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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ENGLISH HISTORY ON THE RENAISSANCE STAGE: POLITICS, PLAY, AND GAMES

BY

FAITH NOSTBAKKEN

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled ENGLISH HISTORY ON THE RENAISSANCE STAGE: POLITICS, PLAY, AND GAMES submitted by FAITH NOSTBAKKEN in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

(Linda Woodbridge, supervisor)

(Jean MacIntyre)

(Jonathan Hart)

(Leslie Cormack)

(James Shapiro)

Date April 30, '93

To my parents

for the blessing of their friendship and support

Abstract

The English history play of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is a problematic genre whose diversity can be more fully understood by examining the nexus of "history" and "play." While "history" has been the focus of many previous discussions, "play" serves as an organizing concept in this study. "Play" encompasses broad possibilities of action and meaning that illuminate the performative and interactive qualities of drama and history, of the stage as a place for both politics and entertainment. Combining play and game theories from political, anthropological, theatrical, and linguistic spheres opens avenues to recognize the history plays as complex forms and representations of "play" as well as "history."

This study examines and compares political and non-political play in a selection of histories. Role-playing and game-playing illuminate similar portrayals of kingship, power, and authority in Marlowe's Edward II and Ford's Perkin Warbeck, two plays which dramatize the instability of political relationships through competitive and cooperative action and dialogue. Games and rituals alternate and frame one another in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III, indicating how dramatic structure as well as historic topics determine the political attitudes presented on stage. In Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, the alternation between political and holiday realms exposes the paradoxes of play and reveals Hal's flexibility as the key to his success as the most "playful" player. The doubleness of play is also apparent in the disguise motif which recurs in a number of history plays. The shifting identities of kings, subjects, rebels, and fools on stage reflect the ambiguous functions and expectations of the genre and the theatre itself. When "playhouse" and "gamehouse" identify the theatrical forum for history, and the dramatists approach history often by disguising it or transforming it

with fiction, legend, and myth, then there is a need for a double vision, for a consciousness that what was staged four centuries ago and is being read and reproduced today is "history + play," a genre based on two disparate but necessarily integrated concepts.

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Introduction

The English history play that rose to sudden popularity in the 1590s and virtually disappeared soon after the turn of the seventeenth century is a dramatic form that for various reasons has received little attention compared to other genres in that period. Some scholars have dismissed the history play for being less successful artistically than other genres. Other scholars have recognized it primarily for its historic rather than its dramatic significance as an expression of national consciousness after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Many have avoided the genre as a literary form too broad and complex to allow for coherent, comprehensive discussion. While each of these approaches can be reasonably justified, England's historical drama nevertheless invites reexamination as a genre that is recognizably diverse, and many neglected plays demand closer scrutiny as independent works combining dramatic, historic, and political elements. The nexus of "history" and "play" that accounts for the problematic nature of this genre can form the basis for a renewed interest in it. If the word "history" has been the main focus of many previous "history play" discussions, the word "play" receives more significant attention in this study. As an organizing concept, "play" encompasses broad possibilities of action and meaning that can offer a new understanding of the performative and interactive qualities of drama and history, of history as drama, of the stage as a place for both politics and entertainment. Relying on various play and game theories--from Renaissance and modern periods, from political, anthropological, theatrical, and linguistic spheres--I will approach a number of the history plays with a view to recognizing their complexity as forms and representations of "play" as well as "history."

One of the most immediate problems to avoid in discussing the history play is the danger of adopting and relying on imprecise terms

that obscure or ignore literary and historic distinctions. I will devote more time to my interpretation and use of the term "play" later: I shall first address the ambiguity engendered by the attempt to place these dramatizations of England's past in their own historical periods, consider the difficulty in speaking of this theatrical form as a particular "genre," and identify some of the critical approaches that reveal--even as they attempt to clarify and resolve--the "generic" problems.

A relatively short-lived phenomenon, the history play is often identified as an Elizabethan form. Alternatively, it is viewed as a Tudor development because it appears during the reign of the last Tudor monarch but relies heavily on the narrative chronicles encouraged by the first Tudors, Henry VII and Henry VIII. Yet notable plays such as Shakespeare's Henry VIII and Ford's Perkin Warbeck bear witness to the fact that the appeal of national, historic drama had not completely died out in the Stuart period of James I and Charles I. By spanning the years of all these reigns, the term "Renaissance"--at least in discussions of the English theatre--avoids the inconsistencies of categorizing according to monarchs, but ignores the obvious distinctions between Tudor history plays and later Stuart drama. Leonard Tennenhouse, for example, speculates about how the differences between Elizabeth's reign and James's reign influenced Shakespeare's approach to history plays ("Strategies of State"), and Anne Barton discusses similar distinctions in non-Shakespearean works ("He that plays the king"). The chapters of my study do not organize the history plays chronologically, because although I acknowledge the importance of sequence in the development of the history play and recognize monarchical influences especially on this politically focused drama, I am more interested in exploring what the plays have in common as popular reenactments of the past during England's theatrical renaissance. If describing the English history play as a Renaissance genre is vague

enough to be somewhat misleading, it nevertheless encompasses the time period from the late 1580s to the mid-1620s that forms the temporal boundaries for the plays that I explore.[1]

More problematic than identifying the period of the stage performances is referring to the English history play as a "genre" which is both literary and historical and eludes the traditional generic dichotomy of tragedy and comedy. Without focusing specifically on history plays, both Rosalie Colie and Barbara Lewalski attest to "the complexity of genre concepts in the Renaissance" (Lewalski 6), acknowledging the flexibility of the term "genre" in a way that justifies its use in discussions of mixed or evolving literary forms. However, the extant history plays reveal such a variety of dramatic approaches and historical and political perspectives that many scholars who may wish to refer to the plays as one class or genre recognize the difficulties of doing so. As Kristian Smidt remarks in reference to Shakespeare's histories alone, "It would be hard to extract a formula for a new genre of history play out of so much diversity" (16-17). Likewise, Jonathan Hart acknowledges the "[controversy] over the definition of the history play" (24) as he too focuses his study on Shakespeare's work:

> Owing to the magnitude of the problem, it is best to examine the history play as it is represented in the Second Tetralogy, as opposed to analyzing plays as diverse in time and temperament, scope and emphasis as Gorboduc and Perkin Warbeck. (24)

Because my study aims to explore the often ignored non-Shakespearean history plays and to include Shakespeare's works only as part of a much

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[1] Leah Marcus addresses the difficulties of labelling literature according to historical periods ("Renaissance/Early Modern Studies," in Redrawing the Boundaries: The Transformation of English and American Literary Studies, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn [New York: MLA, 1992]: 41-63). She discusses the gradual terminological shift in current criticism from "Renaissance" to "early modern" as identifiers of literature following the medieval period. She points out, however, that the change presently taking place is not simply one of nomenclature but represents "conceptual reconfigurations" and a "remapping of the field itself" (41).

larger dramatic phenomenon, it is more difficult for me to avoid the generic "controversy" which revolves around suitable criteria for defining the history play. The voices in the controversy so far have attempted to define this genre from the standpoint of three categories which I identify as purpose, structure, and subject.[2]

Early in the debate, Lily B. Campbell and Irving Ribner emphasized the didactic purpose of the drama, recognizing that accuracy to the past remained secondary to a politically instructive role in the present. In Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy (1947), Campbell distinguished the political focus of the history plays from the ethical focus of tragedies (16-17), and described the way topical allusions in the historical genre provided a political commentary on Elizabethan society. For her, The Troublesome Reign is an almost allegorical history play, a mirror providing obvious parallels between King John and Elizabeth, Pandulph and Cardinal Allen, Arthur and Mary. Irving Ribner likewise posited a didactic purpose as the defining feature of the history play in his thorough genre study, The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare (1957). He, too, indicated that history plays were significant as they paralleled contemporary politics, promoting nationalism and affirming Tudor orthodoxy. For him, Bale's King Johan is the first history play because of its moralistic, patriotic intent, and a play like Edward III, for example, is unified by a didactic theme, "the education of a perfect king" (150). He sees a clear distinction between true history plays and historical romance or legends which lack the requisite "serious intent" (267). This "purposive" definition, focusing on the stage primarily as it relates to the outside world, depends on speculations about authorial

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[2] In an overview of twentieth-century criticism addressing Shakespeare's historical drama, Edward Berry offers an alternative approach to existing definitions of the history play based on what he recognizes as three significant features: "the patriotism of the plays . . . , their preoccupation with politics, and their sequential nature" (249).

intent[3] and demands an occasionally forced interpretation of dramatic action. Campbell, for example, mentioned Henry IV's Falstaff, one of Shakespeare's most comic figures, only as he "confirmed the picture of conditions in the English army and the picture of the aftermath of war for the soldier" (254).

In The Iconography of the English History Play (1974), Martha H. Fleischer rejects this approach altogether and defines the history play according to structure rather than purpose as "a form of literature--fiction--and not a form of history" (254). She sees the English history play as "a romance, a story of the adventures of a messianic fertility hero, the climactic adventure being a battle or sacrificial death, the ultimate episode a restoration or virtual resurrection" (269). Her generic boundaries are limiting for they lead her to describe Ford's Perkin Warbeck more like a de casibus tragedy than a history and to reject Part Two of Heywood's If You Know Not Me because its partly fictional sources violate the representative pattern (271), although she ignores her own restrictions to include both plays in detailing the iconography of the history play.

David Scott Kastan and John Wilders adopt structural approaches which appear more useful because they take the historical subject into consideration. Both scholars emphasize the importance of historical time on the dramatist's "structural artistic imperatives" (Kastan "The Shape of Time" 263), Kastan by noting that "open-endedness is fundamentally the mark of the history play" (269-270) and Wilders by remarking that history plays begin and end with "the sense of the continuing movement of history" (6). Kastan suggests that the plays follow the tradition of the medieval mystery cycle: the Corpus Christi

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[3] Many recent critics have pointed out the problems of proving a dramatist's intentions or identifying them with an historian's objectives. See, for example, David Scott Kastan's "The Shape of Time: Form and Value in the Shakespearean History Play," Comparative Drama 8 (1973-74): 262; and G.K. Hunter's "Truth and Art in History Plays," Shakespeare Survey 42 (1990): 15.

plays deal with human history as salvation history in a timeless context of eternity (264); the English history play dramatizes human history as national history inscribed by the limitations of time in such a way that each "play recognizes the impossibility of isolating the action from its place on the temporal continuum" (270). Thus Shakespeare's Henry V ends with a reminder of the disasters that followed in Henry VI's reign, and many other historical characters are aware that their actions are constructed by past actions: Richard II's abdication by the murder of Woodstock, Hal's prodigal youth by his father's usurpation of the crown. Kastan, however, recognizes the problems in his approach, noting that Richard III is an exception to the rule because of its strong "terminal stability" (277). And ironically, while Kastan's perspective suggests that the comic continuum of time overrides the actions of the stage characters, Wilders portrays the tragic inevitability of time as characters try to establish permanence in a fallen world that defies it (Wilders 28).

The third common approach to defining the history plays is to identify the subject of the drama. Drawing from Heminges' and Condell's divisions in Shakespeare's First Folio, G.K. Hunter says, quite simply,

> what one can derive from their list is the sense that this genre must be defined, above all, by its subject matter: a history play is a play about English dynastic politics of the feudal and immediately post-feudal period--is, you might say, 'a play about barons.' (15)

While acknowledging that "Elizabethan generic vocabulary is notoriously spongy" (15) and that "tragedy," "comedy," and "history" overlap as title words and categories for the drama of the period, he suggests topical boundaries for the history play: "historical narratives must be 'true,' as against other kinds of plays which can be acknowledged and responded to as feigned or fictive" (16). This "subject" approach to the history play is workable only when qualified by an awareness that "factual" or "true" reenactments of the past are open to the "subjectivity" of interpretation. Thus Hunter identifies

> the central dilemma in the genre--the contradiction (or at least tension) between truth to the experience of the past and the fictional or artful means by which such material can be unified and given general significance. (20-21)

Two scholars who study history plays from Elizabethan times to the twentieth century tend also to offer a "subject" approach qualified by an acknowledgement of the dramatists' interpretive subjectivity. In Historical Drama: The Relationship of Literature and Reality (1975), Herbert Lindenberger proposes that since the drama has no "typical historical 'structure'" (99), one should think instead of an "'historical world,' which implies not so much a particular structure or type of language as a body of materials which a writer approaches with certain recognizable attitudes" (99). He submits,

> Historical drama, insofar as it reflects upon and interprets past events, can be considered a branch of historical thought, though one which projects hypotheses and individual theories about history more than it does fully worked out philosophies. (131)

In The Play of Truth and State (1986), Matthew Wikander also implies that the drama is based on an exploration of subject rather than a didactic purpose or literary structure in his suggestion that Shakespeare and Brecht alike adopt "[a] scrutiny, not [an] acceptance or rejection, of history" (7). Part of the problem in studying history plays in the Renaissance--particularly those that are non-Shakespearean--is that many of the playwrights not only interpret the facts of the past, but include characters and events having questionable or nonexistent factual origins. The Bastard of Falconbridge in The Troublesome Reign and King John, the sentimental ballad of Jane Shore in Heywood's Edward IV, and the folk motif of the disguised king in Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me are only a few examples of the many fictional, mythical, or legendary elements that exist in Renaissance plays about English history. The dramatists appear to be not only interpreting history but "playing" with it, by purposely, inadvertently, or necessarily ignoring the boundaries of their "factual" subject.

History as a field of study in the Renaissance had its own ambiguities which provide some explanation for the freedom adopted by the dramatists of history, apart from their literary license to play with the past. D.R. Woolf notes that "the idea of history, as much as its practice, was in a state of ferment in Renaissance England" ("Erudition" 47) and that in Tudor times "history" could mean either "story" or "inventory of factual knowledge" (17). He explains a gradual interchange between the terms "antiquities" (signifying non-narrative records) and "histories" (indicating narrative accounts of the past) (20-27) until the 1630s when the two words were "often used synonymously" (45).[4] In Fact or Fiction: the Dilemma of the Renaissance Storyteller, William Nelson observes not the shifting relationship between narrative and non-narrative records, but the vague boundaries between written accounts of fact and fiction:

> [the] blending or confusion of fiction and history was encouraged by the absence of a clear distinction between them, especially when history was understood as historians practiced it, rather than as the naked truth they professed it to be. Despite their pretenses, historians were ignorant of many things, they disagreed with each other, they were partisan, they were given to conjectures as to causes and motives. Those who followed the classical tradition invented speeches and concocted descriptions. Histories were therefore by no means free of fiction; in fact they differed from it not in kind but only in the quantity of invention. (93)

History and story, fact and fiction, were not clearly distinct domains either in the history plays dramatized on stage or in the narrative chronicles which were a popular genre during most of the Tudor period. The chronicles, which constituted the primary source material for the dramatists, were written not only to provide "history lessons" for the reading public but to serve the political aims of the ruling monarchs

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[4] In chapters one and seven of his recent study, The Idea of History in Early Stuart England (1990), Woolf incorporates his discussion from this earlier article that I cite, "Erudition and the Idea of History" Renaissance Quarterly 40 (1987): 11-48. In his book, he expands more fully the view "that early Stuart historical writing is fraught with tensions, ambiguities, and uncertainties" (Idea 11).

who wanted on record their own version of "history," official Tudor interpretations of the past.[5]

When the history play entered the theatres near the end of the sixteenth century, it became not simply a public expression of late Tudor national consciousness but part of the debate about the relationship between contemporary politics and past events, about the dermarcations between poetry and history, about the legitimacy, popularity, and "truth" of interpretation and imagination. Literary critics and historians alike took part in the debate, the historians praising history over fiction, the literary critics such as Philip Sidney praising fiction over history (Nelson 51-52). Two notable defenders of drama, Thomas Nashe (Pierce Penilesse, 1592) and Thomas Heywood (Apology for Actors, 1612), appealed to the authority of reality in the history plays as an argument for the moral, instructive function of the stage. But as Nelson observes,

> For those who had a high regard for historical truth, its mixture with fiction was intolerable, for the consequence was not to make the history interesting or the fiction credible but to sully the truth. (104)

The author of the Refutation of Heywood's Apology for Actors takes that tack, complaining of the history plays "that the ignorant instead of

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[5] Other treatments of the political attitudes of Tudor chroniclers and the changing idea and practice of history at the turn of the sixteenth century in England include Henry Ansgar Kelly's Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1970; D.R. Woolf's "Genre into Artifact: the Decline of the English Chronicle in the Sixteenth Century," Sixteenth Century Journal 19.3 (1988): 321-354; and F.J. Levy's Tudor Historical Thought, San Marino, CA: Huntington, 1967. Kelly's view that the chroniclers were not all simply using history to support the Tudor Myth, Woolf's argument that the narrative chronicles were losing popularity and "[dissolving] into a variety of [historical] genres" (323) including historical drama, and Levy's account of the shift in the seventeenth century from chronicler as "mere collector of material" to true historian as analyst "who did not present that material but instead used it" (255 a paraphrase of Bacon's distinctions in The Advancement of Learning) each provide slightly different perspectives on the ferment surrounding English history. In doing so, they raise questions about assumptions that the drama simply reflected narrow partisan attitudes of the existing monarchy, or capitalized on an already popular subject demarcated by clear expectations, or mirrored current objective "truths" or "facts" of "history."

true History shall beare away nothing but fabulous lyes" (Heywood 42).[6] The popularity of the English history play is without question, given the records of its proliferation in the 1590s and the fact that it represents over a quarter of Shakespeare's dramatic canon. But there was apparently no public consensus about the boundaries of subject matter, structural imperatives, or political and moral purposes even by the artists, critics, and defenders of the time, let alone four centuries later by new generations of historians, critics, and dramatic producers attempting to reconstruct contextual attitudes of the Renaissance or relying on twentieth-century attitudes to shape and interpret texts of the past.

While modern historical theorists appear to be acknowledging their awareness of the fictional subjectivity and the structural imperatives shaping the writing and rewriting of history,[7] two recent historical approaches to drama and literature, new historicism and cultural materialism, tend to have a double perspective which stresses the need to see texts objectively as part of a cultural, historical context, but which often denies or ignores the influences of their own twentieth-century context on their analysis and intepretation of texts and

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[6] The controversy over the purpose and value of the theatres extends far beyond the response to the history plays and is explored in studies such as Russell Fraser's The War Against Poetry (1970) and Jonas Barish's The Antitheatrical Prejudice (1981). In the context of the history play, Hart summarizes and interprets the distinctions between historians and poets made in Sidney's An Apology for Poetry (1595), noting that Sidney's "having predeceased the golden age of English drama, including the development of the English history play" may have limited his perspective on the possibilities of such a mixed, controversial genre (14).

[7] Scholars who address the debate about history as an "objective science" or a "narrative art" and who acknowledge the subjective aspect of history which qualifies or limits it as a science include R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History, 1946; J.H. Hexter, Doing History, 1971; and Hayden White, Tropics of Discourse, 1978. Collingwood speaks of the necessity of "historical imagination" which identifies historians with novelists (242-246); Hexter stresses "the gap between knowing and commmunicating in history" (46) and observes the unavoidability of "value words" in "[d]iscourse about what people are like" (132); White provides an entire structural system based on literary terms to identify the subjective "story" element of narrating history.

performances from the past.[8] New historicism and cultural materialism have had a particularly significant impact on the recent directions in contextual criticism of Renaissance drama and other genres of the same period. In terms of my categories of purpose, structure, and subject, these two related approaches are largely "purposive" to the extent that they challenge the assumptions of cultural uniformity adopted in the earlier studies of Ribner, Campbell, or E.M.W. Tillyard, while at the same time relying on similar speculations about authorial intentions. New historicists and cultural materialists frequently identify the dramatist's intention as subversive rather than didactic, and as exposing political contradictions or inconsistencies rather than upholding and presenting the values of the existing monarchy.[9]

This critical development has mainly manifested itself in a number of political studies on Shakespeare's histories and his other drama rather than on the Renaissance English history play as an independent

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[8] New historicism is more frequently guilty in this regard than is cultural materialism. Professing cultural materialists such as Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield are, in fact, quite open about their political agenda as they acknowledge in their approach to literature a "commitment to the transformation of a social order which exploits people on the grounds of race, gender and class" (Political Shakespeare viii). The New Historicism (ed. H. Aram Veeser, 1989) provides some insightful articles on the strengths and weaknesses of new historicism, its ongoing changes and developments, and its relationship to cultural materialism. Regarding the lack of uniformity in recent historical approaches, see also Louis Montrose, "New Historicisms," in Redrawing the Boundaries, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn (New York: MLA, 1992): 392-418.

[9] The number of recent discussions about new historicist studies in Renaissance literature indicates the impact of this approach on contemporary criticism and provides further analysis of its theoretical assumptions. Articles include Jonathan Goldberg's "The Politics of Renaissance Literature: A Review Essay," English Literary History 49 (1982): 514-542; Louis Montrose's "Renaissance Literary Studies and the Subject of History," English Literary Renaissance 16 (1986): 5-12; Jean Howard's "The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies," English Literary Renaissance 16 (1986): 13-43; Edward Pechter's "The New Historicism and its Discontents: Politicizing Renaissance Drama," PMLA 102 (1987): 292-303; Carolyn Porter's "Are We Being Historical Yet?" The South Atlantic Quarterly 87 (1988): 743-786; James Holstun's "Ranting at the New Historicism," English Literary Renaissance 19.2 (1989): 189-225; and Richard Levin's "Unthinkable Thoughts in the New Historicizing of English Renaissance Drama," New Literary History 21.3 (1990): 433-447.

and diverse genre.[10] Larry Champion's "The Noise of Threatening Drum": Dramatic Strategy and Political Ideology in Shakespeare and the English Chronicle Play (1990) is the only recent study that brings some of the latest historical and cultural assumptions to brief readings of a number of history plays, including non-Shakespearean plays. My own study is undeniably influenced by practitioners of new historicism and cultural materialism, and my focus on politics particularly in the first two chapters reflects the political interest engendered in Renaissance studies during the last decade or more. However, my organizing concept is "play" rather than "politics," and I move in the last two chapters towards an understanding of the history plays as works that represent and encourage attitudes which are "playful" as well as "political."

Two scholars, John Turner and R. Rawdon Wilson, provide a jumping off point for an explanation of my approach to England's historical drama and my use of the word "play." John Turner introduces Shakespeare: The Play of History (1988) by speaking on behalf of himself and the other two contributors and inviting their readers to focus on the equation, history + play:

> We have argued here for both play and history, the former authenticating the latter, the latter disciplining the former; and we have tried in what follows to move discriminatingly between the two, the subjective appropriation of Shakespeare's plays to fashion our own symbols for present understanding and the objective attempt to see them in their own historical context. (6)

He suggests that the study is an

> attempt to mediate between two critical methodologies, one traditional and one modern, both with characteristic strengths but both of which seem . . . to have significantly misrepresented the value of the blend of drama and history in the plays. (4)

His terms "play" and "history," however, largely explain the perspective of the contributors--their blend of critical subjectivity and

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[10] Select works include Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield's Political Shakespeare (1985), Graham Holderness's Shakespeare's History (1985), and Leonard Tennenhouse's Power on Display: The Politics of Shakepeare's Genres (1986).

objectivity--more than "the blend of drama and history in the plays." While the three contributors offer insightful readings of a selection of Shakespeare's works, only a portion of the study is devoted to the First Folio's group of English history plays per se, and very little is actually made of "play" as an organizing concept. Turner's implicit equation, history + play, is nevertheless useful, and I adopt it in addressing English history plays from a critical standpoint that, to a certain degree, acknowledges and encompasses each of the three defining assumptions of the genre: purpose, structure, and subject. "History + play" allows one to recognize the generic diversity and to explore in individual works the multiple purposes and expectations of performance as opposed to the straightforward academic intentions of instruction, the structure that differentiates dramatic history from narrative history, and the subject that can be seen as series of overlapping and successive political games reenacting history on stage.

R. Rawdon Wilson's In Palamedes' Shadow (1990) offers, as the subtitle indicates, "explorations in play, game, and narrative theory." Wilson begins with a concise summary of "eight categories of game and play models" (8) and continues with an inquiry into the applicability of the various play/game theories as approaches to literature. Wilson's study is useful as it confronts the complex relationship of play to game, and as it reveals the multiple levels of "play" potential within texts, between texts, by authors, by readers, or between authors and readers. Referring to play and game as "twinned terms [which] possess an inordinate diversity and range in ordinary language as well as a large number of technical meanings" (18), he emphasizes the rule-orientation of games and speculates, "One might suppose that play must be the more general concept and that though all games presuppose playfulness, not all play leads to gamefulness" (76). Referring more specifically to play and games in literature, he observes

> that literary texts may be games in several ways: that they may incorporate empirical games, that they may mark off the

> playground of the author's personal gamefulness, that they may engage the reader in textual games as well as in word play, that they may be constituted as games (whatever the author may wish or think) by the reader's own game playing, and even that they may be transformed into gamer by the rulelike procedures of interpretive criticism. (104)

While Wilson studies narrative works rather than drama, he demonstrates that the broad scope of "play" represents numerous approaches rather than a single approach to literature, and that it can consequently open doors to both the richness of possibility or the vagueness of ambiguity.

The concept of "play" is even more appropriate in approaching drama than narrative. It is, however, no less problematic as a potentially obfuscating than as a clarifying concept because of the many different levels of simultaneous interaction, especially when a play enacts history with possible allusions to contemporary events or individuals. The main focus of my discussion in the following chapters is the interaction among historical characters on stage. That is, I approach the events of reenacted history as game-like according to the players' explicit or implicit rules and strategies, or as playful according to their attitudes and expectations of amusement or entertainment. I do not, however, overlook or exclude the other levels of play that exist metaphorically or literally in the relationship between the theatre and the outside world, between the players and the audience, between the actors and the characters, between history and performance, between fact and fiction. All of these levels inform the complexity of the history play as a genre and help to illuminate the broad, often indistinct boundaries that circumscribe both history and play.

The uncertain but undeniable connection between the more general term, play, and the more specific term, game, that shapes my discussion is essential to our understanding of acting and theatres in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Donald Watson explains the political significance of drama as game:

> Elizabeth helped to construct the conventions of the stage of politics, though its basic nature had been conceived by the first Tudor and long ago had been laid bare by Thomas More, who equated at least some "king's games" with "stage plays." (24; from History of Richard III, ed. R. S. Sylvester, The Complete Works of Sir Thomas More, New Haven: Yale UP, 1980, III, 80.)

The link between play and game not only derived from the political activities of the Tudor court, however, but also had social origins in a variety of public, community performances. Michael Hattaway describes how the Elizabethan term "player" identified participants in both drama and games:

> Plays had historical as well as categorical relationships with games. The customary Elizabethan word for actor is 'player', and Elizabethan plays draw upon the traditions of popular and aristocratic sports and revels. A printed text of c. 1560 gives us 'The Play of Robin Hood, very proper to be played in May Games'. The Bankside playhouses lay right by the bearbaiting rings and were associated with them by the City fathers and doubtless by many members of their audiences. The first Blackfriars playhouse had been a fencing school. Tudor interludes draw upon folk forms: impersonation, slapstick, combats, verbal 'flytings', bawdy anecdotes, the pageants of the Midsummer shows, as well as on traditional seasonal games of Robin Hood and St George. The devils with squibs and crackers in their tails, so popular in the public playhouses come, like fools and clowns, from the 'dramatized life' of the community. (80)

This close relationship between play and games in the Renaissance theatres had roots even further back in dramatic history. Louis Montrose acknowledges the earlier precedent of drama as game in the medieval mystery cycles (studied in V.A. Kolve's The Play Called Corpus Christi, 1969) as he distinguishes between the perceptions of "game" and "reality" in the two periods: "the medieval religious stage and the secular Elizabethan stage differ fundamentally, in that what they 'play' are two different orders of reality" ("Purpose" 69), for "the religious drama of the medieval Corpus Christi cycle imitates Biblical history and divine revelation in 'play'; the secular, professional, and commercial drama of Shakespeare's London exemplifies the reality which it plays" (70) (my emphasis). The politically-, historically-, and dramatically-based relationship between play/game and reality in the sixteenth century provides a contextual foundation for the exploration of the

overlapping boundaries and expectations of reality and game-play in the "reality-based" history plays of that period.

Glynne Wickham provides even more thorough documentation of the ambiguous and evolving relationship between the two words "playhouse" and "gamehouse" as terms to identify the place and hence the activity of Renaissance theatres in England (Early English Stages, 1300-1660 Vol. 2 pt. II, 30-94). Noting, "The two words 'recreation' and 'pastyme' supply the key to the ambiguity transferred into English from ludus and extending outwards into both 'play' and 'game'" (34), Wickham explains the use of the word "game" for drama:

> In the sixteenth century a uniquely consistent use of the word game in a theatrical context comes from Great Yarmouth in Norfolk where we find 'gamehouse', 'game players', 'game book' and 'game gear'--a building, actors, a script and stage-costumes and furnishings. In other words we have all the essential ingredients of dramatic performance covered not by the word 'play' but by the word 'game'.
>
> Such usages can be paralleled in many other provincial cities, especially those in East Anglia. For example, as late as 1558 the Church wardens of Holy Trinity Church, Bungay, in Suffolk, are making provision for game books and game gear while those of St Mary's Church in 1543 speak of 'ye game on corp(u)s (Chris)ti day'. (32)

He likewise cites examples in London and elsewhere of "the word play used to describe activities we might regard as being more aptly designated by the word game" (34) to prove that "until the middle years of the sixteenth century the words 'game' and 'play' tended to be used indiscriminately rather than rationally in respect of both dramatic and non-dramatic recreational activities" (41). By the 1620s, however, it is evident "that a genuine distinction has at last been made in the English language between 'game' and 'play', 'place' and 'house'" (Wickham 40). The age of the history play occurs in the transition period between the time when "play" and "game" were interchangeable signifiers of the theatre and the time when "play" became the more acceptable term, between a time when "history" could signify both fact and fiction and a time when the word became more clearly identified with a "scientific" or "objective" understanding and recounting of the past.

There were conflicting attitudes towards and theories of play during that time, just as there were conflicting conceptions of history. Eileen Allman describes the instructive aspect of "play" which is at the center of both sixteenth-century defenses of the theatres and twentieth-century interpretations of didacticism in the history plays:

> The direct connection between play and education was an important aspect of the theories and practices of Renaissance schoolmasters. At Eton, under headmaster Nicholas Udall, playwriting, acting, and staging were part of the curriculum; Udall himself probably borrowed the technique from his own education at Winchester. According to one of his pupils, William Malim, Latin plays helped the pupils learn their grammar and pronunciation; English plays provided 'subtlety and humour.' (10)

Play was not merely linked to education, however, and William Worthen points out the disagreement between humanist and Puritan conceptions of theatrical play-acting as it was disengaged from the classroom:

> To the humanists, the actor's art is a creative expression of the world's dazzling fruitfulness, and of man's preeminent place in it. To the Puritans, the actor represents man's fallen inconstancy, and his evanescence implies the threatening chaos immanent in the natural order when nature's degrees and differences are erased. (26)

The function and understanding of "play" as it fused both acting and games was thus a continued source of debate which Allman summarizes:

> The Renaissance attitude toward play, then, is ambivalent. Play is a force that molds our minds and behavior for good or ill, that allows us to reach beyond ourselves into a dangerously powerful, possibly forbidden sphere of energy, and that reconnects us to absolute forces who use us for their own actualization. (14)

As broad and conflicting as are the definitions of "play" today--ranging from voluntary, creative activity to random, inescapable motion[11]--"play" was obviously already a multifarious term inspiring many interpretations and responses in the Renaissance.

My own approach to the history plays draws on the diverse and ambivalent conceptions of "play" and "history" in the Tudor and Stuart

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[11] R. Rawdon Wilson distinguishes between these "two [modern] irreducible senses" of play (66) according to the contrast between Friedrich Schiller's understanding of play as purposeful and Jacques Derrida's conception of jeu libre as random, involuntary activity (65-73).

periods, incorporating with those prior views modern game and play theories. I rely more on the assumptions of political game theory and anthropological play theories than on concepts of narrative and textual playfulness that have entered literary criticism through the post-structuralist influences of Roland Barthes or Jacques Derrida. My interest is less in the critic's or even the playwright's role as game-player than in the way that various modern game and play assumptions can enrich our understanding of the controversy around Renaissance theories and can contribute to current readings of some well-known and some less-familiar Renaissance history plays. "Play and "game" provide an angle from which to approach the drama in its present form as text and in its original form as performance which we can reconstruct partly through our imaginations and partly through our knowledge and interpretation of the historical context, including the role and influence of the Renaissance theatres. To this end, I adopt and combine theoretical assumptions and interdisciplinary perspectives which may appear inordinately broad and disunified, but which, I contend, illuminate the diversity of the history play genre itself and the inconsistent and ambivalent assumptions about play, game, and history during their production and performance. Focusing on "play" draws attention to the connections rather than the distinctions among the elements of politics, education, and entertainment that come together in the drama considered in this study.

The first two chapters are organized around comparative analyses of two history plays, interpreting their stage interaction as a form of political play. Both chapters bring assumptions of modern political game theory to the dramatic texts, but each chapter integrates those recent assumptions with older, more theatrically-based concepts of play or performance in order to examine different political issues raised in the individual works. Chapter One combines views of politics as game-playing and as role-playing to explore similar portrayals of kingship,

power, and authority in two plays representing early and late works in the historical genre, Marlowe's Edward II (1592) and Ford's Perkin Warbeck (1634). The public consciousness of governing as a form of acting in the reigns of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs, as well as the political significance of games such as chess in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, provide an historical context for the integration of the two "play" concepts in interpretations specifically of the dramatic action and, more generally, of the political function of the stage in society.

Developed by John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern in 1944 (The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior), the modern political game theory I adopt is based on a set of mathematical assumptions about social interaction. Its technical, prescriptive nature offers little to literary analysis, but its concepts revolving around goal orientation are adaptable and applicable especially to the study of political literature and dramatic performance.[12] Emphasizing both the seriousness of play and the necessary interdependence of political actors, game theory rests on two assumptions: first, that the people involved act as players motivated by clear personal preferences, and second, that the achievement of their preferences depends upon the choices and actions of

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[12] Several scholars have applied political game theory to literary works. Nigel Howard analyzes Harold Pinter's The Caretaker in Paradoxes of Rationality: Theory of Metagames and Political Behavior (1971): 140-146. In a book-length study of the Old Testament, Steven Brams likewise evaluates stories by ranking characters' goals, listing their strategies, and rationalizing the outcomes according to the mathematical apparatus of game theory (Biblical Games: A Strategic Analysis of Stories in the Old Testament, 1980). Because of their adherence to the technical, prescriptive nature of game theory, their studies tend to complicate rather than illuminate the literature. Howard's study, in fact, intends Pinter's play as a demonstration of game theory rather than as an example of literary analysis. However, when the concepts are used flexibly rather than rigidly to describe character interaction and plot development, game theory has the potential to broaden our understanding of stories and drama depicting political events.

the other players.[13] The personal preferences are assigned a numerical value of utility which provides the measure by which to determine the overall balance of gains and losses at the end of a political conflict. Depending on the strategies and expectations of the players, the games are described as zero-sum competitive or non-zero-sum cooperative. When the opponents' goals are diametrically opposite, the gains of one equal the losses of the other, resulting in a game score of zero. When there is opportunity for compromise so that both opponents report gains and losses, the outcome is non-zero-sum cooperative. As Thomas Schelling explains,

> In the pure coordination [i.e. cooperative] game the interests are convergent; in the pure-conflict [i.e. competitive] game the interests are divergent; but in neither case can a choice of action be made wisely without regard to the dependence of the outcome on the mutual expectations of the players. (86)

This political theory, detached from its specific mathematical formulas, broadens the possibilities of the game analogy in an understanding of the rules and strategies, cooperation and competition, winning and losing, that characterize any form of politics--contemporary or historical, on stage or in real life. Chapter One, "Playing Politics: Edward II and Perkin Warbeck," integrates game-playing with role-playing as dual activities enacting public relationships of power and authority. The chapter explores the intangible elements of myth, belief, perception, and will that define the injudicious private role-seeking of Edward II and the creative, public role-playing of Perkin Warbeck. On a larger scale, the study examines the contrasting political shifts from "cooperative" to "competitive" games in Marlowe's play and from "competitive" to "cooperative" in Ford's play to demonstrate the playwrights' similar conception of politics as a series of dynamic, unstable relationships between rulers and ruled.

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[13] Duncan Luce and Howard Raiffa describe the conflict of interest at the center of game theory in the introduction to their study, Games and Decisions: Introduction and Critical Survey (3-6).

Chapter Two combines game-play with ritual as two types of public performance--dynamic and static--that reflect the political interplay in two early contemporary histories, The Troublesome Reign of King John and The Raigne of King Edward the Third. The comparison challenges the common "purposive" view of these plays as propagandistic, and looks beyond speculations about authorial intentions to scrutinize the dramatic, structural imperatives that the playwrights adopt to foster different political attitudes through their portrayals of history. "Framing the Game: The Troublesome Reign and Edward III" studies the negative view of political instability engendered by games of shifting coalitions in The Troublesome Reign as opposed to the positive view of national victory sustained throughout Edward III, and observes the dramatists' reliance on ritual action to reinforce their overall perceptions of political game-play. Addressing the stage as a place to present history as story discloses the interpretive choices of the story-tellers who share the past by shaping and recreating it.

The third chapter, "1 Henry IV: The Paradoxes of Play," incorporates the concepts of political game theory with a specific anthropological view of "play" that acknowledges the uncertain distinctions between play and work, playfulness and seriousness, pretended activity and reality. Whereas the previous chapters compare two plays, this chapter focuses on only one of Shakespeare's two related plays about the reign of Henry IV. The intent is to demonstrate the vision of doubleness in the first play rather than to readdress the common scholarly question of the progressive or repetitive doubleness linking the two plays' dramatizations of Henry IV's political troubles and Prince Hal's pre-kingship relation to Falstaff. Alternative worlds of politics and holidays structure the action on stage, exposing the paradoxes of play and revealing Hal's flexibility as the key to his success as the most "playful" player. The two worlds of battlefield and tavern exemplify the interplay of history and fiction made possible when

narrative chronicles are transformed by the relative freedom of the stage.

Chapter Four draws again on the paradoxical doubleness of play to explore the disguise convention as a common "play" motif reappearing in a number of otherwise very different plays that span the period from some of the earliest performances to the time when some of the last English history plays were being produced. "Double Play: History in Disguise" reveals the necessity of flexible generic boundaries if the diversity of subject matter, historical precision, and authorial interpretation are to be taken into consideration. At the same time, however, the folk motif of the king-in-disguise and the complementary proliferation of subjects in disguise on stage provide a thread of continuity to disparate plays, including Henry V, 1 Sir John Oldcastle, Parts I and II of Edward IV, Edward I, and When You See Me You Know Me. Each of these plays reflects a similar doubleness of contradictory motives in the disguised characters, who appear to act out simultaneous or alternating playful and political agendas. The doubleness which is first examined in the disguised Henry V's scrutiny of his self-sustaining political myth, the King's Two Bodies, is played out again and again in the actions and attitudes of rulers and subjects in other histories. My study of this pattern advocates the view that disguises which support, distort, exploit, or evade history within the plays reflect the ambiguous double functions and expectations of the genre and the theatre itself. When the forum for history is a playhouse/gamehouse and the dramatist's approach to history is often to disguise it or transform it with fiction, legend, and myth, then there is a need for a double vision, for a consciousness that what was staged four centuries ago and is being read and reproduced today is "history + play," a genre based on two disparate but necessarily integrated concepts.

This approach to the Renaissance English history play by no means resolves the controversy about generic guidelines or definitions. My

discussion of a handful of plays cannot even begin to qualify as a comprehensive genre study. Nevertheless, it does attempt to recognize the complexity of the dramatic medium, addressing what Donald Watson identifies as "the paradox that the visual, aural, and kinesic elements of performance are both absent from and present within the printed pages the interpreter shuffles in his study" (11). Furthermore, I proceed with an awareness that to categorize according to purpose, structure, or subject, or even to attempt to incorporate all three is still to fall short of what textual records and our recreative imaginations provide us--the opportunity to explore the play of history with the knowledge that the past is layered with a multiple of interpretive levels. As Herbert Lindenberger observes, there are at least four

> levels of reality which shape our consciousnesss as we experience a history play: first, the historical materials which the play derives from its sources ("correct" or not) and which it purports to reenact; second, the theatrical conventions into which these materials are recast; . . . third, the sense of historical continuity which the author gives to that segment of the past which he has dramatized . . . . [and fourth,] the influence of our present situation on our interpretation of the work. (10)

To explore "history" from the standpoint of "play" in the following chapters is to appeal to the many levels of interpretation that color the past as it is filtered through minds and engaged in texts and performances over the centuries.

CHAPTER ONE

Playing Politics: Edward II and Perkin Warbeck

Marlowe's Edward II (1592) is among the earlier plays in the genre of English historical drama which became so popular in the last decade of the sixteenth century; Ford's Perkin Warbeck (1634) did not appear in print until over forty years later as a surprising, solitary revival of the historical theme. Ford himself admits, "Studies have of this nature been of late / . . . out of fashion" (Prologue, ll. 1-2). The two plays are hardly contemporary, and perhaps that is one reason they have not been seen in conjunction with each other.[1] Furthermore, Marlowe portrays the distant past of medieval England in his dramatization of Edward II's reign, while Ford's characters enact the much more recent history of the early Tudor period which playwrights in Marlowe's time avoided because of its relevance to current political affairs. Edward II portrays a weak king who threatens England's stability;[2] Perkin Warbeck depicts a strong king who overcomes the threats of a pretender. The differences between the two plays are so obvious that their equally compelling similarities have been thus far overlooked. Yet their shared political focus invites a new, close comparison. Both plays present politics as a subjective, unstable "playing" founded on relationships

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[1] Edward II has more often been compared to Richard II, for scholars have long recognized Marlowe's play as a source or at least a model for Shakespeare's. Some of the most recent studies exploring the parallel themes and development shared by these two plays include Ben Taggie's "Marlowe and Shakespeare: Edward II and Richard II," Publications of the Missouri Philological Association 13 (1988): 16-21, and Robert Merrix and Carole Levin's "Richard II and Edward II: The Structure of Deposition," Shakespeare Yearbook 1 (1990): 1-13. Perkin Warbeck has also been compared thematically to Richard II by Alexander Leggatt in "A double reign: Richard II and Perkin Warbeck," Shakespeare and His Contemporaries: Essays in Comparison, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann, Manchester: Manchester UP, 1986: 129-139.

[2] See Michael Manheim's The Weak King Dilemma in the Shakespearean History Play (1973) for a discussion of the monarchs as weak kings particularly in Woodstock, Shakespeare's Richard II, and Marlowe's Edward II.

and dependent upon intangibles such as myth, belief, perception, and will. As reenactments of history, both dramas rely on the "interplay" of two public activities that converge in Renaissance playhouse/gamehouse performances: role-playing and game-playing.

To begin from a broad perspective and gradually to center on these two historical plots allows for recognition of the pervasive influence of the acting and games metaphors on the politics of the age--from the public concerns of the monarchs, to the attitudes towards the theatres, to the distinction of the history play as one form of political drama, and, finally, to Marlowe's and Ford's specific dramatizations of the past. Understanding the larger picture will put the "political play" of Edward II and Perkin Warbeck into a clearer historical context which makes less significant the expanse of years between the two works and between their two topics.

Role-playing and the theatrical relationship between actor and audience are perhaps more common than the game metaphor in Elizabethan and Stuart social and political settings. As Anne Righter notes,

> Comparisons between the world and the stage were so common as to become, in many instances, almost automatic, an unconscious trick of speech. . . . the play metaphor was for Elizabethans an inescapable expression, a means of fixing the essential quality of the age. (76)

Elizabeth I herself recognized and applied the actorly image to her own political role, saying, "[W]e Princes, I tell you, are set on stages, in the sight and view of all the world duly observed" (Neale 2:119). Stephen Greenblatt cites this statement in Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare, his study of the relationship between Elizabethan self-fashioned fiction and political power. Emphasizing stage imagery, he says of the queen, "She believed deeply--virtually to the point of religious conviction--in display, ceremony, and decorum, the whole theatrical apparatus of royal power" (167). Christopher Haigh

captures her theatricality by recounting her ability to assume various roles with her subjects:

> On the throne, Elizabeth was the Virgin Queen; towards the Church she was a mother, with her nobles she was an aunt, to her councillors a nagging wife, and to her courtiers a seductress. (106)

Donald Watson's recent study of Shakespeare's histories also discusses "the theatricality of Elizabethan culture" (11), particularly in "the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign" (13) when the theatre as an institution and history plays as a genre were coming into existence. As Haigh, Greenblatt, and Watson suggest, Elizabeth recognized the performative aspect of her public position and used it to her advantage.

James I likewise refers in Basilikon Doron to the similarity between kings and actors. He says, for example,

> Kings being publike persons, by reason of their offices and authority, are as it were set (as it was said of old) upon a publike stage, in the sight of all the people. (5)

Jonathan Goldberg suggests that James's references during his kingship present contradictory views of monarchs both as "transparent" and "knowable" and as "opaque" and "misread" (James I 114, 115), but that the political use of the metaphor was certainly "a commonplace of Jacobean culture" (James I 113). Charles I, perhaps more than his predecessors, appealed to the political power of the theatrical image by relying on court masques as "direct political assertions" which eventually became so removed from reality that they alienated the king from his subjects (Orgel Illusion of Power 52). According to Stephen Orgel,

> Court masques were always topical; under Charles I they argued the royal case in current political and legal disputes with an energy and ingenuity that suggests that the king must have been actively involved in their composition. (The Illusion of Power 43)

In "An Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return From Ireland," Andrew Marvell's poetic recounting of history suggests the appropriateness of the stage metaphor even at Charles' death:

> thence the Royal Actor born
> The Tragick Scaffold might adorn:
> While round the armed Bands
> Did clap their bloody hands. (54-57)

While the image of player-king became progressively less effective as a source of authority in each consecutive reign, all three monarchs governing from Marlowe's to Ford's time used the metaphor as a means of portraying or creating their public roles and representing their relationships to their subjects.[3]

The game-playing metaphor also has political relevance in the Renaissance, although because it is less common, more diverse, and not as easily identified with kingship as is the performative medium of theatre, its influence requires more elaboration. Nancy Struever notes that Italian humanist historians saw the political connection between theatre and game in the public sphere. She says, for example, that Poggio Bracciolini "uses the words ludus and theatrum continually to express his sense of the coexistence of separate but internally coherent areas of human discourse and action" (176). She continues,

> Poggio thus evolves the concept of politics as a difficult and dangerous game: public life becomes the ludus fortunae . . ., the fortunae theatrum . . . . Descending into the theater of fortune is like entering a battle; one must abide by its rules; submission to its conditions is the only course. . . . Kings cannot be wise men, and therefore happy men, because they are nothing but dressed-up actors playing out their particular game. (177-178)

This image of Fortune as a game of chance over which rulers have no control developed first in the Middle Ages. Noting that dice, bowls, and shuttlecock were associated with the goddess Fortuna (81-82) in medieval times, Howard Patch says,

> Fortune enjoys exalting and debasing mankind as a game. She also plays games with human beings, in which they may either win or lose according to their fortune. (81)

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[3] David Scott Kastan suggests that the popularity of the theatres and the rise of the history plays contributed to the growing problems surrounding the English monarchs' use of the player-king image. He argues that "the theatre nourished the cultural conditions that eventually permitted the nation to bring its King to trial, not because the theatre approvingly represented subversive acts, but rather because representation became itself subversive" ("Proud Majesty" 461).

Interest in Fortune's games remained current in Elizabethan politically-oriented literature, such as the popular collection A Mirror for Magistrates, which interpreted the rise and fall of numerous figures in English history as the consequence of Fortune's controlling wheel.[4]

Another game early associated with royalty and political intrigue is chess. Norman Reider notes that unlike fortune's game, it relies on strategy and skill rather than chance: "Chess, both in its present form and from the point of its invention, has as an essential element the elimination of the gods of fortune" (452). Interestingly, however, in medieval literature, Fortune played chess as well as other games. In Book of the Duchess, for example, Chaucer compares the death of Blanche, the Duchess, to the loss of the queen in a chess game played against Fortune. Chess was understood as a war game; its forerunner, the Indian game chaturanga, featured war elephants as well as foot-soldiers of the Indian army (Golombek 15). Golombek explains the early medieval view of the chess board as a metaphor for life, providing morals and depicting the roles and responsibilities of the political hierarchy. He notes that "a short Latin work . . . translated as 'A morality of chess, according to Pope Innocent III'" (66) begins its explication: "The world resembles a chess-board which is chequered white and black, the colours showing the two conditions of life and death, or praise and blame" (67).[5] "By Tudor times, [when] playing chess was the expected accomplishment of a courtier and a gentleman" (Golombek 93), associations between Fortune and chess appeared less common, although Sir Thomas Elyot's The Book named the Governour continued to stress the medieval moralizations or life metaphors of the game board (Golombek

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[4] In Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy, Frederick Reifer devotes a chapter to the role of Fortune in Mirror for Magistrates. He remarks on the antiquity of the tradition: "Fortune generally retained the identity conferred by the ancients and, to a considerable extent, resisted absorption by Christian providence" (31).

[5] Golombek acknowledges his reliance on H.J.R. Murray's A History of Chess (1913) for a translated, paraphrased version of the Latin text.

93). The players' unlimited variety of moves and the game pieces' limited or assigned roles emphasized the elements of power and social position in government so that the game remained a popular means by which to comment on political strategy and relationships.

While game-playing and role-playing were accepted analogies for state affairs, the two concepts also intertwine as descriptions of the political relationship between the theatre and public activities outside its walls. As an institutionalized "playhouse/gamehouse" emerging with an ambiguous social role, the theatre received conflicting public and political responses. On the one hand, it survived and flourished through the support of royal patronage and remarkable public popularity; on the other hand, it was subject to hostile criticism from religious groups, city officials, and various social classes who saw dramatic activity as a threat to morality, the business commmunity, or the established hierarchy.[6] As Louis Montrose explains,

> The notion that someone should earn his living by playing, rather than by working, was anathema to the conservative oligarchy of great merchants who ruled London. . . . The public theatre and the professional player of Elizabethan London were abominations. They represented a profound challenge to traditional thinking both because they failed to fit conveniently into existing frameworks and because they presented a contrary framework, a dramatistic world picture. (55)

The theatre was paradoxically both set apart from and integrated into the social framework. Although it was a gamehouse or playhouse providing liminal space for a form of "holiday" entertainment, it was also undeniably a controversial institution involved in the serious, interdependent political games of public life. As Michael Bristol suggests in Carnival and Theater, the festive community atmosphere of the stage provided a double forum as "a privileged site for the celebration and critique of the needs and concerns of the polis" (3).

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[6] Alfred Harbage's Shakespeare's Audience (1941), Russell Fraser's The War Against Poetry (1970), and Jonas Barish's The Antitheatrical Prejudice (1981) discuss conflict among different social groups attending the plays and contemporary opposition to the theatre in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The central dichotomy of modern political game theory, the zero-sum competitive game and the non-zero-sum cooperative game, is useful in understanding the contradictory relationship of England's secular theatres to the broad social spectrum of its critics and audiences. The antagonistic reaction to the stage from the professional and religious interest groups is characteristic of a competitive game in which the players have diametrically opposing goals: nothing would have pleased the Puritans and London officials more than to have plays banned and the theatres closed down. Yet the support from royalty and loyal, paying patrons who came to the plays represents the response of members in a cooperative game in which all sides gain by the theatres' success: the actors by staying in business, the audience by being entertained, and royalty by monitoring the stage to ensure that performances would be not only entertaining, but also politically correct and potentially complimentary to the state. The Office of the Revels served as the government's chief regulator, licensing theatres and guarding against dramatic material that might include

> 1. Critical comments on the policies or conduct of the government
> 2. Unfavorable presentations of friendly foreign powers or their sovereigns, great nobles, or subjects
> 3. Comment on religious controversy
> 4. Profanity (after 1606)
> 5. Personal satire of influential people.
>
> (G.E. Bentley 167).

Annabel Patterson acknowledges, however, a degree of flexibility--an element of "cooperation"--in this system of state censorship:

> there were conventions that both sides accepted as to how far a writer could go in explicit address to the contentious issues of his day, how he could encode his opinions so that nobody would be required to make an example of him. (11)[7]

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[7] Treatments of censorship and regulation of the Renaissance stage also include Phoebe Sheavyn's The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age (1967), chapter two; G.E. Bentley's The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642 (1971), chapter seven; Janet Clare's 'Art made tongue-tied by authority': Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship (1990); and Richard Dutton's Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama (1991).

The interdependence emphasized in the dichotomy of modern political game theory characterizes the public role of the English theatre as a popular and controversial institution in the Renaissance period. The stage held a kind of complex, game-like relationship to society by inspiring simultaneous cooperative and competitive responses from various sectors.

While acknowledging from the standpoint of game theory that most political contests combine cooperation and competition, Thomas Schelling provides examples of each which illuminate the political impact of Elizabethan and Stuart discourse on the stage within its cultural, historical context:

> If chess is the standard example of a zero-sum game, charades may typify the game of pure coordination [i.e. cooperation]; if pursuit epitomizes the zero-sum game, rendezvous may do the same for the coordination game. (185)

Although the competitive chess metaphor appears frequently within Renaissance drama, Middleton's A Game at Chess (1624) perhaps best exemplifies the extent to which the confrontational nature of that game could exemplify the public influence of the theatre through an allegory critiquing contemporary political conflicts. The drama represents an ironic form of double game-play, for not only does the plot itself enact a chess game between white and black houses, but Middleton's deliberate attempt to satirize peace negotiations between England and Spain in the 1620s had a profound impact beyond the walls of the theatre. The play proved so popular and controversial that the state imprisoned the dramatist and banned the performances after nine successful days because Spain issued a complaint to King James (Crowell 29).[8] Within A Game at Chess, Middleton portrays serious political competition through Spain's stance as conqueror, but outside the theatre as well, the propagandistic

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[8] Janet Clare discusses the complex political ramifications of the play's performances and suggests that "King James emerges with some credit for his tactful handling of the affair . . . . he banned the play, though stressing disapproval at the stage impersonation of himself as much as at the Spanish satire, and prohibited--but only briefly--the professional activity of his company" (197).

effect of the play and the official response to it resemble the conflict of a zero-sum game. In John Loftis' words,

> however extravagant the Black Knight's reference to a "great work / Called the possession of the world" may now seem, Middleton in 1624 had reason to fear Spain's master plan to achieve, if not a universal monarchy, then world hegemony. (174)

Mixed public reaction indicates that while Middleton may have struck a chord with English spectators who recognized the international threat represented on stage,[9] the political powers refused to allow such explicit commentary that might interfere with international negotiations. The competitive game-like quality of Middleton's topical satire resided both in the plot itself and in the conflict generated between the play and state.

Charades, Schelling's example of a coordination or cooperative game, is an acting game with obvious ties to drama, which also requires cooperation between performer and audience. In the dramatic framework of Renaissance theatres, the game of charades closely approximates the Stuart masque in which royalty in the audience looked for flattering, mythical representations of themselves on stage. Stephen Orgel notes the game-like nature of this activity as it developed in the court of the Tudor king, Henry VIII:

> Unless we begin to think of the masque as a game, rather than as a show, the part of the masquer will be a difficult one in which to imagine the king, since he had effectively ceased to be a part of the audience.
> (The Jonsonian Masque 22)

Although James I never actively participated in masques as did Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, and even James's son Prince Henry, Orgel describes a similar breakdown of the dramatic barriers between audience and actor because of the masque's allusions to King James and because of his essential presence at the performance--"[t]he king must not merely see

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[9] Drawing on John Holles' written account of his attendance at one of the play's performances in 1624, A.R. Braunmuller discusses the popular appeal of the political allegory and its obvious criticism of Spain, especially through the representation of Gondomar as the Black Knight and stage villain ("To the Globe I rowed" 340-356).

the play, he must be seen to see it" (The Illusion of Power 16). The king's indirect participation in the the Stuart masque made it into a kind of game, a cooperative venture between politician and actor, audience and performer.[10]

The Stuart masque is to Middleton's play as charades is to chess, for as Stephen Orgel says of the masque, "As a genre, it is the opposite of satire; it educates by praising, by creating heroic roles for the leaders of society to fill" (The Illusion of Power 40). The masque's focus on heroism and its emphasis on Stuart autocracy reinforced the dangerous idealism of absolute monarchy to such an extent that the dramatic form eventually contributed to the Stuart downfall (The Illusion of Power 88-89). While both A Game at Chess and Stuart masques were intentionally political performances, the first was too confrontational to endure state censorship, the second too idealistic to survive as an art form dependent on realities beyond the stage. The two extremes exemplify the dangers and limitations of "conflict" and "collaboration" as primary game-like relationships between theatrical activity and public responses in Renaissance England. The satire and the masque indicate how the dichotomy of twentieth-century game theory can illuminate the complex ties between politics and performance characterizing the interaction of play and audience, theatre and society.

The history play invites similar consideration as a dramatic form that also stimulated a broad range of game-like public responses and occasionally provoked direct political reactions. From the performance of Richard II (1595) in support of the Essex Rebellion in 1601 to the glorification of the Spanish Armada's defeat in Thomas Heywood's If You Know Not Me (1604), the plays generated confrontational and cooperative

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[10] The participation of other court members besides the king enhanced the game-like quality of the masque. As Orgel says, "Masques were games and shows, triumphs and celebrations; they were for the court and about the court, and their seriousness was indistinguishable from their recreative quality" (Illusion of Power 38).

interaction between the stage and the world, between performance and reality. Clearly the presentation of Richard II on the eve of the Essex Rebellion had a subversive purpose intended by the insurgents and recognized by Elizabeth herself.[11] Just as clearly, Heywood's portrayal of Elizabeth's part in England's victory in 1588 could be little less than an idealization of the nation's recent history. The potential for topical parallels between past and contemporary individuals and events allowed the drama a closeness to reality which heightened political sensitivities, giving plays an impact beyond the theatre itself.[12]

However, because the history plays are not purely allegorical, the interaction between the stage and the world is not as game-like as were the Jacobean masques (according to Orgel) or Middleton's satire (according to the state response of censorship). History play performances do not have a "charades" or "chess" analog representing the "pure coordination" or "pure conflict" dichotomy of political game theory. In spite of Donald Watson's suggestion that "the average theatergoer who saw an English history play . . . would have assumed that all history is contemporary history" (24), topicality is nevertheless subtle rather than overt; there remains an artificial boundary between the entertainers and the entertained. These

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[11] Clare points out the uncertain role of the Chamberlain's Men in this political intrigue. "Curiously," as she observes, "the complicity of the Chamberlain's Men in the series of events leading to Essex's desperate bid for the Crown did not produce any reprisals against the professional theatre" (65). She speculates that "Phillip's [one of the actor's] testimony that the company were induced to perform for financial remuneration may have persuaded [Coke] that they were not accomplices in their audience's motives" (65-66).

[12] This is not to suggest, as Lily B. Campbell has, that the plays are simply political mirrors in which there is an almost allegorical correspondence between characters and contemporary political figures (Shakespeare's Histories: Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy, 1947). On the other hand, Graham Holderness's view in Shakespeare's History (1985) that Shakespeare's plays reconstruct a feudal past not to be confused with the Renaissance present implies a cleaner break in history than even Elizabeth herself was willing to acknowledge. Without speculating about authorial intention, one can certainly recognize a potential for assumptions and interpretations which drew the events on stage into the broader surroundings of day-to-day public life.

distinguishing features perhaps explain the genre's broad appeal and success at a time when political debate was obviously a popular but dangerous activity. As David Bevington suggests,

> politics is germane to a remarkable percentage of Tudor plays, but in terms of ideas and platforms rather than personalities . . . . Granting then that we are dealing with a drama of conventional type rather than of historical verisimilitude, the Tudor drama is nonetheless sharp in its delineation of issues. (Tudor Drama 25)

Although there are obvious differences between Tudor plays and later Stuart drama and although histories were a more prominent form in the late Tudor period, the stage exerted a political influence during the entire period that theatres operated from 1576 to 1642.[13] Furthermore, especially in a study of Edward II and Perkin Warbeck, Ford's self-proclaimed "out of fashion" history play invites recognition of the intentional similarities between his history play and the earlier Tudor genre. While acknowledging potential topicality as an important issue in such a political genre, one can nevertheless allow that the self-contained historical plots provide greater freedom to explore the interaction within the plays themselves, apart from pointing out indisputable parallels between dramatic action and contemporary events. Thus the concept of game-play and the accompanying terms "cooperation" and "competition" can inform the politics on stage as well as the obvious political repercussions from the stage to the streets. As history plays reenact past politics, they portray a world of interacting and alternating zero-sum competitive games and non-zero-sum cooperative games characterized by threats, bargains, political assertions, and coalitions, and defined by the dynamic rise and fall of personal and public achievements.

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[13] The stage's political influences are addressed in new historicist and cultural materialist studies, such as Dollimore and Sinfield's Political Shakespeare (1985) and Jonathan Goldberg's James I and the Politics of Literature (1989). See also Walter Cohen's Drama of a Nation: Public Theater in Renaissance England and Spain (1985).

At the same time, the interaction on stage is also influenced by the concept of role-playing, by the artificial boundary between actors and audience, between the past and the present, that distinguishes history plays from satire or masques. The separation of performer and spectator invites consideration of the boundaries between rulers and subjects which not only made theatricality a useful metaphor for monarchs in the Renaissance period, but which also became a self-reflexive element in the historical genre where actors played kings and kings acted out positions of control--where the image of player-king became a central metadramatic concept. "Play" as theatrical performance and "play" as game participation combine within the history plays to reflect, represent, and offer new perspectives on past and present relationships of authority and power.

Central to both stage-play and political game-play is the use of language. Once again, looking outside the walls of the theatres and recognizing the importance and influence of language in the world of politics and history provides a context for understanding similar influences on stage. As Jonathan Goldberg says in his study of Jacobean politics, "Language constitutes the reality of politics and history; the articulation of events is itself a historical event; words themselves participate in the life of society" (116). His remark recalls J.L. Austin's speech-act theory emphasizing the performative rather than simply the descriptive nature of language. Speeches can be acts, not merely expressions of physical action. This concept underlies Jonathan Goldberg's James I and the Politics of Literature and Stephen Greenblatt's Renaissance Self-Fashioning, which argue that politicians and poets can create and reshape reality with their speeches and writings. Such verbal potential is perhaps particularly real in an age that recognized the power of rhetoric. Roger Ascham's The Schoolmaster (1570), Castiglione's The Book of the Courtier (trans. 1561), Abraham Fraunce's The Arcadian Rhetoric (1588), and Thomas Wilson's Arte of

Rhetorique (1553) are among the influential rhetoric and conduct texts that emphasized rhetorical style as a source of influence and social success. As Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker point out in their study of seventeenth-century literature and history,

> It was a fundamental tenet of Renaissance humanism that language participated in authority; rhetoric is, after all, a study of the power of language and an essential for the education of a statesman. Language is seen to be possessed of power. The English interest in philology at the end of the sixteenth century indicates a concern with words not only as representations but as historical realities possessed of authority. . . . For this age language represented power. And power, in turn, depended on language. . . . A government that lacked a standing army and a police force rested upon articulations and perceptions of authority. Rhetoric and governance could not be dissociated. (7-8)

Rhetoric is an essential instrument of power not only in the day-to-day governing of Renaissance England, as Sharpe and Zwicker suggest, but in the nation's recorded history. The history-writing that became a popular genre in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England began its revival earlier with the Italian Renaissance. Nancy Struever notes that Italian humanist historians acknowledged the creative potential of their language to shape and order the events of the past. Writers such as Poggio Bracciolini recognized this artificial structuring process as a kind of game because rhetorical rules imposed an artificial frame on the events. Struever explains the historian's view, saying, "historiography is a game which can be played only by trained linguists who understand, for example, in the case of Roman history the rules of the Latin genres" (181). The Italian approach toward historiography eventually influenced English historiography through the work of Polydore Vergil. According to F.J. Levy, "What Polydore had introduced into the writing of English history was the exercise of logic" (58). His attention to the style and details of Latin history had a widespread impact:

> Grafton's continuations of Fabyan and Hardyng as well as his own works, Hall's Union, and their successors are best treated as successors of Polydore Vergil, whose Latin history they borrowed in substantial quantities. (24)

The reenactment of history on stage combines the dual role of rhetoric as the historiographer's text and the politician's speech-act. The playwright records history as he reshapes it, while the actors perform the past as an immediate, present event. The genre thus invites a close look at language, at the way in which the playwright turns historical narrative into drama and the way in which the characters interact through speech-giving, naming, persuasion, and verbal deception. In The Drama of Speech Acts: Shakespeare's Lancastrian Tetralogy (1979), Joseph Porter finds J.L. Austin's philosophical speech-act theory appropriate to the dramatic portrayal of history because of its emphasis on the "dramatic facts about language" (8). Porter compares, for example, two conceptions of "story," Richard II's interest in "tale" and Hotspur's focus on "plot." Explaining that "where a 'tale' may be about a single person (as is the case with Richard's 'tale of me'), 'plot' entails that multiplicity of persons to whom the language of drama is assigned" (178), Porter uses linguistic distinctions to account for the difference between Richard's speech-giving theatricality and Hotspur's dramatic playing. With Hotspur, "what matters is the liveliness of the interchanges, with one speaker pitting himself against another" (179). At one level, as Porter suggests, word choices and linguistic styles determine the effect characters have on each other; at another level, the playwright's choice of diction reflects his interpretation of history and influences the response of the audience.

The double analogy of theatrical playing and game playing through language, which was current and common in the public attitudes, politics, and history-writing of the Renaissance, illuminates the interaction on stage in Marlowe's Edward II and Ford's Perkin Warbeck. While each of these plays has been interpreted independently as offering a psychological study of England's historical figures by subordinating

the public sphere to concentrate on character,[14] the shared political focus of the plays rather than their psychological interest invites a comparison of the two. Politics is social rather than psychological. It is the activity of individuals seeking to justify, verify, establish, and enact roles of power and authority over each other. This activity is central to both plays, for, in spite of the intensity or depth of character development in each, there are few soliloquies to portray internal personal conflicts or private motivations.[15] Dialogue rather than monologue is the predominant means of expression. By contrast, Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, for example, dramatizes the psychological and spiritual battle of Faustus through his soliloquies and the arguments between his Good and Evil Angels. In Marlowe's history play, Edward II's personal struggle and downfall occur primarily because of his public role and his relationship to his subjects. Similarly, the attempt of Ford's Perkin Warbeck to ascend the throne is meaningful only as others respond to and ultimately reject his aspirations. Both plays, in short, emphasize the public interdependence characterizing political relationships.

The theatrical concept of state players acting specific roles or parts not only points out the public conduct of the political leaders, but also assumes an audience with its own expectations: kings perform and subjects respond. In both plays, the characters on stage represent

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[14] Winston Weathers sees the polity in Perkin Warbeck as a symbol for the mind and personality, and the three kings as each representing parts of an individual's psyche (218). Wilbur Sanders, likewise, suggests of Edward II that it is "an intensely personal play in which the public issues hardly arise" (121), and Walter Cohen agrees that "Edward's tragedy consists of his private misery: though his agonies are intensified by the fact that he is king, they have no apparent bearing on affairs of state" (238).

[15] This observation is particularly true of Ford's play. Marlowe does include several soliloquies in Edward II. However, no character speaks many lines alone, a number of the soliloquies involve plans for the future rather than self-examination or self-revelation, and the prevailing impression left by the rapid action on stage is the intense antagonism of one political side against the other.

subjects as public audience and kings as political players whose perceptions sometimes confirm and sometimes contradict each other. Playing, according to the concepts of game theory, however, breaks down this artificial boundary between political spectators and actors with the assumption that all participants are contenders in a shared activity in which some win and others lose. From this perspective, the distinction between subjects as audience and kings as actors becomes less clear in both plays when subjects actively join the political game rather than simply responding to the king's performance. When subjects like Warbeck claim to be kings or when subjects like Mortimer adopt kingly functions, they become players who compete with their monarchs for favors, supremacy, and power. While both plays portray the necessity of role-playing as a means of sustaining political myths, they represent opposing patterns of game-playing: Edward II moves from cooperative efforts to competitive strategies and Perkin Warbeck shifts from competitive to cooperative.

Language is the chief means for participants to justify themselves and persuade others in this complicated interaction. Both Edward II and Perkin Warbeck lack the extensive battle scenes and military action found in their primary sources, Holinshed and Bacon, or in other history plays such as Shakespeare's Lancaster and York cycles. For Marlowe and Ford, language itself becomes the crucial political action. Thus, while the two playwrights are surprisingly true to the events of their chronicle sources, their own renditions of the historical facts portray a subjectivity and complexity less apparent in the accounts of either Holinshed or Bacon, because the drama emphasizes the fluctuating political and verbal play and interplay of the characters.

Perhaps the most obvious theatrical comparison of Perkin Warbeck and Edward II lies in the attitudes of the two title characters. Although they have very different social positions, they are both

player-kings.[16] This concept of government as performance appears not only in the attitudes of England's Tudor and Stuart monarchs but in much of the political drama of the time. Its development has been traced particularly throughout Shakespeare's works.[17] The opposing views established in the studies of Eileen Jorge Allman and James Winny illuminate Ford's and Marlowe's use of the metaphor. Allman suggests that

> the Player-King is a ruling figure who succeeds in fusing the ideal of majesty and his playing of the role because he understands the nature of playing, uniting himself through it with that ideal and acting it out publicly to his community. (6, note 7)

She sees the actorly impulse as the fulfilment of kingship. Winny uses the player-king image to refer to each history play king as one who

> is forced to come to terms with the nature of the royal identity which he has tried to assume, and to recognise a disparity between his ideal of majesty and his personal ability to fill the role assigned to him. (46)

He sees role-playing as a limitation of kingship. Of Ford's and Marlowe's player-kings, Perkin Warbeck is the character who improves his status by adopting the "ideal of majesty" Allman describes, whereas Edward II, according to Winny's terms, restricts his kingly identity by playing out his own private desires.

Perkin Warbeck's role-playing is historically based on the fact that he is a pretender to the throne who claims to be someone he is not, Richard of York, Edward IV's son. But Ford develops the theatrical analogy and expresses it particularly in the voice of Henry VII, who declares "[t]he counterfeit, king Perkin" (V.ii.1), an imposter and

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[16] Other critics independently have made similar observations about each character. Michael Neill, for example, describes Perkin Warbeck as a "player-king and the playwright's own shadow" (115). Harry Levin similarly speaks of Edward II as a "king with the soul of an actor" whose theatricality is an inherent part of his own character (21-22).

[17] Studies include Anne Righter's Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play (1962), James Winny's The Player-King: A Theme of Shakespeare's Histories (1968), and Eileen Jorge Allman's Player-King and Adversary: Two Faces of Play in Shakespeare (1980).

suggests that Warbeck has learned his part so well that he has become what he plays:

> The lesson, prompted and well conned, was moulded
> Into familiar dialogue, oft rehearsed,
> Till, learnt by heart, 'tis now received for truth.
> (V.ii.77-79)

Perkin is, indeed, so consistent in his role that there is no distinction between the actor and the part; only a knowledge of history itself lets the audience watching the play know the difference. Ford deliberately emphasizes the pretender's personal consistency by omitting the section in Bacon's history in which Warbeck confesses his true identity. Bacon's Warbeck "openly [reads] his confession and [takes] it upon his death to be true" (423). Ford's Warbeck creates a fantasy that becomes a part of the play's reality; his kingly conduct is true or real even though his title is a fraud. His theatricality is the center of what Ronald Huebert refers to in the play as "an elaborate game of 'let's pretend'" (101).

Edward II is a legitimate king who has no need to pretend, and yet, like Warbeck, he too "plays" his kingly role. If Warbeck strives to make his fantasy a reality, Edward attempts to replace the reality of his kingly responsibilities with a fantasy of kingly pleasures. He does not want to rule the nation as much as he wants to enjoy the companionship of his favorite. After offering new titles to placate his nobles, he concludes,

> If this content you not,
> Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
> And share it equally amongst you all,
> So I may have some nook or corner left,
> To frolic with my dearest Gaveston. (I.iv.69-73)

Edward's lack of concern about the stability of his kingdom is matched by his indifference to foreign affairs, for he casually dismisses the threatening letters from France: "Tush, Sib, if this be all, / Valois and I will soon be friends again. / But to my Gaveston . . ." (III.ii.66-69). This unconcern, compounded by pleasure in the

theatrical, also makes the king an ineffective military leader. As Mortimer witnesses, Edward II has been in the field of battle

> But once, and then [his] soldiers march'd like players,
> With garish robes, not armour, and [Edward]
> Bedaub'd with gold, rode laughing at the rest.
> (II.ii.181-183)

The king acts like a star performer rather than a ruler, encouraging his n to be players rather than warriors. Like Warbeck, Edward II is a counterfeit king because he fashions his own version of kingship and tries to live out that fantasy in spite of the demands of his political office.

While Warbeck is a king in the making, however, Edward is a king on the throne, and the difference recalls John Blanpied's distinction between a "machiavel" and an "antic" ruler. He sees the "machiavel" as an actor who plays with a clear purpose in mind, and the "antic" as a performer who "plays for the sake of playing" (14). Warbeck is an actor striving single-mindedly to become king by playing the part. Edward, on the other hand, is more like a performer seeking his own playful entertainment regardless of his throne. They are two different player-kings. Shakespeare's Richard II offers parallel figures in Bolingbroke, the actor becoming king, and Richard, the performer losing his kingship because he tries to isolate his role from the response of his subjects. Ironically, Shakespeare's and Ford's two actor-kings rely on different skills: Bolingbroke's strength lies in his silence, Perkin's in his eloquence.[18]

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[18] Coburn Freer offers an argument against the effectiveness of Perkin's eloquence in "'The Fate of Worthy Expectation': Eloquence in Perkin Warbeck," "Concord in Discord": The Plays of John Ford, 1586-1986, ed. Donald K. Anderson, 131-148. Freer suggests that "the reason for the failure of [Perkin's] eloquence lies in a cluster of attitudes and circumstances, and we know--having no less historical hindsight than Ford's first audience--that these will eventually defeat the aims of that rhetoric" (131). In the continuation of this chapter, my observations about the cooperative game outcome in Ford's play suggest that, in spite of the historical framework circumscribing the stage action, Perkin's failure is not as complete as Freer indicates.

The element of fantasy shared by Ford's and Marlowe's player kings is reflected in their common interest in the ceremonial aspect of royalty. Warbeck, being a king without a kingdom, has little but ceremony to draw upon, and yet he is not simply dependent on this aspect of kingship but is well-skilled in it. He plays his role convincingly when he participates in the masque-like procession which welcomes him to Scotland (II.i.39). And when Warbeck speaks about his royal origins, James responds, "He must be more than subject who can utter / The language of a king, and such is thine" (II.i.103-104).[19] That an actor as gifted as Perkin should be able to demonstrate his declamatory abilities before the political leaders he wants to impress is not surprising, but, as Joseph Candido aptly points out, Warbeck continues to play his ceremonial role even when he is alone on stage with his wife Katherine, who needs no further conviction of his kingship over her (306). He says to her,

> give me leave to use
> A parting ceremony; for tomorrow
> It would be a sacrilege to intrude upon
> The temple of thy peace. (III.ii.140-143)

The religious metaphor indicates his ritualistic style, and his request that Katherine "sing a requiem to [his] soul" (III.ii.156) if he should

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[19] Perkin's gift of speech recalls the political contest in Marlowe's Tamburlaine 1. Mycetes is a weak, ineffective leader largely because he cannot express himself adequately so that rather than speaking for himself he relies on his brother and Meander to speak for him. As he says, "Brother Cosroe, I find myself aggriev'd, / Yet insufficient to express the same, / For it requires a great and thund'ring speech" (I.i.1-3). Tamburlaine, on the other hand, sways armies to his side with the power of his language. As Theridamas responds, "Not Hermes, prolocutor to the gods, / Could use persuasions more pathetical" (I.ii.210-211). While Tamburlaine is much more violent and aggressive than Perkin and defiles ceremony rather than upholding it, the two upstarts share the language of kings which gives them the power to overcome their lowly origins and threaten the thrones of surrounding rulers.

die in battle continues his same ceremonial approach to relationships.[20] His is a kingship of lofty language and formal gestures.

Edward II, too, enjoys the ceremonial aspect of his role, but he focuses more on the celebratory, showy aspects of pageantry than on lofty and ritualistic formality.[21] When the nobles and the king are temporarily reconciled, Edward calls for a visual display in recognition of the union: "In solemn triumphs, and in public shows, / Pembroke shall bear the sword before the king" (I.iv.349-350). Ironically, Pembroke is more concerned about the practical than the ceremonial use of the sword, for he responds, "And with this sword Pembroke will fight for you" (I.iv.351). In fact, Edward's preoccupation with the showiness of court more often reflects his intimate relationship with Gaveston than his expected alliance with the nobles. While Gaveston plans to "have Italian masks by night, / Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows" (I.i.55-56) to delight the king, Edward reciprocates with calls for "a general tilt and tournament" (I.iv.375) and royal feasting to honor the favorite's marriage. David Bevington and James Shapiro suggest the destructive influence of the ceremonial link between the two

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[20] Perkin is somewhat like Charles I, Ford's monarch, who also saw both kingship and marriage in ritual, religious terms. Moreover, the ceremonial focus is typical of Ford's style. One thinks, for example, of the tragic conclusion of The Broken Heart, where Calantha continues her ritual dance as the three messages of death reach her ears. She responds with a reproof when the music ceases:

> We all look cheerfully.
> And cousin, 'tis, methinks, a rare presumption
> In any who prefers our lawful pleasures
> Before their own sour censure, to interrupt
> The custom of this ceremony bluntly. (V.22.23-27)

The formality and dignity of ceremony informs Ford's courtly treatment of love in history and in tragedy.

[21] Just as Perkin resembles Charles I in his emphasis on the ritual nature of relationships, Marlowe's king enjoys a form of pageantry recognized in Elizabeth's reign. Roy Strong's The Cult of Elizabeth (1977) describes the pageants and Accession Day tournaments which celebrated Elizabeth in medieval, feudal style. Edward's attention to "public shows" recalls a form of festivity shared in both his own and Marlowe's period of history. Marlowe's and Ford's dramatic choices perhaps reflect contemporary influences as well as records of the past and personal literary styles.

men: "King Edward's own alliance with anti-ceremonial behavior is prominent from the beginning, especially in his behavior towards Gaveston" (Bevington and Shapiro 268). The king is anti-ceremonial not so much because he is opposed to any form of pageantry but because his uses of ceremony often "violate all expected visual forms of royal and courtly behavior" (268). Paradoxically, Edward wants traditionally public gestures to serve as his own private entertainment. He remains consistently focused on the theatrical or performative aspect of kingship even near his death, when he recalls his past glory and says,

> Tell Isabel, the queen, I look'd not thus,
> When for her sake I ran at tilt in France
> And there unhors'd the duke of Cleremont. (V.v.67-69)

His is the kingship of pageantry. Like Perkin Warbeck, Edward enacts the ceremonial role associated with kingship, but because Warbeck's performance is ritualistic and almost sacred while Edward's is frivolous and purposeless, the pretender's ceremony gives dignity to his false cause while the king's ceremony compromises his legitimate position.

The contrast between Warbeck's determination to achieve his goal and Edward's desire to enjoy his role is illustrated by the use of subjunctive clauses to express kingship in both plays. Enraged by the nobles' opposition to his conduct with Gaveston, Edward declares, "If I be king, not one of them shall live" (I.iv.105). He utters a similar threat later specifically to Warwick and Mortimer: "If I be England's king, in lakes of gore / Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail" (III.ii.135-137). His other threats are frequently in the subjunctive. He says of the nobles, "But if I live, I'll tread upon their heads / That think with high looks thus to tread me down" (II.ii.96-97), and "If I be cruel and grow tyrannous, / Now let them thank themselves, and rue too late" (II.ii.204-205). He clearly intends to intimidate others with his power as king, but the "if" clauses, rather than presaging danger to them, seem to cast a shadow of doubt on Edward's own status and strength. That doubt is intensified by the fact that the king's

favorites echo his words of threat. Gaveston's unfinished clause, "Were I a king--" (I.iv.27), is later repeated in Spencer's more elaborate speculation:

> Were I king Edward, England's sovereign,
> Son to the lovely Eleanor of Spain,
> Great Edward Longshanks' issue, would I bear
> These braves, this rage, and suffer uncontroll'd
> These barons thus to beard me in my land,
> In mine own realm? (III.ii.10-15)

Their remarks undermine the intended strength of Edward's "if" by indicating the possibility of kingly aspirants amongst Edward's own supporters. The subjunctives shared by the king and his favorites, coupled with Edward's own direct attempt to meld identities by calling himself "another Gaveston" (I.i.143), weaken the king's monarchical authority rather than establishing the solidarity of his side against the opposition of the nobles.

Perkin Warbeck, on the other hand, does not allow himself the uncertainty inherent in conditional statements. When his follower Frion advises, "if you will / Appear a prince indeed, confine your will / To moderation" (IV.ii.20-22), Warbeck denounces the doubt implied by Frion's remark:

> If, if I will appear!
> Appear a prince! Death throttle such deceits
> Even in their birth of utterance. (IV.ii.23-25)

His own use of the subjunctive clause which follows does not conform to the normal pattern of cause and effect. When he says, "if my cousin-king will fail, / Our cause will never" (IV.ii.49-50), he casts doubt on James's achievements and foresees the unconditional certainty of his own successful ascent to the English throne. Likewise, he counsels Frion to report "The raising of an empire" against England, adding of himself and Katherine, "If [we] fail, / Yet the report will never" (IV.iii.144-145). The conditional failure is countered with a guaranteed success. The "if" clauses are logically misleading. Victor Turner's observations about play and drama offer a useful reference for the comparison of these two player kings. Turner speaks of play as being "in the

subjunctive mood," saying that "[i]t refers to what may or might be. It is also concerned with supposition, conjecture, assumption, with the domain of 'as-if,' rather than 'as-is'" (222-223). The subjunctive mood used by Edward and Perkin indicates, ironically, that the true king lives an "as-if" existence, while the aspiring king acts out an "as-is" role of play which becomes more than play because of its future indicative purpose: "I will be king."

The metaphor of theatricality not only relates to the concept of player-kings but also draws attention to the reciprocal nature of authority requiring public justification. Dickerson and Flanagan define authority by saying, "No one has authority as such; one has it only if others respect and obey it. Authority is one pole of a relationship of which the other pole is legitimacy" (12). Drama relies on public authority, for an actor's legitimacy depends on an audience's willingness to suspend reality and accept the stage convention that, for his time on stage, the player is the part that he plays. This mutuality required in the performance of a play recalls the cooperation necessary for a pure coordination game, with the slight distinction that the artificial boundaries of the stage limit the audience to passive rather than active participants, to spectators rather than players. In the political sphere as well, a leader's success or legitimacy depends on his own willingness to perform the functions of his office and on the subjects' willingness to accept his right to rule. That acceptance is thus based on shared beliefs which Murray Edelman defines as myths giving meaning to social events (3); more specifically, they are myths of justification that give authority to a political order. Edelman notes the subjective nature of these myths as a foundation for politics:

> Clearly, neither the confidence with which a political belief is held nor its contemporary popularity is an indicator of its validity, though it is an indicator of its reality. (11)

In Perkin Warbeck and Edward II, Ford and Marlowe demonstrate that both the fact of authority and challenges to it derive from the

insubstantiality of myths which must be believed even if they need not be valid.

The legitimate, crown-possessing kings in Perkin Warbeck, England's Henry VII and Scotland's James IV, seek and find justification in a conventional myth of the English monarchy, providential right.[22] In making preparations to suppress the Cornish uprising, Henry VII indicates that the security of his position derives from divine power: "Heaven is our guard still" (II.i.161). Daubeney reiterates Henry's view: "Wise princes, Oxford, / Fight not alone with forces. Providence / Directs and tutors strength" (IV.iv.5-7). Urswick, too, assures the king, "Your majesty's a wise king, sent from heaven / Protector of the just" (III.i.36-37). Henry's authority rests in the publicly accepted ideology of divine kingship.[23] Scottish subjects also acknowledge James's providential legitimacy, for as Huntley says,

> But kings are earthly gods, there is no meddling
> With their anointed bodies; for their actions,
> They only are accountable to heaven. (III.ii.57-59)

Even the English bishop, Durham, recognizes James's sacred right, advising him to reject the pretender, unite with true kings, and "yield / Unto those holy motions which inspire / The sacred heart of an anointed body!" (III.iv.42-44). In the English and Scottish courts of Perkin Warbeck, the political reality of order rests on belief in the royal sanctity of divine appointment, a belief which defies objective validity or proof.

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[22] Ernst Kantorowicz's The King's Two Bodies traces the idea of divine right as it developed from medieval to Renaissance political theory. It is an ideological concept which achieved public acceptance both in the time of these two playwrights and in the periods dramatized in their plays.

[23] Philip Edwards suggests that it is somewhat difficult for an audience to take the idea of divine intervention seriously given that Daubeney describes the cruel murder of the two innocent princes in the Tower as part of heaven's justice in Act I.i.27-35 ("Royal Pretenders" 25). However, the subjects' reliance on a providential view to justify the events of their history is more meaningful as it reflects the political power of myths on stage than it is cause for questions about political consistencies by an audience watching the play.

Marlowe's king does not draw on the same kind of myth. As Michael Hattaway observes about Edward II,

> Marlowe's historiography, like his dramaturgy, is demystificatory; there are few references to God and no sense that the monarch rules by divine right. Instead we witness a play that is wholly concerned with the Court, with the political basis of power. (143)

In spite of the absence of references to divine right, however, Edward II still recognizes the need to justify his "political basis of power." He does so not by appealing to external sources but by espousing another myth of authority, that legitimacy lies in the very fact of present kingship, that it is treasonous to oppose a ruler. He questions challenges to his rights, asking, "Was ever king thus over-rul'd as I?" (I.iv.38) and "Am I a king and must be overrul'd?" (I.i.135). Unfortunately for Edward, his myth is not powerful enough to draw the necessary reciprocal response of affirmation from others. Kent echoes the king's de facto justification only after he himself has left Edward's side. Of the king's enemy, Kent asks, "Proud traitor, Mortimer, why dost thou chase / Thy lawful king, thy sovereign, with the sword?"; of himself, he adds, "Vile wretch, and why hast thou, of all unkind, / Borne arms against thy brother and thy king?" (IV.v.12-15). While his conscience condemns the treason, however, his appeal is like Edward's. Kent does not assert kingly rights; he only questions their absence. But an interrogative, like a subjunctive, is a mood that raises doubts, while authority requires a declarative of belief. Relying on the wrong mood, Edward and Kent fail to act through speech to fashion myth into reality. What Stephen Orgel says of the idealized kingship of James I and Charles I in Jonsonian masques is true of Marlowe's king:

> the danger of political myths lies in their tendency to exclude political realities: the mirror of the king's mind allows him to know only himself. (The Illusion of Power 77)

Desperately trying to maintain his kingship, Edward does not realize that his questions reflect his own uncertainty instead of engendering the support of his subjects.[24]

Although Edward's failing authority differs from Henry VII's credible kingship, both men face threats to their thrones because Mortimer and Perkin create myths which challenge their kings. Perkin's is a personal myth which reflects and thus threatens to disqualify Henry's. Warbeck primarily emphasizes his familial right as "sole heir / To the great throne of old Plantagenets" (II.i.47-48), but, like Henry VII, he refers to the holy sanction of his royal blood when he defends "the truth / Of [his] dear mother's womb, the sacred bed / Of a prince murdered and a living baffled!" (IV.ii.28-30). Both Perkin and Henry claim England as their own kingdom, and their conflict is appropriately expressed in the words of Marlowe's Edward II: "Two kings in England cannot reign at once" (V.i.58). Theatrically speaking, an audience will believe the role that one actor plays, but it will not accept the possibility of two people playing the same part, for then the legitimacy of both is open to question.

Unlike Perkin, Mortimer begins his confrontation of Edward II by drawing on an alternative rather than a contradictory myth. He appeals to the safety of the English nation as a more pressing concern than the sanctity of the king's authority. In proposing to murder Gaveston, he anticipates the praise he will receive "For purging of the realm of such a plague" (I.iv.270), and he justifies his intentions to violate the

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[24] Edward II's approach to his dwindling kingly authority resembles the response of Shakespeare's Richard II when he shatters the mirror to the ground. Richard, too, asks questions:

> Was this face the face
> That every day under his household roof
> Did keep ten thousand men? Was this the face
> That like the sun, did make beholders wink?
> Is this the face which fac'd so many follies,
> That was at last out-fac'd by Bullingbrook? (IV.i.281-286)

While the broken glass visually represents his defeat, his questions, like Edward's unanswered ones, mirror only the images of glory in his own mind.

king's orders by asserting public legitimacy: "we shall have the people of our side" (I.iv.283). James Voss's observation aptly indicates, however, that Mortimer's appeal for public legitimacy is little more than a cover-up for the nobles' primary motivation: "The real concern of the barons is for their own position in society and not for an abstract ideal of order moral or political" (521). Indeed, while Mortimer bemoans the way "base Gaveston" "[riots] it with the treasure of the realm" (I.iv.404), the noble is far more incensed that

> the king and [Gaveston]
> From out a window laugh at such as we,
> And flout our train, and jest at our attire. (I.iv.415-417)

Mocked and outdone, Mortimer feels his own social prestige and dignity violated and compromised. While both Mortimer and Perkin challenge existing kings with assertions that lack validity, Mortimer's myth is a public justification for a private motivation, whereas Perkin's is a personal myth created to acquire a public position.

When the contradictions and conflicts of myths and expectations reach such intensity that challenges to existing political order are founded solidly enough in belief to pose as potential and threatening alternatives, then the theatricality based on artificial boundaries between on-stage audience and players gives way to the more integrated activity of game-playing. Games begin with group participation and a seeming equality of involvement. Yet, as Levi-Strauss explains, games

> appear to have a <u>disjunctive</u> effect: they end in the establishment of a difference between individual players or teams where originally there was no indication of inequality. (32)

The difference between the disjunctive effect of game-playing and the legitimizing assumptions of role-playing reflects the political distinction between power and authority. As Dickerson and Flanagan explain, "Power is the ability to rule; authority is the right to rule" (12). The mutuality of authority and legitimacy which establishes the social framework for role-players and their audiences relies on the stability of myths, the shared beliefs that justify the pretense of

playing and that sanction the actors' rights to perform and entertain. Power, on the other hand, correlates with the dynamic interaction of game-play which also involves an element of legitimacy, a framework of accepted rules, but which focuses less on the framework of the "game" than on the alternative forms of "playing": the compromise of cooperation and the aggression of competition. While role-playing depends on the distinction between actors and passive spectators, game-playing assumes that the players are all active participants creating coalitions in pursuit of common goals, or competing to prove superior ability and contending for greater positions of power. Role-playing strives for a unifying outcome as the viewers authorize the performance with their attention and applause; game-playing produces a division between winners and losers.

In Perkin Warbeck, the political game takes an ironic direction by beginning with the attitude of competition and ending with a partially successful spirit of compromise or cooperation. In Act I, Henry VII clearly does not see Warbeck as an equal contender and refers to the pretender as an object rather than a player of games by comparing their contest to a hunt:

> They're all retired to Flanders . . .
> But we will hunt him there too, we will hunt him,
> Hunt him to death even in the beldam's closet,
> Though the archduke were his buckler. (I.i.119-123)

Henry's later reference to fishing draws a similar distinction between the pursuer and the victim, as he criticizes the playful tactics of a foolish angler and, by implication, applauds his own aggressive strategy:

> He fondly angles who will hurl his bait
> Into the water 'cause the fish at first
> Plays round about the line and dares not bite.
> (IV.iv.29-31)

Henry plays a zero-sum game which entails his opponent's defeat. James, on the other hand, plays Perkin's cooperative game for a time by acknowledging Perkin as a figure of English royalty. Yet when the

Scottish king calculates the value of his choice, he ultimately yields to international pressure by shifting his loyalty to Henry VII. Tallying his own score, James concludes,

> A league with Ferdinand, a marriage
> With English Margaret, a free release
> From restitution for the late affronts,
> Cessation from hostility! and all
> For Warbeck not delivered, but dismissed!
> We could not wish it better. (IV.iii.56-61)

James's reversal, however, reflects a spirit of compromise, for he agrees only to cease protecting Warbeck and not to turn entirely against him. He grants Warbeck's request to keep Katherine as his wife, concluding, "We will part good friends" (IV.iii.108). James's gains are certainly more substantial than Warbeck's, but both men are partial winners in the bargain.

Even at the conclusion of the play, Ford depicts an outcome of shared wins and losses. By allowing for a meeting between Henry and Warbeck, contrary to historical sources, the playwright suggests that the two English "kings" relate to one another more as equal contenders in play than as predator and prey. Daubeney's reference to the game table, to "cards well shuffled / And dealt with cunning" (IV.iv.25), appears more appropriate than Henry's hunting analogy. Indeed, Henry offers Warbeck a compromise rather than adhering to the original plan to "Hunt him to death." Warbeck has the opportunity to become another Lambert Simnel, a former pretender who confessed his fraud and now praises Henry VII, calling him

> A prince composed of sweetness--heaven protect him!--
> [Who] Forgave me all my villainies, reprieved
> The sentence of a shameful end, admitted
> My surety of obedience to his service. (V.iii.40-43)

But Perkin is not Lambert Simnel, and, while accepting James's earlier compromise, Warbeck cannot accept Henry's offer because it violates his own belief in the "truth" of his royal identity. Instead, the pretender chooses the hangman's rope, resolving to suffer "[a] martyrdom of majesty" (V.iii.74).

Although Warbeck dies refusing to cooperate, Ford's elevation of the pretender as an individual of dignity rather than merely a fraud leaves the impression that both kingly characters gain something at the end. Warbeck loses his life but attains a measure of victory in the admiration of others and the constancy of love between himself and his wife. He says, "Harry Richmond, / A woman's faith hath robbed thy fame of triumph" (V.iii.101-102) "since herein, / Even when I fell, I stood enthroned a monarch / Of one chaste wife's troth pure and uncorrupted" (V.iii.125-127). He wins, as Michael Neill describes it, in his "kingship of Katherine's heart" (133). Katherine's own identification of Perkin's kingship over her, "You must be king of me, and my poor heart / Is all I can call mine" (III.iii.168-169), and Skelton's similar reference to Perkin as a "king of hearts!" (IV.v.32) reinforce the card-playing metaphor that gives the pretender status as a competent and equal player in king's games. Henry VII, on the other hand, regains the security of his throne, but his nation loses a man who had all the "king-becoming graces" (Macbeth IV.iii.91) without the legitimacy to display them. Critics continue to disagree about the extent of Perkin's heroism and Henry's legitimacy. Responses to the two English "monarchs" in the play vary from Philip Edwards' belief that Henry VII is a "violent usurper" ("Royal Pretenders" 25) to Mark Stavig's negative view of Perkin as a "hypocritical or demented individual" (183) whom the audience cannot take seriously (169). Disagreement arises primarily because Ford has reversed the zero-sum competitive attitudes expressed in his historical sources. He has created, instead, an ambiguous compromise, leaving readers and audiences still trying to calculate the final score long after the political game is over.

Compared to the power game in Perkin Warbeck, the political action in Edward II takes an opposite but equally ironic direction by beginning with the appearance of cooperation and ending with the antagonism of competition. Relations in Act I are clearly not wholly conciliatory,

but the king and his subjects at least offer gestures of compromise. When the nobles demand Gaveston's banishment, Edward initially refuses but then concedes as he acknowledges the benefit of maintaining his kingly position. He says to Gaveston, "thou must hence, or I shall be depos'd" (I.iv.110). When the nobles later allow Gaveston's return, Edward shows his appreciation by offering them new offices and political responsibilities. Both sides can claim a victory in the action. Even Isabella appears a winner for her role in reconciling the king and nobles. Edward rewards her, saying, "Once more receive my hand, and let this be / A second marriage 'twixt thyself and me" (I.iv.333-334).

But the semblance of cooperation does not last long, primarily because the players' inflexible wills make their gestures of compromise entirely insincere. Will is a crucial perceptual element of power, as Ray Cline acknowledges in his study of international politics, where he presents power as a function of both will and capability.[25] Power is both subjective and objective. In the political game played out in Edward II, the influence of subjective wills gradually shifts the action from apparent compromise to aggressive competition. Frank Ardolino explores the imperative mood of will in Marlowe's plays and notes the confrontational language characterizing the stage interaction:

> In their attempts to satisfy and enforce their wills, Marlowe's heroes employ a rhetoric of aggression, aggrandizement, and imperiousness which is in tune with the world of power politics they inhabit. They use language to harangue, intimidate, and coerce their subordinates and enemies. . . . (115)

While Tamburlaine is perhaps Marlowe's most aggressively wilful character, Edward II's typical response is "I'll have my will" (I.i.78).

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[25] His equation is complicated and technical: Pp=(C+E+M)x(S+W)
where Pp=perceived power,
C=Critical Mass=Population Territory,
E=Economic Activity,
M=Military Capability,
S=Strategic Purpose,
W=Will to Pursue National Strategy (Cline 34).
In a simplified form, Pp=CxW, however, it is useful for identifying the perceptual and physical aspects of power.

Although he welcomes the barons' decision to return Gaveston, he is not the least bit willing to reform his previously indulgent habits as a concession to their proposal. When Gaveston is executed, Edward simply adopts new favorites, the Spencers, to whom he promises, "[We] will enrich thee with our favour" (III.ii.50). In his wilfulness, Edward is like Perkin Warbeck's James IV, who also imposes his wishes upon his subjects. James justifies his offer of Katherine to Perkin with the remark, "'Tis our pleasure" (II.iii.40), and he denies Huntly's opposition, saying, "he is not / Our friend who contradicts us" (II.iii.67-68). The difference between the outcomes of the two kings' arbitrary actions lies not in themselves but in their subjects. Huntly obeys James; Edward's nobles remain as wilful as he is. They welcome Gaveston's return only to make him a more accessible target of their hostility. There is no room for compromise; there is no place for obedience. Constance Kuriyama suggests that the power struggle which develops is secondary to "the conflict between Edward's personal values . . . and the demands of his society" (192). However, if as Cline suggests, power is a function of will, then the personal and social conflict of interests becomes the primary motivation for Edward II's political power game.

The conflict of wills entails a competitive game. James Voss interprets the action as a "clash of incompatible ways of life" (519) in which the nobles begin with traditional appeals to law and the rights of the landed class, but soon alter their tactics when they discover that their nontraditional king "disregards accepted patterns of behavior and formulas for resolving social conflict" (524). In terms of game playing, the nobles introduce new rules when they discover that Edward

is not willing to play by the old ones.[26] Even the king's loyal follower, Kent, shifts loyalties because of Edward's nontraditional approach as an "Unnatural king" willing "to slaughter noble men / And cherish flatterers" (IV.i.8-9). The queen, too, gives up hope of reconciliation: "In vain I look for love at Edward's hand, / Whose eyes are fix'd on none but Gaveston" (II.iv.61-62). But unlike James in response to Warbeck, Isabella does not simply reject Edward but adopts the wilful determination of Mortimer's followers, whom she joins as the polarities of the nation solidify and the competitive goals of each side become more mutually exclusive.

The uncompromising language of the either/or conjunction marks the dynamics of this zero-sum game. Lancaster offers Edward a choice between Gaveston's banishment and war:

> Adieu, my lord; and either change your mind,
> Or look to see the throne, where you should sit,
> To float in blood; and at thy wanton head,
> The glozing head of thy base minion thrown. (I.i.130-133)

Canterbury proposes a similar alternative:

> Remember how the bishop was abus'd:
> Either banish him that was the cause thereof,
> Or I will presently discharge these lords
> Of duty and allegiance due to thee. (I.iv.59-62)

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[26] Thomas Pavel, who uses transformational grammar to analyze the plot development in Marlowe's plays, notes the wholly polemical structure of Edward II, a play organized around a series of Moves and Counter-moves (81). He explains the initial potential for compromise and its ultimate breakdown by suggesting that Edward and the nobles have similar maxims. Edward's, "The satisfaction of personal desires is inclusively preferable to the peace of the family or the kingdom," runs parallel to the nobles', "The respect of the laws and the traditions of the kingdom is inclusively preferable to the respect of the king's person" (82). "Inclusively" indicates that if both conditions in either maxim were simultaneously achievable, the two sides would be willing to compromise. Largely because of Gaveston's inflexible maxim, "The satisfaction of personal desires is exclusively preferable to the peace of the kingdom" (82), the compromise shifts to a competitive power struggle. Pavel's interest in "unveiling general properties of plot" (13) leads to a technical, structuralist analysis which, with its tree diagrams of action, is similar to the game theory studies by Steven Brams (Biblical Games: A Strategic Analysis of Stories in the Old Testament, 1980). Although my study shares some of the same theoretical assumptions, it focuses more closely on specific linguistic interaction than on broader movements of sequential plot action.

Their threatening language is echoed by Mortimer's statement of determination: "My lords, now let us all be resolute, / And either have our wills, or lose our lives" (I.iv.45-46). The either/or construction indicates the complete inflexibility of the nobles in their negotiations with Edward. And in comparison to Edward's use of the subjunctive if/then as a form of threat, their language carries the force of undeniable certainty. The linguistic imbalance is indicative of the uneven sides as the king is gradually outnumbered by his opponents. Nevertheless, proposals on either side meet with similar responses: Edward's "yet I will not yield" (I.iv.56) is echoed by Mortimer's "I will not yield" (I.iv.422). Given the diametrically opposing agendas and hardened wills, the game of threats can only lead to full-fledged civil war.

Consequently, the antagonism results in a much more violent conclusion than Ford's Perkin Warbeck. Impelled by the desire to win, Mortimer ignores and contradicts his original appeal of public justification as he participates in Gaveston's murder, the Spencers' removal from court, and Edward's imprisonment. Noting his own lack of public support as "The commons now begin to pity [Edward]" (V.iv.2), he becomes like another Edward, seeking self-serving uses for his power, with the words, "Mine enemies will I plague, my friends advance" (V.iv.67). While Mortimer thus usurps the king's role as Perkin fails to do in Ford's drama, Edward loses status as an equal contender in play and becomes the predator's prey. Before his imprisonment, he identifies himself as a lion, wounded but impelled by a "dauntless mind" (V.i.15). After suffering the humiliations of prison, however, he sees this role reversed:

> The wren may strive against the lion's strength,
> But all in vain: so vainly do I strive
> To seek for mercy at a tyrant's hand. (V.iii.34-36)

Unlike Warbeck, Edward is not even allowed the dignity of a final meeting with Mortimer and the queen before his brutal murder, before his

loss is complete. Ironically, Gaveston's allusion to the Actaeon myth, as he calls for entertainments to please the king, prophesies Edward's end. Describing the appearance of "a lovely boy in Dian's shape" (I.i.61), Gaveston concludes,

> and there, hard by,
> One like Actaeon peeping through the grove,
> Shall by the angry goddess be transform'd,
> And running in the likeness of an hart
> By yelping hounds pull'd down, and seem to die;--
> Such things as these best please his majesty. (I.i.66-71)

As Edward becomes an Actaeon figure himself hunted by his own followers and loses the image of lion-king, the failure of myths results in disastrous political and personal consequences.

In Ford's play, the political loser, Warbeck, is partly a winner; in Marlowe's play, the political winners ultimately join the losers. Mortimer's followers and the king's favorites are murdered before Edward's death, but ultimately Mortimer is also beheaded, the queen is banished, and only young Edward III remains as the scorekeeper left to tally the results of the civil war. As a previously ineffective participant, a pawn in the game of the others, he ascends the throne but acknowledges the emptiness of his newly achieved power. He speaks only to the dead, not the living. First, he addresses the head of Mortimer, "Could I have rul'd thee then, as I do now, / Thou hadst not hatch'd this monstrous treachery!" (V.vi.96-97). He then concludes by bidding a farewell of grief to his father's hearse. The tragic conclusion appears to result in a zero-sum outcome for all sides, and Edward III is given no opportunity to articulate hope for England's future; there is no one left on stage to encourage and to govern.

While death is a clear indicator of the disjunctive effect of games in both plays, the political action determining each conclusion is continually linked to the intangible power of language. Just as the language of myths seeks to corroborate authority, the language of persuasion serves as an instrument of power. For if the subjunctive clauses of the player-kings determine the credibility of their myths and

the "either/or" conjunctions reflect the uncompromising conflict of competitive games, the linguistic tactic of persuasion points to a much more self-conscious recognition of speech as a form of political influence and manipulation. In the equation, Power=Capability x Will, language acts as one of the chief capabilities in Edward II and Perkin Warbeck. Henry VII in Ford's play and Edward III in Marlowe's play acknowledge the potential impact of language in similar circumstances. Henry refuses to meet the traitor Stanley at his trial, saying, "If a' speak to me / I could deny him nothing; to prevent it, / I must withdraw" (II.ii.42-44). Likewise, when Edward III commits his mother to the Tower for treasonous acts, he interrupts her plea, saying, "Away with her, her words enforce these tears, / And I shall pity her if she speak again" (V.vi.85-86). Both kings prevent a confrontation because they recognize that their own sympathies lie with the accused. The ability of language to persuade is especially strong when the power of the will to resist is weak.

Words, however, must be even more convincing when the individuals being persuaded are less likely to compromise. Because James IV and Edward II are wilful characters, the influence exerted over them by Warbeck and Gaveston astounds the other subjects. Crawford expresses his incredulity, saying of Perkin's

> witchcraft of persuasion, that it fashions
> Impossibilities, as if appearance
> Could cozen truth itself; this dukeling mushroom
> Hath doubtless charmed the king. (II.iii.3-7)

Marlowe's nobles similarly perceive Gaveston as a "night-grown mushrump" (I.iv.284). Watching Gaveston and Edward whisper together, Mortimer Senior protests the favorite's influence, saying of the king, "Is it not strange, that he is thus bewitch'd?" (I.ii.55). The power of Perkin and Gaveston lies not in their social status but in their ability to win favor with wilful kings by persuasion. For the nobles who understand the concrete power of military force and land ownership, there is

something mystifying and even bewitching about the abstract power of words.

Yet the nobles, especially in Marlowe's play, are not exempt from the influence of persuasion. In a private dialogue, the queen sets out to convince Mortimer to repeal Gaveston's banishment. The odds are against her. Yet, despite her assurance to Edward that "it lies not in [her] power" (I.iv.158) to reconcile the lords, despite Moritmer's own resolution that "It is impossible" (I.iv.228) to persuade him, and despite Pembroke's conviction, "Fear not, the queen's words cannot alter him" (I.iv.233), she does sway Mortimer to her side. In the context of this opposition, the absence of words themselves in the pantomime on stage makes their power appear all the more mysterious and impressive. This pattern of persuasion then repeats itself as Warwick first rejects Mortimer's reversal, saying, "All that he speaks is nothing; we are resolv'd" (I.iv.251), but then accepts Mortimer's reasons as his own. Words have force in spite of wills. Kuriyama notes the "explicit denials of the power of words" in Edward II (205), but, while her remark may be a valid observation of Edward's rhetorical failures, it is certainly not true of the rhetorical skill of others. The nobles do, nevertheless, qualify their faith in words by recognizing language as only one element of power and acknowledging physical force as an equally viable alternative. When Isabella asks Mortimer to speak with the king rather than take up arms against him, Mortimer responds with a double subjunctive that indicates his unyielding determination to win at any cost: "Ay, if words will serve; if not, I must" (I.ii.83). Language can succeed, but when it fails, then Mortimer produces his sword with the resolution, "We never beg, but use such prayers as these" (II.ii.31).

To express an entirely different attitude to the power of language in Perkin Warbeck, Huntly uses an analogy similar to Mortimer's:

> Prayers are the weapons
> Which men so near their graves as I do use.
> I've little else to do. (III.ii.128-130).

For Mortimer, words are a first resort to be followed by swords. For Huntly, words become a last resort for one too old to use a sword, and for one who, in losing his daughter, believes, "I have no more / But prayers left me now" (III.ii.77). Ironically, Huntly appeals to the solace of words after his own language game has failed. He has earlier set a contest of courtship with Dalyell, Katherine's professed suitor, saying, "I'll only use my tongue / Without a father's power, use thou thine" (I.ii.58-59), and "if thou prevail'st / With passion more than I can with my counsel, / She's thine" (I.ii.55-57). When James interferes and removes Katherine from the game, Huntly, "whilst [his] tongue can wag" (II.iii.36), cannot convince the king to change his mind. James commands, "Cease persuasions," "We are resolved" (II.iii.57, 66). Words are Huntly's only weapons, and when they fail, he simply admits defeat. The examples of this subplot in Perkin Warbeck and of the queen's and nobles' effective persuasion in Edward II illustrate the broad political scope of verbal power. Although Edward II proves unsuccessful in the legitimizing appeal of his speeches, his subjects demonstrate that words can be forceful. In Perkin Warbeck, while the pretender proves that language can inspire belief, Huntly exposes the sad truth that words can also be futile. Furthermore, the dialogue in both plays indicates that rhetorical power rests not only in the skill of the orator but in the receptivity of the audience being persuaded.

The importance of language in political relationships leads to instability because of the potential duplicity of words. They can exaggerate and deceive. In Perkin Warbeck, for example, Stanley flatters Henry with this assurance,

> what madness 'twere to lift
> A finger up in all defence but yours,
> Which can be but impostorous in a title. (I.i.98-100)

Henry believes Stanley's "heart / Is figured on [his] tongue" (I.i.101-102), only to discover that the noble is a secret enemy plotting with Warbeck against him. The problem, as Perkin says, is that "Treason is bold-faced / And eloquent in mischief" (III.iv.40). Traitors and loyal followers use the same language, creating a political paradox, for, while alliances require verbal affirmation, words are an unreliable representation of truth. The paradox, in Henry's terms, is the "[m]isery of confidence" (I.i.110) for a king whose leadership depends upon committed subjects. But Henry VII, too, manipulates appearances with words for his own benefit. When his spokesman, Oxford, directs Katherine to court, she understands that the king "commands [her] to his presence" (V.i.98), but Oxford corrects her, saying, "Invites'ee, princess, not commands" (V.i.99). Henry's invitation permits no refusal, however, and Oxford's mislabelling of the act does not change the king's coercive intentions. When Henry later proposes to Katherine, "We'll prove your father, husband, friend, and servant, / Prove what you wish to grant us" (V.ii.156-157), the apparent generosity of his offer simply violates the reality of Katherine's own position, as she objects, "O sir, I have a husband" (V.ii.155). Like Stanley, Henry uses words to conceal the questionable integrity of his policies. In Ford's play, the dishonesty and deception of language which can create "the strange truth" of Perkin's power is simultaneously the underpinning and undermining force of political interaction.

Flattery and linguistic pretense contribute to the political instability in Edward II, as well. Edward is surrounded by men who speak falsely. Gaveston indicates that he "must have wanton poets, pleasant wits" (I.i.51), masters of language, to "draw the pliant king which way [he] pleases" (I.i.53). Spencer and Baldock are equally manipulative. Baldock, in particular, is the "smooth-tongued scholar" (IV.v.66) who adopts the language and appearance of studiousness for "mere hypocrisy" (II.i.45) to gain favor with the king. Edward's followers do not mask

treachery in praise, as Stanley does, but they do choose sides according to power rather than principles, and they exaggerate professions of devotion for their own benefit. The king's support is built on a false foundation.

In Marlowe's political world, in fact, verbal duplicity becomes not simply an option but a necessity. Kent illustrates the negative effect of that necessity. The only morally responsible character, he loses favor with Edward for offering honest advice and then loses his own life because he cannot feign loyalty to Mortimer's cause and heed his own warning, "Dissemble or thou diest" (IV.v.21). Isabella is more skilful at political deception. To maintain Mortimer's support but conceal her treachery before the eyes of her son, the heir to the throne, she chooses to "Use Edmund friendly as if all were well" (V.ii.79) and send a "finely dissembled" (V.ii.174) message to her husband:

> Commend me humbly to his majesty,
> And tell him that I labour all in vain
> To ease his grief, and work his liberty. (V.ii.69-71)

Her pretense sustains her control until her actions and Mortimer's appear too violently in opposition to her professions. The flattery and dissimulation do not simply contribute to a sense of political uncertainty, but instigate political disintegration, as the characters demonstrate not "the impotence of words" (Kuriyama 205), but the power of words to contradict expectations, manipulate perceptions, and misrepresent truth.

Marlowe and Ford both dramatize politics as a struggle of power and authority enacted through the two intertwining activities of game-playing and role-playing. In doing so, they illustrate the nature of history not simply as organized, recorded facts, but as the confusing conjunction of substance and shadows--the substance of reality and the shadows of its dependence on playing with the intangibles of language, unreliable perceptions, and beliefs. The myths authorizing role-playing

and king-playing rely on the ever-shifting foundation of shared beliefs. The outcome of games is determined as much by individual will and the deceptive words of persuasion as by weapons and physical force. Edward II presents the limitations of a world founded on myths and gestures where shadows destroy the substance of political order. As Edward says, "But what are kings, when regiment is gone, / But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?" (V.i.26-27). Perkin Warbeck offers the expansive, creative possibilities of pretense and persuasion so that Warbeck, "the Christian world's strange wonder" (V.i.36), has a double identity as "a shadow / Of majesty, but in effect a substance / Of pity" (V.ii.32-34). As Michael Neill suggests, "In Ford's world it is taken for granted that the substantiality of being is always liable to mockery from the shadows of performance" (136). Edward II dramatizes the political seriousness of play; Perkin Warbeck portrays the mocking playfulness of politics.

CHAPTER TWO

Framing the Game:

The Troublesome Reign and Edward III

Although many scholars debate about the private nature of the action in Edward II and Perkin Warbeck, few would disagree that the two histories The Troublesome Reign of King John and The Raigne of King Edward the Third focus on the public affairs of England rather than the private personalities of public figures. Ironically, even though Edward III devotes as much time to a love interest as Perkin Warbeck, the interaction beween the king and the Countess of Salisbury in the former play is interpreted as an extension of its political concerns.[1] As "public" plays about England's past, Edward III and The Troublesome Reign have much in common. Written anonymously[2] and performed early in the development of the history play's popularity on stage,[3] they share

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[1] As Irving Ribner says, "The central political problem of the play is that of the relation between the king's and moral law, and with this problem the Countess of Salisbury scenes are primarily concerned" (145-146). See also John S. Lewis, "The Rash Oath in Edward III," Allegorica 1 (1976): 269-277.

[2] Authorship remains a question in the two plays although Shakespeare's name has been attached to both. In the introduction to the Shakespeare's Classics edition of The Troublesome Reign, John Munro dismisses the various suppositions, saying, "These guesses we need not trouble about. Nothing is known of the plotter or author, or authors, of the play, and no convincing arguments with regard to them have been brought forward" (xiii). Fred Lapides provides a much more thorough analysis in his introduction to The Raigne of King Edward the Third as evidence of the play's Shakespearean style. He concludes, however, by acknowledging that "[u]ltimately, each reader must follow Capell's wise advice and decide for himself whether he believes Edward III to be by Shakespeare, since without any external evidence, the play is not likely to be admitted into the canon" (30). Given the lack of concrete evidence proving authorship, this study will accept the anonymity of the dramatists for both plays.

[3] The precise date of the two plays' initial performances is unknown, although Lapides provides evidence to suggest that Edward III, entered in the Stationer's Register in 1595, was probably written between 1589 and 1592 (32). The Troublesome Reign shares a similar time frame for its inception. It appears before the first printing in 1591 and after Marlowe's Tamburlaine (1587), which is alluded to in the prologue.

an international scope as they dramatize England's conflicts with armies advancing from France, Scotland, or Rome. Their focus on England's identity in relation to external opponents has led critics to conclude that both plays depict a patriotic or propagandistic view of history. According to Irving Ribner, Edward III is "an intensely patriotic play, and it alters history freely in order better to sustain its patriotic tone" (144). According to Virginia Mason Carr, "The TR is also an intensely nationalistic play; it reflects the common belief among the English that they were a chosen nation" (166).[4]

Despite similar conceptions about these plays, however, their authors differ significantly in the way they shape history by selection, artistic technique, and tone. Game theory and its relationship to public rituals and ceremonies illuminate the degree to which patriotism in both plays celebrates England's present by advocating the legitimacy of its past. While both plays address various issues of legitimacy, a game theoretical approach to plot reveals that patriotic nationalism does not provide the same unifying force in The Troublesome Reign as it does in Edward III. The complex, overlapping political games in The Troublesome Reign expose an historical reality of intrigue and competition that challenges a simple interpretation of the play as

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[4] While Ribner and Carr represent the critical mainstream in their approach to these two plays, several scholars offer alternative readings. Larry Champion's recent study (1990) of English history plays provides a rare and refreshing challenge to the accepted, conservative Tudor interpretation of Edward III. He bases his approach to Edward III and other histories on the view that the plays do not simply "affirm and support . . . the Tudor establishment" (12), but that they "are framed to permit--indeed to encourage--a multiplicity of ideological responses; responses that, in turn, accommodate and stimulate the divergent political views of a socially heterogenuous [sic] audience" (13). His conclusions are not necessarily my own, but he has initiated debate on a play that has long been neglected. The Troublesome Reign has engendered more critical discussion, undoubtedly because of its close ties to Shakespeare's King John. Classifying the anonymous work as one of several "weak-king plays," Michael Manheim addresses the failure of other critics "to recognize the strongly ambivalent response it invites toward the king" (117). Although he limits his discussion to King John's character and has by no means convinced many more recent critics to adopt his perspective, his challenge to the standard interpretation invites closer scrutiny of the complicated interaction on stage and the shaping of the play as a whole.

patriotic, Protestant propaganda. Ceremony fails, and legitimacy is constantly undermined. In Edward III, by contrast, game structure and ceremonial display reinforce one another so that subtle challenges to legitimacy are constantly silenced in service of a myth of national unity.

The historical and literary background to both plays influences their presentations of the past. Although The Troublesome Reign is considered propagandistic on the grounds of its post-Reformation interpretation of King John as a Protestant hero, the play itself leaves his heroism open to question by mixing historical and mythical representations of his character. Historically, John was an unpopular and ineffectual king. Yet early Protestants such as William Tyndale adopted a mythical[5] interpretation of his achievements to support their attack against papists. As Carr points out,

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[5] I use the term "mythical" here in the same sense that the Tudor Myth is understood as a selective interpretation of historical facts in service of a prevailing political agenda. My approach, however, is also influenced by Murray Edelman's definition of myths as shared beliefs giving meaning to social events (3). (See my previous discussion of Edelman's concept of myths in Chapter One). While most myths appeal to a historical or cultural context for a source of legitimacy, beliefs such as the Tudor Myth and King John's Protestant characterization claim a very specific historical credibility which often has little ground in actual fact. To those championing King John's challenge to the Catholic Church, it mattered little that he reigned centuries before Protestantism began. Cultural materialists and new historicists refer to such conceptions as ideologies used to sustain governmental power and control. From the standpoint of a new historicist interest in political expediency, little distinguishes myths from ideologies.

Northrop Frye, on the other hand, does distinguish ideology from myth. He says, "ideology to me suggests ideas, and a myth to me means a mythos, the Greek word for a story or narrative. . . . All ideologies are derived from stories or story patterns" (Myth 204-205). For him, while myth is disinterested and universal, ideology is "argumentative" and "intolerant," and "because it is or includes the rationalizing of a claim to social authority, tries to get itself established as the right or 'orthodox' one" (103-104). My use of "myth" combines Edelman's "shared beliefs" and Frye's "story" to mean a particular society's story rather than (as Frye sees it) a story transcending the political concerns of ideology. A society's story may include, for example, not only policies and values recorded of reigning kings, but also the almost magical sensationalism of the legendary, extra-historical figures and events that so often find their way into the history plays. Story in historical drama always follows a fine line between fact and fiction, history and myth, and subtle distinctions between the two on stage point to similar ambiguities in political life itself.

> John's reign (1199-1216) was a suitable vehicle for such propaganda because John had defied Pope Innocent III and had been excommunicated for his refusal to allow the election of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury. (24)

One of the play's sources, Foxe's Acts and Monuments, follows this Protestant interpretation, and John's confrontation with Pandulph midway through the first part of the play comes directly out of this tradition. He says,

> Know, Sir Priest, as I honour the Church and holy churchmen, so I scorn to be subject to the greatest Prelate in the world. Tell thy Master so from me; and say, John of England said it, that never an Italian Priest of them all, shall either have tithe, toll, or polling penny out of England; but, as I am King, so will I reign next under God, Supreme Head both over spiritual and temporal. And he that contradicts me in this, I'll make him hop headless. (I.v.76-84)[6]

The king's voice is confident in its national, Protestant sentiments.

Yet another source of the play, Holinshed's Chronicles, offers a much broader perspective on John's reign, to the point of including diverse and contradictory accounts of various events and policies. F.J. Levy comments on the tendency of many chroniclers to include conflicting details:

> If two or three inconsistent accounts of some event existed, most likely all would be recorded, and it was rare for the chronicler to make it clear which he favored. This was partly due to an unwillingness to antagonize possible readers by raising another controversy. . . . There was also, however, a deplorable lack of faith in the new methods of criticism. Suppose the methods themselves were wrong, or the chronicler's application of them inexpert, then some potentially useful fact would be omitted and the inference that might be drawn from it would be forever lost. The risk was more than most chroniclers dared take, and so they contented themselves by leaving the final choice to the reader. (169)

As a consequence of this historical approach, the playwright of The Troublesome Reign was required to play a kind of multiple choice game in

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[6] Lily B. Campbell notes that the title Supreme Head "is a definite anachronism appearing at any time previous to the reign of Henry VIII" (147). The playwright is clearly adopting the language of Protestant mythology here to liken King John to Henry VIII.

All quotations from The Troublesome Reign in this chapter are identified by the first or second part of the play, followed by the act and the line numbers.

selecting material for his plot. Either Arthur escaped from prison and later drowned or "through verie greefe and languor he pined awaie, and died of naturall sicknesse" or he was secretly murdered at the king's command (Holinshed vol. 2, 286). Either John was murdered by a monk "mooued with zeale for the oppression of his countrie" after the king promised to raise taxes, or the king was poisoned maliciously by his own servant conspiring "with a conuert of that abbeie" (336). The king failed to govern well either because his taxes inspired hatred in the people or because he "wanted nothing but faithfull subiects" (339). Clearly, the alternatives offer vastly different interpretations of John's feats and defeats, and the playwright's decision to combine Foxe's and Holinshed's approaches leaves room for a less than simplistic, politically one-sided account of the past.[7]

Placed in a literary context between Bale's Kynge Johan and Shakespeare's King John, however, The Troublesome Reign is still primarily considered a propaganda play leaning closer to the dramatic allegory in its expression of a Protestant, political agenda. Ribner observes that "the play enforces the basic Tudor doctrines of absolutism and passive obedience, just as they had been proclaimed in Kynge Johan" (79). When The Troublesome Reign is compared to Shakespeare's play, and when authorship and chronology are not considered the most pressing

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[7] Other critics have noted the influence of inconsistent Tudor interpretations of King John on the playwrights of the time. Manheim notes the "room for difference of opinion as to how John might be seen in drama of the 1590s," and observes that "the critics have tacitly acknowledged this division by finding John heroic in TR and a good deal less than heroic in Shakespeare's play" (117-118). J.L. Simmons recognizes that the The Troublesome Reign combines various views but concludes, "Although some credit must be given to the author's attempted historical comprehensiveness, the result is qualified by a dramatic failure" (55). Many critics would readily admit that, aside from several Shakespearean plays, most English history plays are "qualified by dramatic failure," yet to acknowledge the enormity of their task in combining and selecting from volumes and views of the past goes some way toward appreciating what they have accomplished and understanding how and to what measure they have failed.

issues (which is rare, indeed),[8] Shakespeare's play is generally deemed a superior work artistically and thematically. Roy Battenhouse concludes, "The Troublesome Reign carries a great deal of anti-Catholic bias and is written as Protestant propaganda, whereas Shakespeare's play is more objective" (193). One might argue whether "objectivity" is an appropriate basis on which to distinguish two dramatic interpretations of history, but certainly the two "King John" plays are similar enough to solicit frequent comparisons. However, resisting the temptation to see The Troublesome Reign inevitably as Kynge Johan's successor or King John's shadow, and viewing it instead in light of Edward III, a play with similar artistic merit and political bias, raises questions of intent and exposes possibilities of meaning that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Tudor literary and chronicle depictions of Edward III are not fraught with the same ambiguity as those of King John primarily because the events in Edward's historical period did not inspire a similar Protestant move to falsify the king's reign in order to mythologize his deeds. Furthermore, the record of Edward's political successes offers greater promise as an example of English heroism. His main indiscretion, his love affair with the Countess, appears in one historical source, Froissart's Chronicles, where it is but a brief, passing encounter, a page in a volume of history. Lapides gives evidence to suggest that the author of Edward III borrows details not only from Froissart's account, but from William Painter's version in the Palace of Pleasure (41-44). Detailing the development and adaptations

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[8] Most critics agree that The Troublesome Reign preceded Shakespeare's King John, although E.A.J. Honigmann attempts to prove that King John is the earlier play, written in 1590/91. He concludes, however, "Critics of exceptional authority prefer a date between 1593 and 1596. Students of the period will realize that more is at stake than meets the eye, and that the problem, obscure and elusive though it be, must be faced" (intro. King John, lviii). Dating of the "King John" plays continues to be a source of speculation and study, but has little relevance in my discussion of two relatively contemporary but independent plays dramatizing two different periods of history.

of Edward's love story from the fourteenth to the late sixteenth century, Samuel Pratt adds that, unlike Painter and other Elizabethans, the dramatist of Edward III does not falsify character details for the sake of moralizing the past, but allows for "the problem of dealing with an English king turned lustful" (40). Curiously, at the same time that the playwright develops this more negative encounter into a lengthy episode, he repeatedly enhances the king's heroism by conflating other details. Lapides notes, for example, that

> [b]y pitting Edward against one French king rather than two, the author is . . . able to make the play a more heroic one, in which two strong-willed men are contending against each other. (46)

Like the author of The Troublesome Reign, the playwright of Edward III had to select from various versions of the past, but his task was made somewhat simpler because interpretive discrepancies about Edward's life arose from occasional details and events rather than from a complicated Tudor conception of his reign, combining the factual and fictional aspects of chronicle narratives, Protestant mythology, and morality drama.

Not only their sources, but their dramatic medium as well influences the two playwrights' interpretation of English history. When, as R.L. Smallwood says, the author "turns the informative then-narrative. . . into the liveliness of now-theatricality" (146), his story takes on a whole new social dimension. Martin Esslin explains the difficulty in determining the boundaries of dramatic activity because of its similarities to other communal forms:

> One can, for example, look at drama as a manifestation of the play instinct: children playing Mother and Father or Cowboys and Indians are, in some sense, improvising drama. Or one can see drama as a manifestation of one of humanity's prime social needs, that of ritual: tribal dances, religious services, great state occasions all contain strong dramatic elements. Or one can look at drama as something one goes to see, which is being presented and organised as something to be seen, a spectacle: in Greek theatre (...theatron) means a place where one goes to see something. . . . (10)

The relationship of drama to games (somewhat related to both Esslin's play instinct and his spectacle) and to ritual illuminates the complexity of the history play as a form which demands diverse commitments and responses from the dramatists and the audience alike. The reality of a game consists in the structure of rules and goals that gives independent meaning to the activity. In ritual, on the other hand, a framework of beliefs unites the performance to experiences beyond it by promising to effect change or by sanctioning action completed in the past. As Barbara Myerhoff says, "In ritual, doing is believing" (151).

Historical drama shares aspects of both kinds of public performance in the way the playwright's art meets the audience's participation. The cultural context of "belief" required in ritual and the expectations of games are fused in the stage activity.[9] Coleridge remarks that the appropriate response to a work of art is the temporary "suspension of disbelief" (397). Presumably, an audience attending a history play suspends its disbelief by relying on imagination as the key to experiencing past events through the conventions of dramatic

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[9] The relationship between ritual and drama has primarily been the subject of theatre historians interested in the ritual origins of the dramatic form in classical and medieval times. The typical evolutionary approach to drama adopted in the mid-twentieth century has since been challenged by critics aware of the rich possibilities in exploring the two forms of public performance as concurrent and connected activities. V.A. Kolve, for example, deconstructs the evolutionary theory by suggesting that the relationship between the ritual performance of liturgy and the medieval mystery plays is one of "cousinship" rather than "parentage" (2), and Peter McDonald similarly describes the two as coexisting "distinct activities, albeit related in many respects" (93). See also Richard L. Homan's "Ritual Aspects of the York Cycle" Theatre Journal 33 (1981): 303-315. Discussions of the relationship between ritual and drama in the Renaissance focus on secular rather than sacred activities: monarchical ceremonies and the rise of public theatres. Two recent examples which explore connections between state ritual and Shakespeare's English and Roman history plays include Richard McCoy, "'Thou Idol Ceremony': Elizabeth I, The Henriad, and the Rites of the English Monarchy," Urban Life in the Renaissance, ed. Susan Zimmerman and Ronald Weissman (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1989) 240-266; and Mark Rose, "Conjuring Caesar: Ceremony, History, and Authority in 1599," True Rites and Maimed Rites: Ritual and Anti-Ritual in Shakespeare and His Age, ed. Linda Woodbridge and Edward Berry (Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1992) 256-269.

performance. The audience is called upon to accept conditions such as those presented by the Chorus in Shakespeare's Henry V:

> Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them
> Printing their proud hoofs i' th' receiving earth;
> For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,
> Carry them here and there, jumping o'er times,
> Turning th' accomplishment of many years
> Into an hour-glass. (Prologue 26-31)

The demands on the imagination create a separate dramatic space removed from surrounding reality. The play is like a game defined by its own rules, and the audience becomes a group of spectators, knowing the players' rules, enjoying the unpredictability of successive moves, and savouring the anticipation of an unknown end. The appeal of conflict characterizes drama and sport.[10]

Yet the events of the past that provide the sources for history plays are themselves grounded in reality to a degree that the fictional material in most works of art is not. Hence the audience may also respond like ritual participants, knowing and believing the outcome because they know the past, the history behind the story. The degree to which Elizabethan audiences were familiar with English history before

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[10] I use the game analogy here to discuss a different level of "history as play" than I do in the previous chapter. In Chapter C I describe the relationship between the theatre and the world beyond in terms of the competitive and cooperative dichotomy of political game theory to distinguish the contemporary impact of history plays from the effect of other topical dramatic genres such as masques and satire. Here, I am referring more specifically to the immediate interaction between the audience and actors within the walls of the theatre during the performance of a play. These two uses of the term "game" are not mutually exclusive nor inconsistent but help to illustrate the ambiguous multiple functions of the stage. I focus here on the stage as an entertainment place, a "gamehouse" or "playhouse" involving spectators and being set apart from society's daily activity, whereas earlier I used game theory concepts to describe the broader participatory role of the theatre and history plays within society rather than set apart from it.

Jonathan Hart's recent study of the Chorus in Henry V leads to some of the same conclusions about the ambiguous relationship between the theatre and the world that I reach through my game theory approach (Theater and World 148-157). Discussing the Chorus's ironic role in Shakespeare's play, Hart argues, "Challenging the imagination of the audience directly, the Chorus asks it to consider the problems of the theater. Imagination and the relation of the theater to the 'world outside' and to the historical world represent the foundation of the speeches of the Chorus" (148).

being exposed to it in the theatre is a subject of some debate. Thomas Nashe indicated that for many in the audiences of his time, the plays provided basic knowledge as well as interpretation (Pierce Penilesse 86-88). However, D. R. Woolf notes the growing popularity of chronicle history at a time prior to and concurrent with the development of the history play: "it is undeniable that the second half of the [sixteenth] century witnessed an enormous expansion in the public . . . interest in the past, particularly within the urban environment" ("Genre" 331-332). Marjorie Garber acknowledges the validity of both perspectives:

> Shakespeare's contemporaries might well be expected to know the facts of their own recent history, or at least a version of those facts. For them, anachronistic prophecies set within the plays would be reminders of what they already knew about the ensuing pattern of events, and would therefore reinforce the sense of foreboding fostered by the dramatic action. Yet Coleridge notes that even in periods immediately succeeding Shakespeare's own, the history plays seem to have been for many people the chief source of information about historical events . . . . (318)

One can only speculate that while some members of the audience may have been educated about history in the theatres, others who attended the plays knew something about the past they were about to see represented.

Assuming the presence of historically knowledgeable members in the audience, Garber adopts Jacques Derrida's logic of "future anterior--the future that is already inscribed" (318)--to suggest a "complicity between audience and actor" (328) based on the "belief in the truth of history" (305). Although she speaks of "a reader-response, or more properly an audience-response, approach to the [plays]" (306) in arguing that prophecies within the plays are a way to understand the prophetic or predictable nature of history being retold, her observations support a similar notion that historical inevitability engenders a form of ritual involvement for the viewers. Whereas game-like dramatic conditions require a momentary suspension of disbelief, historic conditions demand a ritual-like assumption of belief which looks beyond the boundaries of the performance.

While the analogy of spectators viewing a game is useful in identifying a particular aspect of the dramatic experience, game-playing is likewise one of the key elements in the interaction on stage. Conflict manifests itself in the way characters establish goals and compete with one another to achieve their own ends. As in Perkin Warbeck and Edward II, game theory assumptions illuminate the unfolding of political plots in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III. Both plays are characterized primarily by the oppositional tactics of zero-sum activity, but the intricacies of the plot in The Troublesome Reign require a fuller explanation of the tenets of game theory. Zero-sum interaction is relatively simple when two sides having diametrically opposing goals play against one another to determine the victor. Games, however, become much more complicated if there are more than two opposing teams. Morton Davis defines the "n-person game" as one that includes three or more players. He notes that assessing power in an n-person game is much more difficult than in a two-player game (139-140). Although he does not elaborate with an explanation, presumably the difficulty stems from the nature of power as an oppositional relationship of "greater-than" and "lesser-than." It invites binary distinctions. N-person games create unstable dynamics by requiring multiple comparisons of power, in which one measure qualifies another. According to Davis, the complexity inevitably results in coalitions (140). Players compromise or conceal initial goals in an effort to simulate the simpler two-sided competition and thus clarify the locus of power.

The Troublesome Reign is a play about coalitions. It dramatizes a series of three-player games involving England, France, and Rome. The players shift alliances as they adopt strategies most likely to favor their individual goals while at the same time giving themselves a firm power base with which to confront their most tnreatening opponents. France and Rome form an alliance which invalidates the former treaty

between King Philip and King John, but Pandulph later deserts France in favor of England. These shifts indicate the political instability implicit in multiple-player games: rules authorizing political obligations become less important than an overriding drive for the ultimate goal, power.

The form of interaction is significantly different in Edward III. Like The Troublesome Reign, Edward III includes three players on the international scene, England, France, and Scotland. But England faces its two opponents on separate fronts, so that there is an absence of three-way coalition games. The plot thus promises to be much less complex. King Edward's initial orders to send troops out in two directions at once suggest the development of a scene-by-scene alternation between two independent competitive games. The Scottish rebellion, however, quickly becomes a minor issue. In the second scene, the Scottish King David and his handful of supporters fly upon hearing of the English advance, and an open battle never takes place. Thereafter, England's contest with Scotland is merely reported rather than enacted, until the last scene when Copland appears with his prisoner, King David, as an outward sign of England's complete victory. England's behind-the-scenes contest with Scotland is understated while the main action on stage concerns England and France as they struggle over England's claim to be France's legitimate inheritor. The very nature of the plot, as two simple, competitive games, one superimposed on the other, allows the playwright to define a firm patriotic stance. Unlike The Troublesome Reign, in Edward III England does not have to compromise its own position by forming coalitions to overcome one opponent by the support of the other. The double medium of reporting and enacting conflict suggests that King Edward is powerful enough to play out two battles simultaneously and emerge the victor in both.

In The Troublesome Reign, such simple oppositional games are complicated not only by multiple competitors, but by the uncertain

conditions created when members of one team are not wholly united. Factions and divisions on the English side weaken its position against outside opponents. Strategy, as Thomas Schelling points out in his discussion of political games, "is concerned not just with enemies who dislike each other but with partners who distrust or disagree with each other" (5). King John, the Bastard Falconbridge, the nobles, and even Arthur speak with independent voices for England, and instigate strategies guaranteed to ensure their own interests. It is difficult to keep track of the shifting loyalties on English soil, let alone follow the activity of coalitions abroad.

It becomes equally difficult to sense the patriotic fervor of a nation whose members are frequently at odds with one another. No single figure consistently represents England's national pride. King John, though speaking out forcefully against the dominance of the Pope, is in many ways a flawed and untrustworthy ruler who governs with doubtful legitimacy and who acts rashly. The nobles, equally untrustworthy, desert their king in favor of a French contender. The Bastard Falconbridge, though loyal and patriotic, has questionable credibility given his origins: he is an illegitimate son, albeit royal, and his role as a strong English nationalist derives from legendary sources outside the boundaries of recorded history.[11] Patriotism is by no means an overriding sentiment when it is uttered by an illegitimate voice, reinforced in large part by negative examples of the unpatriotic, and

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[11] In his introduction to Shakespeare's King John, John Dover Wilson supplies the sketchy historical origins of the Falconbridge character. He notes brief references to several bastards in Holinshed, Hall, and Stowe, and concludes, "In short, Philip, the son of Lady Falconbridge, appears to be compounded of most of the valiant bastards in English history" (xli). Guy Hamel expands Wilson's observation, stating that the playwright develops a legendary personality out of possibilities suggested by minor historical figures. He remarks that the Bastard "belongs in historical romance. His place is in works like the Earl of Huntingdon plays. He is in fictional kind the counterpart of Robin Hood" (43). He is at once an historical and nonhistorical character; his is a mythic voice far enough removed from the misjudgments and errors of history to justify and glorify England's past with a freedom that the truly historical figures do not have.

upheld only occasionally by bold claims for England's unity and well-being. In short, the title could not be more aptly chosen to indicate the uncertain and troubled times of a nation whose domestic and foreign affairs are sadly in need of repair. The play is, after all, "the troublesome reign" and not "the famous victories" of King John.[12] The dramatist appears more inclined to expose in historical example the tension between patriotic ideals and political reality than simply to exalt an ideal that completely ignores the events of the past. The uncertain tone recalls Philip Edwards' observation that

> [w]hile the English history plays vary as enormously in their attitude to the nation as in their dramatic and literary value, they all have something of that rather bewildering complexity of response to England's history which is so marked a feature of Shakespeare's histories. (Threshold 68)

The "attitude to the nation" in Edward III is significantly different than the complicated perspective in The Troublesome Reign. Not only is England's strength sure and uncompromised in relationship to external enemies, but there is also little dissent of nobles and king at home. Occasionally, the nobles question Edward's judgment, but they never attempt to overide his commands or dispute his authority. When Audley, Artoys, and Derby seek extra troops to save Prince Edward in battle, Audley protests against the King's refusal, "Yet good my Lord, tis too much wilfulnes, / To let his blood be spilt that may be saude" (1552-1553). Faced with the King's resolution, however, the three men simply reply in obedient resignation:

> Aud. O cruell Father, farewell Edward then.
> Der. Farewell sweete Prince, the hope of chiualry.
> Art. O would my life might ransome him from death.
> (1565-1567)

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[12] The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth was a late 1580's history play contemporary with The Troublesome Reign of King John and also belonging to the repertory of the Queen's Men (Pitcher 8). The contrasting titles set the tone for two different dramatizations of history, the first a crude farce depicting Prince Hal's rise to the throne in the prodigal son tradition, the second a much more complex interpretation of kingship and political reality during King John's reign. The two anonymous plays can be viewed almost as complementary explorations into a new genre from a comic and tragic approach.

The two farewells followed by a conditional statement of a desired rather than an expected alternative deed reinforce the image of Edward's ultimate power. In another instance of tension on the English side, Edward III does show questionable judgment. He contradicts his own orders for more troops because he is distracted by his love for the Countess. The nobles are bewildered by his response as they exit on Derby's remark, "Lets leaue him to his humor" (832). Larry Champion suggests, "It is hardly likely that the line . . . could have been delivered without a note of sarcasm bordering on disdain" (32). Even accepting Champion's interpretation, however, one would have to conclude that the scene confirms the king's control. Although the nobles may be frustrated by his inconsistencies and irresponsibility, they are nevertheless unwilling to challenge his prerogatives. Edward's dominance as leader, despite occasional disagreements, establishes England as a unified team in its action on the international front.

The playwright deliberately contrasts this image of stability with French instability and disunity. In one of the few scenes involving common citizens, two French men and a woman argue about the odds of France overcoming the English, only to be interrupted by the entrance of a fourth subject warning the others to fly and lament. "Ah wreched France, I greatly feare thy fal, / thy glory shaketh like a tottering wall" (1269-1270). Later in the play, there is similar confusion amongst the French soldiers and in the royal family itself. The French King John utters a cry of distress:

> Our multitudes are in themselues confounded,
> Dismayed, and distraught, swift starting feare
> Hath buzd a cold dismaie through all our armie,
> And euerie pettie disaduantage promptes
> The feare possessed abiect soul to flie. (2144-2148)

His two sons enter not only to confirm the military disaster, but to advance a picture of French cowardice as they advise the king, "Fly father flie, the French do kill the French" (2154) and "Plucke out your

eies, and see not this daies shame" (2160). England's chief opponent in the game is depicted as a nation constantly on the verge of collapse.

By contrast, when England temporarily loses ground in battle, one senses the threat to individuals rather than impending danger to the kingdom as a whole. And typically it is the lesser figure of the prince rather than the crucial figure of the king whose life is at stake. In one such life-threatening episode, Prince Edward draws on the creative power of language to downplay the danger posed by his opponents. He counters Audley's detailed description of surrounding French soldiers, with a series of metaphors, beginning, "Thy parcelling this power hath made it more, / As many sands as these my hands can hold" (1879-1880). He concludes by diminishing the external power:

> The drops are infinite that make a floud,
> And yet thou knowest we call it but a Raine:
> There is but one Fraunce, one king of Fraunce,
> That Fraunce hath no more kings, and that same king
> Hath but the puissant legion of one king:
> And we haue one, then apprehend no ods,
> For one to one, is faire equalitie. (1897-1903)

He simplifies the contest, depicting it as a fair, two-sided competition, to indicate that the odds are not insurmountable. His language game is a means of containment to circumscribe the threat to himself and his troops. His method parallels the way in which the playwright uses his own dramatic framework to contain the conflict of English history, whether it be by contrasting scenes of ordered and chaotic forces, by superimposing scenes of simultaneous battle, or by downplaying physical action through verbal interpretations.

To suggest that the playwright uses techniques of containment recalls Jonathan Dollimore's discussion of cultural materialism and politics in Renaissance drama:

> Three aspects of historical and cultural process figure prominently in materialist criticism: consolidation, subversion and containment. The first refers, typically, to the ideological means whereby a dominant order seeks to perpetuate itself; the second to the subversion of that order, the third to the containment of ostensibly subversive pressures. (10)

In the histories, the prominence of patriotic expression serves to consolidate dominant ideologies of the state, while scenes which question or expose the ambiguity of mainline political values function subversively. In the most recent interpretation of Edward III, Champion tends to balance consolidation and subversion by arguing that the play offers two equally valid political readings:

> Examined from the diametrically opposed perspectives of heroic patriotism and grim realpolitik, Edward III is revealed to be a play crafted to satisfy the demands of a highly heterogeneous audience. (36)

A careful examination of the way the playwright emphasizes or undercuts various speeches and actions by consciously organizing scenes indicates that the two opposing political views are perhaps not as equally balanced as Champion suggests. Without denying the excitement of theatrical conflict and an occasional contest of moral or political values, the playwright continually relies on dramatic containment to affirm English power. One senses a drive to inevitable victory which gives the play a comic view of history.

The role of young English princes as heirs to the throne in both The Troublesome Reign and Edward III contributes to the plays' tragic or comic angle and influences the prevalence of patriotic sentiment. Northrop Frye's discussion of the relationship among tragedy, history, and comedy proves a useful point of departure. He refers to two history play kings without sons to inherit the kingdom, but his insights have broader implications:

> History merges so gradually into tragedy that we often cannot be sure when communion has turned into catnarsis. Richard II and Richard III are tragedies insofar as they resolve on those defeated kings; they are histories insofar as they resolve on Bolingroke and Richmond, and the most one can say is that they lean toward history. Hamlet and Macbeth lean toward tragedy, but Fortinbras and Malcolm, the continuing characters, indicate the historical element in the tragic resolution. (284)

Not all histories unfold tragic story lines to conclude like Richard II and Richard III with the triumphant emergence of the king's political opponent. In The Troublesome Reign, as in Marlowe's Edward II and

Shakespeare's King John, the young prince appears after his father's defeat as a sign that history's open-endedness mitigates the tragedy of one man's reign. In Marlowe's play, Edward III has an insignificant role until his father's death; in both "King John" plays, Prince Henry's existence on stage coincides with his father's death. The new young leaders, particularly in the "King John" plays, express hopes for a better future.[13] In The Troublesome Reign, for example, Prince Henry says:

> Thus England's peace begins in Henry's reign,
> And bloody wars are clos'd with happy league.
> Let England live but true within itself,
> And all the world can never wrong her state. (II.ix.43-46)

The measure of hope inspired by the prince's final remarks and the degree to which each of these plays "lean toward" tragedy or history depend upon the extent of personal loss felt at the king's death and the magnitude of devastation during his reign. Because the author of The Troublesome Reign does not achieve the same sympathy for King John as Marlowe does for Edward II, tragedy in the former play is open to question. Yet in any of these plays about "troublesome reigns" the element of patriotism is limited rather than augmented by the enactment of history. Expressions of national pride conclude a dramatization of political disaster, and anyone suffering doubts about England's current political state might have difficulty being convinced that history's failures necessarily breed political wisdom for the future. The action unfolds like a relay in which the prince takes over where the king leaves off, but the drama concludes before he recovers his father's lost ground. For Henry III, following in King John's steps, this would have been "troublesome."

Edward III depicts a much more comedic view of history, and the prince plays a major part in sustaining that perspective. For Northrop

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[13] See Chapter One for a fuller discussion of the dramatic constraints limiting Edward III's positive potential at the end of Marlowe's play.

Frye, marriage rather than sonship exemplifies comedy in the history plays. He says,

> There seems to be a far less direct connection between history and comedy: the comic scenes in the histories are, so to speak, subversive. Henry V ends in triumph and marriage, but an action that kills Falstaff, hangs Bardolph and debases Pistol is not related to comedy in the way that Richard II is related to tragedy. (284)

While marriage is limited to a comic resolution in Henry V, however, sonship sustains the comedic perspective throughout a play like Edward III. As a promising young warrior with a dominant role, Prince Edward reinforces the image of English heroism by proving himself in several dangerous combats. Nationalism is painted with broad strokes when two Edwards share the stage from the first scene, confront the same opposition, and emerge to celebrate their triumph as the last two spokesmen in the play. Their game relies not on the exchange of a relay but on the mutual support of political partners.

This double image of national leadership constrasts slightly with the "comic" atmosphere engendered by princes playing dominant roles in other history plays. Prince Hal appears in The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth and Shakespeare's 1 & 2 Henry IV; the promising young Protestant Prince Edward appears in Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me. Through Hal's escapades with Falstaff, humor creates the comic element in history. Hal defies the expectations of prince and heir to entertain himself and the audience, although in Shakespeare's play, he also represents an undercurrent of hope for England's future. In When You See Me You Know Me, Rowley's Prince Edward appears more heroic than Prince Hal and even more "politically correct" than his own father, Henry VIII. In Edward III, however, the prince's comic contribution does not challenge the king's centrality with either humor or heroism. Young Edward mirrors his father's political courage and strength without threatening the king's authority.

Both The Troublesome Reign and Edward III begin similarly with international challenges to England's kings, as French messengers

approach the court. The visual configuration in the first scene of The Troublesome Reign is deceptively simple, however, in depicting a two-way confrontation between King John and King Philip. The dynamic outwardly indicates a zero-sum contest that quickly culminates in preparations for war between the two countries. But the direct antagonism between them arises from an issue of internal English politics. France appears merely as the muscle power in bargaining on behalf of Arthur, the son of John's older brother and a contender for the English throne. Unlike Shakespeare's Henry IV, who advised his son to "busy giddy minds / With foreign quarrels" (2 Henry IV IV.v.213-214) as a distraction from domestic problems, King John prepares to confront the challenge from abroad to affirm his legitimate rights at home. National and international politics are so completely entangled from the first scene that hopes for English heroism appear faint from the very start.

Before the primary game gets under way, however, the playwright introduces a minor domestic complaint which, although it has little foundation in historical sources, serves to elaborate the historical issues and manner of the play. Unmentioned in Holinshed or Foxe's Acts and Monuments, the Falconbridge quarrel begins with a question of justice and legitimacy as Robert challenges his brother's right of primogeniture. The cause for their dispute reflects the larger concern of legitimacy on the throne which in the previous scene is Arthur's key challenge as the surviving son of John's older brother. The Falconbridge brothers compete for their father's land as do King John and Arthur for a kingdom.

The scene unfolds as a court trial with demands for proof of legitimacy entailed in the call for justice, and King John assumes the role of judge, a position which gives him opportunity to confirm the authority challenged at the outset of the play. But the legal case is not effective either in establishing King John's legitimacy or in affirming the relationship between proof and justice. John rightly

begins with a display of just impartiality, demanding solid evidence in support of Robert's charges against his mother and brother. Dissatisfied with the testimony, however, the king virtually abdicates his responsibility, resolving that the accused Philip determine the outcome by answering a simple question, "Philip, who was thy father?" (I.i.236). Why the evidence of one witness should be considered more valid than the other's remains unclear, and the correlation between proof and justice consequently becomes questionable as the Bastard contradicts his own testimony after experiencing a trancelike vision that reveals his identity as Richard the Lion-hearted's son. Curiously, the most direct source of truth on the issue, the mother's testimony, initially bears no part in verifying Philip's revelation. The Bastard's acceptance of his new status, and his resignation of any claim to the Falconbridge lands conclude the matter, and King John reemerges only to sanction a competitive game that has turned cooperative and, so, resolved itself. Philip is content: "Base to a King, adds title of more state, / Than knight's begotten, though legitimate" (I.i.285-286). Robert is relieved: "Robert, revive thy heart, let sorrow die! / His faltering tongue not suffers him to lie" (I.i.288-289).

Only after King John has departed to continue his contest with Arthur does the Bastard seek reassurance from his mother that his own revelation disclosed the truth. Her confession, "fair King Richard was thy noble father" (I.i.421), finally provides the audience with conclusive testimony, and sets her illegitimate son free to play with a whole new set of rules. As he says, "Ay, marry, Sir, let me alone for game; / I'll act some wonders, now I know my name" (I.i.427-428). One might wonder, however, at the playwright's intention in including this appended dialogue between the two characters. Like King John's later recrowning, which he sees as confirming his original coronation but which his subjects see as challenging it, Lady Falconbridge's admission has the potential either to validate doubly what the Bastard has already

said or to undermine the credibility of his statement by indicating that more substantial proof is necessary. It is possible that the playwright simply failed to realize the ambiguity implicit in the doubly dramatized confession, as he became caught up in the theatrical sensation of the Bastard's mythic revelation. Alternatively, the dramatist may have consciously provided the information twice because he distrusted the audience's capacity to understand the significance of the event.

However, the way in which this scene's issues are mirrored in the next allows for the viability of a third interpretation--that the playwright deliberately complicated the scene because he intended to raise questions about the relationship between proof of legitimacy and subsequent justice. The only politically significant proof is a personal vision which, although it certainly reinforces the royal origins of the Bastard, unsettles expectations of due process and just conduct in public affairs. When all three "proofs" are considered in combination, Robert's circumstantial factual evidence, Philip's mythic discovery, and the mother's private confession suggest that a foundation for legitimacy and order rests on a truth that is neither simply derived nor immediately apparent. Thus the means by which to ensure just, valid rulership remain obscure. The Falconbridge scene enacts a contest in the form of a simple two-person game in which the playwright suggests that the easy resolution may inaccurately represent the true complexity of the issue. The score requires further verification even after the contenders agree that the game is officially over. As an isolated event, seemingly having little bearing on the surrounding circumstances, this family dispute establishes a pattern for the contest about to be played out at Angiers in the following scene.

Immediately, on the international front, the question of justice and the challenge for proof sound in the charges of the contenders for royal power. King Philip asserts Arthur's right, saying to the English king,

> I rather lookt for some submiss reply
> Touching the claim thy nephew Arthur makes
> To that which thou unjustly dost usurp. (II.ii.79-81)

King John speaks on his own behalf, claiming direct dispute with Arthur, not France:

> I list not plead my title with my tongue,
> Nor came I hither with intent of wrong
> To France or thee, or any right of thine;
> But in defence and purchase of my right,
> The town of Angiers, which thou dost begirt
> In the behalf of Lady Constance' son;
> Whereto, nor he nor she can lay just claim. (I.ii.83-89)

The two mothers join the fray, offering conflicting appeals for justice in defense of their sons. As Queen Elinor says to Constance, "I tell thee, I,--not envy to thy son, / But justice, makes me speak as I have done" (I.ii.124-125). The problem arises, as they all realize, because no substantial proof confirms the rights of one side or the other. As King Philip says to Elinor, "But here's no proof that shows your son a king" (I.ii.126).

Choosing the town of Angiers as the proper place for arbitration only magnifies the obvious difficulties in solving the question of legitimacy. The contenders cannot agree whether words or swords should provide adequate proof, and their appeal to Angiers as judge reveals that, in fact, neither means will satisfy. Hearing King Philip and King John demonstrate their claims, the town's spokesman concludes, "We answer as before: till you have proved one right, we acknowledge none right" (I.ii.226-227). Obviously, conflicting verbal justification is insufficient. But watching the two sides demonstrate their legitimacy in a test of might on the battlefield remains equally unproductive. The spokesman again refuses to acknowledge either king, saying, "We care not which, if once we knew the right; / But till we know, we will not yield our right" (I.iv.51-52). The statement exposes both kings' limited power when there is no apparent consensus on the rules of the game. The main conflict appears insolvable.

Yet in contrast to John's earlier decision to end the deadlocked Falconbridge contest by allowing one of the competitors to determine the outcome, Angiers transforms this two-sided struggle into a complex n-person game by choosing to become a key player itself. That decision immediately generates the move to form coalitions in order to simplify the ambiguity of multiple goals and contenders. The unyielding position of the town inspires the Bastard to propose an alliance between France and England in competition with the town:

> Might Philip counsel two so mighty kings
> As are the Kings of England and of France,
> He would advise your Graces to unite,
> And knit your forces 'gainst these citizens,
> Pulling their batter'd walls about their ears.
> The town once won, then strive about the claim;
> For they are minded to delude you both. (I.iv.53-59)

His strategy has questionable value, as there is little to gain from destroying the prize in order to win it.

Interestingly, a similar strategy emerges in the standoff between England and the French town of Calais in Edward III. When King Edward chooses to kill the six citizens sent as an offering from the besieged town, Queen Phillippe advises against such a victory of destruction:

> By giuing life and safety vnto men,
> As thou intendest to be king of Fraunce,
> So let her people liue to call thee king,
> For what the sword cuts down or fire hath spoyld
> Is held in reputation none of ours. (2294-2298)

She persuades her husband that politically a cooperative stance of mercy is more beneficial than pure competition, when the town is, ironically, not only the opponent but the sought-after goal of the game. Typical of the portrayal of conflict in Edward III, the English attack on the town is not complicated by multiple opponents or even by the assertiveness of the townsmen themselves. Edward establishes the terms of opposition, the sacrifice of respected individuals for the salvation of the town, and only he has the power to alter his own conditions when he so chooses. The English bargain from a standpoint of strength as they do not in the similar town siege in The Troublesome Reign.

Not surprisingly, the kings in The Troublesome Reign decline the Bastard's destructive strategy and opt for the town's cooperative alternative, a nuptial contract between Prince Lewis of France and King John's niece, Lady Blanche. Yet by allowing both nations a share of power over Angiers, the union changes the rules of the game entirely. King Philip has shifted from defending first Arthur, then himself, then his own son. Arthur's claims are virtually ignored until he is offered some land as a consolation prize. Constance bemoans the way the game has shifted:

> Is all the blood yspilt on either part,
> Closing the crannies of the thirsty earth,
> Grown to a love-game and a bridal feast?
> And must thy birthright bid the wedding-banns?
> (I.iv.223-226)

Even the Bastard expresses discontent because earlier he has himself been promised Blanche's hand in marriage. Furthermore, he reveals the way King John discredits his own position by giving up "No less than five . . . provinces at once!" (I.iv.164) in the nuptial agreement. Manheim describes the king's actions as irresponsible, saying, "In acquiescing to the marriage and yielding the dowry, he has acted in a puerile, selfish manner which directly affects the lives of others . . . and the welfare of his kingdom" (120). Selfish he may be, but King John merely responds like the other key players by acknowledging the need for compromise while favoring the agreement most beneficial to himself.

The outcome of the game is consequently not a straightforward resolution of the initial political confrontation. Just as Frye suggests of Henry's union with Katherine in Henry V, the marriage here is subversive even if it is comedic, because lives have been sacrificed and principles compromised in the name of power and in the quest for peace. Like the settlement of the Falconbridge dispute, the conclusion to this contest leaves one uncomfortably aware that the real issues have not been addressed. Angiers is the only unqualified winner in an agreement that has simplified and ignored rather than solved political

problems. The source of legitimacy remains unidentified and the foundation for proof undetermined. Little wonder that when Pandulph enters to add a whole new set of political concerns the union between France and England is easily broken. Before the religious controversy develops and opportunity arises to glorify England's Protestant superiority, the playwright has already exposed the precarious foundation of political order, the tendency for players to favor themselves by misrepresenting their causes and oversimplifying the outcome, and the questionable efficacy of political rights when challenged by a constant drive for expediency.

The issue of legitimacy arises early in Edward III as well, but the playwright simplifies his account of the problem by setting it outside of the main action and limiting its political scope. Whereas The Troublesome Reign uses the fictitious Falconbridge family dispute to launch a complex debate about broad national and international political rights, Edward III uses the romantic episode between Edward and the Countess of Salisbury to focus on a more concentrated issue, the king's right to command his subjects. The game structure of the action provides a kind of grammar to recount history. The involved multiparty political games in The Troublesome Reign frame questions by balancing a number of contradictory alternatives that elude concrete resolutions. In Edward III, the love digression which interrupts the war between England and France enacts a simple, two-sided competitive game as a statement that proclaims rather than questions the king's abuse of his power.

Edward conducts himself as a less than ideal king who attempts to seduce the Countess for his own pleasure. He turns love into a war game, saying,

> My eyes shall be my arrowes, and my sighes
> Shall serue me as the vantage of the winde,
> To wherle away my sweetest artyllerie. (860-862)

Many judge his action as unjust and irresponsible. From a practical standpoint, Lodowicke fears Edward's distraction will harm England's performance in battle:

> Then Scottish warres farewell, I feare twill prooue
> A lingring English seege of peeuish love,
> Here comes his highnes walking all alone. (357-359)

From a moral standpoint, the Countess' father, Warwicke, questions his duty as a loyal subject commanded to obey his political oath by wooing his daughter on the king's behalf. From a legal standpoint, the Countess challenges the supremacy of political law over marital law, saying to Edward,

> It is a pennalty to breake your statutes,
> Though not enacted with your highnes hand,
> How much more to infringe the holy act,
> Made by the mouth of God, seald with his hand. (602-605)

Even the king condemns himself when, briefly, he recognizes the injustice of his actions. The game has a clear right and wrong side; it is a moral contest.

It also has an obvious dramatic conclusion when the king acknowledges that he has transgressed the boundaries of legitimate power and abandons the Countess for the French war. According to most interpretations, Edward wins by admitting his error and mending his ways. As Ribner says, "In the castle of the Countess he has learned two great lessons of kingship: a respect for the moral law upon which all civil law must be based, and the ability to rule his passion by means of his reason" (147). Champion challenges this view by suggesting that Edward's education in the love digression has no lasting effect:

> The numerous references to sinful conduct and neglect of political responsibility flatly confound any attempt by the perceptive spectator to pass off the incident as but an episode of Edward's salad days, a romantic flirtation from which he ultimately gains a sense of self-control. (33)

Champion, however, does not question the end of the game itself. And yet it would be an oversight not to notice that Edward gives in to the Countess only after she threatens to kill herself on the spot if he continues his "most vnholie sute" (978). The standoff suggests that, no

matter what he says in return, Edward has lost the game according to his own rules of competition. His decision to return to the war with France may be nothing more than a desire to try his hand at another game.[14]

Yet if the educational function of the entire Countess episode is not made wholly convincing by its conclusion, then it threatens to undercut the patriotism of the play by openly exposing the potential danger of the king's weakness. His rash behavior recalls Marlowe's Edward II who willingly sacrifices his political responsibility for his love of Gaveston. Because of his determination to gratify personal desires, Edward II cannot overcome political opposition even though he gains temporary ground midway through the play. But the dramatic presentation in Edward III restricts the impact of the king's misjudgment. The political consequences of his actions are only verbally hinted, rather than developed into substantial conflict. The fact that nothing else of significance happens on stage during the lengthy episode suggests that Edward's extended flirtation with the Countess does not so much influence as interrupt the broader power struggle. Unlike Edward II, who transfers his interest to the Spencers after Gaveston's death, Edward III leaves the Countess abruptly never to look back and she never appears on stage again. Later, Edward III interprets victory as proof that his weakness was only a temporary fault without lasting effect on his military endeavors: "Now Iohn of Fraunce

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[14] Interestingly, Pratt notes that in Froissart's account, a chess game between King Edward and the Countess provides the climax to their story. He says,

> Chess was only the apparent contest. . . . How much symbolism Froissart intended by this game I wish I knew. That the game ends with the King checkmated by the Countess, a result of Edward's letting himself be defeated, is surely a parallel more than acccidental. The wagers in the game are a pair of rings. . . . Edward does not win the 'light ring of gold' and the Countess refuses to accept Edward's ring with the large ruby. (35)

While Bernes's English translation of Froissart does not include this game (Pratt 47) and the playwright therefore was unlikely to have had access to it, the inconclusive nature of the chess competition reflects similar uncertainty about the score at the end of the contest in Edward III.

I hope, / Thou knowest King Edward for no wantonesse, / No loue sicke cockney, nor his souldiers iades" (1611-1613). While there is room to question the winners and losers in the love game, to wonder whether Edward's moral declarations represent a convincing conversion or a coverup for his own defeat, there is no doubt about the game's finality. The playwright clearly feels free enough to address the reality of the king's human limitations, but his presentation of the situation as an isolated game with few spectators downplays the consequences in favor of a more optimistic picture of England's strength. Just as momentary victory cannot stave off inevitable destruction in a tragic plot like that of Edward II, the initial demonstration of weakness in Edward III does not detract from but forecasts or increases the triumph in its comic portrayal of history.

In spite of the abrupt conclusion to the love game, the playwright maintains dramatic continuity by incorporating as a theme in the French war the question that the Countess and Warwicke raise about maintaining political oaths.[15] The test of honor in oath-taking invariably ends with a confirmation of principles and a resolution that favors England's well-being. Salisbury, whose very name suggests connections with the Countess of Salisbury theme, plays a significant part in the questioning of political integrity. He persuades his prisoner Villiers to procure him safe passage through French territory in exchange for Villiers' freedom. Several scenes later, Villiers and Prince Charles of Normandy quarrel about the necessity of granting Salisbury's request. Charles suggests that Villiers has no need to keep faith when he has already attained his freedom, but Villiers argues from a standpoint of honor:

> But in an othe we must be well aduisd,
> How we do sweare, and when we once haue sworne,
> Not to infringe it thougn we die therefore. (1793-1795)

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[15] While focusing primarily on the Countess episode, John Lewis notes that "the repeated use of rash oaths in Edward III . . . . [helps] bridge the chasm between the Scottish invasion and Edward's succumbing to lust and the war in France" (276).

His belief in keeping faith persuades Charles to grant passage to the English noble. Later, the scene repeats itself as King John challenges Charles' promise by threatening to send Salisbury to the gallows, arguing:

> The breach of faith dwels in the soules consent,
> Which if thy selfe without consent doo breake,
> Thou art not charged with the breach of faith,
> Go hang him, for thy lisence lies in mee
> And my constraint stands the excuse for thee. (2087-2091)

Again, however, Charles upholds his word of honor so forcefully that his father, the king, also agrees to give Salisbury his freedom. The question of maintaining oaths forms a recurrent pattern, and in each case, the answer of faithfulness reinforces a view that consistent principles can order the chaos of war. Furthermore, while ironically it is the French who stand the test of honor, they do so in a decision that respects Salisbury's request and therefore indicates the legitimacy of England's warfaring stance. Both sides appear to act in accordance with a military code that forms the rules of the game.

Even when the subtext might suggest disloyalty, the main action confirms English fairness and good faith. Three individuals from the French side who join or assist the English ranks are rewarded for service rather than suspected of treachery. Edward III makes Artoys an English earl in the first scene of the play. He describes the Frenchman as a worthy candidate, one who has been banished by his own country rather than one whose integrity is stained by betrayal.[16] Gobin de Graie, the French guide who later leads English troops through the river valley, also receives just reward. Edward's remarks suggest that the guide parallels Villiers as a rightful prisoner set free for his obedience:

> Then Gobin for the seruice thou hast done,
> We here inlarge and giue thee liberty,
> And for recompenc beside this good,
> Thou shalt receiue fiue hundred markes in golde. (1277-1280)

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[16] Even in Froissart's account, the French king rather than Artois is blamed for the disagreement that caused the earl's banishment (34).

The third, Lord Mountford, swears allegiance to the English crown after regaining a contested fiefdom that the French king had granted to one of Mountford's enemies. Again, Mountford's shift in loyalty appears justified and does not raise questions about his honor. In each case, French commitment to the English cause reinforces England's rightful role in war without developing a significant subtext of treachery and inconstancy.

The matter is portrayed quite differently in The Troublesome Reign. There the need for coalitions in multiparty games devalues the oath by making it a dispensible commodity lacking guarantees or commitment. Once the Cardinal persuades the French to violate their agreement with England, succeeding oaths become signs of self-serving treachery allowing no side to claim the moral superiority of its cause.[17] When the English nobles desert King John and vow allegiance to France, Meloun counsels the French Prince Lewis against trusting their loyalty, saying,

> Indeed, my lord, they that infringe their oaths,
> And play the rebels 'gainst their native king,
> Will, for as little cause, revolt from you,
> If ever opportunity incite them so:
> For, once forsworn, and never after sound,
> There's no affiance after perjury. (II.iii.242-247)

Already guilty of perjury with England themselves, the French make light of their new alliance with the nobles, for as Lewis declares,

> A smile of France will feed an English fool.
> Bear them in hand as friends, for so they be;
> But in the heart, like traitors, as they are.
> (II.iii.276-278)

Yet when Meloun then betrays this strategy to the English nobles, they choose to return to King John not out of loyalty, but as the surest hope

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[17] The Bastard's speech about commodity is a much noted part of Shakespeare's King John. The absence of such overt political commentary in The Troublesome Reign stems from an entirely different approach to the Bastard's character rather than from any variance in the actions and motivations of the others on stage. Philip Falconbridge plays by the rules of English moral and military superiority, while the nobles and King John play fast and loose with any principles of honor and good faith in the name of competition and political gain.

of survival in a life-threatening game with few options. According to Pembroke, "If we persevere, we are sure to die; / If we desist, small hope again of life" (II.v.57-58). Traitors abound in both camps, and in The Troublesome Reign betrayal breeds betrayal to the same extent that honor breeds honor in Edward III.[18]

Under such conditions, the fairness of the game can be determined only by the measure of victory and the success of temporary coalitions. When Pandulph offers Lewis the English crown while King John is preoccupied with Arthur, Lewis takes assurance that the odds are in his favor: "'Tis best we follow, now the game is fair" (I.x.43). Naturally, by the same standards, what is fair to France is foul to England, and King John despairs at his declining position when Arthur's death motivates the nobles' desertion:

> His death hath freed me from a thousand fears,
> But it hath purchast me ten times ten thousand foes.
> Why, all is one! such luck shall haunt his game,
> To whom the devil owes an open shame:
> His life, a foe that levell'd at my crown;
> His death, a frame to pull my building down.
> (I.xiii.236-241)

Playing against too many opponents at the same time minimizes the victory and magnifies the defeat. For King John, overcoming one contender only incites the others to form a more powerful coalition against him, and fairness is reduced to strategies of personal survival. His final choice appears to be his only alternative, a coalition between himself and the Cardinal. The king sees resigning his crown as the only way to save it.

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[18] For background about the importance of oaths as signs of honor in Tudor England, see Faye Kelly's "Oaths in Shakespeare's Henry VI Plays" Shakespeare Quarterly 24 (1972): 357-371, and Joseph Lenz's "The Politics of Honor: The Oath in Henry V" Journal of English and Germanic Philology 80 (1981): 1-12. Kelly notes how the violation of oaths in the Henry VI plays contributes to a pattern of disorder and treachery; Lenz suggests that Henry V "honors his oaths, and by example teaches his subjects, as well as his enemies, to honor theirs" (1). Similar negative and positive examples appear in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III, although in Edward III the subjects instruct their leaders to honor rather than, as Lenz suggests in Henry V, the other way around.

The playwright's account of the king's appeal to the Catholic Church represents the ambiguous juncture of history and myth in the Elizabethan interpretation of King John's reign. From the standpoint of Protestant propaganda, the king's ultimate downfall stems from his decision to resort to the Cardinal when everyone else has abandoned him. On his deathbed, King John states this position:

> Since John did yield unto the Priest of Rome,
> Nor he nor his have prosp'red on the earth:
> Curst are his blessings; and his curse is bliss.
> (II.viii.100-102)

From a more objective standpoint of political strategy, however, John's move "finely to dissemble with the Pope" (II.ii.166) in a new alliance is in keeping with the previous action of the game. Furthermore, he judges his decision in part because the compromise appears to fail:

> Accursed John, the devil owes thee shame!
> Resisting Rome, or yielding to the Pope,
> All's one!
> The devil take the Pope, the peers, and France!
> Shame be my share for yielding to the priest! (II.iv.73-77)

Here, John's status as loser seems as significant as his obvious lack of integrity that allowed him to negotiate with the enemy in the first place.[19] Between condemning the outcome of the game and blaming the Pope, he accuses himself in words that reflect the alternative view of John not as a Protestant representative but as an unpopular, usurping king:

> How have I liv'd, but by another's loss?
> What have I lov'd, but wrack of others' weal?
> When have I vow'd and not infring'd mine oath?
> Where have I done a deed deserving well? (II.viii.81-84)

John's inconsistent standards of evaluation not only indicate the playwright's willingness to portray the complexity of the political

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[19] Manheim suggests that John's alliance with Rome is entirely blameworthy: "John may reveal contempt for himself in his frequent asides here, but his submission is ignominious nevertheless" (126). Yet the play itself erodes the absolute standards needed to make such a judgment. The disintegration of claims for legitimacy at the walls of Angiers qualifies any succeeding suggestion of indisputable right and wrong even though the playwright seems to be emphasizing the king's culpability as the primary cause of his own misfortunes.

interaction on stage but reveal either the dramatist's desire to include or his inability to avoid the varied interpretations of King John's role in history. The heroic version loses credibility in a political battle based on dissembling and disloyalty, and propaganda has limited potential in a play whose "hero" judges himself from diverse but equally negative angles.

One cannot argue, however, that the play's anti-Catholic bias is nonexistent or insignificant. It would be an oversight, for example, not to acknowledge the humor employed to undercut Catholicism when the Bastard Falconbridge ransacks the friary and exposes friars and nuns hidden in each other's chambers. The scene enacts a fictional event to reinforce a myth of Protestant superiority in the historical plot. Yet, if anything, it downplays the Bastard's heroic stature by portraying him in a silly game of hide-and-seek with a company of fools. While it may provide some slapstick entertainment for the audience, the scene is too brief and lighthearted to have a sustained impact on the chaos of the central political contest where the ideal of Protestantism suffers because of weak representatives and a multiplicity of competing goals. Even King John's murder by a monk is dramatized with sufficient detail to render it more than mere Catholic corruption. In contrast to Shakespeare's brief line in King John, "The King, I fear, is poison'd by a monk" (V.vi.23), the playwright of The Troublesome Reign allows the murderer to rationalize his deed:

> Is this the King that never lov'd a friar?
> Is this the man that doth contemn the Pope?
> Is this the man that robb'd the holy Church,
> And yet will fly unto a friary? . . .
> Accurst be Swinstead Abbey, Abbot, friars,
> Monks, nuns, and clerks, and all that dwells therein,
> If wicked John escape alive away! (II.vi.84-93)

Given King John's reputation in the friary, the monk voices a legitimate complaint and responds according to the terms of competition that the king has already established. In the antagonism adopted throughout the play, the monk's murder of the king seems no more outrageous than John's

earlier decision to kill a relatively innocent young boy, Arthur. The anti-Catholic bias, like the anti-French sentiment, is qualified by the ambiguous portrayal of England's own representatives.

The prevailing image is not one of right against wrong so much as it is a vision of political chaos enacted in the game-play on stage. In such an unstable world, even though Arthur and the Cardinal appear to be playing from the sidelines, they have a profound influence on the tragic direction of the game and contribute directly to King John's downfall. By portraying their simultaneous influence on the central action when historically they plagued King John at different times, the dramatist not only unifies the play, but emphasizes the tightly interconnected nature of politics.

When Arthur attempts to attain his freedom in an act that costs him his life, he presumably thinks his choice will have no reverberations beyond the walls of his prison. He moves in a game of solitaire, playing not against others but for himself: "I venture life, to gain my liberty; / And if I die, world's troubles have an end" (II.i.3-4). Ironically, when the nobles blame King John for this death they exemplify yet again the way in which invalid assumptions lacking sufficient proof repeatedly determine political action in the play. Even the witness of Hubert has no impact as tensions escalate and the nobles turn from their king. Essentially, John suffers for a crime he has not committed.[20] Although he is blameworthy for imprisoning Arthur

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[20] John's vacillation between desiring and regretting Arthur's death recalls two Shakespearean kings responding to murders in their favor. In Richard III, Edward IV replies to news of his brother's murder, "Is Clarence dead? The order was revers'd" (II.i.87). Acknowledging that he desired and commanded the deed himself, he continues to his nobles, "O God! I fear thy justice will take hold / On me and you, and mine and yours, for this" (II.ii.132-133). Similarly, Henry IV concludes Richard II with an ambivalent response to Richard's death: "Though I did wish him dead, / I hate the murtherer, love him murthered . . . . Lords, I protest my soul is full of woe / That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow" (V.vi.39-46). These Shakespearean kings respond immediately to the cosmic implications of their sin, suffering guilt and fearing judgment. In The Troublesome Reign, however, King John's guilt is so closely tied to concerns about his own well-being that it is difficult to distinguish sincerity from expediency.

in the first place and commanding his murder, the double reversal as John changes his mind and Arthur falls to his death disturbs the anticipated development of cause and effect. The confusion suggests that at the heart of the playwright's portrayal of history is the primary assumption of game theory, that interdependence inescapably characterizes political action. As M. Shubik says,

> the essence of a "game" . . . is that it involves decision makers with different goals or objectives whose fates are intertwined. . . . Although they may have some control which will influence the outcome, they do not have complete control over others. (8)

The game analogy gives added meaning to Herbert Lindenberger's theory about history plays:

> The particular "wisdom" of historical drama comes from the insight that springs of human action are unfathomable, that there is no necessary correlation, for instance, between intention and event, between the ability of the human will to govern action and the power of actual circumstances. (133)

One move motivates another although the relationship between the two may often defy reason or expectation. In The Troublesome Reign, whether Arthur functions as a token in an international conflict at the walls of Angiers or as an isolated captive on the walls of his own prison, he acts as a catalyst stimulating responses beyond his control and his own aspirations. He is both inside and outside of the political contest, and his uncertain position contributes to the unpredictability of the action.

Pandulph also exemplifies the unpredictability of interdependence as he too plays beyond the center of the conflict. Interrupting the other players to impose rulings that alter their decisions, he influences the action from above it rather than, as Arthur does, from outside of it. He tries to be the master of a godgame, determining the relationship between England and France and guiding their moves

according to his own assumptions of dominance.[21] The game goes beyond his own control, however, when Lewis refuses to listen as willingly to a commanded retreat as he did to a call for war. Meloun suggests that the Cardinal's vision of the game is entirely inappropriate:

> Lord Cardinal! by Lewis' princely leave,
> It can be nought but usurpation
> In thee, the Pope, and all the Church of Rome,
> Thus to insult on kings of Christendom:
> Now with a word to make them carry arms,
> Then with a word to make them leave their arms.
> This must not be. (II.iv.44-50)

Lewis ends his alliance with the Cardinal just as his father had earlier abandoned his support for Arthur, and Pandulph discovers that he is not a controller but merely another player whose power is limited by the effectiveness of his own coalitions. The stage holds no gods, and Arthur's earlier comment about John's control over him represents the action throughout the play: "Might hath prevail'd, not right" (I.ix.9). Legitimately recognized rights can potentially order conflict, but might without god-like omnipotence is a relative commodity, dependent without preceding the winds of political change.

The only individuals who have the power to act as godgame masters determining the moves of each player in the history plays are the playwrights themselves. Yet to suggest that they do so is to say little more than that any dramatist performs a god-like role in creating the

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[21] According to R. Rawdon Wilson's definition, the Cardinal is not a true player of the godgame. Wilson explains,

> A godgame occurs in literature when one or more characters creates an illusion, a mazelike sequence of false accounts, that entraps other characters. The entrapped character becomes entangled in threads of (from his point of view) an incomprehensible strategy plotted by another character who displays the roles of both a gamewright and a god. The master of the game is godlike in that he exercises power, holds an advantageous position, will probably be beyond detection (even understanding), and may even be, like Oberon or Ariel in Shakespeare's plays, invisible. In this respect, the god of the godgame recalls the callous behavior of the gods toward human victims in certain myths. (124)

The relationship between Pandulph and King John or King Lewis is not as omnisicent as Wilson suggests of the magister ludi and his strategy not so incomprehensible, but the Cardinal "exercises power" and "holds an advantageous position" by having an authority both religious and political while the kings have only the political.

world of his characters. While the absence of a narrative voice in drama perhaps emphasizes the god-like invisibility of the author's control, it also distances the creator from his creation. That distance implies that, if the game analogy is appropriate, the authors are gamewrights rather than game participants. Drama perpetuates the illusion that the story tells itself rather than being told or controlled by an outsider. Nevertheless, what an analysis of the political activity on stage in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III indicates is that the two playwrights adopt entirely different approaches as they select and organize material to give history a new and independent reality on stage. Choosing "[t]o set a form upon that indigest" (King John V.vii.26) of the past, the dramatist of Edward III carefully shapes conflict by techniques of containment. The author of The Troublesome Reign prefers to make a few simple moves and then to suggest that the game takes on a life of its own, driven to seemingly endless permutations by the self-interest of players. In part, the narrative sources of the histories determine the measure of chaos or order in the periods portrayed, but to a large extent, the shaping of each scene and the verbal interaction of the characters depend on the artistic decisions and political visions of the dramatists themselves.

One of the ways both playwrights shape history is by integrating ceremonies into the primary game-like activity on stage. The differences between games and rituals such as public royal ceremonies add to an understanding of the drama of politics in each play. Games depend on a structure of rules and goals that provides a context for interaction without determining individual moves or the final outcome. Ross Chambers identifies the complex connection and distinction between the rules and moves of a game:

> One might say that game-playing involves, on the one hand (on the side of the game), rule-governed behavior and on the other (on the side of the play) the making of moves that are both permitted and constrained by the rules but cannot be simply identified with, let alone reduced to, them. Rules and moves are in a relation of interdependency such that

> neither can do without the other (the rules are nothing except for the moves they make possible; the moves make no sense except in the framework of the rules), yet they cannot simply be identified with one another. (95)

Prescribed by rules but unfolding according to individually-chosen consecutive moves, the action of a game is predictable only to the extent that it leads to a division between winners and losers. History records the neverending play of public games patterned by bargains, negotiations, compromises, victories, and defeats but distinguished by the identity and skill of each new player with his new ambitions.

In ritual, unlike in game, attitude matters more than mastery and skill. The moves, not simply the rules, are prescribed and the performance changes reality in a predictable way because the participants believe that it will do so. As Thomas Greene notes in his discussion of ritual and ceremony in the Renaissance,

> Signifiers, verbal or performative, cannot in themselves cause things to happen; their effectiveness depends upon shared agreement in a society that endows a given signifier with a given result. To believe that the signifier in itself makes things happen is to believe in magic. ("Ceremonial Play" 290)

A coronation ceremony, for example, does not merely symbolize kingship but makes a man a king according to the expectations of the community. Although history is not comprised of neverending rituals, it is punctuated by important ceremonies which interrupt, influence, and give purpose and direction to the political decisions of each age. Furthermore, in contrast to the disjunctive effect of games, Levi-Strauss notes that ritual "is the exact inverse; it <u>conjoins</u> for it brings about a union . . . or in any case an organic relation between two initially separate groups" (37). Relying on and reinforcing community, ritual frames and organizes the conflict that characterizes public national and international games.

By including a number of formal, ceremonial scenes, the dramatists of <u>The Troublesome Reign</u> and <u>Edward III</u> bring together artistic and political imperatives. Artistically, the slow, purposeful gestures of

ceremony generate harmony to balance the tension created by the conflict dominating the often rapid pace of competitive gamesmanship among the characters. Furthermore, the formal scenes provide the visual appeal of elaborate, stately spectacles popular with the audience. Politically, the ceremonies demonstrate the historical significance of symbols and rituals as instruments of power. Clifford Geertz identifies the crucial relationship between ceremony and power:

> At the political center of any complexly organized society . . . there is . . . a governing elite [whose members] . . . . justify their existence and order their actions in terms of a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities, and appurtenances that they have either inherited or, in more revolutionary situations, invented. It is these--crowns and coronations, limousines and conferences--that mark the center as center and give what goes on there its aura of being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built. The gravity of high politics and the solemnity of high worship spring from liker impulses than might first appear. (15)

His remark underscores the value of myth and ritual to sanction the goals and claims of state. For if myth is "story" repeated to justify authority, ritual is the dramatic counterpart: staged gestures and words used to command public acceptance of power.[22]

Greene observes an ambivalence towards ritual in the Renaissance. He notes that while negative uses of the word "ceremony" began in the mid-1500s, such public performances were, nevertheless, common and popular:

> Arguably, in statistical terms, the sixteenth century provided more ritual and ceremonial occasions than any other century. . . . The newly powerful, centralized monarchies of the sixteenth century learned how to use ceremonial occasions brilliantly in order to aggrandize their own prestige. ("Ritual" 182)

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[22] Myth as "story" is the position adopted not only by literary critic Northrop Frye but by historian Hayden White. Frye uses the Greek "mythos" as the basis for his structural analysis of literature, and White focuses on the interpretive, mythological element that shapes history into "story." See Frye's Fables of Identity and Myth and Metaphor, and White's Tropics of Discourse.

As I do here, Lewis Spence draws distinctions between ritual and myth in his discussion of primitive religion when he describes ritual as the "mimetic magic by virtue of which religious acts for the behoof of a community are performed" and myth as "the account of those acts in words" (102).

Greene suggests that the literature and drama of the period responded to this ambivalence by questioning and experimenting with ceremony, as well as incorporating it as an expression of genuine power ("Ceremonial Play" 287-288). For an Elizabethan audience, the enactment of public rituals in plays about Edward III and King John would be informed by the ceremonial import of their own queen's reign, as she relied on progresses and annual Accession Day celebrations to increase her popularity and secure the loyalty of her subjects.[23] The audience's responses to the ritual scenes on stage undoubtedly were also influenced by the questioning of ceremony evident, for example, in Shakespeare's histories.[24] Drawing from an historical and contemporary tradition of monarchical ceremony, the authors of the two history plays adopt and adapt symbols of power to contribute to their own political interpretations of the past.

Most of the ritual action in Edward III focuses on Prince Edward and contributes to his characterization as a strong, promising young warrior. Two ceremonial scenes frame his initial appearance on the battlefield. The first is a ritual of preparation as the king and his nobles arm Prince Edward for war. Their actions are formal as each bestows on the prince an item of armor. Their language is incantatory

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[23] See, for example, Geertz's description of the Elizabethan progress in "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics Since the Middle Ages, ed. Sean Wilenz (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1985) 13-38. Fuller discussions of Elizabethan ceremony appear in Roy Strong's The Cult of Elizabeth (1977), and Alan Young's Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments (1987).

[24] Greene briefly discusses Shakespeare's histories in his two related articles, the second including selections from the first. See his "Ceremonial Play and Parody in the Renaissance," Urban Life in the Renaissance, ed. Susan Zimmerman and Ronald Weissman (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1989) 280-293, and "Ritual and Text in the Renaissance" Canadian Review of Comparative Literature 18 (1991): 179-197. See also Richard McCoy's "'Thou Idol Ceremony': Elizabeth I, The Henriad, and the Rites of the English monarchy" (Urban Life in the Renaissance 240-266) for comparisons between Elizabeth's secular pageants and ceremonies and Shakespeare's depiction of similar royal rituals.

as each begins by addressing the prince, "Edward Plantagenet prince of Wales," and concludes by announcing his task, "Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou comst" (1449-1473). The repetition conjures up the magic of ritual which assumes that for those who participate, simple gestures and words can transfigure and empower to change the future. The prince's comparison of the ceremony to Jacob's "blessings on his sonnes" (1481) gives more power to the performance by adding a spiritual dimension to it. The short scene formalizes in action the tranformation King Edward earlier expresses as necessary in his son: "Ned, thou must begin, / Now to forget thy study and thy bookes, / And vre thy shoulders to an Armors weight" (157-159). The ceremony legitimizes the prince's participation in the following war game by providing him with not only the armor but the attitude of courage needed to perform well.

The second ceremony, the knighting of the prince after his victory, completes the ritual frame around the battle. According to King Edward, knighthood proves the prince's worth:

> Arise Prince Edward, trusty knight at armes,
> This day thou hast confounded me with ioy,
> And proude thyselfe fit heir vnto a king. (1603-1606)

As a reward for bravery, the ritual answers the promise of heroism in the first ceremony. The battle itself takes place offstage as a game reported rather than enacted, and the nobles' account of it draws attention to the ritual framework. Their narrative magnifies the danger to Prince Edward more effectively than a dramatic enactment with limited space and a set number of actors, for the battlefield of the mind is more impressive than the battlefield on stage. But their three consecutive reports, accompanied by pleas to King Edward to help his son, contain the danger by ordering it with the repetition of ritual established in the previous scene. Implicit in their formalized account is the belief that the substance of courage and victory expressed in the arming ceremony will be sustained in the continuity of ritual form during the battle itself. When Prince Edward appears triumphant, with

the slain King of Bohemia borne before him, the magnitude of his danger and the faith in his success culminate in a heroism worthy of knighthood. The concluding ceremony thus sanctions the achievement of the game.

Champion focuses not on the prince's victory, but on King Edward's "manipulative pride" during the reported battle (33). He concludes of the king,

> His crass comment that his son is laboring for a knighthood and that, should he die, "[w]e have more sonnes / Than one" (24-25) smacks more of a fanatic devoted to a heroic ideal than of a father/king concerned either for the safety of his child, the proper lineal descent of his kingdom, or the outcome of the battle. (34)

From the standpoint of political reality, Champion's criticism of the king is valid, but the stylized depiction of the scene allows for a temporary move from historical reality into the magical realm of ritual where the almost supernatural power of the prince does not simply diminish the king's stubborn denial but draws strength from it. Prince Edward's glory shines brighter because his father refused him aid.

Ritual action occurs the second time Prince Edward is threatened by defeat in battle, and again orders the competition of the military game. Rather than dramatizing the actual physical conflict, the playwright stylizes it as a scene of temptations. Three French heralds approach the prince, each first announcing the dispatcher of his message and then offering the prince a means of escape. The first herald, from the King of France, tempts with an offer of subservience by suggesting that if the prince bows before the French king, "ransome shall redeeme liues forfeited" (1911). The second, from the Duke of Normandy, encourages cowardice by offering Edward a horse to yield him escape from the battlefield. The third, from the French Prince Phillip, advises surrender by promising a prayer book to allow Edward to prepare himself for death. The prince responds with words of defiance to each proposal. It is unlikely coincidental that the scene resembles the temptations of Christ, and the similarity gives cosmic significance both to Edward's

danger and to his strength. The use of three tempters symbolically suggests the completeness of Prince Edward's trial at war, paralleling the completeness of his preparation when three English nobles participated in his arming ceremony.

Visual and verbal repetition enhance Prince Edward's victory following this second military challenge. When he appears on stage, preceded by King John, Prince Charles, and other French prisoners, his triumphant entrance imitates but improves on his earlier arrival with the slain King of Bohemia. His mocking remarks to his captives underscore his achievement:

> Fie Lords, is it not a shame that English boies,
> Whose early daies are yet not worth a beard,
> Should in the bosome of your kingdome thus,
> One against twentie beate you vp together. (2194-2197)

The dramatic irony when Salisbury later approaches the English king, describing the intensity of the battle and forecasting "The most vntimely tale of Edwards fall" (2408), allows the audience to sit back and enjoy the terrifying details knowing, as Salisbury does not, that young Edward has again triumphed against the odds. Repeating in story what has already been enacted and resolved on stage represents not bad dramatic organization but simply another opportunity to glorify the prince's heroism. The approach strikes one as an earlier theatrical rendition of the slow-motion re-plays which are so characteristic of the current televising of sports events. Salisbury's account becomes part of the last celebration of Edward's might as once again the report of death precedes a flourish of trumpets which announces the prince's final appearance on stage. By relying on ceremony, narrative, and stylized action, the playwright has turned two battles into three demonstrations of victory. By instilling an element of predictability, the repetition provides the sense that one is observing a series of rituals rather than games: the outcome is the same every time.

While the playwright primarily adopts a ritual approach to focus on the prince's acts in the last section of the play, ceremony and

ceremonial language function throughout Edward III as the essential proof of legitimacy that continually strengthens the English players in their series of challenges on the international front. King Edward's naming Artoys Earl of Richmond at the beginning of the first scene launches the noble's career as one of the most prominent English heroes throughout the play. Bestowing the earldom acts as a ritual of promise like Prince Edward's later, more elaborate arming ceremony. Likewise, in the final scene Copland reenacts the prince's earlier ritual of reward. King Edward knights Copland for appearing with the captive King David of Scotland just as he knighted Prince Edward for entering with the dead King of Bohemia. Ceremonial description complements these frequent rituals. Prince Edward, for example, sees war as a celebration:

> As cheereful sounding to my youthfull spleene,
> This tumult is of warres increasing broyles,
> As at the Coronation of a king,
> The ioyful clamours of the people are,
> When Ave Caesar they pronounce alowd. (160-164)

The emphasis on formal public activity orders and authorizes England's political games with other nations.

By contrast, ceremonies in The Troublesome Reign are far less frequent and continually fail to achieve the purpose of sanctioning and containing political competition. The Bastard is the focus of several naming ceremonies. First, King John lays his sword on him and knights him at the end of the family dispute, saying, "Rise up, Sir Richard Plantagenet, King Richard's son!" (I.i.310). Ironically, however, even the king disregards the ritual significance of the act as he continues to address "Sir Richard Plantagenet" simply as "Philip." Later when the Austrian Limoges refuses the disgrace of fighting with a "Base bastard, misbegotten of a King" (I.v.31), John attempts to legitimize the competition with another naming ritual to make the Bastard a duke and equal contender in combat. He says,

> Kneel down! In sight of Philip, King of France,
> And all these princely lords assembled here,

> I gird thee with the sword of Normandy,
> And of that land I do invest thee Duke;
> So shalt thou be, in living and in land,
> Nothing inferior unto Austria. (I.v.45-50)

His pronouncement is futile, however, for Limoges denies the community belief structure necessary to make the ceremony valid. Consequently, the succeeding war game between the two characters is never sanctioned, and the Austrian eventually becomes the victim of the Bastard's hunt rather than a rival in equal combat. The ceremonial repetition of naming signals ineffectuality rather than a means of control.

Likewise, the playwright casts doubt on the sustaining power of ritual by staging only the second performance of John's double coronation. As Pembroke's response to King John's command indicates, repetition drains the crown and the words of significance:

> My liege, that were to busy men with doubts.
> Once were you crown'd, proclaim'd, and with applause
> Your city streets have echo'd to the ear,
> God save the King! God save our sovereign John!
> Pardon my fear, my censure doth infer,
> Your Highness not depos'd from regal state,
> Would breed a mutiny in people's minds,
> What it should mean, to have you crown'd again.
> (I.xiii.32-39)

Unlike the characters in Edward III who increase the credibility and predictability of their political games by relying on the support of rituals, King John performs this crucial public rite as a form of game. He measures his strength not by a single demonstration of mutual consent but by the number of times he can succeed in the performance. Yet even he undermines his own interpretation of the deed by confirming it with a question rather than a statement: "Once was I not depos'd, your former choice, / Now twice been crowned, and applauded King?" (I.xiii.99-100). Not only does this act of recommitment presuppose failed commitment, but it immediately leads to the most divisive breach of political obligation between King John and his nobles. Because games of self-interest and competition frame the ritual--as opposed to an alternative community structure which would have rituals circumscribing games--the mutual signs and symbols of authority no longer have the capacity to contain

threats of disorder. The crown becomes a plaything rather than a tangible proof of legitimacy because it lacks the sanction of true ceremony. In a play in which rules of the game are often dispensible or rarely enforceable, the absence of respect for ritual public order contributes to a vision of politics as dangerously instable.

A third set of failed double rituals accompanies the oaths made between the English nobles and the French Prince Lewis. The English lords Essex, Pembroke, and Salisbury gather at St. Edmund's Bury and justify their cause to each other with a series of complaints against King John: he banished Chester; he killed Arthur; he alienated the Pope; he usurped the throne. The Bastard, however, categorically undercuts each charge with an alternative interpretation and concludes that "where fell traitorism hath residence, / There wants no words to set despite on work" (II.iii.113-114). His speech erodes the foundation of proof carefully established by the others so that their climactic ceremonial swearing on the altar loses its sacrosanctity. After they swear to each other "to the death be aid to Lewis, / And enemy to John" (II.iii.146-147), they repeat the ritual at the altar with lengthier, more formal vows when Prince Lewis enters. The scene concludes, however, with the French alone on stage making plans to betray the English. Thus the double ceremony appears completely meaningless, framed by the Bastard's censure on one side and Lewis's dishonesty on the other. The playwright indicates that in naming, crowning, and swearing the ceremonial acts themselves lack inherent authority without the complete support of a community belief system. And when one performance is unconvincing, a performance twice done is inevitably undone. Guy Hamel suggests that <u>The Troublesome Reign</u> is "highly ritualistic" (51) and that "[r]itual events . . . tend to resolve the possibility of ambiguities" by being "too decisive" (52). In fact, however, the rituals in this play reinforce indecision and unpredictability by their ineffectuality. Because they fail to impose

even the slightest measure of consensus on the constant drive of competition, they add to the overwhelming sense of disorder characterizing the political games.

Recognizing the relationship between rituals and games in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III gives insight into the artistry that shapes and informs the past in both plays. Hayden White's description of "plot" and "story" in narrative history is a useful distinction in identifying the creative process behind these dramatic histories as well. He suggests that the events of "plot" are made into "story" by interpretive acts of selection, organization, characterization, and tone (61). Seeing "plot" in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III as a series of often overlapping competitive and communal public performances indicates that to frame the game by structuring political actions and balancing conflicting voices is as important as selecting the events themselves. The "story" shaped in both plays underlines the importance of legitimacy and its foundation in acknowledged public proof. But the proof that is invariably satisfied by circumscribing and containing action in Edward III is rarely satisfied by the compromising, duplicitous strategies of characters in The Troublesome Reign. The union of plot and story calls for a reevaluation of the propagandistic label attached to both plays. Propaganda emerges out of a story demonstrating clear-cut distinctions between political winners and losers. The author of King John's story does occasionally give voice to an attitude of English superiority, but he mainly stages political games as perpetual contests that offer only temporary and incomplete victory. Conversely, while the dramatist of Edward III does allow glimpses of the destructive nature of war or the fallibility of the king, he upholds the view that politics produces unqualified winners and he tells his story from England's winning side.

CHAPTER THREE

The Paradoxes of Play: 1 Henry IV

More so than any other history play, Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV is consciously playful. Its representation of the past includes not merely an occasional legendary figure or fictionalized event, but an entire madcap realm of games and pranks played on the outskirts of history. At Eastcheap, life is identified with "playing holidays," robbery is committed for "sport's sake," and the play extempore by Hal and Falstaff is an amusing parody of political reality. If, as discussion in the two previous chapters indicates, the drama of historical conflict can itself be readily understood according to the rule-bound competition of games, then the juncture of two separate, very different playing fields in 1 Henry IV problematizes a simple correspondence between politics and games. The diverse activity on stage invites one to place "game" in the broader context of "play," a much more ambiguous, open-ended, and paradoxical term with potential to influence and describe nearly every aspect of life. John Turner observes of the term "play,"

> [it] has signalled both approval and disapproval of a child's and of an adult's behaviour; it has had associations with ceremony and authority and also with mockery and debunking; it has involved man's highest duties and his holidays from duties; it has spanned the whole spectrum of meanings from law to lawlessness and has sometimes enjoyed a privileged area apart from both . . . it has included and excluded ideas of sport, contest, even war; and it has been defined in terms both of chance and risk and of skill and mastery. (6)

"Play," as Turner indicates, is not confined to the rules and goals of games, but can encompass endless pairs of contradictory activities that follow, violate, or simply ignore the ordering framework of rules. Not in spite of but because of its seemingly problematic boundaries, the term "play" is appropriate in a reading of Shakespeare's unique historical drama, for the paradoxical nature of play informs the relationship between taverns and battlefields in 1 Henry IV and reveals Hal's adaptability as the trait that gives him the advantage over

Falstaff and Hotspur, allowing him to emerge as the most competitive and successful player.

The contradictory possibilities of play noted in Turner's remark form a long-standing topic of debate among anthropologists, sociologists, psychoanalysts, philosophers, and political scientists interested in the cultural relationships between play and work, play and education, play and rehearsal, play and game, play and war and so on. Briefly outlining "eight models of play and game" in his introduction to In Palamedes' Shadow, R. Rawdon Wilson notes, "Not only do play and game concepts slip in and out of many distinct perspectives, but (in their conceptual swirl) these perspectives are framed within uncertain boundaries" (17). It is not the purpose of this chapter to engage in the vast theoretical ambiguities of play and game; however, acknowledging the conceptual diversity of the terms allows for new ways to understand the interaction in Shakespeare's history play. Combining political game theory with a brief anthropological study of play by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (entitled "Some Paradoxes in the Definitions of Play") illuminates 1 Henry IV as a drama about two parallel realms of play.

A game-theory approach is not only valuable in analyzing the nature of competitive and cooperative interaction on stage, and in identifying the degree of compromise or the incentive for coalitions in events of the past, but it is useful because of its focus on players' rationality and motivation. The term "rationality" represents not necessarily clear-minded objectivity and logic, but an obvious correspondence between the player's goals or personal preferences and his strategies. In the theory's most precise mathematical applications when it serves not only to understand but to predict the outcome of real economic and political decisions according to consistent human behavior, rationality is measured by a utility value. As Rapoport explains, "Whatever is preferred (whether it seems selfish or altruistic from

certain points of view) is assigned the higher utility" (122). In practice, the method of calculation is often too technical to reflect accurately the multiplicity of choices that complicate each move. And certainly as an approach to dramatic interaction it has little value if it serves simply as a means of predicting the character choices that determine the plot.[1] But the assumption that players seek to maximize goals by choosing specific strategies directs attention to the variety of attitudes and responses depicted on stage in a play as diverse as 1 Henry IV. Frank Zagare acknowledges the spectrum of activities that involve strategies and goals: "Outcomes may be trivial when the game itself is trivial; outcomes may also involve life and death for millions of people when great nations are linked in a gamelike way" (11).

In the play, the conflict of interest between King Henry and Hotspur about the prisoners of war clearly represents the realm of serious political games. The resolution of the dispute depends on extreme offensive and defensive strategies of a civil war with the potential to turn England into a chaotic state of unrest. The root of the problem is a breakdown in authority which leads to game-like divisions between subjects and rulers. As Robert Ornstein says, "Instead of obeying the King as his subjects, the Percies would bargain with him as his equals" (130). Henry IV, however, refuses to accept the bargaining language of equals, having just affirmed his kingship with a statement of severity rather than patience:

> My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
> Unapt to stir at these indignities,
> And you have found me, for accordingly
> You tread upon my patience; but be sure
> I will from henceforth rather be myself,
> Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition,
> Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,
> And therefore lost that title of respect
> Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.
> (I.iii.1-9).

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[1] See note 12 in the Introduction and note 24 in Chapter One for references to the game theory approaches to literature adopted by Nigel Howard, Steven Brams, and Thomas Pavel.

Ironically, he adopts a language of equality by suggesting that the proud pay the proud, but then argues that the equality of subject and king is unnatural, and therefore the currency is no longer negotiable. He has lost too much in the increasing threat of civil war to accept a bargaining role with those who once had a share in the achievement of his power.

Henry's uncompromising position impels the subjects to forget their part in Richard II's deposition, and to identify themselves with the former king as similar victims of Henry's mistreatment. Motivated by this inconsistent but nevertheless sincere sense of double injustice, historically and personally founded, they adopt a competitive stance which rules out any future form of cooperative negotiation. When, for example, King Henry proposes pardon and redress prior to the Shrewsbury battle, the rebels reject his offer, recognizing not only that their own ambitions have expanded beyond ransoming prisoners to taking a kingdom but also that their treasonous intentions cast doubt on the sincerity of the king's offer. Worcester rationalizes their refusal, saying,

> It is not possible, it cannot be,
> The King should keep his word in loving us.
> He will suspect us still, and find a time
> To punish this offense in other faults.
> Supposition all our lives shall be stuck full of eyes,
> For treason is but trusted like the fox,
> Who never so tame, so cherish'd and lock'd up,
> Will have a wild trick of his ancestors. (V.ii.4-11)

Having initiated confrontation, the rebels see aggression as the only strategy that can ensure as a minimum goal their own safety and as a maximum achievement, the restoration of their honor and of political justice.

The seriousness of the game is underscored by continual references to the number of lives at stake. The war becomes almost as mathematical as political game theory itself, for strategies of power on either side depend on carefully calculating the support of allies and soldiers. Hotspur appeals to the strength of numbers as he castigates a cautious and unwilling correspondent by expounding the strength of his cause:

> Is there not my father, my uncle, and myself? Lord Edmund Mortimer, my Lord of York, and Owen Glendower? is there not besides the Douglas? have I not all their letters to meet me in arms by the ninth of the next month? (II.iii.23-28)

As supporters fall away from the rebels' side one by one, the remaining leaders plan and measure the odds mathematically. Worcester cautions Hotspur to delay the attack, saying, "The number of the King exceedeth our. / For God's sake, cousin, stay till all come in" (IV.iii.28-29). The Archbishop speculates on the magnitude of defeat against the king's forces in the upcoming battle, predicting, "Tomorrow, good Sir Michael, is a day / Wherein the fortune of ten thousand men / Must bide the touch" (IV.iv.8-10). Falstaff's own reflection that even the most "pitiful rascals" are "good enough to toss, food for powder" (IV.ii.64-66), ironically depicts the devastating human impact of a game that is played so intensely and seriously. The remarks of these individuals supporting either side of the conflict indicate that the backdrop for the political plot enacted by the handful of characters on stage is a historical reality in which lives translate into numbers on the scoreboard of a zero-sum competitive civil war.

The prominence of Eastcheap as a setting for stage action represents an entirely different realm of game-playing and invites consideration not from the mathematical standpoint of political game theory but from the anthropological perspective on the ambiguous relationship between "reality" and the "pretend" world of play. Csikszentmihalyi begins his discussion in "Some Paradoxes in the Definition of Play" by saying,

> Perhaps the most mystifying thing about play is that, on the one hand, it is supposed to be disengaged from reality in a variety of ways, while at the same time it is credited with a great number of useful real-life functions. (14)

His examples expose the paradoxical relationship of work and play. He notes that one might question whether a life-threatening leisure activity like rock-climbing is done in play or in earnest. It has no "useful real-life function" and yet its danger associates it closely

with reality (16). Conversely, a job at the stock market is considered a "real life" activity that may appear to outsiders more playful than serious (16).[2] Csikszentmihalyi suggests consequently that the game-like aspects of some serious "work" make "the notion of an external, objective reality" (16-17) problematic so that playing ought to be distinguished not by the terms "real" and "nonreal," but rather by acknowledging a difference in goal structures. Reality is relative. Playful activity revolves around different goals than what is normally defined as work, and one can create realities by adopting new goals.

The typical critical response to Eastcheap is to see it as a "holiday" world, a temporary "nonreal" place of fictional activity in the midst of a real, historical world. Graham Holderness notices, for example, in his interpretation of Hal's soliloquy in I.ii, that the play is organized around a dominant and subordinate antithesis of "holiday" and "work" represented by Eastcheap and the political concerns of state

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[2] Csikszentmihalyi's study is part of a vast anthropological discourse about the relationship between seriousness and playfulness. Johan Huizinga acknowledges at the outset of his seminal book, Homo Ludens: "Play turns to seriousness and seriousness to play" (18). More recently, Norman Denzin contributes a similar observation: "one person's play is another person's work, or non-play" (23). John Leyerle discusses the prevalence of such ambiguous activity in literature, saying, "The seeming paradox of serious play is widely encountered in the literature and culture of the Middle Ages. Examples are fortune's roulette wheel, the dance of death, tournaments, the mortal chess game, and the dance of the seven deadly sins" (60). Whereas political game theory focuses on the seriousness of games or uses games to represent other serious activities, anthropologists and sociologists are more interested in the contradictory nature of play itself as an activity which is both serious and nonserious and which therefore evades clear definition.

(100).[3] The dramatic structure of the play, however, suggests a different balance that supports the presence of double plots rather than a plot and subplot. The alternation of scenes in 1 Henry IV between Hotspur and his associates and Hal and Falstaff with their companions simulates a game-like structure of move and countermove between two different but equally valid realms of activity.[4] C.L. Barber's musical metaphor of counterpoint, like the game analogy, is a more accurate expression of the play's development than a dominant-subordinate perspective. As Barber says,

> in 1 Henry IV, the relation of comic and serious action can be described by saying that holiday is balanced against everyday and the doomsday of battle. The comedy expresses impulses and awareness inhibited by the urgency and decorum of political life, so that the comic and serious strains are contrapuntal, each conveying the ironies limiting the other. (13-14)

The two settings are distinct and prominent enough that the alternation between them represents neither a dichotomy between real and playful worlds nor a single play world but two playing activities.

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[3] See also Fredson Bowers' "Theme and Structure in King Henry IV, Part I," in The Drama of the Renaissance, ed. Elmer Blistein, 1970, 42-68. Distinguishing between an "underplot" and a "main plot," Bowers does not give the playwright much credit for deliberate structural organization in suggesting that the prominence of the underplot "was forced on Shakespeare because the action involving the Prince and the King could not appear until the climax of the play, in the middle of the third act, and Falstaff must occupy Hal for roughly a half of the play" (53). Richard Levin offers an alternative structural interpretation, suggesting that "this play is organized around . . . three worlds" (104) in a hierarchy which places Hal's world at the top (The Multiple Plot 104-108). In 1 Henry IV, however, Hal plays in the worlds represented by other figures more clearly than he inhabits his own independent space.

[4] Only periodically does the fairly consistent pattern of alternations admit variation. In I.i. King Henry represents the political world and mentions both Hotspur and Hal though neither appears on stage. In II.i. the Carrier, Chamberlain, and Gadshill enact typical Eastcheap activity though the chief players, Hal and Falstaff, do not appear until the following scene. In IV.iv. the Archbishop of York and Sir Michael privately discuss the rebels' strategy after Hotspur has left the stage in the previous scene. Aside from these double representations of one setting or the other, action alternates back and forth predictably between the two until Hal, Hotspur, and Falstaff all appear on stage in the last act and Hal emerges independent of the other two players in the final scene.

Because Shakespeare's plot development makes Eastcheap neither subordinate to nor less real than the landscape of Henry IV's political concerns, Csikszentmihalyi's idea of relative realities with different goal structures illuminates the dramatic balance. The tavern is simply framed by a different perspective on reality. Its characters are motivated by the spontaneous nature of play rather than a sense of justice or advantage in civil war. The energy of each Eastcheap scene is generated by the spirit of cooperation, by the participants' constant drive for something new and entertaining, by their overriding questions, "What shall we do next? How shall we amuse ourselves?": Hal's "Where shall we take a purse to-morrow, Jack?" (I.ii.99) or Falstaff's "What, shall we be merry, shall we have a play extempore?" (II.iv.279-280). Unlike the political world, strategy in the holiday world is founded on improvisation, not calculation. The numbers game for the rebels reflects life- and death-determining losses in a single, compelling competition; the numbers game played out in Falstaff's account of the robbery demonstrates sheer pleasure in the extravagance of the lie as imaginery soldiers multiply in the dialogue of the unfolding tale. Eastcheap is a place of variety and endless possibility where the players determine the short-term goals and expectations of each consecutive pastime.

The presence of two alternative worlds on stage makes 1 Henry IV an interesting point from which to address the ambiguous juncture of theatre's carnival or holiday atmosphere and the enactment of a serious topic, a dangerous civil rebellion and governmental instability in England's past. In Lily B. Campbell's early interpretation of the history plays as reflections of political policy, she depicts Eastcheap as a subordinate and unfortunate interruption of the play's more serious purpose:

> A series of comic interludes interrupts the continuity of the historical pattern of the two parts of Henry IV, and because these interludes have been built about the character

> of Falstaff, they have obscured the history play they were meant to adorn. (213)

Although the more recent new historicists endeavor to distinguish their approach from the institutional focus of earlier critics, they do not differ significantly in their emphasis on power rather than policy. The theatre is still a political forum, for as Greenblatt suggests, "Theatricality then is not set over against power but is one of the power's essential modes" ("Invisible Bullets" 33). In his view, Eastcheap is significant primarily as a subversive world where Hal deliberately plays a role in order to rise to the throne of kingship.[5]

Since Barber's influential study of the festival impulse in Elizabethan comedy, not only the political but the holiday or saturnalian element has also attracted attention. Barber acknowledges the prominence of the holiday world in 1 Henry IV when he says that "the misrule works, through the whole dramatic rhythm, to consolidate rule" (205). Challenging the simple closure evident in Barber's interpretation of holiday, Graham Holderness reaches a different conclusion by drawing on Bakhtin's view that "carnival customs expressed and embodied an oppositional ideology . . . of alternative values" (84). Holderness argues that the carnival embodiment of Falstaff creates tension and contradiction in the historiography of the Henry IV plays:

> The important thing to recognise is that these dramas bring into play separate and incompatible visions of history; they identify the popular vision with the institution of drama itself; they celebrate the dialectical conflict of these contradictory cultural energies; and they articulate a profound regret at the final effect of closure which signals the impending victory of one dominant conception of 'history' over the complex plurality of Renaissance historiographical practices. (130)

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[5] In "The New Historicism and Its Discontents: Politicizing Renaissance Drama," Edward Pechter draws conclusions similar to mine about the connections between Greenblatt's approach and that of older historicists such as Dover Wilson and E.M.W. Tillyard (294). According to Pechter, Greenblatt "privileges Hal's voice and narrative over the others in the play" ("chiefly Falstaff's") and therefore shares similar political limitations with the critics from whom he deliberately dissociates himself (294).

He bases his observations on the view that the theatre is not solely a political forum:

> [It] was (as it still is) a privileged space of special licence and liberty, in which there can take place a suspension of the ordinary rules and conventions of social order: a place in which 'play' temporarily becomes a norm. The stubborn realities of existence become malleable in the solvent of theatrical fantasy: rigid hierarchical relations can be inverted, kings can become clowns and vice versa; the stage presents the compelling image of a humanity able to transform itself by acts of will, able to liberate itself from the intransigence of historical fact. (112)[6]

This broad spectrum of interpretations reflects the controversial possibilities shaped by Shakespeare's artistry in the Elizabethan history play: theatrical performance incorporates both history and play, both the political and the carnival. Each of the above interpretations is likewise either informed by or intent on the dramatic movement of the Henriad as a whole. In that larger picture, Hal's inevitable redemption of time and rejection of Falstaff signal a closure which represents moral victory from Barber's perspective, the loss of rich complexity in Holderness's view, or the achievement of ultimate power acccording to Greenblatt's understanding. Without ignoring this panoramic view, one can certainly approach 1 Henry IV as an independent work in its own right, lacking closure to the same degree that any history play does[7] but artistically whole and finely tuned to the double

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[6] Holderness shares his perspective on Shakespeare's histories with Michael Bristol's broader approach in Carnival and Theater. Bristol argues that the Elizabethan theatre is a place of "unresolved structural ambiguity" (111) where the impact of popular culture is as significant as concerns with and expressions of "power" (19).

[7] David Scott Kastan emphasizes the "open-endedness . . . of the history play" (269-270), for "[i]ndividual actions may be brought to completion, but the history play recognizes the impossibility of isolating the action from its place on the temporal continuum" ("The Shape of Time" 270).

impulses that shape historical drama.[8] To see in this work two equally balanced realms of political play and holiday play is to acknowledge the unresolved tension between the suspended reality of theatre as a "holiday" arena and its inevitable interaction with its social and political surroundings.

The paradoxical balance and interaction of the two worlds within the play revolve primarily around the characters Hal, Hotspur, and Falstaff. Critics have frequently compared these three characters, acknowledging Hal as the moderate individual whose behavior lies between the extremes of the other two. In Praisers of Folly, for example, Walter Kaiser suggests that Hal provides "a mean between Hotspur's excess and Falstaff's defect" (234).[9] More recently, James Calderwood uses metadramatic terminology, observing that Hal mediates "between the claims of Hotspur mimesis and Falstaff theatrics" (80). In Heroic Mockery, George deForest Lord comes the closest to adopting a sociological perspective of play by including Hotspur with Homer's Achilles as participants in serious zero-sum games contrasted with the "'as-if' character of play" (18). In his closer analysis of Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, however, Lord does not elaborate on the play metaphor but shifts his interest between games and feasts to conclude that Hal "strikes the proper balance between gravity and festivity" (88). Although Lord choses not to pursue the implications himself, his cursory remark about the seriousness of game and the separateness of

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[8] For another view of doubleness in the history plays, see A.P. Rossiter's "Ambivalence: The Dialectic of the Histories," chapter three in Angel with Horns. Rossiter describes 1 & 2 Henry IV as Comic Histories with a "doubleness of implicit values in those situations which are ambivalent; those which can be seen as serious and farcical: as pathetic and absurd: as abominable and laughable . . ." (54).

[9] Hiram Haydn's approach in The Counter Renaissance is similar: "If Hostpur is the excess of honor, Falstaff is as surely the defect" (604). See also William B. Hunter's "Prince Hal, His Struggle for Moral Perfection," South Atlantic Quarterly 50 (1951): 86-95.

play points to the paradoxical possibilities suggested by the extreme and balanced behavior of the three central characters on stage.

Understanding the play's resolution as it lies in Hal's "balanced" behavior or "mediating" position requires exploration into the two alternatives presented by Hotspur and Falstaff. Ironically, in a drama entitled 1 Henry IV, it is not the king nor even the prince but the rebel and the tavern fool who speak the most lines and monopolize the stage by alternating turns.[10] And it is Falstaff, the least historic figure, who plays the biggest part in more ways than one. Given Csikszentmihalyi's view of the paradoxes of play, the dominating players Hostpur and Falstaff differ not according to the reality and nonreality of their activities but according to the diverse motivations which separate their two worlds. The language they use to identify their activities reflects their alternative approaches. Hotspur asserts with confidence his strategy to dethrone the king: "Why it cannot choose but be a noble plot" (I.iii.279). He later calls it "a good plot . . . and full of expectation: an excellent plot" (II.iii.17-19). Falstaff's company conspires in a similar activity, not to rob the king of his crown but to rob the king's men of the king's money. They do so, however, as Falstaff says, "for recreation sake" (I.ii.155), and Hal agrees to join the robbers in doublecrossing Falstaff simply because "it would be argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever" (II.ii.95-96). Admittedly, Hotspur also adopts the language of games as he anticipates the civil war: "O, let the hours be short, / Till fields, and blows, and groans applaud our sport" (I.iii.301-302). But a sport involving "blows" and "groans" rather than laughter and

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[10] The Pelican edition of Shakespeare's plays includes a "Comparative Analysis" table listing the number of lines spoken by characters whose individual sums are greater than 500 lines. Of the 2954 lines in 1 Henry IV, Falstaff speaks 585; Hotspur, 545; and Hal, 535 (31). The percentages from those statistics are 20%, 18.5%, and 18% consecutively. My own calculations from the Riverside edition are similar, with Falstaff speaking 20% of the lines, Hotspur 17%, Hal 15%, and King Henry IV 11%. Falstaff's use of prose means that he has even more words than the blank-verse speakers.

recreation indicates an entirely different attitude than the one fostered in the games of the Eastcheap group. The political players organize themselves for the seriousness of plotting; the holiday players exert themselves for the pleasure of jesting. Goals, expectations, and motivations differentiate Hotspur's and Falstaff's play worlds.

In talking about goal structures, Csikszentmihalyi concludes that what distinguishes the activity of play is an element of consciousness: "the player is aware that the goals and rules of action he or she is following are freely chosen among the many sets of goals and rules one could have chosen" (19). From this standpoint, Hotspur and Falstaff share similar handicaps as players partly because they do not recognize or allow alternatives to their chosen goals and rules and partly because they are not aware of the paradoxes that they enact themselves. As a participant in political games, Hotspur does not simply refuse to acknowledge the holiday world, but aggressively opposes it as inconsistent with and threatening to his own values. He excuses his rash decision to keep Henry's prisoners, explaining that a "certain lord"

> With many holiday and lady terms
> . . . question'd me, amongst the rest demanded
> My prisoners in your Majesty's behalf.
> I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,
> To be so pest'red with a popingay,
> Out of my grief and my impatience
> Answer'd neglectingly, I know not what--. (I.iii.32, 46-52)

Hotspur's impatience with the gentleman stems from his own concern that holiday terms of any sort undermine his own chivalric, military terms and actions. Even in his most carefree moments, with his wife Kate, Hotspur scorns courtship and wooing as alternatives to military games:

> . . . this is no world
> To play with mammets, and to tilt with lips;
> We must have bloody noses, and crack'd crowns,
> And pass them current too. (II.iii.91-94)

His every action and word are filled with intensity and competitiveness. In his own camp, he antagonizes Glendower for claiming to conjure spirits, for speaking Welsh, for "such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff"

(III.i.152) as he himself finds intolerable. Likewise, in his wife's lap, he challenges the meekness of her oath-swearing:

> Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
> A good mouth-filling oath, and leave 'in sooth,'
> And such protest of pepper-gingerbread,
> To velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens. (III.i.253-256)

"Sunday-citizens," "skimble-skamble stuff," "holiday and lady terms" represent a realm of activity that Hotspur finds foreign and undesirable. He plays a violent game and plays not for fun but for keeps. He accepts only one goal structure.

Ironically, however, while Hotspur is primarily interested in political games, he does not act as a rational political player. That is to say, his goals are not always self-evident, his motivations not clearly defined, and his strategies consequently are often inconsistent. When, for example, King Henry demands the prisoners of war, Hotspur begins by explaining the misunderstanding: "My leige, I did deny no prisoners" (I.iii.29). But when Henry then questions Hotspur's allegiance and refuses "To ransom home revolted Mortimer" (I.iii.92), Hotspur changes his mind about the prisoners, calling after the departed king, "And if the devil come and roar for them / I will not send for them" (I.iii.125-126). His peace offering--the prisoners of war--becomes the game prize as his apology turns suddenly to a treasonous challenge. His inconsistency is also apparent when he argues with Glendower and Worcester about dividing the map into fair portions. He first appears motivated by the desire for more land, but when Glendower finally concedes, Hotspur refuses to accept the offer, saying,

> I do not care. I'll give thrice so much land
> To any well-deserving friend;
> But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,
> I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair. (III.i.135-138)

His aggression becomes meaningless when he argues on principle and not for the stated practical purpose or outcome. Unlike King Henry, who earlier refused to bargain because he feared compromising his political

position, Hotspur rashly persists in bargaining although he does not care whether he achieves any political gains as a result.

Likewise, in his preparation for and encounter with Hal on the battlefield, Hotspur loses partly because he is an inferior player but largely because he is not entirely clear about what he wants to win. Honor appears to be his chief concern, and yet when it becomes a goal rather than a motivation, it translates more easily into poetic aspirations than concrete strategies. In Hotspur's words, honor requires "an easy leap" to heaven or a "dive into the bottom of the deep" (I.iii.201,203). It is too vague to inspire "rational" or clear, self-oriented political behavior.

Given Percy's grandiose, abstract ambitions, Worcester and Vernon appear unnecessarily cautious in electing to deceive him about King Henry's offer of pardon (V.ii.), for Hotspur's honor would not allow him to submit to mercy. While in Holinshed's version there is no explanation for Worcester's decision to deceive Hotspur,[11] Shakespeare allows for Worcester's rationalization in a scene which reveals both the earl's inaccurate assessment of Hotspur's uncompromising idealism and his own self-serving intentions as he willingly sacrifices Hotspur's future to protect his own. Although Worcester's choice to "let not Harry know, / In any case, the offer of the King" (V.ii.24-25) undoubtedly has no bearing on Percy's determination or the war's outcome, it does reflect Worcester's rationality as a political player whose ultimate goal has become his own survival rather than a demonstration of valor or the overthrow of the king.

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[11] Holinshed states, "It was reported for a truth, that now when the king had condescended vnto all that was resonable at his hands to be required, and seemed to humble himselfe more than was meet for his estate, the earle of Worcester (vpon his returne to his nephue) made relation cleane contrarie to that the king had said, in such sort that he set his nephues hart more in displeasure towards the king, than euer it was before, driuing him by that meanes to fight whether he would or not" (vol. 3, 25). Like Holinshed's explanation, Grafton's narrative chronicle does not account for Worcester's motivation either (vol. 1, 489-493).

Worcester appears to measure the king's offer of pardon according to his own traitorous actions, recognizing that the game has become far too competitive to allow room for retreat, and that the rebels are, in Macbeth's words, "in blood / Stepp'd in so far that, should [they] wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go o'er" (Macbeth III.iv.135-137). Henry IV, ironically, tries a bargaining strategy here in V.i. long after he has played his part in I.iii to draw the lines of competition which eliminate the foundation of trust necessary for any later offers of compromise. In Shakespeare's continued dramatization of the civil unrest in 2 Henry IV (IV.ii), Prince John's deception at Gaultree, as he arrests the rebels after promising to redress their grievances, exemplifies the risks taken in accepting bargains when a zero-sum stance has already been established. When Worcester is taken prisoner in the last scene of Part One, his defense of his political strategy, "What I have done my safety urg'd me to" (V.v.11), appears all the more rational from the hindsight perspective of Prince John's breach of trust in Part Two.

Hotspur, on the other hand, is motivated by honor not safety as he presses on even when the numbers suggest that the rebellion is becoming a lost cause. His purpose becomes increasingly muddled on the battlefield. Prior to his combat with Hal, he sees honor as allowing him to be a winner regardless of the outcome: "And if we live, we live to tread on kings, / If die, brave death when princes die with us!" (V.ii.85-86). Yet he admits defeat when Hal mortally wounds him: "I better brook the loss of brittle life / Than those proud titles thou hast won of me" (V.iv.77-78). Either he acknowledges in his wounded state that the goal of honor or bravery is no longer sufficient, or he recognizes what he earlier refused to admit, the power of death over reputation. At any rate, in spite of Hotspur's competitive stance and the seriousness of his games, he is a player with limited ability. He loses because he fails to identify or maintain consistent optimum

strategies and because his one overriding goal is too abstract to translate into political action.

Unlike Hotspur, Falstaff plays in the holiday world, which is dominated by word games rather than war games, and his verbal dexterity places him comfortably at the center of the activity. James Calderwood describes him as

> the verbal improvisor and embodiment of language games [who] represents the full fleshing out of the word. He has been at a great feast of languages and has fed well on epithets, puns, sententia, inkhorn terms, bombast, slang, and all manner of styles from the biblical to the euphuistic to the mock-heroic to the fishwife screech. (42)

Calderwood's remark suggests that Falstaff's mastery of formal wordplay is the key to his distinction in Eastcheap's entertainment. Joseph Porter, on the other hand, studies the interactive nature of "language as the instrument or medium of acts done in and through speech" (58) in 1 Henry IV. Interested in speech acts rather than wordplay, he focuses, for example, on the use of questions as a form of control in the first scene between Hal and Falstaff (62-66). The two characters answer questions with questions and evade responding to the imperatives implicit in each other's inquiries. Porter concludes, "where control is at issue, it generally rests with Hal. Yet Falstaff continues to make occasional bids for control and to refuse those of Hal" (66). In their linguistic analyses, both Calderwood and Porter acknowledge the importance of language as performance and recognize Falstaff as Eastcheap's main verbal performer.

Neither Calderwood nor Porter, however, points out one of Falstaff's frequent, characteristic habits of speech, his use of the subjunctive mood. Yet in view of Victor Turner's definition of the realm of play as "the domain of 'as-if,' rather than 'as-is'" (222-223),[12] Falstaff stands out not only as a verbal performer but as one whose abundant "if" clauses define his holiday role as readily as do his

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[12] See the previous discussion of Turner and the subjunctive nature of play with regards to kingship in Chapter One (45-47).

wordplay or his question-posing and evading.[13] He frequently uses conditional terms to castigate his friends, saying of Poins, for example, "If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hang'd" (II.ii.18-19). Occasionally, he replaces "if" with the synonym "and" to the same effect: "And the Prince and Poins be not two arrant cowards, there's no equity stirring" (II.ii.99-100). Yet one of his earliest uses of a subjunctive clause suggests that there is more to Falstaff's speech patterns than simply unconscious habit. When he promises to reform his wicked ways, saying to Hal, "By the Lord, and I do not, I am a villain" (I.ii.95), he immediately echoes his own phrase by responding to the Prince's interest in a robbery: "'Zounds, where thou wilt, lad, I'll make one, an' I do not, call me villain and baffle me" (I.ii.100-101). Hal can mock him for his about-face, but Falstaff's reliance on the limitless possibilities implicit in the subjunctive mood give him the freedom to promise conditionally what he need not perform. His linguistic choices allow him inconsistency without accountability.

Frequently his subjunctive remarks express absurdities that add a quality of exaggeration to much of what he says. The link between "if" and "then" clauses generates humor in declarations such as the following: "if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring" (II.iv.128-130). Falstaff's syntax implies that manhood obviously has been forgotten: the condition must be true because the resolution clearly is not. His account of the robbery includes similar illogical connections. He says,

> I know not what you call all, but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish. If there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legg'd creature . . . . I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. (II.iv.185-194)

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[13] For an insightful discussion of conditional language contributing to a tragic outcome rather than characterizing a comic play world, see Madeleine Doran's "Iago's 'if': An Essay on the Syntax of Othello," in The Drama of the Renaissance, ed. Elmer Blistein, 1970, 69-99.

This absurdity of conditions that often depends on Falstaff's association between himself and food or animals clarifies Holderness' view of Falstaff as a Bakhtinian influence in the play. As Holderness says,

> The dominant style of carnival discourse is the grotesque. . . . The carnivalising imagination creates gargantuan images of huge bodies, enormous appetites, surrealistic fantasies of absurdly inflated physical properties. (86)

He concludes, "Falstaff is Bakhtin's 'material bodily principle' writ large" (88). Falstaff is a carnival figure dominating the holiday world because he dwells on the absurd and grotesque, and he often does so by turning the subjunctive language of possibility into expressions of logical impossiblilty as a way of deflecting any criticism evoked by his inconsistency and exaggeration. The obvious untruth of so many of his result clauses calls for the acceptance of his habitually far-fetched "if" clauses.

The characteristic flexibility of this language in the carnival world contrasts with the logical indication of cause and effect more apt to typify the use of the subjunctive in the serious political world. In civil war negotiations, the word "if" often initiates a proposed or anticipated threat. King Henry declares the alternative to Hotspur's acceptance of his pardon: "But if he will not yield, / Rebuke and dread correction wait on us, / And they shall do their office" (V.i.110-112). In similar syntactical form, the Archbishop anticipates this retribution: "For if Lord Percy thrive not, ere the King / Dismiss his power he means to visit us, / For he hath heard of our confederacy" (IV.iv.36-38). The subjunctive functions as an indication of genuine danger in the conflict between the rebels and the king.

Falstaff's "if," on the other hand, has the swaggering effect of a harmless dare partly because he is a man of word rather than action, and partly because he so thoroughly denies the logic of the subjunctive that he destroys his own linguistic credibility. When he plays the part of the King, he manipulates language to defend his own character:

> If that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff. (II.iv.426-430)

The conditional form of his Biblical allusion challenges anyone to question Falstaff's virtue without simultaneously denying the validity of his scriptural principle. But Falstaff subsequently resigns his role, not by daring Hal to refute his friend's integrity, but by challenging the prince to surpass Falstaff's acting ability:

> If thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-sucker or a poulter's hare. (II.iv.435-437)

From virtue to hanging, from pious proclamations to animal slaughter, Falstaff enjoys a broad spectrum of insinuations, challenges, and declarations without anticipating or inviting consequences.[14] And in 1 Henry IV where serious consequences are held at bay, the audience can enjoy the extravagance of his propositions without feeling any obligation to moral disapproval largely because Falstaff converses in the subjunctive that characterizes the "as-if" realm of Eastcheap. Despite Hal's allusion to Falstaff as the father of lies in the accusation, "These lies are like their father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable" (II.iv.225-226), Falstaff's reliance on the speculative nature of the conditional mood turns the falseness and immorality of lying into the untrue but amoral activity of playing. As Edward Pechter says, in a playful adaptation of Philip Sidney's words, "Falstaff, he nothing affirms, and therefore never lieth" ("Falsifying Men's Hopes" 222).

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[14] In As You Like It, Touchstone concludes his disquisition on the "degrees of the lie" (V.iv.88-89) by observing the benign effect of conditional language:

> I knew when seven justices could not take up a quarrel, but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an If, as, "If you said so, then I said so"; and they shook hands and swore brothers. Your If is the only peacemaker; much virtue in If. (V.iv.98-103)

Touchstone implies, as Falstaff exemplifies, that there is more "virtue" in adopting the word "if" than in acting upon the word "honor."

Ironically, however, if Falstaff's language places him comfortably in the holiday world where cause and effect are frequently ignored or irrelevant, he resembles Hotspur in that he plays a paradoxical game. In a realm where the pleasure of the jest presumably achieves precedence over the ultimate score for any individual participant, Falstaff frequently plays like a rational political player with well-defined goals. He continually strives to score points for himself as he is motivated by equally compelling desires: to acquire money and to portray himself favorably in spite of or at the expense of others. If Hotspur is so bound by the rules of chivalry that he loses sight of the game's outcome, Falstaff is so concerned about a favorable outcome that he cares little for the rules. Although he indicates that he robs for sport's sake, he appears to be impelled by the promise of monetary gains. When he loses the money from the robbery, he shifts to his alternative goal by recounting the event in such a way as to establish for himself an heroic reputation. When the jest against him exposes his cowardice, he simply returns to his original goal, saying, "But by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money" (II.iv.275-276). Even as he participates in the "play extempore" in which reputation is the main stake, he keeps self-interest at the forefront. Whether he plays the Prince or the King, he ultimately seeks to flatter himself. Falstaff is an improviser who, chameleon-like, gives the appearance of continually winning because he is dedicated to his purposes and because he compels others to play his game.

Being a rational, self-oriented participant does not disadvantage him in his own holiday world as Hotspur's irrationality handicaps him in the political world, but like Hotspur, Falstaff is bound by his inability to recognize alternative goal structures and realms of play. Rather than being willing to adapt to the political world, he tries to impose his holiday terms on the other reality. In typical subjunctive terms, he suggests to Hal,

> Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty. Let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon. . . . (I.ii.23-26)

Falstaff hopes to turn England into a state of "let's pretend" governed by the unlimited possibilities of fiction. But he deals in speculation here, for the success of his proposal depends not on his own creative playing but on Hal's future acceptance of his conditions. When Falstaff does join the political game of civil war, he manages to work towards his own expectations as he trades soldiers for money and survives combats, but the results depend as much on luck and the terms of others as on his own manipulative strategies. At Eastcheap, he is flexible because he can "play off" the actions and words of others in cooperative banter, but in the political world he must "play against" others in a much more competitive, less predictable activity.

Paradoxically, Falstaff appears to become less consistently rational as he loses power outside of his own comfortable tavern domain. At Eastcheap, he hacks his sword with his dagger and smears blood on his cohorts, Bardolf and Peto, to give credence to his robbery story, but on the real battlefield, he carries sack rather than a gun in his holster. He continues to manifest carnival appetite rather than soldierly wisdom at the peril of his own life. Even his subjunctive mood shifts to indicate his limited control rather than his linguistic dexterity. His conditional clauses tend to come in pairs. As he says of Hotspur,

> If he do come in my way, so; if he do not, if I come in his willingly, let him make a carbonado of me. . . . Give me life, which if I can save, so; if not, honor comes unlook'd for, and there's an end. (V.iii.56-61)

At Shrewsbury, losing becomes at least a possibility for Falstaff, as it has not been in his holiday games. Even when he pretends chivalry in mock combat with Hotspur's corpse, he uses the double conditional to claim his victory. He says to Hal, "If your father will do me any honor, so; if not, let him kill the next Percy himself" (V.iv.140-142), and "If I may be believ'd, so; if not, let them that should reward valor

bear the sin upon their own heads" (V.iv.148-150). His language no longer controls the action but merely represents the alternative responses of others.

Interestingly, Falstaff's double subjunctive is a linguistic form adopted by both Hal and Hotspur in their speculations about their own fates in the political game. When Hal promises his father that he will join the war effort and restore his own honor, he says,

> This in the name of God I promise here,
> The which if he be pleas'd I shall perform,
> I do beseech your Majesty may salve
> The long-grown wounds of my intemperance.
> If not, the end of life cancels all bands,
> And I will die a hundred thousand deaths
> Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow. (III.ii.153-158)

He knows enough not to proclaim the outcome of a life-threatening competition but only to assure his father that he will fight with determination at all costs. Hotspur's "And if we live, we live to tread on kings, / If die, brave death when princes die with us!" (V.ii.85-86) parallels the personal predictions made by the other two characters. The "if--if not" construction represents the zero-sum nature of the political world where alternative strategies do not necessarily guarantee success, and where winning for some inevitably entails losing for others.

Although Falstaff escapes serious harm in 1 Henry IV, his triumphs on the battlefield outside of Eastcheap lack the assurance and predictability of his earlier triumphs in the tavern world because he is playing by the wrong rules at a game that is not his own. His confirmation of his resurrection on the battlefield, "I am not a double man" (V.iv.138), is true to the extent that Falstaff is incapable of recognizing or adopting more than one set of goals. Even in claiming a final victory over Hotspur, he proves successful only because Prince Hal adopts the "as-if" single subjunctive of the holiday world for Falstaff's sake: "For my part, if a lie may do thee grace, / I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have" (V.iv.157-158). Falstaff describes

his subordinate rather than controlling position as Hal leads the way offstage: "I'll follow, as they say, for reward" (V.iv.162). Out of his depth in the political realm, he depends on payoffs from others, for in this place he does not have the power to generate his own successes.

Prince Hal, rather than Falstaff, is the double man, for he recognizes the possibility of shifting goals, and he has the flexibility to play successfully at both holiday and political games. For example, he fully enjoys the Gadshill robbery but then returns the money, acknowledging the double standard of two worlds which Falstaff resists, complaining, "O, I do not like that paying back, 'tis a double labor" (III.iii.179-180). Prince Hal's doubleness exemplifies play according to both Richard Lanham's literary theory and Csikszentmihalyi's anthropological theory. In The Motives of Eloquence, Lanham says,

> It is only by supposing man's nature to be double that his invention of and appetite for ornament can be made intelligible. . . . He likes to think himself intensely purposeful but often this is self-flattery. At least half of the time his living is play, his motive dramatic and self-contrived, his self a role. (210)

Including Hal as one of many literary figures who illustrate the human doubleness of the rhetorical and the serious self, Lanham concludes that through rhetorical or non-serious activity, "Hal learns to play his royal role without being absorbed by it, without forgetting its precarious dramatic construction" (207). Hal also fits Csikszentmihalyi's anthropological description of doubleness by being an adaptable player moving from one set of expectations to another, by being able to grasp "the possibility of changing goals and therefore restructuring reality" (17). While the two theorists differ--Lanham envisioning an overlap of double perspectives and Csikszentmihalyi describing the separateness of alternative activities--both, nevertheless, stress a self-consciousness and social awareness which are central to Hal's character, apparent particularly in his "I know you all" speech in the first act of the play.

This soliloquy is essential to many interpretations of Hal's conduct and the direction of the plot in 1 Henry IV, although Hal's self-revelation is ambiguous enough to raise as many questions as it answers about his motivation. For critics adhering to the prodigal son, morality play tradition and for those in the new historicist camp, the speech explains and therefore almost dismisses the tavern activity so prevalent in the play. Dover Wilson cites Hal's soliloquy as proof that the prince becomes increasingly conscious "of the obligations of his vocation" (69). From this perspective, the tavern holiday is an immoral, temporary pleasure with an inevitable end. For new historicist Steven Mullaney, the speech reveals "not a prodigal youth given over to vile participation but a prince who plays at prodigality, and means to translate his rather full performance into the profession of power" (81). In this light, holiday is not recreation but a calculating activity as Hal "[collects] and [rehearses] strange ways, tongues, and of course, companions" (75) in order to later cast them off in an assertion of his own dominance and control. In Wilson's view, Hal demonstrates no flexibility, only a conversion. In Mullaney's view, the world is not double, but merely single.

Yet Hal's soliloquy does not express his motivation and predict his actions in such simplistic terms. He speaks first in indirect, metaphoric language about imitating the sun, about permitting Eastcheap "idleness" but planning "again to be himself" (I.ii.200) by casting off the "contagious clouds" of his surroundings. In the middle of his speech, however, he shifts to the conditional language of play in a speculation about the pleasure of holidays in relation to the alternative of work:

> If all the year were playing holidays,
> To sport would be as tedious as to work;
> But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come,
> And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents. (I.ii.204-207)

This remark links his initial and concluding strategy statements in an uncertain way. When he continues with the conjunction, so, the logic of his comparison is potentially double rather than single. He proceeds,

> So when this loose behavior I throw off
> And pay the debt I never promised,
> By how much better than my word I am,
> By so much shall I falsify men's hopes,
> And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
> My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault,
> Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
> Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
> I'll so offend, to make offense a skill,
> Redeeming time when men think least I will. (I.ii.208-217)

Eastcheap is obviously the holiday world, and if the conditional speculation reflects back on the beginning of the speech, Hal may be suggesting that while his tavern activity will become "tedious" by its regularity, "falsifying men's hopes" with a reformation will give to his escapades with Falstaff the pleasure of "rare accidents." If the condition points to his concluding remarks, however, Hal may be implying that the anticipated reformation itself is the rarity, bringing pleasure not only "like bright metal on a sullen ground," but like a "holiday" from his present habit of idleness. The central "if" clause allows for both interpretations, and the ambiguity reveals Hal's self-consciousness though certainly not his transparency.[15] His remarks suggest that he is aware of two related, balanced worlds without judging the reality or the dominance of one over the other.

Ironically, Hal shares his implied connection between holidays and kingship with the man who is most critical of the prince's behavior, Henry IV. Henry's lesson on kingship in III.ii, comparing Richard II's

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[15] Jonathan Hart also acknowledges the ambiguity implicit in this soliloquy, although he argues from the standpoint of the prince's attitude towards time rather than according to the playful perspective of Hal's subjunctive clause:

> Even though the prince seems to enjoy tavern life, he confides to the audience about his redemption of time, so that how much of his biding of time is prudent wisdom, harmless celebration, or callous deception remains uncertain (I.ii.121). The prince seems to display these attributes simultaneously. (122-123)

ineffective public behavior with his own during Richard's reign, includes verbal parallels with several of Hal's previous remarks. The king's account of his own public appearances recalls Hal's description of holidays as "rare accidents" which "when they seldom come, they wish'd for come." As Henry says of himself before he became king, "By being seldom seen, I could not stir, / But like a comet I was wond'red at" (III.ii.47-48), and "so my state, / Seldom but sumptuous, show'd like a feast, / And wan by rareness such a solemnity" (III.ii.57-59). Noting that if he had been "[s]o common-hackney'd in the eyes of men" as Hal, he would have remained in "reputeless banishment" (III.ii.40, 44) and never become king, Henry glorifies his own strategy for winning public opinion to his side:

> And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,
> And dress'd myself in such humility
> That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
> Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths.
> (III.ii.50-53)

The king's attention to humility and courtesy echoes Hal's account of an entirely different, recreational activity, fraternizing with a group of drawers:

> I have sounded the very base-string of humility. Sirrah, I am sworn brother to a leash of drawers, and can call them all by their christen names, as Tom, Dick, and Francis. They take it already upon their salvation, that though I be but Prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy.
> (II.iii.5-11)

While Henry IV and his son describe their very different pre-kingship performances in similar terms, the king has a single vision limiting his language of holiday and work to political goals and ambitions only. He does not understand the flexibility of play, and even after he becomes king, his habit of being "seldom seen"--emphasized by his rare appearances on stage--has the effect of making his kingship appear like a holiday which gives abundant opportunity for dissatisfied nobles to express suspicions and complaints, and to consolidate dangerous opposition.

Hal's words and actions, on the other hand, raise questions about his blend of political motivation and idle recreation. His performances call to mind the unresolved debate about the nature of play itself. Because play is often associated with children and because their games frequently imitate adult activities, some theorists define play as rehearsal or preparation for "real life" in the same way that critics such as Greenblatt and Mullaney view Hal's tavern games as rehearsal for kingship.[16] Caroline Loizos and John R. Bowman contend, however, that play is not simply the equivalent of rehearsal. Loizos says that only "to regard play as practice for adult function does not account for the fact that adults as well as infants play" (185; Bowman 240). Neither does the focus on political rehearsal account for the fact that in some of Shakespeare's histories, kings as well as princes play. In Henry V, for example, the king in disguise accepts a challenge of a duel with the soldier Williams, but then later provides his own playful entertainment by arranging for Fluellen rather than himself to become Williams' unwitting opponent (IV.i, vii, viii). The definition of play, then, must encompass more than mere preparatory exercises.

Other theorists offer alternative interpretations. Csikszentmihalyi contributes to the debate by discounting any relationship between rehearsal and play:

> those children's games that are simply scaled-down versions of adult roles can hardly be called play. . . . When a girl pretends to feed and dress her doll, her actions and experiences are not playful in the sense we are using the term, because again there is no contrast between her goals and those presented for her by the culture. (21)

His is a particularly narrow definition and although his idea of self-conscious behavior in alternative realities provides insight into the dramatic balance in 1 Henry IV, to impose this definition of play rigorously and wholeheartedly on Shakespeare's history would require a

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[16] In a similar vein, Pechter suggests that "Hal's plays are always in tempore," exemplifying purpose and control ("Falsifying Men's Hopes" 225).

complete disregard of the paradoxical possibilities evident in the subtle nuances of Hal's soliloquy. Kim Storey offers a different solution to the problem of definition by presenting three categories of play: games "which have predetermined rules and involve competition," imitation play "which involves close replication of adults and their activities," and pastimes "which are forms of play that are relatively unstructured and lack competitive elements" (79). Although Csikszentmihalyi's paradigm of alternative realities is central to the argument presented in this chapter, brief consideration of Storey's categories illuminates the complex enactments and multiple interpretations of play in 1 Henry IV. King Henry's political world undoubtedly exemplifies the competitiveness of "game," and Falstaff's eager anticipation of the combat between Hal and Hotspur, "Nay, you shall find no boy's play here, I can tell you" (V.iv.75-76), marks the intensity of the performances in this realm. But the boundaries between "pastimes" and "imitation play" for Hal in the holiday world remain far less clear.[17]

The "Francis scene" exemplifies the tavern activity that elicits diverse critical comment about the purpose or meaning of Hal's many entertainments. James Winny offers a moral reading, referring to "[t]he sheer inanity of the episode," suggesting that "Hal is wasting time fruitlessly, and [that] the discovery that Eastcheap [provides] an important part of his education is not to be made in this play" (134). Winny sees the recreation of "Anon, anon, sir" as a pastime, and a useless one at that. J.D. Shuchter, on the other hand, imposes a dramatic pattern on the scene, seeing it as one of three interviews "which [imitate], in almost farce terms, the steps of Hal's

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[17] Given the numerous paradigms existing to clarify the paradoxes of play, various categories are not only limited in themselves but potentially similar to others. One can, for example, see parallels between the competitive/cooperative dichotomy at the basis of political game theory and Storey's three-part model in which games are classified as competitive while pastimes and imitation play appear more cooperative.

developmental action" (131). This interpretation, combining an acknowledgement of farce and a conclusion that "Hal's playing is a way of knowing" (131), draws together an understanding of play as both unstructured, pleasure-inspired pastime and purposeful imitation. Greenblatt provides a political approach, in which he comments on Francis' oppression and concludes that "the Prince is implicated in the production of this oppressive order" ("Invisible Bullets" 31) by using his theatricality as a source of power. Greenblatt's view of the scene falls most appropriately into Storey's category of imitation play, which has meaning and purpose beyond the activity itself.[18]

Hal's own explanation is evasive enough to encompass and give credence to all three interpretations:

> I am now of all humors that have show'd themselves humors since the old days of goodman Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve a' clock at midnight. (II.iv.92-95)

He could be saying that he is learning or rehearsing the humors of his subjects to prepare for his role as king, or he could be exclaiming that an abundance of humor is its own reward, or he could be suggesting both. Lanham's remark, "We play for advantage, but we play for pleasure, too" (4-5), is perhaps the closest one can come to understanding Hal's "playing holidays." Either he has made "offense" such "a skill" that he deceives the audience as well as his friends, or he as often as not disregards his announced political motivation for the sake of "argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever" (II.ii.95-96). At any rate, "I know you all" is no guide book to decipher Hal's every move, and the pleasure principle appears far more obvious in Eastcheap than any indication of purposeful rehearsal or imitation play. The doubleness of Hal's soliloquy and the diversity of his activities

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[18] See also Gerard H. Cox, "'Like a Prince Indeed," Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater, ed. David M. Bergeron (Athens: U of Georgia P, 1985) 130-149. Cox notes, as I do, that "we as audience are not given privileged information about Hal's intentions" (139), but speculates that the scene contributes to Hal's understanding and demonstration of honor rather than his flexibility in two playing worlds.

indicate that he is completely at home in the tavern world. He is "not . . . of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the north" (II.iv.101-103); he does not utterly suppress holiday attitudes in order to uphold political expectations.

Unlike Falstaff, however, Hal does not insist on imposing holiday terms on the political world. When political matters interrupt the performance of the play extempore, the prince abandons the pleasure of one game for the conditions of the next as he prepares to put down the rebellion. Only Falstaff remains committed to the dramatic game he feels he has not quite won: "[P]lay out the play, I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff" (II.iv.484-485). Only Falstaff later bemoans his "charge of foot" (III.iii.186) and dreams in holiday rather than military terms: "O, I could wish this tavern were my drum!" (III.iii.206). Hal, however, is not prepared to compromise his position by holding on to the recreational expectations of Eastcheap. He rebukes Falstaff for carrying sack in his holster, demanding, "What, is it a time to jest and dally now?" (V.iii.55). The prince acknowledges that he is now "playing" in a context where the ultimate score is a priority, where winning or losing means life or death, where holsters are meant for guns. He trades his Gadshill vizard for a promise to "stain [his] favors in a bloody mask" (III.ii.136) and challenges Hotspur on the battlefield. The test of Hal's skill and adaptability comes in this confrontation, and the prince wins, not as Falstaff does by violating codes of chivalry and decency, but by adopting Hotspur's terms of competition. As Hal says,

> Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere,
> Nor can one England brook a double reign
> Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales. (V.iv.65-67)

The mutually exclusive ends admit no possibility of compromise. From that perspective, Hotspur's final speech is his only appropriate response, as Hal's victory entails his opponent's defeat. Moreover, Hotspur's acknowledgement of his fatal loss affirms Hal's success as a

political participant who triumphs by his skill; he accepts the rules and knows how to achieve his goals.

Hal's eulogies over the bodies of his competitor, Hotspur, and companion, Falstaff, indicate that he does not abandon his acceptance of two kinds of game, in spite of entering and performing well in the political world. Addressing the political player in lofty terms of honor and courtesy and the holiday player in puns and playful terms of familiarity, Hal continues to demonstrate his doubleness.[19] Even in his syntax, he balances one set of expectations against the other. Two conditional clauses indicate his awareness of alternative worlds. To Hotspur, he says, "If thou wert sensible of courtesy, / I should not make so dear a show of zeal" (V.iv.94-95); to Falstaff, "O, I should have a heavy miss of thee / If I were much in love with vanity!" (V.iv.105-106). The first, spoken from Hal's winning position, identifies the limitations of the subjunctive given the competitive irreversibility of political games. "If thou wert sensible" implies, "But thou art not." The second appeals to the limitless possibilities of the subjunctive in the holiday world. "If I were much in love" allows for the assumption, "Indeed, I am," and leaves room for Hal's later discovery, "Thou art not dead."

These linguistic parallels are a final illustration in 1 Henry IV of the flexibility entailed in Csikszentmihalyi's theory of play. As he suggests, "play is not defined by the form or the content of the activity," nor by "reference to structure or behavior," but by the

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[19] Calderwood describes this doubleness in light of his own dramatic metaphor, suggesting that Hal has the ability to "register the differences between the two modes of death, the realistic and the theatrical" (85). Yet Hal is not necessarily aware of the theatricality of his response to Falstaff, for as James Black notes, "Falstaff saves himself from being killed at Shrewsbury by playing dead, fubbing off death by seeming to die, and doing it well enough to deceive Hal" (32). Nevertheless, Hal's opposing responses to the two "dead" men do indicate his consistent ability to speak in the different languages of the two play worlds and mark his "flexibility [which] enables him not only to unite a divided England but to unite a temporarily divided 1 Henry IV as well" (Calderwood 85).

perspective and "the experience of the player" who consciously recognizes optional goals and rules (20). He says, "If we could not conceive of acting by a set of rules that are different from those to which we have learned to adapt, we could not play" (20). Accordingly, because Hal is the most self-conscious player both in his language and in his moves, because he recognizes the co-existence of alternative realities and plays by optional goals and rules, he emerges as the most capable and indeed the most playful player.

1 Henry IV is an historical drama that depicts not simply a chronology of events, the decisions that determine plot, and the characters who participate. It is a drama that portrays the paradoxes of play that arise as events unfold, goals determine decisions, and characters define their own spheres of reality. It is about the irrationality of those like Hotspur and Falstaff who do not understand the paradoxes and about the flexibility of those like Hal who do. It is in some ways the most limited of history plays because it spends such relatively little time on the "facts" of the English past. It is in some ways the most unlimited of the history plays because it opens the boundaries of past records to explore the speculations and conditions of events that never happen or of endless histories that happen but are never told. Certainly, it is a drama that solicits flexibility from its audiences who cannot observe history without encountering play, who cannot experience play without discovering its paradoxes, who cannot enjoy laughter without seeing the devastating outcome of power games, and who cannot finally leave without the uneasy realization that the theatre provides a structure but no closure, that history and play are never done. In the ultimate paradox, the closing words of the performance announce the open-endedness of the drama, as King Henry exits the stage, saying, "Let us not leave till all our own be won" (V.v.44).

CHAPTER FOUR

Double Play: History in Disguise

In Shakespeare and the Play of History, John Turner's appeal for a new understanding of Shakespeare's drama that brings together the objectivity of history and the subjectivity of play (5) is an invitation that ought to encompass not only Shakespeare but many of his contemporaries. While the carefully balanced sequence of alternative activities representing "play" in 1 Henry IV is a credit to Shakespeare's artistic craftsmanship, the boundless possibilities inherent in the definition of "play" provide an angle for closer scrutiny of less-known history plays in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Little has been said about the way action is played out in many of the "chronicles" which are often dismissed for being too episodic or insufficiently factual to inspire artistic and historic interest.[1] Yet in a genre that is so diverse as to elude distinct boundaries, the conditional element of play provides threads of continuity. Disguise is one form of "play" that integrates a multiplicity of purposes in the interaction of historical and nonhistorical characters on stage. It is a common motif in the histories, having a significant function in Shakespeare's Henry V; the biographical history, 1 Sir John Oldcastle; Heywood's Edward IV; Peele's

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[1] I agree with Ribner's conclusion that critical distinctions between the terms "chronicle play" and "history play" are ill-founded and of little use. Pointing out the "inadequacy of the notion" that "chronicle is used . . . to refer to a kind of formless, episodic drama," he chooses "to abandon the term 'chronicle' entirely" and accept only the term "history play" (5-6). Similarly, I argue in this chapter for an exploration of disguise as a common motif that links otherwise disparate history plays reflecting different approaches to history and attaining different levels of dramatic achievement but not, therefore, to be dividied into two kinds of drama: "chronicle play" and "history play."

Edward I; and Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me.[2] As a manifestation of play, disguise recalls John Turner's observations about "play" as an activity associated with the disparate expectations of ceremony and authority, holidays and duties, law and lawlessness (6). The disguises adopted by kings, subjects, rebels, and fools in these history plays embody in the doubleness of appearances and identities the contraries that this genre continually brings together in its blend of fact and fiction: the serious and the humorous, the tragic and the comic, the political and the playful.

Disguise arises naturally out of central elements in theatrical activity--impersonation and the accompanying attitudes of "let's pretend" and "let's believe."[3] The overall performance relies not only on words and actions, but on the physical presence of individuals whose costumes and names define their identities. By role-playing, actors extend the playful invitation, "let's pretend," and assume a reciprocal

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[2] These titles are not intended as a comprehensive list of historically-based plays incorporating the disguise motif. Other extant plays in the early 1600s which link the convention of disguise with history include Look About You, The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington and The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington. The plays chosen for this chapter, however, not only share the disguise of kings as well as other characters, but invite closer scrutiny of "history in disguise" because their plots draw more directly from official versions of narrative history than do these other plays.

[3] The phrases "let's pretend" and "let's believe" recall Don Handelman's distinction between play and ritual:

> But if the bypass to play is predicated upon a premise of "make-believe", that to ritual is predicated upon a premise of "let us believe" . . . . From the perspective of the ordinary social order, human beings recognize the "inauthenticity" of one and the "truth" of the other. (187)

Implicit in Handelman's "make-believe" are the two invocations "let's pretend" and "let's believe" which more appropriately express the doubleness of perception that makes dramatic performance as well as other forms of playful activity "authentic" rather than "inauthentic." This issue of authenticity recalls Csikszentmihalyi's challenge to "the notion of an external, objective reality" of work (16-17) as opposed to the nonreality of play as discussed in Chapter Three. The truth or authenticity of ritual, on the other hand, appears to require the absense of invocation. Myerhoff's observation, "In ritual, doing is believing" (151), indicates a community declaration, "we believe," as opposed to Handelman's invocation, "let us believe." See Chapter Two for a more detailed discussion of rituals and games in historical drama.

response from the audience, "let's believe." The previous chapters have focused primarily on the impact of the aural and temporal aspects of play. Perkir Warbeck's dependence on speech acts as a source of power in Chapter One and the subjunctive language games of Falstaff and his companions in Chapter Three illustrate the entertainment and dramatic force of verbal play on stage. In Chapter Two, the combination of rituals and military games in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III demonstrates the important interplay of static and dynamic action when history is relived before an audience. Yet the stage medium also invites attention to the transformation of actors into characters, to the material element which distinguishes dramatic history from narrative history and play from chronicle. Relying on costumes and conventions, players pretend to be kings, lords, or fools. As Sandra Billington observes about stage impersonation in her focus on the concept of mockery rather than doubleness:

> The very act of a player putting a crown on his head to represent a historical figure turned him, and, by association, the character he portrayed, into a mock king even before the text gave greater definition to this type he portrayed. (Mock Kings 6)

Disguise, however, adds a doubleness to this role-playing. The one-to-one correspondence of actor and character is complicated by characters who conceal their identities or assume the roles of other individuals in the play. Impersonation becomes a form of double play, for it is not only a necessary condition of the dramatic medium itself but an additional aspect of the plot included to invert expectations for the sake of humor, intrigue, or surprise.

In a study of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure, Rosalind Miles discusses the common use of the disguise convention in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. She suggests that

> disguise has two primary and usually distinct modes in drama. On the one hand it is no more than a piece of plot mechanism, an unsophisticated constructional expedient; on the other, it is a technique whose potential fits it for poetic use, one rich in associations and levels of meaning. (125)

While she feels that many Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights used the device "carelessly, mechanically or flippantly, as the immediate dramatic need dictated" (127), she notes that more sophisticated dramatists understood and relied on the potential subtlety of disguise (125, 127). Miles suggests that there are two types of disguisers on stage:

> the self-oriented disguiser who masquerades for his own pleasure or profit . . . and the disguiser who is motivated by his consideration for others or his concern with their affairs (this character is usually altruistic but nevertheless can, paradoxically, convey a darkening of the tone). (129)

She admits that her categories do not always work, but her attempt to classify acknowledges the double possibilities of disguise within the plot to serve as a source of playful merriment in itself or as a strategy to achieve goals beyond itself.

Miles's observations about different purposes and effects of disguisers on stage can be more fully understood in light of the multiple origins of the disguise tradition available to Renaissance dramatists.[4] From the religious morality plays comes the Vice figure who relies on the deception of false identities in order to tempt by distorting reality. The three court vices in John Skelton's Magnyfycence, for instance, deceive by adopting aliases: Crafty Conveyaunce becomes Sure Surveyaunce, Counterfet Countenaunce is Good Demeynaunce, and Clokyd Colusyon is Sober Sadnesse (ll. 525-526, 674, 681). Name changes often combine with costume changes in the manipulation of identities by the Vice character. As Jean MacIntyre observes in her study of Elizabethan costumes,

> At least some of the time, the original costume of a morality deceiver must have been emblematic of his true nature. . . . But if the Vice puts on a sober robe or gown that implies "virtue" atop his more accurate costume, and if

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[4] My focus here is on English dramatic and historic traditions of disguise. For a broader discussion of classical and continental uses of disguise in drama, see Victor Oscar Freeburg, Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama [1915] (New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1965), especially chapter three, "The Origin and Extent of Dramatic Disguises."

> this occurs along with speech and action emphasizing the change and its corrupt purpose, the impression of falsity is both stronger and more durable. In The Life and Repentance of Mary Magdalene the Vice, Infidelitie, has not one but several gowns to disguise himself. (23)

The Vice tradition from the morality genre represents a sinister use of the disguise motif on stage. Yet the disguised Vice figure invokes a double rather than a single response, for while his trickery is an obvious symbol of evil, his buffoonery and clever duping of others also provides comedy and entertainment.[5]

This implicit doubleness continues in the Vice-like figures appearing in the historical genre. In Thomas Preston's Cambises, an early Elizabethan drama, Ambidexter follows in the morality tradition as "comic Vice who," according to Ribner, "has absorbed many of the functions of the clever servant and the parasite of classical comedy and who by his constantly changing roles ties the parts of the play together" (Ribner 55). With his adaptibility giving him an edge over the other characters, Ambidexter is a possible predecessor to Shakespeare's much more clever Falstaff. The character in Cambises explains the doubleness which provides his entertainment and success: "I signifie one / That with bothe hands finely can play" (Cambises ll. 149-150). To be ambidexterous is the manual equivalent of Falstaff's paired conditionals, "if so; if not." The similarity between the physical and linguistic flexibility portrayed by these two figures indicates the diverse range of playfulness on stage in historical drama.

In Cambises, however, the entertainment value of Ambidexter's flexibility is complemented by a more serious or sinister side to his character. As Eugene Hill observes, this serious side is made more apparent by the potential relevance of historical drama to contemporary events and to conditions in the recent past. Suggesting in a contextual

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[5] Miles acknowledges only the negative aspect of this dramatic contribution: "For disguise itself is traditionally a diabolic technique. The Morality tradition of the Vice disguised as Virtue had not died out by Shakespeare's time . . ." (131).

reading of Cambises that "[t]hematically as well as structurally, Ambidexter is central to the play" (408), Hill points out the religious and political "ambidexterity" apparent in "the dreadful period of English history whose end Foxe celebrates," in the "multiple [recantations]" characterizing the battle between Protestants and Catholics (416), and in the memory of Henry VIII's double-dealing (427). Ambidexter's centrality, Hill argues, reinforces the serious political impact of Thomas Preston's play early in Elizabeth's reign.

The contradictory playful and sinister nature of the Vice figure in Cambises exerts an influence in later Elizabethan history plays as well. While emphasizing Falstaff's playful qualities in 1 Henry IV and making his sinister side more apparent in 2 Henry IV, Shakespeare combines both features in his characterization of Richard III in the last two plays of the first tetralogy. A.P. Rossiter describes Richard III's "cruel-comic" nature according to the morality tradition alluded to by Richard himself (III.i.82-83):

> he has become a wit, a mocking comedian, a 'vice of kings'--but with a clear inheritance from the old Vice of the Moralities: part symbol of evil, part comic devil, and chiefly, on the stage, the generator of roars of laughter at wickednesses (whether of deed or word) which the audience would immediately condemn in real life. (15)

Depicted in history and morality, the disguised Vice figure brings together serious and humorous qualities.

Besides the influence of early religious drama, disguise comes to the Elizabethan stage from folk festivals and May Day celebrations. Of particular significance to the history plays is the function of Robin Hood and his companions in village holidays and rituals. Suggesting that "[t]he symbolical dramas of the seasons . . . first arose at the village feasts in close relation to the dance" (188), E.K. Chambers describes Maid Marion's role in the sword and morris dances (200) and notes the village revellers' common practice of impersonating Robin Hood and his men during the May Day activities (174-78). Grafton and Stowe add a factual dimension to the Robin Hood character by including him in

their chronicles (J.C. Holt 31). According to William Simeone, this combination of "historical" and "pastoral" traditions presents somewhat conflicting personalities to the Renaissance playwrights. The historical aspect rationalizes Robin Hood's power and influence by giving him a social position while the pastoral idea of a golden world allows for a holiday atmosphere (186-87). Robert Weimann suggests a similar conjunction of roles in Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition:

> Robin Hood could achieve the semiritual status of a summer king or Lord of Misrule and at the same time assume the identity of a "social bandit"--the prototype of a "primitive rebel." In either case, a spirit of inversion and social resistance is important, be it in the playfully rebellious "gestures" and actions of ritual processions or in the more representational elements within the folk plays and the emerging social consciousness of the ballads. (28)

The disguise of Robin Hood, whether it involves others dressing up as him or as him dressing up to deceive others, is a folk tradition which when it appears in several of the history plays brings the ambivalence of serious social import combined with festival recreation, both the political and the playful.

A third form of disguise which conjoins contradictory purposes in its influences on Elizabethan drama is found in the masquing and mumming associated with the king's court. Chambers describes the subversive political uses of mumming in the early English reigns:

> Some chroniclers relate that it was at a mumming that the partisans of Richard II attempted to seize Henry IV on Twelfth night in 1400. . . . In 1414 Sir John Oldcastle and his Lollards were in their turn accused of using a mumming as a cloak of sedition. Thus the London distrust of false visages had its justification. (395-396)

From the same examples, Glynne Wickham concludes that disguise offered "convenient anonymity to professional agitators" (Early English Stages vol. 1, 202). However, when popular mumming was prohibited early in the fifteenth century and replaced by the masque in Henry VIII's reign (Wickham The Medieval Theater 162), disguising became more of a sanctioned than a subversive form of political play centered on the court. According to Chambers' description of this Tudor entertainment,

> The early masks resembled the simpler type of "mumming" rather than the more elaborate and spectacular "disguising," but by the end of the reign both of the older terms had become obsolete, and all Elizabethan court performances in which the visor and dance played leading parts were indifferently known as masks. (402)

Although the Tudor masques differed from the Jacobean masques by including "conflict, protest and mockery" so that they were "not always an idealisation of the court or monarch" (Axton 24), they were nevertheless primarily a form of political celebration. As Marie Axton says in her discussion of Tudor court activities,

> In mask, tournament and disguising the inner circle at court celebrated its personal and public triumphs or defeats in iconographic fictions understood fully by a select few and more imperfectly by a widening audience. (29)

From past ages dramatized in the history plays, mumming served potentially seditious objectives, and from more contemporary Tudor and early Jacobean periods, masquing authorized the royal court and received authority from it. Fifteenth and sixteenth century mumming and masquing therefore offered to dramatists of the late sixteenth century what the games and plays of Robin Hood and the Vice of the moralities offered: a tradition of disguise which provided ambiguous expectations by encompassing double motives and meanings.

Central to the history plays in particular is the disguised king, a folk motif with a long tradition falling primarily outside chronicle sources of the drama. While most scholars account for the motif's popular recurrence on stage by acknowledging broad public awareness and acceptance of it in the Renaissance period, Elizabeth Walsh offers useful background by explaining where disguised kings may have originated and how they became such a common part of community myths and stories. She suggests biblical and classical analogues in Abraham welcoming angels as he entertains three strangers, and in Odysseus receiving kindness when he visits Eumaios in disguise (3). By the Middle Ages, "[t]he motif of the incognito king given hospitality by a man of low rank seems to have been a universal one" (8). As Walsh

explains, this motif in countless legends and popular tales often included a "courtesy lesson" as the benevolent king later disclosed his disguise and rewarded the hospitable individuals (8).

By the Elizabethan period, the dramatizers of history frequently incorporate this disguise convention into their plays although it originates in the traditions of folk-lore and popular myth rather than in historical precedents. They adapt and play with history instead of merely reenacting portions of official Tudor narratives. The disguised excursions in Renaissance drama are associated particularly with such English kings as Edward IV, Henry V, and Henry VIII. In Heywood's Edward IV, for example, the king's adventures with Jane Shore and his incognito encounter with Hobs the Tanner come not from Holinshed's chronicles but from two ballads, The Woeful Lamentation of Jane Shore and King Edward the Fourth and The Tanner of Tamworth (Ribner 273). Similarly, the disguise of Rowley's Henry VIII receives only brief mention by the chroniclers Stowe and Grafton as they note that "On Midsummer Night, the king came [illegible] into Cheape in one of the cotes of his gard" (intro. Rowley ix). Yet the incident appears more fully in the popular chap-book The King and the Cobbler (intro. Rowley ix). When Rowley includes the traditional story in When You See Me You Know Me, the fact that it seems somewhat out of place between court scenes about the religious controversy during Henry VIII's reign suggests that the episode was obviously such a familiar part of Henry VIII lore that it was worth including in spite of its questionable effect on dramatic continuity. It is reminiscent of the way that the legend of Henry V as a "wild prince" begins the The Famous Victories and Shakespeare's "Henriad," and likewise recalls the inclusion of the legendary Bastard of Falconbridge in The Troublesome Reign.[6] Similar to these other

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[6] See Chapter Two, note 11, for discussion of Falconbridge's legendary role in historical drama.

examples, Rowley's disguise scene exemplifies the way that history plays often fuse fact and fiction.

Like Falconbridge's political significance in the King John play, however, the disguise motif contributes to the concerns of dramatized history by drawing attention to the king's double identity as Body Politic and Body Natural in the symbolic conception of the King's Two Bodies included in the Tudor understanding of monarchical power.[7] Many twentieth-century critics observe in the Tudor history plays a preoccupation with the human element of politics represented by the king's natural body.[8] Michael Manheim's discussion in The Weak King Dilemma of plays that depict incompetent kings and John Wilders' thesis in The Lost Garden that historical drama portrays imperfect men coping in a fallen world both posit an Elizabethan consciousness of kingly limitations through a dramatic inquiry into the foundations of kingly power.

More recently, Jonathan Dollimore's cultural materialist view that Renaissance drama actively challenges the legal and moral ideologies sustaining the political system suggests that the playwrights manifest subversive motivations rather than mere interest in or concern for the human frailties and public ideologies characterizing governmental control (Radical Tragedy 18). While Dollimore's theories revolve primarily around Renaissance tragedies, his focus on subversion and centers of power has implications in the king-dominated plots of the history plays. He does explore one historical drama himself as he

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[7] Ernst Kantorowicz's The King's Two Bodies demonstrates the influence of this political fiction on historical drama in a chapter on Shakespeare's Richard II. See also Chapter One of this study for the significance of divine kingship in Perkin Warbeck.

[8] See, for example, Jonathan Hart's Theater and World for a brief overview of the "two bodies" myth in the Elizabethan period and its significance in Shakespeare's second tetralogy. Hart notes, "The notion of the king's two bodies was not, from about 1561 onward, a rarefied idea. It may have received its greatest public exposure on the stage" (61-62).

argues, with co-author Alan Sinfield, in "History and Ideology: the instance of Henry V" that Shakespeare's "construction of ideology is complex--even as it consolidates, it betrays inherent instability" (211). Like the other critics exploring the foundations of power presented in English drama, Dollimore and Sinfield address the political implications of double-bodied kingship without specifically referring to the historical significance of the King's Two Bodies as a monarchical ideology spanning the period from early English history to Jacobean times.

Dollimore and Sinfield's view of ideology as "material practice, woven into the fabric of everyday life" (211) also invites playful and serious associations with the materiality of the king's disguise, a transformation achieved most frequently by a simple but significant exchange of costumes and sometimes by an accompanying change of names. In the dramatic portrayal of England's past, the non-historical motif of disguise ironically adds to the debate over state power and its sustaining ideology by drawing attention to the king's humanity and individuality as well as his royal prerogative. The king reveals the humanity of his Body Natural when he removes the material signs of "divine" Body Politic, the robe and crown. Yet disguise usually entails revelation, and the simple folk convention typically concludes with the ruler exposing his masquerade and returning to his initial station. In adopting and adapting this convention within the context of Tudor two-bodied kingship, the playwrights of history lack the single-minded motive of political subversion maintained by Dollimore and Sinfield. Their drama nonetheless explores and exposes the ideological or mythical complexities of kingship, and the alternatives available to a king who temporarily conceals his Body Politic.

The identity game of disguise stands in stark contrast to the irreversible annihilation of selfhood dramatized, for example, in the abdication of Shakespeare's Richard II. Richard agonizes over the

tragic loss of his whole identity as he gives away his scepter and crown, saying, "I have no name, no title . . . . And know not now what name to call myself!" (Richard II IV.i.255-259).[9] He realizes as a dethroned king that his Body Natural has no social reality without its accompanying Body Politic.[10] Disguise, on the other hand, hides but does not remove the double-bodied nature of kingship, and thus reflects the "as-if" realm of possibility rather than Richard's tragic realm of inevitability. A disguised king who chooses to conceal his Body Politic plays with but does not relinquish his identity.

This chosen "as-if" pretense of single, fictional identity ironically allows the king double, contradictory possibilities of power or vulnerability. The king's disguise can empower by giving him access to knowledge of his kingdom otherwise hidden from him by the protective superiority of his crown and robe, but it can also produce a sense of vulnerability by removing the authority of his divinely sanctioned Body Politic. His newly acquired power he can take back with him to the throne, but the vulnerability is often though not necessarily as temporary and conditional as the disguise itself. That reality invites Greenblatt's assertion that "all theatrical masks" exist only to serve the interests of power ("Invisible Bullets" 33). Yet invariably the dramatists depict history in disguise with a doubleness that reaches beyond the centrality of power alone to demonstrate the alternation and conjunction of politics and play in the actions of historical figures brought to life on the stage.

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[9] King Lear experiences similar tragic self-annihilation when he gives up the power of his political body but continues to demand the royal prerogatives for his natural body, only to discover that "that way madness lies" (King Lear III.iv.21).

[10] Cf. Kantorwicz's study of Richard's "tragedy of dual personality" (39).

I. Shakespeare's Henry V and the King's Two Bodies

One of the most familiar and sophisticated dramatizations of the disguise motif in an historical setting appears in Henry V, where Shakespeare questions the mythical reality of the King's Two Bodies by addressing the degree to which the king is empowered or exposed while he plays with his double identity. Henry V does not deliberately disguise himself, but in borrowing Erpingham's cloak, he takes advantage of its anonymity to deal with challenges from his men--Pistol, Williams, and Bates--in a way that discourages identifying himself and leads him eventually to express in soliloquy the clash inherent in the myth of Two Bodies that defines his royal role:

> O hard condition,
> Twin-born with greatness, subject to the breath
> Of every fool whose sense no more can feel
> But his own wringing! (IV.i.233-236)

Empowered as a king but subject as a man, he confronts this "hard condition" when he quarrels incognito with the soldier Williams about the values and expectations at the core of the king's leadership. Arguing that "Every subject's duty is the King's, but every subject's soul is his own" (IV.i.176-177), Shakespeare's Henry V appeals to the duality posited by Bracton, the medieval lawyer who contributed to the myth of two royal bodies the concept that the king holds a position both "above and under the Law" (Kantorowicz 162).[11] Henry signifies his

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[11] As a medieval king brought to life on an Elizabethan stage, Henry V embodies the issue of divine right as it occupied the minds of monarchs and jurists from early English history until the seventeenth century. Edward Coke's argument in favor of the King's Two Bodies in Elizabethan times acknowledges the opposing views of other contemporary theorists who did not accept divine right as an implicit doctrine free from the restraints of the law (Hart 75-76). Hart addresses the impact of this political controversy on Shakespeare's dramatization of English history in the second tetralogy (55-88), and explores, as I do, the significance of the Two Bodies doctrine in the scene of Henry V's disguise (190-197). While Henry is, as Hart suggests, "a king and no king" (194) in IV.i, he is also--in the cross-currents of history--both a medieval and a Renaissance king, a figure from the past and a character in the present, who reflects and participates in a political debate that continued over the centuries.

political obligation to guide and participate in his own international quarrel, but argues that he shares no blame for eternal consequences befalling his subjects who die in battle. He appears to claim a double role including both responsibility and freedom from responsibility. However, the length of his defensive speech, complete with several examples and rationalizations, suggests the complexity of his philosophical stance. Myth does not easily translate into practical action or obligation, and doubleness is not easily simplified.

Both Dollimore and Sinfield's article and Greenblatt's discussion of Henry's conversation in disguise rely consistently on the term "ideology" rather than "myth"[12] to make similar observations about the philosophical difficulties of Henry's defensive speech. Yet in their view, the difficulties reflect Henry's self-serving interests as king rather than merely exposing the perplexing combination of fact and fiction comprising the myths that define his political reality. Dollimore and Sinfield refer to the "subtext . . . in the confrontation with Bates and Williams: the possibility, the danger of subjects who disobey," and Henry's subsequent need to "mystify both kingship and subjection" (217-218), to suppress challenges by asserting his myths of power. Greenblatt submits that Henry's "string of awkward 'explanations'" is contradictory and "cast[s] long shadows on the king himself" (Negotiations 61). Not even Williams is convinced of Henry's benevolent kingship in the context of international war. While the soldier concurs that "'Tis certain, every man that dies ill, the ill upon his own head, the King is not to answer it" (IV.i.186-187), he is

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[12] See note 5 in Chapter Two for my discussion of the two words according to the views of Frye, Edelman, and new historicists. Frye distinguishes between the two terms, Edelman speaks of society's myths, and new historicists focus on political ideologies. Debating the interpretations of cultural materialists and new historicists, I tend to use the terms "myth" and "ideology" interchangeably, although in Chapter Two and in the continuation of this discussion I explain my preference for "myth" as a word that describes the communal beliefs which order society rather than the narrow views imposed on society by the "orthodox" elites interested solely in perpetuating their own power.

uncertain about the justice supporting the king's French campaign, and Henry's efforts to reassure him lead only to a postponement of their quarrel. The king disguised as common man does not have the power to arbitrate successfully in his own favor; he learns his vulnerability in competing on equal ground with men he can ordinarily command by the power represented in his title and crown.

Yet the cultural materialist's and the new historicist's interpretations of Henry's self-serving interests paint him solely as a powerful manipulator who imposes his own political values on an entire nation. Murray Edelman's observation that "reality" rather than "validity" marks the significance of any political myth (11) provides an alternative perspective on this dramatization of history. In fact, Henry V has not single-handedly constructed the myth of the King's Two Bodies for his own advantage but has accepted its conditions in public accord with his subjects, as part of his inheritance of the throne, as a reality--valid or otherwise--of monarchical order. Greenblatt's insistence on referring to Shakespeare's character as "Hal" rather than "Henry V" in the last play of the tetralogy suggests the critic's unwillingness to acknowledge the pervasive reality of the English myth which distinguishes kingship by title and double-bodied identity. Prince Hal and King Henry are different kinds of players. While Hal's flexiblity allows him to move freely between two worlds and to play singly in either the tavern or the political realm, King Henry, on the other hand, plays doubly in a single world, for he plays with two corporeal selves which are never entirely free from the political realm. Hal's doubleness is based on alternative worlds; Henry's derives from two aspects of himself. Dollimore and Sinfield recognize the contradictions and inconsistencies of Henry V's monarchical ideology more fully than Greenblatt. They contend, however, that Henry asserts the indisputable reality of his self-sustaining myths in order to deliberately "mystify" his own power, rather than allowing for a double

understanding of "mystification" by which Henry's myths potentially and apparently "mystify" or perplex him as much as he "mystifies" or obscures the sources of his own power in order to control others.[13]

Certainly, in his soliloquy after his encounter with Williams, the king continues to wrestle with and question the implications of a power that is generated primarily by political myth or ideology. He indicates that the performative elements of the "idol Ceremony" and the physical symbols of "the balm, the sceptre, and the ball, / The sword, the mace, the crown imperial" (IV.i.200-201) provide somewhat artificial distinctions between private man and king. Unlike Richard II, who indicates in his abdication speech that the royal symbols define his personal identity (Richard II IV.i.), Henry acknowledges that man and king are different and that the two identities of royalty are therefore not easily or naturally fused. He then concludes with a plea heavenward which suggests that the fiction of the immortal body, the king "who never dies" (Kantorowicz 313), perpetuated by succession, is fraught with doubt and instability following the murder of Richard II:

> Not to-day, O Lord,
> O, not to-day, think not upon the fault
> My father made in compassing the crown!
> I Richard's body have interred new,
> And on it have bestowed more contrite tears,
> Than from it issued forced drops of blood. (IV.i.292-297)

Disguise exposes the insecurities of the man behind the mask of ceremony, the king without the crown whose Body Natural offsets the power represented by his Body Politic. The scene pairs justification of the mythical constructs that ensure national order with revelation that such fictions do not bear up well under the scrutiny of either subject or king.

In her discussion of the disguise scene, Anne Barton addresses the personal costs for a king who she feels "has achieved a union of body

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[13] For an argument against the "ultimate inadequacy" (241) of the political interpretations adopted by Greenblatt, Dollimore, and Sinfield, see Jerrold Plotnick's "'Imaginary Puissance': The New Historicism and Henry V," ESC 17 (1991): 249-261.

natural and body politic difficult to flaw" ("King Disguised" 102). She does not, however, question the flaws and fragility of political myths themselves which Shakespeare's characters appear to address and which Phyllis Rackin more convincingly discloses: "Henry and the audience are forced to hear an eloquent challenge to the official version of events and a powerful case against war itself, that is, against the king's entire historical enterprise" (Stages of History 243). In this scene just before the climax of the play, Shakespeare relies on the theatrical fiction of the king's disguise to expose the political fictions contributing to England's historical triumph at Agincourt.[14] The dramatist suggests that to play according to fiction is to play very seriously both when Henry wears the crown and when he wears the cloak of his officer. There are not just personal sacrifices at stake in accepting the two bodies, but political costs if Henry dares to trade the philosophical defenses offered from his concealed identity for open admission of the inconsistencies that ensure his power.

Accordingly, Dollimore, Sinfield, and Greenblatt accurately observe the king's measured attempt to control or contain potentially subversive unrest. Henry postpones the quarrel with Williams rather than imposing order by revealing that he is the king. In doing so, he demonstrates political astuteness by deflecting immediate hostility in an unmasking that would reinstate his power. Yet Greenblatt's insistence on the "falsification" of ideology which sustains Henry's "charismatic authority" (Negotiations 63) is a less convincing view than one that focuses on the "fictionalization" more closely associated with "myths" that are dangerously fragile but, nevertheless, vitally central

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[14] Like Rackin, Hart acknowleges the dramatic and historic conflict implicit in what I have described as the material doubleness of Henry's incognito adventure:

> The problem elements of disguise and debate and the historical aspects of time and interpretation are in constant and creative friction. Perhaps most of all, the collision of official and unofficial history, of private and public selves (and other roles that challenge this opposition) make us aware of how much strain persists in the genre of the history play. (197)

to political reality. Falsification indicates deliberate deception by the empowered; fictionalization represents public concurrence of a community who depends on a "let's believe" attitude to structure its existence.

Interestingly, "Harry le Roy," the name Henry adopts to introduce himself to Pistol at the beginning of the disguise scene, contributes to the fictionalization that doubly characterizes the conditional activity of disguise and the inevitable workings of the political, historical realm. While the morality Vice figures adopt aliases of antithetical personifications to deceive deliberately and to tempt naive individuals away from goodness and truth, Henry relies on the linguistic doubleness of a pseudonym that reflects his true identity. Simultaneously, he adheres to, protects, and denies his royal body. Rackin suggests that the name "bespeaks Henry's double role as theatrical player and history-making king" (Stages of History 243). It also, however, bespeaks the mysterious intentions of his disguised adventure. Playfully, he offers clues that appear to invite discovery of his kingship. Prophetically, he chooses the French title of king, implying the conditional possibility that if he wins the next day's battle, he will become double king over England and France. More immediately, perhaps "Harry le Roy" indicates a conscious or unconscious reluctance on Henry's part to embrace wholly the vulnerability of a common man when he can justifiably claim the protective title of king. Perhaps the pseudonym is simply an acknowledgement that kings can play at single, material anonymity but can never fully escape the double existence of materiality and myth. Ironically, the fictional name distinguishes the factual Body Natural in disguise from the fictional Body Politic in power.

The conclusion to this disguised encounter which comes several scenes later, after the victory at Agincourt has been achieved, continues to cast Henry's motives and expectations into an unclear light. One wonders why he lies to Fluellen in order to hand him the

glove which orchestrates a challenge between him and his fellow soldier, Williams. The conditional "if" of play, however, continues to invite the speculative "perhaps" of possibility. Perhaps Henry wants to save Williams from an oath that would compel the soldier to assault his own king. But clothed again in the garments of his Body Politic, the king is in some measure above the law and free to overlook an oath mistakenly sworn against him. Besides, the king-in-disguise convention traditionally ends with benevolent forgiveness on the part of the ruler. Henry does not have to take such measures to free Williams from the rules of the game. Perhaps Henry's design is simply to spare himself the inevitable assault on his own Body Natural by stepping outside of the game to act in the controlling role of magister ludi. If he is wise enough not to expose the deficiencies of political myths to his subjects, he is certainly clever enough to use the myth of double identity in his own favor. Perhaps, however, Henry is neither so benevolent nor so calculating, and simply recognizes the opportunity to be a spectator of playful diversion in the controlled confrontation of a game between two very serious but unwitting players. Certainly Henry V's interruption of the quarrel--to arbitrate as referee, to uncover the cause and explain the outcome as magister ludi, to offer money as payment from a spectator, as reward from a ruler, as compensation from a manipulator--indicates little more than obvious closure to the disguise-and-revelation motif. Ultimately, it would seem that Shakespeare provides no motive-revealing soliloquy from Henry V because the playwright calls upon the theatre audience to enjoy the doubleness of play rather than imposing singleness on the strategy of a two-bodied player.

Other critics have also acknowledged the ambiguity of the concluding encounter between Henry V and Williams. Examining the juncture of official history and its subversive plebeian interruptions, Rackin says,

> The king presents Williams with a gift of money, thus seeming to pay tribute to the subversive plebeian voice that threatened to discredit his great historical project, but when Fluellen offers Williams a 'silling' (IV.viii.71), Williams refuses to take it. Fluellen reiterates his offer, but their dialogue is interrupted by the arrival of the herald who enters with the document from which Henry reads Holinshed's list of the noblemen who died in the battle. After this, Williams never speaks again.
> (Stages of History 246)

Barton, on the other hand, argues that Shakespeare uses the disguise motif "to question, not to celebrate a folk convention" ("King Disguised" 99), and concludes of the final gift-money gesture that it indicates a tragic rather than typical comic appropriation of the convention:

> Henry is generous to Williams, but it is a dismissive generosity which places the subject firmly in an inferior position and silences his voice. The two men do not sit down at table together to any common feast . . . . ("King Disguised" 101)

Viewing the encounter's silent conclusion as a completed game with unrevealed motives supports the assumption that silencing subversion from an historical standpoint or adapting a convention from a literary standpoint exposes only one side of the king's and the dramatist's double play. When Shakespeare allows the Two Bodies to represent both a political doctrine of kingship and a theatrical convention of disguise, he points to the tragic and the comic potential in history: the tragedy that a man is both more and less than himself in exercising the power of a king, and the comedy that a king can play with the possibilities of a divided self in the games he enjoys with his companions who are only single-bodied men.

II. Non-Shakespearean Histories and the Doubleness of Disguise

A number of non-Shakespearean history plays also include the disguise motif, not only adopting it in their portrayal of kingship but developing it as a more extensive connection between official narrative

accounts of the past and playful attitudes of the stage. Kings, nobles, commoners, rebels, and court fools disguise to deceive others, to protect themselves, or often simply to play with possibilities that are limited by their "true" or "historical" identities. The political issue of the King's Two Bodies is not, as Barton implies, wholly replaced in the non-Shakespearean histories by "disguise as caprice, for reasons that are fundamentally exploratory and quixotic" ("King Disguised" 93). Instead, the issue is broadened, complicated, and therefore sometimes clouded by a double vision which brings together history and play by frequently disguising history as play or play as history. The following discussion of 1 Sir John Oldcastle, When You See Me You Know Me, Edward IV, and Edward I progresses not chronologically, but rather topically, branching outward from single incidents of disguised kingship similar to Henry V's to more elaborate uses of the disguise motif that serve as a kind of theme and variation, shaping the historic plots by incorporating elements of fiction. The shifting political concerns and the changing theatrical organizations from 1590 to 1604, as well as the issue of authorship, invariably influence the different approaches in these plays. Nevertheless, the common disguise motif exposes the complicated question of generic boundaries when the doubleness implicit in character identity and appearance on stage is also evident in the dramatists' perceptions of their "factually-based" topics and invited in their audiences' responses.

1 Sir John Oldcastle, a play of multiple authorship identified with Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway,[15] not only is based on some of the same facts and fictions associated with the historical reigns dramatized in Shakespeare's 1 & 2 Henry IV and Henry V, but emerges out of a theatrical context of doubleness by drawing from and responding to Shakespeare's plays which

[15] For a detailed discussion of the collaboration involved in creating this play, see Jonathan Rittenhouse's introduction to the Renaissance Imagination edition (1984).

immediately preceded it. Written and performed for the Admiral's Men at the Rose Theatre, a rival company to Shakespeare's Chamberlain's Men at the newly erected Globe Theatre, Oldcastle borrows and reflects "situations, characters, and catch-phrases which presumably had become familiar to theatre-goers" (Rittenhouse 29) from Shakespeare's Henriad. According to Rittenhouse, "Oldcastle's King Harry, for example, owes a debt to both the strength exemplified by King Henry in Henry V and the playfulness shown by Prince Hal in 1 Henry IV" (29).

Oldcastle's Prologue also draws attention to other double characterizations implicit in the plot by defending the name of Sir John Oldcastle against the reputation of Shakespeare's Falstaff (originally named Oldcastle):

> It is no pampered glutton we present,
> Nor aged counsellor to youthful sin,
> But one whose virtue shone above the rest,
> A valiant martyr and a virtuous peer. (ll. 6-9)

Oldcastle, by this report, is a purified historical parallel to Shakespeare's nonhistorical tavern man. Barton explains the contemporary Elizabethan context of the Oldcastle/Falstaff debate by pointing out that Sir Henry Brooke gave monetary support to the Sir John Oldcastle production, probably to "dissociate [his] ancestor Sir John Oldcastle, the Lollard martyr, from Shakespeare's Falstaff" ("King Disguised" 107). The coupling of characters is further complicated, however, for as Rittenhouse suggests of the thieving parson in Oldcastle, "Sir John of Wrotham's character slyly recalls the roistering Falstaff of 1 & 2 Henry IV" (29). Hal's companion is thus mirrored again in Oldcastle's more corrupt, less entertaining version of the stage clown. Even some of the antics of Harpool, Oldcastle's serving man, recall the activities of Shakespeare's Falstaff. The Elizabethan audiences undoubtedly would have recognized these characters by their theatrical counterparts in a play in which the king-in-disguise is not the only manifestation of fictional and historical doubleness, of two bodies reflecting, supporting, and contradicting one another.

King Harry plays a relatively insignificant role in this co-authored history which focuses, as the title suggests, primarily on the Lollard martyr Oldcastle, Lord Cobham. Ribner classifies Oldcastle as one of several "biographical history plays" written in the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods (200), including also The Famous History of the Life and Death of Captain Thomas Stukeley, The True Chronicle History of the whole life and death of Thomas Lord Crowmwell, The Booke of Sir Thomas More, and The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt. He says "it is possible to distinguish a group of plays in which the central issue is not so much the life of the state as the life of an individual" (194). Considering that Marlowe's Edward II unites the "life of an individual" king with his involvement in state affairs and that Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV is as much about playful diversion as about English history, an attempt to categorize the histories invariably exposes the unique approach taken in each play. Yet certainly the "biographical histories" focus less on matters of kingship and succession than most of the "king" titled plays and choose instead to explore the political activities of other prominent historical figures.

Ironically, while King Harry plays a minor role and appears in only six of the twenty-seven scenes in 1 Sir John Oldcastle, his most extensive presence on stage is in a disguised encounter with the nonhistorical Sir John of Wrotham, a meeting reminiscent of both "Harry le Roy's" pre-battle conversation with the soldier Williams and Prince Hal's masked prank against Falstaff in the Gadshill robbery. Harry indicates a practical political design in concealing his identity: "Well, I'll to Westminster in this disguise / To hear what news is stirring in these brawls" (x.32-33). His expressed intent suggests the benevolence portrayed in the traditional disguise motif as monarchs "travel among their people incognito in order to study them at close quarters as a means of ruling more wisely" (Barton, "King Disguised" 129). Alternatively, from a new historicist perspective, Harry's

explanation reveals his calculating use of masks as means of advancing his own political power rather than serving his people well. But when Harry meets the parson, neither attitude prevails as he disregards the rebellion and enters into a game of deception in which the two men attempt to out-rob one another.

Broad political motives fall to the sidelines as the one-on-one competitive game ensues. First the parson plays the thief, stealing one hundred angels from Harry and extracting from him a promise of future pardon if needed. One angel cracked in two and shared between them seals the agreement of mutual assistance, and Harry's disguise as the king's serving man provides him the power base with which to validate his half of the promise. The king's chosen fictional identity recalls the close, ambiguously motivated links between Shakespeare's Henry V and his double, "Harry le Roy," but the disguise of Oldcastle's Harry appears less significant to him and his purposes than to Sir John who seizes the opportunity for future pardon and who rationalizes, "I am glad thou art no worse, thou mayst the better spare thy money" (x.66-67). Harry's asides in the scene indicate more interest in the reckless activities associated with Shakespeare's Prince Hal than with the benefits of courtly power maintained by his role as a king's servant:

> Just the proverb: one thief robs another. Where the devil are all my old thieves that were wont to keep this walk? Falstaff the villain is so fat he cannot get on's horse, but methinks Poins and Peto should be stirring hereabouts. (x.51-55)

As the two men part, there is a sense that the shadow of Hal has been outdone by the ghost of Falstaff but that the single-bodied king, seeing the parson as a double of his former self, accepts the monetary loss as a form of personal victory. The doubleness linking the two men gives the impression that the first round of their game is as cooperative as competitive.

In the next scene, Harry is joined by two disguised companions, Suffolk and Huntington, as the playful capers continue into the middle

of the night. Although the king questions his companions to ensure that sentinels are keeping watch over the rebellion, he appears to deny the presence of his Body Politic by refusing to wait for an answer:

> Peace, no more of that,
> The king's asleep. Wake not his majesty
> With terms nor titles, he's at rest in bed.
> Kings do not use to watch themselves, they sleep,
> And let rebellion and conspiracy
> Revel and havoc in the commonwealth. (xi.4-9)

Harry nevertheless does receive assurance that London is safely attended before proposing a game of dice amongst friends, emphasizing again,

> King Harry is asleep,
> And all his lords, these garments tell us so,
> All friends at football, fellows all in field--
> Harry, and Dick, and George. (xi.28-31)

He suggests "passage," a game in which the outcome is determined by double numbers appearing on the dice: "The Caster throws continually till he hath thrown Dubblets under ten, and then he is out and loseth. Or Dubblets above ten, and then he passeth and wins" (OED IV.4--Compleat Gamester definition, cited in Rittenhouse's footnote, xi.39). Appropriately, the disguised king, already playing doubles by pretending to be only half of himself, chooses a game of doubles for nightly diversion, and, unsurprisingly, his double, the thieving parson, appears to join the game. The players pun on the words "cracked French crowns" as they challenge each other to gamble with authentic money and as they allude to pending victory in the French war. In this second scene Harry's money competition, Sir John loses and his final offer, his cracked crown, exposes his previous robbery against the king, who presents his half of the crown as evidence not only convicting the parson but identifying himself with the escapades of his far less than better half.

Ironically, however, Harry wins this gambling game in fair play without requiring or resorting to the powers vested in his concealed Body Politic. He appears to accept the chosen vulnerability of his disguise as a challenge rather than as a threat with potentially

reversible consequences. By postponing Harry's revelation of his identity, the authors may be implying that a king is more powerful than a parson by nature rather than by political myth. Yet they seem more convincingly to suggest that Harry becomes so absorbed in his disguised activity that he overlooks his political advantage and the accompanying responsibilities. By all indications, he forgets the conditional quality of his playing as he and Sir John of Wrotham engage in a heated exchange that leads to the challenge of a duel. Only an outsider, a nearby soldier, interrupts the seriously competitive game to uncover the king's disguise, to end the potentially dangerous combat, and to expose Sir John's traitorous crime. Harry's questions to the soldier, "Butler, what news? Why dost thou trouble us?" (xi.126), signify both the king's restored concern for the duties of his Body Politic and his annoyance that the games of his Body Natural are so abruptly ended. The convicted Sir John appeals to the lawless, playful Harry by challenging the king as a copy of himself: "If the world say true yourself, my liege, have been a thief" (xi.151-152). Using that accusation as a personal defense and accepting the king's command, "Live and repent, and prove an honest man" (xi.159), Sir John gains pardon from the sentence of hanging issued by his former gaming partner who now responds to him according to the duties of political power. The dual and duelling thieves part, one as parson and the other as king, committed to double in honesty as they have previously doubled in crime.

This disguise scene in 1 Sir John Oldcastle has sparked contradictory interpretations from scholars who measure the portrayal of King Harry against the patterns associated with folk conventions and history. Assuming disguise as a form of discovery, Miles indicates that King Harry's disguise is not typical because "he learns to know himself rather than others by seeing his faults mirrored in them" (138). Harry's own remarks and actions indicate that his disguised adventure is not so much instructive as entertaining for someone who has not entirely

given up his playful past for the serious responsibilities of the present. Alternatively, Barton discounts any notion of political mythology underlying the king's double-bodied games:

> That doctrine of the king's two bodies which underlies all of Shakespeare's histories from Richard II to Henry V is nowhere visible in [this] play . . . . The whole idea of kingship in this play is uncomplicated, stripped of sacramental overtones, and essentially gay. (114-115)

Yet Harry's specific reference, twice reiterated, to the king's sleeping body suggests an awareness of political complexity which Harry can escape only by assuming an alternative self in the off-hours when the troubles and duties of kingship temporarily rest.

Larry Champion evaluates the scene from the standpoint of solemn history:

> the king evinces no remorse or embarrassment for his reputation and offers no words of rationalization, either political or spiritual, for his past behavior. At the very least, his choosing to wander at night in his old haunt in Westminster, to banter with John almost as if he were a fellow thief--and a bit later to win his money back in a game of dice--do nothing to enhance his image as a mature, competent ruler. Some spectators might well be led to wonder whether Henry has not simply transformed his thieving and dicing skills to a larger political arena. (45)

The sinister and dangerous implications of Harry's escapades cannot be denied, yet his shared identity with his "fellow thief" ends abruptly in the disguise and revelation scenes. Sir John later appears as corrupt as ever, bemoaning his poverty: "The devil, drink, and the dice has devoured all" (xvii 5-6). King Harry, on the other hand, resolutely exercises his authority in the scene following his incognito adventures. He questions rebels, the Bishop, and Lord Cobham to expose rumored accusations and to condemn the true traitors to martial law. He never plays a more competent political ruler than immediately after his gaming episode.

Any exploration of the dual political and playful roles of Oldcastle's King Harry should bear in mind the impact of multiple authorship on the play's plot and characterization. The king is not only a much less significant and therefore less developed character in

Oldcastle than Shakespeare's title king is in the contemporary Henry V, but--like Oldcastle's other characters--is the subject of inconsistencies undoubtedly resulting from authorial collaboration. Rittenhouse notes, for example, "two significant inconsistencies" in the concluding disguise scene: that Suffolk does not recognize Sir John of Wrotham from his previous appearance in priestly garments in scene ii, and that "King Harry's description of his encounter with Sir John . . . does not correspond with what occurred in scene x" (56). Furthermore, the collaborators in this play were likely guided as much by the economic and commercial realities of the theatre business as by goals of dramatic continuity. As MacIntyre observes of playwrighting after 1598: "The Admiral's Men's discovery that they could not rest on old laurels may explain the explosion of new scripts at the end of the decade, scripts put together by teams of poets with a speed hardly matched before television" (101). Discussing the king's disguise as it appears in Sir John Oldcastle--one of the speedy productions by the Admiral's Men--calls for recognition that the disguise convention, the political mythology of Two Bodies, and the serious treatment of the king's role in history are all conditioned by the distinctive features of this collaborative play. And yet, while Oldcastle lacks the philosophical coherence and the profound political scrutiny evident in Henry V and sets out to correct rather than copy the shaping of history in Henry IV, Oldcastle's king-in-disguise motif nevertheless parallels in simpler form the doublenesss of politics and play manifested in Shakespeare's material and verbal explorations of the King's Two Bodies. As a true king who plays with the temporary possibilities of denying and shifting his identity but who also assumes the political responsibilities of the state, King Harry is a double king no less than Shakespeare's Henry V.

The king-in-disguise motif in Samuel Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me (1604) recalls the use of the convention by both Shakespeare and the Oldcastle authors. Performed by the newly organized Prince Henry's

Men when James I became king, Rowley's play is organized predominantly around the religious opposition between Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey, but also focuses considerable attention on young Prince Edward and Henry's court fool as defenders of the Protestant faith.[16] The play is polemical, with a religious and political bias similar to that in Sir John Oldcastle.[17] Rowley, however, does not simply present a one-sided political issue, but, like the Oldcastle authors, allows the playful opportunities of disguise to expand the staging of history into something more than the performance of a polemical tract.

Rowley, too, disguises his king, Henry VIII, for one episode in the middle of the night. Henry initially expresses a political purpose similar to the intentions of Oldcastle's King Harry:

> This night we meane in some disguised shape,
> To visit London, and to walke the round,
> Passe through their watches, and observe the care
> And speciall diligence to keepe our peace.
> They say night-walkers, hourely passe the streets,
> Committing theft, and hated sacriliege:
> And slightly passe vnstaied, or vnpunished,
> Goe Compton, goe, and get me some disguise,
> This night weele see our Cities gouernment:
> Brandon, doe you attend at Baynards-Castle,
> Compton shall goe disguisde along with me. (930-940)

Unlike King Harry in Oldcastle, however, King Henry VIII actually carries his plan into action rather than being distracted by a gaming diversion along the way. But he adds an "if" clause to his purpose as protection against danger to himself, as an implicit acknowledgement at the outset that a king-in-disguise gives up the inherent safeguards of his Body Politic:

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[16] MacIntyre suggests that Rowley's play "may have emphasized the upbringing of an earlier prince because Prince Henry had been named for Henry VIII and was expected to succeed as Henry IX" (239), and that "[p]erhaps the prominence of young Edward, the scenes with Will Summers and Wolsey's fool Patch, and those in which the King goes disguised . . . were contrived to appeal to the ten-year-old prince, should his servants be called to play before him" (239-40).

[17] MacIntyre's observation that Oldcastle was "revived with additions in the fall of 1602" (246) suggests that there were close contemporary ties between these two plays as well as similar political leanings.

> Our swordes and bucklers shall conduct vs safe,
> But if we catch a knock to quit our paine,
> Weele put it vp, and hye vs home againe. (941-943)

More so than Oldcastle's Harry or Shakespeare's Henry V, Rowley's Henry VIII adopts an overt conditional game plan, giving credence to the new historicist view that the preservation of power motivates a king's every action. Henry VIII's subjunctive alternative recalls Falstaff's more deliberate scrutiny of "honor" as a "mere scutcheon" (1 Henry IV V.i.140), a ceremonial virtue, an emblem of death. The honor of battling bravely and fairly against the odds, as Henry VIII seemingly indicates, is no realistic and desirable alternative for a man who has the protective title of "King" as his ultimate talisman.

However, when Henry visits London incognito, he not only acts as king, uncovering the corrupt behavior and verifying the rumors which initially motivated his journey, but he also proves himself capable of undignified, unkingly, self-indulgent playful conduct. First, he acts responsibly as he encounters the corruption of the city guards who not only let him pass with ease into the city without challenging his identity or purpose, but who expose their willingness to ignore criminals trafficking in the night. From the standpoint of duty-bound king, Henry privately questions the discrepancy between their negligence and his own goal to rule justly:

> what bootes it for a King,
> To toyle himselfe in this high state affaires,
> To summon Parliaments, and call together
> The wisest heads of all his Prouinces:
> Making statutes for his subiects peace,
> That thus neglecting them, their woes increase. (1055-1060)

His disguise empowers him with knowledge otherwise shielded from him in his remote political role, and the conventional application of the folk motif seems relatively intact. As the scene continues, however, Henry antagonizes a robber, Black Will, and initiates a brawl that leads to his own arrest. The confrontation between the two appears less as the king's intentional pretense to expose further corruption than as a spontaneous response from a provoked man who has completely forgotten

his kingly obligations and the initial strategy of the protective "if" clause. Like Oldcastle's duelling King Harry, Rowley's king becomes so engaged in the competition itself that serious play rather than equally serious politics momentarily drives forward the action of his disguised adventure.

In prison, Henry's double expectations continue as he regains kingly interest in uncovering extensive crimes and deception, but also manifests apparent pleasure in his new, unfamiliar surroundings. As he says in soliloquy,

> Well M. Constable, you haue made the Counter
> This night, the royall Court of Englands King:
> And by my crowne I sweare, I would not for
> A thousand pound t'ware otherwise. (1251-12554)

His satisfaction stems both from his political discoveries and from his continued verbal contest with Black Will. The criminal challenges, "Thou cutst my head indeed, but twas no play, thou layest open enough, I could haue entred at my pleasure" (1312-1313). Henry later responds, "I came neerer you, though yee mislikte my play" (1359). Clearly, their interpretations of play differ, and as clearly, Henry's own intentions throughout the episode are not merely single. Like Butler's intervention in the revelation scene of Sir John Oldcastle, Henry's companions, Brandon and Compton, finally invoke the King's protective "if" clause and expose his disguise before he does. He then assumes his kingly role to rectify the corruption by sending a hardened criminal to Newgate and by releasing an innocent man wrongly imprisoned. He complains to his companions, however, "[B]eshrew ye Brandon for discouering vs, we shall not spend our time so well this moneth" (1333-1334) and later adds, "And once a quarter we desire such sport" (1446). Anne Barton suggests,

> There is no ironic examination of the disguiser's character of motives, probably because the historical existence of the central figure, as well as his royalty and proximity to Rowley's own time, must have meant that fictional explorations had to be severely limited. ("King Disguised" 141)

Yet very little distinguishes Rowley's attitude to the disguised Henry VIII in 1604 from the Oldcastle authors' approach to the disguised Henry V in 1599-1600. In both plays, the initial intentions and ultimate execution of political responsibilities frame the kings' playful adventures, but the two rulers evince a pleasure in their play that threatens to override its conditional boundaries. In both plays, holidays and duties inform the midnight activities of the King's Two Bodies.

Thomas Heywood's Edward IV (1599), a two-part play contemporary with Sir John Oldcastle and Henry V, is most extensive in its use of the disguise motif. In Miles' opinion, "This play shows how valuable and versatile the idea is, and also how it may be worked to exhaustion" ("King Disguised" 138). Unlike the incognito rulers in the other history plays, Edward IV spends more time in disguise than in kingly attire during the first part of Heywood's drama. His masked identity is not confined to a single excursion in the liminal spaces of midnight play where the conditional limits on a king's single-bodied pretenses are imposed by the inevitable return of the day. Edward's two adventures, one to visit Hobs the Tanner and discover the subjects' attitudes towards their king, and the other to seduce Jane Shore and compel her to accompany him to court, reflect public and personal aspirations of a man who deliberately mixes politics and play, and who alternates between kingship and disguise according to his own whim and for the sake of his own satisfaction. Neither excursion is historically based, yet both derive from "Edward's historical reputation as a gamesome king" (Miles 138). They reflect Heywood's typical "bourgeois" style and interests as he portrays the humanity rather than the divinity of the king.[18] These legendary adventures which cast Edward's kingship into an ambivalent, if not an unsavoury, light challenge Ribner's

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[18] See, for example, Mowbray Velte's The Bourgeios Element in the Drama of Thomas Heywood (1966) for a discussion of Heywood's particular style and public concerns.

conclusions based on the play's brief dramatization of the historical confrontation between England and France: "the far from laudatory account of Edward in the chronicles is greatly changed throughout, so that Heywood need not present an unfavourable portrait of an English king" (275). Consciously or otherwise, Heywood does not provide a simple, single portrait of an admirable English monarch, and the playwright's use of disguise in various nonhistorical scenes complicates the overall picture.

Visiting Hobs the Tanner incognito, Edward encounters a surprising doubleness in public perceptions about kingship. Asked "what say they of the King," Hobs replies, "Of the Kings, thou meanest" (45).[19] With Henry VI still alive and imprisoned and a rebellion in progress to recrown him, the concept of the King's Two Bodies takes on a whole new meaning, as it does in Richard II when Bolingbroke accepts the crown at Richard's abdication. Hobs voices the distrust of the common people contending with divided, conflicting loyalties. In his own opinion, "There's such halting betwixt two kings, that a man cannot go upright, but he shall offend t'one of them. I would God had them both, for me" (41). He tells King Edward that people love him

> as poor folks love holidays, glad to have them now and then; but to have them come too often will undo them. So, to see the King now and then 'tis comfort; but every day would beggar us; and I may say to thee, we fear we shall be troubled to lend him money; for we doubt he's but needy. (45)

[19] Because the text of Edward IV cited in this chapter includes no line numbers, quotations will be identified by page number.

A needy "holiday-king" rather than an awe-inspiring "duty-king" is not a particularly flattering or patriotic estimation.[30] Surprisingly, however, Edward acts only to confirm that opinion. Rather than taking his knowledge of public perceptions back to the court to improve his own government, he plans a disguised excursion to Hobs' home simply for sport, saying, "Good cousin Howard, grudge not at the jest. . . . I must have my humour" (48).

The relationship between common man and disguised king in Heywood's play is similar to the one between Oldcastle's parson and King Harry. Edward adopts the common derivative of his own name, Ned, and passes himself off as one of the king's serving men who, because of his court position, claims influence over the king's decisions. Just as Sir John of Wrotham invokes pardon from the disguised King Harry, Hobs sees Ned's declared power as a means of kingly pardon for his own imprisoned son. Yet when the tanner visits the court to achieve this purpose, Edward initially appears more interested in continuing the game of mistaken identities at Hobs' expense than in assuming the duties of his Body Politic. King Edward takes great pleasure in his [illegible] power and in Hobs' false assumption that the mayor must be the king because when performers "play an enterlout or a commodity at Tamworth, the King always is in a long beard and a red gown, like him" (89). Ironically, while dramatic performance determines the tanner's impression of royalty, Edward's own preoccupation with disguises validates the view that the fictional element of identity achieved by appearances is an

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[30] Hobs' remark recalls both Prince Hal's speculation about "playing holidays" (1 Henry IV I.ii.204) and Henry IV's attitude about his own infrequent public appearances: "By being seldom seen, I could not stir, / But like a comet I was wond'red at" (III.ii.47-48). From a subject's perspective, Hobs' equation of royalty with holidays reflects not Henry IV's vision of celebration and splendor, but Hal's conclusion that "to sport would be as tedious as to work." From one who remains unquestioningly loyal to the crown, Hobs' opinion implies a public cynicism or indifference about kingship that adds to the sense of royal anonymity generated by Heywood's inclusion of two kings in Part One of Edward IV, one without any bodily presence on stage, the other disguising and frequently absent from the throne.

unreliable, albeit primary, source of political distinction and authority.

From Hobs' initial appearance on stage when he mistakes the queen for Mistress Ferris (III.i), to his final confusion at court where typically an outsider rather than the king himself eventually reveals Edward's real identity, Heywood appears to question the mythical assumptions about royalty that distinguish king from commoner. Nevertheless, the playwright ends the misunderstanding in the tradition of the folk motif with Hobs' horror at Edward's disclosure, with the king's benevolent forgiveness, and with a gift for the tanner from the king--a proposed match between Hobs and a widow conveniently present at court. As Barton indicates, "Again, the meeting between subject and king in disguise has generated harmony, good fellowship, and mutual understanding" ("King Disguised" 96). However, Hobs' open irreverence for royalty, his indifference about which of the two living kings deserves his loyalty, his comic though telling assumption that kings can be known by their likeness to professional pretenders--actors on stage--, and Edward's own manipulative behavior for the sake of sport suggest undercurrents that unsettle the closing, superficial harmony. Hobs does not respond in mysterious silence to the marriage offer as Williams does to the glove of coins from Shakespeare's Henry V. Yet the merriment of the court scene can certainly generate a similar impression that Heywood's closure is too simple for his complicated portrayal of mixed loyalties, questionable royal integrity, and double motives that define the relationship between subject and king.

If Edward's behavior to Hobs inspires an ambivalent response, the king's disguised encounter with Jane Shore paints a more clearly negative picture of political power abused in the guise of playful diversion. Ironically, the feast of celebration which usually concludes the folk motif of the king's disguise initiates Heywood's account of Jane Shore's seduction. In a similar inversion, the harmonious outcome

of the convention is eventually reversed. Enamored of Jane Shore at a court gathering, Edward visits her at her husband's shop in a disguise which, as he proudly boasts, protects him from public notice:

> Well fare a case to put a king in yet.
> . . .
> This shape is secret; and I hope 'tis sure.
> The watermen that daily use the C
> And see me often, knew me not in [illegible] 5)

Unlike the more typically playfully disguise[illegible] in the other histories or even Edward in his own encounters with the tanner, here the king has no allies in his adventure and no protective noblemen to expose his true royal identity before play becomes dangerously serious and potentially harmful to subject or king. Moreover, the king perceives this activity not so much as mere pastime, sport, or humor like his entertainment with Hobs, but as a genuinely competitive game launched by his persistent double entendre as he bargains with Jane to buy her "fairest jewel" (66).

Goal[illegible]nted rather than rule-oriented, Edward has no intention of playi[illegible] He relies on the false humility of disguise to guarantee [illegible]e meeting wi[illegible] Jane but then exposes his own royal identity in order to wield his p[illegible]tical power over her. She cannot understand this repeated act of doubleness which simultaneously denies and affirms his Body Politic:

> Oh, what am I, he should so much forget
> His royal state and his high majesty?
> Still dot he come disguised to my house,
> And in most humble terms bewrays his love. (75)

Edward himself tries to suggest that the disguise is less a sign of secrecy than sincerity:

> The most thou see'st is hurt unto myself:
> How for thy sake is majesty disrob'd!
> Riches made poor and dignity brought low,
> Only that thou might'st our a[illegible]ion know! (77)

Yet he is poor and low in fictional appea[illegible] only, and ultimately he wins his game by casting aside that semblance of humility. He does so first by assuming greater powers than even a Body Politic allows him to

claim as he challenges Jane's appeal to the Host of Heaven: "It lies within the compass of my power, / To dim their envious eyes, dare seem to lour" (78). Finally, he resorts to the power vested in his kingly self:

> Thou must, sweet Jane, repair unto the Court,
> His tongue entreats, controls the greatest peer:
> His hand plights love, a royal sceptre holds;
> And in his heart he hath confirm'd thy good,
> Which may not, must not, shall not be withstood. (78)

Edward uses political power for private gain; he turns disguise from a playful to a sinister design; he abuses the doubleness of appearances for a single, self-serving end.

Heywood's account of Edward IV's immoral playing recalls the scene between the king and the Countess of Salisbury in Edward III and anticipates a similar encounter between Henry VII and Perk n's wife, Katherine, in Ford's later Perkin Warbeck. Katherine and the Countess might appear as more aggressive competitors than Heywood's Jane Shore, who submits to her monarch's commands, but they also have the benefit of confronting less deceptive, less persistent kings. While appearing in single royal apparel rather than in the doubleness of disguise, Henry VII and Edward III ironically face double, conflicting agendas of private passion and political responsibility. Their encounters with the two women are consequently small parts in a much larger performance. Katherine's declaration of faithfulness to Perkin at the cost of her own life simply becomes a silenced issue when the pretender's hanging resolves the more prominent political concerns for Henry VII at the conclusion of Ford's play. Similarly, although the Countess, in one sense, outwits Edward III by threatening to end the contest with her own death, Edward III's willing compliance as he leaves her and returns to

the war against France again silences the question of the king's private immorality and the consequences for a relatively powerless woman.[21]

In Heywood's Edward IV, Jane Shore's story is central rather than secondary, and Edward's determined pursuit sets political matters in the background despite censure from individuals such as Emersley:

> I wonder, in this serious busy time
> Of this great gathered Benevolence
> For his regaining of his right in France,
> The day and nightly turmoil of his lords,
> Yea, of the whole estate in general,
> He can be spared from these great affairs,
> And wander here disguised in this sort. (80)

Jane's later defense, "before I yielded [up my fort], / I did endure the long'st and greatest siege / That ever batter'd on poor chastity" (86), is consistent with the portrayal of Edward's tactics, and in the immediate outcome of the confrontation, she appears as a victim of the king's wilful irresponsibility. Esther Yael Beith-Halahmi offers similar conclusions, saying that

> the monarch shows himself as far more guilty than the woman he corrupts, for instead of being the benevolent guide of his unsophisticated subject as his exalted role requires, he plays the devil's advocate, using his wit and his power to entice the honest wife from the path of virtue into that of sin. (293)[22]

Edward's disguised adventures, alternating between Hobs and Jane Shore, dominate the first part of Heywood's history with fictional playing that minimizes the public issues of kingship while at the same time

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[21] Cf. Phyllis Rackin, "Patriarchal History and Female Subversion in King John" in King John, ed. Deborah Curren-Aquino: 76-98. Rackin notes that in spite of the patriarchal nature of history, "the women in King John play crucial roles in determining the course of events" (79). Interestingly, however, even in that play and The Troublesome Reign, the women are silenced as they disappear midway through the plot. Whether in fictional diversions or in improvisations on historical sources, women rarely appear as equal contenders in the games of the history plays.

[22] By contrast, Velte places the blame on Shore herself: "she is temporarily dazzled, and for the time forgetting her real love for Shore, succumbs to the desire for station and riches" (30). In light of Edward's triple imperatives demanding Jane's acquiescence and her own response of silence obedience, Velte's conclusions are not wholly convincing.

addressing royal power and the king's questionable or culpable behavior.[23] Thus Edward IV presents king's play not as a free activity beyond historical reality, but as a complicated double venture which is neither a consistently playful nor mutually acceptable form of cooperation or competition among him and the other players. Edward plays unscrupulously and enjoys his unfair advantage.

Heywood, on the other hand, plays a dramatic game that is less concerned with the double-bodied nature of kingship than with the double bond defining the relationship between subject and king. Thus, while the king's disguising has the subversive potential to unsettle society from the top of the hierarchy downward, it fails to threaten seriously the fabric of the political order because Heywood repeatedly suggests that order lies in the solid moral fabric of the common people rather than in the leadership of their ruler. The importance of the London mayor and citizens in the Falconbridge rebellion, the integrity of the tanner in political and private matters, and the prominence of Jane Shore's tale confirm the assumption that Heywood focuses on a different aspect of public life than many of the contemporary historical playwrights. Unlike Shakespeare in Henry V, for example, Heywood integrates fiction into his historical drama not primarily by examining the myths that sustain centers of political power but by overshadowing official chronicle versions of history and bypassing the central myths of kingship almost entirely to dominate his plots with imaginary incidents and marginal individuals. This form of fictionalization contributes to his expression of English loyalty, the marginal as opposed to the central focus of the relationship between subject and king. Nevertheless, Heywood's depiction of unconditional public allegiance in conjunction with his represent tion of less than ideal

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[23] Beith-Halahmi notices and discusses symmetrical patterns in the "comic Tanner episode" and "the more serious one of Jane and Matthew Shore" which structure the first part of the play (292-293).

kingship surely raises questions about the political vision generated by his interest in citizens' morality.

In the second part of Edward IV, the dramatist continues to address the double bond of loyalty and leadership as almost separate, independent entities by expanding the folk tradition of incognito kings to include subjects disguising themselves in response to the actions of their monarchs. Although Edward's incognito adventures are virtually over, he enjoys one last vicarious disguise in the French setting of the first act by sending his two men, Howard and Sellinger, undercover to test the honesty of Burgundy and the Constable of France while he listens on the sidelines. His response to this successful strategy, "Oh, it was sport alone to note their carriage" (117), reinforces the perception from Part I of Edward IV that the English king has difficulty distinguishing the playful and political limitations and obligations of his power. Ironically, in this historically-based international confrontation, Edward appears to be more playful yet less directly involved than he has been in many of his earlier private adventures. To seduce a married woman requires the serious commands of a king whose disguised identity limits his power; to uncover a political plot against England inspires in King Edward the laughter of an entertained bystander whose disguising strategy serves him well. Invariably, Edward always wins, but contradictory motives for his manipulations undermine reasons for confidence in his leadership.

His vicarious disguising marks his move from dominant player to sidelines spectator and eventually to displaced king as history moves forward into Richard III's reign and as subjects take over the disguising role completely in a continued dramatization of citizens' parallel responsibilities, private morality and public duty. The man Edward earlier chose to double by displacement, Jane Shore's husband, adopts a disguise and a new name, Matthew Flood, as a means of safe observation--a purpose contrasting with that of Edward's covert,

playful, subversive pretenses. "Flood" suggests natural but uncontrollable destruction for one whose original name signifies comfort, security, and protection. When Shore changes his name at the time of Jane's seduction, he indicates that he has experienced something as irreversible as a natural disaster, for he vows complete loyalty to King Edward instead of challenging the loss of his own wife: "Oh, what have subjects that is not their kings? / I'll not examine his prerogative" (87). Through Shore's initial attitude, "Flood's" later commentary in asides on Jane's faithlessness to him and her ironic willingness to serve others, and Jane's own suffering of conscience, Heywood stresses virtue and patriotic obedience by seemingly ignoring his earlier portrayal of the king's culpability in the Shores' separation.

The playwright's inconsistency typifies the Elizabethans' ambiguous views of Jane Shore, ranging from expressed condemnation of her faithless immorality to sympathetic renditions of her inexcusable mistreatment.[24] Heywood is more generous to Jane Shore than some of his contemporaries, but his reliance on disguises contributes to a double perspective. On the one hand, "Flood's" asides indict Jane Shore. On the other hand, after Richard III banishes her from court and threatens death to those who help her, two common men use an innocent game of bowls to disguise their attempt to serve and save the woman they see as a victim of injustice. The different possibilities enacted in disguising which allows Matthew's passive presence during Edward's reign and the other men's active disobedience during Richard's more tyrannical reign likely reflect Heywood's judgment of the second king's far more serious abuse of power. However, the subjects' purposeful deception also represents uncertainty about the opposing responses of civic

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[24] Esther Yael Beith-Halahmi's two volume study, Angell Fayre or Strumpet Lewd: Jane Shore as an Example of Erring Beauty in 16th Century Literature, explores the accounts of Shore's tale in ballad, play, and poetry to show the varied influences and interpretations that were all part of an Elizabethan preoccupation with Edward IV's mistress.

responsibilities and legitimate political protests. Heywood resolves this uncertainty by emphasizing the virtues of private longsuffering and public obedience in a reconciliation scene between the Shores. As Matthew unmasks before his wife, he expressly blames his monarchs for his misfortune, yet he does so not as a challenge against injustice but only as a parting observation immediately preceding the Shores' simultaneous deaths by the coffin of their innocent, executed friend:

> A king had all my joy, that her enjoy'd,
> And by a king again she was destroy'd.
> All ages of my kingly woes shall tell.
> Once more, inconstant world! farewell, farewell! (189)

As in the dramatization of Hobs' encounter with King Edward, Heywood again provides simple closure which suggests that any inconsistencies in the presentation of the double bond between subject and king are not primary concerns of the playwright himself.

Disguising ends with this sentimental conclusion to Jane Shore's story, but Heywood maintains his uneasy blend of history and fiction in his return to the world of kings and courts for the play's final scene. Richard III adopts the asides characteristic of the disguised Matthew Shore to expose his own deception as a vice so ingrained in his cruel personality that it permeates his whole kingship without the need for physical disguise. In lines that echo Shakespeare's much more complex villain-king, Heywood's Richard III says, "Thus must thou, Richard, / Seem as a saint to men in outward show, / Being a very devil in thy heart" (190).[25] At this unsettled conclusion to Edward IV, Heywood simply moves from one form of fictionalized history, based on conflicting Elizabethan versions and elaborations of Jane Shore's life, to a similar form of history as myth, existing in the more consistent official Tudor versions of Richard III's cruel tyranny. As Sandra Billington suggests, "under the cloak of moral tragedy, state tyranny is

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[25] Cf. And thus I clothe my naked villainy
With odd old ends stol'n forth of holy writ,
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil.
(Richard III I.iii.335-337)

placed under scrutiny. The misrule lord of Part I, Edward IV, is replaced in Part 2 by the greater mockery of Richard III" (Mock Kings 230-231). Beginning with a gamesome king and ending with an oppressive, vindictive king, while shifting dramatic focus back and forth between common citizens and English monarchs, Heywood simplifies his own two visions of public life by continually separating the absolute loyalty of subjects to their kings from the kings' occasionally playful but more often absolute mistreatment of their subjects.

Beith-Halahmi explains this unresolved dramatic conflict by maintaining that "Heywood is not interested in the problems posed by Machiavellism or usurpation nor in any of the abstract questions of politics" and that, while these problems are expressed, "the only answer to these complicated matters . . . is that of legalism--the duty of upholding the status quo" (311). Her remark is consistent with views Heywood presents in his own tract, Apology for Actors (1612), in which he advances historical drama as an instructive medium designed

> to teach the subjects obedience to their King, to show the people the vntimely ends of such as haue moued tumults, commotions, and insurrections, to present them with the flourishing estate of such as liue in obedience, exhorting them to allegeance, dehorting them from all trayterous and fellonious stratagems. (Bk. III Sig F3)[26]

In Edward IV, this intended moral effect comes as Heywood silences political questions with one-sided answers. Nonetheless, a doubleness pervades the play, emerging out of the traditional disguise motif which Heywood adopts, inverts, and expands to develop his own plot. In the episodic dramatization of overlapping and alternating history and fiction, the depiction of playful kings frequently includes a sinister

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[26] Ironically, while Heywood draws on heroic examples of Edward III and Henry V to support the patriotic influence of the history play genre (Apology Bk. I Sig. B4), he earlier writes this history play about the more controversial monarch, Edward IV. However, even in the Apology Heywood seems to suggest that the "English Prince" should be the one inspired by kingly examples of heroism on stage, while the subjects should be moved instead by "seeing the person of any bold English man presented" (Bk. I Sig. B4). Furthermore, the years between the play and the tract may also account for Heywood's different approaches to the instructive role of history.

side, and the emphasis on law-abiding English subjects ignores the reciprocity of political relationships. Like Shakespeare, Heywood plays with the possibilities of disguise within an historical framework, but the two dramatists adopt entirely different perspectives. Heywood's Edward IV invites its audience to envision in the cross-currents of fact and fiction a divided bond between subject and king. By contrast, when Shakespeare writes his contemporary Henry V, he appears to call for greater political consciousness on the part of his audience as he integrates rather than segregates two visions by revealing the mythical elements of politics and history, and raising questions he does not necessarily intend to answer.[27]

A much earlier history play, George Peele's Edward I,[28] shares with Heywood's Edward IV an emphasis on ballads and legends, many of which Peele incorporates into a poorly constructed plot that "[employs] very little of the historical information at hand" (Hook 15-16). Identifying Edward I with the world of folk kings by depicting him as a robust rather than regal character, Peele playfully manipulates history with less intentional didacticism than is frequently evident in Heywood's approach. Yet even with a predominantly hearty attitude towards the past and its characters, Peele reflects two often

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[27] The differences between these two history plays recall Joel Altman's study of the homiletic and non-didactic rhetorical influences on Tudor drama (The Tudor Play of Mind, 1978). Altman suggests that while some Renaissance plays may be modelled as didactic statements, many are dramatic questions that argue both sides of an issue (6-7). His study does not address the English history plays, however, which in their diversity allow for similar rhetorical, linguistic scrutiny. Heywood may be striving for a didactic statement in Edward IV, but his resolution is certainly an uneasy one. Likewise, the numerous conflicting ironic, patriotic, and cynical readings of Henry V suggest an ongoing debate about the status of Shakespeare's history play as statement or question. The subjunctive nature of play and the "as-if" conditions of the theatre shaping the portrayals of history on stage invite one to consider the impact of rhetorical mood as well as sentence structure in a language-oriented analysis of Renaissance plays.

[28] In his introduction to Edward I, Frank Hook studies potential contemporary allusions within the play to date it "between mid-1590 and 1593," the year of its first quarto publication (5).

contradictory sides of play as he uses the conventional disguise motif to dramatize intrigue and interaction between the English king and the Welsh rebels.

The sinister side of play revolves around the uprising of Lluellen, Prince of Wales, who sends his brother David as an informer in disguise to the English court. Early in the play, when King Edward captures Lluellen's love, Elinor, the two Welsh brothers use the disguise to orchestrate a feigned confrontation as Lluellen takes David hostage and threatens to kill him until Edward agrees to return Elinor. Although Peele plays up the romantic concerns in this conflict, he also includes the more serious negotiations that lead to a political truce. Before retreating to the wilderness of their own land, the rebels receive pardon for their treasonous threats and are granted a promise that England's next ruler will come from Wales. The Welsh outlaws' first use of disguise as an effective political strategy establishes their credibility as skillful players in a zero-sum game between what might otherwise seem to be two unequal contenders, a small band of unlawful rebels and the powerful army of a legitimate king.

Following this initial confrontation, Peele introduces the ambiguous figure of Robin Hood, a character both historically and fictionally based, to suggest that a sinister and playful doubleness distinguishes the outlaws and their disguises. In the Welsh wilderness, Lluellen decides to adopt the role of Robin Hood and assigns the roles of Maid Marion to Elinor, Friar Tuck to Friar David, and Little John to Meredith. The Welsh prince appears to instigate this disguising game as an alternative to the political game King Edward has refused to continue playing with them:

> weele get the next daie from Brecknocke the booke of Robin Hood, the Frier he shal instruct us in his cause and weele even here fair and well, since the king hath put us amongst

> the discarding cardes, and as it were turned us with deuces and traies out of the decke . . . . (vii.1176-1181)[29]

By creating a company of double-identitied outcasts, Lluellen invokes the "pastoral" or "Greenwood" harmony and contentment of an isolated forest community:[30]

> There rests nothing now cosin but that I sell my chaine to set us all in greene and weele al play the Pioners to make us a cave and Cabban for al weathers. (vii.1202-1204)

This role-playing recalls the holiday atmosphere of "Robin Hood" impersonations in the rural celebrations of May Day. Robert Weimann notes about this festive Robin Hood tradition,

> Here his name was often synonymous with the May King ("somer kyng"), who apppeared also as mock king or summer Lord of Misrule. In many places the days of maying became simply 'Robin Hoodes Daye.' (27)

The license of mock kings on May Day is not unlike the temporary license of actors impersonating kings on stage: the liminality of both holiday time and entertainment space encompasses conditional activities of play.[31] Peele invokes the spirit of community celebrations in his history play by portraying the Welsh company singing songs together

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[29] Frank Hook speculates, "The 'booke of Robin Hood' which Lluellen buys in Brecknocke (1.1176), if we admit an anachronism, may have been A mery geste of Robyn Hoode and of hys lyfe, wyth a newe playe for to be played in Maye games very plesaunte and full of pastyme (ca. 1561), which shares a number of motifs with Edward I" (18). The proliferation of ballads and folk traditions centered on Robin Hood began as early as the fifteenth century and occurred not only in England but on the continent.

[30] In his introduction to Edward I, Hook uses the term "Greenwood" to refer to the rustic, secluded Welsh wilderness inhabited by Peele's "Robin Hood." William Simeone alternatively describes it as a "pastoral world," noting that "[i]n the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when definitions of such words as pastoral and historical were less restrictive than they are now, Robin Hood existed in both a historical and a pastoral tradition" (185). "Greenwood" is perhaps most effective in defining the territory of Peele's Robin Hood, a character whose double identity distorts any distinctions between "pastoral" and "historical" sources.

[31] In her discussion of actual and fictional mock kings, Billington makes a passing remark about the appearance of Robin Hood in Edward I, suggesting that "[s]ummer king, fool king, outlaw king, and misrule lord combine in a play more full of motifs than ideas" (Mock Kings 120).

while Lluellen speaks highly of the characters they have chosen to imitate:

> How well they coucht in forrest green,
> Frolike and livelie withouten teene:
> And spent their daie in game and glee,
> Lluellen doe seeke if ought please thee,
> Nor though thy foot be out of towne,
> Let thine looke blacke on Edwards Crowne.
> Nor thinke this greene is not so gaie,
> As was the golden rich array. (viii.1252-1259)

By playful association with folk celebrations beyond the stage, Robin Hood's appearance in Edward I encourages the audience to enjoy the holiday setting of the green world rather than denounce some of the Welsh rebels' forest activities, including the Friar's attempt to seduce Elinor and his clever outwitting of an innocent farmer in a gambling game.

Yet just as Robin Hood is both folk hero and political rebel, Lluellen's company is not simply a group of holiday players but an historically-based band of outlaws resisting the authority of an English king. As William Simeone observes,

> The transformation of Lluellen and his friends into Robin Hood and his followers is never complete. In spite of their adopted names, they remain much what they were, with Lluellen's principal concern being a kind of guerilla warfare against Edward Longshanks. (190)

Lluellen gestures towards an "as-if" alternative world of play but chooses a fictional identity that doubly characterizes his rebellious spirit rather than granting him the pure liminality of his own separate, independent kingdom.[32] He may describe his company as the king's discarded cards, but he continues to play a subversive political game. As lord of misrule, in play and in fact, he insists on bearing both titles at once, "Lluellen Prince of Wales and Robin Hood of the great mountaine" (xi.1843-1844), to assert with two identities an authority

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[32] Billington cites historical examples of outlaws adopting the Robin Hood legend as part of their uprising. She notes one example "in 1467 when Robin Hood titles were used by leaders in the Yorkshire rebellion" (Mock Kings 18). There are both holiday and historical precedents for Peele's double-identitied rebel.

that challenges Edward's jurisdiction as legitimate king. Lluellen's character reinforcement by double naming recalls Henry V's "Harry le Roy" or Edward IV's "Ned" as aliases that preserve connections with the individuals' true selves. Ironically, Lluellen assumes a double body by embracing two names, in contrast to these history play kings who pretend to have single bodies when their reality is defined by two. The inversion makes the outlaw a mock king not only according to the fiction of his adopted role but as a result of his insistence on playing two rebels at once. The dramatic convention of disguise presents the rebels in Peele's play, like disguised kings in other history plays, as characters who cannot or choose not to deny their identities completely in fictional pretenses that simultaneously provide some freedom of play while nevertheless maintaining the underlying seriousness of political agendas.[33]

The second confrontation between the king and the Prince of Wales takes place in Lluellen's "Greenwood" territory and leads again to a truce through a series of complicated reversals in the disguise-and-revelation motif. Edward, alias Longshankes, reveals his identity as king just before overcoming Lluellen in hand-to-hand combat. At the same time, however, Edward's companion, David, discloses his Welsh

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[33] The Robin Hood tradition in Edward I also finds its way from ballads and community celebrations into several other Elizabethan plays in the 1590s. The list includes Robert Greene's George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield, the anonymous Look About You, and Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle's The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington and The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington. In "Renaissance Robin Hood Plays," Simeone discusses the extent to which the dramatists of these plays rely on "historical" or "pastoral" versions of Robin Hood as a folk hero. All of these plays have at least cursory connections with history and English kings, although their dramatic structure relies on legend, folklore, and the playwright's imagination more than on chronicle material. The role of Robin Hood in history, politics, and play--an inviting topic in itself--extends beyond the boundaries of this chapter even as it complicates and obscures the boundaries of the history play genre in general. Peele's play is representative of a development in Elizabethan drama which constitutes almost an entire sub-genre of fictionalized history centered on the adventures of Robin Hood. Because of the double perspective Edward I achieves by superimposing a folk tradition on an historical context through the materiality of disguise and impersonation, I include it in this chapter while acknowledging that, in doing so, I skirt the borders of a much larger discussion.

allegiance to his brother, Lluellen, and changes sides to overtake a fourth member in the competition, Mortimer, an English earl who has been disguised as a potter in Lluellen's camp. Mortimer earlier left England in romantic pursuit of Lluellen's love, Elinor, but suddenly abandons this personal quest and announces his loyalty to Edward's cause. The strategy of revealing disguises leads to a stalemate between the mock king, "Robin Hood," and the legitimate king, Edward I. As a source of trickery and unfair play, but as a limited, conditional strategy of deception, disguise postpones but does not prevent a third and inevitable confrontation near the end of the play. Lluellen ceases to be Robin Hood after his forest combat with Longshankes, and Edward finally "hath the day" (xvii.2365) when the single-bodied rebel no longer wields the advantage gained by his former use of disguise.

At the close of Edward I, Peele includes one last king-in-disguise episode which sustains the doubleness of play evident throughout earlier scenes. King Edward dresses as a friar to serve as his wife's confessor, and, in doing so, discovers the queen's past unfaithfulness to him as she slept with his brother and bore a daughter by an unknown friar. She dies instantly at the end of her confession, a sensational conclusion in keeping with Peele's dramatic portrayal of the queen throughout the play as a Spanish woman driven by pride and given to outrageous behavior.[34] By comparison, Edward appears relatively

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[34] Peele's expression of anti-Spanish sentiments undoubtedly reflects England's hostility towards Spain in the wake of the Spanish Armada. Ironically, the reputation of Queen Elinor derives primarily from ballads rather than chronicle sources, and yet, more so than the historical sections of the plot, this fictional addition invites close associations with contemporary political attitudes. Peele's anti-Spanish perspective differs significantly from Heywood's actual dramatization of England's 1588 victory in his much later history play, If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody (1604). The contrast suggests both that by the early seventeenth century the nation's hostility and fear in the 1590s had subsided and that as England's conquest gradually became part of its history, it was transformed into mythic dimensions not unlike the mythic proportions of Richard III's villainy that characterized earlier Tudor history. For further discussion of the contemporary political relations that shaped and distorted history in drama, see John Loftis' Renaissance Drama in England and Spain: Topical Allusion and History Plays (1987).

upstanding and justified in his own disguising tactic which discloses his wife's more corrupt political and moral deception. Nevertheless, the friar's weeds invite double associations indicating that Edward's self-serving trickery has little to do with the appropriate behavior of a dignified, honorable king. Whereas Lluellen's green costume of Robin Hood reinforces the rebel's cause, Edward's outfit cannot help but identify him with two disreputable opponents: the bawdy, unlawful Friar David-Friar Tuck character enacting his trickery in the green world, and the unnamed friar who apparently played a kind of mock king in fathering the queen's child who Edward assumed was his own. The first connection recalls King Harry's negative identification with the thieving parson in Sir John Oldcastle, and the second depicts England's conqueror of Wales and Scotland as a bit of a domestic fool. Ironically, because Elinor dies so suddenly that Edward never reveals his disguise to her, the compound associations of his temporary identity appear all the more unflattering and real.[35] The play's rapid conclusion hardly gives Edward time to divest himself of the friar's costume and its mocking implications.[36]

Although few would argue that Edward I is a particularly well-crafted play, the disguise motif helps to unify Peele's otherwise disparate plot which Hook describes as having a three-part episodic structure. He explains, "The play falls into three distinct sections, each of which has its own group of source materials: the historical events, the Greenwood sequence, and the vilification of Queen Elinor"

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[35] The irony is even greater in light of the fact that the ballad sources include Edward's unmasking before the queen.

[36] Following his disguised episode with Elinor, Edward's final speech about his conquests over Lluellen and Balioll are confusing and inconsistent. An interpretation of his speech or even an assumption that the king concludes his role on stage in friar's weeds is necessarily qualified by the imperfections of the extant text. As MacIntyre observes, the surviving text of Edward I "reached print not from prompt books or even from playwright's fair copy, but from foul papers (the author's draft form) that are full of inconsistencies and that may contain alternative versions of some scenes" (99).

(10). Disguising occurs in each section: the rebel, David, works undercover in the initial historical conflict; "Robin Hood" impersonations characterize the "Greenwood sequence"; and Edward's role as friar is crucial in the final "vilification of Queen Elinor." The double naming and double performing shared by these episodes reflect not the continuity of a carefully selected historical chronology but rather a dramatic effort to bring together folk traditions and past events in a play with a dual, albeit frequently confusing, vision. According to Hook, Peele "is fascinated by 'merrie England,' that ideal world in which lovers assume more importance than mere battles and political theories" (16). However, Edward I enacts both history and play as Peele superimposes his entertaining concept of "merrie England" on his obvious desire to celebrate the nation's historic conquests.

Like Peele's Edward I and Heywood's Edward IV, 1 Sir John Oldcastle expands the double vision implicit in the central king-in-disguise motif by including other characters using costumes and fictional identities for their own ends. While Peele's political rebels disguise partly as a subversive strategy to defeat the king, and Heywood's mistreated citizen, Matthew Shore, disguises primarily to achieve the passive obedience of an uninvolved bystander, Oldcastle depicts a variety of characters who rely on disguise for politically opposing reasons--either to generate injustice or to escape it. Rebels and innocents alike conceal their identities for the sake of power or protection. Sir John Oldcastle is presented as one of the innocent individuals, a victim of treacherous plots conceived by others. Because of the dramatists' apparent concern about the contemporary reputation of Sir Henry Brooke and the defaming influence of Shakespeare's Falstaff, they select and shape history to downplay Oldcastle's treasonous involvement in the religious controversy of the Lollard uprising, to

portray him instead as a loyal subject slandered by the Catholic Church, and to conclude the play before Cobham's historic execution in 1417.[37]

Disguising is instrumental in the politics and play of the concluding scenes which present Oldcastle's position in a positive light through a series of comic impersonations that complicate and ridicule the official enactment of justice. When the Bishop sends Oldcastle to the Tower in spite of King Harry's proof that he is innocent of political crimes, Oldcastle escapes by stealing the Bishop's garments to conceal his own identity. Later Cobham and his wife evade the authorities by switching clothing with a carrier and his daughter staying at the same inn. Meanwhile, in the midst of their efforts to escape, an Irish murderer tries to evade the law by stealing the clothing of Oldcastle's man Harpool. Harpool is subsequently misidentified and arrested as the murderer, the Irishman arrested for his apparent connection with Oldcastle, and Oldcastle and his wife arrested for circumstantial evidence placing the guilt of the murder on them. If the proliferation of mistaken identities and costume reversals turns the high exploits of history into an absurd affair of stage

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[37] Presumably the lost 2 Sir John Oldcastle dramatized Lord Cobham's end, and one can only imagine that the authors maintained their heroic treatment of the title character as established in the first play. The two-part format invites further comparisons with Shakespeare's 1 & 2 Henry IV and the obvious relationship between Oldcastle and Falstaff. One can only regret the lost opportunity to look for deliberate parallels between an honorable presentation of Oldcastle's martyrdom and Shakespeare's account of Falstaff's disgraceful rejection by Prince Hal. In 1 Sir John Oldcastle, the main character appears unbeatable, in spite of harrassment, threats, and abuse. At the end of 1 Henry IV, Falstaff's counterfeiting corpse rises to life as a witness to his survivalist's instincts. Playful comparisons are inviting, whether Oldcastle's dramatists intended them or not. For fuller discussion of Shakespeare's character, see the introduction to the Oxford edition of 1 Henry IV where Bevington presents reasons for maintaining Oldcastle's name in Shakespeare's play. Bevington suggests that "Shakespeare clearly had the historical Oldcastle in mind. Oldcastle was in fact a soldier and proto-Protestant 'martyr' or 'rebel.' To retain his name is to see that Shakespeare at once softens the rejection (the historical Oldcastle was probably burned alive) and accepts its necessity (King Henry V's hand was forced by Oldcastle's treachery)" (107). See also Janet Clare's discussion of the influence of censorship on "The Falstaff/Oldcastle controversy" in 'Art made tongue-tied' (76-79).

comedy, the political resolution is nevertheless telling. All disguises exposed, the Irishman is sentenced to be hanged for murder, Sir John of Wrotham--the thieving parson who naturally had his share in the adventure by robbing the Irishman--is once again pardoned upon his promise to repent, Oldcastle is released as the wrong suspect in a crime he obviously did not commit, and Harpool presumably follows in the good graces of his lord. The play's central character then sets off to Wales to escape the machinations of the Bishop as victory sounds in the last two lines: "Well may the bishop hunt, but spite his face, / He never more shall have the game in chase" (xxvii.167-168).

The dramatists clearly enjoy their own games in the boisterous, disorderly adventures that constitute a significant portion of the plot. Yet the reputation of Oldcastle remains one of their obvious, central concerns. The dramatic balance sought between opposing considerations of serious politics and entertaining play is exemplified most succinctly in the play's middle scenes where King Harry maintains his dual image as a man aligned with a thief, but also as an effective ruler swiftly and astutely assuming his royal responsibilities. How fitting, then, that in the last scene, even as Oldcastle escapes the dishonest manipulations of the Bishop, the incorrigible thieving parson, King Harry's double, is once again freed to continue his old tricks. To Larry Champion, the inconsistencies make the play "politically eclectic" and certainly not ideologically unified (47), but to an audience familiar with the spirited antics of Falstaff and Hal, Oldcastle might represent an eclecticism not merely political but also playful in a performance that imitates as much as it counters the dramatic flexibility apparent in Shakespeare's Henry IV.

Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me employs a different kind of subject-in-disguise, the "wise fool" figure, Will Somers, to complement and contrast with the king's own double appearances in disguise on London's streets and in royal costume at court. As an historical figure

whose popular, mythic reputation by Elizabeth's reign surpassed official records of his own personality and deeds, Will Somers plays a role in Rowley's drama that not surprisingly encompasses factual and fictional dimensions.[38] He is a prominent figure, speaking fewer lines only than the principal player, Henry VIII, and being present on stage for almost half the play.[39] Shaping this major comic character not only according to Somers' own familiar reputation but in keeping with the character type of the wise fool, Rowley creates a disguiser unique amongst the other double-identitied individuals populating the history plays.[40] In his game-playing role with the king, Will Somers does share some character traits with clownish individuals like Heywood's Hobs the Tanner or Oldcastle's Sir John of Wrotham, but Somers is a deliberate rather than an unwitting player. And unlike kings, rebels, and other subjects, whose disguises are usually temporary and conditional, Will "[disguises] his true wits under a fool's cap and bells" (Goldsmith 11) in a permanent, institutionalized role. As Glenys McMullen explains, "it is the fool's work to make others play" (18). With this paradoxical

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[38] Enid Welsford notes that Rowley's portrait of Somers "mixed truth and falsehood, as no doubt they were already mingled in living, popular tradition" (166). Other accounts contributing to the popular tradition of Will's life include Thomas Nashe's "strange, masque-like entertainment and his only drama, Summers Last Will and Testament (perf. 1592; pr. 1600)" (Ruoff 309), Robert Armin's extant A Nest of Ninnies (pr. 1609), Robert Greene's "A Pleasant Tale of Will Sommers" in The Defence of Conny Catching (1592), and a much later anonymous publication, A pleasant history of the life and death of Will Summers (1676) (Welsford 163; Goldsmith 108).

[39] Robert Goldsmith provides supporting statistics in Wise Fools in Shakespeare:

> Henry VIII speaks the greatest number of lines (1051), but Will comes next with 374 lines as against 246 lines for Wolsey and 152 lines for Queen Katherine. Will speaks more lines than does any of Shakespeare's fools. . . . [He] is on the stage about forty percent of the time. (114)

[40] Goldsmith traces the literary tradition of wise fools as far back as "the mocking philosopher of the Platonic Dialoques" (11) and cites Erasmus' In Praise of Folly as a "possible link between the irony of Socrates and the gay insouciance of the renaissance fool" (13). Erasmus and Plato are part of a much larger "fool" tradition existing on the continent and in England, and including social custom, law, and theatre, as well as literary explorations of these.

occupation, the court jester has both a public obligation to entertain and political immunity to challenge and disregard the king's authority. Again, in McMullen's words, "as satirist the fool forces society to make a critical re-appraisal of itself, but as entertainer he relieves the tension accompanying this uncomfortable experience through laughter" (19). The fool's costume thus materially represents the contradictory doubleness of political power and comic play.

From a playful perspective, the fool inhabits the conditional "as-if" realm of possibility in spite of his permanence and his public responsibilities which make play into work and work into play. As William Willeford suggests in The Fool and His Scepter,

> Much of the fool show is occupied with what might be called impossible possibilities--with what, on the one hand, might be but, on the other hand, is not because, for one reason or another, it cannot be. (69-70)

From a political perspective, the court fool is not unlike the May Day Robin Hood, for "the office of the jester fulfills some of the same functions as the ritualized rebellion in which political subjects express actual and possible resentments against authority" (Willeford 155). The fool thus "[becomes] a similar kind of mock king" challenging and imitating the true king (Willeford 158). "Irreverence," as Robert Weimann suggests, "becomes the method, and disrespect the principle of the fool's comic inversion" (13). As Rowley's Will Somers brings together historic figure and mythic reputation in the court jester tradition, he is not only double in himself but a source of doubleness in his mocking relationship to many of the play's other characters.

Will's counterpart in the jester's role is Wolsey's fool, Patch, and their performance together to draw the king out of his ill humor underscores the disguised wisdom that makes Will's entertaining occupation both a source of laughter for King Henry and a source of political influence in the court. Called upon to resolve the crisis centered on King Henry's rage, Will refuses to approach him but convinces Patch to go first, to cry "Boo" and receive the physical

abuse, "the first fruits of [the king's] furie" (779). Amused by Will's clever evasions, the king rewards him with "a new Coate and cap for this" (792); relieved by Will's success in reversing Henry's dark humor, Charles Brandon, as representative of the the king's lords, promises the fool the same reward. Thus Will is doubly paid in costumes that both acknowledge his wisdom and encourage his affected foolishness. Patch, on the other hand, receives "an Angell to buy [himself] points" (771). As a fool whose costume conceals no wisdom, as a "nat'rall" in Henry's words (760), he is "the cause that wit is in other men" but is not like Will (or Falstaff), "witty in [himself]" (2 Henry IV I.ii.9-10). He is paid for his folly, not his disguise. As Welsford notes, "Patch, we are told, was 'a natural fool', Somers 'an artificial fool', a distinction which is constantly drawn in English literature" (160).[41] In a comical vein, Wolsey's "natural" fool and Henry's "artificial" fool reflect the more serious distinctions between the Cardinal and the king, the first an "artificial" or illegitimate power-seeker and the second a "natural" or legitimate political and religious leader. Furthermore, Will's sidekick Patch emphasizes by stark contrast the power and the wisdom embodied in King Henry's chief entertainer, the only person in court with guaranteed influence over the king. If Will is an "artificial" or "disguised" fool, he is likewise a kind of "artificial" or partial ruler whose jesting both restores and undermines Henry's control over court: "The fool is a king; the king is a fool" (Willeford 159). They govern and entertain each other.

Through double naming, Will also invites comparisons with Black Will, the thief who challenges the disguised king in London. Like Will, who gains royal favor by transgressing the boundaries of court behavior, Black Will displays the spirited cleverness of one who benefits by breaking laws and abusing the institutions of political order. The thief as rebel is the dark or "black" counterpart of the court jester

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[41] Cf. Goldsmith p. 24.

and acts as an alternative "lord of misrule," subverting the king's power without the advantage of Somers's publicly sanctioned humor. Both men confront the king: Will Somers playfully to stimulate Henry's good humor, Black Will seriously to challenge the disguised king's impudence. Both are physically beaten by King Henry: Will recalling a "boxe on the eare" (621) dealt him before his scheme to send forth Patch, Black Will admitting, "Foregod yee broake my head most gallantly" (1364). Both are admired, pardoned, and rewarded when the game is over: Will Somers with new garments in recognition of his shrewd wit, Black Will with remuneration and a promise to become one of the king's military men, as recognition of his valiance. The parallels between the two Wills reflect primarily on Rowley's presentation of King Henry. As both rebel and fool assume equal status with their monarch by challenging him, they act as mock kings or double kings who undermine the true king's dignity. Willeford's observation about fools' play applies to both these characters:

> [their] mockery of the king is partly a reminder that . . . his individuality is a joke . . . . The fool helps to maintain a relativity between the king and his office. (162)

The king's relative individuality implied by a pair of Wills on stage in Rowley's play invites comparisons with Henry V's reflections in Shakespeare's play. The fragility of an identity based on the political myth of the King's Two Bodies is a reality that Shakespeare's Henry V dares expose only in the privacy of a soliloquy and in the anonymity of his disguise. While Shakespeare's play indicates the danger of publicly acknowledging politics' fictional element, Rowley draws more extensively on the folk conventions of foolish wisdom and mock kings to portray openly the humor and incongruity of the king's privileged position. Yet the fact that both Black Will and Will Somers ultimately depend on Henry's good favor confirms the king's individuality, even as the playfulness Will brings to court and Henry seeks in midnight disguising suggest a view not unlike Henry V's conclusions about ceremony: that

power itself is as tenuous and conditional as play. Henry VIII's authority hinges on his own willingness to assume the robe and crown of kingly responsibilities and on Will Somers' continued acceptance of the inferior rank represented by his cap and bells.

Rowley's fool demonstrates his greatest influences in court through his compound role as playful entertainer and outspoken Protestant advocate as he draws on both capacities to challenge Cardinal Wolsey. When You See Me You Know Me dramatizes the Tudor religious controversy from a Protestant perspective which characterizes Wolsey as an ambitious, corrupt Catholic defender; Henry VIII as a vacillating, occasionally ineffective judge of religious questions; and Will Somers and young Prince Edward as staunch Protestant supporters. Ironically, in playing Wolsey's adversary, the fool appears to demonstrate more political wisdom and insight than the king, and, in that sense, once again usurps Henry's place. Will condemns Henry's relationship with the Pope which Wolsey promotes:

> I knew twoold be a monnie matter, when als done, now thart defender of the faith, the Pope will haue thee defend euerie thing himself and all. (876-878)

With direct accusations, the fool criticizes Wolsey's part:

> Would the King wood whip thee and all the Popes whelpes out of England once, for betweene yee yee haue rackt and puld it so, we shal be all poore short /, you haue had foure hundred threescore pound within this three yeare for smoakepence, you haue smoakte it yfaith. (1619-1623)

Henry tolerates Will's impudence by acknowledging the political immunity of a court jester: "Well William your tongue is priuiledgde" (1627). And Will himself continually invites others to hear his political voice while denying his political influence by reminding them of his playful occupation: "fooles are innocents, and must be accessarie to no mans ouerthrow" (1520-1521); "fooles are harmlesse" (1605). His effectiveness as "fool-king" depends on his ability to combine the functions of both roles by disguising political power as courtly play.

The success of this balancing act leads to Will's triumphant overthrow of Wolsey, which Sandra Billington describes as "the greatest myth about the Fool" (Fools 35). First, Somers outwits Wolsey in the light-hearted pastime of a rhyming game, and the cardinal admits his own defeat, saying, "Hees too hard for me still, ile giue him ouer" (1481). This contest in the middle of the play foreshadows Wolsey's more significant political overthrow, engineered by Will in the final scene. To expose Wolsey's abuse of power to the king, the fool carefully appeals to the playful jurisdiction of his own court position. Invoking the realm of "impossible possibilities" (Willeford 69) by claiming silence as he speaks and adopting a conditional clause to make a declarative accusation, he witnesses before criminal and judge:

> Wil Summers will be secret now, and say nothing, if I would be a blabbe of my tongue, I could tell the King how many barrells full of gold and siluer there was sixe times filled with plate and jewells, twentie great truncks with Crosses . . . . But this is nothing, for when you are Pope, you may pardon you selfe for more knavery then this comes to. (2819-2827)

For a fool who declares he "must be accessarie to no mans ouerthrow" (1520-1521), Somers plays the master of inversions and language manipulations to prompt Wolsey's discharge from office and his disgraceful fall from Henry's favor.

If Will almost attains the distinction of Protestant hero in the play, he never completely steals this title from the prominent Prince Edward, who consistently epitomizes wisdom and courage beyond his years. In the concluding scene, it is young Edward who plays the important political, ceremonious role in welcoming the visting emperor and bestowing upon him the garter of knighthood. Will Somers, on the other hand, achieves his victory over the king, queen, and emperor in a rhyming match that returns him to the world of play where he acts as clever entertainer, inspiring laughter in the politically powerful by making them look like fools. Noting that Will's character does not conform to the typical role of fool as "ironical bystander" (39),

Goldsmith suggests that "the dramatic importance attached to Will Summers in When You See Me, You Know Me stretches the fool out of character and destroys his comic detachment" (39). The fool's detachment may be compromised, but his comedy is integral to Rowley's reenactment of history in performance on stage. As a foil to the natural fool incapable of impersonation and the "black" outlaw enacting nightly subversion, Will plays an intermediate role that represents the publicly sanctioned entertainment of the stage itself. As Henry VIII's double and Wolsey's adversary, simultaneously challenging and sustaining order through mockery and wisdom, Will embodies the theatre's dual performative opportunities of temporary, conditional diversion and political insight or ideological promotion. As a character who incorporates history, myth, and popular tradition, he personifies the cultural combinations and oppositions that merge in the history plays of the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods. As a disguiser, he invites the audience to see double, to believe the pretense of impersonation, to enjoy collaboration in the stage secrets of hidden identity, and to anticipate the outcome of reversals and revelations.

Along with the many other disguisers who figure in the history plays, Rowley's fool thus draws attention to what distinguishes the staging of history from the narrating of chronicles and the staging of other fictional tragedies or comedies. While disguising is a convention most frequently associated with comedy, it functions in many of the histories as an interruption, intervention, or diversion, drawing the plot away from chronicle sources to take history into the world of play and play into the world of history. A level of "multi-consciousness" (Bethell 29)[42] results with implications as varied as the history plays themselves. From probing the mythical aspects of political interaction

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[42] I borrow Bethell's term, "multi-consciousness," although he uses it to argue for the duality of "conventionalism and naturalism" in Elizabethan drama, while I am referring to the duality of history and play on stage.

constituting history, to mocking the fictions that sustain order, to advocating the conditions of order while portraying the holiday realm of disorder, the dramatists adopt their own patterns of disguise in imaginative reconstructions of the past. As a material, fictional alteration broadening the identity boundaries for kings, rebels, subjects, and fools, disguise opens the "factual" declaratives of history to the playful possibilities that begin with "if" and "perhaps."

Conclusion

Adopting the equation "history + play" opens avenues to explore the disparate, often contradictory, assumptions that come together in these two key elements that shape this Renaissance genre. Most discussions have focused primarily on the historical element. The multiple layers of history that scholars have addressed include the medieval and Tudor periods dramatized; the decades during the Tudor and Jacobean reigns when the narrative chronicle sources of the plays were written; and the span of years from the 1580s to the 1630s when the plays were written, performed, printed, and sometimes later revived on stage. Donald Watson mentions some of the approaches to Shakespeare's histories that have emphasized the historical half of the "history + play" equation. Of the plays, he says,

> We can know them as embodiments of Renaissance ideas of political morality, as mirrors of Elizabethan policy, as essays upon the relationship of family and state, as meditations upon the king's two bodies, as rituals of the ethic of order, as warnings against rebellion, as dramatic treatises about the Tudor myth, as inquiries into the concept of divine providence, as formal developments of the chronicle and morality play, as explorations of the historian's art. We can know their sources and analyze the playwright's manipulation of events and personages, memorize genealogical charts, and map out the battles. (1)

This list of historical issues can be expanded further to include recent cultural materialist and new historicist studies of the twentieth century as a period which has appropriated Renaissance playwrights and their plays for conservative or reactionary political purposes, just as those dramatists appropriated and selected the facts and myths of history for the original stage performances.[1]

Watson concludes his summary of historical topics, however, by acknowledging that there is more to history plays than simply history.

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[1] See, for example, Dollimore and Sinfield's "History and ideology: the instance of Henry V," (1985); Holderness's Shakespeare's History (1985); and Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology, ed. Jean Howard and Marion O'Connor (1987).

He adds, "And we can do much more to know the history plays as plays" (1). In his implicit appeal to the equation "history + play," Watson is more interested in studying the texts to recreate the theatrical context of the first tetralogy than are many other historically-conscious scholars discussing Shakespeare's works. "Play=drama" underlies his analysis in Shakespeare's Early History Plays: Politics at Play on the Elizabethan Stage (1990). Yet invoking the multifaceted word "play" reveals as many possibilities as examining the layers of "history." The preceding chapters of my study have drawn on the diverse meanings and interpretations of "play" to explore a selection of non-Shakespearean and Shakespearean history plays, singly, doubly, or in multiple combinations, to demonstrate the dramatic and political variety that helps to explain the elusive boundaries of this genre.

The "play=drama" concept that Watson emphasizes is also at the center of my discussion. I have sought to demonstrate how the dynamics of the dramatic medium can multiply and reshape the interpretive possibilities of the narrative medium when history is suspended between the playwright and his audience, the actor and his role, the character and his goals, in a stage performance. These plays are not merely reflections of their chronicle sources, nor mirrors of Elizabethan and Jacobean policy, nor blatantly subversive attacks on government ideology. My investigation into the playwrights' selection and framing of events in The Troublesome Reign and Edward III indicates, for example, the structural choices the dramatists make to present their own versions of history by turning plots into stories that embrace or challenge the propagandistic potential in the political issues enacted in the drama. My comparison of Edward II and Perkin Warbeck suggests that parallels exist in the performances of these two plays, as well as in the performances enacted within them and beyond them. The effectiveness of the political contenders on stage depends on their skill as actors, just as the theatrical success of players and of

Renaissance monarchs depends on the kinds of responses they elicit from their audiences.

"Play=game," the second key concept in my theoretical framework, stems from the equation of the two words as descriptions of drama during the Renaissance, but expands to incorporate the modern political appropriation of "game" as an analogy for serious interaction that spans the spectrum from cooperative to competitive activity, from harmonious agreement to confrontation, from bargains and negotiations to war. The political games enacted in the history plays depend on the interplay of elements that comprise the dramatic medium: language, action, and the physical presence of actors pretending to be characters. Speech acts and the dynamics of dialogue serve as verbal sources of power, and the characters' choices of subjunctive, imperative, or indicative moods determine their political successes and the extent of their control. While Edward II's inappropriate choice of the subjunctive rather than the imperative mood undermines the authority of his kingly title in Marlowe's play, Warbeck's denial of "if" clauses improves his political prospects in Ford's play, and Falstaff's reliance on the subjunctive mood in Shakespeare's play indicates the playful potential of verbal games when action is not wholly competitive and when political titles are not the main stakes. The game-like nature of stage action is also evident in the collusion and confrontation characterizing the war-games that give the history plays their dramatic, heroic, sometimes epic appeal: Hal and Hotspur engaging in a one-on-one competition in I Henry IV, the English nobles conspiring to "turn and turn again" (1 Henry VI III.iii.84-85) in The Troublesome Reign, the pursued French soldiers fleeing across the stage and the English prince later emerging triumphant in Edward III. The dramatized history in these plays enacts the moves and countermoves of political games.

"Play," however, is more than an equivalent term for "drama" or "game." Play can sometimes describe activity that is free, spontaneous,

and, as Johan Huizinga suggests, "fun . . . [that] resists all analysis, all logical interpretation" (3). The play of history includes not only dramatic role-playing and political game-playing, but the vast opportunities of playfulness that stand in opposition to the seriousness of politics and the organizing structures and patterns of drama. Falstaff knows a playful world where time is not important, although he exists only in a dramatic world circumscribed by the temporal limitations of the performance. The disguising kings in Henry V, 1 Sir John Oldcastle, and When You See Me You Know Me gesture towards a timeless, spontaneous world of "fun," a holiday realm that provides relief and variety in a world of duty, responsibility, and serious consequences. Yet each of these kings returns to the "factual" realm that defines his existence, that establishes the expectations of his actions within the play, and that allows for the play's topical, political influence beyond the place of the stage and the time of the performance. The rebels in Edward I appear to seek the green world of harmonious, communal living, but continue their hostility towards their king; the fool in When You See Me You Know Me plays jokes on everyone above and below him, with him and against him, but, nevertheless, manifests a steadfast political position. The actions and words of these characters demonstrate that a double perspective conditions the attitudes and expectations of this dramatic genre.

It would seem, then, that in the history plays, there can be no such thing as pure fun or purely spontaneous play. But neither can there be pure history or purely serious political drama. This is a genre that demonstrates the paradox that "all the world [cannot be] playing holidays" but that the impulses of "playing holidays" nevertheless shape and influence the nexus of history and play.

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