion* of our actions. Plays like *Summer's Will and Last Testament* also emphasise the ultimate restriction placed upon the will: whatever is willed must come to an end, whether the objective of the will is achieved or not. A sense of futility pervades the performance of the will, even though it is still shown to be capable of authoring its own continuation through another form of itself, symbolised in the instructions or bequests that shape the basis of a testamentary will. By drawing parallels between Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* and Nashe's *Summers Last Will*, this chapter emphasised how the will may still draw meaning and validity from its destruction or apparent redundancy.

Donne's 'The Will' provides another example of the extent to which the will was theorised in the writing of this period, engaging with a number of the key concerns that have been raised throughout this thesis. Furthermore, it also serves to denote where future work on the will could be carried out. In the introduction to this thesis, I noted the common association between the will and states of desire and unrequited love in the Neoplatonic and Petrarchan poetry of England. In the poetry of, for example, Henry Howard, Philip Sidney, Robert Sidney, William Shakespeare, and Thomas Wyatt the will often is understood to be a part of the intellect or soul whose

operation may reveal the nature of love and desire to be transitive or destructive.[4] The will may also act to confuse the author or poet as to what the true nature of the Platonic ideal of the good actually is, or it may act to disturb the proper hierarchy of the soul. Nonetheless, as I also suggested, another strand of Renaissance poetry actually exalted the status of the will. The Jesuit poetics at the heart of the writing of William Alabaster, Jasper Heywood and Robert Southwell proposed that the will was 'the ultimate redemptive faculty' in the human subject.[5] Providing a more detailed comparative investigation of the conceptions of the will presented in the writing of these Jesuit poets alongside the amatory and lyric poetry of Howard, Philip and Robert Sidney, Shakespeare, and Wyatt would prove a fruitful way to enrich the work completed in this thesis. In particular, a more thorough investigation into how the will in portrayed in these works would help to elucidate the aesthetic overlap between Protestant and Catholic devotional poetry, and would also help in developing Strier's argument that there exists a 'deep continuity' between Petrarch and Elizabethan poets who are widely considered as 'anti-Petrarchan'.[6]

In addition to this, explaining the affiliation that this poetry has to the unique notions of selfhood and personal liberty presented in the poetry of, for instance, John Davies, John Marston, John Norden, Austin Saker, Isabella Whitney and Mary Wroth would serve to further demonstrate the importance of conceptions of the will to early

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[4] Henry Howard, "Such Wayward Ways" and "The Fansy which that I have served long", in *Songes and Sonnettes* (London: 1557); Philip Sidney, "The Dialogue of Reason and Passion", in *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia: Book II* (London: 1590); Robert Sidney, "Sonnet XVII", in *The Poems of Robert Sidney*, ed. P. J. Croft (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); William Shakespeare, *The Rape of Lucrece* (London: 1594), and William Shakespeare, *Sonnets* (London: 1609); Thomas Wyatt, "The Ballad of the Will", in *The Complete Poems: Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. R. A. Rebholz (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981). See also Kathryn Schwarz. "Will in Overplus: Recasting Misogyny in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*". *ELH*, Volume 75, Number 3, Fall 2008, 748.

[5] Raspa, *The Emotive Image: Jesuit Poetics in the English Renaissance*, 61.

[6] Richard Strier, *The Unrepentant Renaissance: From Petrarch to Shakespeare to Milton* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 59.

modern writers who wished to unpack or comment upon the intricacies of the human mind.[7] Theories of the will are pivotal to the structure of the works of these poets: the will is used is as a literary motif which enables these poets to question the meaning of being and human identity, as has been seen within the variety of plays examined in this thesis. Developing this research into these areas could help to articulate early modern England's preoccupation with theorising the nature of the will to an even greater extent, adding a further layer of complexity to how multiple notions of will were used in Elizabethan and Jacobean writing for a variety of purposes.

This thesis has explored: how English early modern writers defined the will in relation to the moral and psychological construction of the individual; the associated imagery and ideas that the will was connected with; the proposed purpose of the will; whether it was possible to control the performance of the will. By investigating these key issues, this thesis has stressed how important the concept of the human will was *for* and *in* the writing of the period. It has illustrated how the theorisation of the will helped to shape and influence, for example, the tradition of the Tudor morality play, the development of the malevolent malcontent type, the portrayal of female misrule, how human transgression was signified, the anxieties associated with the transferral of personal legacies and inheritance, as well as how death and the completion of human goals were represented. These findings should allow for a more expansive reassessment of the role that the will played in conceiving of the self, the good and human sin in literature of Elizabethan and Jacobean England than has hitherto been

[7] John Davies, *Nosce Teipsum* (London: 1599), *Mirum in Modum* (London: 1602), *Microcosmos* (London: 1603), and *Wittes Pilgrimage* (London: 1605); John Marston, *The Scourge of Villainy* (London: 1599); John Norden, *The Labyrinth of Man's Life* (London: 1614); Austin Saker, *Narbonus: The Labyrinth of Liberty* (London: 1580); Isabella Whitney, "Will and Testament", in *A Sweet Nosegay, or Pleasant Posy: Containing a Hundred and Ten Philosophical Flowers* (London: 1573); Mary Wroth, *Countess of Montgomery's Urania* (London: 1621).

made.

The purpose of this research was to articulate the importance of the will in early modern literary culture and its role in shaping theories of knowledge in the period. As I suggested in the introduction, investigations into the puzzling nature of the will are underrepresented in academic studies which examine the diverse philosophical outlooks displayed in the vast array of literature produced in early modern England. Nonetheless, as Pierre de la Primaudaye aptly notes, the 'error is verie great' when people attribute such a strength and power to the faculty of reason as if 'that by it alone a man may wel and iustly gouerne himselfe.'[8] This thesis has demonstrated just how widespread theories of the will were in the period, and how they helped writers to conceive of the capability that 'man' had to govern himself, his actions and the terms of his legacy. Primaudaye's declaration is an important one, as failing to appreciate or recognise the influence the will has in early modern writing would be a failure to appreciate an intensely significant trope in the intellectual culture of the period.

[8] Primaudaye, *The French Academy*, 24.

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