A STUDY OF THE TREATMENT OF TIME IN THE PLAYS OF
LYLY, MARLOWE, GREENE, AND PEELE

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

In the plays of William Shakespeare inconsistencies in the treatment of time are sometimes found. Some of these are the result either of the carelessness of Shakespeare or of the corrupt condition in which many of his plays have come down to us, but there are some plays in which these inconsistencies may have been intended by the playwright. The action in his play has to take place within a certain historical time, but for dramatic reasons this time must seem longer.

According to Professor Wilson, Shakespeare counts off days and hours, as it were, by two clocks, one of which records the true Historic Time, and the other the Dramatic Time, or a false show of time, whereby days, weeks, and months may be contracted to the utmost. It is as though the hour hand pointed to the historic time, while the minute hand, recording fresh sensations with every swing of the pendulum, tells dramatic time. While the former has traveled from one figure to another, the latter has traversed the whole twelve and is true to the hour when the hammer falls. We know that but one hour has passed, and yet, following the minute hand, we have lived through the whole twelve.1

The play in which double time is most evident is Othello.2 The first act takes place in Venice, where the marriage of Othello and Desdemona is announced and where Othello receives his appointment as governor of Cyprus. After an interval of about two weeks, the two arrive on the island at the beginning


2In the discussion of double time in Othello I am following the discussion in the Variorum Edition of the play.
of Act II. Less than thirty-six hours later on the second night of their stay on the island, Othello kills Desdemona. During these thirty-six hours Cassio loses his position, Iago plants suspicions of Desdemona in Othello's mind, and a messenger arrives from Venice to recall the new governor. All of these complex happenings could not possibly occur within thirty-six hours; and Shakespeare, either accidentally or with deliberate design, has provided for this impossibility by making the time after the arrival in Cyprus seem much longer than it actually is.

There is evidence in the first act that the action of the rest of the play will cover a fairly long period of time. When drawing Roderigo into his proposed plot against Othello, Iago says that Desdemona's love for Othello will surely not endure very long, and proving this statement to be either true or false should require the passage of several weeks at least. Later in the same scene Iago says that he will "after some time" fill Othello's ear with suspicions of his wife's chastity. This plan implies the passage of several weeks or months; yet it is immediately after the voyage to Cyprus, a journey of about two weeks, that Iago begins his fiendish machinations.

There is also evidence in the later acts that after the arrival in Cyprus much more time elapses than the thirty-six

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3 *Othello*, I. iii. 350-354. Throughout the footnotes of this thesis words underlined are titles of plays, capital Roman numerals refer to acts of the play, small Roman numerals to the scenes, and Arabic numerals to the page numbers. "l." and "ll." are abbreviations for "line" and "lines" in the plays.

hours indicated by the historic time. In the first place, it seems that Cassio is in disfavor with his general longer than a few hours. Desdemona says that Cassio languishes from Othello's displeasure. The word "languish" to most people indicates that one has endured sorrow for at least a few days. Later, after Othello has fallen into a trance upon learning that the handkerchief which he had given Desdemona has been found in Cassio's possession, Iago tells Cassio that this is Othello's second fit, that he had one yesterday. There is no reason to suppose that Iago is lying. If this statement is true, Cassio could not have been near Othello on the previous day, else he would have known about the fit; yet, according to the historic time, during the previous day Cassio had been with Othello all the time that Iago was with him. In addition, it seems unlikely that Othello would have suffered such a fit before Iago began planting suspicions in his mind; and he did not begin this evil work until very early the same morning that this act takes place.

In connection with the period of Cassio's disgrace, his relations with Bianca must be considered. She reproaches him for having been absent for seven days and nights. Since there is no record of his having known her before his arrival in Cyprus and since she is referred to by Iago as a housewife, it seems evident that Cassio met her on the island. Even if

5Ibid., III. iii. 43. 6Ibid., IV. i. 52-53.
7Ibid., III. iv. 170-172. 8Ibid., IV. i. 95-96.
he met her the very first night of his stay there, at least a week must have passed since his arrival. In answering Bianca's reproach Cassio says that he has been pressed with "leaden thoughts" during this time. Since these leaden thoughts must have come after his dismissal, this speech is another indication that a week should have passed since the first night at Cyprus; but, historically, the scene takes place the very next day after the arrival on the island.

There are still other incidents which indicate that more than thirty-six hours have elapsed during the action at Cyprus. In Act III Emilia says that her wayward husband has wooed her a hundred times to steal Desdemona's handkerchief. While it is doubtful that Iago has actually asked for the handkerchief a hundred times, this passage does indicate that his pleas have been many and therefore have extended over a fairly long period of time; yet Iago does not mention the handkerchief before his arrival in Cyprus. Probably he does not know of its existence before his wife becomes Desdemona's attendant just before the departure from Venice. In that case he has learned of its existence either on the voyage or after the arrival in Cyprus. Since affairs are always somewhat disarranged on board a ship, especially during a severe storm such as this party had weathered, Iago's discovery of the handkerchief would be much more likely after the party lands in Cyprus.

\[9\text{Ibid.}, \text{III. iv. 176-177.} \quad 10\text{Ibid.}, \text{III. iii. 290-292.}\]
To allow enough time for Iago's learning about the handkerchief and for his numerous pleas to his wife to steal it, several days should have elapsed since the arrival.

Near the end of the play there is still more evidence that the action on the island has covered some time. On the second day there Roderigo tells Iago that he has spent nearly all of his money for jewels and other favors, which he has given to Iago to present to Desdemona. In the first act we have been lead to believe that Roderigo is rich. When he is advised by Iago to make as much more money as he can, he says that he is going to sell all of his lands. To have spent all of this money would have required more than the one day and night that are indicated in the play. He cannot have spent very much money while he was still in Venice because he and Iago left for Cyprus early the next morning after their plot was formed. In addition, not all the jewels probably would have been delivered to Iago at the same time, but a few each time at various intervals. Roderigo's speech in Act IV lends support to the idea that the plot has been operating for a fairly long period of time. In this act he says:

Every day thou dallest me with some device, Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keepest from me all conveniency than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will indeed no longer endure it; nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace with what already I have foolishly suffered.

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11 Ibid., IV. ii. 186-190.  
12 Ibid., I. iii. 350-393.  
13 Ibid., IV. ii. 175-182.
This passage indicates that the gifts have been delivered during a period of at least several days; that Iago has kept deceiving Roderigo with excuses about Desdemona's failure to grant his suit; and that Roderigo, who is certainly of rather slow wit, has begun to suspect Iago's intentions.

Finally, the recall of Othello in Act IV in so short a time after his appointment does not seem very probable. In this act, which takes place during the second day on the island, a messenger arrives from Venice with an order recalling Othello and designating Cassio as governor in his place. To arrive at Cyprus one day after Othello does, the messenger must have sailed from Venice only one day after Othello did. Since the Senate of Venice, like any other deliberative body, was not given to making quick decisions, it is not likely that they would have sent a messenger to recall Othello only one day after they had appointed him.

All of the incidents mentioned above indicate that more time has elapsed on the island than the thirty-six historic hours recorded between the landing of the party and the murder of Desdemona. The evidences of double time in Othello have been discussed rather fully because they are so well-known and because they serve as perhaps the clearest example of this device found in the works of Shakespeare. Other of his plays also show evidences of double time, although to a somewhat less degree. Among these are both parts of Henry IV, Henry V, the second part of Henry VI, Richard III, A Merchant of Venice,
Taming of the Shrew, Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It, Hamlet, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, and Cymbeline.

Because Shakespeare borrowed so many ideas and devices from other writers, we wonder whether he also borrowed the trick of double time from some of his predecessors; therefore one of the purposes of this study is to discover whether or not this device was original with Shakespeare. In this study I have considered the works of John Lyly, Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, and George Peele because these four seem to have influenced Shakespeare more than did any of the other of his immediate predecessors. To discover what influence, if any, these men had upon Shakespeare's treatment of time is not, however, the only purpose of this study; for I am also interested in the characteristics of the works of these men for their own values, independent of any influence which they may have had on the works of Shakespeare. I shall point out the characteristics of each man's treatment of time and show that each man is, to some degree, careless in his treatment of this element. Since it is evident that there are inconsistencies in time in each writer's plays, I shall try to determine the reasons for these incongruities. I shall attempt to show in this study that the plays of these four men do contain inconsistencies in time, that some of these are caused by the deliberate use of double time and others by carelessness on the part of the playwright or the
publisher, and that Shakespeare was influenced in his treatment of time by Lyly, Marlowe, Greene, and Peele.
CHAPTER II

PLAYS THAT ARE CONSISTENT IN TIME

The Plays of Lyly

About the treatment of time in John Lyly's plays Bond says: "In the matter of time Lyly balances between classical precedent and romantic freedom, obviously aware of the rules and sometimes closely observing them, at others pretending to observe while he really violates, at others frankly disregarding them and claiming licenses which the later romanticists abandoned." In four plays he has observed completely the unity of time; and two others, Mother Bombie and Sapho and Phao, require only a few days for their action to unfold. All the rest of his plays require the passage of a considerable length of time. In only two, Midas and Mother Bombie, has Lyly been consistent in his treatment of time; and even these two present some problems about the handling of this element.

Midas is an allegorical play in which there are portrayed the ambitious designs of Philip of Spain, represented by King Midas of Phrygia, against the heroic island of Lesbos, which represents England. To conquer this stubborn island, Midas needs gold; so he asks for and receives the golden touch.

After this gift has become a curse, he asks to have it removed. His prayer is granted; he goes to bathe in the river, loses his cursed touch, goes hunting in the woods, meets Pan and Apollo, chooses the one whom he considers the best musician, and receives ass's ears as a punishment for his unjust choice—all of these acts taking place in one day. If we attach no allegorical significance to these incidents, but accept them as the simple acts of the mythical King Midas who originally appeared in Ovid's story, all of these happenings can easily take place on the same day. If, however, we accept Halpin's belief that the incident of the choice between Pan and Apollo is an allegorical reference to Philip's choice between the Roman Catholic faith and that of the Protestants, one day would be insufficient time for Philip to make this all-important decision. As Bond points out, however, this allegorical significance of the choice is unlikely because Philip did not hide his choice from his people; but Midas does try to conceal his choice. Since Bond's interpretation of the passage seems more reasonable than Halpin's, we may assume that the incident of the choice between the gods is not allegorical and therefore is not inconsistent in time.

In Act III of this play there is a reference to the Armada, which Spain had sent against England. In this act Midas says: "Have I not made the sea to groan under the number of my ships;
and haue they not perished, that there was not two left to make a number?" In the first act, however, Midas had said: ". . . these petty islands neer to Phrygia shal totter. . . ." These "petty islands" are, of course, the British Isles. At first it seems that these two speeches indicate that in the first act Midas is just on the point of sending the Armada against England and that by the third act the Armada has been destroyed; but, since only two or three days have elapsed between the two acts, it would be utterly impossible for the expedition to have been sent out and destroyed within this time. There is, however, no definite proof that the speech in Act I refers to the Armada. In this passionate threat Midas does not say that he is going to send the Armada; he merely says that these islands shall fall. Philip of Spain was no doubt furious when he learned of the loss of his great navy and certainly must have sworn to avenge himself upon the upstart young nation which had surprised the world by defying him, the richest and most powerful ruler in the world. There is no historical evidence which indicates that Philip gave up his plan of invading and conquering England after the disastrous failure of the Armada or that the rivalry and mutual threatenings between the two countries ceased then. On the contrary, the surprising English victory, which was as much a result of luck and the aid of the elements as it was of the superiority of the British seamen, did not immediately make England the strongest nation in

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4John Lyly, *Midas*, III. i. 31-32. 5Ibid., I. i. 111.
the world. The defeat was the first concrete evidence that Spain was beginning to decline as all great empires have eventually done; but Spain was still far from being displaced from her position as the most powerful nation of the world. Instead, the rivalry between the two nations, one of which was rising and the other declining, continued for many years longer. Midas' speech in the first act, then, may simply reflect his determination that Spain shall rise above the temporary defeat inflicted on the Armada and shall emerge victorious at the end of the struggle. Since Midas had received the touch of gold just before this scene, his optimism would be quite natural. If this interpretation of the speech is accepted, one may assume that the Armada has already been defeated before the play opens and that the speech in Act III is simply a reference made in a moment of pessimism caused by the fact that Philip is almost starving to death because of the curse of the touch of gold. If we accept the explanation that the Armada has been sent against England and destroyed before the play begins, there is no inconsistency in the reference to it.

In Act IV, Scene iv there is another reference to the enmity between Spain and England. The people of the court are worrying about Midas' melancholy mood and his lack of interest in the affairs of state, which are very pressing because the enemies of Phrygia are at the very door of the country. ⁶ At

⁶Ibid., IV. iv. 12-14.
first the speech seems to indicate that the enemies of Spain have taken advantage of the King's temporary preoccupation to gather an army, which is now stationed near the borders of Spain. Such events could not have happened, however, during the nine or ten days that have passed since Midas acquired the ass's ears, which are the cause of his melancholia. These events should, however, be viewed in a different light. In the first place, Spain's enemies were probably not threatening her borders with armed forces; at least, there is no historical justification for such an interpretation. The "doors" of Spain at this time extended to the New World, where her extensive colonial empire was constantly being threatened by both England and France; so it is probably the colonies which are being so closely beset at this time by enemies. In the second place, the state of having enemies at her doors was chronic in Spain at this time because of her mighty struggle with England, which I have already mentioned; therefore the enemies may well have been threatening Spain before Midas' attack of melancholia. What is most worrying Midas' councilors is not the threats of the enemy from the very threshold of the country but the fact that Midas remains gloomy and secluded without showing any interest in opposing these enemies. We see, then, that since the enemies of Spain were menacing her nearly all of the time, this particular threat has probably existed for some time and not necessarily just after the King's temporary retirement from court affairs; therefore the time which is required for these
events to come to pass need not be any longer than that which is indicated by the other events of the play. As Spain's troubles with England can be made consistent, Midas shows no inconsistencies in time.

One of Lyly's plays which requires only a short time for its action is Mother Bombie. Only three days pass during the play. There is but one event in the play in which the time element is somewhat confusing. This is the occasion on which each of the four fathers--Memphio, Stellio, Prisius, and Sperantus--goes to the inn to seek his servant. In Act II, Scene ii each of the men appears alone in the street in front of the inn, fumes about the tardiness of his servant, and finally enters the inn alone. Immediately afterward, in Scene iii, there is a brief meeting on the same street between Candius and Silena. The next scene, in which the four pages are just on the point of leaving the tavern, probably takes place soon after the encounter between the young people. In Scene v the masters are together in the tavern, talking of the pages, who have just left. At first we wonder why the masters, each of whom entered the tavern in Scene ii to find his servant and send him forth once more upon his task, have not yet apprehended them in Scene iv. There has been enough time for them to accomplish this purpose, for at least five or ten minutes have passed since the masters entered. We may find the answer to this problem by examining more closely the conversation in Scenes iv and v. In Scene iv Risio tells the others: "If you be examined
how we met, sweare by chance; for so they met, and therefore will beleev it: if how much we drunke, let them answere them selues; they know best because they paid it.7 This speech shows why the masters have not immediately approached their servants; the gentlemen have met accidentally, probably at the bar, and are drinking together and talking. They are old friends, but they have not drunk together for thirty years;8 therefore they would probably spend several minutes together after this accidental encounter, for, as Memphio says, God knows when all four of them will meet again.9 Just where the pages are during this reunion is doubtful. They are apparently in a corner of the same barroom. If they had been in another room, they need not have allowed themselves to have been seen by their masters because these mischievous boys could have left their room by the window if necessary rather than pass through the barroom and risk the discovery of their plot.

Risio's speech indicates that they have already been seen by the masters but probably not approached by them. In Scene v the boys have just left because each master speaks of the clever way that his boy has turned aside his scolding for drinking too much. In brief, these four scenes are not so close in time as they at first seem to be; there is adequate time for all the many incidents which take place within them.

7Lyly, Mother Bombie, II. iv. 14-17.
8Ibid., II. v. 1-2. 9Ibid., II. v. 55-56.
In only two of his six plays has Lyly been consistent in his treatment of time, and both Midas and Mother Bombie present certain problems about the matter of time. Because there is, in each play, a reasonable solution of the difficulties, we must conclude that in these two plays Lyly is as consistent in his treatment of time as any average playwright is. It is the very nature of drama to condense events and to cause them to seem to occur in a shorter period of time than that in which they would actually occur in real life. If two scenes are presented on the stage only thirty minutes apart in time even though one is told that a year is supposed to elapse between the two, there is created an illusion that the time is much shorter because of the proximity of the times that the two are seen on the stage. If we consider this natural tendency of the drama to condense time, we conclude that Midas and Mother Bombie are as consistent in time as we may reasonably expect any dramas to be.

The Plays of Marlowe

Marlowe is frankly careless in his handling of time; but one of his plays, the first part of Tamburlaine the Great, might perhaps be classified as consistent in its treatment of time. At least two years pass during the action of this play, and all its events might reasonably be expected to occur within this time. The chief problem of this play is the short length of time allowed for the fighting of battles. In it great battles
are won in only a few minutes. For example, when Tamburlaine is about to fight Bajazeth, the Turkish Emperor, the two meet on the stage, each boasting to the other about the ease with which he is going to win the coming battle; then each withdraws, leaving his wife on the stage and bidding her wait there until he returns victorious. The ladies delicately insult each other during forty-six lines of dialogue; then Bajazeth flies back upon the stage, pursued by Tamburlaine, and is overcome by him. In line 214 Tamburlaine's generals re-enter with news that all the contributory kings, who have aided the Turk, have been slain and that the battle is won. Between line 166, when each of the leaders leaves the stage, and line 187, when the trumpets sound the call to battle, twenty-one lines of dialogue, the battle lines are formed; and between lines 187 and 214, twenty-five lines, the battle is won. Allowing for all possible pauses in the delivery of the dialogue, not more than ten or twelve minutes could possibly have passed during the battle. Actually, the winning of a battle should require much more time than these few minutes, but almost none of Tamburlaine's victories do require as much as an hour. Perhaps this can be partly accounted for by the fact that fighting was then done hand-to-hand with swords and spears and that when the king of a country was captured his men usually lost heart and stopped fighting soon afterward. Since Tamburlaine was a very superior fighter, he may have fought his

10Christopher Marlowe, Tamburlaine the Great, Part I, III. iii. 61-214.
way quickly to the Turkish Emperor, singled him out from the fight, and overcome him. While Tamburlaine is doing this, his generals, also very excellent warriors, have each probably singled out a contributory king and overcome him. The Turkish army, seeing itself deprived of all its leaders and beset by Tamburlaine's common soldiers, who are also good fighters, soon retires from the field, yielding the battle to Tamburlaine. No matter what explanation one gives, however, this quick victory still remains very improbable, although it is not, perhaps, impossible.

Another difficulty in this play is found in the account of Tamburlaine's Egyptian campaign. In Act IV, Scene i the conqueror is in Africa besieging the city of Damascus. In this scene the Soldan of Egypt says to one of his soldiers:

See, Capolin, the fair Arabian king,  
That hath been disappointed by this slave  
Of my fair daughter, and his princely love,  
May have fresh warning to go war with us,  
And be revenged for her disparagement.11

In Scene iii, which takes place on the same day, the Soldan is talking to the King of Arabia. Unless that king is in Egypt in Scene i, his presence there this soon would, of course, be impossible; but there is a reasonable argument for believing that he is in Egypt in that scene. Zenocrate had originally been betrothed to this king and had been on her way to his court when she was captured by Tamburlaine. A great many months,

11Ibid., IV. i. 68-72.
perhaps a year or two, have passed since this time; and this would be enough time for the King of Arabia to begin to wonder why Zenocrate does not arrive, to learn of her capture, and to come to Egypt to consult with her father about the means of recovering her. To accomplish all of this and to prepare his army to help the Soldan resist Tamburlaine's projected invasion would require the passage of all the time indicated by the other events. There is, then, no inconsistency in introducing the King of Arabia in this scene as an ally of the Soldan if we accept the explanation that he is already in Egypt for the reasons that have been mentioned.

All of Marlowe's plays cover a considerable length of time; even so, it is often difficult to crowd all the events of his plays into the time assigned to them. I have already pointed out the difficulty of conceiving of the possibility of Tamburlaine's winning a great battle within ten or twelve minutes in a single scene. In Marlowe's plays, then, many of the inconsistencies in time are found within a single scene rather than in the lapse of time between scenes. In the plays of none of the other playwrights do we find the minutes within a scene expanded to seem so much longer than they can possibly be. Marlowe's plays show less consistency than those of Lyly, since only one of Marlowe's seven plays is consistent, while two of Lyly's eight are included in this list. Marlowe seems never to have concerned himself very much with trying to be consistent in his treatment of time; he is interested in the characters; so the time must take care of itself.
The Plays of Greene

Like Marlowe, Robert Greene is not very much interested in achieving consistency in his plays. Only two of his dramas, *James IV* and *A Looking Glass for London and England*, can possibly be considered consistent; and in both of these are complex problems in time which must be considered.

The action of *James IV* requires the passage of several months during the play. In the first scene King James of Scotland is married to Dorothea, the daughter of the King of England. James is secretly in love with Ida, daughter of the Countess of Arran, and determines to try to win her love. After a few weeks of unsuccessful wooing, he is persuaded by Ateukin, his go-between in the matter, to have Dorothea murdered so that he can then offer marriage as a bait to tempt Ida. James sends an assassin to kill the queen, who has learned of the plot and has fled to the forest; the villain severely wounds her and returns to the castle, believing that she is dead. On hearing of the supposed death of his daughter, the King of England determines to avenge her murder and begins to gather an army, a matter which would require at least three to six months. During all these months of preparation, Dorothea is lying in the home of a country squire, slowly recovering from her almost mortal wounds; and back in the court James is continuing his suit of the virtuous Ida. The time required for Dorothea's recovery would about coincide with the five or six months necessary for the gathering of the English army and its
invasion of Scotland; but it may seem unlikely that James would have continued to sue patiently for Ida's hand for so many months. It seems more likely that he would either have forced the girl to marry him or, fearing to do this, have become disgusted with Ateukin and have dismissed him. That James does wait so long without discouragement or undue impatience may be accounted for by the fact that he cannot spend very much time courting Ida. He undoubtedly knows that the King of England is raising an army to invade his kingdom, and for his own protection he has to raise an army of his own to meet the threat. Most of his time will, then, be occupied by military affairs; and he may reasonably have decided to make his kingdom secure before he urges his suit very much further. In addition, he shows signs of some uneasiness and remorse about the death of Dorothea; and these pangs of conscience may have somewhat cooled his ardor in pursuing another woman. These two factors may well have caused James to delay his courtship for several months. We see, then, that this period of James's courtship of Ida is not inconsistent with the time required for the recovery of Dorothea and the invasion by the English army.

All the problems in time found in A Looking Glass for London and England center around the actions of Jonas. This play tells the story of the Lord's threatened destruction of Nineveh because of the wickedness of its people. Jonas, an Israelite, is ordered by the Lord to go to Nineveh and warn

12 Robert Greene, James IV, 11, 1746-1751.
the people that the city will be destroyed unless they repent.
Instead of going to Nineveh, Jonas takes a ship bound for Joppa.
A storm comes, and he is cast overboard and swallowed by a whale.
Strangely enough, he is cast up by the leviathan on a bank within sight of Nineveh. Since this city is a great distance from
the sea coast, one wonders how the whale got near it. As Jonas
is so near the city, we may assume that he enters its gates the
same day that he is cast up on its shores. His first appearance is to Thrasibulus and Alcon, both of whom were ruined by
a usurer in II, ii. Since the time of their ruin several days
have passed because the two have been forced to begin a life of
thievery in order to exist. Jonas warns them to repent because
Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days. That night Jonas goes
to the banquet which Rasni is giving in honor of Aluida and
warns again that Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days. Asked
by Rasni who this intruder is, the clown replies:

Oh, sir tis one goodman Ionas that is come from
Iericho; and surely I thinke he hath seene some spirit
by the way, and is fallen out of his wits, for he neuer
leaves off crying day nor night. My maister heard him
and he shut up his shop, gave me my Indenture, and he and
his wife do nothing but fast and pray.13

At first this speech seems to indicate that Jonas has been
in Nineveh several days because he cries his warnings both day
and night; but, on the other hand, if Jonas has been there more
than a day or two, the king, Rasni, would have heard of him; but
Rasni's speech shows that he has not previously heard of this

13Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge, A Looking Glass for
strange prophet; therefore Jonas cannot have been in the city very long. He has been there, however, during at least most of one day and probably half the night, as this banquet scene seems to take place very late at night. The clown has probably heard Jonas ranting in the streets during the day and again after nightfall and therefore says that this man never leaves off crying his warnings day or night. The clown also tells of the effect of the prophecy on his master by saying that the smith and his wife do nothing but pray. If the prophet has spoken to them much earlier in the day and if their repentance has immediately begun, enough time would have elapsed to justify the clown's saying that they do nothing but fast and pray. To have accomplished all of the things that Jonas had accomplished in one day and part of one night, he must have appeared many times both before and after he appeared to Thrasibulus and Alcon, but it is quite possible that he did this, since we know that he appeared to the smith and his wife, even though the scene in which he made his appearance is not given. It is quite possible, then, that the clown's speech does not require Jonas to have been in the city for more than one day. On the other hand, there is no conclusive evidence that the day that he is cast up near the city of Nineveh is the same day that we have the first record of his appearance there in Act II, Scene ii. He may have been in the city a day or two before he appears to the first two people; but, as I have already pointed out, Rasni's ignorance of the prophet's presence
in the city before his appearance at the banquet seems to indicate that he has not been in the city before this day. Either conception would, however, make the time element in the play consistent.

Most of Greene's plays, like those of Marlowe, require the passage of a considerable length of time during their action. There is no attempt to achieve unity of time in them and little effort to make the element of time consistent. Only in James IV and A Looking Glass do we find any fairly consistent treatment of time, and even in these two there are some evidences that indicate quite strongly that they contain inconsistencies. A closer examination of these seeming inconsistencies, however, seems to indicate that they are illusory and not actual. In Greene's plays, as well as in the plays of the other men in this study, the corruptness of the text that has come down to us must be considered. Perhaps the time element in these plays was less confusing in the original text, but unfortunately we cannot find these originals; so we must consider the plays in their present form.

The Works of Peele

Two of George Peele's plays, The Arraignment of Paris and The Battle of Alcazar, appear to be consistent in time. The Arraignment of Paris shows perfect unity of time; it requires but little more time for its action than is necessary to present it on the stage. It tells the story of Paris' being called
upon to judge which of three goddesses—Venus, Juno, or Pallas—is the most beautiful. The story begins when these three goddesses come to visit Diana at her bower in the woods of Ida. The action progresses almost continuously from the first scene to the last. There occur Paris' awarding of the golden apple to Venus, the indignation of the other two goddesses, the council of the gods, and their final decision—all within a short time of each other. The only incident which seems somewhat improbable is the death of Colin, the shepherd who suffers because his lady love disdains him. In Act III, Scene i he is able to walk about in the forest, mourning his unrequited love, denouncing the injustice of love, and vowing to die at the feet of Venus in protest of her injustices. In the next scene he is dead. Not more than a few minutes, or an hour at most, have passed between the two scenes; so it seems somewhat strange that a man who is strong enough to walk about in one scene should die an apparently natural death within an hour. To explain this phenomenon we must consider the mediaeval conception of love and the way in which people were affected by it. According to this idea, the beauty of a fair young lady entered the eyes of a young man and, like an arrow from Cupid's bow, inflicted in his heart a wound which only the love of the young lady could cure. This wound was real as well as symbolical because lovers really suffered physically in those days; love was a malady.

The Elizabethans accepted, at least in their literature, this mediaeval idea of the actual physical effect of love upon a person; therefore Colin's death in such a short time was not entirely unreasonable to them. If we accept his sudden death as a literary convention of the time, there is no inconsistency in the incident or in the play.

The other play, The Battle of Alcazar, covers several months at the least, instead of a few hours like The Arraignment of Paris. The first part of the former, the account of the overthrow of the tyrannical Moor, requires several weeks for its action. This turbulent period is followed by a few months of peace under the reign of Abdelmelec, the rightful heir to the throne. During this period of peace the Moor is sending his request for aid to King Sebastian of Portugal, and this ruler is preparing his army to invade Abdelmelec's kingdom of Fez. There are many exact dates given in this play. The Moor's request for aid reaches Sebastian in the late winter or early spring. It must have been early in the year because he would have to have several months to make preparations for the proposed campaign, and he tells the Moor's ambassador that he will be in Africa by August.15 Sebastian leaves Lisbon on June 26 with his army and arrives in Cadiz on July 8.16 In that city he waits fifteen days for the Spanish to join him as they have

15 George Peele, The Battle of Alcazar, II. iii. 46.
16 Ibid., III. iii. 27-34.
promised him they will do. Unknown to Sebastian, however, the Spanish king has secretly made a treaty with Abdelmelec in which Philip of Spain receives seven "holds" in Africa in return for his promise not to aid the Moor or Sebastian; so the Portuguese king waits in vain for his ally. After fifteen days, on July 23, he sails from Cadiz for Tangier, where he is to meet the Moor.17 About five or six days later the two join forces and begin their march toward Alcazar. On Monday, August 4,18 the forces of the Moor and Sebastian are met by those of Abdelmelec and are disastrously defeated by them. The dates of this campaign are definitely stated, while in all the other plays exact calendar dates are not given.

One problem in this play is the length of time that the Irish deputation is in Lisbon before Sebastian conscripts them for service in his army. In Act II, Scene ii the deputation, which has been sent by the Pope to re-take Ireland for the Catholic Church, is forced to put into harbor at Lisbon because of a fierce storm.19 In Scene iv, when the messenger mentioned by the Moor in Scene iii of this act arrives in Lisbon, the deputation is still there and is pressed into Sebastian's service. Since the group is there only because of the foul weather, this scene must have been only two or three days after Scenes ii and iii; else the deputation would have been gone

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17Ibid., III. iii. 35-46.  
19Ibid., II. ii. 18-19.
before the arrival of the African messenger. It seems likely that the messenger is already quite near Lisbon when he is mentioned by the Moor in Scene iii; if he had left Africa only that day, he could not have reached Lisbon before the Irish group left. The assumption that the messenger had left several days before his departure is mentioned by the Moor is reasonable; therefore the time element in this play is not inconsistent.

Consistency in time is shown in a greater proportion of Peele's plays than in the plays of any of the other three writers. In addition, there are no plays by any of the other authors that are so easily declared consistent as are his. In most of the plays by the other playwrights there are many seeming inconsistencies that must be explained away, but we find none of these in the plays of Peele; his works are either frankly inconsistent or definitely consistent. In addition, his The Arraignment of Paris and four of Lyly's plays are the only plays that I studied that observe the unity of time, and Peele's play has the additional virtue of being consistent as well, while Lyly's plays are not. In general, therefore, Peele's plays show more consistency than those of the other playwrights.

We find, then, that few of the plays by these authors are consistent in time. Only seven out of a total of twenty-six plays are included in this classification. Some of these seven present problems which seem, at first, to indicate that there are inconsistencies in time within the plays. The classification of a play as consistent or inconsistent is a matter of the interpretation of the meaning of certain speeches and events
within the play that relate to time. A different interpretation of just one event in a play might change its classification from consistent to inconsistent. There are, then, few plays included in this study which are consistent in time.
CHAPTER III

PLAYS WHICH CONTAIN INCONSISTENCIES

The Plays of Lyly

Three of Lyly's plays, The Woman in the Moon, Campaspe, and Sapho and Phao contain but few inconsistencies. In The Woman in the Moon Lyly has definitely observed unity of time, but in so doing he has allowed certain inconsistencies to creep into the play. The drama tells the story of Nature's creation of a woman, Pandora, at the request of some Utopian shepherds. When the seven planets discover the newly created woman, they become jealous of this "earthy starre";¹ and each determines to avenge itself on Nature by exercising an evil influence over Pandora during its hour of domination. According to a mediaeval belief, each hour of the day was dominated by a different one of the seven planets. These rose to ascendancy in the following order: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Luna.² Since Lyly allows the planets to dominate Pandora in this order, it seems apparent that he is following this mediaeval conception; yet the time during which each one is in control in the play seems less than an hour. In addition, the scenes in which Venus and Mercury control the girl are much

¹Lyly, The Woman in the Moon, I. i. 134.
²Walter Curry, Chaucer and the Mediaeval Sciences, p. 124.
longer than the average length of time that the others exercise domination. The Scene during which Venus dominates contains 332 lines, and the scene in which Mercury controls contains 304 lines, while Mars controls during only seventy-eight lines. Each planet should dominate during the same length of time—one hour. The unequal periods of domination by the planets is a discrepancy, but it is not very noticeable in the play.

More apparent are the inconsistencies caused by the numerous events which are crowded into some of the scenes. For example, in Act II, Scene i, when Jupiter is in domination and is causing Pandora to be ambitious, the bewildered girl says:

By day I think of nothing but of rule,
By night my dreams are all of empery.8

Since only about one hour is supposed to have passed since her creation, she cannot yet have lived through a night. The words clearly indicate the passage of a long period of time, much longer than the two or three minutes that Jupiter has been in domination. No time has elapsed between the time of Saturn's domination and that of Jupiter because the latter is ascending to the place of control as Saturn is descending. In addition, Pandora is not swayed by ambition until she comes under Jupiter's influence because in the first of Act II he says:

Now shall Jupiter rule Pandora's thoughts,
And fill her with Ambition and Disdain.4

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3Lyly, The Woman in the Moon, II. 1. 8-9.
4Ibid., II. 1. 2-5.
Only four lines later Pandora speaks of being dominated by ambition both day and night. It is very obvious that not enough time has elapsed to justify this statement.

Another inconsistency arises in connection with the period of Venus' control. This planet announces that

I'll haue her wittie, quick, and amorous,
Delight in reuels and in banqueting,
Wanton discourses, musick and merrie songes.\(^5\)

As a result, Pandora is untrue to Stesias and gives freely of her favors to all the other shepherds and to Gunophilus. Venus dominates only one hour, and at the beginning of Act IV Mercury is ascending to the position of power as Venus is descending;\(^6\) so no time at all elapses between the times of their control. At the beginning of Act IV the three shepherds have already witnessed the disdain of love which Mercury has sworn shall dominate Pandora during his period of control. Since Pandora was going out to meet Learchus in the forest,\(^7\) it seems strange that only twenty-eight lines later we find him with the other two shepherds bemoaning with them the change which has begun only eight lines before, when Mercury has come into domination. It would seem that it would take longer than the two or three minutes needed for this speech of Mercury for Pandora to convince the shepherds that she has really changed her mind and for all three, who had been separated in the last scene, to meet again.

\(^5\)Ibid., III. ii. 2-4. \(^6\)Ibid., IV. i. 1-3. \(^7\)Ibid., III. ii. 316.
The chief inconsistency is, however, found in the shepherd's speeches about what has happened in the previous scene during Venus' domination, which has lasted, as I have already said, only one hour. Learchus says:

How many thousand kisses gaue she me.  
And euery kisse mixt with an amorous glaunce.\(^8\)

Of course, Learchus probably does not mean that Pandora has actually kissed him several thousand times; but she must have kissed him a great number of times to justify this statement. This great number of kisses, combined with the "amorous looks," would alone take up most of the hour, leaving no time for her affairs with the other two shepherds and Gunophilus. In addition, Melos says:

How oft haue I leand on her siluer breast,  
She singing on her Lute, and Melos being the note.\(^9\)

Such an affair between Pandora and Melos would also require more than the hour granted for Venus' control. These past favors which the shepherds say that Pandora has granted them, then, require more than an hour; they should properly require several days at least, yet we know that they do not because Venus is followed immediately by Mercury, who counteracts her influence. Pandora's speech in Act II and the shepherds' speeches in Act IV are, therefore, indications that the action of this play should require more time than the seven hours and few minutes that the play actually covers.

\(^8\)Ibid., IV. i. 21-22.  \(^9\)Ibid., IV. i. 23-24.
Another play which contains one slight inconsistency is *Camdaspe*. All of its events require the passage of a considerable length of time. The development of Alexander's passion for Campaspe, his ordering Apelles to paint her picture, and the completion of the portrait would all cover a long period of time; and a sufficient amount of time is allowed for all of these events. The one inconsistency in the play is the incident of Diogenes' proposal to fly. In Act II, Scene ii Alexander sends his page to bring Apelles to the court. When the painter appears before Alexander in the last part of the scene, the latter asks him if his portrait of Venus is yet finished. On being answered in the negative, Alexander says: "Well, let it rest unperfect, & come you with me, where I will shewe you that finished by nature, that you haue been trifling about by art." Alexander then commissions the young man to paint a portrait of Campaspe; and in the next scene, which probably takes place later the same day, the girl has come for the first sitting. It is her first visit to Apelles' studio because he shows her his pictures, a thing which he would naturally do on the first day. The incident at the studio is covered by Scenes i and iii, which are divided by Scene ii. This scene is also on the same day because it is just after Apelles and Campaspe have withdrawn into the studio, leaving Psyllus, the page, alone in an outer room. He is soon joined

10Lyly, *Camdaspe*, II. ii. 114-116. 11Ibid., II. ii. 159-160.
12Ibid., III. iii. 10-30. 13Ibid., III. ii. 1-5.
by Manes, the servant of Diogenes, the philosopher. These two then announce to the world in general that on the next day between the hours of nine and ten in the market place Diogenes, the cynic, will fly. In Act IV, Scene i Solinus says: "This is the place, the day, the time that Diogenes hath appointed to fly." This scene should, therefore, take place the next day after the scene in which the announcement of the flight is made; but the actions between these two acts requires the passage of several weeks. In this time the portrait of Campaspe has been completed, and Apelles has fallen in love with the beautiful subject and has determined to blemish the portrait a little in order that he may have her near him a short time longer while he is repairing the damage. All of these events would require the passage of several days at least and more probably several weeks; yet Act IV, Scene i, which follows all of these happenings, is supposed to take place only one day after the day on which the work on the portrait began. This is clearly an inconsistency.

Sapho and Phao has a few more inconsistencies within it than does Campaspe; in fact, in the former there are some indications of the existence of double time. There is a definite attempt to secure close continuity, even unity, in time in the play. The action seems to begin about the middle of one

14Ibid., III. ii. 54-57. 15Ibid., IV. i. 1-2.
16Ibid., III. iv. 114-115. 17Ibid., III. v. 57-61.
afternoon and to continue through that night to early the next morning, thus covering less than twenty-four hours. These scenes are all definitely closely connected in time. The scenes of the first act all take place on the afternoon that Phao receives the gift of unusual beauty from Venus. At the beginning of Act II, when Phao goes to Sybilla's cave for advice, it is either night or very near nightfall because the wise old woman says: "Faire youth, if you will be advised by mee, you shal for this time seeke none other Inne, then my caue; for that it is no lesse perillous to trauaile by night, then vncomfortable." 

A few lines further she adds: "Come neere, take a stoole, and sit downe. Now, for that these winter nights are long, and that children delight in nothing more than to heare old wiues tales, we will beguile the time with some storie." 

In the next scene Phao is just leaving the cave in despair when he meets Sapho and her ladies and is requested to row them across the stream on his ferry and later is asked by Sapho to come to the court. The next scene, the first meeting between the two pages, Molus and Criticus, and Calypho, the servant of Vulcan, Venus' husband, also takes place on the same night because Calypho has been sent to find Venus, who has not yet come home. The time of Act III is also the same night because the second scene of this act is directly connected with this meeting between Calypho and the pages. In the first

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18 Ibid., II. i. 16-18.  
19 Ibid., II. i. 21-24.  
20 Ibid., II. iii. 34-40.
meeting the two pages have accused Calypho of being a devil because he works for a master who has horns (Vulcan). In Act III, Scene ii, when the second meeting takes place, we find that Calypho has returned from a trip to the forge, where he has gone to ask Vulcan about his horns. It is still the same night because Molus asks Calypho whether Venus has come home yet, and he replies that she has not. His inquiry about his master's horns, then, has been only a brief interruption in his search for Venus. Act IV is also the same night because Sapho is still unable to sleep in the first scene when Venus, who has not yet gone to Vulcan, promises her relief from her troubles. The third scene of this act seems to be well toward morning, as Sapho and all her ladies have slept some and are telling their dreams. It must still be very early in the morning, however, as Sapho says to her ladies: "Cease your talking: for I would faine sleepe, to see if I can dream... Draw the curteine." Act V comes soon after the fourth act because in the first scene of the fifth act Venus is giving to Cupid the arrows which Vulcan has made for her in the last scene of the fourth act. Probably it is early morning by this time. Since all the action takes place within twenty-four hours, the play may be said to observe the unity of time.

There are some incidents, however, which indicate that the action should take place during a much longer period of

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21 Ibid., III. ii. 36-48.  
22 Ibid., III. ii. 53-54.  
23 Ibid., IV. i. 48.  
24 Ibid., IV. iii. 93-95.
The suddenness of the development of Sapho's passion for Phao and the rapidity of its waning seem somewhat inconsistent with the few hours that are allowed for them in the play. In addition, it seems unlikely that Phao would have gone to see Sybilla again in Scene iv of Act II because he has already been to see her in the first scene of this act, which takes place on the same night. More likely he would have waited a day or two before consulting her again. A third inconsistency is the reference to Phao's disdain of the Sicilian ladies. In Scene iv of the first act the ladies of Sapho's court are talking of the strange beauty of Phao, and one of them says: "Proud elfe! how squeamish he is become alreadie, vsing both disdainful lookes, & imperious words: insomuch that he galleth with ingratitute." Later the same night, Phao himself asks: "Doth Sapho bewitch thee, whom all the Ladies of Sicily could not wooe?" To have spurned the attentions of all the ladies in Sicily, or even just those of the court, and to have this disdain the topic of conversation between the ladies, should have required the passage of a day or two at least, not just an hour or two. There are, then, definite inconsistencies in this play.

Of all the plays that I studied, Endimion is the clearest example of double time. As Bond points out, "Where it is necessary to indicate intervals for a special effect, Lyly does so; otherwise the play proceeds on the general assumption

that the events are compressed into a few days." The chief
indication of the discrepancy between these two times is the
fact that, while Endimion ages during his forty years of sleep,
all of the other characters remain young. Cynthia is, of course,
immortal and would not be affected by the passage of years; but
the others are human and should have aged as Endimion, another
mortal, has; yet they have not aged at the end of the play.
The pages, Dares and Samias, are still young and mischievous.
Semele, still loved by Eumenides, remains fair. In addition, Tellus still possesses "matchless beauty." Eumenides, too,
seems to be a young man; at least there is no mention of his
having aged any. Sir Tophas is also still young because in
Act V, Scene ii he is just growing a beard, which, at present,
consists of "three or foure little hairs"; and he is observing
how troubled he will be "when this younge springe shall growe
to a great wood!" Actually, then, not very much time has
passed since the first of the play, in spite of the fact that
Endimion is supposed to have slept forty years.

Another inconsistency is found in the account of how long
Geron has been separated from his wife, Dipsas. When Eumenides
meets Geron by the fountain in the forest, the old man has
been there these "fiftie winters"; and Endimion has been

29 Lyly, Endimion, V. iii. 239.
30 Ibid., V. iii. 256-257.
31 Ibid., V. ii. 17-21.
32 Ibid., III. iii. 5.
asleep on the lunary bank "almost these twentie yeeres."\textsuperscript{33}

When the old man and Eumenides return to Cynthia's court, Endimion has been asleep forty years;\textsuperscript{34} so the journey back to the court has required twenty years. Geron has, then, been separated from Dipsas for seventy years. On the other hand, Cynthia accuses Dipsas of having practiced witchcraft for "almost these fiftie yeeres."\textsuperscript{35} Since the practicing of witchcraft was the cause of Geron's leaving her, the period of his absence should be only fifty years instead of seventy. There is, therefore, a definite discrepancy in the length of his absence.

Still another inconsistency is found in Eumenides' account of the length of time he has loved Semele. He is in love with her before Endimion's strange sleep begins; so when he is at the Lovers' Fountain with Geron, he has been in love with Semele for at least twenty years; yet here at the fountain he says: "Howe secrete hast thou beene these seauen yeeres, that hast not, nor once darest not, to name her, for discontenting her."\textsuperscript{36}

He has not seen Semele since he left the court; and, since he was in love with her when he left there, he must have loved her for at least twenty years or more, not for just seven years. This is another definite inconsistency in time. It

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Ibid.}, III. iii. 18-20.  \textsuperscript{34}\textit{Ibid.}, V. i. 50.

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, V. i. 21-22.

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}, III. iv. 53-55.
clearly bears out the idea that, in spite of the references to the passage of twenty or forty years, only a short time is really supposed to elapse during the play.

There is another indication of this idea in the fact that the fountain is really quite near the court. In Act IV Epiton says: "Tush, let mee alone! but I must needes see if I can find where Endimion lieth: and then goe to a certain fountaine hard by, where they say faithfull Louers shall haue althings they will aske." This fountain, most authorities agree, is the same one that Eumenides journeys twenty years to reach. Geron says of the fountain that "who soeuer can shedde the tears of a faythful Louer shall obtain anything he would." Since the fountain mentioned by Epiton is also one where true lovers may obtain a boon, it seems likely that the two are the same. Epiton says, however, that it is "hard by"; so it should not have required Eumenides twenty years to reach it and another twenty years to return from it with Geron to the court. This is as much a discrepancy in place as in time.

Finally, it seems that Tellus' enslavement of Corsites should have been consummated sooner than twenty years after her imprisonment in the castle on the desert. On the very day that the blunt captain is bringing her to her prison, Tellus begins

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37 Ibid., IV. ii. 66-68.
39 Lyly, Endimion, III. iv. 20-27.
to exercise her charms upon him;\textsuperscript{40} so it should not require twenty years for his passion to mount to the point where he is willing to do anything she asks. It seems likely that the passions which Tellus has begun to raise in Corsites' heart on the day of her entry in the prison, the day after Endimion fell asleep, would have culminated in his complete enslavement long before twenty years. We know that such a length of time has passed because this scene takes place after the encounter between Eumenides and Geron, when we are told that Endimion has been asleep twenty years. The development of Corsites' passion for Tellus, then, also adds to the argument that only a brief period of time should really pass during the play.

Another play which contains definite evidences of double time is \textit{Love's Metamorphosis}. A considerable length of time is necessary for hunger to cause Erisichthon to spend so much money on food that he has to sell his daughter to obtain more money. He tells the girl: "Thou seest in how short a space I have turned all my goods into my guts, where I feel a continuall fire, which nothing can quench..."\textsuperscript{41} Since a person cannot readily find a market for all of his goods at once, this scene would require that at least a week or two pass after the day on which Ceres has laid the curse of famine on Erisichthon. In addition, he mentions that the merchant to

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Ibid.}, III. ii.

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Lyly, Love's Metamorphosis}, III. ii. 3-5.
whom Protea, the daughter, is to be sold "keepeth not only day, but hower," which indicates that the father has had time, since being reduced to selling all his goods, to make an appointment in advance with the merchant. Furthermore, Petulius, Protea's lover, has also aided her father with his money.

All of these facts indicate that much time has passed since the curse was laid upon Erisichthon; yet on the same day of Protea's sale to the merchant the foresters go back to the tree where they had left the garlands for the nymphs in Act I, Scene i and find the scornful messages which the girls had written in the second scene of the first act. Since the words of the messages that the foresters read in Act III, Scene i are the same as those that the girls had written in the earlier scene, the messages are quite evidently the same. It is also apparent that they would wait more than a few hours to come back to the tree to see whether the girls have left any answer; therefore Scene i of Act III should be only a few hours later on the same day as Act I. Scene ii of Act III, the one in which Erisichthon sells Protea to the merchant, takes place on the same day as Scene i of that act because in the scene which immediately follows the sale, Scene i of Act IV, the foresters have arrived at the

42 Ibid., III. ii. 3-5.
43 Bond, op. cit., III, notes on Time, p. 238.
44 Lyly, Love's Metamorphosis, IV. ii. 37.
temple of Cupid to ask his aid in avenging themselves upon the disdainful nymphs. In III, i the three had agreed to appeal to this god; and at the last of the scene Montanus said: "Then let us prepare our selues for Cupid's sacrifice." Since people do not usually tarry when they are on their way to seek revenge, it seems likely that Act IV, Scene i comes only an hour or two after III, i. Since Scene ii of Act III comes between III, i and IV, i, it must take place on the same day as these two scenes. In addition, since III, i takes place on the same day as all of Act I, then Scene ii of Act III, when Erisichthon sells his daughter in order to obtain money to buy more food, takes place on the same day as I, ii, when he killed the nymph, thus incurring Ceres' anger and causing her to place the curse of famine upon him. In the same day that famine starts operating on him, Erisichthon sells all his goods to obtain food, borrows all the money that Petulius can lend him, makes an appointment with a merchant, and sells his daughter to him to obtain money for food. Obviously all these events could not have happened in a single day.

As a matter of fact, the entire play is supposed to take place during one day. We have already seen how the first four acts are so closely connected to each other that they should all take place on the same day. Act V is just as closely connected to Act IV because in the last scene of that act Protea proposes to tell Petulius "the summe of all my fortunes, which

46Ibid., III. i. 177.
happily will breed in thee both loue and wonder";\(^47\) in Act V, Scene ii she has just finished her story, and Petulius remarks that it is "a straunge discourse."\(^48\) Less than an hour, then, has probably passed since she began her story. All of the other scenes of this act are just as closely connected; therefore the entire play should take place on one day, although it is obviously impossible for all these events to happen in so brief a time. In this play Lyly is faced with the problem of telling two stories— one of which is that of Erisichthon's crime and his punishment, requiring several days at least, and the other that of the foresters' revenge on the nymphs, requiring only a few hours of one day.

**Gallathea** is a fourth play that shows definite evidences of double time. As in the above play, there are two stories related. One is the account of the adventures of the three brothers, who are shipwrecked in Act I, Scene iv. After they are cast up on the shore, they decide to separate and seek their fortunes, planning to meet again in twelve months to tell of their adventures.\(^49\) On the same day, two fathers, Tyterus and Melebeus, send their daughters, Gallathea and Phillida, to a forest disguised as boys. Neither father knows what the other has done. Each hides his daughter because he fears that she will be chosen as the fairest maiden in the land and therefore will be sacrificed to Neptune. It seems unlikely that

\(^{47}\text{Ibid.}, \text{IV. ii. 101-102.}\)

\(^{48}\text{Ibid.}, \text{V. ii. 1-3.}\)

\(^{49}\text{Lyly, Gallathea, I. iv. 75.}\)
the girls would be hidden in the woods more than two or three months before the sacrifice. On the day of this dreaded event both of their fathers deny that their daughters are still alive. Tyterus says, however, that he has seen Melebeus kissing Phillida lately. This speech indicates that the girl has not been in the forest very long, certainly not nearly a year; yet the day that Tyterus makes this accusation is the day of the sacrifice and also the day on which the three brothers, who separated in the first act, meet again as they had agreed to do. They had said in Act I that they would meet again in a year; and they have really been separated a year because in the first scene of Act V Rafe says: "... we can tell what fortune we have had these twelue monthes in the Woods." The year required for the brothers' adventures in the woods is, then, inconsistent with the two or three months necessary for the girls' adventures in the same woods.

Of the plays of Lyly at least three, The Woman in the Moon, Sapho and Phao, and Love's Metamorphosis, observe the unity of time; but none of these plays is consistent in its treatment of this element because the action of all of them should normally require more time than one day. There is, then, double time in all three of these plays. Gallathea and Endimion, which require several months for their action, also show double time. We find more examples of this device in Lyly's plays.

than in those of any of the other three playwrights. In one of his plays, *Campeaspe*, there is only one incident, the occasion of Diogenes' projected flight in the air, that is inconsistent. In this play we find no evidence of double time, and the one inconsistency in it may be the result of a misplaced scene. It is to the plays of John Lyly, however, that we must go for the clearest and most numerous examples of double time before Shakespeare.

The Plays of Marlowe

Six of Marlowe's seven plays show inconsistencies in time. These vary from very slight evidences in the second part of *Tamburlaine the Great* to a great number in *The Jew of Malta*. In only one incident does the second part of *Tamburlaine the Great* show any inconsistency. This one is the campaign of two of Tamburlaine's generals, Techelles and Theridamas. In Scene iv of Act III the two are in Balsora and have just conquered the town. They are in great haste to rejoin their commander, because Theridamas says:

> Soldiers, now let us meet the general, Who by this time is at Natolia, Ready to charge the army of the Turk. 52

Since Tamburlaine is already at Natolia ready to attack the army of Callapine, it seems unlikely that he would wait for these two generals; yet these two are present at the battle. It must have required several weeks at least for them to march their

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52 Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*, Part II, III. iv. 84-86.
armies from Balsora to Natolia; and it is improbable that the forces of Tamburlaine and Callapine would face each other this long without fighting.

A play which shows more inconsistency is Dr. Faustus. One incident which shows this element is the one in which Wagner conjures up two devils to frighten the clown into entering his service. Wagner must have learned to conjure from his master, Dr. Faustus; yet the master has acquired this art only an hour or two before this scene. This fact is proved by the conversation between Faustus and the two scholars, Cornelius and Valdes, earlier in the evening.

Faust. Come show me some demonstrations magical,
    That I may conjure in some bushy grove,
    And have these joys in full possession.

    Vald. Then haste thee to some solitary grove
    And bear wise Bacon's and Albertus' works,
    The Hebrew Psalter and the New Testament;
    And whatsoever else is requisite.
    We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

    Corn. Valdes, first let him know the words of art;
    And then, all other ceremonies learned,
    Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

    Vald. First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
    And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.53

Faustus, having been initiated into the mysteries of the black art by his friends, goes to try his hand at conjuring after they leave; and he probably has no time to teach his servant anything about the device; therefore it would seem more logical for Wagner's conjuration to come two or three days later, not the same night that Faustus first learns and uses the art.

53Marlowe, Dr. Faustus, i. 148-160.
There is no definite evidence of an inconsistency in the age of Faustus at the end of the twenty-four years, but there is a possibility that such an inconsistency may exist. At the first of the play Faustus does not seem to be a very young man and probably is at least thirty years old; but, on the other hand, he seems to be under middle age. At the end of the twenty-four years he should be about sixty years old, but his actions and emotions are not those of a sixty-year-old man. His friends are scholars, who seem to be fairly young men. Wagner does not seem any older than he was at the first of the play; he is still a mischievous boy. The personality of Faustus himself is the same; it does not seem to have changed as that of an old man does change. For these reasons, then, there are fairly reasonable grounds for saying that Marlowe has not made his characters grow so old so much as they should have grown in twenty-four years.

A third play which shows few inconsistencies is Dido, Queen of Carthage. In this play, as in Lyly's Sapho and Phao, we find that insufficient time is allowed for the development of a queen's passion for an inferior. Not more than one day can possibly have passed after the arrival of the Trojans before Queen Dido of Carthage is madly in love with Aeneas. As a matter of fact, she seems to fall in love with him during a single scene. In the first of Act III, Scene i she gives encouragement to Iarbas by telling him that she may yet yield to his suit. If she were even almost in love with Aeneas at

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54 Ibid., III. i. 19.
this time, she probably would not have given this encouragement to another man. Actually she is supposed to have fallen in love with the Trojan after being shot with one of Cupid’s arrows later in this scene. Since the queen is a woman noted for her disdain of suitors, it seems somewhat improbable that she would have fallen in love so quickly and have revealed the fact so plainly. Such events are not, however, impossible.

Another problem in the play is the length of time that Ascanius is left sleeping in the grove. In the last scene of the second act Venus lures Ascanius away from the court and substitutes Cupid in his place. She leaves Ascanius asleep in the grove with milk-white doves to act as sentinels to guard the boy from harm. The next scene, which is the first one of Act III, is the one in which Cupid causes Queen Dido to begin to feel love for Aeneas. In the second scene of Act III, Ascanius is still asleep in the grove and is threatened by Juno, who is on the point of harming him when Venus returns. She has been warned by her doves; and, as she comes on the scene, she says:

> What should this mean? My doves are back return’d
> Who warn me of such danger prest at hand,
> To harm my sweet Ascanius’ lovely life.

Since Venus comes on the scene only twenty lines after Juno first appears, it seems likely that Venus has not gone very far away from the sleeping boy, after she had left him in Act II. Juno’s threat against Ascanius should take place, then, only

55Ibid., III. i. 11-12.  
56Ibid., II. i. 321-323.  
57Ibid., III. ii. 21-22.
a few minutes after Venus has left him; else the doves could not have flown to her and warned her in time for her to return so quickly. In this case, the scene in which Dido falls in love with Aeneas must come on the day that she first meets him. If we allow more than one day for her to meet Aeneas and fall in love with him, then the incident of Ascanius' sleep is inconsistent.

On the same day that Dido falls in love with Aeneas the entire group goes to the forest to hunt. While Aeneas and she are marooned in a cave by a storm, she confesses her love for him. In one day, then, Aeneas lands in Carthage, meets the Queen, and tells her the story of the terrible destruction of Troy; Dido falls in love with Aeneas; and the entire court goes on a hunt, where the queen admits her love to Aeneas. It seems unlikely that all of these events could happen in one day.

Probably the hunt would not take place on the same day that the shipwrecked Trojans arrive in the city, as they would probably be rather exhausted and not particularly anxious to exert themselves enough to go hunting. The action of the first day, then, should logically require much more time than is allowed for it.

The play shows, therefore, at least two definite inconsistencies.

The Jew of Malta and Edward II are the plays of Marlowe which contain the greatest number of inconsistencies. The first is the story of Barabas, a wealthy Jew of Malta, whose goods are confiscated by the government of the island to pay a tribute owed for ten years to the Turks, and of his revenge on all the
people who harm him in any way. When Galymath, the representative of the Turks, demands the payment of the tribute, the Governor of Malta requests to be allowed a month in which to raise the money; and his request is granted. On the same day, after the Turks have left, he unjustly confiscates all of Barabas' goods and money. In the scene in which his goods are seized, there is entirely too little time allowed for the seizure. In line 91 the governor announces that Barabas has lost all of his goods because he has refused to give willingly half of them. Because the other Jews do not protest at giving up one-half of their goods, they lose only that much. In line 131 some officers enter; and to the Governor's question, "Now, officers, have you done?" they reply:

I, my lord, we have seized upon the goods
And wares of Barabas, which being valued,
Amount to more than all the wealth in Malta,
And of the other we have seized half.

Within forty lines, they officers have seized all of Barabas' goods and half of the goods of all the other Jews, a feat which is manifestly impossible. They could not well have seized these before the scene begins because, before line 91, nobody knows that Barabas is going to lose all his goods; therefore the seizure is supposed to have taken place after that, no matter how impossible such an action may seem.

Another seeming impossibility is the speed with which

58Marlowe, The Jew of Malta, I. ii. 91-92.
59Ibid., I. ii. 103-112.
Barabas' house is converted into a nunnery and the nuns moved to it. In lines 128 to 130 a knight says to the governor:

Grave governor, listen not to his exclaim.
Convert his mansion to a nunnery;
His house will harbour many holy nuns. 60

The governor replies that it shall be so. Evidently there has been no previous intention to convert the Jew's house into a nunnery; and it should logically require at least a few days to move the nuns from their old abode to the new even if no changes have to be made in the new one. Within this same scene, however, in line 256, Abigail tells her father

For I left the governor placing nuns,
Displacing me; and of thy house they mean
To make a nunnery. . . 61

Abigail enters to her father in line 224. Between lines 131 and 224, then, the governor must tell the nuns of the new home that they are going to have; the nuns have to pack all their clothing, relics, books, and other possessions; they have to move to the new place, which may be two or three miles from their present place of abode; the governor has to leave the Senate-house, meeting them at Barabas' house; and Abigail is turned out of her home and has time to join her father back at the Senate-house. Obviously all of these events could not possibly have taken place within so short a time. In the second scene of the first act, then, there are definitely two impossibilities in time.

The speed with which Barabas again becomes wealthy is also

60 Ibid., I. ii. 128-130. 61 Ibid., I. ii. 256-258.
an improbable happening. Using the ten thousand Portuguese
gold coins and the infinite rich and costly jewels which he
has hidden away in his house for just such an emergency, the
Jew has by Act II, Scene iii become as wealthy as he was before
he lost his wealth. Since the amount confiscated amounted
to more than all the rest of the wealth in Malta, it seems
unlikely that he could have made enough money to equal this
immense amount in less than a month. We know that the time
which he has spent regaining his fortune has been less than a
month because the envoy from the Turkish Emperor has not yet
called for the tribute, and he had said that he would return
for it at the end of a month. No matter how great the value
was of the jewels that Barabas was able to save, it seems un-
likely that he could have made so much money from them in so
little time.

Another event which takes place in an impossibly short
time is the promptness of Ithamore's journey for Friar Jacomo
in Act III, Scene iii. After Abigail learns that the deaths
of Lodowick and Mathias have been caused by her father's
treachery, she orders Ithamore to go to the newly-made nunnery
and ask Friar Jacomo to come to talk with her. While the slave
is gone, the distressed girl pours out her sorrows in a soliloquy
of thirteen lines; then Ithamore re-enters with the friar. No
matter how close the nunnery is, Ithamore cannot possibly have

\[62\text{ibid., I. ii. 245-248.} \quad 63\text{ibid., II. iii.11.} \]

\[64\text{ibid., I. ii. 136.} \]
gone to it, delivered Abigail's message, and returned with the friar in the minute or two that are required for the delivery of the soliloquy. This incident, like the three I have already mentioned, takes place in an impossibly short time.

Another example of an exceedingly rapid journey is that of Pilia-Borsa in Act IV, Scene iv. Ithamore, influenced by Bellamira, sends Pilia-Borsa to Barabas with a note demanding that he send three hundred crowns by the bearer. Nineteen lines after his exit, Pilia-Borsa returns with the money. Since the house of Bellamira seems not to be very close to that of Barabas, it would have required at least all the time that the messenger has been gone just to walk to the Jew's house and back. This would leave no time for the Jew's arguments, disimulations, and finally his grudging payment of part of the money. That he did procrastinate is brought out in the conversation between Ithamore and Pilia-Borsa after the latter's return.

Itha. How now! hast thou the gold?
Pilia. Yes.
Itha. But came it freely? did the cow give down her milk freely?
Pilia. At first reading of the letter, he stared and stamped and turned aside. I took him by the beard and looked upon him thus; told him he were best to send it; then he hugged and embraced me.
Itha. Rather from fear than love.
Pilia. Then, like a Jew, he laughed and jeered, and told me he loved me for your sake, and said what a faithful servant you had been.
Itha. The more villain he to keep me thus; here's goodly 'parel, is there not?
Pilia. To conclude, he gave me ten crowns.65

To account for this interview between Pilia-Borsa and the Jew

65Ibid., IV. iv. 105-120.
and for the journeys of the former to and from the latter's house requires more time than the four or five minutes allowed for the incident in the play.

As a final example of impossible rapidity of action, we may consider the promptness with which the Governor's officers bring Ithamore before the ruler in Act V. At the first of the act Bellamira and Pilia-Borsa are telling the Governor at the Senate-house of the crimes of Barabas. The woman says that these can be proved by his slave, Ithamore, who is now at her house. The governor orders his officers to "go fetch him straight." After one line of dialogue, the officers re-enter with both Ithamore and Barabas. No matter how close Bellamira's house is to the Senate-house, the officers could not possibly have gone to her house and returned with the slave in the few seconds that they have been off the stage.

Another inconsistency in time is the account of the time when the Turkish siege of the city begins. In Act III, Scene i Bellamira, the courtesan, says: "Since this town was besieged, my gain grows cold." There should not have been any siege of the town at this time, however, because the thirty days allowed the city for raising the tribute have not yet passed. It is not until Scene v of this act that the Turkish envoy returns for the tribute and is told that no more is going to be paid. Since the Turks would have no reason to besiege the city until

66 Ibid., V. i. 18. 67 Ibid., V. i. 19. 68 Ibid., III. i. 1.
after this refusal, there should not be a siege in progress
in Scene i. It should begin some time after Act III, Scene v.
In addition, Calymath is not in Malta, since he sends a
messenger to receive the tribute; and for him to come to the
island with a huge military force would require some months at
least; so even after Scene v several months should pass before
Calymath arrives with his forces.

The siege is mentioned again in Act V, Scene i, when the
governor says:

Now, gentlemen, betake you to your arms,
And see that Malta be well fortified;
And it behoves you to be resolute;
For Calymath, having hovered here so long,
Will win the town or die before the walls.69

The siege has evidently been going on for some time at the
beginning of the fifth act; so it must have begun some time after
Act III, Scene v. The only possible lapse of time comes between
the third and fourth scenes of Act IV, and only a month or two
passes here. In Act IV, Scene iii everyone believes that Friar
Jacomo has killed Friar Barnardine, who has really been murdered
by Barabas and Ithamore. In Scene iv of the act the friar has
just been hanged for his supposed crime.70 Since punishment for
crimes was very swift in those days, not more than a month or
two and probably much less time has elapsed since the last
scene. As the crime was committed on the night of the day when
the tribute was refused and the punishment is meted out on the
same day that the governor mentions that the siege has lasted

69 Ibid., V. i. 1-5. 70 Ibid., IV. iv. 25-30.
for some time, it seems that enough time has not elapsed for Calymath to come with his army and institute this siege against the city. This play, then, contains more inconsistencies than any of Marlowe's other plays.

Another drama which contains almost as many inconsistencies is Edward II. The chief inconsistency is found in connection with the banishment and later the recall of Gaveston. In the fourth scene of the first act Edward, yielding to the insistence of his noblemen, agrees to the banishment of his favorite to Ireland. In the middle of the scene Gaveston sets out on his journey, the king accompanying him a short distance. On Edward's return to the court he is informed that the nobles have been persuaded by the queen to agree to the recall of Gaveston; and a messenger is sent with a warrant "forth for Gaveston in Ireland." This phrase seems to indicate that Gaveston is either already in Ireland or will be there by the time the messenger can reach him. Since the banished favorite left only in the middle of this scene, he should have been only a mile or two away; and it should have been easy for the messenger to overtake him before he had gone much further. A few lines later in the scene another of Edward's speeches adds to the illusion that Gaveston is already in Ireland:

Against our friend the Earl of Cornwall comes,
We'll have a general tilt and tournament. . .


---Ibid., I. iv. 375-376.
Before this speech, in line 221, young Mortimer says:

Fair queen, forbear to angle for the fish
Which, being caught, strikes him that takes it dead;
I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston,
That now I hope floats on the Irish seas.73

This is another indication that Gaveston is supposed to have reached his destination by this time. In addition, in Act II, Scene ii the king, who has journeyed from London to Tynemouth Castle to wait for Gaveston's return, expresses the fear that the exile has been wrecked upon the sea.74 Since a few weeks have passed during the journey from London to the castle near the coast, this lapse of time adds to the illusion that Gaveston has really had time to arrive in Ireland; but actually he should not have had time to reach the seacoast before the king's messenger overtakes him.

Another inconsistency is found in the third scene of Act II. In the previous scene the noblemen had quarreled with the king and had threatened to revolt against him. In this scene they are preparing to storm the castle of Tynemouth when they are joined by Kent, who had broken with his brother, the king, in the previous scene. At the end of that scene Kent left the court to avoid Edward's rising anger. It seems logical that he would go immediately to join the noblemen, since he had announced his intention of joining them. The noblemen are still near the castle when Kent joins them in Scene iii, as the call to battle with the king's forces in the castle is

73Ibid., I. iv. 221-224. 74Ibid., II. ii. 1-2.
sounded at the end of the scene; therefore not more than a few hours should have passed between Scenes ii and iii. It would seem impossible, however, that the noblemen could get their respective armies together in such a short time. As their second quarrel with the king begins only after Gaveston's return, it is not likely that they have their armies with them at Tynemouth Castle. Even if their armies are near the castle, it seems unlikely that they would have attacked it so soon without making more definite plans of assault. Another inconsistency, though not one altogether of time, is Lancaster's speech after Kent's arrival:

Now, my lords, know this;  
That Gaveston is secretly arrived,  
And here in Tynemouth frolics with the king.  

Since every one of the men in this scene was present when Gaveston arrived in the previous scene, it seems rather unnecessary for Lancaster to tell the others that the hated favorite of the king has secretly arrived.

Another inconsistency is found in Scene v of Act II during the battle between the king's forces and those of the noblemen. In the first of this scene Gaveston is pursued by the noblemen and in line 9 is finally captured by them. In line 30 the Earl of Arundel enters with a message from Edward requesting that he be allowed to see Gaveston before he is executed by his captors. It seems unlikely that Edward could have heard of Gaveston's capture so soon and have had time to send a message

75 Ibid., II. iii. 14-16.
to the barons so quickly, for he must have been a few miles away from the scene of the capture, else the barons could have captured him also. There are, then, many inconsistencies in *Edward II*.

Another play which also shows a considerable number of inconsistencies is *The Massacre at Paris*. These are found chiefly in connection with the actual massacre itself, which takes place during one night. In the very next scene after the massacre is over the Duke of Anjou, brother of King Charles of France, is offered the throne of Poland by two of its representatives. Since there is no mention of the massacre, which would probably have been a somewhat shocking event to these foreign lords, it seems likely that some time, a few months at least, must have passed since the night of horror. Moreover, in Scene xi, which takes place either the same day or only a few days later, Queen Catherine says:

> My Lord of Lorraine, have you marked of late,
> How Charles our son begins for to lament
> For the late night's work which my Lord of Guise
> Did make in Paris among the Huguenots?76

These words also imply the passage of at least a few weeks since the massacre. On the other hand, there are two other incidents which indicate that only a short time, two or three days at the most, have passed. In Scene xi, the same one in which we find Catherine's speech that is quoted above, two men come upon the scene dragging the body of the admiral. The body is beginning to decay a little because later in the scene Catherine mentions

76Marlowe, *The Massacre at Paris*, xi. 31-34.
that the air near it is not sweet, a condition which would seem to indicate that about one or two days have passed. Another indication that the time has been short is the fact that Guise goes to such pains to seek out the few Protestants who meet in the woods and to kill them before they can flee from Paris. Catherine urges him to lose no haste in doing this, saying:

Do so, sweet Guise; let us delay no time;
For, if these stragglers gather head again, 
And disperse themselves throughout the realm of France, 
It will be hard for us to work their deaths.

This passage seems also to indicate that only two or three days have passed since the massacre, for otherwise these Protestants would already have been gone; but the scene in which Anjou is offered the Polish crown, which comes just before this one, seems to indicate, as I have already pointed out, that a few months have passed since the shameful deed.

The assassination of Mugeroun is another event that presents a problem about the amount of time required for its consummation. The Duke of Guise, having discovered a love letter which his wife has written to Mugeroun, one of King Henry's close friends, becomes exceedingly angry and when twitted about the matter by the king in a later scene which probably takes place about the same day, swears that the "villain" shall pay for his dishonor with his blood. After delivering

77Ibid., xi, 18. 
78Ibid., xi, 26-30. 
79Ibid., xvii, 24-25.
this threat, the incensed Duke rushes out to find Mugeroun and kill him. In Scene xix a soldier hired by the Duke assassinates Mugeroun. It would seem that this murder would take place not later than a day or two after Scene xvii while Guise's anger is still at the boiling point. Between these two scenes, which should logically come quite close to one another, we find Scene xviii, which shows the defeat of Henry's army under Joyeux by the forces of the King of Navarre. It is only during Scene xvii, however, that Joyeux receives his appointment as the general of Henry's army, which was then ready to march against Navarre.80 Between this scene and xviii, then, Joyeux has to journey to where Navarre's forces are, a place evidently not in France, and to march an army this far would require several weeks. The assassination of Mugeroun, which occurs in the next scene, would, however, logically occur, not months, but only days after Scene xvii. There seems to be, then, an inconsistency in the time between the final insult to Guise's pride and his bringing about the assassination of Mugeroun. Both in this incident and in the scenes immediately after the massacre there are found inconsistencies in time.

Six of Marlowe's seven plays are definitely inconsistent. The second part of Tamburlaine the Great contains the fewest inconsistencies, it having only one; while The Jew of Malta seems to be the most inconsistent. As I have already said in Chapter II, Marlowe is frankly careless in his treatment of

80Ibid., xvii. 1-6.
time. All of the inconsistencies in his plays seem to result from carelessness rather than from the deliberate use of double time. Only two of his plays, The Massacre at Paris and Dido, Queen of Carthage, seem to make use of double time at all; and even in these two its use is slight. Rarely do we find any effort on Marlowe's part to be consistent. He seems not to have planned his action and his scenes very clearly before he actually began writing them, for we find less evidence of planning in his plays than in those of any of the other playwrights.

The Plays of Greene

Two of Greene's plays show only one inconsistency each in time. One of these is George a Greene, which, while not definitively proved to be his, is usually assigned to him. In this play Wily, one of George's servants, has disguised himself as a girl and has taken the place of Bettris, the daughter of Grime. In Act III, Scene ii George learns of this exchange and says:

Jenkin, come hither: goe to Bradford,
And listen out your fellow Wily. 81

In Act IV, Scene iv Jenkin is in Bradford apparently about to seek Wily as he has been ordered to do. We know that Jenkin leaves Wakefield in the morning because his departure is in the same scene in which the three conspirators against King Edward meet George, who is disguised as an old soothsayer of the

81 Greene, George a Greene, lines 725-726.
neighborhood. This meeting takes place in the morning because in a previous scene George has told the three noblemen to consult the old magician whom he is impersonating early the next morning.\(^8\) If Jenkin leaves Wakefield early in the morning, he should have covered the twenty or twenty-five miles to Bradford by nightfall, at least; therefore Scene iii of Act IV should take place late on the same day that Jenkin left Wakefield.

Between these two scenes, however, there comes Scene i of Act IV. In this scene the Earl of Kendall is brought as a prisoner before King Edward in London. To travel from Wakefield to London in the time of King Edward would have required at least a week; so this length of time seems inconsistent with the few hours required for Jenkin's journey to Bradford. In addition to the time required for the transporting of the prisoners from Wakefield to London, there has also elapsed almost enough time for Edward and James to travel from London to Bradford, because the last scene of the play, in which the two appear in disguise at Bradford, apparently takes place not more than two days after the day on which Jenkin arrives in the town. In Scene ii of the fourth act Robin Hood promises Marian that "before the Sunne doth shew the morning day" he will be in Wakefield to confront George a Greene.\(^9\) In Scene iv of this act Robin Hood meets George; therefore this scene must take place early the next morning. In the next scene, which

\(^8\)Ibid., ll. 524-530.

\(^9\)Ibid., ll. 878-879.
is the final one of the play, George and Robin Hood are in Bradford, where they encounter the king, who has just arrived, and also Jenkin. This final scene would probably not be later than the next day because the nearness of Wakefield and Bradford would not necessitate a very long journey between the two. Since the king has had to come all the way from London, several weeks must have passed since he began the journey. Counting the week that is required to transport the prisoners from Wakefield to London and the week or two that are required for the king's journey from London to Bradford, at least three weeks or a month must have elapsed between the day that Jenkin leaves Wakefield and the day that he arrives in Bradford. Since the distance between the two towns is little more than twenty miles, to allow so much time for the journey is very inconsistent.

Another play in which there is only one definite inconsistency is *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*. The problem in this play is found in connection with the adventures of the Duke of Milan after the defeat of his allies, Flaminius and Belinius. When these two flee to the Turkish Emperor for aid in defeating Alphonsus, the Duke of Milan does not accompany them, probably having been separated from them during the rout of their armies. In Scene ii of the fourth act we find him still apparently near Naples. At least he is not in his own country because he says:

Oh Millaine, Millaine, litle dost thou thinke,
How that thy Duke is now in such distresse;
For if thou didst, I soone should be releast
Forth of this greedie gulph of miserie. 84

Another indication that he is near Naples is the fact that in this scene he meets Carinus, who was last seen near Naples at the first of the play. Since there is no indication that he has traveled any distance from his cell in the grove, 85 we may assume that the scene is the same place. Between the time of the battle and this scene, however, several months have elapsed, because in a previous scene Flaminius and Belinius have had enough time to reach the Turkish court and to ask for aid there. It seems unlikely that the Duke of Milan would have remained so near the battle scene for several months. It would have been very dangerous for him to have done so because, had he been recognized, he would have been slain. The Duke's adventures, then, should require only a few days at the most; but the other events of the play require a much longer period of time.

In *Orlando Furioso* Greene is more inconsistent in his treatment of time. The chief problem in this play is found in the first act. Here the five suitors of Angelica—the Soldan of Egypt; Rodamant, King of Cuba; Mandricard, King of Mexico; Brandimart, King of the Isles; and Orlando, one of the twelve peers of France—all present their pleas for her hand; and she chooses Orlando. All of the others except the Soldan of Egypt swear that they will make war upon Marsilius, Angelica's

85 *Ibid.*, 1. 159-166.
father, because they have not been chosen as her husband. Rodamant and Brandimart decide to remain in a castle near Marsilius' capital city, while Mandricard is to return to Mexico and gather an army and return to aid them. All three of these kings leave the scene at line 235; yet in line 270, before any of the three kings or the emperor can possibly have had time to gather followers, Sacrepant speaks as if the enmity between the two sides were well-known in the country and had existed for some time:

Sacrep. Sirra, what thinks the Emperor of my colours, Because in field I weare both blue and red at once? Man. They deeme, my Lord, your Honor liues at peace, As one thats newter in these mutinies, And couets to rest equall frends to both; Neither enuious to Prince Mandricard, Nor wishing ill vnto Marsilius, That you may safely passe where ere you please, With frendly salutations from them both.

To allow enough time for both sides to have chosen colors and for Sacrepant to become known for his neutrality, several days should have passed; but actually only a few minutes have passed because this conversation occurs near the end of the scene in which the quarrel breaks out.

Another event which adds to the confusion in time is the encounter between Marsilius and Mandricard in Act II, which takes place only a day or two after the first act. After Marsilius has treated him with such courtesy, Mandricard exclaims to himself:

86 Greene, Orlando Furioso, 11. 223-226.
87 Ibid., 11. 270-273.
Blush, Mandricard; the honor of thy foe disgraceth thee,  
Pawning his colours for thy warrantize.  
Backe to thy ships, and hie thee to thy home;  
Bouge not a foote to aid Prince Rodamant.  

It is difficult to determine whether Mandricard is supposed to have returned to Mexico for reinforcements between this scene and the first one or whether he has not yet reached his ships since he quarreled with Marsilius in Scene i. The fact that both sides have had time to choose colors for their groups seems to argue for the first assumption. This would mean that the incident is inconsistent. On the other hand, the fact that Mandricard says "bouge not a foote to aid Prince Rodamant" seems to support the latter assumption, for if he had already been to Mexico and returned he would have already "budged" a considerable distance to help his ally and in that case would probably have said "bouge not one foote further." If we accept this interpretation, this incident is not inconsistent.

Another problem is the question of where the twelve peers of France are before Orlando's madness and how they learn of his affliction so quickly. If they are in France when Orlando's honor is supposed to have been wronged, they could not possibly have reached Africa in the week or two that have intervened. There are indications, however, that they are not in France at this time. One of them mentions the fact that they undertake adventures throughout the world; perhaps they are on an adventure near Africa and, finding themselves so near their comrade,

88 Ibid., 11. 779-782.
Orlando, decide to visit him, discovering his misfortune after landing in Marsilius' country. If we accept this explanation of the presence of the peers, there is no inconsistency in this portion of the play.

Another inconsistency, which is more one of place than one of time, is the fact that in one place the scene is said to be Africa and in another place it is said to be India. There is not sufficient time in the play for the scene actually to shift from Africa to India; and if this shift actually takes place, there is an inconsistency in time here. It seems unlikely, however, that such a change in scene is really intended. It seems more probable that Greene forgot that the scene is in Africa and carelessly introduced a reference to India as being the scene of the play.

Greene's play which contains the most inconsistencies is Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. The first discrepancy that we notice in this play is found in accounts of the various journeys that Edward makes between the county of Suffolk and the city of Oxford. In the first scene of Act I Edward leaves Framlingham for Oxford to consult Friar Bacon and arrives at the friar's cell after about a week or ten days. Later, however, Edward travels to Fressingfield, a town near Framlingham, and returns to Oxford in one night. We know that Fressingfield and Framlingham are near each other because both are in Suffolk. In addition, the manner in which Edward speaks about the maid

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89 Ibid., I. 164. 90 Ibid., I. 1046.
of Fressingfield when he is in Framlingham in the first scene indicates that it has been only a short time since he has seen her. We may assume, then, that the two towns are probably within ten or fifteen miles of each other. In that case, it should not require over a week for Edward to go from Framlingham to Oxford and only one night for him to go to Fressingfield from Oxford and return to the university city.

There is also a definite inconsistency in connection with Margaret's troubles with her two unwelcome suitors, Lambert and Serlsby. In Act III, Scene ii both of them come to her with proposals of marriage; and she, unwilling to marry them but not wishing to refuse them outright, asks them to give her ten days in which to make up her mind. By the end of the ten days she hopes that Lacie, whom she really loves, will have returned as he has promised he will. The two unwelcome suitors quarrel, and Lambert challenges Serlsby to a duel. Considering the anger of the two men, one would assume that the duel would take place within a day at least; yet between the challenge and the duel there intervene two scenes which require the passage of almost two months.

In the scene following the one in which the challenge is delivered, the bronze head which Bacon has constructed speaks while the friar is sleeping. Miles, Bacon's servant, remarks that Bacon has watched the head by night and Friar Bungay by day for sixty days. Bungay has come to Oxford only in

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91 Frier Bacon and Friar Bungay, 11. 1074-1075.
92 Ibid., 11. 1570-1571.
Act II, Scene iii; and since that scene, which is one on the night that Edward and Lacie leave Margaret, at least sixty days have passed. In the scene of the challenge less than a week has passed since Lacie's departure; therefore at least fifty or fifty-five days must pass between that scene and the one of the duel. In Scene iii of Act IV Friar Bungay mentions that Bacon has been in a melancholy mood for some time since the failure of his brazen head, and it seems that at least a day or two has passed since that tragic event. In this scene the two rivals for Margaret's hand fight the duel which was proposed almost two months ago. Gentlemen who are angry enough to fight a duel do not usually wait two months to settle their dispute; so it is evident that this scene should take place much sooner than it does.

Another discrepancy is Margaret's tardiness in entering the convent. In the same scene in which the challenge to the duel is delivered, Margaret receives a letter from Lacie in which he breaks their engagement. The poor girl is broken-hearted and says:

For I will straight to stately Fremingham,
And in the abbey there be shorne a Nun. 93

Almost two months later in the first scene of Act V, Margaret is just on the point of entering the convent. Since she leaves the impression in the previous scene that she is going immediately to the nunnery, there seems to be an inconsistency in allowing

93 Ibid., 11. 1516-1517.
her to wait two months before entering it. This is not, however a very serious inconsistency.

Of the four plays of Greene which are inconsistent, two, George a Greene and Alphonseus, King of Arragon, contain only one inconsistency each. In each case this one seems to be the result of carelessness on the part of the author. The other two plays, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay and Orlando Furioso, contain several more inconsistencies. Here, too, however, these seem to be the result of the carelessness of Greene; there is no definite development of double time within either of them. Like Marlowe, then, Greene is very careless in his treatment of time. In addition, his plays require the passage of a considerable length of time within them, just as those of Marlowe do. In the plays of neither of these men did Shakespeare have an opportunity to find the suggestion for the device of double time which he used so effectively in Othello and other plays.

The Plays of Peele

As we have already seen, two of Peele's plays, The Arraignment of Paris and The Battle of Alcazar, are consistent in their treatment of time. Two of his other plays, Edward I and David and Bethsabe, are definitely inconsistent. Between these two groups there is a fifth play, The Old Wives' Tale, which can scarcely be classified in either group. This play

94 Some of the discrepancies in this play may be partly the result of stage abridgments. For a further discussion of this idea see W. W. Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements: The Battle of Alcazar and Orlando Furioso, pp. 125-134.
was written without scenic divisions, although the scene of action shifts at least nine times.95 There are really two stories in this play, each one requiring a different amount of time for its action. The basic story tells of the adventures of three servants, Antic, Frolic, and Fantastic, who are lost in the woods at the first of the play. Soon they are offered hospitality for the night by a smith and his wife. At a reasonable hour the smith and one of the servants go to bed, while the wife and the other two servants are unable to retire for lack of a bed. To pass the time away the old wife proposes to tell a story; and as she begins to tell her tale, the characters in it appear and act out their story. When the tale is finished, it is almost day.96 The action of the story of the three servants requires, then, about seven or eight hours of one night.

The action of the story that the old woman tells, however, seems to require more time than one night. Sacrapant's domination over Celia seems not to have begun very long before the appearance of her brothers, yet some time must have passed since she was first abducted and since their search for her began. All the other incidents in this story seem to indicate the passage of a considerable length of time. These two times within the play may be considered inconsistent by one interpretation because, according to this idea, the action of the wife's

95See Appendix, page 111.
96Peele, The Old Wives' Tale, l. 951.
tale is actually taking place when the three witness it and therefore all the time required for its action must be allowed between the time it begins and the time it ends. By another interpretation, the wife's tale is to be considered just like a play staged for the guests' benefit; in this case the tale, which originally required the passage of a considerable length of time for its action, when presented as a play might easily be staged in one night. If this theory were accepted, the entire play would be consistent if it were divided into scenes.

Peele's Edward I contains one very definite inconsistency and perhaps two. In Scene xii the friar meets a farmer who is going through the forest toward the town of Brecknock, which is about three miles away from Cardis Arthur,\(^9\) where the friar is living in the forest. In line 50 the farmer leaves the scene and starts toward Brecknock, where he is to collect some money. In line 68 the farmer returns, carrying one hundred marks, which he has received "even now at Brecknock."\(^8\) The farmer cannot possibly have gone three miles, received some money, and returned to the scene within eighteen lines. There is a definite inconsistency here.

Another problem in this play is found in connection with the two messengers, one from Wales and the other from London, who reach Edward in Barwick in Scene xxiii. The messenger from Wales brings the news of the defeat and death of Lluellen, while the messenger from London brings the news of the queen's strange

\(^9\)Peele, Edward I, xii. 77-78.
sinking into the earth and of her subsequent illness. The defeat of Lluellen has taken place at least two or three weeks before the queen's mishap because Elinor is still in Wales when the Welsh prince is defeated; but she is at Charing-Green, near London, when she sinks into the ground. Since Wales is about as near Barwick as London is and since the Welsh messenger has at least a two weeks' start over the London messenger, both of them should not have reached Edward on the same day. This incident, then, seems also to be inconsistent.

Peele is much more careless in his treatment of time in *David and Bethsabe* than he is in *Edward I*. In the first play Peele has tried to condense most of the events during the long reign of the Biblical character, King David, into a shorter period that does not exceed ten years. In so condensing events he could hardly avoid some discrepancies. The first incident which seems inconsistent is the tardiness of David in going to Rabbah to take command of the siege there. In the first scene David falls in love with Bethsabe, wife of Urias, one of the soldiers in his army at Rabbah. In Scene iii, about a day later, David, hoping to bring about the death of Urias, sends a letter to Joab, the commander of the forces at Rabbah, telling him to put Urias in the forefront of the wars. In the next scene Bethsabe, now David's wife, is afraid that the Lord is going to punish her for her sin of loving David and helping him to contrive the death of Urias. A young son that has been born to her and David is very ill and on the point of death. About
ten months or a year has passed since the third scene, when David planned the death of Urias. As soon as the child dies, David goes to Rabbah to lead his soldiers because he wishes

That Rabbah may be taken by the king,
Lest it be called after Joab's name,
Nor David's glory shine in Sion streets. 99

In Scene ii, however, Joab had sent the following message to David:

And tell my lord the king that I have fought
Against the city Rabbah with success,
And scaled where the royal palace is,
The conduit-heads and all their sweetest springs:
Then let him come in person to these walls,
With all the soldiers he can bring besides,
And take the city as his own exploit,
Lest I surprise it, and the people give
The glory of the conquest to my name. 100

If Joab were afraid in Scene ii the city might fall before David could reach it, it seems impossible that it would not have fallen by Scene v, which takes place almost a year later. There is, therefore, a definite inconsistency in time in connection with the siege of this city.

A second inconsistency is the great length of time that Absalon waits to take revenge upon Amnon, his half-brother. In Scene iii Amnon dishonors Thamar, the sister of Absalon, and the latter swears to avenge her. It is not until Scene vi, almost a year later, however, that he gets his revenge by stabbing his brother at a sheep feast. Since this scene takes place after the birth and death of the child of Bethsabe and

99Peele, David and Bethsabe, v. 118-120.
100Ibid., ii. 71-79.
David, a year must have passed since Scene iii; it seems unlikely, however, that Absalon would have waited so long for his revenge.

The next day in Rabbah David is told of the crime. In the same scene in which he learns of the murder, a widow of Thecoa comes before him to plead that Absalon may be recalled from banishment. Since David has just heard of the crime, he cannot possibly have already banished the murderer. On being questioned, the woman admits that Joab, who has also learned of the murder only at the first of the scene, has sent for her to come to the king with the plea. Obviously, Joab cannot have sent a message of Thecoa, a village about sixty miles from Rabbah, within these few minutes; and certainly the woman would not have had time to come from her village to the king in this time. In addition, after David has granted the pardon, Joab brings Absalon in to receive his father's forgiveness; and David says:

Live and return from Gesur to thy home; Return from Gesur to Jerusalem.101

This speech plainly indicates that Absalon has been in exile at Gesur; but, since David has just heard of the crime, it is certain that he could not have sent Absalon to Gesur and then recalled him in a single scene. This scene is full of absurdities in time, and it seems impossible that Peele could have been so careless in his treatment of this element. It seems

101Ibid., vii. 178-179.
more likely that this scene should end with line 112 and that the remainder should be a different scene; it also seems probable that there were originally one or more scenes now lost between the two.\textsuperscript{102}

In the last scene of vii we learn from Absalon's soliloquy that he is ambitious to enjoy the power that David now holds. At the end of the scene he says:

\begin{center}
Therefore I shall address me, as I may,
To love them and the tribes of Israel.\textsuperscript{103}
\end{center}

This speech seems to indicate that he is going to begin very soon to try to win the people away from his father. In the very next scene we find that Absalon has led a revolt against the king and that David has been driven out of Jerusalem. It would seem logical that the rebellion would take place not later than a year or two after it was planned in the last scene; yet we find that Salomon, who had not even been born in the last scene, is now a child of at least ten or twelve years of age because he speaks with the wisdom that we would expect to find in a mature person. It seems unlikely, however, that Absalon would have waited so many years to try to gain control of the kingdom. The maturity of Salomon is, then, an inconsistent element in the play.

Among the plays of Peele we find two, \textit{The Battle of Alcazar} and \textit{The Arraignment of Paris}, that are consistent in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{102}Bullen, editor, \textit{The Works of Peele}, note on page 44.
\item \textsuperscript{103}Peele, \textit{David and Bethsabe}, vii. 205-206.
\end{itemize}
time and two others, Edward I and David and Bethsabe, which are definitely inconsistent. His fifth play, The Old Wives' Tale, defies any definite classification because of its lack of scenic divisions. Three of his plays, The Battle of Alcazar, Edward I, and David and Bethsabe, require the lapse of a considerable length of time within them; while The Arraignment of Paris and The Old Wives' Tale observe the unity of time. In Edward I Peele has managed to shift his scenes from London to Wales and Barwick with only two minor inconsistencies. In David and Bethsabe Peele has been more careless in his handling of time. In this play he attempts to condense about twenty or thirty years of the reign of King David into a short period of about ten years, and hopeless confusion has resulted. The inconsistency in time in this play is further increased by the fact that some of the scenes seem to have been lost from the play. Peele's plays, in general, show more consistency than those of the other playwrights.

In this chapter I have pointed out that in most of the plays of these four men inconsistencies are found. Of the twenty-six plays that I have studied, only seven are consistent; while eighteen are definitely inconsistent; and one, The Old Wives' Tale, cannot be definitely classified in either group. In the case of all the playwrights except Peele, almost twice as many of their plays are inconsistent as are consistent. The proportion is smaller in the five plays of Peele, only two of his being definitely inconsistent. The largest number of
inconsistencies were found in the plays of Marlowe, there being only one of his seven plays which can possibly be considered consistent in time. Only one-third of Greene's plays and one-fourth of Lyly's are consistent. Among the inconsistencies in the plays we find two kinds. One type is that of double time similar to the example in Othello. This type is best seen in Endimion, The Woman in the Moon, Love's Metamorphosis, Gallathea, and Sappho and Phao, all plays of Lyly. The other type of inconsistency is caused either by the carelessness of the playwright or by the garbled condition of the present text of his play. The outstanding example of this type is the pardon of Absalon in David and Bethsabe. Often we find events taking place in an impossibly short time. The confiscation of Barabas' goods within a single scene in The Jew of Malta is an example of this inconsistency. Such impossible times may also be the result of the corruptness of modern texts of some of the plays. It is evident, then, that inconsistencies in time were very common among the plays of these four predecessors of Shakespeare and that there were evidences of double time in their plays, particularly in those of Lyly.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In the last two chapters I have shown that inconsistencies in time are very common in the works of four predecessors of Shakespeare. Almost four times as many of their plays are inconsistent as are consistent, and even those plays which are in the latter classification present some problems in time which are difficult to explain. The greatest number of inconsistencies are found in the plays of Marlowe, while the least number are found in the works of Peele. The plays of Lyly and Greene each contain many inconsistencies, showing a proportion of more than two inconsistent plays to one that is consistent.

In Lyly's plays the inconsistencies seem to have been caused chiefly by his attempt to observe the unity of time when writing plays which require the passage of a considerable length of time; consequently his works contain many examples of double time. It seems that Lyly knew what he was doing when he used this device, that its use was not caused by carelessness. He seems to have wished to observe the unity of time whenever possible; when it is impossible to do this, he has actually allowed himself more time but has so constructed his play that the reader is not very conscious of the fact that the playwright has violated the rule. The Woman in the Moon is an excellent
example of his cleverness in this direction. None of his plays actually require the passage of a very long period of time; probably Gallathea, the action of which covers about three months, is the one requiring the longest period of time. Endimion, which is supposed to cover forty years, really covers only a month or two. The plays of Lyly, then, are the best examples of double time that are found among the plays of these four men.

I have shown that Marlowe is exceedingly careless in his treatment of time. Most of his plays, such as Tamburlaine the Great, Dr. Faustus, and The Jew of Malta, deal with powerful characters engaged in mighty actions; and in allowing himself unlimited scope in imaginative thought Marlowe has sometimes either forgotten or refused to recognize the limits of time and space. Few of these inconsistencies in his plays are the result of a deliberate use of the device of double time; they seem to be the result of carelessness and neglect. Marlowe never observes the unity of time; all of his plays require the passage of long periods. Dido, Queen of Carthage, which covers only a month or two, requires the least amount of time; while Dr. Faustus, covering twenty-four years, probably requires the greatest amount. Plays which cover such an extensive period almost invariably contain some inconsistencies. Marlowe, then, in creating his great characters and his "mighty line," has simply ignored the limits of time.
Robert Greene is more consistent in his treatment of time; but he, like Marlowe, is definitely careless. His plays do not show any definite evidences of double time; inconsistencies in his plays seem to be caused chiefly by carelessness. Even in A Looking Glass for London and England and James IV, the only two of his plays which are consistent in time, we find certain problems which are difficult to explain. His other four plays are definitely inconsistent. George a Greene and Alphonseus, King of Arragon contain one inconsistency each. The latter play is one of the few in this group that deals with a great warrior's exploits over a long period of time and still remains only slightly inconsistent in time. Orlando Furioso and Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay contain many inconsistencies.

The plays of Peele, as I have already mentioned, contain a smaller proportion of inconsistencies than those of the other playwrights. Two of his plays, The Arraignment of Paris and The Battle of Alcazar, are consistent. In addition, the former observes the unity of time and is the only play that I studied which observes this unity and is also truly consistent. Because of the lack of scenic divisions it is difficult to classify The Old Wives' Tale. Edward I contains two slight inconsistencies, which are probably caused by the necessity of having the action take place in three widely separated places. David and Bethsabe contains more inconsistencies than any of Peele's other plays. This is caused by the attempt to com-
condense over thirty years of action into a period of about ten years. Some slight evidence of double time is found in this play. Only about one-half of Peele's plays, then, are definitely inconsistent.

I have already pointed out, to some degree, the two types of inconsistencies that are found in these twenty-six plays. The first type, double time, is found chiefly in the works of Lyly, although there are slight evidences of it in the works of the other three men. In Lyly's *Gallathea* we find the two or three months required for the girls' adventures contradicted by the year required for the boys' adventures. In Love's *Metamorphosis* only one day is required for the foresters' revenge on the nymphs, while several weeks are required for Ceres' revenge on Erisichthon. Several days should be required for the growth of Sapho's passion for Phao in *Sapho and Phao*, yet the play covers only one day. The *Woman in the Moon* is supposed to last only seven hours, but references by Pandora and the shepherds to events that require the passage of a much longer period of time causes the play to seem to cover more than these few hours. In *Endimion* we find the clearest example of an attempt to make a short period of time seem much longer than it actually is. In this play the action cannot last very long because of the youthfulness of most of its characters at the end; yet, by introducing references to the passage of twenty or forty years, Lyly succeeds in making us believe that much more time has passed.
The other type of inconsistencies, those caused by carelessness, are much more common. Some of the plays of all of the four men contain examples of this type, but Lyly's contain the least and Marlowe's the most of this type. In some plays we find long scenes in which numerous actions take place in impossibly short times. As example of this impossible time is found in Marlowe's The Jew of Malta. In one scene of this play all of Barabas' goods are declared confiscated and are seized by the government, his house being converted into a nunery. In a few lines of one scene of Marlowe's Edward II, Gaveston is supposed to have traveled almost to Ireland from London. In Peele's David and Bethsabe David is supposed to hear of Absalon's murder of his brother, to banish the culprit to Gesur, and then to recall him to Jerusalem—all of these events taking place in one scene. In some cases, particularly in the last one, most of the confusion seems to be the result of the corruptness of the modern texts of the plays. Some of these long scenes may have been divided originally into two scenes to allow the passage of sufficient time in the interval between the scenes for the action to take place. Some of the original scenes may also have been lost. At any rate, the playwrights should not be forced to bear all the blame for the sometimes foolish inconsistencies that appear in their plays. There is, however, ample evidence for believing that they were not particularly careful in their treatment of time because many of the
inconsistencies that appear in their plays could not possibly have resulted from the garbled condition of the texts.

We have seen, then, that double time was used by the predecessors of Shakespeare, particularly Lyly. It also seems likely that Shakespeare did get his idea for the use of this device from Lyly, rather than from the other three. In both Love's Metamorphosis and Sapho and Phae we find double time used very much as it was later used by Shakespeare in Othello. In Lyly's two plays we find that the action is supposed to take place in only one day but that certain incidents occurring within the plays require more time, a few days or weeks at least. This is almost the same situation that we find in Othello. There the action of the last four acts is supposed to take place in only one day and a half, yet some of the events should require the passage of a few weeks at least. There is, then, a close parallel between the way that Lyly treats the element of time in Love's Metamorphosis and Sapho and Phae and the way that Shakespeare treats this element in Othello; therefore it seems likely that he borrowed the device of double time from Lyly.

It is by no means certain that the use of the device was original with Lyly; but it seems likely that Shakespeare, being more familiar with Lyly's works than with those of more remote predecessors, probably learned of double time from Lyly.

Shakespeare seems to have been influenced in a different way by the other three playwrights. From them and other romanticists he received the precedent of ignoring the unity
of time. In some of their plays, such as Peele's *David and Bethsabe* and the second part of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great*, he found examples of historical plays that covered years, not just days, of time. Perhaps these examples influenced him in some of his historical plays, such as the *Henry VI* trilogy, in which several years pass. Like his predecessors, Shakespeare is inclined to condense historical events into a shorter time than that in which they actually took place. We find examples of this tendency in the *Henry IV* plays, in which the time of the wars of Henry is greatly reduced from the actual historical period that they lasted. Perhaps Shakespeare would have broken with the unity of time and have used the device of double time and the condensation of historical time even if his predecessors had not done so, but there is no concrete evidence to prove this supposition; therefore we may legitimately assume that he was influenced by the examples of the three methods of the treatment of time that are found in the works of his predecessors. The probability of their influence on him is further strengthened by the fact that we know that he borrowed certain ideas for plots from them. It does not seem unreasonable, then, to assume that he was also influenced by Lyly, Marlowe, Greene, and Peele in his treatment of time.
APPENDIX

TIME ANALYSES OF THE PLAYS STUDIED

The Plays of Lyly

Endimion

Act I

Day 1

Scene i  At night

ii  The same night

iii  Still the same night

Day 2

iv  A few nights later

Act II

Scene i  The same night

ii  Also the same night

iii  An hour or two later

Act III

Day 3

Scene i  The next day

ii  Late the same day

Day 4

iii  A few days later

Day 5

iv  Twenty years later

Act IV

Scene i  Probably the same day

ii  Later the same day

iii  That night

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Act V

Day 6  Scene 1  Twenty years after Act IV

ii Later the same day

iii A short time later

Midas

Act I

Day 1  Scene 1  Early one morning

ii Later the same morning

Act II

Day 2  Scene 1  Two or three days later

ii A few hours later

Act III

Scene 1  The same day

ii A short time later

iii An hour or two later

Act IV

Scene 1  Still the same day

ii A short time later

iii A few minutes later

Day 3  iv About nine or ten days later

Act V

Scene 1  The same day

ii A short time later

Day 4  iii Several months later (trip from Phrygia to Delphi)
The Woman in the Moon

Day 1  Act I

   Early one morning

Act II

   A minute or two later

Act III

   Scene i  Immediately afterward
   ii A short time later

Act IV

   A few minutes later

Act V

   Immediately afterward

Gallathea

Act I

Day 1  Scene i  Late one day

   ii A short time later
   iii An hour or two later
   iv A short time later

Act II

Day 2  Scene i  A few hours later

   ii A short time later
   iii An hour or two later
   iv Immediately afterward
   v About an hour or two later
Act III

Scene i  A short time later
   ii  An hour or two later
   iii A short time later
   iv About the same time

Act IV

Day 3   Scene i  About two or three months later
       ii  Should come before 1 of this act and be
            not later than 2 or 3 days after III. iv
       iii A short time later
       iv An hour or two later

Act V

Scene i  Later the same day
   ii  A few hours later
   iii A few minutes later

Campepe

Act I

Day 1   Scene i  Probably about the middle of the day
       ii  A short time later
       iii An hour or two later

Act II

Scene i  A few minutes later

Day 2  ii  About a week later
Act III

Scene 1  A few hours later
   ii  A short time later
   iii  Immediately afterward

Day 3
   iv  Two or three weeks later
   v  Immediately afterward

Act IV

Scene i  Should logically take place the next day after III. v
   ii  Later the same day as III. v

Day 4
   iii  About one or two days later
   iv  Probably later the same day
   v  Practically continuous with the last scene

Act V

Scene i  A few hours later
   ii  An hour or two later
   iii  A short time later
   iv  Immediately afterward

Sapho and Phoe

Act I

Day 1  Scene i  Early one day
   ii  A short time later
   iii  Continuous with Scene ii
   iv  A few minutes later
Act II

Scene i  Night of the same day
  ii  Immediately afterward
  iii  Shortly afterward
  iv  A short time later

Act III

Scene i  A few minutes later
  ii  A short time later
  iii  A few minutes later
  iv  A short time later

Act IV

Scene i  Continuous with III. iv
  ii  Continuous with Scene i
  iii  An hour or two later
  iv  A short time later

Act V

Day 2  Scene i  Early the next morning
  ii  An hour or two later
  iii  A few hours later

Love's Metamorphosis

Act I

Day 1  Scene i  Early one morning
  ii  About an hour later

Act II

Scene i  About half an hour later
Act III
  Scene i  A few hours later
           ii  A short time later
Act IV
  Scene i  An hour or two later
           ii  A short time later
Act V
  Scene i  An hour or two later
           ii  A short time later
           iii  Immediately afterward
           iv  A minute or two later

Mother Bomble

Act I
Day 1    Scene i  About noon on Monday
           ii  A short time later
           iii  A few minutes later
Act II
  Scene i  About an hour later
           ii  A short time later
           iii  A few minutes later
           iv  Several minutes later
           v  Immediately afterward
Act III
Day 2    Scene i  Early the next morning
A short time later
Continuous with Scene ii
Night of the same day

Act IV
Scene i  Several minutes later
A few minutes afterward

Act V
Scene i  Later the same night

Day 2
Very early the next morning
Still early the same morning

The Plays of Marlowe

Tamburlaine the Great, Part I

Act I
Day 1  Scene i  Early one day
A few hours later

Act II
Day 2  Scene i  Early the next day
The next day
An hour or two later
A few minutes later
An hour or two later
Less than an hour later
A short time later
Act III
Day 4  Scene i  About two or three months later
        ii  Probably the same day
Day 5  iii About five or six days later

Act IV
Day 6  Scene i  A few months later
        ii  About the same time
        iii  A few hours later
Day 7  iv  The next day

Act V
Day 8  Scene i  The next day

**Tamburlaine the Great, Part II**

Act I
Day 1  Scene i  One day
        ii  About the same time
Day 2  iii  A few months later

Act II
Day 3  Scene i  A few weeks later
Day 4  ii  A few days later
        iii  Later the same day
        iv  About the same time

Act III
Day 5  Scene i  A few weeks later
Day 6  ii  A few days afterward
        iii  About the same time
Day 7
iv About a week later

Day 8
v A few months later

Act IV

Scene i Immediately afterward

ii A few hours later

iii A short time later

Day 9
iv The next day

Act V

Day 10 Scene i A month or two later

ii About the same time

Day 11
iii A few hours later

The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus

Day 1 Scene i Just at nightfall

ii A few minutes later

iii Later the same night

iv Still later

v Midnight the same night

vi A short time later

Day 2
vii A few months later

Day 3
viii A little more than twenty-three years later

ix About an hour later

x Later the same day

Day 4
xi A few weeks later
Day 5  Scene xii  Probably the next day
Day 6  xiii  The next night
        xiv  After supper the same night
        xv  About an hour or two later
Day 7  xvi  A few nights later

**The Jew of Malta**

**Act I**

Day 1  Scene i  Middle of one day
        ii  Later the same day

**Act II**

        Scene i  Midnight

Day 2  ii  About twenty-nine days later
        iii  A short time later the same morning

**Act III**

        Scene i  Night of the same day
        ii  Later the same day
        iii  A short time later
        iv  Very late the same night

Day 3  v  Probably the next day
        vi  Later the same day

**Act IV**

        Scene i  Later the same day
        ii  Just before one o'clock of that night
        iii  One o'clock of that night

Day 4  iv  A few weeks later
v About an hour later the same day
vi A short time later

Act V

Scene i Shortly afterward

Day 5
ii Probably early the next day
iii A short time later
iv Later the same afternoon
v That night

Edward the Second

Act I

Day 1
Scene i Probably about midday

ii A short time later
iii A few minutes later

Day 2
iv The next day

Act II

Day 3
Scene i Several days later

Day 4
ii Several days afterward

Day 5
iii The next day
iv A few hours later
v An hour or two later

Act III

Scene i That night

Day 6
ii The next day
iii A short time later
Act IV

Day 7        Scene i   A few days later
Day 8        ii       A few weeks later
Day 9        iii      A few weeks afterward
Day 10       iv       A few months later
Day 11       v        A day or two later
Day 12       vi       A few days later

Act V

Day 13       Scene i   A few days later
Day 14       ii       A few days afterward
Day 15       iii      A week or two later
Day 16       iv       About five days later
Day 17       v        Another five days later
Day 18       vi       Four or five days later

The Massacre at Paris

Day 1        Scene i  One morning
            ii       An hour or two later
            iii      About an hour later
            iv       About an hour afterward
            v        An hour or two later
            vi       Early that night
            vii      A few minutes later
            viii     A few minutes afterward
            ix       About the same time
<table>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Several days later</td>
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<td></td>
<td>xii</td>
<td>About an hour later</td>
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<td>xiii</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>xiv</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>xv</td>
<td>Probably the next day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>xvi</td>
<td>A few weeks later</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>xvii</td>
<td>About the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>xviii</td>
<td>A few months later</td>
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<td></td>
<td>xix</td>
<td>About the same time</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>A month or two later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxi</td>
<td>About the same time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxii</td>
<td>A few hour later</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxiii</td>
<td>A few hours afterward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>xxiv</td>
<td>A few months later</td>
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**Dido, Queen of Carthage**

*Act I*

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>One day near Carthage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii</td>
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*Act II*

Scene i  An hour or two later

*Act III*

<table>
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<th>Scene</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>Probably the next day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>A few minutes later</td>
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iii An hour or two later
iv A short time later

Act IV

Scene i An hour or two later

Day 3 ii A few weeks later

Day 4 iii A day or two later
iv A few minutes later
v Immediately afterward

Act V

Day 5 Scene i A few days later

The Plays of Greene

Frier Bacon and Frier Bungay

Act I

Day 1 Scene i Early one day

ii About the same day

Day 2 iii Less than a week later

Act II

Scene i About the same day

Day 3 ii About two days later

iii Continuous with Scene ii

iv A few hours later

Act III

Scene i Evidently the same night

Day 4 ii Late the next morning
Day 5

Act IV

Day 6 Scene i About a day later

Day 7

ii Probably the next day

iii Perhaps the same day

Day 8 Scene i Early the next day

Day 9

ii The next day

iii A short time later

George a Greene

Act I

Day 1 Scene i One day in Bradford

ii Later the same day

iii About the same day in Westmoreland

Day 2

iv Early the next day in Bradford

Act II

Scene i The same day in Westmoreland

ii A short time later

iii The same day in Wakefield

Act III

Scene i The same day in Bradford

Day 3

ii The next morning

Act IV

Day 4 Scene i Several weeks later in London
Day 5

Scene ii About a month later in Sherwood Forest

iii Should be one day after III. ii

Day 6

iv Early the next day

Act V

Day 7

Scene 1 Probably the next day in Bradford

**James IV**

**Act I**

Day 1

Scene i One day in the King's court

ii Later the same day

Day 2

iii A few months later

Act II

Day 3

Scene i Probably the next day

Day 4

ii A day later

Act III

Scene i A few hours later

ii A few hours afterward

iii A short time later

Act IV

Day 5

Scene i The next day

ii Later the same day

iii About the same time

iv Later the same day

Day 6

v Probably the next day

Act V

Day 7

Scene i A few months later

ii About the same time
Iii The same time near Dunbar

Day 8

iv A day or two later

v Much later the same day

Day 9

vi About two days later

Orlando Furioso

Act I

Day 1

Scene i One day in Africa

Day 2

ii Morning a few days later

iii A few minutes later

Act II

Scene i Probably the same day

ii Later the same day

Act III

Day 3

Scene i A week or two later

ii A short time later

Act IV

Day 4

Scene i A few weeks later

Day 5

ii About a day or two later

Act V

Scene i Later the same morning

ii A short time later

Alphonsus, King of Arragon

Act I

Day 1

Scene i One day near Naples

ii Immediately afterward
Act II
Day 2  Scene i  Perhaps a week later
      ii  A few minutes later

Act III
Scene i  A few hours later
Day 3  
      ii  A few months later in Constantinople
      iii  A few hours later

Act IV
Scene i  An hour or two later
      ii  About the same time near Naples
Day 4  
      iii  Several months later

Act V
Scene i  A few hours later
      ii  A few minutes later
      iii  An hour or two later

A Looking Glass for London and England
Act I
Day 1  Scene i  One day in Nineveh
      ii  An hour or two later
      iii  A few minutes later

Act II
Scene i  A short time later
      ii  A few hours later
      iii  Late the same night

Act III
Day 2  Scene i  The next day in Israel
ii About the same time in Nineveh

ili Later the same day

Act IV

Day 3
Scene i  A day or two later

Day 4
ii A few days later

iii Later the same night

iv Still later

v A short time later

Act V

Scene i  That night

Day 5
ii More than a month later

Day 6
iii Several days after this (the end of the forty days)

iv Later the same day

v An hour or two later

The Plays of Peele

The Arraignment of Paris

Act I

Day 1
Scene i  Early one morning

Act II

Scene i  About the same time

ii A few minutes later

Act III

Scene i  An hour or two later

ii A short time later
Act IV
Scene i  An hour or two later

Act V
Scene i  Only a short time later

The Battle of Alcazar

Act I
Day 1 Scene i  One day near Argier
Day 2
   ii  A day or two later

Act II
Scene i  Later the same day
Day 3
   ii  A few weeks later in Portugal
   iii  About the same time in Africa
Day 4
   iv  Later about a week

Act III
Day 5 Scene i  About a month later
Day 6
   ii  About another month later
Day 7
   iii  About six days later
   iv  Later the same day

Act IV
Day 8 Scene i  About four days later
Day 9
   ii  Probably the next day

Act V
Day 19 Scene i  Probably the next day (August 4)
| Day 2 | Scene ii | About a week or two later in Wales |
| Day 3 | Scene iii | About nineteen weeks later in London |
| Day 4 | Scene iv | A month or two later in Wales |
| Day 5 | Scene vi | About two months later near Brecknock |
| Day 5 | Scene vii | About the same time |
| Day 6 | Scene viii | The next day |
| Day 7 | Scene ix | About the same time in Scotland |
| Day 8 | Scene x | A few days later near Brecknock |
| Day 8 | Scene xi | The same day |
| Day 8 | Scene xii | That night |
| Day 9 | Scene xiii | About a week later |
| Day 10 | Scene xiv | About two weeks later |
| Day 10 | Scene xv | A few days later |
| Day 10 | Scene xvi | Later the same day |
| Day 10 | Scene xvii | A few hours later |
| Day 10 | Scene xviii | An hour or two later |
| Day 11 | Scene xix | A short time later |
| Day 11 | Scene xx | Two or three weeks later near London |
| Day 11 | Scene xxi | The same day in Scotland |
| Day 11 | Scene xxii | That night near London |
| Day 12 | Scene xxiii | About two weeks later near London |
| Day 12 | Scene xxiv | About the same time in Scotland |
| Day 13 | Scene xxv | About two or three weeks later |
David and Bethsabe

Day 1  Scene i  One afternoon in Jerusalem
Day 2  ii  The next day in Rabbah
        iii  Late that night in Jerusalem
Day 3  iv  About ten months or a year later
        v  An hour or two later
        vi  The same night
Day 4  vii  The next day at Rabbah
Day 5  viii About ten years later near Jerusalem
         ix  Later the same day
         x  Late that night
         xi  The same night
Day 6  xii The next morning
        xiii Later the same day
        xiv A short time later
        xv  An hour or two later

The Old Wives' Tale*

Prologue 11. 1-132  Late one night (the three servants and
        the old wife)

Scene i  11. 133-349  At a cross in a woods
        ii  350-448  A short time later at Sacrapant's
            cell
        iii  449-550  A few hours later at the cross

*In its original form the play has no scenic divisions. The divisions given here are my own and are based on the shifts of scene within the play.
iv  11. 551-629 About the same time in Sacrapant's study
v   630-706 A few hours later at the well
vi  707-758 Late that night in the woods
vii 759-798 About half an hour later in an inn
viii 799-824 The next day back at the well
ix  825-949 A few minutes later near Sacrapant's study

Epilogue 1. 950-end Just before daybreak (the servants and the old wife)
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Texts


Works Consulted


