



Death and Eroticism

ANATOMY IN JACOBAN TRAGEDY

Anatomy Theatre



Designed by Inigo Jones for the
Company of Barber Surgeons, 1636

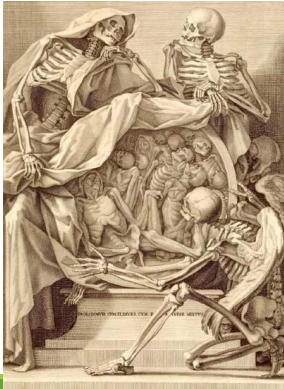


Frontispiece for *De Humani
Corporis Fabrica* (1543), Vesalius



PARADIGM OF THE AGE
OF EXPLORATION:
DIS-COVERY

Frontispiece for *Atlantica* by Olaus
Rudbeck (1689)



The "mingle-mangle"
of death

The horror of the
"confounded" self

frontispiece for *Anatomia* by
Bernardino Genga (1691)



Death the Leveller

"La Danse Macabre" by Leonie
Justin Alexandre Petit



"Adam, Eve and Death" by Hans
Sebald Beham (1543)

- Death enters the world at the same time a SHAME and NAKEDNESS.
- Death as the EXPOSER OF HIDDEN INTERIORS.



"Death and the Family" by Hans Weiditz (1532)

DEATH AND DOUBLENES

- Masques, masks, painting;
- Danse macabre;
- Temporal vs eternal values, pleasures and rewards;
- Machiavellianism;
- *Pharmakon* (poison and cure);
- Onstage vs offstage action;
- Asides
- Disguise

DOUBLENES: Irony, conspiracy, self-delusion, disguise

OPPOSITION/DICHOTOMY: purity/corruption; body/soul; interior/exterior; life/death

DEATH both COLLAPSES distinctions and CLARIFIES values.

EXPOSURE AND DEATH: VISION

"Muscle Man," Vesalius's *De Fabrica*

The Revenger: a self-exposing anatomy;

An ANATOMIST with PRIVILEGED PERSPECTIVE; MEDIATES between life and death;

Revenge drama: a machine to "bring to light" the hidden interior of things.



DEATH AND EROTICISM

Conspiracy is by nature EROTIC:

- The half-seen/half-hidden;
- Masquerade of partial, teasing exposure;
- Death as the TELOS:
 - the stripping away of pretense;
 - the collapse of SURFACES into SUBSTANCE.

"Death and the Maiden" by Hans Baldung (1520)



Mechanisms of Exposure

• REUNITE APPEARANCE AND REALITY

1. DISGUISE (self-revealing surfaces E.G. Rapine and Murder in TA);
2. EAVESDROPPING (dramatic irony; transforms "insides" into "outsides/privacy into public display);
3. SPECTRAL VISITATION (outside knowledge or projection of inner anxiety);
4. MADNESS (SELF-LOSS → SELF-DISCOVERY)
5. ENGINEERING CHARACTERS (servants, dependents);
6. PREGNANCY/VIRGINITY TESTS ("Truth is the daughter of time");
7. SEXUAL PENETRATION (breaching of boundaries between inner/outer worlds);
8. LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (trials, executions, gallows speeches)