

The “Scourge of Penance” and a “Garment of Sorrow”: Catholic Reforms and the Spectacle of the Passion in *Everyman*

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Of medieval English plays, *Everyman* is arguably the most famous. Its popularity derives, in great measure, from its compelling dramatization of the universal human condition that transcends its time. This morality play combines allegory with high drama, successfully fusing the religious and the dramatic (van Lann 645). Critics see in *Everyman* the “themes of isolation and self-knowledge” found in Shakespeare’s great tragedies (Spinrad 68). T. S. Eliot praises *Everyman* as a successful case of religious drama that fuses the religious “with ordinary dramatic interest” (n. p.). William Poel’s 1901 production with the Elizabethan Stage Society ignited a renewed interest in *Everyman*, which was absent on the English stage since the banning of religious drama in 1559, and led to further experiments with the medieval play in and out of England. Among

numerous stage productions and film versions of *Everyman*, the German adaptation *Jedermann* is the most well-known. Famous German director Max Reinhardt, after seeing Poel's production, collaborated with Hugo von Hofmannstahl to adapt *Everyman* into a modern play in 1911, removing much of its religious dogma and fleshing out the allegorical characters with modern sensibility. *Jedermann* has become the most popular show of the Salzburg Festival since 1920, also made into a film in 1961. As Richard Homan aptly notes in his study of *Everyman* films, the vitality of the play lies in its theme of "the recognition of one's mortality," which brings about "reconsideration of personal values and a search for salvation" (21).

Despite its enduring stage presence, however, the play in its entirety is far from being universal. *Everyman* in its intact form is not "for all time" but "of an age." Although the summon of death that begins the action of *Everyman* is inevitable to all human beings, its solution is unique to late medieval England. Modern adaptations of *Everyman* are valuable on their own as a reminder of mortality, the transience of life and the need to lead a meaningful life. However, the original *Everyman* brings death on the stage not just to give a general moral lesson but to point to a very specific way to bypass it. To the original audience, *Everyman* was meant not as the *ars vivendi* but as the *ars moriendi* literally, or how to prepare death for a Catholic to get salvation. Taking the question alone out of the play without paying due attention to its resolution would result in a misunderstanding, or at best, a partial understanding of this medieval morality.

Before I turn to my own discussion, it would be worth considering recent criticisms that attempt to historicize the play from a different perspective. It has been brought to awareness recently that *Everyman* "does not actually represent Every Man, as a reader might so naturally assume, but rather Every Merchant" (Ladd 58). In the wake of the recent 'economic' turn in English studies, critics have focused on the verbal matrix of economic and legal terms in *Everyman*, interpreting the protagonist as a

representative of the mercantile class and the play as a social critique of corruption in early Tudor England.¹ Elizabeth Harper and Britt Mize pinpoint *Everyman's* sin as avarice, not unspecified general sins as is commonly assumed (264).² However, sins ensuing from material possession are not particularly a medieval phenomenon but rather a universal evil. As Harper and Mize admit, the mercantile language of the purchase, money lending, gift-giving, the account book and final reckoning in *Everyman* is already present in the Bible. For instance, the words related to reckoning and account, which appear about 40 times in *Everyman* by Harper and Mize's count (275), originate from the idea of Doomsday in the Bible. V. A. Kolve, noting over 25 occurrences of "accounting" and "reckoning" in the play (70), traces its biblical sources to the Revelation and, most of all, to the parable of talents in Matthew and Luke, which he regards as "the source behind the sources" for *Everyman* (72). The evil of material possession is an ever-present, timeless issue since the beginning of the civilization, and it is still in keeping with modern capitalist society, as is demonstrated in the subtitle of Hofmannsthal's *Jedermann: Das Spiel vom Sterben des reichen Mannes*, or "The Play of the Rich Man's Death."

Axiomatic it may sound, what makes *Everyman* of its time is not so much of its economic language as its religious concern. Lawrence V. Ryan argues in his classic essay "Doctrine and Dramatic Structure in *Everyman*" (1957) that "the doctrinal content is the reason for being of *Everyman*" (723). Medieval morality plays were, first and foremost, the instrument of the church to indoctrinate the people of its dogma. As a careful explication of

¹ For economic criticisms of *Everyman*, see Roger Ladd, "My condicion is mannes soule to kill" - *Everyman's* Mercantile Salvation" (2007) and Elizabeth Harper and Britt Mize's article, "Material Economy, Spiritual Economy, and Social Critique in *Everyman*" (2006).

² See, for comparison, Thomas van Laan's argument that the Seven Deadly Sins are all present in *Everyman*, spread out in the figures of Felawship, Kinrede and Cosyn (468-470).

an orthodox view on salvation, *Everyman* is a thoroughly Catholic play in its outlook as well as in its resolution. At the same time, the play also registers the Catholic uneasiness to a historical moment of the religious crisis at the turn of the fifteenth century.³ *Everyman* calls for purification of lay individuals as well as the priesthood, yet its reformist ideas remain firmly within the boundary of the Catholic church.

Despite its Catholic theology specific to its time, *Everyman* is easily adaptable. The play has a unique structure that encases its cardinal Catholic doctrine in the middle, which allows an easy cutout in modern productions. The scene of *Everyman's* visit to the House of Salvation, which ranges over 250 lines from 522 to 771, breaks the play into two parts: the general lesson of *contempus mundi* in the first half and the actual pilgrimage to death in the second half. This essay focuses on this scene at the House of Salvation, which, I would argue, forms a climax theatrically as well as thematically. This particular scene has not received sufficient attention that it deserves, although quite a few critics have analysed *Everyman* in terms of its theology and reformist politics. Drawing on previous readings of *Everyman* as a response to reformist movements in late medieval Europe, particularly by C. J. Wortham and David Bevington, I would emphasize the importance of this scene as a spectacle of the Passion in the imitation of Christ that reflects the reformist movements within the Catholic church.

The approach of this essay is more theatrical than theological. It does not profess to add significantly new insight to the theological and

³ Although *Everyman* is generally categorized as a medieval play, the traditional period marker is problematic. The date of *Everyman's* composition is not known. Critics locate it in the late fifteenth century or in the early sixteenth century (ca. 1495 for David Bevington and the 1520s for C. J. Wortham), which clearly marks the play as early Tudor. In this essay, I wittingly mix "late medieval" and "early Tudor" in describing *Everyman*. The very difficulty of periodizing the play demonstrates its transitional nature.

politico-religious readings of *Everyman*, which have been well established, yet hopes to complement such interpretations in terms of staging. It attempts to recreate the original staging of *Everyman*, with particular attention to the middle scene at the House of Salvation that highlights Catholic reformists ideas theatrically. In doing so, I wish to underline, once again, the historicity of *Everyman* as a cultural product that reflects the religious crisis in England at the turn of the fifteenth century, and to promote the importance of theatre-based approaches for a comprehensive understanding of the play.

Any efforts to reconstruct a play of the past theatrically, of which few records remain, are bound to be speculative. However, "recreation" of its performance condition through informed speculation, which has formed one important branch of medieval theatre research (Twycross 26), would be essential to understand *Everyman* as the original audience would have perceived it. Stanton B. Garner, Jr. also raises awareness of the need to approach English morality plays as theatre pieces written to be performed, arguing that the stage "constitutes not simply an added effect, but a fundamental condition of meaning" in these plays (273). A few critics have ventured "a perilous undertaking," in Bob Godfrey's words, of re-imagining *Everyman* on the stage: Stanton B. Garner Jr.'s "Theatricality in *Mankind* and *Everyman*" (1987), David Mills's "The Theatres of *Everyman*" (1995), and Bob Godfrey's "*Everyman* (Re)Considered" (2000). I will refer to these insightful essays whenever they become relevant to my discussion, which will mainly focus on the theological implications of the middle scene of the play.

Everyman presents a particularly difficult case for a theatrical approach. Little is known about *Everyman*. Four printed editions from 1508 to 1537 survive, which seems to indicate a wide demand of the play. It is now generally agreed that *Everyman* is a translation of the Dutch play *Elckerlijc*, which was first printed in 1495 (Wortham 23). We do not know for certain

who translated it and when, in which condition it was performed, and for what kind of audience. Some scholars suggest that *Everyman* was not intended to be performed. The title page description of *Everyman* as a “treatise” seems to support this view: “Here begynneth a Treatise how the hye Fader of Heven sendeth Dethe to somon every Creature to come and give Acounte of their Lives in this Worlde,” which is “in Maner of a Morall Playe.”⁴ However, the text of *Everyman* also suggests that the play was meant to be performed. As Godfrey points out, its text is rich in internal clues and “indicative elements that reveal clear instances of a perceived action bodying forth the conceptual substance of the play” (159). As I will show later, the play is full of deictic indexes such as *this*, *now* or *here* that presuppose the spatio-temporal dimension of the actual stage.

Everyman is a fairly economic play stage-wise. Unlike other medieval morality plays, *Everyman* is unusual in its somber tone and simple stagecraft, with no comic topsy-turvy of Vice figures, nor pageants of the Seven Deadly Sins. A textual analysis of *Everyman* points to a basic necessity of a few locations, which includes a high Heaven where God and Aungell speak, the “hous of salvacion” where Confession dwells (540) and a Grave where Everyman finally lays himself down. It would also require a small number of stage properties: an account book, a scourge, and a rood. David Bevington makes a similar suggestion for the stage: a high place, a *sedes* for the house of salvation, an unlocalized open stage for most actions, and a grave, “perhaps by means of a trap door” (*Medieval* 749-50). The simple stage requirement indicates that *Everyman* could fit both indoor performance in a church or a great hall as well as outdoor *platea-and-sedes* (place-and-scaffold/mansion) staging.⁵ If we accept David Mills’s sensible

⁴ References to *Everyman* is to David Bevington, ed., *Medieval Drama* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1975), unless noted otherwise. Its line number will be cited in-text in a parenthesis.

⁵ For the discussion of the staging convention of English medieval plays, see Meg Twycross, “The Theatricality of Medieval English Plays” (2008): 26-74.

suggestion to locate the high place for God above the House of Salvation (129), *Everyman* could be staged with even greater economy of one localized *sedes* for the House of Salvation/high place and the unspecified *platea* for all other actions. The representation of the grave is another matter. Mills suggests for the grave a kind of a monument tomb one finds in a church; yet a trap door would be a more suitable location that can indicate the descent of Everyman, as "into this cave must [he] crepe" (792). Actions taking place at the House of Salvation, as the sole localized setting of the play, would have attracted more attention than other unlocalized actions.

Indeed, Everyman's visit to the House of Salvation is significant, not only visually but also structurally. The actions of *Everyman* break into two parts with this scene as a turning point. The first part concerns the summon of Dethe and Everyman's desperate struggle to get help from Felawship, Kinrede, Cosyn and Goods, and his growing isolation and despair from successive desertion. With the entrance of Knowledge at line 522, the action takes a different turn. Everyman visits the House of Salvation for penance, is joined by Five Wittes, Discrecion, Beauté and Strength (who desert him again at the moment of death), goes into the grave with Good Dedes and is received by Aungell. Even this brief description is sufficient to indicate the difference of the two parts. Thomas F. van Laan describes the two parts as "a falling action" and "a rising action," regarding the "descent-ascent structural pattern" as the organizing principle of the play about salvation (466). Lawrence V. Ryan suggests a three-part structure, treating the scene of the House of Salvation separately: two series of desertions interposed by "an episode in which Everyman prepares for death by receiving the last sacraments" (725).

Theatrically, what immediately separates the first part from the second is the scope of Everyman's movement. *Everyman* is a relatively static play. The protagonist encounters a series of allegorized characters in his journey to the grave, and this creates an impression of a road movie. However, in

the first half of the play, Everyman remains rather immobile centre-stage; whomever he looks for conveniently appears to him, only to desert him after a short conversation. This movement of characters highlights Everyman's isolation, who is left on the stage alone. Apart from the opening speech of God to Dethe, all actions up to his journey to the House of Salvation can be staged in one and the same *platea*: Dethe's Summon of Everyman, Everyman's encounter of Felawship, Kinrede, Cosyn and Goods and their betrayal one by one, and the discovery of Good Dedes and Knowlege.

It is only after meeting with Knowlege that Everyman actually goes on a journey, as Knowlege says, "Now go we togyther lovingly/ To Confession, that cleansinge rivere" (535-36) and takes him to the House of Salvation. Importantly, Knowlege stands for "acknowledgement of one's sin," as Ryan explains, not intellect or learning in a general sense, nor even "faith" or "the grasp of the divine law and the divine plan of the universe" as some critics argue (728). The role of Knowlege in the play, which is to take Everyman to Confession and repentance, is self-explanatory. The scene at the House of Salvation forms a nadir in van Laan's analysis, and yet, it is important as the beginning of Everyman's real pilgrimage. Contrary to the inertia of the first half, the latter half of the play is packed with Everyman's action. Led by Knowlege, Everyman visits "that holy man, Confession" (538), "Knele[s] downe and ask[s] mercy" (543).

Most significantly, Everyman is given by Confession a knotted whip, "a precious jewell... [c]alled penaunce, voider of adversité" (557-58).

Confession: Here shall you receive that scourge of me,
Whiche is penaunce stronge that ye must endure,
To remembre thy Saviour was scourged for the[e]
With sharpe scourges, and suffred it patiently; (561-64)

Here the text is full of deictic words such as "*that* scourge" and "*now* I will my penance begin" (574) that indicate the actual presence of a scourge as stage property as well as the actual whipping as stage action.⁶ After making a lengthy confession lasting 24 lines, Everyman asks Knowledge to "give [him] the scourge of penance" (605): he "will *now* begin, if God give [him] grace" (607):

Everyman: In the name of the holy Trinite
 My body sore punished shall be.
 Take *this*, body, for the sinne of the flesshe!
 Also thou deli[gh]test to go gay and fresshe,
 And in the way of dampnacion thou did me bringe;
 Therefore suffre *now* strokes of punnishinge.
Now of penance I will wade the water clere,
 To save me from purgatory, that sharpe fire. (611-18)

Only after Everyman's penance visualized by his self-flagellation can Good Dedes rise from the ground, "delivered of [its] sikenesse and wo" (620) and get ready to go with Everyman. Observing the immediate impact of self-flagellation, emphasized again with three "*now*"s within the eight lines spoken by Good Dedes and Knowledge, Everyman continues scourging: "*Now* will I smite faster than I dide before" (627).

This spectacle of scourging is followed by another one: that of weeping, which visualizes contrition. As Everyman "wepe[s] for very sweteness of love," Knowledge asks him to "[p]ut on *this* garment to thy behove,/ Whiche is wette with your teres" (638-39). It is "the garment of sorowe", or "[c]ontricion.../ [t]hat getteth forgivenes" (643-46), Knowledge informs Everyman. Everyman's line, "For *now* have I on true contricion" (650), confirms that he has put on this special garment in full view of the audience. This makes a sharp contrast to the "*gay*" clothes Everyman was

⁶ All emphasis in italic, here and in the following analysis, are mine.

wearing in the first half (85), visualizing his inner change externally. Everyman's action of scourging and donning of sackcloth forms a central spectacle on the otherwise static and sparse stage, highlighting the importance of penance and contrition in the Catholic concept of salvation.

As there are no stage directions in *Everyman*, we can only speculate how this spectacle of scourging would have been enacted. Considering the convention of medieval Passion plays that displayed realistic images of torture and bodily pain, the representation of the scourging in *Everyman* would have been also gory and violent.⁷ Examining a manuscript that contains notes for the staging of a Passion play, Véronique Plesch points to frequent descriptions of violence and blood as a norm for a late medieval play (87). The manuscript also includes various stage tricks that involve blood, such as a knife that "has a hollow blade and filled with diluted vermilion" and "an iron cap with sponges soaked in red liquid placed under it" (81-82). Pamela King, in her study of the N-Town Passion Plays, suggests "whips dipped in pigs' blood or similar" to achieve the effect indicated in the stage direction about Jesus's scourging, "tyl he is all bloody" (76). Like Everyman's donning of the garment of sorrow, Jesus appears in white dress after scourging in this play. One critic notes that *Everyman* does not present the sacraments of penance in the right order of contrition, confession, satisfaction and absolution (Harding 4). The contrition symbolized by a "garment of sorrow" follows the satisfaction of scourging. This may result from a practical stage need that requires Everyman in purified dress for his speedy pilgrimage in the following action.

The actions of the scourging, crowning with thorns and carrying of the Cross, Pamela King notes, have "iconic importance" in the N-Town

⁷ According to Friedemann Kreuder, who cites the surviving descriptions of performances of medieval Passion Plays in London and Metz, "the actor playing Jesus in the crucifixion scene was fatally injured by the thrust of Longinus' spear or nearly died of heart failure" (178).

Passion Plays (77). Likewise, Everyman's action of scourging, donning of the sackcloth as well as carrying of the cross in the following scene performs an active imitation of the Passion of Christ. His progress in the latter half of the play has a clear parallel to Christic action (van Laan 473). In a fascinating study of flagellation, Nicklaus Largier observes that every asceticism including flagellation is "a work of memory, as a memorial gesture in which the message of Scripture and the life of Christ are made present" (55). Discussing the influence of the fourteenth-century flagellation ceremony on late medieval Passion plays, Friedemann Kreuder associates such violent imitation of the Passion of Christ with "the contemporary understanding of the Eucharist as a bloodless, but nevertheless real, repetition of the sacrifice of Christ" (185). Flagellation, Kreuder says, was meant to be "a visualization that attempted to create a 'real' immediate relationship with the suffering God in an imitative physical performance" (184), which can be equally applied to Everyman's scourging. Confession enjoins that Everyman "must endure [the scourging]/ To remember thy Savior was scourged for thee/ With sharp scourges, and suffered it patiently" (562-65). Everyman craves "[of Christ's] glory to be partaker/By the means of his passion" (602-603).

In fact, one of major influences on *Everyman* is Thomas à Kempis's *Imitatio Christi*, a popular devotional book written in the early fifteenth century. It was widely read as a spiritual guidebook for the *Devotio Moderna*, the reformist movement within Catholicism most active in the low countries from the late fourteenth century onwards up until the Reformation. As Bevington notes, *Everyman* was written at the moment of crisis, in "a time of fervent espousals of various reforms" in the religious climate of church decline, with heresy, skepticism about the Eucharist and spiritual apathy (Tudor 36). Of *Everyman's* relation to Catholic reformist movements, C. J. Wortham has written most cogently. Focusing on the treatment of Confession and Good Deeds in *Everyman* that differs from its

Dutch source *Elckerlijc*, Wortham argues that the alterations and interpolations of *Everyman* reflect the English translator's uneasiness about the reforming tendencies in *Elckerlijc* (28): in short, "*Elckerlijc* is ante-Reformation; *Everyman* is anti-Reformation" (23).

Everyman puts a great emphasis on the authority of the Church in the matter of individual salvation. As Bevington points out, *Everyman* carefully stages the orthodox Catholic teaching on the sacrament of penance in four steps: confession, contrition, satisfaction, and absolution (*Medieval* 939). *Everyman*'s scourging and wearing a sackcloth forms a part of the sacrament of penance, and the whole business of salvation can be completed only through the administration of the Church. Thus, Knowledge sends *Everyman* out to receive the "holy sacraments and ointement togyder," the last sacraments of the Eucharist and extreme unction to prepare for death (707-709). Five Wittes reminds *Everyman* of the seven sacraments of the Church without which no salvation is possible - "Baptim, confirmacion, with preesthode good,/ And the sacrament of Goddes precious flesshe and blod,/ Mariage, the holy extreme unccion, and penaunce" (723-25). The priest "bereth the keyes, and thereof thath the cure/ For mannes redempcion" as the only authority entitled to give the sacraments (707-19), and thus is exalted as higher than angels: "God hath to them more power given/ Than to ony aungell that is in heven" (735-36). As critics point out, Five Wittes's eulogy of the priesthood echoes verbatim the chapter on "The Dignity of the Sacraments and of the Priesthood" in Thomas à Kempis's *Imitatio Christi* (Mcrae 306; Bevington, *Tudor* 36).

After *Everyman*'s supposed exit for the last sacraments offstage, probably out of decorum and also out of stage economy, Knowledge this time criticizes the simony and corruption of some priests (750-763). To this attack on bad priests, Five Wittes can respond only with a wishful defense: "I trust to God no suche may we finde" (764). The passage on the priesthood, which ranges over 60 lines, has been often regarded as a

"digression," not directly related to the action of the play.⁸ However, as recent critics have shown, the debate constitutes an essential part of *Everyman* in relation to its concern with Catholic reforms. E. K. Chambers has wrongly interpreted *Everyman* as a Protestant play from Knowledge's criticism of priests; to the contrary, it is "an urgent plea for reform" within the Catholic church, "directed at those who alone have the power of reform" (Bevington, *Tudor* 37). The priesthood passage in *Everyman* re-asserts the church authority and at the same time calls for its purification and reform from within.

After the break at the House of Salvation that brings the audience home the importance of penance, *Everyman* resumes his journey to the grave. One remarkable aspect about this intervening scene is its time scale different from that of the two parts that surround it. While the temporal dislocation of the middle scene has escaped critics' attention, Kolve's remark on the allegorical nature of time in *Everyman* offers a clue: what appears to us as a long journey, "all those desperate wanderings in the *platea* ... is really born of the allegorical mode itself" (81). The journey in *Everyman* may cover one's lifetime, yet it unfolds on the stage like a fleeting moment. The main action of *Everyman's* encounter with "friends" and procession to the grave is abstract and timeless in its quality. As Kolve says, *Everyman's* action actually represents the movement "of the soul of any man" in search for salvation (82). The action in the House of Salvation, however, coincides with the actual stage time as well as the audience's time in the here-and-now, thus exerting a greater impact on the audience's experience than the action of allegorical time.

The action of the second half of the play unfolds even more rapidly than that of the first half. Having been purified by penance and contrition,

⁸ Harper and Mize note that E. K. Chamber's view of this passage as "a makeweight" and A. C. Cawley's as "extension" were most influential to wrongly "canonize the digression theory" (See Harper and Mize 305, footnote 47).

Everyman is supported by true friends, Discrecion, Strength, Five Wittes and Beauté, who all promise to abide by Everyman until the end. Now Everyman carries the cross in the imitation of Christ's Passion, as is seen from his speech to his new company: "Now set eche of you on this rodde your honde,/ And shortely folowe me" (778-79). The cross should be of a considerable size that can be carried by Everyman and six more characters, Knowledge, Good Dedes, Five Wittes, Beauté, Discrecion and Strength. It creates a powerful iconography that evokes the Passion of Christ in Calvary.

As death dooms on, the second movement seems to return to the universal theme. Fear of death felt by Everyman ("Alas, I am so faint I may not stande!/ My limmes under me doth folde." 788-89) is common to all, as well as another set of desertion by the true friends. The only one that can accompany Everyman to death is Good Dedes, who "will speke for [Everyman]" in front of God (876):

All erthly thinges is but vanité:
 Beauté, Strength, and Discrecion do man forsake,
 Folisshe frendes, and kinnemen, that faire spake -
 All fleeth save Good Dedes, and that am I. (870-73)

This seems to reflect an ethos universally accepted both in East and West: "do good in your life, and you will be rewarded".

However, the meaning of Good Dedes is also unique to Catholic dogma. Wortham notes a significant change in *Everyman* that deviates from the Dutch original: the Dutch character *Duecht*, literally meaning virtue, is turned into Good Dedes (26). The emphasis of good work in *Everyman*, Wortham argues, reflects the Catholic propaganda against the Lutheran emphasis on *sola fide* that man can be saved by faith alone.⁹ However,

⁹ Wortham gives further instances of such changes: God's words that "Charite they

outward charity such as alms-giving takes only a secondary position in the Catholic notion of good work. As Bevington notes, Everyman's good deeds "consist not only of charitable acts but also of penitential scourgings assigned by his confessor" (*Medieval* 939). Significantly, Good Dedes and Knowledge are presented as sisters in the play. Good Dedes can revive only after Everyman completes the sacrament of penance, which suggests that penance is the fundamental basis that comprises good work. Everyman's "account book" is cleared immediately after his donning of the robe of contrition ("Everyman: Good Dedes, have we clere our rekeninge?/ Good Dedes: yes, indeed, I have it here": 652-53). Charity work is presented as supplementary, as in Everyman's arrangement of alms-giving in his testament (699-702), and this appears even redundant to his salvation. The account book carried by Good Dedes demonstrates that Everyman's "singuler vertue" that renders his "rekeninge... crystall clere" is none other than penance (896-98). Without appreciating fully the middle part of the House of the Salvation, its proper meaning is easy to get lost.

Paradoxically, the "longevity" of *Everyman* lies in the fact that this pivotal scene is readily detachable. Given the two-part structure of *Everyman*, the central and perhaps most disturbing scene of self-flagellation as well as the passage on the priesthood can be easily cut out or minimized in modern adaptations, universalizing the play as a timeless work that calls for a better life in front of mortality. William Poel once remarked on his revival of *Everyman*: "I did not myself produce *Everyman* as a religious play. As a religious play, it is bad. Its theology is indefensible" (Speaight 166). Despite his faith in God, Poel found the institutionalized Church and its sacerdotalism repulsive (167). The majority of modern audiences would share Poel's sentiment, unless they are ardent Catholics. As Poel further

do all clene forgete" (51), which changes from the Dutch line that translates as "My pure faith is all forgotten", or Dethe's speech that man will go to hell "Excepte that almes be his good frende" (78), which has no authority in *Elckerlijc* (Wortham 27-28).

remarks, "One can very easily tear it to pieces in that respect. But the whole story, Eastern and not Catholic in its origin, is beautiful as a piece of art" (166). Ryan objects to Poel's idea that *Everyman* can be easily adapted (723), and he is right in a sense, because once the central scene is taken out, the play becomes a completely different piece. *Everyman* is a cultural artefact of its time not so much for its mercantilism as its Catholic doctrine. In this essay, I have tried to recreate the original staging of the play with special attention to the middle scene, which encapsulates an essentially Catholic message for salvation at the time of religious crisis. Amidst the ever-growing religious controversy and feud at the turn of the fifteenth century, *Everyman* affirms the authority of the Church as well as emphasizes the need for purification through the imitation of Christ within the boundary of the Catholic institution. Adaptations of *Everyman* can work as a powerful *memento mori* for modern audiences; in its entirety, it is an extraordinary work that bears witness to the religious zeal and crisis of early Tudor England that anticipates the massacres and martyrdom of the Renaissance Reformation.

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ABSTRACT**The "Scourge of Penance" and a "Garment of Sorrow":
Catholic Reforms and the Spectacle of the Passion in *Everyman*****Yeeyon Im**

Everyman, arguably the most popular English medieval play, still appeals to the modern audience as a work of the *ars moriendi*. Despite its universal theme of death, however, the play in its entirety is far from being timeless. This essay draws attention to its unique structure that encases its cardinal Catholic doctrine in the middle, which allows an easy cutout in modern adaptations. The scene of *Everyman*'s visit to the House of Salvation breaks the play into two parts: the general lesson of *contempus mundi* in the first half and the actual pilgrimage to death in the second half. The middle scene at the House of Salvation, I would argue, forms a climax theatrically as well as thematically. This particular scene has not received sufficient attention that it deserves, although quite a few critics have analysed *Everyman* theologically as well as theatrically. Drawing on previous reformist interpretations of *Everyman*, I would emphasize the importance of this scene as a spectacle of the Passion in the imitation of Christ, which reflects the reformist movements within the Catholic Church. In doing so, I wish to underline, once again, the historicity of *Everyman* as a cultural product of the religious crisis in early Tudor England, and to promote the importance of theatre-based approaches for a comprehensive understanding of the play.

Key Words | *Everyman*, medieval morality play, passion play, penance, salvation, flagellation, Catholicism, the Reformation