CHAPTER 4

Publishing the show: The Rape of Lucrece as Lucanian counter-epic of empire

They did conclude to bear dead Lucrece thence,
To show her bleeding body thorough Rome,
And so to publish Tarquin's foul offense.
(*The Rape of Lucrece*, 1850–52)

Even more than *Venus and Adonis*, *The Rape of Lucrece* is imbued with the discourse of both the theatre and the print shop. The epigraph above constitutes a 1594-version of the conjunction, as Brutus, Collatine, Lucretius, and the emergent founders of the Roman Republic bear the "dead Lucrece" in order to "show" her "bleeding body" as a spectacle through Rome and to "publish" Tarquin's "foul offense." In the last line, the word "so" puts the conjunction in motion: the "show" leads to "public[cation]"; the bearing of the dead female's deflowered body allows the men to publish the criminal's action. The community of surviving men becomes the agent of the show, the dead female its object, and the masculine perpetrator its prime suspect. The publicity occurs within a nationalist environment, "thorough Rome," the product of a shared, rational judgment by – and a government decision among – men: "They did conclude." The words *show* and *publish* nominally refer to political behavior with subjective origins, but jostling here in the poem's final stanza, they consolidate two sustained strands of literary discourse from Shakespeare's professional career, cut along clear lines of gender.

Show was a standard Elizabethan term referring to performances in the theatre, and was used as such by Shakespeare habitually, as in this self-conscious display during the actors' performance of *The Mousetrap* from *Hamlet*:

OPH. Will a' [the Prologue] tell us what this show meant?
HAM. Ay, or any show that you will show him. Be not you asham'd to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.[1]   (*Hamlet*, 3. 2. 143–46)

The word *show* occurs in its cognate forms fourteen times in *Lucrece*, from beginning to end (81, 115, 252, 296, 395, 402, 807, 953, 1507, 1514, 1748, 1761, 1810, 1851). *Publish* meant "proclaim" or "make public," but at this time it was also coming to mean *put into print*, and, as several recent critics point out, the narrative that concludes with this term also opens with it: "why is Collatine the publisher / Of that rich jewel he should keep unknown" (33–34).[2] Thus, for recent critics interested in the materiality of the text, Shakespeare's use of the word as bookends to his narrative signals his own anxiety about "shifting from the sphere of theatre to that of print[ed poetry]," brought about when a man of the theatre turns from drama to verse, as the theatres close in 1592–93 due to plague.[3]

Admittedly, *The Rape of Lucrece*, like *Venus and Adonis*, does not go as far as *A Lover's Complaint* in telling a story in which the author's twin literary forms play a role in the plot, the way the young courtier's "deep-brain'd sonnets" and "tragic shows" do in Shakespeare's third and final narrative poem (209, 308). Tarquin and Lucrece remain the legendary (semi-historical) Roman prince and Roman matron that they had been since Livy's *History of Rome* and Ovid's *Fasti* (or even Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*); they are not, that is, Elizabethan practitioners of poetry and theatre. Nonetheless, Shakespeare does suffuse his re-telling of the West's arch-myth of sexual violation, personal reputation, and political formation (see I. Donaldson, *Rapes*, 7–9) with a formulation suggested by the poem's final stanza: in this poem, the author is also processing his own (afflicted) standing as an emergent English poet-playwright.

The Rape of Lucrece remains "one of the most exhaustively discussed poems in the English language" (Crewe, ed., *Narrative Poems*, xli), yet critics who represent three major groups – sexuality, politics, and art – neglect the discourse of both poetry and theatre *in the text*. Neglected as well is the nationalist context for understanding this discourse: the counter-Spenserian movement mounted in the early 1590s when Marlowe composes two minor epics in opposition to *The Faerie Queene*: the Ovidian *Hero and Leander*; and a translation of Book 1 of Lucan's epic, the *Pharsalia*, known as *Lucan's First Book*, "arguably one of the underrated masterpieces of Elizabethan literature" (Martindale, *Redeeming the Text*, 71).

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[2] See, e.g., Dubrow, *Victors*, 89–90; Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity*, 97–100, 115–24. See Barkan: "The word *publish* in Shakespeare's time was finely poised between the pre-Gutenbergian general meaning of 'make public' and our more limited sense of 'one who publishes a book'" (*The Gods Made Flesh*, 347n8).

[3] Wall, *Imprint*, 217; see Burrow, "Life," 29–33; cf. Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity*, 97.

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[1] On "show" in Shakespeare, see Parker, *Margins*, 252–71; on "show" and "tell" and the "links between dramatic show and female show" here, see 253.

Critics who emphasize the poem's sexuality tend to read *Lucrece* as a work about rape, brooding over a cultural problem in which men abuse women, over questions such as "consent," over debates regarding the extent to which rape corrupts the flesh of the victim while preserving the purity of her soul, and finally over Shakespeare's representation of his characters' interiority, first in the rapist Tarquin, then in his victim Lucrece.[4] Critics emphasizing the poem's politics read *Lucrece* as either a-political or more often today as deeply political, with the latter dividing between those who see a "royalist" poem in support of the Tudor monarchy and those who see a "republican" poem in support of individual freedom, as critics attempt to get at the poem's contribution to a 1590s conversation about matters of government and state policy.[5] Finally, critics emphasizing art or the literary read the poem variously for its genre as an Ovidian minor epic, narrative poem, complaint, or tragedy; its intertextuality with the principal sources, Livy and Ovid, but also Virgil, Petrarch, Chaucer, Gower, and other medieval and Renaissance authorities; its distinctive (for some, overbearing) rhetoric and striking tropes – what Jonathan Crewe terms its "figurative overload" ("Writing Rape," 154); and its clear two-part structure (before and after the rape) and other formal features.[6]

In a recent edition of the poem, Crewe helps us see a critical genealogy for the three groups, reminding us that "it took a succession of feminist critics, writing in the 1980s and 90s, to gain attention for the poem as one of sexual violence against a woman rather than, say, as a literary-historical, rhetorical, or aesthetic phenomenon only" (Crewe, ed., *Narrative Poems*, xxxv). Thus, Crewe himself goes on to emphasize a sexual and political reading: "It is rape . . . in Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and elsewhere that brings

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[4] See Hynes, "Rape"; El-Gabalwy, "Ethical Question"; Kahn, "Rape"; Bromly, "Lucrece's Recreation"; Cousins, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 48–110; Baines, "Effacing Rape"; Ziegler, "My Lady's Chamber"; Newman, "Mild Women"; P. Berry, "Woman, Language"; Willbern, *Poetic Will*, 76–96; Dubrow, *Domestic*, 45–61; Hendricks, who gives a recent overview of feminist criticsm ("A word," 104–07). See Belsey, "Consent," on the feminine agency of Lucrece's important utterance (327–28). See also Jed on the humanist interpretation of the myth, *Chaste Thinking.*

[5] For an a-political reading, see Tolbert, "The Argument." For a royalist reading, see I. Donaldson, *Rapes*, 40–56; for republican readings, see Patterson, *Reading*, 304–09; Platt, *Rome*, 13–43; Dzelzainis, "Political Thought," 106–08. Nass sees a critique of monarchy ("Law," 311n28). On the poem and Elizabethan historiography, see Dubrow, "Clio"; on Rome, see Miola, *Rome*, 18–41.

[6] On genre, see H. Smith, *Elizabethan*, 113–17 (on Ovidian verse); Hulse, *Verse*, 175–94 (on minor epic); Dubrow, "Mirror" and "Narrative and Lyric" (on these genres and complaint); Walley, "Tragedy." On intertextuality, see Lanham, "Ovidian Shakespeare"; Newman, "Mild Women"; Bate, *Ovid*, 65–82; Enterline, *Rhetoric*, 152–97, who emphasizes Ovid and Petrarch; M. A. Wells, "Rape," who emphasizes Virgil and Petrarch; Hillman, "Gower's Lucrece," who emphasizes Gower. On rhetoric and tropes, see French, "Badge of Fame"; N. J. Vickers, "*Lucrece*" and "Heraldry"; Maus, "Tropes." On formal features, see R. M. Frye, "Composition"; Kramer and Kaminsky, "Contraries."

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into the fullest possible view the systemic nature of unequal power-gender relations in Western culture" (xliii). Published in 1999, Crewe's edition in a popular series (The Pelican Shakespeare) might be seen as valorizing sexual and political commentary at the expense of the "literary-historical." Neglected in this genealogy, however, is the most recent phase of commentary (already evoked): indebted to Joel Fineman and Nancy J. Vickers in particular, a phase represented by Wendy Wall and Colin Burrow, who emphasize *Lucrece*'s subtle representation of (male) authorship and the poem's self-conscious role within and representation of manuscript and print culture.[7]

Despite an evident return to a literary emphasis, most important recent work does move across the boundaries of the sexual, the political, and the literary. To these three groups, we probably need to add a fourth – one touched on by most commentary: the religious or philosophical, which shows the poem foregrounding human rather than divine agency and thus emphasizing questions of name, fame, and reputation.[8] What most critics in all four groups share is a strong sense that Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece* constitutes a complex yet crucial authorial intervention in one of our most enduring and troubling myths, evidently as important today as it was in classical Rome or Elizabethan England. By turning first to the immediate historical context of literary nationhood in which Shakespeare composed and printed the poem, and then to the combined discourse of poetry and theatre emerging from within it (both the prefatory material and the poem proper), we may extend the shared value of *Lucrece* as a decisive moment in English literary history. Specifically, we may more fully understand the tension between "show" and "publication" in the poem's final stanza only *inside* the contemporary scene of literary competition for the national rights to publish the historical show of the female's interpetively porous body.[9] In his 1655 edition of the poem, John Quarles intimates something of this national project, when his title page calls Shakespeare "The incomparable Master of our English Poetry," and his frontispiece presents the famed Droeshout dramatic author looking down on a theatrical scene right out of the poem: Lucrece stabs herself dramatically in front of a male figure whose shoulder bears a theatrical mask and who could be either her husband,

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[7] Fineman, "Shakespeare's Will"; N. J. Vickers, "*Lucrece*" and "Heraldry." See also Crewe, "Writing Rape"; Enterline, *Rhetoric*, 152–97; M. A. Wells, "Rape."

[8] On human agency, see Maus, intro. to *Lucrece*, *Norton*, 638. On fame, see Dubrow, *Victors*, 145–47; Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity*, 96–97, 102–15.

[9] Thanks to Heather James for this formulation (personal communication, 25 June 2003).

The Fates decree, that 'tis a mighty wrong
To Woemen Kinde, to have more Greife, then Tongue

1655

Figure 6. Frontispiece to *The Rape of Lucrece*, edited by John Quarles (London, 1655).

Collatine, her rapist, Tarquin, or her successor as political activist, Brutus – perhaps all three (Figure 6).[10]

LUCAN AND LUCRECE

Most recent critics would agree to classify *Lucrece* through some version of Ovidianism, whether "Ovidian narrative poem" or "Ovidian minor epic" (or epyllion).[11] The classification of Ovidian minor epic is more precise, in part because *Lucrece* is "not really [a] narrative poem . . . at all": it does "not do very many or very interesting things with temporal sequence, and not very much happens" (Burrow, "Politics," 1); in part because the rhyme royal stanza, the nationalistic frame, and the dominant military metaphors show Shakespeare's attempt to enter the epic register.[12]

Such Ovidian classification identifies the historical context of *Lucrece*, like that of *Venus*, as lying in the author's attempt to walk down the Virgilian path of pastoral and epic via the medium of printed poetry (cf. Hulse, *Verse*, 12). While both poems deploy the Virgilian progression in their topoi and in their landscape, we may observe how the forest scene of Shakespeare's first minor epic more precisely identifies *Venus* as a version of Ovidian pastoral, while the domestic or civic scene of his second minor epic identifies *Lucrece* as a version of Ovidian epic, the "graver labor" advertised in the *Dedicatory Epistle* to *Venus*. Together, the two publications present the English Ovidian author progressing from lower to higher Virgilian forms in order to "establish himself as a respectable poet" (Hulse, *Verse*, 175) – establish himself, we may add, in competition with other authors. The paradox imprints Shakespeare's "signature" as an author: an Ovidian author pursues a Virgilian career, in competition with other contemporary authors. In turn, the paradox draws attention to the author's revision of the Virgilian career model as his signal achievement in the Elizabethan literary system.

[10] Thanks to Sasha Roberts for suggesting Collatine and Margreta de Grazia for suggesting Tarquin (personal communications, 22 November 2003).

[11] In *Verse*, Hulse collapses the traditional division of "Ovidian verse" into "two major categories" in order to discuss "minor epic": "the epyllion or minor epic, dealing with classical mythology; and the historical complaint, drawing on English chronicles" (16). In addition to Hulse (and before him Keach), the most important recent Ovidian analyses are by Bate, *Ovid*; Enterline, *Rhetoric*.

[12] Fineman suggests that "There is something momentous, both thematically and tonally, about the way . . . [lines 1520–26 on Troy] call up the loss of everything the English Renaissance self-servingly identifies with the bright light of Troy, something genuinely epic" ("Shakespeare's Will," 59). See Dubrow, "Clio," 429–36; N. J. Vickers, esp. on the "heraldry in Lucrece's face" ("*Lucrece*," 64; see "Heraldry"). Maus takes this line a (generic) step further: "in the elaborate description of Lucrece's face . . . the (pastoral) field of flowers and the (epic) field of war strive for predominance in time-honored Petrarchan fashion" ("Tropes," 78).

In the early 1590s, we do not have to look far to discern the authors with whom Shakespeare might most see himself in competition. At the wellhead, Marlowe's perturbed ghost has long been seen to haunt Shakespeare's two minor epics, especially in the form of *Hero and Leander*. Yet on 28 September 1593, within a few months of Marlowe's death on 30 May, *Hero and Leander* shows up back-to-back in the Stationers' Register with Marlowe's *second* "narrative poem": the 694-line *Lucan's First Book*. C. S. Lewis anticipates most scholars today in judging Marlowe's poem of "very great merit," even though he was "tempted" to deny that Marlowe wrote it (*English Literature*, 486) – a question no longer in dispute. Where we may classify *Hero* as a counter-national epic championing the freedom of the Ovidian author, we may classify *Lucan* as a new Elizabethan genre, a counter-epic of empire championing the freedom of the Lucanian author within a republican frame.[13]

As the name suggests, a counter-epic of empire is a poem in the epic mode that *counters* the politics of the normative epic of empire, Virgil's *Aeneid*, but also its European heirs, including Dante and Petrarch, Tasso and Ronsard, Spenser and Milton. In classical Rome, the first great authors of this subversive genre were two: Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* and Lucan in the *Pharsalia*. Both poets organized their epics to attack and resist Virgil's epic poem in service of the Augustine regime, and what they share is precisely a republican ethos of *libertas*. Yet Ovid and Lucan differ, and not simply because one wrote a mythological epic and the other a historical one. Ovid is a counter-national poet in the sense that he counters the concept of the nation as a political collectivity by asserting the authority of the poet himself.[14] By contrast, Lucan counters the national poet with a political form of nationhood, that of the Roman Republic. Hence, Ovid tells universal myths about the changing of the gods, subject to the power of desire, but Lucan narrates a historical battle between two political leaders, Caesar and Pompey, in the event that turns the Republic into the Empire. Lucan is *formally* a political author of Roman nationhood in a way that Ovid is not. To be sure, Ovid is a political author, from the *Amores* and *Ars amatoria* through the *Tristia* and the *Ex ponto*; but as Ovid makes clear in his later works, he foregrounds the poet's own competition with the Emperor, even in the very poem he writes to placate Caesar's wrath for relegating him to Tomis: "my mind is . . . my comrade and my joy; over this Caesar could have no right" (*Tristia*, 3. 7. 47–48). Back in the *Amores*, Ovid had written:

13 See Cheney, *Profession*, esp. 221–26 (on Marlovian epic), 227–37 (on *Lucan*), and 238–58 (on *Hero*).
14 On "counter-nationhood," see Cheney, *Profession*, 19–25.

"Verse is immortal, and shall ne'er decay. / To verse let kings give place, and kingly shows" (1. 15. 32–33; trans. Marlowe). If Lucan is a patriotic author in service of Rome, Ovid is not; he is patriotic to his own authorship. When Marlowe translates both the *Amores* and the *Pharsalia*, he shows his fellow Elizabethans alternative modes of literary subversion – Ovidian and Lucanian – which he re-deploys in his two minor epics of the early 1590s: *Hero and Leander* and *Lucan's First Book*.[15]

The Roman originators of the counter-epic genre did not simply create an alternative space, as many of the epyllion writers of the 1590s did with the allure of eros. Rather, the Roman counter-epicists of empire, like their Elizabethan heirs, composed political poems that confronted the imperial epic of empire decisively on its own ground, where the topic of freedom stands forcibly as its stronghold: freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action, and freedom of writing.[16]

Marlowe's translation of Book 1 of the *Pharsalia* is the first to be printed in English, and therefore it deserves to be moved to the front of any genealogy of the epic tradition pertaining to England. Although not published until 1600, it was almost certainly the inaugural poem firing the English Lucan revival in the 1590s, represented by Daniel's *Civil Wars* (1595), Drayton's *Mortimeriados* (1596), and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (1599).[17] Marlowe did not translate Lucan simply to participate in the Renaissance project of recovering classical authors; he aimed also to attack and resist the great Virgilian epic of empire for his nation, *The Faerie Queene* (Cheney, *Profession*, 227). In this typology of intertextuality, Marlowe translates Lucan to counter Spenser's cultural authority. What is at stake in such a professional competition is the writing of English nationhood. Specfically, Marlowe counters Spenser's monarchical form of nationhood with a republican-based counter-nationhood, and this form narrates the author's oppositional freedom of voice and art. The Elizabethan Lucan revival, in its incipient, Marlovian form, counterpoises the Elizabethan Virgilianism championed by Spenser.[18]

15 In *Epic*, Quint neglects this Elizabethan genealogy, distinguishing between "two rival traditions of epic" – "epics of the imperial victors and epics of the defeated" (8) – with Virgil and Lucan functioning as the figureheads.
16 On *libertas*, see Cheney, *Profession*, 21–25, 273–74nn40–41.
17 On Lucan in the English Renaissance, see Blissett, "Lucan's Caesar"; Hulse, *Verse*, 195–205, 210–14; McCoy, *Rites*, 103–26; G. M. Maclean, "The Debate," 26–44; Quint, *Epic*, 5–10, 131–60; Norbrook, *Writing*, 23–62.
18 Dubrow, *Victors*, joins most critics in concentrating on those writers between Livy and Gower who told the Lucrece myth. Similarly, Enterline's study relating Ovid, Petrarch, and Shakespeare jumps over Shakespeare's contemporaries. The "literary history" she tells (*Rhetoric*, 176) is thus in need of supplement. The same applies to M. A. Wells on Virgil, Petrarch, and Shakespeare.

Since "Lucan was the central poet of the republican imagination" (Norbrook, *Writing*, 24), we may profitably call his first English translator the central Elizabethan poet of the republican imagination.[19] We may agree that republicanism does not become a decisive question of government until the English Civil War, but we might also recall the political context of the 1590s – what Patrick Collinson famously calls Elizabeth's "monarchical republic."[20] While *Lucan's First Book* joins other pre-1640s "dramatization[s] and publication[s] of the classics" in forming a largely "oblique" conduct of political debates between monarchy and republic, we need to give Marlowe credit, especially since the "first book of the *Pharsalia* was in fact much cited by two of the leading seventeenth-century theorists of republicanism, James Harrington and Algernon Sidney" (Norbrook, *Writing*, 13, 36–37).

Like Marlowe, Shakespeare composes two short epics in the early 1590s. Just as we commonly read *Venus* with *Hero*, so we might read *Lucrece* with *Lucan*. While these last two works seem to have little in common, they share a specific Elizabethan context: young authors of the same sex and generation, born in the same year and of the same middle-class environment, compose mid-length narrative poems on Roman political topics, at the same time (1592–93) and under the same cultural circumstances: the closing of the theatres due to plague.[21] Above all, both *Lucrece* and *Lucan* represent a Roman political narrative divided across the government line separating monarchy and republic. Whereas Marlowe follows Lucan in using the Civil War of Pompey and Caesar to represent the death of the Republic and call for its political reinstatement, Shakespeare uses his two principal source texts, Ovid and Livy, to show how sexual strife between Tarquin and Lucrece represents the birth of the original Republic. Consequently, we may wish to re-classify Shakespeare's work; it is not simply a second narrative poem but a specific version of the Elizabethan genre Marlowe had invented: a Lucanian counter-epic of empire, opposing the primary Virgilian epic of Elizabethan empire, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.[22]

[19] Norbrook (*Writing*) recalls only incidentally that Marlowe was the first to be published as a translator of Lucan (41), and he never mentions *Lucrece* (or her myth), referring to Shakespeare only a few times in passing (12, 224, 373).

[20] For Norbrook's brief discussion of Elizabethan republicanism, including reliance on Collinson's paradigm, see, *Writing*, 11–14. For more detail in *Lucrece* on this paradigm, see Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Renaissance Political Culture*, ch. 3.

[21] On the dating of *Lucan's First Book* late in Marlowe's career, see Lewis, *English Literature*, 486; Shapiro, "Lucan," 323–24.

[22] Cf. H. Smith, *Elizabethan*: "No poet writing in 1594 could fail to be influenced by the achievement of Spenser's publication four years earlier" (117).

The gender dynamic at the center of *Lucan* and *Lucrece* does differ. Perhaps tellingly, Marlowe narrates a competition between two men, while Shakespeare narrates a competition between a man and a woman. Eros lies at the center of *Lucrece* in a way that it does not of *Lucan*.[23] Having said that, we may wish to peer in on what is probably Marlowe's most neglected representation of the female; it is also one of his most poignant, all the more so because it turns into an address to a woman who has died surrounded by men, right near the beginning of *Lucan's First Book*:

> for Julia,
> Snatched hence by cruel fates with ominous howls,
> Bare down to hell her son, the pledge of peace,
> And all bands of that death-presaging alliance.
> Julia, had heaven given thee longer life,
> Thou hadst restrained thy headstrong husband's rage,
> Yea, and thy father too . . .
>
> (*Lucan's First Book*, 111–17)

Who is this remarkable woman? She is the daughter of Caesar, Julia, who married Pompey to seal the attempted alliance of two men so narcissistic that "Pompey could bide no equal, / Nor Caesar no superior" (125–26). Caught tragically between her father and her husband, this young woman, as Marlowe powerfully renders, goes to hell giving birth to the child who would be heir to the two huge men in her life, so much so that Julia can hold their largeness at bay, although not even she is strong enough to endure the "ominous howls" of "cruel fates," who grimly determine that such a "pledge of peace," with its political-marital "bands," must become a "death-presaging alliance." So much, we might say, for the vagaries of having to translate someone else's poem, yet the young man is not to be chastised for voicing so powerfully this tragically youthful icon of the dead mother and her child, sacrificed to the fatal engine of masculine politics. We might wonder what Shakespeare would have thought.

Whatever he thought, he and Marlowe both end their counter-epic poems with a memorable female icon. Lucrece takes her life into her own hands to motivate exemplary future action not simply among chaste Roman matrons (1714–15) but also among powerful Roman men. Identifying her assailant, she states, "'He, he, fair lords, 'tis he, / That guides this hand to give this wound to me'" (1721–22), prompting outrage so charged it "changed" the Roman "state government . . . from kings to consuls" (Argument, 45).

[23] See Wheeler, "Lucan": "Lucan does not avoid Ovidian eroticism altogether: Caesar's love for Cleopatra recalls that of Pygmalion for his statue (cf. 10.71–72 and *Met.*, 10.252)" (379n57).

Similarly, Marlowe follows Lucan in cross-dressing his voice in the garb of the Bacchic Roman matron, who ends the book in a furious complaint – a poetic form important to Shakespeare's work (Dubrow, "Mirror").[24] "Disclosing Phoebus' fury," the matron addresses Apollo, "'Paean, whither am I haled? where shall I fall, / Thus borne aloft? . . . / Why grapples Rome, and makes war, having no foes? / . . . I have seen Philippi" (676–93).

That last reference is crucial, because *Lucan's First Book* ends with a double reference to two famous and interrelated battles that occurred on the same field in Macedonia. Philippi is "where Octavianus and Antony defeated Brutus and Cassius in the crucial battle of the Civil War, 42 BC. But the place was conventionally identified with Pharsalus, so that Lucan's [and Marlowe's] reference is in fact to both battles" (Orgel, ed., *Christopher Marlowe*, 259). The typology is even more precise for Shakespeare's minor epic, because, as he himself recalls no fewer than three times in *Julius Caesar*, there were two famous (and related) anti-imperial, pro-republican men named Brutus. As Marcus Brutus puts it in Act 2, scene 1, "My ancestors did from the streets of Rome / The Tarquin drive when he was call'd a king" (53–54; see 1. 2. 159–61 and 3. 2. 50), referring to Lucius Junius Brutus. In Book 5 of the *Pharsalia*, Lucan recalls this genealogy, when Apollo cuts off the voice of the Delphic priestess, prompting the poet's intervention: "You, Paean, Prince of Truth . . . / . . . Your silence meant to ensure that Fortune achieves / deeds with a righteous sword – ambition punished, tyranny / met once more by a vengeful Brutus" (199–208). Later, in the most infamous moment in Lucan's epic, the cadaver of the dead soldier re-animated by the witch Erictho narrates to Pompey's son Sextus, "'You, Brutus, first Consul after the kings' expulsion, / you were the only pious shade I saw rejoicing" (6. 791–92).[25]

While Lucan does not refer to Lucrece directly, he brings his epic to the threshold of her domestic story by recurrently evoking Lucius Junius Brutus. Not surprisingly, Lucan appears to supply potential origins to some of Shakespeare's most memorable moments in *Lucrece*.[26] Shakespeare's military metaphors, singled out by critics, are consonant with Lucan's military

[24] On Lucan's cross-dressing of his own voice here, see Hardie, *Epic Successors*, 107–08; Feeney, *The Gods*, 275.

[25] Lucan mentions Lucius Junius Brutus five times in the *Pharsalia*; see also 7. 37–39, 7. 440–42, and 7. 586–96. Lucan clearly thinks of Brutus as the inventor of Roman liberty, just as he thinks of Julia, who goes on to haunt the epic darkly, as its most harrowing female casualty, joining Pompey's surviving wife, Cornelia.

[26] Jones (*Origins*) shows persuasively that Shakespeare imitated Lucan in such plays as the first historical tetralogy, *Julius Caesar*, the second tetralogy, *Hamlet*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* (273–77), and that he knew Marlowe's translation in manuscript (273).

battle. Yet it is Shakespeare's photography of the "crimson blood" "bubbling" from Lucrece's "breast" that looks Lucanian in all its macabre detail, betraying a shared fascination with violence to the body's deep interior – a fascination Lucan no doubt inherited from his uncle but one for which even Seneca could find no match. Even in Book 1, which pales by comparison with later books, we discover the augurer Arruns slaying a bull to read the text of a Roman prophecy, which reads in Marlowe's translation:

> from the yawning gash,
> Instead of red blood, wallowed venomous gore.
> These direful signs made Arruns stand amazed,
> . . . a dead blackness
> Ran through the blood, that turned it all to jelly,
> And stained the bowels with dark loathsome spots;
> The liver swelled with filth, and every vein
> Did threaten horror from the host of Caesar:
> . . . and from the gaping liver
> Squeezed matter; through the caul the entrails peered,
> And which (aye me) ever pretended ill,
> At that bunch where the liver is, appeared
> A knob of flesh.   (Marlowe, *Lucan's First Book*, 613–28)

We may look on in horror, but Lucan is simply warming up.

Lucan's fascination with blood, its modulating color, but also its theatricality, re-appears in Shakespeare's poem, albeit in more reticent fashion:

> Her blood, in poor revenge, held it in chase;
> And bubbling from her breast, it doth divide
> In two slow rivers, that the crimson blood
> Circles her body in on every side,
>
> . . .
>
> Some of her blood still pure and red remain'd,
> And some look'd black, and that false Tarquin stain'd.
> About the mourning and congealed face
> Of that black blood a wat'ry rigol goes,
>
> . . .
>
> And ever since . . .
> Corrupted blood some watery token shows.
> (*Rape of Lucrece*, 1734–48)

Both authors pause to brood over the metamorphoses of blood, the mingling of "black" and "red" color, the "stain" it leaves, its theatrical character, and strikingly its afterlife: Marlowe's Lucanian blood "ever pretended ill," while Shakespeare's "ever since, as pitying Lucrece's woes, / Corrupted blood

some watery token shows." We shall return to Lucrece's blood later, observing here only that Shakespeare's major source-texts record no origin for his representation.[27]

Unlike *Lucan*, however, *Lucrece* is much more difficult to plot along a clear political axis.[28] One way out of the difficulty is to return to the material facts of the poem's production. Shakespeare's much-discussed move from stage to page is not simply the occasion for the poem but its underlying obsession. In *Lucrece*, more anxiously than in *Venus*, we see what happens when a man of the theatre presents himself in print as a poet in the English and European tradition. While critics have situated *Lucrece* within the author's conflict between print and manuscript, drawing attention to the poem's use of terms from print culture, we might attend to a combined discourse of printed poetry and staged theatre. Not simply Dame Night but the printed epyllion itself is a "Black stage for tragedies" (766). Through the poem's self-reflexive language, its references to such arch-myths of the Ovidian author as Orpheus and Philomela from the *Metamorphoses*, and its complex Virgilian ekphrasis of the fall of Troy, Shakespeare can be seen to process not so much a clear political organization as a decisive authorial representation. Since *Lucrece* narrates the legend leading to the birth of the Republic, we may wonder whether Shakespeare is here addressing the origin not of republican government per se but rather of what we might call republican representation: the author's representation of a republican frame of art. Such an art may well learn to operate within the Elizabethan monarchy, and if so, *Lucrece* would find a natural home in Elizabeth's "monarchical republic." And so it did, being printed four times during that sovereign's reign (see Figure 3 above).

THE DEDICATORY EPISTLE AND THE ARGUMENT

Typically, editors and critics separate their discussion of the twin prose items prefacing the 1594 quarto. Such discussion tends to view the *Dedicatory Epistle* as one of two patronage documents extant in the Shakespeare canon, emphasizing that it is "notably warm[er]" than the dedication to *Venus* and thus suggestive of that poem's persuasive power (Burrow, ed., *Sonnets and Poems*, 13). The Argument has spawned considerably more discussion, including about its authorship, though today most scholars accept it as

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[27] The following editions record no speculation: Prince; Wilbur and Harbage; Roe; Crewe; Burrow.

[28] Whereas Burrow suggests only that "Lucrece's words ask awkward and unanswerable questions about unregulated monarchy" (*Sonnets and Poems*, 54), Hadfield argues that the poem champions republicanism outright (*Shakespeare and Renaissance Political Culture*, ch. 3).

Shakespeare's composition; the best discussion sees it counterpoising the poem's Ovidian or erotic interpretation of the Lucrece story with a Livian or republican one (e.g., Burrow, ed., *Sonnets and Poems*, 45–54). Taking this cue, we might see the two prefatory items as also providing counterpoised forms of discourse, twin windows for viewing the poem itself.

Almost always, critics view the dedication as evidence for understanding *Lucrece* as "the 'graver labor' promised . . . in the dedication to *Venus and Adonis*" (Lanham, "Ovidian Shakespeare," 94), without stating the repercussions, especially for our view of Shakespeare as a "man of the theatre": in 1593–94, the author presents himself *in print* as a Virgilian poet moving from lower to higher forms, effectively from pastoral to epic. The main problem with the commonplace view is that it closes the year-long space between *Venus* and *Lucrece* when Shakespeare's readers were primed to expect a poem formally in the epic register.[29] This space is now lost to us – admittedly it was brief – but we might try to re-capture it. When we do, we discover an author neglected in modern criticism: Shakespeare the print-epicist. Not Shakespeare the minor epicist, but Shakespeare the major epicist. In 1579, Spenser had set the precedent for Elizabethan authors to present themselves as Virgilian pastoralists preparing for national epic, and Shakespeare in the pastoral-based *Venus*, complete with its prophesying dedication to his patron, could easily be construed as preparing himself for the kind of epic labor Spenser published in 1590 with Books 1–3 of *The Faerie Queene*. Critics have been too quick to lose sight of this moment; to regain it is to re-envision Shakespeare at a distinct time of his professional career.[30]

The fact is, however, Shakespeare is not Spenser, and *Lucrece* is not *The Faerie Queene* (just as *Venus* is not the *Calender*). Like the *Dedicatory Epistle* to *Venus*, the dedication to *Lucrece* maps out an Ovidian discourse, attenuating the Virgilian career model in a way that is consistent with a counter-epic of empire. When read in its proper historical context, the *Dedicatory Epistle* advertises its Ovidian author as a rival to the Virgil of England. By calling *Lucrece* a counter-epic of empire, we supply a generic classification that can help us better understand the complexity of Shakespeare's Marlovian maneuver.

Hence, the discourse of the dedication repeats the European Virgilian discourse of empire but then shoots it through with the discourse we have come to expect from an Ovidian author:

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[29] In his edition, Burrow concurs (*Sonnets and Poems*, 173).

[30] As late as the first decade of the seventeenth century, Shakespeare is entertaining epicist phantasies of competing with England's great national poet (Cheney, "Sonnet 106").

The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end: wherof this Pamphlet without beginning is but a superfluous Moity. The warrant I have of your Honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutord Lines makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours, what I have to doe is yours, being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duety would shew greater, meane time, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship; To whom I wish long life still lengthened with all happinesse.

> Your Lordships in all duety.
> William Shakespeare
> (*Dedicatory Epistle, Riverside*, 1816)

Critics explain "without beginning" by referring to Shakespeare's narrative strategy in the poem itself, which opens *in medias res* – that is to say, along epic "Lines." Yet the epicist thrust is advanced through the bold repetition in the opening phrase of the central concept of Virgil's *Aeneid*: "*imperium sine fine*" (1.279: empire *without end*; emphasis added). This Virgilian intertextuality helps explain Shakespeare's preoccupation with two other arch-concepts from the *Aeneid*: "duety" (twice voiced) and longevity or fame. In Shakespeare's lexicon, however, it is not empire that is without end but "love" – the author's love not of the nation but of the patron; and it is this love to which he shows duty and grants immortality ("without end"). The author wishes his patron a very long life indeed, wittily *lengthened* through the triple repetition of "*long* life *still* [=always] *lengthened*." By shifting Virgil's claim of poetic immortality for the Empire to long life for Southampton, Shakespeare attenuates the Virgilian register with Ovidian (homoerotic) desire.

Like the dedication to *Venus*, this one shows the author's prediction of future works, but it also recollects past works: "What I have done is yours, what I have to doe is yours." The next phrase, "Were my worth greater," seems to acknowledge the author's humble position, yet it wittily asks for further support. If Shakespeare had more money, of the kind Southampton can supply, his "duety would shew greater": he would continue writing works "greater" than *Venus* or evidently *Lucrece* itself. While some find it "tempting to think that he may be referring to the *Sonnets*" (Roe, ed., *Poems*, 140), more likely Shakespeare is imagining higher (no doubt finally Ovidian) work on Southampton's behalf; a Petrarchan or even a counter-Petrarchan sequence would probably not qualify. The fact that such a grave work was either not forthcoming or has not survived does not erase the advertisement. Again, this is the space over which we may wish to pause.

When Shakespeare goes on to designate his "graver labour" (*Lucrece* itself) with humble terms, he does not violate the Virgilian decorum. For,

throughout *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser presents himself as a humble pastoral poet writing a "homely verse" (6. 12. 41). Thus, even as Shakespeare fulfills the Virgilian promise to write in a higher genre, he tactfully diminishes his stature through humble signs. The word "Pamphlet" suggests diminishment; similarly, the word "Moity" means "trifle," with the phrase "superfluous Moity" meaning that "although only half a poem, it is still too much" (Roe, ed., *Poems*, 140).[31] Perhaps, too, we might see an allusion to the "Castalia . . . aqua" or Muses' springs advertised in the Latin epigraph from Ovid's *Amores* prefacing *Venus*: the feminine source of the male's poetic inspiration – a masculine phenomenology of the literary womb. Finally, the phrase "untutored Lines" pens (Spenserian) humility, denying the very learning critics have read into the dedication.

While the Virgilian discourse predominates, Shakespeare subtly lets his discourse from the (Ovidian) theatre infiltrate: "shew greater." The phrase predicts the Coleridgean principle, that Shakespeare's two narrative poems "give at once strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity, of his [dramatic] genius" (Kolin, ed., "*Venus and Adonis*," 69). In effect, Shakespeare lends Coleridge his voice. As we may also see, it is the word "shew" here that unleashes the theatrical stream into the poem itself.

Similarly, the phrase "being part in all I have" anticipates the theatrical concept of the actor's "part" that also recurs in the poem – five times to be exact (1135, 1327 [twice], 1328, 1830). Only the intense triple repetition in lines 1327–28 has warranted a theatrical gloss – "plays a part of woe" (Roe, ed., *Poems*, 206):

> For then the eye interprets to the ear
> The heavy motion that it doth behold,
> When every part a part of woe doth bear.
> 'Tis but a part of sorrow that we hear.
> (*Rape of Lucrece*, 1325–28)

Long ago, Malone observed of this passage: "Our author seems to have been thinking of *Dumb-shows*, which were exhibited on the stage in his time. Motion, in old language, signifies a *puppet-show*; and the person who spoke for the puppets was called an *interpreter*" (Prince, ed., *Poems*, 126).

Yet the word "part" also belongs to the musical discourse of song. Shakespeare repeats the related idea of *bearing a part* three times (1135, 1327, 1830).

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[31] Fineman suggests that "this image is quite central to 'The Rape of Lucrece,' figuring not only the rape but also its motivation and consequences, so it is significant that Shakespeare . . . associates his poem with the phenomenology of the spurt" ("Will," 27).

For example, in the first instance, Lucrece tells Philomela, the nightingale, "against a thorn thou bear'st thy part." Then in the second instance, quoted above, the *Riverside* editors catch a double ring, of both poetry and theatre: "sings a woeful part (in the musical sense)" and "plays a woeful role" (1831).[32] Thus, when Shakespeare says that Southampton is a "part" in all he has, he implicates the patron's theatrical and poetic role in his own literary production.

A version of this conjunction appears in the Argument, albeit in brief form. While acknowledging that this strange composition may be viewed as a Livian counterpoint to the Ovidian poem (see Belsey, "Consent," 320–21), we may note its slender strand of both Ovidian Petrarchism and Ovidian theatricalism. The Petrarchism appears when "Collatinus extolled the incomparable chastity of his wife Lucretia" (12–13), which the poem itself will dilate on tragically when Tarquin visits the sleeping Lucrece in her bedroom. The theatricalism emerges when the wagering husbands find all their wives but Lucrece "dancing and revelling" (18–19), when Tarquin initially "smother[s] . . . his passions" for Lucrece in order to ensure that he is "royally entertained" by her (22–23, 26), and more directly when Lucrece reveals to her husband and the other men that Tarquin is "the actor" (36) who has become the very "cause of her sorrow" (934–35). Shakespeare's concern in the Argument with tragic causality, located in the theatrical rapist Tarquin but more subtly in her Petrarchan husband, creates an authorial lens for viewing the story as the printed product of the poet-playwright.

TARQUIN, BOOKS, AND THEATRE

The authorial imprint is embedded in the sexual conflict between Lucrece and Tarquin and in the tragic resolution of their story. In the first half of the poem, Shakespeare presents Tarquin not simply as a lustful prince ruining his reputation and his rule, but also as an author who has written a book and is committed to playing the part of an actor. When Lucrece first greets him, she

> Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,
> Nor read the subtle shining secrecies
> Writ in the glassy margents of such books.
> . . .
> Nor could she moralize his wanton sight,
> . . .

[32] Enterline sees a conjunction of music and theatre here (*Rhetoric*, 192).

> He stories to her ears her husband's fame,
> Won in the fields of fruitful Italy;
> And decks with praises Collatine's high name,
> Made glorious by his manly chivalry,
> With bruised arms and wreaths of victory.
>
> (*Rape of Lucrece*, 100–10)

The narrator's discourse of printed books here is striking – and constitutes one half of Shakespeare's signature in his handling of the Lucrece legend. Yet the narrator imposes his bookish discourse and its narratival point of view onto Lucrece, who intuitively perceives Tarquin's "looks" for what they are without being conscious enough to act on her instinct: a printed copy of a concealed truth that she needs to read carefully. Since she "never cop'd with stranger eyes" (99), she reads the text of the book but evidently fails to heed the more arcane secondary text, "the subtle shining secrecies" revealed in the book's marginal glosses, which direct the reader to the truth of the inner-text. When she cannot "moralize his wanton sight," she fails to interpret the moral or ethical character of Tarquin's "wanton" book.

Lucrece may read Tarquin's face as a book, and fail to interpret it accurately, but almost simultaneously, as if in literary collusion, the prince presents himself as the author of the book she longs to read: a romance epic about her husband's glorious chivalry. In this narrative, Collatine has fought manfully, suffering bruises to his martial arms, but he returns home heroically, wearing the laurel wreath of victory.

We need to historicize this representation of authorship and readership, because Shakespeare's terminology compels us to do so. The contents of the "book" that Tarquin "stories" to Lucrece are formally Spenserian.[33] Drawing on a virtual inventory of the central words of *The Faerie Queene* – the only chivalric English Renaissance epic available at this time – Tarquin presents a narrative to Lucrece of her husband's standing as an epic hero, just as Spenser does to Queen Elizabeth of Prince Arthur, the heroic lover of Gloriana. Collatine has used "manly chivalry" to win the "wreath" of martial "victory" in the "field" of national battle, and thus Tarquin uses a versified narration to celebrate his friend's (and kinsman's) heroic achievement through "praise" of his "name," "fame," and "glor[y]."[34]

[33] Cf. Hillman, "Gower's Lucrece," who quotes the second stanza to support a Gowerian influence.
[34] Shakespeare's "bruised arms" recalls Spenser's "helmes unbruzed" (*October*, 42), the New Poet's synecdoche for the (as yet) unwritten Elizabethan epic. Accordingly, in the opening stanza to Book I of the written epic, Spenser presents the Redcrosse Knight wearing bruised arms (I. I. I), although Christian reasons emerge for their condition.

For her part, Lucrece cannot "moralize" Tarquin's "wanton sight." The word "moralize" is the final term announcing the Spenserian project in the opening stanza to the national epic: "Fierce warres and faithfull loves shall moralize my song" (1.Proem 1). While Spenser emphasizes the ethical dimension of war and love in the conduct of "Knights and Ladies" (1.Proem 1), Tarquin hypocritically moralizes his song of the warrior Collatine to disrupt the faithful love between husband and wife. "Wanton sight" is also striking, because it shows not simply Lucrece's blindness to the storyteller's sexual hypocrisy but also Tarquin's brilliant performance of the Marlovian maneuver of opening up the "wanton voice" of Spenser's "ethical" art.[35]

Marlowe was indeed the first to have performed this maneuver on a grand scale, making it his most sustained strategy for deconstructing Spenser's national authority.[36] Shakespeare appears to have been attuned to Marlowe's maneuver, and accordingly he presents Tarquin as a Marlovian superhero appropriating the Spenserian ethos. Specifically, Tarquin appears before Lucrece as a Spenserian epic author of his friend's glory precisely to transact his "counterfeit profession" (Marlowe, *Jew of Malta*, 1. 2. 292).[37]

Accordingly, once Lucrece entertains Tarquin in her home, the narrator lapses into Spenserian diction and verse to describe the guest's self-conscious "show":

> He makes excuses for his being there.
> No cloudy show of stormy blust'ring weather
> Doth yet in his fair welkin once appear,
> Till sable Night, mother of dread and fear,
> Upon the world dim darkness doth display,
> And in her vaulty prison stows the day.
>
> (*Rape of Lucrece*, 114–19)

Here Shakespeare provides a version of the Spenserian poetics of night that critics find later in the poem.[38] For instance, the word "blustring" is a favorite of Spenser's in both the 1579 *Shepheardes Calender* and the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, where it occurs, respectively, three and five times.[39]

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[35] Paglia suggests that both an "ethical voice" and a "wanton voice" compete for authority in *The Faerie Queene*, and she argues that Spenser's historical achievement lies in the victory his poem grants to the latter (*Sexual Personae*, 190–91), not the former, as he himself proclaims in the Proem to Book 1.

[36] See Cheney, *Profession*, 116–17. Yet Paglia allows us to see that the origins of Marlowe's wanton appropriation of Spenser's ethical art lie in Spenser himself.

[37] Dubrow calls Tarquin "a Marlovian character" (*Victors*, 119). On desire and will more recently, see Belsey, "Consent," 323–26.

[38] Bush glosses lines 747, 764–70, 799 – all part of Lucrece's complaint to "Night"– with *Faerie Queene* 3.4.55–59, Arthur's complaint to Night ("Notes"; see Roe, ed., *Poems*, 179, 180, 182).

[39] In chapter 8, we shall see that Shakespeare associates the word "blusterer" with the Spenserian figure of the reverend man in *A Lover's Complaint* (58).

Specifically, Shakespeare's phrase "stormy blust'ring weather" appears to glance at the opening (Virgilian) tempest of the Legend of Holiness, described as "cloudes" of "hideous storme" (1. 1. 6. 5–6) and as a "blustring storme" (10. 2). Similarly, Shakespeare's line 118 – "sable Night, mother of dread and fear" – collects together two other passages in Book 1: after the Redcrosse Knight kills the dragon, the coming of "sad succeeding night, / . . . with her sable mantle gan to shade / The face of earth" (11. 49. 6–7); and the departure of "everlasting Night" as "The mother of dread darknesse," along with Duessa, from the underworld (5. 43. 5, 44. 5). The word "welkin," a "poeticism for 'sky'" (Roe, ed., *Poems*, 149), is also a favorite of Spenser's in the *Calender* and in the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, as is the conceit of dimming bright light; the juxtaposition of the two conceits here may well glance at *Faerie Queene*, 3. 10. 46.7, a memorable passage directing readers to the story of Hellenore and Paridell, Spenser's parodic rewriting of Book 2 of the *Aeneid*, the fall of Troy. As the satyrs "give a busse / To Hellenore . . . / . . . th'Earthes gloomy shade / Did dim the brightnesse of the welkin round" (3. 10. 46).[40] Yet infiltrating Shakespeare's Spenserian *bricolage* is a discourse of performance – not simply in "blust'ring" but also in "show," "appear," and "display." The thought of Shakespeare's stanza, as so much else in the poem, is difficult and oblique, as the reader struggles to determine whether the meteorology is actual or metaphorical. Inescapably, the pronoun in line 116, "his," compels us to see a connection between Tarquin's demeanor or action – his making of "excuses for his being there" – and the curious agency of the "stormy blust'ring weather," which makes no "cloudy show" until Night displays her "dim darkness." Shakespeare writes Tarquin's Marlovian hypocrisy through with the performative verse of England's Virgil.[41]

Scholars may not find Spenser lurking in Lucrece's bedroom, but they find Marlowe. They gloss the colonial image of Lucrece's breasts – "ivory globes" and "maiden worlds" – with *Hero and Leander*, 2. 273–76, where Leander scales Hero's "rising ivory mount," which is "with azure circling lines impaled, / Much like a globe (a globe may I term this, / By which love sails to regions full of bliss)." Effectively, Tarquin is a Marlovian reader and writer of Spenser. Rather than simply misreading Spenser or siphoning off a wanton voice contained by an ethical one, Shakespeare's rapist operates

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[40] Spenser's conceit of "dim[ming] the welkin" caught Marlowe's eye in *Doctor Faustus* (1. 3. 4) as did the Hellnore/Paridell story, an important intertext for the Helen of Troy scene (Cheney, *Profession*, 209).

[41] Shakespeare also appears to have in mind Archimago's hermitage: "And everyone to his rest betakes, / Save thieves, cares, and troubled minds" (124–26). Cf., e.g., *Faerie Queene*, 1. 1. 39, where Archimago sets about to "trouble sleepy mindes." On "The Postures of [Spenser's] Allegory," including allegory's performative dynamic, see Gross' essay by this title.

under the influence of Marlowe; his counter-Petrarchan, counter-Virgilian aesthetics originates not only in *The Faerie Queene* but also in *Hero and Leander.*

Marlowe's presence helps to explain the theatrical discourse in this part of the poem. Thus, before Tarquin awakens Lucrece, he betrays the theatricality of his project:

> Then childish fear avaunt, debating die!
> Respect and reason wait on wrinkled age!
> My heart shall never countermand mine eye,
> Sad pause and deep regard beseems the sage;
> My part is youth, and beats these from the stage.
> (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 274–78)

A man about to rape a woman imagines himself as an actor on the stage. Tarquin metaphorizes an internal drama of generational strife in which he plays the "part" of an impetuous "youth" beating the wisdom of an old "sage" from "the stage." Yet Shakespeare's phrase suggests not merely internal but professional conflict, as if the mental habit of theatre were itself both an impediment to and an abetter of desire (Dubrow, *Victors*, 90). The violence contained in the metaphor shows Tarquin relying on an imaginative drama to "countermand" such rational arbiters as "Respect and reason," "Sad pause and deep regard."

We can see a specific theatricalizing of Tarquin's shameful interiority in the poem's central representation of the "impious act" (199):

> Thus graceless holds he disputation
> 'Tween frozen conscience and hot burning will,
> And with good thoughts makes dispensation,
> Urging the worser sense for vantage still;
> Which in a moment doth confound and kill
> All pure effects, and doth so far proceed
> That what is vile shows like a virtuous deed.
> (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 246–52)

Since "graceless" means "lacking or refusing divine aid" (Roe, ed., *Poems*, 156), we can read this photograph of the lustful man's subjectivity in terms of Reformation Humanism – perhaps of the Spenserian variety. Bereft of Christian grace, Tarquin is one of the elect; like Faustus, he has been elected for damnation. In the next line, the whole program of Reformation Humanism literally goes up in flames. In contradistinction to the teaching of Luther (or of Plato), Shakespeare shows Tarquin's "hot burning will" able to *freeze* "conscience." Later, Lucrece will make the exact opposite point:

"I sue for exil'd majesty's repeal, / Let him return, and flatt'ring thoughts retire; / His true respect will prison false desire" (640–42). Where Lucrece joins Plato and Luther in arguing that conscience can arbitrate conduct before the unruly powers of desire, Shakespeare's poem hauntingly disagrees. Rather than understanding conscience as a divine voice standing above the body's fray, Shakespeare imagines the interior faculty embedded darkly in the tissue of flesh, subject to the hot power of "Will" (495).[42]

The subsequent debate between Tarquin and Lucrece intertwines the theatre with the print shop – especially stage tragedy and printed epic (470–76). Despite Tarquin's awareness of the consequences of his act – "I know repentant tears ensue the deed" – he strives to "embrace" his own "infamy" (502–04); he continues to locate *literary authority* in his victim. If Lucrece does not submit to his desire, he will falsify the evidence by killing "some worthless slave" (515), whom Tarquin will pretend he caught sleeping with her, to the calumny of "every open eye" (520),

> And thou the author of their obloquy,
> Shalt have thy trespass cited up in rhymes,
> And sung by children in succeeding times.
> (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 523–25)

In this context, the word "author" is noteworthy. Referring to the adulterous betrayal Tarquin will proclaim that Lucrece has committed, the word nominally means "cause" (Crewe, ed., *Narrative Poems*, 71). Yet the passage refers to the literary consequences of Lucrece's sexual authorship, both written and oral: poets will commemorate her in "rhymes" and children will sing about her in songs. She will "author" the very infamy that Tarquin earlier admitted he invented for himself.

Tarquin's defacement of his "soul's fair temple" as a "spotted princess" (719–21) identifies one consequence of rape: the male thinks he rapes a woman, yet in the process he rapes himself (Hynes, "Rape"). Yet Shakespeare also pinpoints the destructive psychological consequences of an individual's reading and writing of a certain form of art – a Marlovian art of Ovidian desire, transacted through poetry and theatre: "Desire doth fight with Grace, / For there it revels" (712–13). Shakespeare rewrites Spenser's Castle of Alma episode along Marlovian lines, as if Prince Arthur, the human minister of divine grace, had not simply failed to protect the besieged

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[42] As readers observe here, Shakespeare seems to sign this idea with his own name. See "will" also at 1299 and Fineman, "Will," 28, 49–51, 68. Tarquin's theatrical self-presentation helps to explain the theatrical terms that flood Lucrece's own perception upon her awakening (456–62).

castle but become its principal attacker.[43] Marlowe knew that Spenser was wrong about desire: "Love is not full of pity (as men say) / But deaf and cruel where it means to prey" (*Hero and Leander*, 2. 287–88). The feminine "temple" being "defaced" (719) is thus also the "heavenly image" of Lucrece within Tarquin's "thought" (288). The process of perceiving the female is now complete. In the first half of the poem, Shakespeare uses the discourse of both poetry and theatre to present the Marlovian Tarquin as an Ovidian author violating the Spenserian chastity at the heart of the Elizabethan nation's cult of the Virgin: "Pure Chastity is rifled of her store" (692).

BEARING THE AUTHOR'S PART: LUCRECE, ORPHEUS, PHILOMELA

In the second half of the poem, Shakespeare turns to the literary interiority of the victim. He does so initially to measure the resistance by the Spenser target under Marlovian attack. If the first half assigns agency primarily to Tarquin, presenting authorship as fundamentally Marlovian, the second half assigns agency primarily to Lucrece, presenting authorship as fundamentally Spenserian. Specifically, Lucrece emerges as a Philomela figure associated with Orphic power.

Perhaps appropriately, the paradox of Tarquin's strategy – he takes authorship and agency into his own hands yet assigns authorship to his victim – produces one of the most perplexing moments in the poem. The narrator identifies a Roman matron lying on the threshold of violation with the arch-poet of classical culture:

> when a black-fac'd cloud the world doth threat,
> In his dim mist th' aspiring mountains hiding,
> From earth's dark womb some gentle gust doth get,
> Which blow these pitchy vapors from their biding,
> Hind'ring their present fall by this dividing;
>   So his unhallowed haste her words delays,
>   And moody Pluto winks while Orpheus plays.
>   (*Rape of Lucrece*, 547–53)

This is a complicated stanza. Within the narrative, the reference is part of the narrator's multi-stanza "delay" in reporting the outcome of Lucrece's plea to Tarquin: "be compassionate" (594). Lines 1–4 use a meteorological

[43] Roe ed., *Poems*, comments that lines 708–11 "strike a medieval or Spenserian note in their personification of lust's aftermath as wastage"; specifically, I suggest, the "Spenserian note" derives from *The Fairie Queene*, 2. 11. 22, the description of Maleger, who besieges the Castle of Alma.

analogy to explain the delay – a gendered analogy in which a "gentle gust" of wind from "earth's dark womb" blows "black-fac'd clouds" that threaten to envelope "th' aspiring mountains." The analogy works, since it impedes Tarquin's action: "So his unhallowed haste her words delays." Nothing in the first six lines prepares for the emergence of Orpheus in the seventh, which conjures up the tradition of Orphic art.

The disjunction Shakespeare creates, between evoking this charged myth and delimiting its presence, produces a challenge to criticism.[44] Shakespeare, I suggest, cues the reader to witness in this story of rape an arch-story about Ovidian intertextual authorship. Thus the Orpheus reference precedes an allusion to the myth during Lucrece's apostrophe to Philomela later: "And for, poor bird, thou sing'st not in the day . . . / . . . we will unfold / To creatures stern, sad tunes to change their kinds; / Since men prove beasts, let beasts bear gentle minds" (1142–48). Here Shakespeare does not simply discuss the limits and strengths of the "female voice" or confine his representation to "lyric" poetry.[45] By 1594, the myth of Orpheus, like that of Philomela, had acquired a rather specific authorial genealogy. In the *Commendatory Verses* appended to the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, Sir Walter Ralegh identifies the New Poet as "Philumena," while R. S. calls him the "Bryttane Orpheus."[46] In Shakespeare's hands, the rape of the "Philumena" – like Lucrece is textualized historically in terms of the "Bryttane Orpheus."

Shakespeare goes on to spread his representation of the violated Orphic author in four stages: Lucrece's complaint to Night, Opportunity, and Time (764–1036); her identification with Philomel (1079–1211); her composition of a letter to her husband (1289–1316); and her viewing of the Troy painting (1366–1582). Leaving aside the letter for a moment, the other three self-reflexive literary moments correspond to complaint, pastoral, and epic. For Elizabethans, these three genres were practiced most famously by Spenser, who had published his pastoral *Calender* in 1579, his epic *Faerie Queene* in 1590, and his *Complaints* in 1591. The presence of the Chaucerian genre of complaint in Spenser's career does not invalidate his standing as England's Virgil but complicates and extends it.[47] While Shakespeare's three-genre order implies a progression from lower to higher forms, it scrambles Spenser's publishing chronology, perhaps simply to

[44] Nonetheless, there is very little on it; cf. Enterline, *Rhetoric*, 168–69; Bate, *Ovid*, 77; Roe, ed., *Poems*, 170.

[45] On "female voice," see Bate, *Ovid*, 76–77; on "lyric," Enterline, *Rhetoric*, 169.

[46] On Orpheus in Spenser, see Cain, "Orpheus"; Cheney, *Flight*, 22–76, including on R. S. (167, 294n22). On Philomela in Spenser, see Cheney, *Flight*, 77–110, including on Ralegh (134).

[47] Cf. Rambuss, *Spenser's Secret Career*, 78–95. See Cheney, *Flight*, 247n2, 257–58n18.

accommodate narrative. Yet Shakespeare might also be subtly deploying a principle Marlowe had practiced in *Ovid's Elegies*, when he disrupts Ovid's accurate ordering of Virgil's tripartite career by erasing georgic and putting epic before pastoral: "Aeneas' war, and Tityrus should be read" (1. 14. 25: "Tityrus et segetes Aeneiaque arma legentur" [1. 14. 25]). Jonson found this procedure unacceptable and restored the original idea: "Tityrus, Tillage, and Aeney shall be read" (see Cheney, *Profession*, 7–8). Shakespeare's evident scrambling of the Spenserian structure turns out to be consistent with the view of the Britain Orpheus exhibited subsequently.

In her complaint to Night, Opportunity, and Time, Lucrece clearly searches for a literary form of consolation. This form is not simply the Elizabethan complaint stemming from *The Mirror for Magistrates* (Dubrow, "Mirror"), but more particularly the genre that Spenser had inserted into his Virgilian career three years previously in his collection of complaints. The Spenserian provenance of Lucrece's complaint is clear from its opening lines: "O comfort-killing Night, image of hell, / Dim register and notary of shame" (764–65). As Bush observed long ago, "The apostrophe to Night . . . bears a special resemblance to a speech that Spenser puts in the mouth of Arthur" (*Mythology*, 153; Roe, ed., *Poems*, 180). Like Prince Arthur, Lucrece relies on complaint to bring consolation during a moment of intense suffering.[48] Yet the Spenserian faith in literary consolation ultimately fails Lucrece: "In vain I rail at Opportunity . . . / The remedy indeed to do me good / Is to let forth my foul defiled blood" (1023–29). In this failure, a lot is at stake – including, in 1594, for England's New Poet. As Lucrece's speech makes plain, she uses the complaint to locate blame for her defilement. Her complaint thus counters Tarquin's analysis, which locates "the fault" in her (482), constructing an elaborate etiology for her tragedy.

In Shakespeare's lexicon, Tarquin's contamination of Lucrece appears as a Marlovian contamination of her Spenserian project. If in *Venus* Shakespeare shows the mighty opposites poised in antagonism, here he shows the consequences. Shakespeare's real interest lies in the moment of contamination, and nowhere more telling than in the coloring of Lucrece's complaint by tragedy. Shakespeare's echoes of both Marlowe and Spenser in his portrait of Lucrece, like those in his portrait of Tarquin, catch the early modern author in a decisive moment of literary competition. It is only in the moment of contamination that we can witness Shakespeare's representation of his own

[48] Roe ed., *Poems*, cites three other Spenserian origins to Lucrece's complaint: lines 799 (182), 881–82 (186), and 956 (180).

authorial predicament as a new Ovidian poet-playwright, caught in the double act of shame: shame through having "gone here and there" and made himself "a motely to the view" (Sonnet 110. 1–2; see chapter 7); and shame through "publishing" a printed poem. In her histrionic complaint, Lucrece transacts her own author's historical moment.

Only at line 1079 does Shakespeare identify the myth underwriting Lucrece's complaint: "By this, lamenting Philomele had ended / The well-tun'd warble of her nightly sorrow" (1079–80). The introduction of Philomela has two functions. First, since the nightingale sings its song during the night, it marks the transition from night to day – the very time Lucrece fears. Second, and more importantly, the reference identifies Lucrece with Philomela, as "By this" indicates. Shakespeare's paradoxical aesthetic formulation, that the "warble of her nightly sorrow" is "well-tun'd," unfolds this latter function, which gathers force immediately. For Lucrece herself addresses Philomela during an intense moment of literary identification: "Come, Philomele, that sing'st of ravishment" (1128). Through Lucrece's identification with Philomela, Shakespeare can narrate an author's attempt to rely on the Spenserian aesthetics to cope with the tragic act of rifled chastity. As Catherine Belsey reminds us, "In Shakespeare's Poem Philomel is seen not in the act of vengeance but after her metamorphosis into a nightingale, and leaning her breast against a thorn to keep her woe alive for all to hear" ("Consent," 335). In this aesthetics, the singer can identify with Philomela in order to experience consolation. Thus, throughout the *Calender* Spenser presents his pastoral persona, Colin Clout, as a Philomela figure. *August* is especially important for *Lucrece*, because its aesthetics of consolation anticipates Shakespeare's lines 1079–1148. As Colin puts it, "cheerefull songs . . . can chaunge my cheerless cryes. / Hence with the Nightingale will I take part" (182–83).

In his pastoral, Spenser had understood the tragic mode of the Philomela story, when Colin in his role as "Nightingale . . . sovereigne of songe" begins his elegy for the dead Queen Dido by evoking "Melpomene" (*November*, 53), the goddess of tragedy. Indeed, the Greek tragedians and Seneca all adopt the Philomela myth as the ur-myth of tragedy (cf. Garrod, "Nightingale," 136). Thus, the Elizabethan Philomela traces via the Roman Ovid to the Attic tragedians. Readers may recognize the power of Philomela for the Greeks by recalling Cassandra'a climactic identification with the ravished nightingale in Aeschylus' *Agammemon* (see chapter 2). For Elizabethans, the missing link in this genealogical chain would be Seneca, who in his tragedies relies on the Philomlela myth to represent the heart of Roman

political atrocity – including in *Thyestes* (1. 56–57). The Senecan matrix for the Philomela myth may help explain the presence of Shakespeare's theatrical terms discussed earlier: "bear'st a part." Not merely does Philomela sing her song and play a role; she also bears the phallic thorn of Tarquin within her. Effectively, Tarquin contaminates Lucrece with his compound art of poetry and theatre.[49]

PAPER, INK, AND PEN: THE PRINTING OF LUCRECE'S AUTHORSHIP

After failing to find consolation in Spenserian pastoral and complaint, Lucrece writes a letter to her husband. The passage leading up to this act of letter-writing uses authorial terms to describe the difference between the agency of men and women:

> For men have marble, women waxen minds,
> And therefore are they form'd as marble will;
> The weak oppress'd, th' impression of strange kinds
> Is form'd in them by force, by fraud, or skill.
> Then call them not the authors of their ill.
> (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 1240–44)

The last line suggests the very struggle of *authorship* we are examining. Women like Lucrece cannot be "authors of their ill" because they are made of "waxen" material – that which is "impress[ed]" rather than that which presses. Thus, only men can be the "authors" of women's ill, since men are "form'd" of "marble," able to "oppress" the "weak," whether "by force, by fraud, or skill." The syntax seems to grant women authorship only to take it away, placing it in the "minds" of "men." As before, authorship is a trope for agency and causality, yet here the narrator reverses Tarquin's earlier charge against Lucrece: he is not the cause of the rape. In fact, the passage does not take authorship away from Lucrece (or women); only from "their ill." In terms of the Elizabethan literary collision, Shakespeare appears to be assigning blame for the violence of the current literary climate to Marlowe, rather than to Spenser.

Accordingly, Shakespeare presents Lucrece as an author when she directs her maid to fetch her "paper, ink, and pen" (1289). In this representation of Lucrece as an author, we may discover Shakespeare's "primal scene of . . . composition" with regard to printed poetry (Willbern, *Poetic Will*, 94):

[49] Cf. C. and M. Martindale, *Antiquity*, 49–50; Enterline, *Rhetoric*, 170.

> Her maid is gone, and she prepares to write,
> First hovering o'er the paper with her quill.
> Conceit and grief an eager combat fight,
> What wit sets down is blotted straight with will;
> This is too curious-good, this blunt and ill:
>   Much like a press of people at a door,
>   Throng her inventions, which shall go before.
> (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 1296–1302)

Lucrece does not write about the rape in her letter to Collatine, "Lest he should hold it her own gross abuse, / Ere she with blood had stain'd her stain'd excuse" (1315–16). Instead, at line 278 "Lucrece herself adopts what is in effect a theatrical image for her behavior: ironically, in order to convince Collatine of her honesty, she must play her part like an actress" (Dubrow, "Mirror," 407). Rather than choosing a staged play over a printed inscription, Lucrece combines the two forms that will lead to her climactic political act: the inscription and enactment of her suicide in service of the Roman Republic: "I am the mistress of my fate" (1069). In other words, Lucrece reverses her author's own turn from stage to page, using the page of her letter to stage her final scene, as well as to script the role of revenger for her husband and the other men.[50]

TO FIND A FACE: LUCRECE AND SINON AT TROY

To prepare for this final event, Lucrece searches out one artifact in particular – a painting that for Elizabethans models the Western epic enterprise: the fall of Troy. Writers from Homer and Aristotle to Chaucer and Lydgate had selected the Troy story as the arch-myth for the intersection of epic and tragedy. For Aristotle, the primary origins to tragedy and comedy are the epics of Homer, which themselves are produced "through the dramatic character of his imitations" (*Poetics*, 1448b.24–1449a.7). In classical Rome, Virgil had shown his Homeric-based epic hero Aeneas viewing the frescoes of the Fall of Troy, thereby placing his *Aeneid* in the tradition of "lacrimae rerum" (1. 462). In Dante's *Inferno*, the character Virgil calls his epic "l'alta mia tragedia" (20. 113), while Dante finally detaches himself from his great Roman mentor by calling his epic about Christian salvation the *Commedia*. Influenced by this tradition, Chaucer relies on the verse form of rhyme royal to call his *Troilus and Criseyde* "little myn tragedye" (5.1786), while Lydgate in *Troy Book* extends this tragedic tradition in epic

[50] Thanks to Doc Rissel for this point (personal communication, 14 February 2003).

form.[51] Yet for Virgil in the *Aeneid*, as for Spenser in *The Faerie Queene*, the fall of Troy begins as a tragedy about men and women but finally serves a comedic political goal for the nation. Whereas Aeneas escapes Troy to found Rome, so (yet another) Brutus founds Troynovaunt. Both works transpose tragedy into epic. For Shakespeare in 1594, the Troy myth would be most immediately filtered from "the olde famous Poet Chaucer" through "the new Poete" (*Calender, Dedicatory Epistle*, 1), especially Spenser's detailed representation of the Fall of Troy in Book 3, canto 9, of *The Faerie Queene*.

What, more specifically, is a painting of Troy's fall doing in Lucrece's house?[52] Since the painting is there, indeed the home's central artifact, Shakespeare would seem to be depicting a domestic version of the religious principle enshrined in the *Aeneid*: the Fall of Troy is the animating ideology in the home of Lucrece and her husband. As with the Trojan frescoes in the temple of Sidonian Dido, the Troy painting licenses and determines Tarquin's behavior, his false epic "rape" of a beautiful woman in a national setting. Lucrece's domestic artwork tells us that she is doomed from the start; her domestic space has been infiltrated by an intruder who represents the state.[53] That intruder is not only Tarquin but Virgil – more accurately, Virgilian art, and not just monarchy but monarchical art itself: Spenser's monarchical art, organized around a deterministic nationalist teleology. This becomes clearer when Lucrece locates Tarquin in the painting itself. In short, the Troy painting is the Virgilian epic ideology organizing Lucrece's domestic space.

Within Shakespeare's fiction, Lucrece turns to the painting of Troy as an alternative to complaint and pastoral mourning (1364–65). Although this "newer way" works temporarily, in the end epic art fails as sadly as does these other genres: "none it ever cured" (1581). Here the poem rejects one of the West's most enduring ideas, specified in terms of Spenser's Virgilian ideal: that art can redeem, that literature can supply the purgation and consolation for life's traumatic sadness. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, unlike in *The Faerie Queene* or the *Aeneid*, art leads grimly to death.

Shakespeare relies on the principle of Ovidian attenuation to contain and subvert the epic of England's Virgil – a principle Marlowe initially put into play, by translating the *Amores*, by Ovidianizing the Troy story in *Dido*, and finally by translating Lucan's first book from the *Pharsalia*. At stake in

[51] For this discussion, I am indebted to Robert R. Edwards; see his edition of *Troy Book* (1).

[52] This is the question Hexter asks about the frescoes in Virgil: what is a painting privileging a Trojan myth important to Aeneas' destiny doing in Dido's Carthaginian Temple of Juno, the arch-enemy of Troy? For Hexter, the oddity of this crux shows a deterministic universe championing the Pax Romana.

[53] Helgerson, *Adulterous*; see 30 and 39 on *Lucrece*.

Lucrece is just what type of foundational myth will serve the nation: Spenser's Virgilian-based dynastic myth supporting the Tudor regime; Marlowe's Lucanian-based republican myth negatively rehearsed in the civil war that ends the Republic; or Shakespeare's Ovidian/Livian-based republican myth affirmatively performing the birth of the republic within a monarchical frame. Shakespeare appears to be advancing the case for a new national myth, beyond Marlowe, beyond Spenser.

Thus one significance of the Troy painting lies in the colliding presence of Spenserian and Marlovian models, which merge not in the figures we might expect, Helen or Hecuba, but in Sinon, the painting's climactic figure. In Sinon, Lucrece finds what she is looking for: an artistic model of the actor who has blotted the princess. She indeed knows what she wants: "To this well-painted piece is Lucrece come, / To find a face where all distress is stell'd" (1443–44). Lucrece goes to the Troy painting to "find a face" – one that *stells* distress, a word usually glossed as "delineated, portrayed" (Roe, ed., *Poems*, 211) but perhaps also meaning *distilled*. She finds a face to activate the purgative principle the narrator identifies earlier: to *suffice true sorrow feelingly* through *sympathizing* with a *like semblance* (1111–13). As if to emphasize this process, the narrator repeats the word "feelingly" later: "Here feelingly she weeps Troy's painted woes" (1492).

To find a face: it is an engaging idea. The word *face* occurs no fewer than nine times during the 200-line Troy passage. Whatever else Shakespeare is doing, he is probing an aesthetics of the face, the cultural problem of the face, the artist's show of face. Like the word *face*, the word *show* and its cognates appears eight times in the Troy passage. While in five of them Shakespeare describes the painter's art as a form of theatrical performance, in four he expresses both the painter's and his subject's deceit, with three concentrated on Sinon. In line 1503, *show* and *face* jostle in a description of the arch-traitor: "His face, though full of cares, yet show'd content" (1503). Sinon's power lies in the show of face.

That Lucrece should pass over Hecuba to Sinon reveals where her interest in art lies: not in identification but in activation – revenge rather than sympathy:[54]

> At last she sees a wretched image bound,
> That piteous looks to Phrygian shepherds lent;
> His face, though full of cares, yet show'd content;
>   Onward to Troy with the blunt swains he goes,
>   So mild that patience seem'd to scorn his woes.
>   (*Rape of Lucrece*, 1501–05)

[54] Cf. M. A. Wells, "Rape," who focuses on Helen.

For evidence that "'Phrygian' . . . connotes fierceness" in contrast with "'piteous,'" Roe cites E. K.'s gloss from *October* (*Poems*, 214) – Spenser's eclogue on the "state of Poet" (97), including the New Poet's review of the *cursus* of "the Romish Tityrus" (55; see 55–60, 193–99). Yet the E. K. passage contains the artistic principle Lucrece enacts when finding the face of Sinon; for E. K., this principle derives from Orpheus, since it is Spenser's representation of Orpheus' use of music to "bereave" the "soule of sence" (*October*, 27) that E. K. glosses (153–62). Shakespeare sees Sinon from Book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid* putting into play this Spenserian Orphic principle in order to bring about the Fall of Troy, wherein the traitor uses his face to secure the "compassion" of the Trojans only to destroy them. Accordingly, Shakespeare presents Sinon walking down the Virgilian path; using his "face" to create "piteous looks" in the "Phrygian shepherds," he moves through the pastoral domain of "blunt swains" until he reaches the epic city.

This panoramic view of Sinon strolling from shepherds to princes leads the narrator to focus on the traitor's art of face:

> In him the painter labor'd with his skill
> To hide deceit, and give the harmless show
> An humble gait, calm looks, eyes wailing still,
> A brow unbent, that seem'd to welcome woe,
> Cheeks neither red nor pale, but mingled so
>   That blushing red no guilty instance gave,
>   Nor ashy pale the fear that false hearts have.
>   (*Rape of Lucrece*, 1506–12)

Shakespeare virtually equates Sinon's pastoral pose – his "humble gait" – with the "deceit" of a "harmless show": an innocuous theatre of appearance. As critics observe (e.g., Fineman, "Shakespeare's Will," 58), Sinon's face "mingle[s]" the pastoral red and white that Tarquin reads into the chivalric heraldry of Lucrece's face earlier. Sinon is not cross-dressed, but his "harmless show" performs an effeminate pastoral version of masculine warfare.

In the next stanza, Shakespeare makes the tragedic theatre of Sinon's pastoral face explicit: "He entertain'd a show so seeming just" (1514). So powerful is Sinon's (Marlovian) theatre that Lucrece cannot believe "So fair a form" could be "lodg'd" in "a mind so ill": "Such signs of truth in his plain face she spied, / That she concludes the picture was belied" (1530, 1533–34). She discerns the complicity between the painter's "craft" and that of Sinon, prompting her to witness a crossover from art to life, from the

circumstances of Troy to those of Rome: "Tarquin's shape came in her mind the while" (1537). Concentrating on Sinon's face as a theatrical mask, she makes an astonishing discovery: that Tarquin has himself read Sinon clearly, that her own domestic artwork contains the seed of her destruction. The discovery prompts her final epiphany: like Sinon with his pastoral pose, the epic "Tarquin armed" came to her "beguild / With outward honesty, but yet defil'd / With inward vice" (1544–46). This recognition prompts her rage, as she uses "passion" to "assail" the art of Sinon's face with her "nails" (1562–64). Only temporarily does such violence allow her "sorrow" to "ebb and flow," wearying "time with her complaining" (1569–70), because this truant use of art also fails: "Losing her woes in shows of discontent, / It easeth some, though none it ever cured" (1580–81). Finally, Lucrece's rapt absorption in Sinon's "shows" cannot free her from the defilement of rape. Lucrece's attack on the Troy painting prints Shakespeare's own critique of the Spenserian nationalist myth. In the process, he clears a space for a new myth, organized not around a monarchical dynasty but around a monarchical republic.

THE ART OF PUBLICATION: BRUTUS, LUCRECE, AND THE BLOOD OF THE REPUBLIC

When Collatine, Lucretius, and Brutus arrive, Lucrece has reached her decision: "And now this pale swan in her wat'ry nest / Begins the sad dirge of her certain ending" (1611–12). Traditionally, the swan is a sign of lyric poetry. Callimachus attributes the origin of lyric poetry to the movement and song of the swan at the birth of Apollo:

with music the swans, the gods' own minstrels, left Maeonian Pactolus and circled seven times round Delos, and sang over the bed of child-birth, the Muses' birds, most musical of all birds that fly. Hence that child in after days strung the lyre with just so many strings – seven strings, since seven times the swans sang over the pangs of birth. (*Hymn IV*, "To Delos," 249–54)

The idea is so ancient that our earliest preserved lyre is in the shape of a swan (Cheney, *Flight*, 70–71). Shakespeare's unusual placing of the swan on "her wat'ry nest," a site not of transcendence but of succession, of birth and maternal power, suggests his interest in the Callimachean etiology.

Certainly, the swan is an apt symbol for Lucrece's final "dirge," since the swan was thought to sing sadly before its death, as Spenser records in a fragment: "The silver swan doth sing before her dying day / As shee that feeles the deepe delight that is in death." The fragment is published by

E. K. in his gloss (242–43) on Spenser's resounding swan image in *October*, where the shepherd Cuddie claims that "Colin fittes such famous flight to scanne: / He, were he not with love so ill bedight, / Would mount as high, and sing as soote as Swanne" (88–90). Here Spenser uses the swan to predict his eventual transcendence of the Virgilian career model with a hymnic or non-courtly form of contemplative poetry (Cheney, *Flight*, 16, 29–31, 228–29). By recognizing this Spenserian genealogy, we can better discern in the swanlike Lucrece a striking figure of male poetic authorship. Because Shakespeare is publishing the representation in a poem, he is presenting Lucrece's final swanlike "dirge" as the product of the lyric print poet. Whereas Spenser's authorial swan flies into the beyond to acquire fame, his own Lucrecian swan stays earthbound, singing her song from her position on her nest. This is swansong with an attitude: out of her death, she will create life – in this world, not the next.

The lyric image of the swan jostles with Lucrece's turn to theatre to perform the final act of her last scene. When Collatine arrives, he "finds his Lucrece clad in mourning black" (1585), and immediately he recognizes the histrionics behind her unusual (Hamlet-like) costume: "'Unmask, dear dear, this moody heaviness, / And tell thy grief, that we may give redress" (1602–03). *Redress* is among the finest puns in the poem, and yet it is challenging to interpretation, since it forces the reader to temper this moment of obvious characterological "grief" with the author's hidden wit. The theatrical terminology also anticipates the sudden re-dressing of Lucius Junius Brutus. Lucrece's histrionics turn out to have a curious role in the afterlife – both spiritually, when "Her contrite sighs unto the clouds bequeathed / Her winged sprite, and through her wounds doth fly / Live's lasting date from cancell'd destiny" (1727–29) – and physiologically, when her blood divides into pure and impure streams of red and black: "And ever since, as pitying Lucrece' woes, / Corrupted blood some watery token shows" (1747–48).[55]

In the combined representation of her swan-dirge and performed suicide, Lucrece appears to be linking poetry and theatre in a new way, marshalling art back into constructive political action, for her act compels the "astonish'd" (1730) men to revenge her tragic death, spurred by Brutus, who alone "pluck'd the knife from Lucrece' side" (1807). When Brutus "throws that shallow habit by, / Wherein deep policy did him disguise" (1814–15), we witness a form of succession. Yet it is not simply political – the succession from monarchy to republic or, as the Argument concludes,

[55] Hadfield sees Lucrece's blood as "a symbol of freedom" (unpublished manuscript, 147).

"from kings to consuls." Nor is it even characterological, from "chevaliers" to "bounty hunters" or those who are straightforwardly "trusting," "idealistic," and "artless for survival in a post-Saturnian world" to individuals who are "mysterious pragmatists" and have in their heart a "motivational riddle" (Majors, "First Brutus," 345–51). Finally, the succession is artistic and professional, from the aesthetics of Spenser and Marlowe to that of Shakespeare himself.

It is certainly easiest to see Brutus as a figure for the Shakespearean actor/playwright, as the discourse describing Brutus is so clearly theatrical. Indeed, when Brutus throws aside his "habit" and "show," he recalls Marlowe's Tamburlaine changing from Scythian shepherd to mighty monarch. Yet Wendy Wall, *Imprint*, helps us see a more dynamic version of authorship, which allows us to include poetry: "Formerly regarded as a jester, Brutus makes his debut by taking advantage of the outrage generated by the tale of the violated woman. He thus becomes a figure for Shakespeare, whose emergence as an author rested, in part, on his creation of *Lucrece*" (273). Wall goes on to relate this representation to Shakespeare's "career trajectory" (273) from *Venus and Adonis* to the "graver labour" of *Lucrece*, the equivalent to "Gascoigne's transformation from amorous lover to didactic writer" (273). Something of this poesis in its relation to the theatre of Brutus emerges when the former fool addresses "Courageous Romans" in the marketplace of the city: "kneel with me and help to bear thy part, / To rouse our Roman gods with invocations" (1830–31). "Bear thy part" suggests theatrical enactment, but "rouse . . . with invocations" suggests the tradition of poetry. As such, Brutus proves himself Lucrece's legitimate heir, a theatrical hero with an interest in publication.

As the epigraph to this chapter intimates, the poem ends with this very conjunction of poetry and theatre:

> When they had sworn to this advised doom,
> They did conclude to bear dead Lucrece thence,
> To show her bleeding body thorough Rome,
> And so to publish Tarquin's foul offense;
> Which being done with speedy diligence,
>   The Romans plausibly did give consent
>   To Tarquin's everlasting banishment.
>
> *(Rape of Lucrece,* 1849–55)

According to Heather Dubrow, the double use of the word "publish" at the beginning and end of the poem "signals the movement from the private sphere of home to the public arena of the marketplace, from complaint

to epic" (*Domestic*, 59). With Philomela perched outside, Dubrow calls the private sphere a "pastoral home" (48). *The Rape of Lucrece* registers a cultural shift from poetry to theatre, print publication to staged show, the Virgilian career model of pastoral and epic to the Ovidian career model of amorous poetry and tragedy. If late-Tudor literature written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth comes to settle on an "aesthetics of the body" (Hulse, "Aesthetics," 30), Shakespeare can be seen to conclude his poem with a stirring icon. When the people "show" the dead body of the chaste matron in order to "publish" it throughout the nation, the author weds poetry and theatre to create a new hybrid form of republican aesthetics.[56] No word better represents this wedding than "publish," which in its early modern resonance catches the very transfer, from the meaning of "make public" to *put into print* (Burrow, ed. *Sonnets and Poems*, 338, 245).

To seal the aesthetics of publication, Shakespeare uses the two closing lines to represent a final form to the authorial conjunction. The word "plausibly" in the penultimate line means "with applause" (*Riverside*, 1836), suggesting that the Romans give their consent by applauding Tarquin's banishment. The printed poem ends with a version of the theatrical convention closing a play, in which the presenter figure steps forward to ask for the audience's applause, as Puck will do at the end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Prospero at the close of *The Tempest*.[57] By ending his poem with the Romans applauding the Tarquins' banishment, Shakespeare gestures to his own reading public, subtly lending consent to a republican frame of art within the queen's monarchical republic, which will also be "everlasting" – *without end*. Finally, Shakespeare's "graver labour" is about – and is brought about by – the Marlovian invasion of the Spenserian domestic domain. We see an etiology not so much about the formation of the Roman Republic as about the printing of the national poet-playwright. Capturing a decisive moment in English literary history, Shakespeare's counter-epic of empire tragically publishes the author's national show.

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[56] As we have seen, Vickers equates Lucrece with *Lucrèce*.

[57] Thanks to Dustin Stegner for this point (personal communication, 14 February 2003).

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