SOURCES OF THE CHARACTER OF BARABAS IN MARLOWE'S THE JEW OF MALTA

by

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INTRODUCTION

No single literary source has been discovered for The Jew of Malta or for the character of Barabas. Basing his judgment on the great amount of cruelty present in the play, Symonds conjectures that the play may have been derived from a Spanish novel.[1] It is my intention in this work to present the known sources upon which Marlowe probably drew to create the character of Barabas. After presenting a short outline of the character I will touch on a problem of characterization evident in Barabas, and then I will proceed to examine the sources from which Marlowe drew information, using them, finally, to solve the historic problem of his characterization. Below, I will briefly sketch the outlines of the character.

Machiavel, as speaker of the prologue, introduces Barabas and identifies him as one of his followers. Barabas is first seen surrounded by heaps of gold. He is an extremely wealthy and well-known merchant. But, being a Jew, he is looked down upon by the Christian community of Malta. Malta owes tribute to the Turks and, to pay this tribute, the Christian governor seizes all of Barabas' wealth, who vows revenge on Malta for this wrong. He begins his stratagem by having his daughter Abigail join the order of nuns which has been placed in his house after it was taken from him. Barabas had hidden a large sum of money in his house in case of such an emergency as has now befalled him, and Abigail enters the house to recover the money. She is successful and delivers the money to her father who rejoices. Barabas buys a Turkish slave, Ithamore, to help him in the villainy he plans against the Governor. The Jew dexteriously

entices the Governor's son, Lodowick, to his house by promising him that he shall have Abigail. Barabas also promises Abigail to Mathias, with whom Abigail is in love, and uses Mathias' jealousy to cause the suitors to kill each other. The death of her lover causes Abigail sincerely to return to the nunnery. Because she knows of the double murders, Abigail and the other nuns are poisoned by Barabas with the help of Ithamore. Two friars who learn from Abigail of the murders are also disposed of by the Jew and the Turk to the accompaniment of much comic business and dialogue (a consistant characteristic of Barabas' villainy). Meanwhile, Ithamore falls into the hands of a prostitute and her bully, and brags to them of the two original murders. This results in the three being poisoned by Barabas while disguised as a French musician. They die, but not before they have communicated the story of Lodowick's death to his father, the governor. Barabas, too, mysteriously dies and his body is cast over the walls of the city. But the Jew has outwitted the Christians by drinking of "poppy and cold-mandrake juice" in order to feign death and escape the Governor's hands. Barabas offers his services to the Turks who use his knowledge of a secret passage through the walls to capture Malta. For his service, Barabas is made Governor of Malta. Realizing that he is not safe on this Christian island, Barabas changes sides again, promising to kill the Turkish soldiers and deliver their leader, the Sultan's son Calymath, to the former governor. The first part of his plan succeeds and the Turkish soldiers are killed. But Barabas is double-crossed by the former governor, whom he has enlisted to help him trap Calymath. The governor springs a trap door prematurely and Barabas is plunged into

a boiling caldron. He dies screaming curses at Christian and Turk alike and bragging of his prowess in cunning villainy.

The most evident characteristic of Marlowe's Barabas is the bifurcation of the role in the second act. Before Act II scene iii, Barabas appears to be drawn with the stature of a tragic hero. His aspirations for wealth, his capabilities, and passions are of heroic proportions, and, by the loss of his wealth, he bears the tragic burden of persecution such as the Hebrew people had borne since they were enslaved by the Egyptians.

However, in the deluding of the suitors and in his instructing the newly purchased Ithamore, an entirely different figure of Barabas appears. He reveals this change to villainy in this early speech,

> As for myself, I walk abroad o' nights.
> And kill sick people groaning under walls:
> Sometimes I go about and poison wells;
>
> (II iii 180-82)

From this point until he is dead, his career is one of villainy, dissembling, and murder. This ability to do evil has prompted J. L. Cardozo to comment,

> The Jew of Malta and the Duke of Guise stand as dramatic exemplars of consumate evil; the spirit of their ambition is as much a part of that nature of that evil as the diabolic quality of their crimes. It is an ambition itself diabolic, for the lofty images in which it is conceived are speciously alluring as the ugly facts in which it is "realized" are hideous and painful. It is the ambition of Lucifer over again: the motive supremacy leading inevitably to painful self-destruction.[2]

Marlowe seems to have followed the Elizabethan penchant for eclecticism in drawing the character of Barabas. A knowledge of the sources which Marlowe appears to have used, consciously or unconsciously, is not only interesting in itself, but will also help one to understand the

seeming discrepancy which a reader or viewer of the play detects between the two facets of Barabas.

The most complete outline of sources is in chapter IX of John Bakeless' The Tragicall History of Christopher Marlowe (Vol. I; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942). His compilation of source areas is exhaustive, and I have followed them, adding extra works in areas where they seem relevant. The source areas which I will investigate are:

I. Contemporary Jews.

II. Medieval traditions concerning Jews.

III. The Elizabethan concept of Machiavelli's teachings.

IV. The literary influence of Seneca and Cinthio.

V. The Vice of the morality play.

FOOTNOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

[1] Ellis, Havelock (ed.), Christopher Marlowe . . . (The Mermaid Series . . . Vol. I) (London: Vizetelly & Co., 1887), 197.

[2] Cole, Douglas, Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962), 158.

I. CONTEMPORARY JEWS

The expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290 was much more complete than similar expulsions in continental Europe. Nevertheless, there has been much critical discussion about whether Marlowe and Shakespeare did know Jewish persons from whom they borrowed racial traits for their respective portraits of Barabas and Shylock. The latest scholarship on the subject holds that the dramatists could not have seen living models in England.[1]

However, there were Jews who had been converted to Christianity who were living in England. Of these Edward Brandon has been suggested as a possible source for the character of Barabas. He was wealthy, engaged in political intrigues, and became governor of the Channel Islands.[2]

Of the many internationally known Jews who had lived during the century in which The Jew of Malta was written, the careers of two are similar to that of Barabas. One was the Portuguese Jew, Joao Miques, alias Joseph Nassi, who became confidential advisor to the Sultan. He was in political and financial touch with the German and French courts, and was false to both. Like Barabas he was rich, and became governor of a Christian island, Naxos.[3]

Nassi's career, however, differed from that of Marlowe's character in several respects. Nassi inherited his wealth instead of amassing it by trade, he gained his fame from political not commercial dealings, and he resided in the Turkish court without reversals of fortune. Also, unlike Barabas' declaration that he does not seek a crown,

I must confess we come not to be kings;
That's not our fault: alas, our number's few,
And crowns come either by succession,
Or urged by force;
. . . . . .
Give us a peaceful rule, make Christians kings,
That thirst so much for principality.

(I i 128-32, 134-35)

Nassi had hopes of sovereignty. He hoped to become King of Cyprus and planned a Jewish state in Tiberias. He died a natural death.[4]

The other Jew was David Passi who flourished from 1585 to 1591. He was involved in the Turkish designs on Malta (which led to the seige that was the historical basis for one of the play's episodes), he was well known for playing Christians against Turks, and he was connected with English diplomacy in the Mediterranean where he was watched by English political observers. During this period when the Queen of England sought a Turkish naval attack on the Spanish, Passi conferred with both the Sultan's secretary and with the English. But when arrangements had been made, Passi warned Spain in order to divert the attack to Malta. For this attack he also helped the Turks prepare models of Malta and of Cyprus. Passi ultimately fell into disfavor with the Grand Vizar who wanted him killed. But the Sultan intervened, saying that Passi was the best spy he had. The Vizar finally prevailed, and Passi was sent to Rhodes. He did return from Rhodes but is reported to have looked as though he had passed through hell.[5]

C. F. Tucker Brooke, who first proposed Passi as a prototype for Barabas, further noted that Marlowe was a friend of Raleigh and the Walsinghams. The Walsinghams especially were involved in English foreign policy and would have known of Passi. Marlowe could have learned of Passi through his connections with Raleigh and the Walsinghams.

From the careers of these contemporary Jews, careers with which Marlowe could easily have been familiar, the characteristicas of wealth and position, and the willingness to follow any party for personal gain seem to have been taken for the character of Marlowe's Jew.

Next I will consider another source from which Marlowe seems to have drawn for Barabas' personal and racial traits.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION I

[1] See J. L. Cardozo, The Contemporary Jew in the Elizabethan Drama (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1925) for a full summary of the arguments concerning the presence of Jews in England after 1290.

[2] Bakeless, John, Christopher Marlowe: the Man in his Time (New York: Morrow, 1937), 185.

[3] Ibid., 185 ff. For a full account of his life see Cecil Roth, The House of Nassi the Duke of Naxos (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1948).

[4] Brooke, C. F. T., "The Prototype of Marlowe's Jew of Malta" [London] Times Literary Supplement, XXI (June 8, 1922), 380.

[5] Ibid.

II. MEDIEVAL TRADITIONS CONCERNING JEWS

> Marlowe betrays complete ignorance of Jews and Judaism. He knows nothing beyond the treatment dictated by ferocious medievalism. Barabas--a name purposely selected to excite malice . . .[1]

Marlowe drew all of his knowledge of Jews from malicious medieval traditions. Landa states that the stage tradition of Barabas and Shylock began in the Roman theatre, and continued through the medieval era, when the figure of Judas in the mystery and morality plays set the characteristic cruelty of the stage Jew.[2]

> Marlowe's Barabas and Shakespeare's Shylock are both replicas of the Jew as conceived by mediaeval imagination. The abhorrence of the Jew was that which was inspired by a repulsive abstraction rather than by a concrete individual. The Jew in the flesh was practically an unknown creature to the ordinary Englishman and woman of the age.[3]

I have divided the traditions surrounding Jews into two broad categories; first, those directly based on religious motives, and second, those based on secular matters.

Among the first, one of the most potent to the medieval mind was that of the Jews as the murderers of Christ. It must be remembered that the betrayal and murder of Christ was considered one of the most central crimes in Christian history, second only to the transgression of Adam and Eve. Dante named the ninth circle of Hell the "Judecca" after Judas Iscariot, and that arch betrayer was being eternally bitten and torn by the teeth of the Devil. "'That soul up there, which suffers greatest punishment,' said the master, 'is Judas Iscariot, he who has his head within, and outside plies his legs.'"[4] The fact that he is a Jew is of no mean significance.

On November 26, 1095, Pope Urban II, in a sermon at the Council of Clermont, summoned Christendom for a crusade against the foes of the "true faith". The religious vigor turned against the infidels extended also to the Jews. The Crusaders vowed that the blood of Christ would be revenged on the Jews.

In January 1096 in Northern France, bands of peasants accompanying the Crusaders, motivated by the belief that killing a Jew would remit time in purgatory, began massacring Jews. This kind of mass murder spread through the Rhineland and followed the Crusaders through Bohemia and to Byzantium. When Godfrey de Bouillon captured Jerusalem in 1099, all surviving Jews in the city were driven into a synagogue which was then set on fire.[5]

The Crucifixion was an often repeated theme in medieval writings, and the Jews were always the villains. The Jews referred to in medieval sermons, literature, and plays were always stereotypes. Even in the mystery plays, which were based on biblical history, Jewish characters were identified with the Jews of that time to incense the audience. Stage directions instruct that the Jews crucifying Christ should wear the peaked cap of medieval Jewery. "The manner in which the Jews treated Jesus and the saints in this literature was presented, and understood, as illustrative of the character of the contemporary Jew."[6] Again,

> In the passion plays, the Jews figured as the villains of the piece; and the spectators clearly did not differentiate between the Jews of antiquity and those of their own day. It was natural that they should be introduced into the carnival-tide antithesis to the passion play.[7]

Greizenack tells of a grotesque dance by Jews around the cross on

which Jesus hangs, in the Coventry Mysteries.[8] The tormentors wore black buckram painted with nails and dice, and Judas was present with his famous red beard and wearing a yellow robe.

One of the charges leveled against medieval Jews was that of sacrilege to the Host and to holy images. The Jews were supposed to steal, or bribe a Christian to procure a communion wafer which was then tortured. Because of the doctrine of transubstantation, Christ would suffer the tortures inflicted on the wafer. The Croxton Sacrament is based on this accusation.[9] The fact that the Jews did not believe in the doctrine on which the accusation was based was unimportant; they were still punished severely. The Jews were also charged with obscene desecration of images of saints and the Virgin.

Through twisting logic, the Jews could be associated with workers for the Devil. Since the truth of Christianity was so evident, to the medieval Christian mind, and since the Jews did not accept it, they must not be human and were, therefore, allied with the Devil against Christ.[10] This association of the Jews and the Devil accounts for one of the most prominent characteristics of the stage Jew.

> In the English Corpus Christi pageant, The Betraying of Christ, Judas appeared on the scene in a fiery red wig--a detail of costume which customarily distinguished the devil in other plays.[11]

This idea concerning Jews was also prevalent in medieval drama. In the play Saint Mary Magdalen, a transition work from the English mystery and miracle play to the morality drama, we see the last glimpse of the confessed Jew before he comes under an allegorical name. Infidelity, the Vice of the play, proclaims himself a Devil and the son of a Devil, his

name, "Moysaical Justice," and he, "sticks so much in Jew's hearts that they will not believe the doctrine and wonders of Jesus."

Since the Jews were associated with the Devil, they must be working for the Antichrist as well. During the 13th and 14th centuries there was a great popular fear that the end of the world was imminent. One aspect of this dread event would be the coming of the Devil's Antichrist assisted by a hidden army of "red Jews." The invasions of the Turks and Mongols during this period gave added impetus to the fear. The Jews were connected with Armageddon in still another way, the Antichrist was to be the son of a serpent and a Jewish prostitute.[12]

On Easter Even, 1144, the body of a skinner's apprentice named William was found near the city of Norwich. The story spread that he had been killed by the Jews in a mockery of the Passion of Christ to celebrate the Passover feast. This was the first charge against the Jews of "ritual murder." Other Jewish religious ceremonies were thought to require the blood of Christians. In May 1171 the same charge (without the discovery of a corpse) led to the burning of most of the Jewish community at Blois. There were numerous other cases; Paris 1180, Erfurt 1199, Fulda and Wolfsheim 1235. By the end of the 15th century, half a hundred cases of "ritual murder" had caused the deaths of many Jews in retribution.[13]

Such stories, especially of the murder of children, were very popular. Chaucer, in "The Prioress's Tale," relates how the Jews, "Hateful to Christ and all his company," slit the throat of a little boy for no other reason than that he sang a hymn to the Virgin as he walked through their ghetto. It is interesting that they were set to do the murder by, "First of our

foes, the Serpent Satan [who] shook/ Those Jewish hearts that are his waspish nest." The Christian's revenge was remarkably moderate, only having the murderers pulled apart by horses, not killing the entire Jewish community. The tale ends with a reminder to Englishmen that that sort of thing also happened in England, in a reference to, "Hugh of Lincoln, likewise murdered so."[14] The popularity of this theme in its sensational aspects extended to the stage.[15]

Aside from the above mentioned traditions which came to be associated with Jews, there was another set based more on secular matters.

> Sometimes not even so specious a pretext [as ritual murder] was considered necessary. In case of a destructive conflagration, so frequent and so fatal in medieval towns, who should be responsible but the Jews? If there were an outbreak of plague, it was plainly they who had introduced it--provably, if they were infected first; and none the less obviously (for it clearly demonstrated their malicious forethought) if they remained immune. All heresy was assuredly fostered by them; and it was they who were answerable for otherwise unexplained murders. In case of an enemy invasion--especially one by the Infidel--it was taken for granted that they had invited it.[16]

The above quotation shows the general aura of suspicion in which the Jews were viewed. Also, Landa states that by the Elizabethan era the word "Jew" was considered a terrible insult.[17] One of the earliest influences propogating such a use was North's Diall of Princes (1568), which was a translation of the Spanish Relij di Principe by the Inquisition father Antonio di Guevara.[18] Lyly's extremely influential Euphues (1578) also used "Jew" as a term of contempt.[19]

The general term "Jewishness," in the middle ages, was applied to a person of any faith who broke fidelity, dealt unjustly, and generally substituted gold for God. The term "Jew" in this sense was used by St. Bernard in the 12th century in relation to usury.[20]

This connection in popular thought between Jews and usury is proverbial and needs only to be touched on lightly. It only needs to be mentioned that the Jew's monopoly on money lending was a cause of much hate directed towards them by Christians. Any excuse was deemed sufficient to confiscate a Jew's wealth and dissolve any debts owing to him. For instance, when Richard Coeur-de-Lion was ransomed from captivity in Germany, the Jews were forced to contribute three times as much as the London burgers.[21]

Stephen Gossen in The School of Abuse (1579) speaks of the bloody minds of usurers, while inveighing against a play, The Jew.[22] This would seem to be the first Jewish usurer on the stage, and the beginning of a long stage tradition.

Because the Jews had become the scapegoats for any misfortune befalling a community, the spread of the Black Plague throughout Central Europe in the 14th century was charged to the Jews' poisoning wells.[23] In 1321 the Crusades spread south of the Pyrenees from southern France and the report came back that Jews and lepers had been poisoning wells under orders from the infidel kings of Tunis and Granada. Massacres and heavy fines were imposed on the Jews in retaliation.[24]

There are many traditional medieval stories of a Jew's daughter who lured Christian boys to their deaths by pretending to love them.[25] Sexual relations between Jews and Christians had been strictly forbidden by a decree of the fourth Lateran council, of 1215.[26]

Although illustrative passages in The Jew of Malta can not be found for each of the above mentioned medieval traditions, taken as a whole, they convey the general feelings towards Jews with which Marlowe and his audience

would have been familiar. There are, however, a number of instances in the play in which Marlowe did avail himself directly of popular notions.

The name of the central character is not typically Jewish. It is not Old Testament Hebrew, but New Testament Aramaic. The name no doubt had an emotive value as its original bearer had at least a passive share in the tragedy of Christ.[27]

The Christians taunt Barabas about his religion in the scene in which they seize his wealth. When he asks if the Jews must contribute money equally with Christians, he receives the reply,

> No, Jew, like infidels.
> For through our sufferance of your hateful lives,
> Who stand accursed in the sight of Heaven,
> These taxes and afflictions are befallen
>
> (I ii 63-66)

And again,

> If your first curse fall heavy on thy head,
> And make thee poor and scorned of all the world,
> 'Tis not our fault, but thy inherent sin.
>
> (I ii 108-10)

The common dislike of Jews rolls off the tongue of Mathias' mother without a second thought, "Converse not with him, he's cast off from heaven" (II iii 164).

Mutilation of the Host charges would require a Jew to believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation. Barabas' oath, "Corpo di Dio" (II i 91), may be a reflection of this.

In general, Barabas is shown as hating or having contempt for Christians.

> Rather had I a Jew be hated thus,
> Than pitied in a Christian poverty;
> For I can see no fruits in all their faith,

But malice, falsehood, and excessive pride,
Which methinks fits not their profession.

(I i 113-17)

Some Jews are wicked as all Christians are

(I ii 113)

It's no sin to deceive a Christian;
For they themselves hold it a principle,
Faith is not to be held with heretics;
But all are heretics that are not Jews.

(II iii 315-18)

Thus loving neither, [Turks nor Christians] will
I live with both,
Making a profit of my policy;
And he from whom my most advantage comes
Shall be my friend.
This is the life we Jews are used to lead;
And reason too, for Christians do the like.

(V iv 112-16)

This attitude and language is parodied by Barabas when his daughter is conversing with the nuns and friars (I ii 337-63).

Barabas has one of the popularly conceived physical traits of the Jews. Ithamore says, "O Brave! master, I worship your nose for this" (II iii 79), and, "I have the bravest, gravest, secret, subtle, bottle-nosed knave to my master" (III iii 9-10). In Rowley's Search for Money (1609) allusion is made to the, "artificiall Jewe of Maltaes nose."[28]

There are only two possible allusions to Barabas' working for the Devil. Neither is explicit, but they are worth noting. In act III scene iv during the poisoning of the pot of rice porridge, Ithamore brings the ladle along with the pot, and quotes the old proverb, "he that eats with the devil has need of a long spoon." The second instance is in act V scene vi at Barabas' death. He cries out, "But now begins the extremity of heat/ To pinch me with intolerable pangs" (87-88). Granted that he is in a caldron, but might it not also symbolically refer to his return to hell?

The tradition of "ritual murder" is alluded to at the end of act III scene vi in which Friar Barnardine says that Barabas has done, "A thing that makes me tremble to unfold." Friar Jacomo's immediate thought is, "What, has he crucified a child?" (47-48).

The term "Jew" is used in an insulting manner in reference to Barabas, with, of course, word play also in mind. Ithamore, rebelling from his master, says, "Hang him, Jew!", and Pilia-Borsa comments, "Then, like a Jew, he laughed and jeered, and told me he loved me for your sake . . ." (IV iv 96, 125-26).

Usury figures in the play with some prominence, though Barabas has amassed his wealth through trade. When the Christians taunt him with his "profession" while confiscating his goods, the reference is probably to usury as well as Judaism. This confiscation is in keeping with the usual practice of medieval monarchs for raising funds. Landa comments that, "Barabas . . . is at once made to feel the grand tragedy of Isreal by a typically medieval Christian act of extortion."[29]

During his extolling of his ability as a villain to Ithamore, Barabas refers to usury in terms any Christian would have gladly applied to a Jew.

> Then after that I was an usurer,
> And with extorting, cozening, forfeiting,
> And tricks belonging unto brokery,
> I filled the jails with bankrupts in a year,
> And with young orphans planted hospitals,
> And every moon made some or other mad,
> And now and then one hang himself for grief,
> Pinning upon his breast a long great scroll
> How I with interest tormented him.
>
> (II iii 196-204)

Although Barabas poisons a great number of people, the specific use of poison which Marlowe used was taken from another source which will be

discussed later. However, Barabas does admit to the crime for which many medieval Jews were put to death, "Sometimes I go about and poison wells" (II iii 182).

The traditional story of the Jewish daughter used to entice Christian boys to their deaths is central to the Abigail-Mathias-Lodowick plot, though it is against Abigail's will and leads to remorse and an almost tragic perception on her part (III iii 42-54).

From an examination of the traditional, medieval beliefs held about Jews we see that Marlowe adopted many prejudices and half-truths to add details of characterization to his central figure. This adopting seems to have been governed by Marlowe's conception of the character as it changed through the course of the play, and was not haphazard. The best illustration of this principle of selective adoption is the fact that early in the play Barabas' wealth is shown to have been amassed through trade with no mention of usury, while he later brags of how his wealth is his blessing for usury and how he tormented people with "tricks belonging unto brokery" (II iii 196-204). These two means of acquiring wealth seem to have been borrowed to emphasize the two views of Barabas; the first, in the early part of the play, as a wealthy, but honest and respected merchant, who has the audience's complete sympathies when he is abused by the Christians. The second view, in the latter half of the play, is of Barabas as a monster of Machiavellian "policy", and the borrowing of the usury theme is appropriate to such a characterization. His dealings as an honest merchant are not mentioned after the introduction of the usury theme. Next we will see how these "racial" traits were combined with another, equally potent, group of prejudices and half-truths--those concerning the teachings of Machiavelli.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION II

[1] Landa, Meyer, Jack, The Jew in Drama (London: P. S. King & Sons, Ltd., 1926), 60.

[2] Ibid., Chaps. i and iii.

[3] F. G. Abbot, Israel in Europe (1907), quoted in Cardozo, 57.

[4] Dante, The Inferno, Canto xxxiv.

[5] Roth, Cecil, A Short History of the Jewish People (London: East and West Library, 1953), 184 ff.

[6] Trachtenberg, Joshua, The Devil and the Jews The Medieval Conception of the Jew and its Relation to Modern Antisemitism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), 15.

[7] Roth, Cecil, The Jews in the Renaissance (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959), 44.

[8] Greizenack, W., Cambridge History of English Literature (Vol. IV; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 44.

[9] Landa, 42.

[10] Trachtenberg, Chap. i, "Devil Incarnal."

[11] Ibid., Chap. i, note 26.

[12] Ibid., Chap. ii, "Antichrist."

[13] Roth, Short History . . . , 189 ff.

[14] Chaucer, Geoffry, "The Prioress's Tale", The Canterbury Tales, trans. Nevil Coghill (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1952).

[15] Abrahams, Israel, Jewish Life in the Middle Ages (New York: Meridian Books, Inc., 1958), 257.

[16] Roth, Short History . . . , 191.

[17] Landa, 15.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Cole, 135. This is also found in Cardozo, chap. iii; and in Landa 15.

[21] Roth, Short History . . . , 222.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION II (continued)

[22] Quoted in Landa, 48.

[23] Landa, 58.

[24] Roth, Short History . . . , 229.

[25] Landa, 58.

[26] Roth, Short History . . . , 211.

[27] Cardozo, 201.

[28] Quoted in Ellis, Havelock (ed.), Christopher Marlowe (Five Plays) (New York: Hill and Wang, 1956), 224, note 37.

[29] Landa, 66.

III. THE ELIZABETHAN CONCEPT OF MACHIAVELLI'S TEACHINGS

Beginning with "Machiavel's" insolently striding out to speak the prologue introducing Barabas as a follower of his; through the machinations of "policy" by Christians, Jews, and Turks, and including the series of double-crosses in the fifth act leading to Barabas' death; the influence of Machiavelli is strong and all-pervasive in The Jew of Malta.

The precepts of the Florentine statesman were introduced into Elizabethan life and letters through three main sources, all of which Marlowe could have known. These sources were:

(1) The writing of Machiavelli himself.

(2) The Contre-Machiavell by Innocent Gentillet

(3) Certain English and Scottish poems and ballads.

As for the writings of Machiavelli himself, Pollard and Redgrave list as the earliest edition of The Prince, "Prince Tr. E. D [acres] 1640, ent 16 jn 1639."[1]

However, Hardin Craig has discovered the existence of three manuscript translations of The Prince which had been circulated privately, two of them in the 16th century.[2]

The actual writings of Machiavelli were little known, but Marlowe and all informed Elizabethans received their ideas about Machiavelli from a book by the French Huguenot Innocent Gentillet. The full title is,

> A Discourse Upon the Means of Well Governing and Maintaining a Good Peace, a Kingdom or other Principality. Divided into Three Parts, Namely, the Counsel, the Religion, and the Policy, Which a Prince Ought to hold and follow. Against Nicholas Machiavell, The Florentine.

It came to be known as the Contre-Machiavell. It appeared in 1576

in French and was translated into English by Simon Patericke the following year.[3] The first edition was published in 1602 and a second, identical edition in 1608. Praz also mentions three Latin editions published in England during the 16th century.[4]

As the full title indicates, Gentillet wrote the book as an attack on Machiavelli's doctrines which he thought beastly and wicked. His immediate complaint was that, through the influence of the Florentine, French politics and society had become wicked. "For of whome have the Frenchmen learned and knowne Atheism, sodomie, trecherie, crueltie, usurie, and such other like vices, but of Machiavell."[5]

The Contre-Machiavell is a patent perversion of Machiavelli, lifting maxims from the context of the full work and taking no account of the disunited state of Italy about which Machiavelli was writing, in an effort to affect national unity. This perversion is obvious, regardless of Gentillet's protest,

> I have also set downe the places of his bookes, to leade them thereunto which desire to try what fidelitie I have used, either in not attributing unto him any thing that is not his owne, or in not forgetting any reason that may make for him.[6]

Bakeless has summarized the "Machiavellian" doctrines as they appear in The Jew of Malta:[7]

(1) Revenge at all costs, and the remembrance of injury.

(2) Religion as mere "policy" i.e., hypocritical self-seeking.

(3) Religion as a cloak for crime.

(4) Being bound to keep faith only when it is profitable.

(5) Complete egoism.

A somewhat extended quotation from Gentillet shows his view,

> Behold here the language and dealings of our Machiavelistes . . . for that there is no wickedness in the world so strange and detestable, but they will enterprize, invent, and put it in execution, if they can. From whence comes it, that they be thus inclined to all wickedness? It is because they are Atheists, contemners of God, neither beliving there is a God which seeth what they doe, nor that ought to punish them. It is that goodly doctrine of Machiavell, which amongst other things complaines so much, that men cannot be altogether wicked . . . . These good disciples (seeing that their master found this imperfection amongst men, that they could not show themselves altogether and in all things wicked) doe seeke by all means to attaine a degree of perfect wickednesse. And indeed they have so well studied and profited in their masters schoole, and can so well practice his Maximes, that none can deny, but they are come unto the highest degree of wickednesse.[8]

Although the general atmosphere of deceit, treachery, and murder in The Jew of Malta owes much to the Contre-Machiavell, a number of specific passages also correspond to events in the play.

Gentillet says in the preface, "Whereas the Italians doe often returne their money with the gaine of fiftie, yea often an hundreth, for an hundreth"; Barabas brags, "A hundred for a hundred I have ta'en" (IV i 57).

The 19th maxim in Gentillet reads,

> A Prince ought to know how to winde and turne mens mindes, that they may deceive and circumvent them . . . . And this is done, when a prince worketh the vertue or vice of him, who hee meanes to undermine and deceive, by giving him a bait fitteth to deceive and intrap him.[9]

The examples which he gives for this maxim are directly applicable to the love plot of the play. Gentillet says that for a lusty man, one should prepare a courtesan for him, which is quite similar to what Barabas does with Abigail for Lodowick. For one who is covetous, give gifts and promise more, as Barabas does to Lodowick. For a man virtuous, loyal and constant, like Mathias, Gentillet suggests, "seeke to draw out of him some word and promise, and there upon lay an ambush for him."[10]

Under, "the general precepts of art", Gentillet advises princes,

> Bouldly to forsweare themselves; Subtilly to dissemble, to insinuate into mens minds and to prove them; To breake faith and promise. . . . To dissemble subtilly . . . to be a manifest deceiver, whereas hee ought to dissemble, and to make an outward countenance not to be so, but rather to be a good and an honest man.[11]

This characterizes Barabas' actions toward Christians, Turks, and his own countrymen.

Barabas sets up the circumstances which lead to the final double-cross by the Governor, and his own death. Machiavelli had forseen such an occurence.

> Brifely, it is Machiavels mind to teach a prince to trust in no lord, which hee hath once offended, and againe, that none which hath made a fault, or offended him, should any more trust him, whatsoever reconciliation, peace, concord, amitie, and good offices may happen since the offence.
> . . . . . .
> It is folly to thinke, that with princes and great lords, new pleasures will cause them to forget old offence.[12]

There is a slight but similar relationship between the final double-cross and the 22nd maxim in Gentillet. "Faith, Clemencie, and Liberalitie, are vertues very domageable to a prince, but it is good, that of them, hee have onely some similitude and likenesse."[13]

Like Barabas, Machiavelli, according to popular belief, was supposed to have died blaspheming. Also, the penchant which Barabas has for murder by poison (using it to eliminate four characters plus an unspecified number of nuns) was popularly ascribed to Machiavelli.[14]

The word "policy" which occurs a dozen times in The Jew of Malta, had immediate connotations of evil machinations to an Elizabethan public. Gentillet devotes over half of his book to one-third of his argument, "The Third Part, Treating of such Pollicie, as a Prince ought to hold in

his Commonweale."[15]

Praz explains the correct use of the word "policy" in Machiavelli's Italy.

> Politico, then, in Machiavelli means 'in conformity with sound rules of statecraft.' It has a merely scientific meaning, and is opposed to corroto, which is synonym to 'misgoverned.' There is no instance of the word being used in Italian in the sense of 'scheming, crafty.' The only cases, quoted by dictionaries, in which the word has the connotation of 'shrewd' are not earlier than the end of the seventeenth century.[16]

However, Gentillet was either not acquainted with the above correct meaning of politico, or chose to ignore it, and redefine the word as "shrewd or crafty."

Marlowe definitely borrowed certain things, matters of deceit, policy, and the egoistical behavior prescribed for princes, from Machiavelli via Gentillet, and from other sources. These he incorporated into Barabas' characterization.

> In Barabas, Marlowe combines Machiavellian "policy" coldly setting aside laws of Christian love and admitting end justifies means; with aspiring soul of a man trying to go beyond mortal limitations (like Tamburlaine).[17]

Although Gentillet's Contre-Machiavell was the most important source through which knowledge of Machiavelli's principles reached the Elizabethan public, the Florentine was also known through two minor sources. These were the Sempill Ballads and certain poems of Gabriel Harvey.

Robert Sempill was a Scottish Reformer who, in the ballads bearing his name, referred to Scottish political events and figures. As early as 1568 (eight years previous to the writing of Gentillet's work), one of the ballads mentions Machiavelli. William Maitland of Lethington, Secretary to Mary Queen of Scots, is called, "this false Machivilian." In other

ballads dated 1570, 1572, and 1583, similar execrations occur. Sempill was in Paris several times and would have been aware of the French political climate, which caused Gentillet to write the Contre-Machiavell.[18]

In 1578 Gabriel Harvey published several Latin poems, "XAI PE: Gabrielis Harveij Gratulationum Valdinensium Libri quattuor," in which he ascribes to Machiavelli four crimes which are later attributed to that writer in drama. These are poisoning (which Machiavelli nowhere recommends), murder, fraud, and violence.[19] The title of one of the poems, "Machiavellus ipse loquitur," may have prompted Marlowe to have Machiavelli speak the prologue to The Jew of Malta.[20] It should be noted also that Harvey's works were written at Cambridge just before Marlowe arrived there to study.

With Machiavelli, as with the information from medieval traditions concerning Jews, Marlowe borrowed selectively. Although Machiavell opens the play with the prologue, mention is not made of him until after the change in Barabas' character. General traits of deceit and wickedness as well as specific admonitions, such as the use of poison, were taken from Gentillet, and used to broaden Barabas' dimension as a monster.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION III

[1] Pollard, A. W., and Redgrave, G. R., A Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1946), 258.

[2] Craig, Hardin (ed.), Machiavelli's "The Prince": An Elizabethan Translation (Chapel Hill, North Carolian: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), intro. xix.

[3] Meyer, Edward, Machiavelli and the Elizabethans (Weiman: E. Felber, 1897), 2.

[4] Praz, Mario, Machiavelli and the Elizabethans (London: H. Milford, 1928), 6.

[5] Gentillet, Innocent, The Contre-Machiavell, Trans. Simon Patericke, (London: Printed by A. Islip, 1602), 176.

[6] Ibid., Preface.

[7] Bakeless, John, The Tragicall History of Christopher Marlowe (Vol. I, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), 351-53.

[8] Gentillet, 94

[9] Ibid., 250

[10] Ibid., 251.

[11] Ibid., 249.

[12] Ibid., 177.

[13] Ibid., 275.

[14] Poirier, Michel, Christopher Marlowe (London: Chatto and Windrus, 1951), 156.

[15] Gentillet, 142.

[16] Praz, 12-13.

[17] Ellis-Fermor, Una Mary, Christopher Marlowe (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1927), Chap. vi.

[18] Praz, 6 f.

[19] Meyer, 25 ff.

[20] Ibid.

IV SENECA AND CINTHIO

Seneca treated many of the same themes as the Greek tragedians, but his audience (if any of the plays were given readings) was made up of Romans of the permanent leisure class whose jaded tastes could only be stimulated by the spectacles of the Circus and by horrors on the serious stage. Closet drama, not needing the breath of vitality necessary for the popular stage, inevitably tends toward a reduction of action and an increase of verbage. In Seneca's case, the action became a progression of treacheries and atrocities; and the language, overblown rhetoric describing the intended action and its fulfillment in the most gruesome detail.

The appeal of this kind of writing was great to the Elizabethans.

> They were delighted with his rhetoric, for they were still so intellectually young as to be impressed by bombast and flamboyance. Introspection had become a national trait, and fed agreeably on the elaborate Senecan philosophizing, with its spice of stoicism suitable to a hard-bitten age. The long Senecan descriptions were suited for imitation on the bare English stage. Finally, Senecas' emphasis on sensationalism, on physical horrors to stimulate emotion, appealed to the English taste, for blood and horror on the stage could not be offensive to the spectators at cruel executions. Ghosts were accepted as fact, and forewarnings were everyday affairs.[1]

With so much interest in them, Seneca's plays were abundantly available to the reading public. The complete dramatic works, translated into English by several hands, was published in 1581 under the title of Tenne Tragedies. However, all but one of the plays had been previously published.

The major relation between Seneca and Marlowe's Jew is in the characterizations of the former's tyrants. "[Seneca] provided the most tragic characters, superhuman villains dominated with one abnormal consuming passion . . . . He furnished an unmatchable model of the sense of words

in stichomythic dialogue and of their sparkle in crystalled proverb."[2]

Rhetoric and villainies are the characteristic features of the Senecan tyrants. Lycus in Mad Hercules, for instance, has usurped the throne of Thebes and spends most of his lines boasting of his power. He wants to marry Megera, Hercules' wife who is of noble birth, to add noble blood to his humble origin and make secure his claim and right to the throne. When she will not consent, he vows ruin on the house of Hercules. He attempts to have Megera and her children burned alive in a temple, but Hercules returns from the underworld andkills Lycus. After enumerating the lands he holds, Lycus says,

> All I own
> And by prerogative of long descent,
> A worthless heir. No noble ancestors,
> Nor family adorned with lofty names
> Have I; but splendid valour. He who boasts
> His noble ancestry exalts a thing
> Which is not his to boast. But power usurped
> Is held with anxious hands; the sword alone
> Can guard it. All thou hold'st against the will
> Of citizens the sword must hold for thee.
> . . . . . .
> The art of ruling chiefly lies in this:
> The power to bear the people's hate unmoved.[3]

Atreus in Thyestes enters vowing revenge on Thyestes, calling for total war in vengence for Thyestes' seducing his wife and trying to steal his throne. He feigns forgiveness and invites Thyestes to his palace to be co-ruler. Atreus dissembles, convincing Thyestes that all of his wrath is forgotten. But secretly he kills Thyestes' three sons, cooks them, and serves them, along with their blood mixed with the wine, to their unsuspecting father at a feast. Atreus then reveals the heads, hands, and the plot to Thyestes and boasts of his villainy.

Atreus, too, is full of maxims for tryants.

Herein is greatest good of royal power:
The populace must not only endure
Their master's deeds, but praise them.
. . . . . .
Integrity,
Truth, loyalty, are private virtues; kings
Do as they will.[4]

I will leave no crime
Untried, and none is great enough for me.[5]

High above all and equal to the stars
I move, my proud head touches heaven itself;
At last I hold the crown, at last I hold
My father's throne. Now I abandon you,
Ye gods, for I have touched the highest point
Of glory possible. It is enough.
. . . . . .
Would I might keep
The gods from flight, and drag them back by force
That all might see the feast that gives revenge.
It is enough the father shall behold.[6]

The mighty ambition and capacity for cruelty (and enjoying it) are not unworthy of Tamburlaine or Barabas. From the tyrants of Seneca Marlowe drew several characteristics which implemented similar borrowings from Machiavelli--the hero as villain and the motivation of complete egoism. To his borrowings from other sources, Marlowe added the emphasis on cruelty and murder, the use of rhetorical monologues, and the characteristic motivation by one consuming passion which he found in Seneca.

Though the works of Seneca were popular and influential, the Roman exerted influence on the swiftly developing Elizabethan drama through another source as well. This was the plays of G. B. Giraldi Cinthio, from whose other important work, The Hecatommithi, Shakespeare was to borrow. Cinthio used Seneca instead of Greek models on the ground that the Greeks, being the first dramatists, were naturally imperfect; and Seneca, being

later, must be more mature in his technique. Cinthio vigorously counseled his fellow playwrights to use Senecan models and, ultimately, prevailed over the opposing Greek faction. "The immediate reason of his preference for Seneca is not far to seek: it is the predominately theatrical quality of Seneca, and ultimately his marvellous power of thrilling the audience by depictions of violent passions."[7]

One of Cinthio's most important borrowings from Seneca was the tyrant, with his career of atrocities and treachery.

> A favorite character is the tyrannous king, and the reason is obvious. The office of kingship provides a maximum of the maesto and decoro which the dignity of tragedy demanded, the prerogative of kingship a maximum of power for the provision of unmitigated cruelty and horror. Furthermore, a character in the most exalted station offers by his fall the most striking type of peripeteia. Almost inevitably the tyrant tends to become not only the main figure because the most potent worker of horror, but also a sheer villain, because through villainy he is most horrible.[8]

Two examples will amply illustrate the Senecan character of Cinthio's tyrants. In Altile, the King and an evil counseler scheme the death of the King's sister and her husband by torture. This is carried on in an atmosphere of heavily-weighted Senecan forebodings and desperate laments.

In the Euphimio, there is,

> No villain of Senecan drama blacker than its main male character, King Acharisto, whose exploits include treason, imprisonment, hypocritical pleas for mercy, release, succession to the crown and to the king's daughter, faithlessness in love, and a final scheme, which is the plot of the play, the plan to put away his wife by burning her alive on a false charge of adultry.[9]

Not only were certain dramatic ideas of Seneca transmitted to the Elizabethan drama by Cinthio, but he, being Italian, knew of the works of Machiavelli, and incorporated them into his portraits of superhuman villains.

> The [neo-] Senecan drama was, then, the medium through which the Machiavellian principles, distorted as they had been, came to be uttered from the stage. Machiavellianism, as epitomized by Gentillet, provided an up-to-date equipment of ideas to the worn-off classical tyrant.[10]

Praz goes on to say that this type of neo-Senecan tyrant reigned supreme in the theater from 1541 to 1590. What Cinthio did with the villain from Seneca was to further develop his knavery using elements found in Machiavelli. In Cinthio, the maxims of villainy became the property of common men as well, thereby furnishing a link between Seneca's villainous princes and the villains of Marlowe and Shakespeare.[11]

The tone of Barabas' actions, his deceit, treachery, enjoyment of cruelty, and his multiple plots and murders, are firmly in the Seneca-Cinthio tradition. Willard Farnham has accurately summarized Marlowe's use of these varied elements.

> It is Marlowe's genius that makes the popular conception of Machiavelli, as a devil of worldly irreligiousness, preside over villainous intrigue in such drama and replace the Senecan ghost. The use of the spirit of Machiavel to speak the prologue to The Jew of Malta and foster the action is a successful stroke in the translation of the Senecan language of revenge into a Reniassance language of revengeful ambition.[12]

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION IV

[1] Bowes, Fredson F., Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy 1587-1642 (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959), 75.

[2] Charlton, H. B., and Kastner, L. E. (eds.), The Poetical Works of Sir William Alexander (Vol. I; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1921), cixix f.

[3] Duckworth, George, The Complete Roman Drama (Vol. II; New York: Random House, 1942), p. 470, act II scene ii. The line numbers given in the text are those of the Latin version and do not correspond to the lines of the English translation.

[4] Ibid., p. 759, act II scene i.

[5] Ibid., p. 761, act II scene i.

[6] Ibid., p. 779, act V scene i.

[7] Charlton, lxxx.

[8] Ibid., xc.

[9] Ibid., lxxvi.

[10] Praz, 25.

[11] Ibid., 20

[12] Farnham, Willard, The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy (New York: Barns and Noble, Inc., 1956), 398.

V. THE VICE OF THE MORALITY PLAY

Doubtlessly, the most theatrically potent and longest-lived character of the pre-Elizabethan English drama was the allegorical figure of the Vice.[1] He appears in the earliest popular religious drama, attains his greatest development in the morality drama, and lives on, in variously altered forms, into the "realistic" drama of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean period.

The characteristics of the Vice, as they were known on the Elizabethan stage, exerted a powerful influence on Marlowe as he created the character of Barabas. To illustrate this I have included a history of the Vice. I begin with the theological background of the English religious drama and show how that dramatic form developed (and the Vice with it) in the history of the morality drama. With the literalizing of the formerly allegorical drama, the Vice became accomodated to this more realistic style but retained the characteristics which made him recognizable on the morality stage. After this survey of the history and the characteristics of the Vice, I will refer again to the bifurcation of the character of Barabas mentioned on page 3. I will then relate the characteristics of the Vice to the character of Barabas in terms of their being both source and material for an explanation of the bifurcation.

Even though a basic theological and metaphysical dualism of primary and irreducable forces of Good and Evil had been rejected by the early church fathers as heresy, the acknowledgement of the existence of evil was fundamental to Christian theology. But to the popular mind such a dualism readily recommended itself under such guises as God vs. Satan, the

Seven Christian Virtues vs. the Seven Deadly Sins, or Christ vs. Anti-christ. The prize of such combats was man's soul. That man had freedom of choice between the two camps, and that damnation was a terrifyingly real concept and was eternal, gave a dramatic tension to "the battles of the Lord of Hosts." Such was the background for the Psychomachia, which was the actual staged dramatization of this conflict. Understandably, the earliest form of the Psychomachia was a physical battle between the factions of ultimate Good and Evil.

As the above form matured, there was introduced malevolent intrigue which became the shaping principle of the morality drama. The allegorical seige of a castle was replaced, in such works as William Rastell's The Four Elements (1530's), by deception and cajolery.

> The moralities dramatize the central type of medieval allegory--the homiletic allegory of the Psychomachia. Transcending change, the same subject, method, and purpose that appear in the Paternoster plays, at the very origin of the morality drama, uniformly govern all the plays that have survived. They all dramatize the war between vice and virtue for possession of the human soul; their method is personification; their purpose moral instruction.[2]

The morality developed out of the allegorical pagentry theatricalizing the pulpit sermon, and it never lost its homiletic purpose. The earliest moralities staged what Chaucer's Parson preached--the schematic exposition, by contrasting pairs, of the Deadly Sins and Christian Virtues. Even much later, Marlowe's Faustus is always exhorted by both good and evil angels.

Although the Devil is often present as an honorary chairman of evil, the vices actually conduct the intrigue for the soul of the mankind Character. Concerning the older vices in general Spivack writes,

> A stage figure in all the habiliments of humanity, promotes an intrigue, or a series of intrigues, for the sake of illustrating to the audience his allegorical meaning. He is the creator of the action and its interpreter, as well as being the central display in a moral pagent of his own designing. His motivation is implicit in his name and nature, and does not need to grow out of his relationship with the other characters, except in so far as his victims present to him the instigation of their virtue. It is only necessary that during his first appearance he should announce his name and declare his strategy, supplementing both by a running moral commentary throughout the play.[3]

At first there were a number of vice characters--the term being used in a moral sense to denote any of the allegorical figures of evil. The earliest preserved example is the Castel of Perserverence (1400-25).

> Þus vycys, a-geyns vertues fytyn ful snelle;
> Euery buskith to brynge man to dystresse;
> But Penaunce & Confescion, with Mankynd wyl melle;
> Þe vycys arn ful lyckely, Þe vertues to opresse:
> Sann dowte;
>
> (11. 70-74)

In a later work, Magnificence by John Skelton (1513-16),

> For I am a vertue yf I be well vsed,
> And I am a vyce where I am abused
>
> (11. 2101-02)

And in a quite late work, The Longer Thou Livest, The More Fool Thou Art, by W. Wagner (1560-68),

> Incontinence. What, Idleness, the parent of all vice?
> Who thought to haue found the heare.
> Idleness. Then art thou neyther mannerly nor wise,
> As by thy salutation doth appeare;
> For if I of vice by the parent,
> Then thy parent I must needes by.
> Thou art a vice by all mens consent,
> Therefore it is like I begat thee.
>
> (11. 595-602)

The last quotation illustrates a very important development--the growing predominance of one vice above the general group, or the Seven Deadly Sins. After 1500 the characters of the Seven Deadly Sins who

fought the Seven Christian Virtues were combined into three or four characters. There were three causes for this: (1) this allegorical drama depended less on pagentry and battle, and more on intrigue; (2) the plays had to be written to fit small professional troupes of actors; (3) after the Reformation, playwrights turned their attention to secular matters, and the humanistic problems with which they dealt could be handled with fewer vice characters.[4]

This type of intrigue plot necessitated the development of a seducer par excellence. This role was taken by the Vice. He flattered, cajoled, and dissembled his way into man's trust and then let in the minor vices. Which vice became the intriguer depended on the homiletic end served by the play. In The Longer Thou Livest, the theme is juvenile delinquency and, as is shown in the dialogue quoted above, Idleness is the radix malorum because youth is most susceptible to it. In Bale's Three Laws, Infidelity is dominate and the other vices are "Frutes of Infydelyte." This is made explicit by Vindicta Dei, "of whom spronge they first? but of Infydelyte?" (l. 1854).

After 1550, theatrical values had overcome direct theological homiletic values. When several vices appeared, the Vice was the only one accorded that name. The other vices acknowledged his dominance, and he even had his own stage directions. In Respublica (1553) the "partes and Names of the Plaiers" names,

> Avarice. Allias policie, The vice of the plaie.
> Insolence. " Authorite, the chief gallaunt.
> Oppression. " Reformation, an other gallaunt.
> Adulation. " Honestie, The third gallaunt.

"The vice of the plaie", had achieved status as antagonist in the intrigue plot. His name indicates his character, and his alias shows his method of becoming intimate with his victim.

The activity and purpose of the Vice was to seduce the mankind figure away from his special guardian virtue, thus: in Mankind, Titivillus slanders Mercy and alienates the hero from her, in Mundus et Infans, Folly creates a breach between Manhood and Conscience, in Lusty Juventus, the title character is drawn away from Good Counsel and Knowledge by Hypocracy and brought to the devotion of Abominable Living. The Vice always makes the initial break in the walls of virtue through deceit, dissembling himself in a moral or physical disguise. The Vice may introduce himself under an alias. Pity in Hickcorner laments the prevalence of this dissembling,

> Alas! now is lechery called love, indede,
> And murdure named manhood in every nede;
> Extorsyon is called lawe, so God me spede:
> Worse was hyt never!
>
> (ll. 557-60)

The Vice appeared for a didactic purpose and this was always made evident to the audience.

> His exposition of his name, his nature, and his characteristic activity is a constant rhetorical formula for every Vice of the morality drama. It is the necessary sermon, prefacing the dramatic action of the play, for that action is, in fact, arranged by him as one more demonstration of his timeless and universal quality.[5]

Cole comments on the intimacy of the Vice with the audience,

> The Vice would often become self-laudatory in his revelation, demonstrating cynical scorn for his victim and mankind generally; he would proudly reveal his plots and stratagems beforehand; in the presence of his victim he would engage in humorous asides, and

> sometimes even keep up a cunning game of mumbling something about his true designs to the human hero, only to cover up the line with some innocuous but comic saying that sounded like the first revelation.[6]

This last characteristic, saying a bit of unpleasant truth to the face of the dupe and then changing a word or two to once more deceive the victim, became a standard trick of the Vice after 1550. It is a typical parading of his talent for deceit, and its homiletic purpose is that the dupe must be deceived but the audience must be aware of the moral truth.[7] The Vice Infidelity in Bale's Three Laws says to Naturae Lex,

> Infid. I thought I should mete a knaue,
> And now that fortune I have
> Amonge thys cumpany.
>
> Nat. Lex. Why dost thou call me a knaue?
>
> Infid. I sayd. I wolds be your slave
> Yf your grace wolds me have.
>
> (11. 200-205)

Besides the dissembling tricks of false faces and disguises, the Vice uses another homiletic device between the audience and his victim. This is his rapid alternation between tears and laughter. His tears are in feigned compassion for his victim, and the laughter is shared with the audience at the dupe's expense. The Vice in Impatient Poverty illustrates this.

> Thys is an heauy departynge
> I can in no wyse forbeare wepynge
> Yet kysse me or ye go
> For sorowe my harte wyll breke in two.
> Is he gone, then haue at laughynge
> A syr is not thys a ioly game
> That conscience doeth not knowe my name
>
> (11. 508-14)

In spite of his serious function of leading souls to damnation, the Vice was a tremendously comic character, revelling in practical

jokes, playing the clever fool, the satirical wit, grossness, physical and verbal antics, and putting a comic turn to his consumate artistry as a deceiver. This comic mode ran the gamut from crude obscenity to witty social satire, and was exclusively the property of the Vice. This comic vein was no doubt one of the principle reasons for the longevity of the Vice figure on the English stage. The low comedy intrusions in Elizabethan tragedy have been attributed to the influence of the vices.[8]

Two further qualities of the Vice must be touched upon. These are the Vice's "honesty", and his emotions of "love" and "hate". A dissembled face of honesty and frequent protestations of it are a prime device for duping the human hero. The Vice of Common Conditions protests, "Beleue me as I am an honest gentleman here is my hand". Later in the play he boasts, "By my honesty it doth me good that I so crafty should bee" (11. 896, 1232). In an identical vein the Vice of The Virtuous and Godly Susanna admits, "In fayth I was an honest man,/ Yet I cannot tell whan" (11. 914-15).

Although the Vice may speak at length of how he loves or hates, love and hate in the Vice are not actually names of real emotions experienced by the character.

> His 'hate' is only a word for the natural war between vice and virtue, and his 'love' is the imposture that conceals his aggression. By definition he is the enemy of the virtues or values that prevail in any play in which he finds himself, and for this antinomy his 'hate' is another anthropomorphism.[9]

> So though I simulate externally Loue to pretend,
> My loue shall turne to muschife, I warrent you in the end.

warns the Vice of Patient and Meek Grissill (11. 899-900).

> I can speake fare to a man and Imbrace hime as my brother
> Whome Inwardlie I disdayn and hate above all other,
> (Love Feigned and Unfeigned ll. 85-86)

These characteristics described the nature of the Vice and were so successful on the stage that they helped the Vice to remain active, as we will see, when the form of homiletic drama died.

In keeping with the homiletic intention of the plays, virtue finally triumphs after initially losing the hero to the Vice. The Vice is punished, and it is usual for the punishment to be proper to his nature. In Respublicia, Avarice is sentenced to be pressed like a sponge until he disgorges his pelf to the last cent. Inclination, at the end of The Trial of Treasure, is bridled and shackled.

> [The punishments] are administered seriously because they are administrated by those in the play who are capable of seriousness, and they are received in a very different mood by the figure at whom they aim. The allegorical immunity of the Vice to any real curtailment of his universal and timeless existence inevitably subdues the effect of his capture and condemnation into a kind of dark-grained farce. His behavior in this situation is no more than a parody of the alarm and resistance of the human criminal confronting the same fate.[10]

The Vice fills the air with oaths or semi-comic threats.

As complete secular drama, both comic and serious, displaced the morality drama, the theatrically viable and vendible character of the Vice remained on the stage. The Vice became a character in comedies removed from the homiletic form of the moralities, but he kept his character as minister of evil and mover of intrigue plots. His actions illustrated his stereotyped nature but he was no longer recognized by his name alone. He became Merry Report in Heywood's Play of the

Weather (1530-33), and the title role of Jack Juggler (1553-58). But in the dramatis personae of such plays "the vyce" always followed his name.[11]

During the period 1520-1585 there developed, parallel to the intermediate and late moralities, a type of hybrid play dramatizing stories and characters from history or legend. The hero represented mankind or a portion of mankind, but the personifications of the moralities were retained, and the stories were reshaped to fit the Psychomachia form. Some instances are John the Evangelist, King Darius, Bale's King John, and The History of Horestes.[12] Although the unifying principle at work in these plays was homiletic and not dramatic, the universal hero-figures became more particularized, concretized, literalized; even to the point of using historic or biblical figures such as Orestes or Judas.

The tragic form evolved as the characters became particularized, and their milieu became social and not escatalogical. As secular interests overcame religious ones, the figure for humankind in the plays became plural; instead of representing abstractly all of Mankind, this figure developed and individualized, though simple, personality; representing one aspect of humanity--youth, age, or a certain inclination, toward coveteousness, for example.[13]

The character of the Vice profited from this change. He took into himself the characteristics of all of the vices. Through his theatrical vitality and popularity he came to dominate the plays. The structure was tailored to him. He opened the plays, he was the central figure, and the play closed with his punishment or final lesson to the audience.[14]

Such a figure is Ambidexter in Thomas Preston's Cambises (1558-69).

By the time of Common Conditions (1576), all allegorical vestiges were gone from the titular Vice, and he had become merely the unprincipled exponent of deceit, illustrating his ability and delighting the audience. But, as he exists in a dramatic world of personalities who do things for perceivable reasons, there is added a vague suggestion of practical motives for his machinations. "For at length it will redowne to my profit I do not doubt", "And therefore for my owne aduantage beleeue me you may" (Common Conditions ll. 614 and 163). But nothing more is made of his motives. This tension between the dramatic necessity of the particularized character to have motives, and the vestiges of the allegorical figure whose evil nature did not necessitate them, followed the Vice figure through all his disguised appearances in Elizabethan drama.

> The evolution of the Vice toward literalness has carried him to the point where he emerges as that familiar figure on the Elizabethan stage who joyfully proclaims his own villainy and baffles our modern scrutiny. The details of this villainy obey the circumstances of the plot in which it appears, but its governing features are clear and consistant with its origin. At its heart it is a demonstration of deceit which takes the form of feigned honesty and affectionate good will.[15]

The aim of the deceit has changed from winning a soul for the powers of evil, to transforming the victim's intentions into their opposite and turning people against each other.

One verbal trick of this late Vice must be noted. As literalism was applied to the Vice as to the other characters, he still demonstrated his nature and title as the Vice, but he could no longer be called Hypocracy and Avarice. Vestiges of the homiletic function resisted the encroachment

of literalism and he kept the moral record straight through self-exposure. An example of this is the self-applied term "villain." Such late Vices as Common Conditions in the play of that name and Subtle Shift in Sir Clyoman and Sir Clamydes use the term constantly in self reference.

To any careful reader of Marlowe and Shakespeare many of the characteristics of the Vice must have sounded familiar. Spivack's Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil resolves certain problems in the characterization of Iago by showing that he is descended from the Vice. Marlowe's Barabas is mentioned in the same context. The supreme villains of both authors can be approached in their relationship to the Vice in much the same way. Spivack points out that Iago is constantly referred to as a "villain."

> But as it is used by Iago to label himself it defines an action that is artistic rather than moral, and it draws its meaning out of an earlier dramatic convention whose characteristic protagonist was at once an abstraction and a professional artist, a laughing farceur who had no further purpose than to confound his human victims by a series of intrigues that illustrated the meaning of his abstract name.[16]

Spivack lists a number of differences between what he calls "the family of Iago", and Shakespeare's intelligible criminals; that is those criminals, such as Macbeth, who were wholly conceived and drawn within the compass of the literal drama.

(1) The intelligible criminals have no ambiguity of moral distinction between cause and effect. Their appetites are not toward the criminal act but toward the consequences of it, unlike the boasting of ability of Barabas and Iago.

(2) The intelligible criminals reflect the suffering derived from an appetite such as lust or revenge. There is a continuous movement of their souls through the world with passion and pain toward death. But in Barabas there is no premise of such a passion in the earlier dramatic life.

(3) The soliloquies of the two types of criminals are different. For the intelligible criminals, the soliloquy is truly private

> ruination, indirectly communicating their purposes, how they are bound to their wickedness. But Barabas, Iago and the rest of Shakespeare's Vice derived criminals have hundreds of lines addressed directly to the audience telling them what they are planning and then they boast to the audience of their accomplishments.
>
> (4) The intelligible criminals never say they are types, rather than individuals, or that they are there to demonstrate a genus of evil--making them actually independent of circumstances of plot working on character.[17]

While all the above principles may not apply exactly to Barabas (being abstracted from a character whose allegorical basis was more fully integrated into the later literal drama), the broad outlines do fit.

The main problem of character in the drawing of Barabas is, as I suggested in my introduction, the bifurcation that appears at the end of the second act. Where Barabas first appears as a well motivated character of the literal drama of which he is a part, but in act two he becomes a demonstration of serialized villainy. This change can now be seen to be due to the two conventions which still rested uneasily with each other in Elizabethan drama. In the second section of the play Barabas is the homiletic Vice, stripped of the necessity of psychological motivation and acting towards his victims and the audience exactly as his dramatic ancestors had done.

The change is anticipated in the first half of the play. Barabas dissembles to the Jews (I i 150-75), and with Abigail to the nuns (I ii 335-630). In the latter scene there is a touch of the Vice as the master farceur who manipulates the players in the show to demonstrate his ability for the benefit of the audience.

As previously stated, Barabas is seen first as a psychological character in a literal drama. But even within this convention, Barabas

exhibits one of the characteristics of the Vice. After the two merchants have left, he has a long expository monologue in which he tells the audience of his pedigree (I i 102-38). The pedigree is in terms of his wealth and race, but it serves the same function as that of the Vice describing his ability as a villain.

After this exhibiting of his pedigree and the deluding of the Jews, the Vice is seen next in Barabas' lament over the loss of his wealth to the Christians. When reminded of the tribulations of Job, Barabas enumerates Job's wealth and tells his comforters that he had enough wealth to buy Job and his beasts and still be wealthy. His comforters leave him on his knees, broken by his grief. He bids them farewell and then leaps up saying,

> See the simplicity of these base slaves,
> Who, for the villains have no wit themselves,
> Think me to be a senseless lump of clay
> That will with every water wash to dirt:
> No, Barabas is born to better chance,
> And framed of finer mould than common men,
> That measure naught but by the present time.
> A reaching thought will search his deepest wits,
> And cast with cunning for the time to come:
> For evils are apt to happen every day
>
> (I ii 216-25)

These words are the Vice exactly. He dissembles to the other characters and then shows his other face to the audience, here with a hint of what he has in store, "For evils are apt to happen every day".

As was mentioned above, in the scene where Abigail enters the nunnery under the pretense of repentence, Barabas' performance is the Vice at his best in comedy, dissembling to the other characters with his true meaning revealed in comic asides. Still, the convention is basically that of literal drama as the asides are ostensibly for the benefit of Abigail.

The literal-psychological disguise of the Vice figure is much thinner in act II scene iii. Barabas enters to inform the audience that he has regained his wealth and to praise himself. Upon seeing Lodowick, "the Vice of the play" announces his intentions,

> Here comes Don Lodowick, the governor's son
> One that I love for his good father's sake.
>
> (11. 30-31)

> Now will I show myself
> To have more of the serpent than the dove;
> That is--more knave than fool.
>
> (11. 36-38)

In the scene that follows, between Barabas and Lodowick, the Jew leads on his unsuspecting victim with friendly, if ambiguous words, and a promise of his daughter. But he has no less than ten asides in which he reveals his true purpose to the audience, and laughs at the dupe. In the continuation of that scene, where Barabas buys a slave, it is interesting that mention is made of "Lady Vanity," an allegorical character from the moralities.

Barabas engages in more low comedy dialogue with the slaves before he singles out Ithamore. He buys this slave and then turns to the audience to keep them informed, Vice-like, of his intentions,

> Ay, mark him, you were best, for this is he
> That by my help shall do much villany.
>
> (11. 139-40)

Barabas then bids Lodowick farewell, again promising him friendship and his daughter. Mathias, Abigail's true love, enters and Barabas makes sure that the audience is aware of his plans for the suitors,

> He loves my daughter, and she holds him dear:
> But I have sworn to frustrate both their hopes,
> And be revenged upon the governor.
>
> (11. 148-50)

To Mathias, Barabas also feigns friendship.

Then, left alone with Ithamore and the audience, Barabas delivers two speeches which have caused confusion to critics who only see Barabas as a fully literalized, consistent, psychological character. He first advises Ithamore to be void of the affections of "Compassion, love, vain hope and heartless fear" (l. 176). He then delivers his own pedigree to his slave and the audience, telling how he kills sick people "groaning under walls," he poisons wells, and through his study of "physic" has enriched the priests with burials, and kept the sextons busy, "digging graves and ringing dead men's knells." He boasts of slaying friend and enemy alike in war and of how he torments people with his usury. He gives no reason why he has done these things, and we need not seek one. Here is the Vice; doing evil because he is evil, enjoys doing evil, and boasting of it. He informs the audience of his nature. He has already avowed his intention of committing villainies.

Where we look for psychological explanations of Barabas' evil behavior, the Elizabethan audience accepted Barabas as a familiar type of character. Barabas was acting within his own familiar convention and could be accepted on that basis by the audience, regardless of the convention established by the remainder of the characters.

Ithamore then has a speech which shows his relationship to his master. He too boasts of his pedigree of evil:

> In setting Christian villages on fire,
> Chaining of eunuchs, binding galley-slaves.
>
> (11. 209-10)

He is particularly proud of having placed itching powder where Christians kneel.

> And therewithall their knees would rankle so,
> That I have laughed a-good to see the cripples
> go limping home to Christendom on stilts.
>
> (ll. 215-18)

Whereas all of Barabas' villaines recorded in his exposition of pedigree are fatal to his victims, this trick in which Ithamore sets such store is little more than a practical joke. As Ithamore helps his master in his villainies it becomes evident that Ithamore is an alter ego of Barabas. He functions as the comic side of the Vice. Because of his function, Ithamore may be descended from the minor vices of the morality drama who were attendant upon the Vice and introduced to the hero by him.

With Lodowick and Abigail, Barabas protests his "honesty" to the suitor and engages in three more asides which reveal his true feelings.

Mathias enters, going to see his Abigail, and Barabas plays the Vice's role of true friend, to lead him to his downfall. He protests that Abigail will be Mathias' wife and even uses the Vice's trick of tears,

> Pardon me though I weep: the governor's son
> Will, whether I will or no, have Abigail:
>
> (II iii 263-64)

Upon Lodowick's re-entrance with Abigail, Barabas swears the same sort of friendship to him, thinking only of how he is to be revenged through him.

After once more swearing friendship to Mathias, Barabas dispatches Ithamore with a feigned challenge from Lodowick to Mathias, and he makes certain that the audience has kept up with the plot.

> So, now will I go in to Lodowick,
> And, like a cunning spirit, feign some lie,
> Till I have set 'em both at enmity.
>
> (II iii 386-88)

The allegorical Vice's function late in his career was "turning people against each other,"[18] and here is exactly the same behavior. The only difference being that his personality is no longer identified by a humor-name like "Incontinence" or "Idleness."

When his plot culminates with the deaths of the two suitors, Barabas is on hand, "[above, on a balcony]", to witness the double deaths and to encourage them.

> O! bravely fought; and yet they thrust not home.
> Now, Lodovico! now, Mathias! So--
> So now they have showed themselves to be tall fellows.
> [Cries within.] Part 'em, part 'em.
> Aye, part 'em now they are dead. Farewell, farewell.
>
> (III ii 5-9)

The image of a puppet master controlling his marionettes is not inappropriate.

Ithamore, as the comic side of the Vice and Barabas' alter ego, delivers the homiletic comment on the deaths,

> Why, was there ever seen such villainy,
> So neatly plotted, and so well performed?
> Both held in hand, and flatly both beguiled?
>
> (III iii 1-3)

He recreates the mirth of the Vice by his laughing fit during which Abigail enters and learns of the death of her love. Ithamore engages in some typical Vice humor with obscene comments about clergy,

> Itha. I pray, mistress, will you answer me but one question?
>
> Abig. Well, sirrah, what is't?
>
> Itha. A very feeling one; have not the nuns fine sport with the friars now and then?
>
> (11. 34-38)

When it becomes necessary to dispose of Abigail because of her knowledge of the suitors' deaths, Ithamore hesitates and Barabas wins

him to the scheme with promises of friendship and wealth. But when Ithamore departs, Barabas reveals his true feelings in Vice-like fashion,

> Thus every villain ambles after wealth,
> Although he ne'er be richer than in hope:
> But hush!
>
> I'll pay thee with a vengence, Ithamore.
>
> (11. 49-51, 115)

After the plot for his daughter's death has been accomplished, Barabas shows no remorse but only the joy of the Vice in his ability as a villain. (IV i 1-21). The emphasis in this passage is not on the end of safety served by the murder but on the activity itself, the cunning of its planning and execution. Another typical Vice gag is inserted. When Ithamore suggests that they poison a monastery (for no other reason than the joy of another such successful plot) Barabas replies, "Thou shalt not need, for now the nuns are dead/ They'll die with grief."

Two friars approach Barabas to accuse him of murder, and he presents one of his best demonstrations of ability to deceive.

> She has confest, and we are undone,
> My bosom inmate! but I must dissemble
>
> (11. 49-50)

And he does, with fornication gags, taking the words out of the friars' mouths and twisting them to suit his own comic purpose. He even manages to make the friars fall out with each other, playing on their covetousness, and bringing them to blows. With the friars gone Barabas once again addresses the audience directly, explaining his intentions.

> What if I murdered him [Friar Barnadine] ere Jacomo comes?
> Now I have such a plot for both their lives
> As never Jew nor Christian knew the like:
>
> (11. 119-21)

This boasting note is familiar.

When Jew and Turk come to strangle the friar, Ithamore once more expresses joy in the action rather than from relief of the safety it will bring.

> O how I long to see him shake his heels.
>
> (IV ii 12)

When Friar Barnardine realizes they seek his life he asks why and receives the answer,

> Itha. Yes, 'cause you use to confess.
>
> Bar. Blame not us by the proverb, Confess and be hanged; pull hard!

Only after the comic reason has been presented is any mention made about the friar's wanting Barabas' wealth. This shows how realistic psychological motivation was of secondary importance compared to the conventional motives of the Vice.

While the murder of the one friar is being blamed on the other, "the Vice of the play" weeps at the prospect of the "murderer" being hanged.

> 'Las I could weep at your calamity!
>
> (IV iii 45)

Later, with the bully Pilia-Borsa, Barabas again uses the Vice's trick of double-faced dialogue.

> I must make this villain away.
> Please you dine with me, sir;--and you shall be most
> heartily poisoned.
>
> (IV v 32-34)

When he must seek how to revenge himself on his errant slave, he uses yet another Vice trick.

> I will in some disguise go see the slave
>
> (IV v 69)

This he does, keeping up a running commentary in asides to the audience, and commenting on what the others say about him. When asked for

the nosegay in his hat, he keeps the audience informed of his villainies.

> So, now I am revenged upon 'em all.
> The scent thereof was death; I poisoned it.
>
> (IV vi 47-48)

Having been hailed before the Governor, his crimes revealed, he utters the cry of the eternal, allegorical figure of evil, "Devils, do your worst! I'll live in spite of you," (V i 41). Appearing to be dead, he is thrown over the walls and revives from his drugged sleep, to tell the audience the villainies he plans.

> I'll be revenged on this accursed town;
> For by my means Calymath shall enter in.
> I'll help to slay their children and their wives,
> To fire the churches, pull their houses down,
> Take my goods too, and seize upon my lands.
> I hope to see the governor a slave,
> And, rowing in a galley, whipt to death.
>
> (V ii 2-8)

Having handed the town over to the Turks and been made governor himself, Barabas delivers his further plans to the audience, in a form not unlike the Vice's sermon, giving moral instruction (V iii 26-46).

Barabas is compelled (by his theatrical ancestry) to reveal each move in his plans to the audience. One of the most revealing of these soliloquys is in act V scene iii, in which is incorporated Machiavellianism, his Jewish tradition, and the expository and bragging qualities of the Vice.

> And thus far roundly goes the business:
> Thus loving neither, will I live with both,
> Making a profit of my policy;
> And he from whom my most advantage comes
> Shall be my friend.
> This is the life we Jews are used to lead;
> And reason too, for Christians do the like
> Well, now about effecting this device;
> First to surprise great Selim's soldiers,
> And then to make provision for the feast,
> That at one instant all things may be done:

My policy detests prevention:
To what event my secret purpose drives,
I know; and they shall witness with their lives.

(11. 108-21)

Just before his fall, Barabas boasts, Vice-like, of his prowess, emphasizing again the action and not the ends gained.

Why, is not this
A kingly kind of trade to purchase towns
By treachery and sell 'em by deceit?
Now tell me, worldlings, underneath the sun
If greater falsehood ever has been done?

(V vi 46-50)

Spivack states that throughout all of the many plots, "The emphasis is always on the artistry, not on the end; the serialized villainy flourishes as a demonstration, not as a means."[19]

But Barabas is double-crossed by the Governor, and the Jew falls into the caldron which he had prepared for Calymath. This is a Vice-like death, since boiling was a common punishment for poisoners, and both the double-cross and the caldron are appropriate to Barabas' nature. As he dies he hurls curses and threats at all present, like his allegorical forebearer.

Barabas is more representative than unique, being a character derived from the Vice who appears in a literalized drama. There are a number of characters in the drama of the 16th and early 17th centuries who exhibit a noticeable difference between their avowed motives and their behavior, which does not follow from them, but is a demonstration of their ability to do evil. Some examples are: Politick Persuasion in Patient and Meek Grissill (1561-65), Lorenzo in The Spanish Tragedy (1587-89), Eleazar in Lust's Dominion (1599-?), Clois Hoffman in Chettle's Tragedy of Hoffman (c. 1602), and Francisco in The Duke of Milan (c. 1616).[20] Among the

characters of Shakespeare are Aaron the Moor, Richard III, Don John, Iago, and, to a lesser extend Edmund in Lear.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION V

[1] I will use the lower case vice to designate the general type of figure from the morality drama, or a character whose actions are directed by the Vice. The Vice will be used to designate the specific allegorical character in a morality play who assumes the role as main tempter of the human hero.

[2] Spivack, Bernard, Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 63.

[3] Ibid., 129.

[4] Ibid., 140-141.

[5] Ibid., 184.

[6] Cole, 26.

[7] Spivack, 156.

[8] Farnham, 432 ff.

[9] Spivack, 165.

[10] Ibid., 196.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 254 ff.

[13] Ibid., 306 f.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 298.

[16] Ibid., 56

[17] Ibid., 39-43

[18] Above, p. 44, first paragraph.

[19] Spivack, 352.

[20] Ibid., 34.

CONCLUSION

I have investigated five sources which Marlowe seems to have drawn upon in creating the character of Barabas. The Mediterranean Jewish intriguers Joseph Nassi and David Passi may have suggested the unscrupulous traitor and informer manipulating opposing powers for his own benefit.

From the medieval conception of the Jew, Marlowe borrowed much traditional material which he used for incidental aspects of the character of Barabas to distinguish him from the Christian inhabitants of Malta. Marlowe worked with the familiar Christian prejudices of the Jews as the murderers of Christ, practitioners of the ritual murder of Christians, Jews being noted for usury, and the term "Jew" as an insult. He has Barabas boast of the crime of poisoning wells, and the Abigail-Mathias-Lodowick episodes came from tradition.

Marlowe accepted Gentillet's perverted view of the teachings of Machiavelli as good stage material and made Barabas engage in action based upon the Florentine's doctrines of revenge at all costs, considering religion as hypocritical self-seeking and the cloak for crime, being bound to keep faith only when profitable to do so, and being guided by complete egoism. Barabas disposes of many enemies by the use of poison which was popularly supposed to have been advocated by Machiavelli.

The villainous tyrants of Seneca and Cinthio contributed the idea of a man dominated by an abnormal consuming passion and capable of any atrocities and treachery to achieve his ends. The Senecan style of rhetorical monologue is also used.

From the Vice of the morality play came the dramaturgical method of presenting Barabas, through which the villainy, deceit, and the crimes of the Jew could be effectively translated to the stage. This dramaturgical method allowed him to be both a spokesman for himself and, as expositor, to keep the schemes of the plot clearly before the audience. There is also the possibility that Marlowe was working from an extant plot, centered above an evil protagonist.[1] In this case, the intimacy with the audience which the Vice enjoyed, and especially his totally evil nature and constant desire to demonstrate his nature would have fitted the needs of the plot perfectly.

Of the relative importance of the various sources, the Vice figure seems to be paramount for the reasons given above. The other sources merely added characteristics to this popular stage figure. As Spivack says with regard to the Vice's acquiring a degree of biographical reality after the breakdown of the morality conventions, "He is also, on occasion, assimilated to type figures out of Latin comedy, the parasite and the miles gloriosus,"[2] or in The Jew of Malta, the Vice takes on the disguise of a medieval Jew, acting in the tradition of the Senecan tyrant and on the principles of Machiavelli.

FOOTNOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

[1] Above, p. 1, footnote 1.

[2] Spivack, 311.

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