

thus subtly employed in a way which acknowledges its traditional usefulness, but moves beyond it. Its seductions to power come over as childishly debased rather than threateningly evil, and, even within that part of the *Satyre* where the traditional morality play is most invoked, the morality resonances of the device seem passé, structurally subordinated to urgent issues of practical reform. What was morally serious, and structurally, stylistically, and mimetically embedded in *The Castle of Perseverance* has become, in the *Satyre*, a self-consciously displayed motif, tonally problematic, trivially playful, divested of special moral status, and deployed to offer stylistic support to the depiction of recognisable and down-to-earth social abuses.

Although awareness of a convention *as a convention* might be expected to increase as time goes on, and would affect its theatrical use, one wonders how and when the major shift in tone and theatrical use manifest in Lindsay became possible. Given the difficulty of fixing dates of composition for many of the plays, and of establishing lines of influence between different parts of the country and authors, one cannot suggest a very precise history of the motif. However, a broad pattern can be described, and this paper will attempt to outline it while analysing the individual cases on which it is based.

Heavily influenced by the morality tradition of its East-Anglian provenance, the N.Town *Temptation*, like *The Castle of Perseverance*, is morally focussed and serious in its use of the alliterative place-name list. Diabolus shows the countries of the earth to Christ in a speech which, though twenty-one lines long, lacks any flamboyant display and consequently does not divert the attention of the audience to its own stylistic achievements. Although Diabolus claims to own all the places he names, his principal goal is neither self-aggrandisement, as in the case of Manhood in *Mundus et Infans*, nor self-definition, as with Mundus in *The Castle*. Directed at the spectator's conscience, it emphasises the difference between Christ's response to temptation and mankind's. Jesus is being tempted to 'covetyse' (150) when shown the kingdoms of the world. The test demands that the countries be presented as convincingly attractive, and so the list is punctuated by phrases which stress what is on offer rather than draw attention to the style in which it is offered or, indeed, the character of the person offering it. The scene makes the vision of the world both real and enticing through remarks about the geographical relationship of places to each other, and their special character. So Babylon, Jerusalem, and Galilee are described as standing close to or over