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THE DANCE IN ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

Part I

The purpose of the following paper is to discuss various functions of the dance in some Elizabethan plays. It is generally known that song and dance were used after the performance of a play¹. My concern is not with that kind of dance, on the contrary, I will only deal with the dance which is integrated with the dramatic vision of the play. While reading the study, one has also to bear in mind that instrumental music accompanied the dance.

1

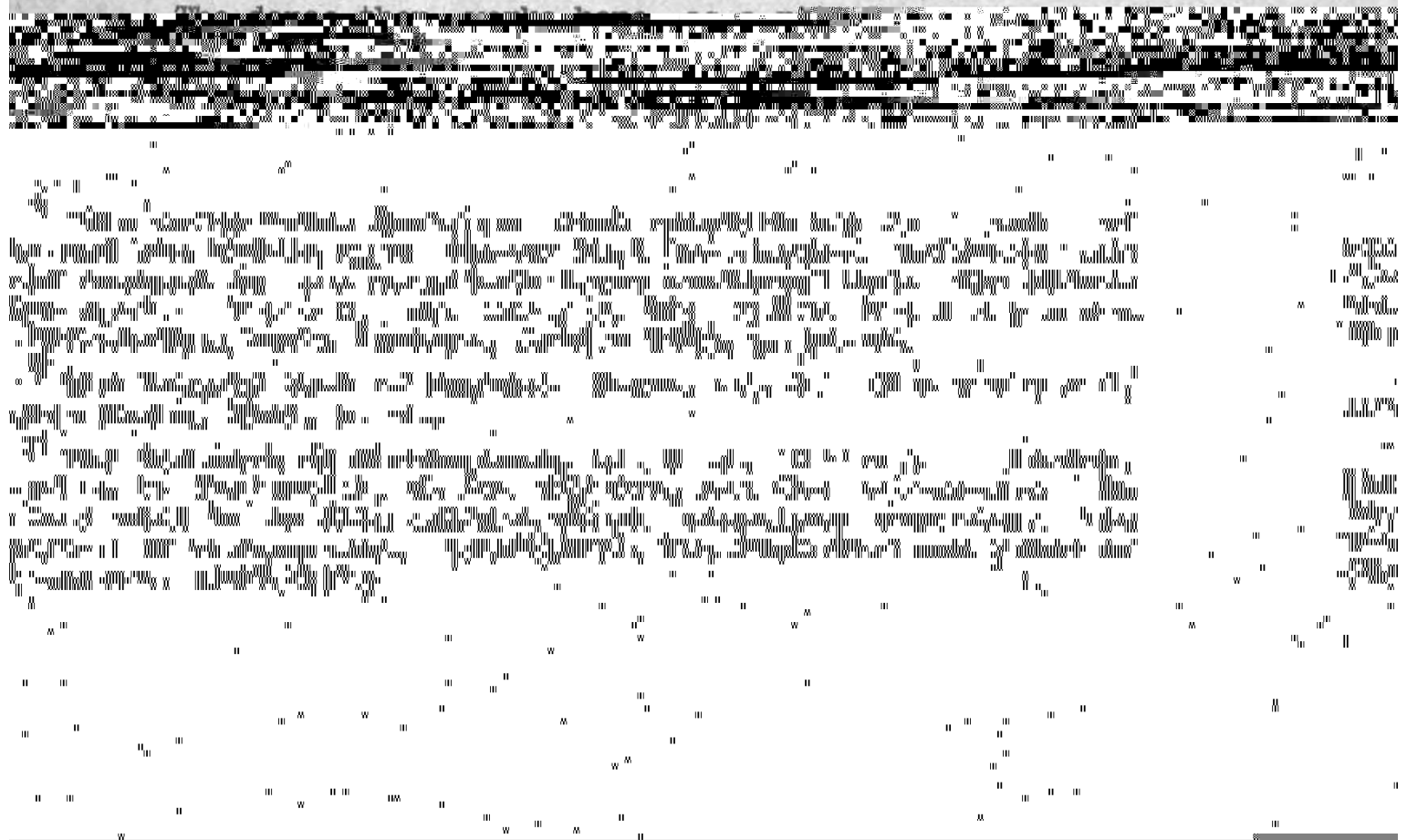
During the reign of Queen Elizabeth dancing became an important pastime at the court. Not only the Queen herself but the whole nation seemed to enjoy dancing to such an extent that they were referred to as "the dancing English"². Like music and song which, having been very popular in Elizabethan England, were rather often used in drama, the dance also appeared there though it was not frequently used for a strictly dramatic purpose. This is why, perhaps, its role during the performance of a play passed rather unnoticed in literary criticism. It

¹ See: A Shakespeare Companion 1564-1964, ed. F. E. Halliday, Aylesbury 1964, "Dances" and "Platter". For instance, mention is made there of the Dr. Thomas Platter's account of the dance he had seen after the performance of Julius Caesar. The dance had nothing to do with the play as such. See p. 126, 372.

² F. Rust, Dance in Society, London 1969, p. 49.

obviously played an essential part in the Renaissance masque, though I will not deal with that here, and it is there that it expresses a harmonious state of existence, a heightened image of life beyond the common reality. This idea corresponded to the contemporary notion of "music of spheres", of the universe performing a continual dance³. The dance of the people was related by contemporaries to the cosmic dance as was microcosm to macrocosm, the latter notion having been discussed at length by E. M. W. Tillyard in his book "The Elizabethan World Picture". Sir John Davies, in his poem "Orchestra" (1596) deals with the idea that music and dance indicate order and harmony in the universe as a result of the intervention of Love⁴. Thus love is the principle that unifies the elements bringing order and harmony, the expression of which is the dance of the universe. This symbolic function of the dance, when related to the human world, seems to be implied in some of Shakespeare's romantic comedies. "Much Ado About Nothing" and "As You Like It" end with a dance which is a confirmation of the romantic mode, of the happy union of lovers. In the latter play the Duke Senior says before the dance begins:

Proceed, proceed: we will begin these rites,
As we do trust they'll end, in true delights⁵.



their song at the end of the play remind us, moreover, of the Pagan tradition, of magic ritual dances at marriage feasts, which are to bring fertility, love and happiness into the lives of the married couple⁶. The magic wishes of the dancing elves - in the play - out of which there emerges an ideal vision of life, also refer to the offspring:

To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue they create
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be;
And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand:
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.

(V. ii. 33-44)

In "Love's Labour's Lost", on the other hand, a dance is anticipated but it does not take place. It is when Rosaline, disguised as the Princess asks for music to let the guests dance. But suddenly she changes her mind and gives a contrary order:

Not yet! no dance! thus change I like the moon.

(V. ii. 213)

implying what Berowne admits openly: "Jack hath not Jill" (V. ii. 870). There is no love sensu stricto and no happy end and so the characters are not given the chance to dance. It seems then that Shakespeare plays very subtly with the image of dance here, reminding us of its symbolic meaning and then dispensing with it and thus reinforcing the idea of unattained happiness.

Though the motif of dance, discussed so far, does not bear on the plot of the play, yet it enriches its vision and stresses its mode bringing to our minds a heightened image of life. There are other plays, however, in which the dance plays an entirely

⁶ R u s t, op. cit., p. 12-13.

perfunctory role introducing only variety on the stage and a break from the movement of the action, as, for instance, in "Much Ado About Nothing", where it merely reflects the courtly dances of the times (II. i. after l. 153) or in "The Tempest" in which a masque and antimasque - with grotesque shapes are used⁷. On the other hand, in the tragedy "Romeo and Juliet" and the chronicle play, "Henry VIII", the dance forms a suitable background and is integrated with the rise of the protagonist's feelings of love. It is during the dance that Romeo, who has come masked to the house of his parents' enemy, spies Juliet dancing and falls in love with her at first sight. He watches her while she dances and it is then that she appears to him as "the true beauty" he has never seen before (I. v. 56). In "Henry VIII" the dance of the king with Anne Boleyn also becomes a significant prelude to his attraction to her, which finally leads to a divorce from Katharine and marriage to her. In both plays the dance may be viewed as a background against which the protagonists' thoughts and feelings are displayed, yet at the same time it is integrated with and becomes part of the first movement of the plot. And in both the plays the image of ideal female beauty and man's infatuation with it are dramatized with the help of dance.

In "The Winter's Tale" dance seems to serve more obviously a dramatic purpose. It is when Florizel dances with Perdita. He says to her before they dance:

But come; our dance, I pray.
Your hand, my Perdita: so turtles pair
That never mean to part.

(IV. iii. 153-154)

Their dance expresses the unity and happiness of lovers and they form a central image against the background of dancing shepherds and shepherdesses (after l. 165). The pastoral and romantic moods inherent in that image are dramatically contrasted with the ensuing anger of Florizel's father who has come disgu-

⁷ IV. i. after l. 138, III. iii. after l. 17 and 28. Other examples: A Midsummer Night's Dream, II. ii., l. 1: "Come, now a roundel..."; Timon of Athens, I. ii. after l. 132; The Winter's Tale, IV. iii, after l. 348.

ised and who learns that his son wants to marry the girl without letting him know about it. His presence before and during the dance, at which he himself and Camillo become onlookers, arouses suspense and gives forebodings of the oncoming events. Thus the dance of the lovers, indicating the theme of love, is juxtaposed with the counterpoint theme formed by Polixenes' motives, by his desire to destroy that love. As a result, dramatic conflict and tension are brought about.

A purely visual contrast of a theatrical kind is also created. This is when the standing and sitting guests, Polixenes and Camillo, and the Shepherd, are looking at Florizel and Perdita. Accordingly, the characters are divided into two groups: the audience, as it were, and those who dance and are watched.

2

Another function of the dance in Shakespeare's plays is to reinforce the moral issue of the play. The witches' dance in "Macbeth" (IV. ii. after l. 132) may even pass unnoticed by the reader, yet visually it performs a rather important function indicating the idea of evil. In the light of contemporary beliefs, the existence of witches as such and their alliance with evil was undeniable. It seems probable that changing Holinshed's "Goddesses of destinie, or else some Nimphes or Feiries" into witches (the language and the place speak for themselves), Shakespeare bore in mind James I's work on "Daemonologie", in which witches and witchcraft are discussed. He, most likely, drew his inspiration to write a play on Scottish history, linking the past with the present, from the accession of a Scottish king to the English throne. It is worth mentioning that about three years later, Ben Jonson wrote "The Masque of Queenes" with the excellent antimasque in which witches are the main characters. He also seems to have taken James I's interests into account. In the antimasque the witches dance and Ben Jonson remarks in the stage-directions that it is "an usuall^d ceremony at they^r Convents or meetings", referring the reader to James I's "Daemonologie"⁸. The scenery there symbolizes hell from which the wit-

⁸ Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford, P. E. Simpson, Oxford 1941, Vol. VII, p. 283, l. 43-44 and note d.

ches appear to the accompaniment of infernal music. A remark is made that "all evils are [morally] said to come from hell"⁹.

In "Macbeth", the moral fall of the protagonist is strictly connected with the witches' influence on him, reminding us of the activities of vices as tempters in the moralities. In the first scene of Act IV the scenery helps to bring out symbolic implications. While Macbeth's Porter has compared himself to the devil Porter implying the links between the castle and hell, here the actual presence of witches in a dark cavern in which a cauldron is boiling, reminds the audience of hell in a visual way, as it was illustrated in medieval and sixteenth century art or as presented on stage. The witches themselves equate the contents of the cauldron with "hell-broth". Accordingly, the appearance of Macbeth there and his growing awareness of having been entrapped by the witches, after he has seen the show of kings followed by Banquo's ghost, receive a symbolic meaning. In this context the dance of the witches becomes a ritual enactment of the presence of evil, of demonism, stressing the theme of evil in the play. The witches seem to have full knowledge of Macbeth's inner life and of his real fate; they only pretend to be ignorant of it. Anyway, when they say - in chorus -

Show his eyes and grieve his heart;

(IV. 1. 110)

it seems clear that they know what Macbeth will see. If this is so, the clash between the protagonist's inner state - his amazement - when he has seen the show of kings and the surprise of the First Witch at his behaviour:

...but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?

(126)

as well as her trifling words, seems to be telling. This would correspond to the illusions the witches have helped to create for Macbeth, illustrated by their: "fair is foul and foul is

⁹ Ibid., p. 282f.

fair" (I. i. 11). As a result, the words "great king", "kindly say", "welcome pay", used by the First Witch, would sound ironic. It is suggested by her that the dance should cheer Macbeth up. Instead, however, he curses them all after they have vanished. Thus, if we accept the view of the witches' knowledge of their role in the temptation of Macbeth and of his fate, a more profound meaning will be assigned to the dance itself. The witches mock at Macbeth while they pretend to give him homage. And having made him their victim, in their triumphal and sacrificial dance, they offer him to the powers they serve. The boiling cauldron becomes the symbol of Macbeth's goal, the dance, moreover, sinister mockery. And it is in this spirit that the last words of the First Witch may be understood:

That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did he welcome pay.

(IV. i. 131-132)

In this way the grotesque dance of the witches would signify the apex of their activities, forming an integral link with the plot, and bringing about the theme of the moral fall of Macbeth and of triumph of evil in an emblematic way.

Apart from contemporary beliefs in witches and their ritual performances¹⁰, a link may be drawn with some morality plays, especially with "Like Will to Like" where the alliance of man with evil is expressed through a dance. In one of the scenes the vicious man, Tom Collier, dances with the Devil and the Vice, Nicol Newfangle¹¹. The dance works as an emblematic stage image illustrating the alliance of man with evil. While here, it seems, the comic grotesque dominates, in the case of the witches in "Macbeth", the grim grotesque overshadows the comic. The latter

¹⁰ In: Tudor Interludes, ed. P. H a p p é, Leicester 1958, p. 328 after l. 176.

¹¹ The dumb show was used, for instance, in "Gorboduc". It is also to be found in Pericles. "The intermedii[...]in Italian tragedy may have furnished the idea of the dumb show, but[...]the dumb show may have been a native development". Elizabethan and Stuart Plays, ed. Ch. R. B a s k e v i l l, V. B. H e l t z e l, A. H. N e t h e r c o t, New York 1965 (1934), p. 77.

may easily, now and then arise on account of the incongruous gestures and movements of the dancing witches, depending on the performance.

The dance of the elves in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" - together with their song - and that of the witches recall the magic ritual dances of folk culture. At the same time they are the key stage emblems of the two plays expressing the victory of love and good wishes, the affirmation of life and the future of man, on the one hand, and on the other, the victory of evil, of the negation of happiness, bringing about a most gloomy vision of man's destiny.

In Act IV Scene ii of "Henry VIII" the dance is also used for a moral purpose. It works there as a symbolic stage image to stress the idea of spiritual glory as opposed to worldly success and power. In the preceding scene the coronation of Anne Boleyn takes place. She wins the hearts of the people who admire her beauty, royal behaviour and piety. They not only accept her as the queen but are also overjoyed at her success. Anne has the love of her husband, her people, and royal splendour.

Scene ii shows Katharine, Henry's first wife. She is expecting her death and in a dream vision she sees virtues - with "golden vizards" on their faces and garlands on their heads - dancing in a masque-like scene. They have brought a garland for her as a token of her moral victory. They dance with the spare garland and at certain "changes" two dancers hold the garland over Katharine's head. The emblematic scene expresses the glorification of Katharine's spiritual life. Thus the theme of worldly and spiritual victory emerges from the lives of the two queens.

Shakespeare was undoubtedly influenced by the use, before him, of dumbshow in drama when he worked out the emblematic scene in this play¹². In "Like Will to Like" the virtuous protagonist, Virtuous Life, is, like Katharine, rewarded for his

¹² See I. Janicka, *The Popular Theatrical Tradition and Ben Jonson*, Łódź 1972, p. 111-121. In "Appius and Virginia" the allegorical dumb show is quite impressive. See *ibid.*, p. 116.

moral life. He is asked to sit down in a chair and receives a crown and a sword as tokens of his spiritual victory, from Honour. Then God's messengers, God's Promise, Honour, and Virtuous Living sing a song full of adoration of God. The dance is missing here and the characters talk, but in both plays the virtuous protagonists are rewarded by receiving tokens of their spiritual victory¹³. Speech and song are replaced in "Henry VIII" by a dance which significantly transforms Katharine's earthly status into a heavenly one, signalling mystic dimensions, a mystic reality.

3

Another mode in which the dance functions in Elizabethan drama, is satire. The dance was used in the moralities in a satiric mode to show characters and life in a deflated way. In "Wisdom" (ab. 1460) and "Mankind" (ab. 1475) dances are executed to express the theme of vice or the vicious state of man¹⁴. In "Like Will to Like" (1568) there is the dance of Tom Collier with the Devil and the Vice - as mentioned earlier - and later, that of Hans who is drunk¹⁵. In both cases the dances are meant to signify the vicious state of man. In "The Tide Taryeth No Man" (1576) the Vice, Courage assumes the role of the musician when he says that the sinners will "evermore dance after Corages pype"¹⁶. Thus sinners are imagined as dancers who dance to the tune played by the Vice; this image signifies their yielding to vice.

Ben Jonson, the greatest Elizabethan playwright of satiric comedies has made use of the dance not only in his masques - in

¹³ Tudor Interludes, p. 350; The Histories and Poems of Shakespeare, IV. ii. In the case of Katharine, she is only shown the garland.

¹⁴ A Morality of Wisdom, Who is Christ, [in:] The Macro Plays, ed. F. J. Furnivall; A. Pollard, Early English Text Society, E. S., XCI, London 1904, Scene four after l. 711; after l. 737 and 763. Mankind, [in:] The Macro Plays, Scene one, after l. 81.

¹⁵ Tudor Interludes, p. 328 and 339.

¹⁶ Tide Tarrieth no Man (1576), [in:] Shakespeare Jahrbuch, XLIII (1907), p. 30, l. 851.

this case, antimasques - but also in his plays. In "Cynthia's Revels" the vicious courtiers, disguised as virtues, appear in two masques and they dance three dances (V. x.). The masques serve as emblems illustrating the theme of appearance and reality and of folly. The dances, which in the masque proper bring out the ideal image of life, heightened to mythic or religious dimensions, help here to burlesque the masque values since vicious courtiers are disguised as virtues¹⁷. They stress the disparity between the apparent order and harmony brought about by the masque dances and the actual disorder at the court resulting from the folly of Cynthia's (Elizabeth's) courtiers. Thus the masques function as antimasques.

The motif of the dance is also used in "The Staple of News", which, among others, bears a strong imprint of the masque and antimasque patterns. The themes of appearance versus reality and of folly, which as a rule dominate the vision of Jonson's plays emerge here especially in the main plot dealing with the adoration of money. Money is personified by the character Pecunia, the central figure in the dance. Her chief lovers are the prodigal, Pennyboy junior, and the covetous man, Pennyboy senior. The desire for money has been worked out in sexual terms. Before the function of the motif of dance and its sources are analyzed, it will be worth while discussing briefly the sources of the character of Pecunia.

The personification of money has a long tradition in classical and later in medieval and Renaissance literature¹⁸. The feminine variant of the personification of money might be traced back in English literature to Langland's Lady Meed who stood for reward and bribery and who in either case was associated with money or its equivalent. In the moralities, Lechery was a female character and it is in "The Trial of Treasure" that the personification of riches is a woman called Treasure whose lover is Lust. She makes him lustful through his relation with her.

¹⁷ See A. H. Gilbert, The Function of the Masques in Cynthia's Revels, "Philological Quarterly" 1943, XXII, 3, p. 211-230.

¹⁸ See J. A. Yunc k, The Lineage of Lady Meed, Notre Dame 1963.

Accordingly, the allegorical theme of the desire for money is shifted onto a sexual plane and money is personified here by a woman. In this way, Jonson may have used "The Trial of Treasure" as one of the sources of "The Staple of News". Also his character, Argurion in "Cynthia's Revels", who is wooed by the lover, Asotus, anticipates that of Pecunia in "The Staple".

The image of the dance in scene ii of Act IV¹⁹ performs an important function in the antimasque pattern of "The Staple of News". While Nicholas sings "the madrigal" composed by Madrigal, the poetaster, in adoration of Pecunia, Pennyboy Canter satirizes the adorers of Pecunia in a mocking vein. The motif of dance stresses their being infatuated by their lust for Pecunia:

Look, look, how
 All their eyes
 Dance i'their heads observe scatter'd with lust!
 At sight o'their braue Idoll! how they are tickl'd,
 With a light ayre! The bawdy Saraband!
 They are a kind of dancing engines all!
 And set, by nature, thus, to runne alone
 To euery sound...
 [...]
 Here, in a chamber, of most subtill feet!
 And make their legs in tune, passing the streets!

(IV. ii. 130-139)

First, their eyes are described as dancing in their heads, out of lust for Pecunia. Then, they are called "dancing engines", which indicates their state: they are as if hypnotized and, in a trance, they automatically draw to their goddess. Finally, Pennyboy Canter makes reference to their "mak[ing] their legs in tune". In all probability then, the characters including Pecunia, made some movements, which resulted in a dance of a limited kind. The comments of Pennyboy Canter, the satirist, who watches the dance of "the be - witched", stress its grotesque, antimasque character. His remarks imply that the actors should use mechanical gestures imitating puppets to become engine-like. In this way their dehumanization would be fully expressed.

The mediaeval concept of the Dance of Death

¹⁹ Ben Jonson, Vol. VI. All the references in the text will be to this edition.

in art and literature, which continued to exist in the Renaissance²⁰, concept of the dance. There, also, a certain dehumanization of man is shown, for the representatives of mankind who parade in a dance with Death point to the idea of the mechanistic course of man's life. The dance signifies the mechanism in which men like automata are led into inevitable death. Similarly, Peter Bruegel the Elder expressed the idea of a mechanistic universe in his paintings, as did some sixteenth century philosophers in their writings²¹.

Jonson uses the same device on another plane. The allegorical dance in "The Staple" points to the influence of vice on man. The lovers of money become engine-like, being driven into a mechanism run by Money. As a result they are grotesquely comic.

Another source which may have affected Jonson more strongly, as it did the writer of "The Praise of Folly", is the *sottie*. There, we have *Mère Sotte*, the mother of fools who compete for her hand and surround her on stage²². Man is ridiculed there by showing his attraction to the World as the characters are attracted to *Pecunia*. In a drawing that reflects the theme of the *sotties* there is a dance of fools who perform their occupations in a circle, the World in the middle²³. This should also be classified as a stage emblem dramatizing the idea of the fools of the World. Man is shown as dehumanized by becoming a slave of the World. The scene anticipates the one in "The Staple" with the Dance of *Pecunia*.

I agree with Enid Welsford when she says that "to the child of the Renaissance man was essentially great - to the mediaeval

²⁰ J. M. Clark, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Glasgow 1950, p. 1.

²¹ O. Benesch, *The Art of the Renaissance in Northern Europe*, London 1965, p. 113.

²² E. Welsford, *The Fool, His Social and Literary History*, New York 1935, p. 228.

²³ *Ibid.* The drawing is opposite p. 225, as in: Bodl. Libr. Douce Portfolio 142, l. 462. Its theme may be linked with the motif of a *sottie* discussed by E. Welsford, where *la Mère Sotte* leads the fools to the World who is to give them employment. As a result each of the fools performs his job (p. 225).

thinker man was essentially vain"²⁴. Thus fool literature is closely linked with the mediaeval spirit²⁵. The Dance of Death, which may have easily been staged in a play or pageant²⁶, and the Dance of the World express the mediaeval tendency to stress the vanity of this world.

The Dance of Pecunia in "The Staple" embodies the same idea of vanity and Pecunia might be regarded as a variety or offshot of the famous Mère Sotte or World. Pecunia is surrounded by fools who perform their activities when they actualize their desire for money by adoring her and showing how they are overcome in will and mind by their vice. In this way the dance performs both a thematic and structural function. It, moreover, brings about the climax of the main plot: the fools' plunging into the "lust" for money, which dehumanizes them.

4

John Ford's tragedy "The Broken Heart" is a landmark in the use of dance being antithetically juxtaposed with the inner state of the protagonist. In "Macbeth", the symbolic dance of the witches was directly related to the moral state of Macbeth, to his yielding to evil. Accordingly, the general impression one gets there is the intensification of the moral pattern in human life and of the power evil may have over man, its victim. The link with the mediaeval tradition, especially with the morality play and its vices, seems to be fairly close, when we agree that the witches played the part of tempters. Ford, on the other hand, was not concerned with the moral pattern, but, while approaching, to some extent, psychological realism and thus shifting the stress from moral to psychological problems, he used the motif of dance to indicate the discrepancy between the heroine's outward behaviour and her inner state. Other themes are also strictly connected with that motif, namely the disparity between external reality as such and the inner life of man, as well as that of appearance and reality.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 242.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Clark, op. cit., p. 93.

Besides, while the witches' dance was worked out in the popular way characterized by the fusion of the serious and comic styles, in this case of the macabre and comic grotesque, Ford stuck to the purity of the tragic style when he used the motif of the dance and integrated it with the plot of the play.

The dance in "The Broken Heart" takes place in scene two of Act V²⁷, at the royal court. The king's daughter, Calantha, who is engaged to Ithocles, expects her bridegroom to turn up any moment. In the meantime, she takes part in the court dance during which she is told, in succession, about the deaths of her father, of Penthea, Ithocles' sister, and finally of her bridegroom, Ithocles. To the amazement of courtiers she continues her dance as if nothing happened and each time, after she hears the given news, she calls for the next "change". She seems to be completely unmoved by the deaths of people who should be closest to her heart and is thought of as if made of stone, as having "a masculine spirit". She seemingly yields to the rhythmic measures of the dance, and the clash between her indifferent behaviour and the way the courtiers think she should react to the news brings about their amazement, resulting in suspense and dramatic tension:

ARM. [In Calantha's ear]. The king
your father's dead.
CAL. To the other change.
ARM. Is't possible? Dance again
Enter Bassanes.
Bass. [In Calantha's ear.] O, madam!
Penthea, poor Penthea's starved.
CAL. Beshrew thee! -
Lead to the next.
BASS. Amazement dulls my senses.
Dance again.
Enter Orgilus.
ORG. [In Calantha's ear.] Brave Ithocles
is murdered, murdered cruelly.
CAL. How dull this music sounds! Strike
up more sprightly;
Our footings are not active like our heart,
Which treads the nimbler measure.
ORG. I am thunderstruck.

(V. ii. 13-19)

²⁷ Elizabethan and Stuart Plays. All the references in the text will be to this edition.

The visual image of the dancing Calantha and the amazed courtiers, who stand by looking at her, makes for a highly theatrical effect on account of the division of the characters into an actress - as we shall learn later - and the audience. Her behaviour, moreover, brings about an atmosphere of mystery. It is only after Calantha's confession that we may fill in the gap and, in flash back, fully understand the meaning of the scene. Her dance has been a façade behind which she suffered the agony of a "broken heart". During the mourning ceremony in the temple, before she dies, she makes her confession:

O my
 lords,
 I but deceived your eyes with antic
 gesture,
 When one news straight came huddling
 on another
 Of death, and death, and death! Still
 I danced forward;
 But it strook home, and here, and in an
 instant.
 Be such mere women, who with shrieks
 and outcries
 Can vow a present end to all their sor-
 rows,
 Yet live to vom new pleasures, and out-
 live them.
 They are the silent griefs which cut the
 heart strings;
 Let me die smiling.

(V. iii. 67-76)

The dance in this play functions as a slice of life in terms of court pastime, but its meaning is also metaphorical, signifying life in general, with its rhythmical, indifferent, mechanical course, which strangely clashes with Calantha's inner world. While life, like dance, exists in terms of measures which correspond to heartbeats, stressing the passing of time, the tragic news made Calantha's life end, her heart stopped beating in a psychological sense as she has, emotionally, died then, though her actual death came a little later. The suffering was too great and there was no future for her love. In this way, Ford makes the reader (or audience) reflect on and revalue the preceding scene with the dance in order to see it in a different perspective. Then, still another tension is actualized and expe-

rienced. It emerges from the antithesis between the flow of the measures of the dance, stressing the passing of time, and the psychic standstill of Calantha's heart; between the dance embodying the mechanical course of external reality and human suffering. Besides, what was in the foreground in the preceding scene, namely the ball and the dancing pairs, has been overshadowed, after the confession, by what was mysterious and hidden from us: by Calantha's inner life.

The technique of projecting minor themes to the foreground and of shifting the main subject to the background is characteristic of Baroque painters²⁸ and it reminds us, to some extent of Ford's manipulating the motif of dance - signifying external reality - and juxtaposing it with Calantha's suffering. In the play, the hidden, spiritual spheres are the main subject, and they are powerful by their silence.

Calantha's behaviour at the tragic news is strikingly different from that of the conventional heroine of romances. Shakespeare's Cressida wants to imitate a romantic heroine²⁹ when she despairs on account of her leaving Troy, saying that she will:

Tear my bright hair, and scratch my
praised cheeks,
Crack my clear voice with sobs, and break my heart
With sounding Troilus. I will not from Troy.

(IV. ii. 110-112)

The grace, dignity and reserve of Webster's heroines when they are at the edge of their being receive their ultimate expression in Ford's heroine. The stage image of the dancing Calantha who enacts indifference though her heart is broken becomes an emblem of the new code of behaviour of aristocratic ladies, in Ford's times and for the following generations.

Instytut Filologii Angielskiej UŁ

²⁸ See H. W ö l f f l i n, *Podstawowe pojęcia historii sztuki*, Wrocław 1962, p. 123-125.

²⁹ See O. J. C a m p b e l l, *Comicall Satyre and Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida*, San Marino, California 1938, p. 214.

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TANIEC W DRAMACIE ELŻBIETAŃSKIM

Celem artykułu jest ukazanie różnych funkcji tańca zespolonego z wizją dramatyczną w wybranych sztukach okresu elżbietańskiego. W komediach romantycznych Szekspira "Much Ado About Nothing" i "As You Like It" taniec - w zakończeniu sztuki - wyraża idealną wizję rzeczywistości przedstawiając pary młodych zjednoczone w miłości i jakby przenosząc je do wymiarów ponadrzeczywistych. Ta symboliczna funkcja tańca wydaje się być związana z ówczesną koncepcją tzw. "muzyki sfer", tańca kosmicznego, który wraz z muzyką miał oznaczać harmonię we wszechświecie. Również taniec i śpiew elfów w "A Midsummer Night's Dream" implikuje istnienie szczęśliwej rzeczywistości.

Funkcja moralna tańca występuje w sztuce "Macbeth" (IV. ii). Taniec czarownic staje się symbolem zwycięstwa zła, co ściśle łączy się ze stanem duchowym Makbeta, jak również stanowi punkt kulminacyjny ich działalności. Tak więc rola tematyczna i strukturalna tańca jest tam niewątpliwa.

Zarówno taniec czarownic w sztuce "Macbeth", jak i taniec i śpiew elfów w "A Midsummer Night's Dream" ma charakter rytualny, przypominający tańce obrzędowe w kulturach prymitywnych.

Odmienne znaczenie moralne ma taniec Cnót w sztuce "Henry VIII". Ukazują się one Katarzynie, pierwszej żonie króla, w śnie. Ich taniec z wieńcem gloryfikuje cnotliwe życie Katarzyny.

Funkcja satyryczna tańca w dramacie elżbietańskim jest najlepiej przedstawiona w sztukach: "Cynthia's Revels" i "The Staple of News" Ben Jonsona. W pierwszej taniec występuje w masce, w której biorą udział dworzanie reprezentujący głupotę, lecz przebrani jako personifikacje cnót. W "The Staple of News" ma miejsce satyryczny taniec wielbicieli Pecunii. Podkreślono pochodzenie personifikacji pieniądza, zwracając jednocześnie uwagę na moralitet "The Trial of Treasure", w którym występuje żeńska odmiana personifikacji pieniądza. Ukazano również związki między motywem tańca w sztuce Ben Jonsona a *d a n s e m a c a b r e* (tańcem śmierci) oraz *s o t i e s*.

W sztuce J. Forda "The Broken Heart" taniec funkcjonuje na płaszczyźnie psychologicznej, a nie moralnej. Symbolizuje on tutaj rzeczywistość zewnętrzną, którą dramaturg skonstrastował z przeżyciami wewnętrznymi bohaterki. Obraz sceniczny tańczącej Calanthy, która zachowuje obojętność na wiadomości o śmierci jej najbliższych, chociaż serce jej pęka, staje się symbolem nowego modelu zachowania się arystokratycznej damy, zupełnie różnego od tego, któremu hołdowała bohaterka średniowiecznych romansów i którego ślady można zauważyć w sztuce "Troilus and Cressida" Shakespeare'a.