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Proximate Foreigners: England and
its Neighbors in the History Plays of
the 1590s

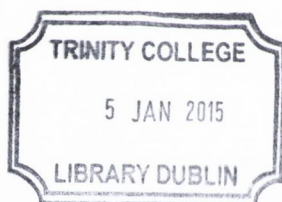
PhD in English Literature
2014

Erin Marie DeYoung

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SUMMARY

The central claim of this thesis is that the correlation between the rise history play genre in the 1590s, concerns about national identity, and emerging disputes over expansion collided in the political/cultural views of proximal foreigners. By looking at those peoples with whom the English had continual exchange due to their geographic proximity, this study posits that these relationships were the ones which shaped English identity and English policy. The varying natures of the relationships between the English, Welsh, Irish, Scottish, and French all contribute varying facets to the emerging and expanding nation. Some of these peoples were assimilated, some were colonized, while others maintained their sovereign status; however, it is the very difference in the status of these peoples which colored English policy.

Although Shakespeare has long dominated the category of the history play, he was far from the only writer to contribute to the genre. This thesis utilizes the works of Shakespeare, Greene, Peele, and Marlowe, among others, to synthesize a cohesive view of the interplay between the proximal foreigners. However, as Shakespeare has come to dominate the field of early modern drama, so too does his presence in any work threaten to monopolize the findings, and he is a central figure to the claims of this thesis. It is the aim of this thesis, however, to provide Shakespeare where he offers the best example of the proximal relationship and, hopefully, in proportion to his contribution to the genre. Questions of the cyclic nature of his two tetralogies are only addressed tangentially, since neither the production nor the reception of either cycle is the focus of this thesis. Instead, this thesis places Shakespeare into a conversation about various proximal relationships with other of his contemporary dramatists.

It is the further aim of this thesis to take the existing scholarship regarding each individual proximal space (Wales, Ireland, France, and Scotland) and engage them in dialogue with each other. Through this process, it is argued that a coherent narrative can be formed which is bound in history but also tied inextricably to contemporary Elizabethan events. With a thorough understanding of how the various proximal spaces are expressed through Elizabethan popular drama (namely in the history plays), a more exhaustive understanding of the diverse influences affecting both the stage and the nation may be observed. The history plays provide an essential backdrop for this conversation because of the historical narrative they present and the common knowledge upon which they rely. As the history plays look back into England's past, they also magnify England's potential future as well as its distinct present.

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Although my declaration preceding this thesis affirms it is indeed my own, I truly feel as though I am standing on the shoulders of giants. This thesis could not have been completed without years of research and the aid of others.

I am indebted to all in the School of English, particularly the Early Modern Tavern Society for their support, debate, opportunity, and community. I have never felt so at home among colleagues.

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Introduction

I was first introduced to the Henriad while completing the required Shakespeare course for my undergraduate degree. We read only two history plays, *I Henry IV* and *Henry V*, but I remember being captivated by both plays despite approaching them with trepidation. Falstaff, to me, was utterly uninteresting; I could have cared less for his bottles of sack and (or) the number of men he didn't face at Gads Hill. Henry, though, I adored. There was something about the "rebel without a cause" youth who wines, dines, and, eventually, becomes king that caught my attention. I found myself returning to the Henriad time and again. I began writing papers about speech acts in *Richard II*, divine right in *I Henry IV*, and, finally, I found myself face-to-face with Lady Mortimer's Welsh song. Like Hotspur who finds himself unwillingly captivated by the magic of the Welsh music, I, too, was unable to turn away from the abandoned Welsh song.¹ There is no text to Lady Mortimer's song, and her only speech acts come to the audience via translation. The peculiarity of this moment within Early Modern drama as a whole, and Shakespeare's works in particular, was even more difficult to ignore.

The Nature of the History Plays

In the vast expanse of Shakespeare scholarship, in particular, and early modern history, in general, the amount of ink spilled over the creation of nation, the defining of borders, and the process of inclusion is prolific. Those who discuss foreignness in Shakespeare's drama have largely restricted themselves to the more obvious examples of difference: *The Tempest*, *Othello*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. Although there has been an influx of criticism dealing with proximal foreigners in the

¹ Hotspur literally finds himself captivated. He is held much against his will to hear the Welsh song, and the Welsh music indubitably contains magic.

history plays, this criticism has largely been confined to one of the proximal locations rather than all of them. The issue with discussing history plays as opposed to comedies or tragedies is the lack of a clear or easy set of rules defining the genre. Tillyard's use of the Tudor myth in conjunction with the project of Shakespeare's history plays has suffered scrutiny in the years since his book was published, but, as will be seen in Chapter Five, it is not completely irrelevant particularly in the case of Fluellen.² Tillyard, however, was neither the first nor the last to grapple with the troubling definition of the history plays.

Until the 1623 folio the genre as a whole did not exist, and the sudden explosion of history plays during the 1590s did little to establish a set standard for the history play. Indeed, many of the "history" plays of the 1590s are only tangentially related to chronicle sources, and many follow the rules of tragedy or romance. Despite the apparent dearth of historical generic context for a history play genre, as well as its brief moment of popularity, Paola Pugliatti reminds readers that "it was anything but ephemeral and short-lived within Shakespeare's career, since it accounted for almost a third of his known production."³ As such, a definition of the genre is both important and necessary; however, it is also one which has been debated for decades. Following Lily Campbell, a number of scholars have taken her distinction between tragedy and history: "The dividing line is there, and it is to this distinction between private and public morals that we must look for the distinction between tragedy and history. Tragedy is concerned with the doings of men which in philosophy are discussed under *ethics*; history with the doings of men which in

² E.M.W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), 89.

³ Paola Pugliatti, *Shakespeare the Historian* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), 3.

philosophy are discussed under *politics*.”⁴ Michael Hattaway continues the distinction in a similar vein:

More recently, however, the *convergence* of history and tragedy in Shakespearean texts has been a starting point for critical analysis. Tragedy has been characterized not just by conflict between a man of high degree and his destiny or read as a tale of a ‘flawed’ protagonist, but has been seen to evolve from political situation. Attention has been paid not only to larger patterns of action but to values, ideologies, and institutions, and to the accidental or contingent. Rather than seeing politics emerge from history it may even be more profitable to think of history emerging from politics: historical narratives are shaped by the politics of the writers of those narratives.⁵

The link between history plays, tragedy, and politics is one that has been well elucidated, and is one that holds resonance throughout this thesis. The morality play tradition from the middle ages has likewise been found in the genealogy of the history play, as A.J. Hoenselaars very directly states, “The English history play as practiced by Shakespeare has direct roots in the morality tradition.”⁶ The similar focus between the morality plays of the middle ages and the history plays of the early modern period on one main character contributes to the shared tradition. The focus of the history plays on one King (normally the title character) is seen to be unlike the broader focus of the tragedies and comedies with their concern over relational identities.

What may be most useful for this thesis is the definition which sees in the history plays a concern for contemporary events. G.K. Hunter sees this motive as one of the most basic behind the creation, production, and appeal of Shakespeare’s history plays: “At the very least we must assume that Shakespeare wrote history plays (more

⁴ Lily Campbell, “*Histories*”: *Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (San Marino, CA: Ward Ritchie Press, 1947), 17.

⁵ Michael Hattaway, “The Shakespearean History Play” in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare’s History Plays*, ed. Michael Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 3-24. 4.

⁶ A.J. Hoenselaars, “Shakespeare and the Early Modern History Play,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare’s History Plays*, ed. Michael Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 25-40. 25. See also M.M. Reese “Origins of the History Play” in *Shakespeare: The Histories A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Eugene M. Waith (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc, 1965), 42-54. 47.

than any other author of the period) with the conscious intention of relating past events to the historical present.”⁷ Campbell, again, offers a seminal claim on the usefulness of history (and history plays), “It is on the assumption that history repeats itself that political mirrors of history can be utilized to explain the present. But it does not repeat itself in every detail, and while the larger outlines of historical fact must be preserved to be convincing, the details are often altered to make them more reminiscent of the present.”⁸ This concern, linking the past with the present, is at the heart of this thesis and its use of history plays to the exclusion of any other genre. This also means this study is not confined to only those history plays which align themselves most closely with the chronicle sources.

Since the historical accuracy of the plays is not my central question or concern, but rather my concern is the performance of various relationships, several plays will be discussed which stray from their chronicle source and border on the genre of romance. *Edward I*, *1 and 2 Edward IV*, as well as the *Scottish History of James IV* are all excellent examples of history plays which transgress the boundaries of the history genre into the realm of romance. These plays are primarily based in chronicle history; however, they all also pull from ballad traditions, popular history, and other plays. Their engagement with contemporary ideologies makes them particularly apt for a discussion of how Elizabethan England’s engagement with her neighbors shaped existing policy. When this study utilizes these plays which border on romance, it does so knowing they deviate from history plays in the strict sense of the genre. Thus, while it may appear the boundary between genres is blurred (why, for instance, is *Cymbeline* not an accepted history play but *Edward I* is), the mark of

⁷ G.K. Hunter, “Afterward: Notes on the Genre of the History Play” in *Shakespeare’s English Histories: A Quest for Form and Genre*, ed. John W. Velz (Binghampton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1996), 229-249. 231.

⁸ Campbell, 125.

genre is each play's engagement with traditional sources of English history and the objective of each to participate in the creation of that history.

The final mark of the history play which is necessary for this thesis is the focus on the nation. Although it seems impossible for a contemporary scholar of the history plays to escape responding to (and referencing) Tillyard, the constantly increasing breadth and depth of scholarship has expanded the idea of the nation (and nation building) exponentially. Holderness, responding to the chronological ordering of the plays, argues, "The history cycles, . . . suggest that the integrated series, imitating the continuity of historical narrative, was a deliberate, planned and intended method of composition."⁹ While Holderness is very certainly arguing for an intentional construction of the history plays (from their production through their reception), my aim here is not to become enmeshed in the intentions of a theatre company in the 1590s; instead, I would argue his statement implies the cohesiveness of the history plays in constructing a coherent historical narrative. Whether this narrative was unquestionably patriotic, caustically cynical, or somewhere in between is the question facing many contemporary scholars. As Hattaway informs us,

Shakespeare chronicles an age of feuding warlords and, in what may seem to be his most patriotic play, *Henry V*, reminds his audience that the motley horde of English, Irish, Welsh, and Scots that make up the king's army scarcely constitutes 'one nation.' National unity was a tactical instrument developed to sustain an expeditionary force, the creation of which was supposed to concentrate the 'giddy minds' (2H4, 4.3.342) of the leaders of political factions.¹⁰

As this thesis is concerned with the assimilation, or segregation, of the various peoples with whom the English interacted most frequently, Hattaway's remarks on

⁹ Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare: The Histories* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 7.

¹⁰ Hattaway, 9.

Henry V underscore the ambiguity found in many of Shakespeare's works in particular, and the difficulty with writing and interpreting history in general.

The question of the serial nature of the history plays, particularly Shakespeare's, is one which cannot be ignored in any work seeking to grapple with their larger themes. Some history plays, such as Heywood's *1 and 2 Edward IV*, clearly follow a serial template as narrative structures from the first part find their culmination in the second part. For instance, the Shores' drama begins nearly at the outset of *1 Edward IV* following the successful defense of London, but doesn't conclude until the penultimate scene of *2 Edward IV* when Shore dies alongside his disgraced wife. Shakespeare's history plays, especially those ones in the first and second tetralogies, pose a far more problematic predicament. Nicholas Grene's, *Shakespeare's Serial Histories*, tackles the question by looking at each of the tetralogies individually.¹¹ The Folio groups the history plays chronologically by King beginning with the earliest (King John) and ending with the most contemporary (King Henry VIII). Although the Folio has little interest in organizing the plays around the chronology of their composition (or production), the Folio also changes the names of the the two middle plays in the first tetralogy (*The First Part of the Contention* becomes *2 Henry VI* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* becomes *3 Henry VI*). While neither the order of the plays in the Folio nor the plays' altered names attests to any serial intentions to the plays' development, it indicates an awareness in hindsight as to the plays' potential serial nature. Grene's overarching thesis posits differing intentions for the first and second tetralogies. The first tetralogy (following the Wars of the Roses) composed first, in the early 1590s, was not necessarily meant to function as a series of four plays. Instead, as each play and the

¹¹ Nicholas Grene, *Shakespeare's Serial History Plays*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002).

genre itself grew in popularity the saga continued to its culmination in *Richard III*. It is potentially for this reason, the first tetralogy was neither composed in chronological order nor do the names of the plays reflect that fact. The second tetralogy, however, written near the height of the history play's popularity, both promises a continuation of the narrative (*2 Henry IV* Epilogue 22-26)¹² and moves chronologically through the sequence. While I would hesitate to imply any necessary causation, the question of the history play's serial nature is complicated and likely reflects pragmatic concerns rather than an underlying interest with consistency.

As in any work seeking to engage with various texts from a wide spectrum of authors, not every work could be included. In my analysis, I sought to choose works that were either indicative of the genre or were actively participating in issues of foreignness and inclusion. For this reason a play such as *James IV* was chosen for the focus on a non-English monarch even if the play itself does not necessarily conform within the more traditional boundaries of the history play genre. *James IV's* engagement with a foreign court, French villains, and several English dialects all lend themselves to the scope of this particular work. Similarly, some plays were excluded from the breadth of this study, most noticeably, *Sir Thomas More* (1595).¹³ Despite *Sir Thomas More's* concern with foreigners—particularly immigrants within London—the play's focus on the Englishness of Thomas More aligns it more with definitions of what it means to be English rather than what it means to be foreign. Additionally, even though *Sir Thomas More* challenges who belongs to England it does so through articulating the status of the title character, an Englishman. The urban

¹² All quotations for Shakespeare's works are taken from William Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare based on the Oxford Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York & London: Norton & Company, 1997).

¹³ Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama* (London: Methuen), 60-61.

protest by the citizens of London as well as the discussion surrounding Thomas More's loyalty to England combine to offer space for further research.

What It Means to be Proximate

Further, my confinement to those foreigners who are "proximate" similarly restricts the choice of history plays. Proximity, as used in any discussion of the Elizabethan encounter with the Irish, is necessary to understanding the complexity of the long history between the two islands. This study, however, seeks to expand the use of proximity applying it to four of England's nearest neighbors: Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and France. The ways in which each are understood in the period affect their representations on the stage, and each has its own unique history with the emergent English nation. Unlike the New World, the shared history between England and her four nearest neighbors frames the use of proximity as a useful entrance to a discussion of England's views of herself as independent nation and her relationship with her neighbors. Murphy not only defines proximity through a shared history, but also a shared geography; and it is this shared geography as well as history that I believe applies beyond the Anglo-Irish relationship. Each of the four territories has infringed and been infringed upon by England throughout the course of their shared history, and it is these constantly changing borders this study finds as the impetus behind linking Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and France within a shared space in Elizabethan historical drama. John Kerrigan's work *Archipelagic English*, although referencing the time period after Elizabethan England, places Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and England into a long historical context which contests heterogeneity.

While postcolonial analyses have been valuably brought to bear on how, for instance Ireland is represented in *The Faerie Queene*, or Wales in *1 Henry IV*, the gross effect of the turn towards the study of empire and its aftermath has been to overlook the uneven, inherited relationships between the parts and

peoples of Britain and Ireland in order to concentrate on ill-defined 'English' or 'British' penetration of the New World, Africa, and South Asia. The incentive has been reduced to explore the cultural specificity and heterogeneity of the advocates of overseas empire, the identity of the colonizers, and the feedback effects of colonization on their difference.¹⁴

Ireland's identification as proximate has been sufficiently explicated by Murphy who, rightly, sees several hundred years of engagement between the peoples of the neighboring islands. Wales' and Scotland's designation as proximate is equally understandable, if less thoroughly articulated in scholarship. Geographically both are situated within the same island as England: Wales to the west, and Scotland to the north. That they are both accessible via land certainly enhances their proximity, but, in addition, each participates in a shared heritage with England. If the treatment of Ireland has been argued to be a rudimentary form of extended colonialism, then this has shaped English policies both with Ireland and her nearest neighbors. Wales rather than serving as a midpoint between Ireland and England is composed of her own unique history and characteristics which form a distinctive Anglo-Welsh relationship. The expansive land border between England and Wales contributed to the relatively porous boundary between the two peoples. Similarly, the long shared history, combined with the ease of traveling between the two regions, furnished an origin story the English wished to coopt as their own.

The Welsh attempting to migrate from Wales to England were met sometimes with strong resistance from those within London. While the political and military crisis in Ireland was the ever-present anxiety, prejudice against the Welsh was the manifestation of a desire to control the *foreign*. Anthony Munday's 1593 play *Sir Thomas More* opens with a historical altercation between Londoners and foreigners. In Elizabethan England, a large portion of the London population were labeled as

¹⁴ John Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603-1707* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 18.

foreign and alien —foreigners being anyone who did not belong to the city, while an alien was someone who did not belong to the country.¹⁵ Although Munday's play is not centered on the Welsh, using Lloyd Kermode's distinctions between citizen, alien, and foreigner, I can see the parallels between the anxieties presented in *Sir Thomas More* and the anxieties afflicting Londoners in Elizabethan England. Similarly, the expectation that the Welsh would remain within the confines of their annexed land added to the disquiet felt when the once forgotten people moved beyond the boundaries of their limited sphere. While we have confined ourselves to looking at the consequences of the English moving into different spheres, we should also recognize the permeability of these boundaries. The Welsh were compelled to move beyond the boundaries of Wales to seek success, but this movement reinforced Welsh difference. If the ease of access to Wales is essential to the geographical/cultural Anglo-Welsh relationship than the converse was certainly true with Scotland.

Although Scotland shares a long, storied past with England and is connected geographically, there is a distinctly dissimilar context for the Anglo-Scottish relationship. Geographically, movement between Scotland and England was made more difficult by the proportionately smaller land border. In addition, the northern location of Scotland, away from the southern population (and government) center of London, intensified the sense of difference and accentuated the sense of distance between the two peoples. Unlike Wales, Scotland established an independent government, made autonomous alliances, and produced a perpetual anxiety of foreign invasion. In both Wales and Scotland, the relatively porous borders aggravated concerns of barbarism, civility, and identity on a national scale. Renaissance England,

¹⁵ Lloyd Edward Kermode, *Aliens and English in Early Modern Drama*. For a complete discussion of alien, citizens, and foreigners see chapter one of Kermode's book.

in particular, became concerned about definitions of Englishness and nation. It is within this larger conversation about defining a nation that Helgerson's book is significant. The influential *The Elizabethan Writing of England* offers an interdisciplinary approach to English nation forming. Helgerson's diverse use of available materials ranging from cartography to maritime navigation to drama and ballads attests to the pervasive involvement of the English with building a nation. Helgerson's work has been particularly important to chapter one of this study, but the underlying theories are pervasive throughout the entirety of the work. Helgerson's work understanding of what Englishness is becomes a necessary juxtaposition to understanding what foreignness is.

The final component to my work's definition of proximity, France, stems from England's many campaigns into France and the Low Countries on behalf of Protestantism (and in direct opposition to Catholic Spain) which altered historical conceptions of the country just across the Channel. Jean-Christophe Mayer's book, *Representing France and the French in Early Modern Drama*, places the relationship between England and France within the historical context dictated by the Wars of Religion and the Reformation. "France was forced to abandon her position of political 'grandee' and as a result England began to consider France less as her traditional foe (one whose involvement within Scottish politics had been a source of resentment) and more as a potential ally in her conflict with Spain."¹⁶ The years of turmoil within France following the Reformation, and the oft-changing alliances along the lines of religion paired the historical enemies against the increasing power of Spain. Mayer continues his analysis of England's attitudes towards France: "They also became conscious that France's status as a nation had changed and that this

¹⁶ Jean-Christophe Mayer, *Representing France and the French in Early Modern England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 33.

change meant that the destinies of the two countries were linked in an almost unprecedented fashion.”¹⁷ Mayer intricately details the transforming relationship between France and England as it is depicted throughout Elizabethan England’s theatrical trajectory. France’s long history both with and within England attests to a more intimate relationship than can be supposed with the other states comprising the continent. For this reason, France has been chosen as a representative of proximity across the Channel, while the Low Countries have not.

Although this work is only tangentially concerned with the process of nation-building, it does so only through the ways in which it affects how foreignness is viewed. Thus, definitions of what is England (and what is English) are intertwined with definitions of what is without—from the New World to the Irish bogs; furthermore, these definitions of the outsider each illuminate particular facets of Englishness shaped by the proximal relationships with each outsider. This study is not an attempt to show depth of relationships as that can be found in a variety of contemporary scholarship; instead, my thesis seeks to show the interdependent relationships between each of the proximal locations.

The historical accounts of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and France are all relevant and important for understanding Elizabethan conceptions of identity; however, due to the scope of this particular study these accounts could not be adequately investigated. It is my hope that future scholars will be able to improve upon and contextualize the small amount of work that has been done in that direction. This means, however, that comparisons are only rarely made between historical accounts (such as Holinshed) and Elizabethan depictions of that history. What is the focus of this study is the way in which those relationships are represented regardless of their historical sources.

¹⁷ Mayer, *Representing France*, 33.

While it may seem irresponsible to only treat the contemporary relationship between England and her nearest neighbors, my study is inherently forward looking in that it seeks to understand how Elizabethan conceptions of nation and foreignness influenced her current relations with her nearest neighbors and the international community.

Scope of this Work

Chapter One begins with a discussion of the interplay between geography and dramatic orientation in Elizabethan historical drama. Remaining within the boundaries of this proximate perspective, Chapter One focuses on Ireland, Wales, and France. Ireland, in this chapter, is noticeable through its evident absence from historical drama of the time. *Richard II* alludes to Ireland during Richard II's disastrous Irish Wars ultimately paving the way for his deposition. Similarly, the absence of Ireland from Saxton's maps of England (and Wales) make the neighboring island equally noticeable. The long history of English occupation and the shared landmass make Wales an exemplum of an already proven (and successful) foreign policy. While recognizing the differences between Wales and Ireland, it is difficult to not place the two locales within close conversation with each other. France, the other proximal location discussed in this first chapter, is potentially the most anomalous. However, France's long history with England (both as occupier and occupied) necessitates its inclusion within a discussion of England's relationship with those locales closest to her. All three geographic spaces are shown to be essentially destabilizing to the nation of England, although all for different reasons. The tentative bias finds expression through the consequences of traveling to (and receiving travelers from) outside the boundaries of England.

Chapter Two addresses the beginning of a two part analysis of gender within the history plays. Chapter Two focuses on normative gender behaviors both for those who are foreign and those who are English. Interestingly, this is the first place where Englishness is encountered and defined, since the history plays oftentimes go to great lengths to depict English heroes as meeting normative gender expectations. This ought not be surprising in a series of English history plays; however, a discussion of English qualities provides a means through which those who are aberrant can be more fully understood. This chapter first addresses masculine men and later addresses feminine women. Those who fall under the structure of masculine men include obvious choices such as Talbot from *1 Henry VI*, as well as less self-evident characters like Richard III from *Richard III*. Indeed, it is Richard's villainy which ultimately evidences his superlative masculinity. The counter to masculine men would be feminine women, and these women similarly range from the expected Isabella from *Richard II* to the unexpected Jane Shore from *1 and 2 Edward IV*.

The counterpart to Chapter Two, Chapter Three addresses aberrant gender roles within the history plays. Necessarily included are the women of the first tetralogy, namely Joan of Arc and Margaret of Anjou, who are marked not only by their masculinity but also by their inherent foreignness. The feminine men who constitute the other half of this chapter also suffer from the label of inherent foreignness: Edward II is tainted by his love for the 'Frenchman' Gaveston. Within Chapter Three geographic location become as important as the identity of the characters—Margaret is an English queen in England, even if she is nearly irredeemably French, while the same cannot be said for Joan of Arc. The inversion of gender roles normally corresponds with national boundaries in a way which makes a discussion of geographic location (and the implications of each location)

understandably important. Phyllis Rackin and Jean Howard's work, *Engendering a Nation*, has been particularly useful within the scope of both this chapter and the one preceding.

Chapter Four begins an investigation into the implications of foreign language within the history plays. This chapter is devoted solely to Shakespeare (specifically the second tetralogy), since he is the playwright most concerned with foreign language, at least within the genre of the history plays. This chapter spends a great deal of time discussing Lady Mortimer's song within *1 Henry IV* and Princess Katherine's language lessons in *Henry V*. It also features a discussion of the Cade Rebellion (and the aversion to French) as a useful predecessor to the use of foreign language within the history plays. However, where the Cade rebels unambiguously condemn those who are not monoglot English speakers, the Welsh of Lady Mortimer is necessarily destabilizing causing even the fiery Hotspur to momentarily soften. Foreign language provides the most unambiguous condemnation of what is foreign (and the proximal foreigner) while also providing the most accessible bridge between England and her neighbors. Although those who speak a foreign language are intrinsically designated as foreign (Lady Mortimer can truly speak no English), they are also given the greatest moment of potential understanding—certainly more than Joan of Arc or Margaret of Anjou receive.

If Chapter Four's analysis of foreign language invites participation, Chapter Five's engagement with dialect challenges this participation. This chapter focuses on the famous four captains of *Henry V*, and the uneasy resolution they provide to a unified English empire. Although these four captains do not include a Frenchman, the conquest of France throughout the course of *Henry V* and the wooing of Princess Katherine include the French within the discussion of dialect and the tenuous English

union. In what could potentially be seen as the most ambiguous of the chapters, Chapter Five provides no easy resolution to England's relationship with her most proximate neighbor, France.

The study ends with a brief discussion of how proximal relationships changed following the accession of King James I who, in many ways, brought Scotland with him. History plays in this time were certainly in the decline, and when they do appear, are located within more current history. The conclusion will give a brief analysis of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* paralleling the trajectory of the earlier chapters. A discussion of history plays would not be complete without a discussion of how they changed (and how the English changed) following the death of Queen Elizabeth and the accession of her nephew.

Chapter One
Foreign Places and National Spaces: Mapping the Other

For the liminality of the western nation is the shadow of its own finitude: the colonial space played out in the imaginative geography of the metropolitan space; the repetition or return of the margin of the postcolonial migrant to alienate the holism of history.

- Homi Bhabha¹

Contemporary society has little concern for the creation, or even the existence, of maps. As Edney points out, “In modern society the nature of maps is self-evident. Most people do not actively use maps on a daily basis, but none the less, every member of a modern, developed society has been taught what to expect of a map: the map is accurate, is truthful, does not contain errors, shows the lie of the land or the network of highways.”² While these expectations of a map readily coincide with contemporary expectations over cartography, the early modern time period was just beginning to implement these same rules which would come to mirror our own.

Early modern England (and Europe) saw a shift in cartographic representation from largely symbolic ecclesiastical maps to scaled political maps. Scaled maps arose as a new phenomenon growing from a desire to better understand and categorize knowledge about foreign defenses and walled towns. These early maps were largely restricted to military campaigns and so were rarely seen by the public. The much more common means of depicting space came through the medieval *mappimundi* otherwise known as a “TO” map due to the arrangement of the continents.³ Despite

¹ Homi Bhabha “DessimiNation” in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), 291-322. 318.

² Matthew H. Edney, “Theory and History of Cartography,” *Imago Mundi* 48 (1996), 185-191. 186.

³ The medieval “TO” maps featured a “T” within an “O”. Jerusalem was at the center of the “T” with Asia above, and Africa and Europe placed on either side. This map was largely ecclesiastical and used as a means of showing the placement of God’s city, Jerusalem, and the displacement of Noah’s sons over the earth. For a more detailed discussion of mappamundi and the “TO” map see Catherine Delano-Smith

some recent studies showing that *mappamundi* did not always follow this orientation, the purpose of these maps remained the same. Often displayed in churches, these maps were a means of depicting Biblical stories and had a specific, didactic purpose.⁴ Ecclesiastical maps were also used on pilgrimages; however, these maps consisted largely of lists of towns and landmarks rather than pictorial representations of space. Although these ecclesiastical maps provided a foundation for the public to see themselves as part of a larger whole, the maps were largely unconcerned with accurately portraying physical space and so will not be considered at length in this chapter.

The rarely seen utilitarian martial maps and the often seen illustrative ecclesiastical maps elucidate the extent to which maps were active in society in early 16th century England. Accuracy for the former was necessary for the understanding and implementation of tactics and defenses, while the latter only needed to tie geography loosely with space since the focus was on the representation of the story. In the ecclesiastical maps, Jerusalem was frequently pictured as a very large space in order to include the important biblical events centered there. Fortress maps, on the other hand, needed to accurately portray enemy fortifications but rarely used a bird's eye view; instead, they showed the full façade of streets and buildings similar to an illustration. As maps expanded, the symbols of cities shrank but still retained the side view. The exploration of the New World led to the standardization of distance when small inconsistencies between maps became a major problem when locating ports across an ocean. Spain was the first country to begin standardizing map production by

and Roger J.P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (London: British Library, 1999); Rhonda Sanford Lemke, *Maps and Memory in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

⁴ David Woodward, "Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 75, no. 4 (Dec 1985), 510-521. 510.

creating an institute for the maintenance and registry of maps; the institute was created at the behest of captains who encountered navigational difficulties as each ship might mark the distance between ports differently.⁵ This eventually led to the implementation of a system designed to regulate the creation of maps. As the New World began to take shape under a specific set of measurements, cartographers turned their attention to the familiar localities nearer to home.

The first of these local maps were created by Christopher Saxton in 1579 and included the counties of England and Wales. Christopher Saxton's maps were revolutionary on two fronts; not only was his map the first scale map of England and Wales, but he was also the first mapmaker to physically survey the land he was depicting.⁶ Early maps relied largely on the classical tradition of mapmakers compiling data from all previous maps when making their own map and rarely seeing the land they were cataloging. Therefore, new maps were merely aggregates of those that had come before, and flaws in one map could be passed between maps for years. Similarly, after Saxton's maps, many other mapmakers based their maps on those Saxton created, rarely bothering to survey the land; in fact, Saxton was the first mapmaker to survey the land of Wales before depicting it. Saxton's decision to enter Wales (as well as his decision not to map Scotland or Ireland) argues for the growing importance of boundaries and the socio-political implications of mapmaking.

Although Early Modern England was just beginning to create maps acting solely as a scaled representation of real places without any particular didactic or military design, beliefs and ideas surrounding space and the world had been in

⁵ David Turnbull, "Cartography and Science in Early Modern Europe: Mapping the Construction of Knowledge Spaces," *Imago Mundi* 48 (1996), 5-24. 7

⁶ William Ravenhill, *Christopher Saxton's 16th Century Maps* (Shrewsbury: Chatsworth Library, 1992). This book contains an excellent, brief discussion of Saxton's methods.

existence since the Romans. The most well-known of these theories was the geohumoral theory, a theory relating ethnic characteristics to the location where a group of people live.⁷ This theory, understandably, felt the influence of cartography quickly and flourished as the ease of visually locating the self and others grew. Geohumoral theory rested on the premise that one's climate effected temperament and characteristics. Character was distinguished mostly in northerly and southerly directions: Northerners were apt to take on another person's traits while Southerners were full of passion. These traits were based on the classic medicinal humors and founded on the belief that different humors thrived in different climates. For instance, blood was seen as a ruling humor of those residing in the south and the cause of their unruly passion. Although this is a rudimentary discussion of the basic premises of geohumoral theory, there are many ways the theory has been used, and this chapter will restrict most of its discussion to the impact of geohumoralism on northerners. As map use increased it became easier to visually locate spatial relationships between groups of people, and geohumoral theory acquired new prominence.

Similarly, the ease with which one could point to a place on a map and see either belonging or difference, and inclusion or exclusion based on the border on the page and the boundaries on the map, became a means of identifying sameness of character amongst people. According to John Gillies, moral and physical similarity became linked as well, "places are read in terms of their 'moral' (or historical, or

⁷ The connection between geohumoral theory and Elizabethan conceptions of foreigners is delineated in A.J. Hoensalaars, *Images of Englishmen and Foreigners in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries: A Study of Stage Characters and National Identity in English Renaissance Drama: 1556-1642* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 1992)., in Lloyd Edward Kermode, *Aliens and English in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009). The latter book also discusses the consequences of geohumoral theory, but in relationship with Mary Floyd-Wilson's *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003): be discussed later in this chapter.

epic, or mythological) significance and then concurred on that basis, opening up the possibility that places bearing similar moral significance might be found to be physically alike also.”⁸ The Irish, for example, were not found to be morally like their English brethren, and as a result, their land is frequently defined as the opposite of English soil. Maps provided the illustration to the words; now, instead of maintaining the essential difference of the Irish people, the difference of the landscape itself could be shown to indicate the characteristics of the people who inhabited it. The correlation between the peoples who occupied a land and their characteristics carried through to the difficulties (or ease) with which the land could be mapped; for instance, the intractable Irish were linked to their unmapped land.

Borders, boundaries, and margins also increased the feeling of difference between England and her closest neighbors. Cartographic innovations helped to cement this view as Saxton’s wall map of England and Wales shows Ireland, Scotland, and France on the periphery, scantily labeled and only partially represented. As the map on the following page shows, such an illustration ought not to be surprising as early modern maps attempted to imitate extant ancient examples in which the barbaric and the unknown were placed on the outermost spaces about which the least was known. Maps featuring England as the center necessarily positioned other spaces on the periphery, and these peripheral spaces came to be used as a means of exclusion: “with the growth of geographic information and the outward push of imperial borders, come ever more others, renewing the need to differentiate, and perpetuating the need for a symbolic border and ever new rites of exclusion.”⁹

⁸ John Gillies, *Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 48.

⁹ Gillies, *Geography of Difference*, 6.

This means of marginalization manifested itself through the literature of the period whether in pamphlets, essays, or drama.

Although the presence of maps in Elizabethan drama has been sufficiently documented, the extent to which maps went beyond their physical presence on the stage and permeated concepts of setting and character has not.¹⁰ Discussion of the influence of maps and the discovery of the New World abounds, particularly relating to *The Tempest*,¹¹ but adequate discussion of proximal foreigners and the emerging European maps is lacking. The ability to visually place oneself in the context of a nation (or a world) simply by looking at a piece of paper was revolutionary and drastically changed conceptions of belonging. With this change in spatial awareness the settings and spaces of drama also took on a new dimension representing and recreating popular notions of the land they represented. By looking at common ideologies surrounding map creation and the movement between spaces within the drama (going from England to France for instance) this chapter seeks to understand the relation between concepts of the foreigner as represented through changing spaces.

¹⁰ David Reed, "Losing the Map: Topographical Understanding in the 'Henriad'," *Modern Philology* 94, no. 4 (May 1997), 475-495. 476.; Lisa Hopkins, *Shakespeare on the Edge: Border-crossing in the Tragedies and the Henriad* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005).

¹¹ Some examples include: Charles Frey, "The *Tempest* and the New World," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (Winter 1979), 29-41.; Trevor R. Griffiths, "'This Island's Mine': Caliban and Colonialism," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 13 (1983), 159-180.; Deborah Willis, "Shakespeare's *Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 29, no. 2 (Spring 1989), 277-289





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¹² Christopher Saxton, *England and Wales* ed. William Ravenhill *Christopher Saxton's 16th Century Maps: The Counties of England & Wales* (Shrewsbury: Chatsworth Library, 1992), 30-31.

Ireland

Ireland occupies a unique and ambiguous position in Elizabethan culture. Unlike Wales and Scotland which are connected to England by land, Ireland was made distinctly separate by the Irish Sea. Ireland's otherness and foreignness were thus established through geographic separation and cemented through the difficulty of traveling to the island. As the aim of this chapter is to investigate the ways in which proximate foreign spaces are conceived and how these conceptions are then projected onto the peoples residing within such spaces, Ireland's proximal foreignness must be thoroughly established. The idea of proximity frequently finds its ways into Elizabethan discourse as Andrew Murphy points out: "The category of proximity is central to virtually all English writing on Ireland, as it returns again and again in such discourse, taking different forms over time as the historical circumstances of the Anglo-Irish relationship change, but always serving to disrupt such discourse."¹³ Ireland's place as proximal and distant, same and other, forces a discordance and an uneasiness that permeates the drama and shapes the portrayal of Irish space.

This difficulty was then projected onto the Irish people, their climate necessarily determining their character, which is a foundational principle in geohumoral thought. Mary Floyd-Wilson discusses the use of geohumoral theory and its effects on the development of English nationalism. "Northerners, including the English, were understood to possess barbaric unruly humors that gave them bodily strength, healthy appetite, and slow wit."¹⁴ These particular characteristics were mostly assumed by the English and shaped to be indicative of English fighting ability,

¹³ Andrew Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us: Ireland, Colonialism, and Renaissance Literature* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1999), 16.

¹⁴ Mary Floyd-Wilson, "English Epicures and Scottish Witches," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 57 (Summer 2006), 131-61. For a more detailed account, see Floyd-Wilson's longer work *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

but they were also intensified in those beyond the boundaries of England. Scottish highlanders and Irish kerns quickly epitomized the stout northern characteristics and, while worthy adversaries, were seen as needing English guidance and governance. Furthermore, Northerners were also seen to be more susceptible to foreign influences than were the Southerners. This was frequently employed to show the temperance of the English in contrast with those people further north (who were too northerly to resist any influence) and those people further south (who were too obdurate to be moved at all).

Beyond citing the humors intensified by the climate in describing the Irish, Englishmen frequently attributed the formidable climate and terrain as evidence of the intractable nature of the Irish. The difficult nature of the Irish enabled the English to view Ireland as a land that required civilization and conquest. The geographic separation only served to enforce the opinion that the distant and obviously separate Irish were in need of the English for guidance. The desire to reform the Irish was further complicated by another class of people in Ireland: the Old English who had settled in Ireland during the first wave of colonization in the 12th century. Many of the Old English had married the Irish and, according to many New English (those who had recently acquired land in Ireland), were hardly recognizable as English any longer so thoroughly had they adapted to the culture of the Irish. Holinshed records Sir Philip Sidney as remarking, “The very English of birth, conversant with the savage sort of that people become degenerate, and as though they had tasted of Circe’s poisoned cup, are quite altered.”¹⁵ However, despite the Old English preference for Irish culture, many of the English still regarded them as thoroughly English, although

¹⁵ Rafael Holinshed, *Chronicles of Ireland, England, and Scotland*. (London, 1586) vol: 2, 50.

of a distinctly lesser class.¹⁶ The problem with the Old English was their illustration of the negative qualities of the Northerner in geohumoral theory. The Englishmen's susceptibility to foreign influence made Irish society appear more appealing than the one they had left behind, despite the clearly inferior status of the Irish culture and people. As Murphy argues, "This assimilation raised the disturbing specter for the new arrivals of an attractive Irishness that might serve to collapse English identity into a seductive Irish difference, even as residual English policy objectives imagined the possibility of an Englishness capable of absorbing Irishness."¹⁷ The contradiction in English considerations of the Old English is not a failure of geohumoral theory to define groups of people, rather this confusion is indicative of an English negotiation of place. While the Old English ancestry may be English, their actions were not; thus, the often conflicting reactions to the Old English signify their shifting place within Elizabethan politics. The marriages between the English and the Irish made clean ethnic distinctions difficult, and rather than relying on the ethnic or social differences within Ireland, England relied on a geographic distinction (the inclusion or exclusion of people from the Pale). As the Pale expanded and contracted, so too, did the distinction between those who were civilized and those who were not.

The project of civilizing Ireland did not begin with the reign of the Tudors, but it found its most exhaustive push with the reign of Elizabeth. The end of her reign coincided nearly perfectly with the final early modern conquest of Ireland to such an extent that Carew delayed informing the Irish about Queen Elizabeth's death when he

¹⁶ "The English referred to [the Old English] as 'English rebels' and 'Irish enemies'; these are the more polite expressions used for these families who had become more Irish than the Irish themselves." John McGurk, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: The 1590s Crisis* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997) 3. See also, Stephen O'Neill, *Staging Ireland: Representations in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 11-23.

¹⁷ Murphy, 64.

was negotiating the final terms of surrender.¹⁸ Because Queen Elizabeth's reign was bound together with conquest in Ireland, it was also the center for the development of the language of imperialism—a center that was largely dependent on policy in Ireland. As a testing ground for Imperial policy, action in Ireland tended towards either military strength or diplomacy, oftentimes oscillating wildly between the two within a short period of a time, and was legitimized through a separate court located in Dublin. The contradictions in policy were exacerbated by the changes in Lord Deputy with the shifts in politics at the court in London.¹⁹ Threats of the Lord Deputy usurping power in Ireland were frequent and significant. The difficulty of passing messages between London and Dublin served merely to emphasize this problem so that a noble out of favor with the Queen would find himself recalled to London at a moment's notice without regard to the political consequences in Ireland. The power wielded by the Lord Deputy made for a formidable rival for the Queen, causing consistent anxiety and tempering policy made in Dublin.

The dangers for a Lord Deputy stationed in Dublin were constant, but were marginal when compared with the Queen's necessary political maneuverings. A strong military reaction would increase the taxes on the subjects as well as conscript many of the men into military service. However, a diplomatic policy threatened to expose a lenient hand and erase any gains made through a military campaign. Furthermore, Spain's discoveries and conquests in the New World placed more pressure on Queen Elizabeth to expand her territory in order to assert England as a world power. The gold Spain reaped from her New World colonies (and the relative

¹⁸ McGurk, *The Elizabethan Conquest*, 23.

¹⁹ For an interesting approach on a much more personal level Alan Stewart's biography of Philip Sidney is an excellent example of the trials faced by a Lord Deputy in Ireland: Alan Stewart, *Philip Sidney: A Double Life*, (London: Pimlico, 2002).

poverty of England) intensified not only the need to control Ireland, but also the need to make Ireland profitable. Ireland, then, was not simply a sounding board for future Imperial policy, it was a means of justifying England's place within Europe. England was under significant strain to secure Ireland before seeking further territory in the New World.

As Ireland could be regarded as a precursor to lands conquered in the New World, England also sought to colonize the already conquered land. Colonization and rule in Ireland were based on the prominence of land as a physical representation of power. The indigenous Irish did not hold land (and primogeniture) in the same regard as their English invaders; instead they preferred a more communal means of allocating leadership within tribes.²⁰ Despite the difference in manifestations of power, the Irish recognized the importance of land, and therefore mapping, to the English. Equating mapping with English imperialism, the Irish sought to restrict English conquest by killing cartographers.²¹ Because of the difficulties encountered by English cartographers in Ireland there are no full maps of Ireland by the English until the reign of James I. The maps that do survive are largely military maps of smaller locations used by the English army.

The difficulty in mapping Ireland was soon reflected in English attitudes towards depictions of the land itself. As Klein points out:

The abstract result of a survey—the geometric outline—requires the cartographer to move beyond a sense of land as a local and social space, deeply immersed in regional custom, that defies its translation into a set of mathematical data. This discursive model, rather than standing in conscious

²⁰ McGurk, 4.

²¹ Bernhard Klein, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 61. Rhonda Lemke Sanford makes a similar claim in her book when she argues “mapmakers as well as poets and dramatists seem to want to prescribe certain ‘correct’ behaviors associated with particular places and they seem, at times at least, to have a moral design beneath what might initially seem to be a rather unbiased presentation and a morally neutral document.” (17)

opposition to the land presented and contained on a map, frequently defines the moment of corruption that necessitates the reforming power of cartographic order. Thus, the colonial rhetoric surrounding the representation of Ireland constructs Irish space as the inherently transgressive realm of the savage or rebel where renewal of political control must be preceded by systematic cartographic description.²²

As the first distinctly non-English space that required mapping the space of Ireland quickly became associated with the cultural schema designed for it. The transgressive culture of the transgressive people grew to include the physical space of Ireland as well. While maps were often thought of as simple markers of place, the consistent attempt to map Ireland demonstrated not only a tangible knowledge of the space but also its control. The first printed map of Ireland appeared in Baptista Boazio's *Irelande* in 1599, even though there was a drastic increase in the number of maps of Ireland drawn between 1580-1603 due to the Irish wars.²³ Maps of Ireland were the means through which the transgressive space could be known and controlled, eventually leading to the control of the peoples occupying the space as well. As Klein mentions later, Ireland's absence from Saxton's maps is not accidental.²⁴ Saxton's maps are the key to a distinctly English space that is separated from the continent and from Ireland. The significant shortage of cartographic knowledge led to an inability to control the land and a consistent lack of accurate intelligence. Elizabeth often remarked on the shortage of maps of Ireland as something she needed for governance, but the absence of easily accessible maps gave Ireland a distinctly mysterious and unknown characteristic, which was reflected in the absence of Ireland from the stage.

²² Klein, 63.

²³ *Ibid.*, 113-115.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 125.

Unlike the other spaces discussed in this chapter, Ireland is in the unique position of never being staged in a history play.²⁵ Wales and France are both spaces of performed activity; Ireland, on the other hand, is a space of diagetic action. Richard II's departure for Ireland with an army implies military operations, and York's governance of Ireland (and his rebellion) in *2 Henry VI* is also implied power. We, the audience, are only told of the catastrophic shift of power in Ireland after it has already happened both with Richard's lost army and York's invading one. Like Queen Elizabeth who was unable to directly participate in the governance of Ireland and so was left to hear about it perpetually after it was over, so the audience was always falling behind through their inability to see the events in Ireland.

Inadequate knowledge of Ireland's terrain also proved difficult for military strategists who were always less informed than their Irish enemies. As cartographic knowledge of the land of Ireland gained importance (largely through its absence), the little knowledge that appeared was considered especially secret and limited to military commanders.²⁶ This, combined with Ireland's propensity to seek assistance from foreign countries in their rebellions, made the threat of invasion from Ireland a constant and permanent threat. Ireland came to represent a great unknown in Elizabethan culture, not only because the terrain, people, and culture were largely unknown, but also, in popular notions, the people of Ireland went largely ungoverned. Governance of the peoples beyond the Pale wavered significantly during Elizabeth's reign; there were periods where it was uncertain if the Pale would remain under

²⁵ There is one extant Elizabethan play that takes place in Ireland, George Peele's *Captain Thomas Stukeley*, but it is not a chronicle history play, and so is not considered here. *Captain Thomas Stukeley* is a much more contemporary play regarding the 1578 invasion of Ireland (and attempted invasion of England).

²⁶ Klein, 113.

English control, while there were others when most of Ireland appeared to be within reach.²⁷

Wars in Ireland were undoubtedly unpopular, and were seen to consume more resources than they brought back into the State. As a place where resources were drained Ireland represented a troubled land—the consequences of which were recognized in England. As Klein argues, “Thus in Shakespeare, Irish space is initially synonymous with a source of political unrest, a place from which rebellion may at any moment spread to England.”²⁸ Therefore, not only does the spatial use of Ireland in *Richard II* and *2 Henry VI* reflect the view of Ireland as an unknown space where power is lost for the English monarch, but it also becomes a source of the political unknown.²⁹ Ireland’s absence from the stage and maps indicates not only its turmoil, but also England’s profound sense of loss in Ireland. In Ireland, in the unknown, political (and military) power disappears. Both plays speak to that loss: *Richard II* examines the military drain on the country while *2 Henry VI* represents the concerns over political resources and the threat of a competing court. In both plays, Ireland comes to demonstrate the loss of political power and resources for the monarch. Both King Richard and King Henry lose their kingship as a result of their engagement with Ireland.

In *Richard II*, Richard’s deposition arises as a direct result of his spending on the Irish wars. Not only does King Richard assume the possessions and wealth of the deceased John of Gaunt, but he also intends to send out blank charters to tax the

²⁷ For a further discussion of Elizabethan policy in Ireland see McGurk, 12; O’Neill, 33-45; Klein, 61-69; and Murphy, 97-123.

²⁸ Klein, 171.

²⁹ For the dating of the plays, I will be using Alfred Harbage’s *Annals of English Drama, 975-1700; an analytical record of all plays, extant or lost* (London: Methuen, 1964). Harbage dates *Richard II* from 1595 (60-61) and *2 Henry VI* from 1591 (56-57).

nobles more heavily. The expense of the wars becomes the impetus behind the major social unrest in the play. Money quickly becomes the central issue of the play as first there is no money to wage war in Ireland and then there is no money to defend against Bolingbroke's invasion. King Richard acknowledges the absence of money from the treasury, and so resolves to gather funds for the kingdom through any means, all the while refusing to concede that his profligate spending has been the source of the kingdom's troubles. His minion, Bushy also recognizes the power of money too late, as he defines the direct relationship between loyalty and taxation:

Green: Besides, our nearness to the King in love
 Is near the hate of those love not the King.
 Bushy: And that's the wavering commons: for their love
 Lies in their purses, and whoso empties them
 By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.
 Green: Wherein the King stands generally condemned.
 2.2.127-133³⁰

York is also troubled by money, questioning Richard's discretion in the Irish wars and later bewailing the absence of money to defend England. King Richard's irresponsible spending (on foreign fashions and pageants), we are told, have emptied the King's coffers and left him at a loss for the Irish wars. Despite his lack of funds, King Richard is determined to establish himself as a military power like his ancestors.

As the son of the Black Prince, Richard is the inheritor of an overwhelming military tradition. His uncles have won their fame and glory on the fields of France, where conquest and victories seemed to await them. Now, Richard is in a position where he must live up to the deeds of his father, grandfather, and uncles. Richard is given consistent reminders of his heritage to the extent that when York chastises King Richard for his narcissistic errors, he uses the language of Richard's lineage:

³⁰ All Shakespeare quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from William Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare based on the Oxford Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York & London: Norton & Company, 1997).

I am the last of noble Edward's sons,
 Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was first:
 In war was never lion raged more fierce,
 In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,
 Than was that young and princely gentleman.
 His face thou hast, for even so look'd he,
 Accomplish'd with the number of thy hours;
 But when he frown'd, it was against the French
 And not against his friends; his noble hand
 Did win what he did spend and spent not that
 Which his triumphant father's hand had won;
 His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,
 But bloody with the enemies of his kin.

2.1.172-184

Richard's father, York argues, was able to win the money he spent, rather than spend money that was not his own; this is significant since resources become the determining factor in the deposition. But more than that, France is the seat where Richard's father gained his glory. France was the perpetual enemy. For King Richard to enter France would be to challenge the memory of his father, and it would be a challenge Richard may not win. Because France will remain under the shadow of his family's past, Ireland becomes the only serious option in which Richard can establish himself as powerful monarch and legitimate warrior. The Irish wars are the means through which Richard will step out of the shadow of his history and into his autonomous monarchy. Richard must physically enter the space of Ireland and leave the space of England to solidify his kingship and dismantle his image as a simple boy king. According to O'Neill, the discursive space "between the physical limits of the nation, English identity, and the limits of Richard's authority is played out geographically through Richard's disastrous relation to Ireland."³¹ Ireland, however, fails to bring Richard the glory he so desperately craves. Ireland's vast difference from France in history, people, and resources makes failure nearly inevitable.

One of the major problems with Queen Elizabeth's handling of Ireland was that there was no consistent policy. The government was unable to commit either to

³¹ O'Neill, 104.

diplomacy or to military conquest, leaving both policies woefully debilitated: during times of diplomacy, there were still preparations for war; and during times of war, there was rarely enough money to supply the soldiers. King Richard is partaking in a distinctly military policy that affects the society of England through its drain on resources. The topicality of *Richard II* has been made clear both in the popular anecdote of Queen Elizabeth's identification with the title monarch and in the probable censorship of the deposition scene.³² Ireland is neither the origin of the censorship (it is the deposition scene) nor is Ireland's place in the drama a fiction (or even a stretch from the actual history); Ireland's place was the direct cause of Richard's downfall, and the manifestation of Richard's failing suggests the subversive nature of this unknown space. This subversion sheds new light on the importance of Ireland as a space indicative of lost resources. Although never staged, the threat of Ireland as a space where power is lost is pertinent enough to precede the infamous deposition scene and to stand as a frontispiece for rebellion. Ireland is a place of lost resources paving the way for rebellion and potentially even the deposition of a king.

The audience is never told of Richard's victories or defeats in Ireland, they are largely irrelevant to the current action of the drama. We do know that Richard returns from Ireland without an army. In fact, Richard has lost everything in Ireland and returns from Ireland with a handful of nobles and the hopes of a Welsh army. Like the outcome of King Richard's Irish expedition, what has happened to the army is as mysterious as the land to which they embarked. Ireland has succeeded in not only consuming the money levied for the Irish wars, but also the manpower that had been allocated to it. Tudor expeditions to Ireland often resulted in similar losses; Irish

³² Cyndia Susan Clegg, "'By the Choise and iuitation of al the realme': *Richard II* and Elizabethan Press Censorship," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (Winter 1997), 432-448. 432; Janet Clare, "The Censorship of the Deposition Scene in *Richard II*," *Review of English Studies* 41 (1990), 89-94.

forces frequently decimated the English troops.³³ Richard II's comment on the coats of his soldiers, "The lining of his coffers shall make coats/To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars" (1.4.60-61) would have called to mind a consistent problem the Tudors faced when attempting to levy an army: supplies. Soldiers were frequently levied from amongst the lowest ranks of society and were given too little money to furnish themselves and provide for their own food (such a system is parodied in Shakespeare's *2 Henry IV* dated for 1597).³⁴ The consequences of this approach to Ireland were a radical loss of manpower and money suffered during Irish expeditions. Rather than depict such losses by staging the defeats of the English against the Irish, losses could be illustrated through the failure to return and by maintaining Ireland as a mysterious space through its absence from the stage.

Resources and manpower were not the only casualties of the Irish wars, communication also suffered from the weather and the 'unknown coasts'. Once Bolingbroke has entered England, while Richard is in the unknown wilds of Ireland, messengers are dispatched to King Richard. Bushy comments "the wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland/But none returns" (2.2.123-124). The failure of messengers to return from Ireland also leads to the flight of the Welsh army. Without news of Richard's arrival, or his departure from Ireland, the Welsh army relies on signs from nature for intelligence on the success of Richard's campaign. These signs show Richard to be dead and, without knowledge to the contrary, the Welsh military abandons Richard. Richard's absence in Ireland and the failure of communication ultimately result in the loss of his kingdom. Richard's insistence on partaking in the Irish wars, as a means of claiming part of the military inheritance that is expected of him, is the last poor decision in what the audience believes to be a long list. What is

³³ For more information on levies and losses see McGurk, 61.

³⁴ Harbage, *Annals*, 64-65.

most interesting about this long list is that “Shakespeare did not invent the Irish problem for Richard; the problem was one of historical record...The fact that Richard’s problematic involvement in Ireland was part of the perceived ineptitude of his rule associates him with that country in a very unflattering way.”³⁵ Not only did Ireland serve as the catalyst for Richard’s deposition, but the troubling space of Ireland is also connected to the troubling space of Richard’s rule.

Richard II not only offers the metaphor of England as a garden and the illustration of Ireland as a consumer of resources, but it also links the space of Ireland with King Richard’s reign. While Richard’s Irish expedition became the impetus for his decline and the space of Ireland responsible for the consumption of his power, Murphy links Richard’s reign with Ireland in a tangible way stating, “with Richard’s journey into Ireland thus intertwined with the demise of his power, we get something akin to the consuming of a discordant element within the English polity by the discordant realm that lies adjacent to (but outside of) it, almost as if Richard and Ireland negate each other.”³⁶ The discord of England is therefore made manifest through Richard’s travels to the unknown and dangerous other space of Ireland.

Richard II demonstrated the consequences of following a strict military policy in Ireland, while the earlier composed *2 Henry VI* shows the consequences of a competing court in Ireland. King Richard’s self-absorption, extravagant taxation, and irresponsible use of resources fed the rebellion that brought about his downfall. King Henry VI’s trust in his advisors proved to be his near fatal mistake. The danger of rebellion within England while its military force was outside the boundaries of

³⁵ Robin E. Bates, *Shakespeare and the Cultural Colonization of Ireland*, (London; Routledge, 2008), 65.

³⁶ Murphy, 104.

England was the threat examined in *Richard II*. In *2 Henry VI*, however, the threat is not from a lack of military at home, but from a power grown too strong abroad.

While King Richard voluntarily entered into Ireland arguably in an attempt to attach as many victories to his name as his father had to his; King Henry VI must enter Ireland through his deputy, the Duke of York, out of necessity caused by an Irish rebellion. Just as their intentions for entering Ireland differ so do their response to their ancestry: both King Richard and King Henry VI are sons of strong warrior fathers, the Black Prince and Henry V respectively. Where Richard II sought to construct a name that rivaled his father's; Henry VI is untroubled over his loss of lands in France and only strives to quell the rebellion in Ireland out of fear that it may carry over into England. Henry VI is content to sit in his "walled garden" of England and not strive for more.

When the news of the rebellion is brought to King Henry VI's knowledge, he sends the Duke of York to "lead a band of men/Collected choicely" to defeat the Irish rebels (3.1.312-3). The instruction to choose his men speaks to the importance of having strong men to fight the Irish wars. York's caliber of man, we soon discover, is vastly different from Henry VI's expectation. Despite bringing choice men from England, York intends to levy a separate army in Ireland that he can then use to invade England and, in his absence from England, he plans to have a wild Englishman named Jack Cade sow the seeds of discord for him in England. York chooses Cade for his courage in battle in Ireland, his mimicry of the Irish kern, and for his retention of Englishness. Cade is a veritable contradiction of national characteristics: his courage mimics that of the Irish, yet his habits, we are told, are those of the Englishman. Cade provides a hybrid utilizing stereotypes of both the Irish and the English, although the purpose to which he agrees is undoubtedly duplicitous. While Cade provides an easy

means through which York can begin a rebellion even in his absence, he is necessarily compromised as genuine. “[Cade’s] connection with Ireland and the Irish kerns associates his actions with a dangerously foreign territory. It is as if Cade brings Irish wildness into England with his march on London.”³⁷ Not only does Cade enter from Ireland, but Cade brings the dangerous and unknown space of Ireland with him. Both Bolingbroke and the York of 2 *Henry VI* take advantage of an undefended England to rise up against the monarch; however, Bolingbroke enters a kingdom with an absent king and York enters the kingdom presuming to be king.

Although York is sent to Ireland with an army under the express direction of quelling the rebellion and nothing more, he uses his political and military autonomy to consolidate his own power in the absence of a monarch. York is not engaged in a diplomatic mission, but he does represent the ever present dangers of stationing strong political minds abroad. The resources England committed to Ireland ran the risk of not only disappearing but also returning as a threat against the state. Elizabeth faced many dilemmas with the men she commissioned as Lord Deputies in Ireland; the post was a high honor that required trust but its distance also created paranoia about a separate court. York leaves England with men who are supposedly loyal to England and to King Henry VI, but the men York returns with are distinctly his own: they are not English and they have sworn no allegiance to the king.

The stage directions at 5.1 specify that York enters with an Irish army (“Enter York and his Army of Irish” 5.1. s.d. TLN 2990-1), and his immediate proclamation is, “From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right” (5.1.1). In the scenes preceding King Henry is informed, “The Duke of Yorke is newly come from Ireland/,And with

³⁷ Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin, *Engendering a Nation: A Feminist Account of Shakespeare’s English Histories*, (London: Routledge, 1997). 80.

a puissant and a mighty power/Of Gallow-glasses and stout Kernes” (4.8.25-27).³⁸ Although York is claiming the English crown, his language and the physical presence of his Irish soldiers show he enters England as an outside invader. York may be asserting English sovereignty, but his entrance into England excludes the English. He has come for conquest within England, and in assembling his forces in Ireland he has become an invader. Ireland has proved to be not only a place where resources are lost, but also a negative source of power against England in supplying the men that will work to overthrow the current monarchy. Where *Richard II* warns of the dangers of a monarch leaving England untended to conquer Ireland, *2 Henry VI* warns of too much power given to those acting in the monarch’s stead. Of course, such power had to be granted to the Lord Deputy (and to any commander of the monarch’s forces), and with the difficulties of communicating easily with Dublin, the Lord Deputy was largely independent of London. York acts as the realization of English concerns regarding an English deputy let loose with unlimited power. King Henry VI’s failure to assert his power over York enables York’s invasion of England.

Although a fellow Englishman, York’s invasion embodies another current fear regarding the state of an unconquered Ireland in Elizabethan England—it was prone to invasion from other foreign countries. Although York does not gain the support of any other continental state in his assemblage of power, his consolidation of influence in Ireland represented a real fear. Ireland was not a site for foreign invasion until 1601, but in the aftermath of the 1588 Armada, the threat of invasion from Ireland was constant. Dated for 1591, *2 Henry VI* acknowledges the threat of foreign invasion through York’s rebellion. Ireland becomes a place where consolidation of politically

³⁸ These exact lines can also be found in the first folio. William Shakespeare, *First Folio of Shakespeare: The Norton Facsimile*, ed. Charlton Hinman (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1968). TLN 2876-8.

transgressive power is a reality, and where the danger to the monarch is ever-present whether the monarch enters Ireland or trusts another to enter in his or her place. Returning again to the idea of Cade bringing “Irish wildness into England with his march on London,” the invasion not only of men but also of the physical space of England (by way of Ireland) was a practical fear. Given that the Irish were not defined only by their difference “in language, religion and dress, and even in the way they wore their hair,” but also by the space they inhabited, an invasion from Ireland, the land, would signal a loss of all that was essentially English.³⁹

As the most politically tumultuous location in the Elizabethan history of places, it ought not be surprising that Ireland was never staged in a chronicle history, although it is staged in Peele’s *Captain Thomas Stukeley* (1596).⁴⁰ The mystery of Ireland was far from comforting; the inability to map Ireland and so to take ownership of it plagued the Elizabethan monarchy throughout its government. While only two of the chronicle history plays deal with Ireland, even they only encounter the space of Ireland indirectly. Missing armies and misplaced trust dominate the unknown and unseen space of Ireland challenging any policy that attempts to colonize the land. The dangers afflicting the English because of Ireland were real and were staged. The treatment of Irish space and its relation to the treatment of the Irish are indicative of English attitudes towards foreignness. The absence of Ireland from the stage indicated the profound uneasiness the proto-English territory had in Elizabethan consciousness and the means through which the unknown space could become known even without access to a visual representation.

³⁹ Jean E. Howard and Physill Rackin, 14.

⁴⁰ Harbage, *Annals*, 62-63. Harbage lists the play as Anon., with a potential author of Heywood and a potential revision in 1599.

Wales

If Ireland was the place where resources and power were consumed to the detriment of England, then Wales was represented as the place where people were forgotten. A geographic space in the process of losing and having its own identity assimilated—the land and the people of Wales were undergoing an ontological transition. Elizabethan Wales was a space lost unto itself, following Henry VIII's Acts of Union, and while Wales was the space for forgotten people, the people of Wales were in the process of being forgotten in a very real and in a very metaphorical sense. Unlike Ireland, a thoroughly unknown space, Wales was a well-known and well-documented space. Furthermore, although the people of Wales were largely viewed as second class, this was not in direct correlation with the ability of the English to know and partake in the Welsh landscape. Wales had been documented along with the space of England for centuries. The knowledge of Wales was augmented by the fact that Christopher Saxton was the first surveyor to set foot in Wales before documenting the land. As a place of contradiction, Wales was both thoroughly recognizable to the English and simultaneously largely unknown through its prior lack of accurate representation. Although Wales had been documented alongside England for centuries, Saxton's expedition to map the landscape of Wales in 1579 was the first time in which Wales was charted. Wales was also linked to both England and Ireland through its essential ports along the Irish Sea. Welsh ports were seen as integral to successfully staging any Irish expedition since men were levied heavily from the counties in and near Wales and troops were moved continuously through the ports. The ports were frequently used to such an extent as to inhibit the economic growth of the port cities because the presence and maintenance of the

queen's soldiers was a constant pressure on the Welsh economy.⁴¹ While the inability to accurately map the space of Ireland led to a constant pressure to subdue the people, the knowledge of space in Wales allowed for the exploitation of the space. As an exploited space, the people who are lost in and to Wales are often seeking refuge or in some cases seeking a space of vengeance.

As Megan S. Lloyd indicates, the uneasy state of Wales in Elizabethan drama reflects the uneasy state of Wales in Elizabethan England.⁴² Henry VIII's Acts of Union of 1534 and 1543 stipulated that the Welsh must assimilate into England through culture, traditions, and language. As a result of these Acts of Union, the Welsh were forced to conform to succeed or retain their culture and remain second-class members of society. The attempt to unify Wales ultimately resulted in a land and people that were forced to forget their separate identity. This forgetting is termed 'silencing' by Megan S. Lloyd, and for the Welsh it is an act of silence; however, for the English this silence offers a place of forgetting and forgetfulness.

While the Tudors were enforcing a strict policy of assimilation on the part of the Welsh, the dynasty was also appropriating a Welsh origin myth as a means of historicizing their presence in England. Through a shared heritage, the English (or as they hoped, the British) would be able to claim a superiority of place that was equal to many groups on the continent.⁴³ However, with the appropriation of the myth of origin and the assimilation of the Welsh people came a natural hesitancy of inclusion. Some, like John Twynne, a Canterbury schoolmaster, refused to accept a shared heritage and argued "that the Welsh were descendants of the dark-skinned

⁴¹ For a more complete discussion of the consequences for the Welsh harbors and military on the Irish campaign see: McGurk chapters 3 and 7.

⁴² Megan S. Lloyd, *"Speak it in Welsh": Wales and the Welsh Language in Shakespeare* (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2007), xi-xiii

⁴³ Philip Schwyzer, *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004).

Phoenecians” but “Britain’s northern climate had lightened the skin of subsequent generations, yet their long-held custom of painting themselves denoted their southern lineage.”⁴⁴ Unlike Ireland, which had the separation of a sea, Wales was connected to England through the same physical space and through a “shared” history, therefore complicating the space of Wales. Where Ireland was a land that needed to be conquered for the sake of its inhabitants, Wales was a land that needed to be annexed for its history. While the Welsh were frequently seen as wild and uncivilized, their status as descendants of Brutus required a more subtle means of dominance. English policy in Wales became focused on assimilation rather than reformation. To solve this problem Wales became a space of silence. Rather than acknowledge a difference, England sought to erase past borders paradoxically combined with their reluctance to fully incorporate the Welsh within the English polity.

Edmund Mortimer in *1 Henry IV* is the quintessential forgotten man.⁴⁵ Leading an army against Glendower, he is defeated and captured, and, in the course of the politics surrounding his ransom, he is abandoned and all but forgotten. The rebels claim that Henry IV’s knowledge of Mortimer’s stronger claim to the throne leads to his rejection and eventual expulsion from court.⁴⁶ We also know Mortimer has married Glendower’s daughter and has allied himself with the Welshman. Mortimer’s marriage has indisputably marked him as an opponent to England and has unmistakably aligned Mortimer with the rebels. Mortimer’s alliance is not unlike those frequently encountered on the border of Wales and in Ireland; and just as the

⁴⁴ Wilson, 11. Twynne published several works on British history in his lifetime where he discounted the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth—an important figure in Welsh history.

⁴⁵ Harbage dates *1 Henry IV* from 1597 (64-65).

⁴⁶ *1 Henry IV* 1.3.140-184. The rebels only appear to use Mortimer’s claim at their own convenience and never give him the recognition he would be entitled to if he was their king.

Old English in Ireland who married the Irish were seen as forsaking their Englishness for the native, so were those who took a Welsh spouse.⁴⁷ England's desire to assimilate the native did not extend to marital alliances, a prime example of the often contradictory nature of Elizabethan policy regarding its closest neighbors. According to Lloyd, "typically marriages happened between Welsh landholders and Englishwomen in Elizabethan Wales, even though technically it was still illegal for an Englishman to marry a Welsh woman without losing his privileged status."⁴⁸ In marrying Glendower's daughter, Mortimer has forfeited his right to claim privilege in England and, perhaps, even his claim to the crown.

King Henry IV certainly reads Mortimer's actions as a decisive break from the English, even going so far as to prohibit Mortimer's name to be spoken in his presence. In denying Harry Percy the right to speak of Mortimer either for his ransom (1.3.89-92) or on his behalf (1.3.117) King Henry is attempting to erase Mortimer from the minds of the court. Mortimer is not willfully pursuing a course of isolation, but because of his actions once in Wales, Mortimer must be ignored by the state of England and so is thrust away from the English court. Henry IV's silencing enforces the erasure of Mortimer serving only to incense Harry Percy and drive the dissident nobles into an alliance with the Welsh. As we will see, Wales becomes a temporary refuge for forgotten peoples. While Henry IV attempts to silence the memory of Mortimer, he ultimately fails in that his censure is the catalyst for a larger movement. While both Richard II and Edward II (in Marlowe's play) are violently brought out of Wales and back into England, Mortimer serves as the foundation for a larger campaign that does not include him.

⁴⁷ Lloyd, 22.

⁴⁸ Lloyd, 22.

Shakespeare's only portrayal of Mortimer occurs in 3.1, in which Lady Mortimer and Glendower also make their sole appearance. The moment captured on the stage happens in the middle of the play and it is the forsaken English Mortimer that appears to hold the scene together; negotiating between the strong-willed Harry Percy and the supernaturally self-defined Glendower. Although their presence is located in the center of the play and in the middle of the action, Mortimer and Glendower disappear from the play following the scene. The hasty excuse given just prior to the Battle of Shrewsbury accounts for their absence and the historical reality of their failure to fight with the other rebels, but it also raises the issue of why these seemingly unnecessary characters are included. Shakespeare's willingness to 'adjust' history for dramatic ends would not preclude leaving Glendower and Mortimer as mere side references, so their inclusion in the play (within Wales) is a deliberate choice. Although Mortimer and Glendower are later excised from the play, left in Wales and unmentioned for the remainder of the action, their inclusion and the unique quality of the scene are significant not just in terms of place but in terms of language, something to be discussed in Chapter Four. Not drawn out to the Battle of Shrewsbury, Mortimer is trapped in Wales as an unrealized promise of what might have been.

While Wales manifests itself as a place of forgetting in the history plays, the Welsh identify Wales as a place of prophecy (often seen as superstition by the English). This prophecy, however, is featured heavily in Welsh conceptions of the self and nation. While Glendower prides himself on the signs that accompany his birth, Welsh prophecy also accompanied the Tudor monarchy. Henry VII was seen as the reincarnation of Cadwaladr and used a predominantly Welsh army on his return

into England.⁴⁹ Although Henry VII used his Welsh heritage as a means of eliciting support and did little to change the status of the Welsh in Britain, the promise of a redeemer king was a central tenet of ‘Welshness.’ Following close on the heels of Glendower (another prophesied redeemer king), Mortimer’s claim to the throne combined with his Welsh alliance make him a suitable candidate for the *mab darogan* (or the Son of Prophecy), a claim that Henry VII, Henry VIII and Elizabeth would have known well. While Henry VIII may have been nominally referred to as the *mab daragon*, by the time Henry VIII had made his Acts of Union, the hoped for *mab darogan* was all but lost to the Welsh.

Shakespeare’s King Henry IV, who, we are led to believe, is well aware of Mortimer’s political importance, ignores rebel hopes for Mortimer, and these hopes are simply passed by before the Battle of Shrewsbury. Like Henry VII, Mortimer embodies the hopes of the Welsh for a renewed monarchy that will reassert their primacy, and also, like Henry VII, Mortimer falls short of the expectations placed upon him. Unlike Henry VII, however, who does not fulfill the prophetic expectations he encouraged among the Welsh through political necessity, Mortimer never achieves a suitable position of power to fulfill any prophetic destiny. Although both Glendower and Mortimer cease to participate in the action of the play after 3.1, Glendower is brought back as an unseen threat in *2 Henry IV* eventually dying off stage and unremarkably late in the play. Mortimer, however, escapes all mention. Mortimer’s claim to the throne, if it is considered significantly stronger than King Henry IV’s, gives Wales a separate identity as refuge for the heir to the throne. As Rackin and Howard describe, Wales’ location stands for a number of other issues within Elizabethan drama; “in addition to the liminal location at England’s geographical

⁴⁹ Schwyzer, 21.

border that makes Wales a constant military threat and the liminal attributes that make it psychologically disturbing, Wales is also the place where the hereditary heir to the throne is sequestered.”⁵⁰ Despite Rackin and Howard’s claim that the hereditary heir to the throne is kept secretly in Wales (presumably waiting for a moment to assume power), no one in *1 Henry IV* appears to take Mortimer’s claim seriously. The nominal use of Mortimer’s heritage allows the rebels to attempt splitting the island into thirds rather than supporting Mortimer’s unequivocal right to the reign over its entirety. Wales becomes not the place where the “hereditary heir to the throne is sequestered,” but the place where he is forgotten. Once in Wales, those claiming to support Mortimer overlook even his nominal claim to the throne. The tripartite threat from the military, the people, and the crown trouble notions of unity which both the English and the Welsh (although in very different ways) hoped would come with the dawn of the Tudor monarchy. Through the policies of the English in creating a sense of shared history, the prophetic space of Wales has been forgotten as thoroughly as the people who follow the prophecy.

Richard, of *Richard II*, does not arrive in England proper; instead, he arrives on the coast of Wales to a land that has already forgotten him. His Welsh army has disbanded the previous day under the assumption that Richard has already died, the commons have sided with Bolingbroke, and most of the nobles have joined arms with the rebellion. Richard may have lost his army and sown the seeds of discontent in England when he left for Ireland, but he has become the forgotten king once he has landed in Wales. Richard goes further than being a forgotten person once he has news that his army has deserted him by declaring “Go to Flint Castle: there I’ll pine away” (3.2.205). Located in Wales, Flint Castle was one of the first castles built by Edward I

⁵⁰ Howard and Rackin, 168.

after his annexation of Wales. Richard's decision to seclude himself in a castle that has stood as an icon of English conquest in Wales complicates Richard's status as forgotten. Richard becomes a bastion of Englishness in an otherwise different land, and while this bastion enhances the English presence in Wales it does so through obliterating English power instead of bolstering it.

Richard's presence goes unfelt by all those in the region. When Bolingbroke comes upon the castle, he is ignorant as to the royal presence inside until informed by another. The encounter between Bolingbroke and Richard displays how Richard internalizes his absence from court and his apparent anonymity:

King Richard: Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee
 To make the base earth proud with kissing it.
 Me rather had my heart might feel your love
 Than my unpleased eye see your courtesy.
 Up, cousin, up. Your heart is up, I know,
 Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

Bolingbroke: My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.

King Richard: Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all.

Bolingbroke: So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,
 As my true service shall deserve your love.

King Richard: Well you deserve. They well deserve to have
 That know the strong'st and surest way to get.

3.3.188-199

Through Richard's language, his status as one of the forgotten is solidified as he wishes himself cloistered away and given "an obscure grave...in the King's highway," where no one will remember who he is (3.3.153-4). Richard has resigned himself to the same fate ordained for Elizabethan Wales—to be forgotten. Rather than reentering England in an act of reclaiming his country and also his memory, Richard is content to wall himself within Wales and to allow Bolingbroke to overtake his country and his legacy. Wales acts as a means of escape for Richard, he imagines himself living the life of a deposed king within a land that has been largely forgotten. He can be one of the forgotten amongst many.

Not only does Richard desire to be forgotten once he has entered into Wales, but he has forgotten the land as well. As he questions the name of the castle, “Berkeley castle call they this at hand?”, he demonstrates ignorance of the land he hopes to inhabit (3.2.1). Wales serves as an intermediary, a place between Ireland and England, a state of limbo through which one must pass if one entertains hopes of regaining power. Richard, however, does not immediately pass outside of the borders, and so, as Hopkins identifies, “Richard II meets his downfall in Wales, which for him serves as a literal half-way stage between England and Ireland.”⁵¹ Wales ultimately fails as a place of keeping Richard II safe from his enemy Bolingbroke. Richard seeks the protection of Wales until he is able to consolidate power and move back to England, he appropriates a castle for his use, and he is eventually discovered by Bolingbroke. Lacking any military strength and forced behind walls, Richard’s resistance to Bolingbroke is minimal. While Wales offered a haven of absence, it proves to be the means through which Bolingbroke is able to bring the “silent king” back to London. Without an autonomous identity of its own, Wales has been subsumed by the dominant English power, and so Wales continues to subsume those who remain within it.

Marlowe’s play *Edward II* illustrates further the dangers of entering into Wales and again demonstrates Wales as a place of protection or as a place of forgetting. Edward enters Wales following his defeat by the nobles and his queen, and as an added measure of protection he pretends that he is fleeing to Ireland. Ireland has previously been mentioned in the play as a place where an army might be levied to challenge the powers of England

Know you not that Gaveston hath store of gold,

⁵¹ Lisa Hopkins, *Shakespeare on the Edge: Border-crossing in the Tragedies and the Henriad*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 14.

Which in Ireland may purchase him such friends
 As he will front the mightiest of us all?
 1.4.258-60⁵²

However, Edward does not consider levying an army and turns to Wales as a means of escape. Ireland is mentioned only to lead others astray, and in denying himself a means of consolidating power, Edward has already lost himself the crown. Edward also goes further than Richard in his attempt to distance himself from kingship by changing his appearance to match his surroundings. Within the Welsh monastery, Edward uses the disguise of a monk to hide himself and his followers, and unlike Richard, Edward has the support of an abbot in his protection.

The abbot claims that under his protection no one will either hear of him or capture him in an unequivocal support of Edward. The abbot's support of Edward, even in the wake of Edward's many poor decisions, resembles that given to the Tudor monarchs. As will be discussed later, Henry V prides himself on his Welshness, and the Tudors all claim a direct line to Welsh descendants. Lloyd introduces this argument at the outset of her book as she refers to the accession of the Tudors to the throne of England; "The national pride that drew many Welsh to London, with a Welsh family on the throne, ultimately led them to become monoglot English-speaking Welshmen."⁵³ The Welsh enthusiasm to support the Tudor monarchy parallels the stalwart advocacy of the abbot in helping to keep Edward safe. Although Edward was not a Tudor monarch, the contrast between the loyalty of the abbot and the waning allegiance of Elizabeth's Welsh subjects represents a growing disparity since the time of Henry VIII. As the only proximal space to be shown in Christopher Saxton's *Maps*, Wales was seen as included within the state of England. However,

⁵² Christopher Marlowe, *The History of Edward II*, ed. Martin Wiggins and Robert Lindsey (New York: New Mermaid, 2003).

⁵³ Lloyd, xii.

with this inclusion came certain requirements for assimilation that were originally embraced by the Welsh, but which quickly became oppressive means of controlling the them.⁵⁴ Edward, however, feels none of the political tension and is promised safe stay at the Welsh monastery. Like Richard, Edward's asylum in Wales is short-lived: Mortimer's men eventually discover Edward's location and convey him back into England. Wales may offer a temporary refuge in which to pine, but Wales is not sustainable as a place of permanent refuge even for the native Welsh—to seek to use the space in such a way inevitably leads to disappearance.

As a space of temporary refuge and forgetting, armies were frequently assembled in Wales for movement into England. However, these armies seldom made it past the border of Wales. Richard II's Welsh army deserts him believing him to be dead, and Glendower fails to appear with his troops in *1 Henry IV*. This lack of movement beyond the boundaries of Wales supports the claim that Wales is a land of forgotten people. Rather than consuming resources and power like Ireland, Wales fails to produce the promised resources. Remaining within boundaries, the Welsh await the prophesied king, but make no move to actualize the prophecy. The reclusive tendency of the Welsh in Elizabethan history plays attests to the different histories of the English and the Welsh. While Ireland was a place to be conquered, Wales was a place that required suppression and a history that had to be appropriated to maintain the sacred cause of the English.

Both Ireland and Wales suffered defeat and conquest at the hands of the English, and both were unable to regain their independence in either Elizabethan or Jacobean England. While Ireland was a place that still needed to be controlled, a status reflected in the lack of maps and its absence from the stage, Wales was a

⁵⁴ Lloyd, xii.

controlled place that needed to be more than a colony if England was to claim an ancient history. This ancient history dominated thinking and policy in Wales during the Tudor monarchy. The mythic and prophetic origins the Welsh used to validate their heritage testified to the unchanging and therefore verifiable nature of their past. The physical space of Wales on the stage manifests this past through the use of myth and prophecy within Wales itself. Furthermore, the extent to which the Welsh needed to become part of the English state for the English to partake in the shared heritage became the necessary forgetting of Wales as a separate sphere.

France

Each space discussed in this chapter carried its own connotations and symbolism with its own uses in Elizabethan England. France in its political and geographical distinction from England, offers a particular view of Englishness. While both Wales and Ireland remain foreign (albeit a rather uneasy foreignness at times) despite their occupation by the English, France's claim to sovereignty (and France's ability to defend this claim) diverges from the other proximal foreigners. Ireland and Wales both strongly attempt to keep (or regain) their own sovereignty; however, England's recognition of French kings set France apart. Although this sovereignty was regularly disputed during the time period the history plays most frequently portray, France is indisputably a discrete political entity, even though its borders undergo constant change. Language, as will be discussed later, and the physical space in France served as tangible markers of England's place and stake in the continent. That French was spoken as the language of the English court until the late Middle Ages certainly did little to establish the supremacy of England over France; however, the Hundred Years War supplied the English with innumerable opportunities to

physically legitimize their place in relation to France and to demonstrate English virtues.

If Ireland was a space of lost resources and lost power because of its tumultuous political situation and Wales was a space allocated for forgotten peoples through the appropriation of Welsh nationalist folklore, then France was a place to prove legitimacy. Despite the fiercely patriotic tone assumed by the English entering into France and the firm condemnation preached by the most ardent nationalists, England's relationship with France was by no means as one-sided as the English frequently hoped it was. In *Thomas of Woodstock*, the court is chastised for wearing French fashions rather than adhering to traditional English clothes. Woodstock is viewed as patriotic (and also as unfashionable) for his apparel in English wools. France's place as over civilized and soft frequently worked itself out over the course of the Elizabethan history plays when the "effeminate French" were contrasted with the hardy English. England needed to define itself outside the negative connotations imposed by geohumoral theory (which said Northerners were slow), while still affirming the French in their geohumoral characteristics (their passion and softness).

While the Elizabethan history plays do not always show overwhelming victories on the soil of France, they frequently do. Furthermore these victories often come as a surprising English victory against impossible odds.⁵⁵ However, the recurring theme of providence, fate, and fortune reinforces the idea that it is not through English strength alone that they have won the day, but rather there is something intrinsic to the English that makes their cause right and just. The oft-

⁵⁵ *Henry V* and *Edward III* are perhaps the most obvious examples. The battle of Agincourt depicts a weary and outnumbered English victory. *Edward III* places the armies of Bohemia, Sicilia, and France among others against the strength of England. The Black Prince is even presumed dead due to the number of men he is fighting against (of course the Black Prince survives to gain great honor in this particular battle).

changing religious atmosphere of France, in many ways culminating in the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, did little to alleviate the English insistence on essential rightness. Similarly, the continual loss of French territory, eventually leaving Elizabeth with only military bases, threatened England's presence on the continent as a Protestant country capable of battling the Papists. In fact, Elizabeth was monarch of the smallest English territory in over 400 years. The English hold on steadily shrinking French territory likewise relegated French lands to the margins of Saxton's famous maps, except for the port city of Calais. Few Elizabethan cartographers sought to map France, and while Elizabeth encouraged cartographers to survey Ireland, she did not do so for France. While Elizabeth's reign may have come to signify a reign of prosperity (and expansion), when she assumed the crown England was a shadow of its former glory.

Due to this former glory, France occupied a categorically different space than either Ireland or Wales (or even Scotland). Lands that were seen as intrinsically connected to English defeats by the Welsh, Scottish, or Irish rarely led England to suspicions of inferiority. Defeats in Ireland were embarrassing only because they should have been otherwise and could be explained away through the barbarous nature of the Irish (diametrically opposed to the honorable English). Wales' shared heritage with England simultaneously elevated the region and forced it into the background. None of the regions in the British Isles presented the threat of an equally civilized enemy, as did France. Conquered lands in France represented the superiority of the English over continental countries in which the English were often seen as pedantic, backwards, and unintelligent.⁵⁶ The victories and defeats depicted on the

⁵⁶ Interestingly, one of the main reasons the English were a laughingstock on the continent was their insistence on using Welsh origins as history. The use of Geoffrey of Monmouth's story of Brutus as the founding myth for Britain at a time when most

stage are all memories of a golden past in which England easily conquered its French neighbors, bolstering the martial prowess of the English in the face of continental dismissal.

With few possible exceptions, no other king in English history has been subjected to such a drastic turn in public sentiment as King John whose conflict with (and in) France is central to Shakespeare's *King John* dated for 1596.⁵⁷ King John's pre-Reformation legacy centered on his numerous, and rather nefarious, attempts to gain the throne, the death of his nephew, and his excommunication by the Pope. Following the Reformation, King John's reign was notable largely because of this excommunication; however, where earlier thought held up his Papal excommunication as evidence of his poor kingship, the Reformation saw him as a proto-Reformer and, therefore, more truly English. Bale's *King Johann* reflects this particular sentiment of John as reformation hero, as does King John's inclusion in John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.

One of the key components to moralizing King John's reign, regardless of his "Protestantism," is how he gained the throne. The question of King Richard I's successor, and consequently King John's legitimacy, rested on the discrepancy between what King Richard I is said to have decreed before his death and the rules of primogeniture. While King Richard I named John his successor on his deathbed, John's legitimacy was not widely accepted due to his nephew's traditionally stronger

of Europe had accepted the falsity of their own Greek founders, only served to further denigrate the status of the English in the eyes of the continent. Andrew King "Howso'er 'tis strange...Yet is it true': The British History, Fiction and Performance in *Cymbeline*" in *Shakespeare and Wales: From the Marches to the Assembly* ed. Willy Maley and Philip Schwyzer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 157-176. [160-161]

⁵⁷Paul Quinn, "'Thou Shalt Turn to Ashes': *King John* as Protestant Martyrology," *Moreana* 45, no.175 (2008), 188-208. See also, Harbage's dating of the text in *Annals of English Drama*, 62-63.

claim to the throne.⁵⁸ Neither did King John's reputation for treachery and deception instill confidence in the commons. The wariness of the commons led King John's reign to always appear in the shadow of Arthur's contested legitimacy subsequently tainting King John's rule with a lack of validity. As with the other English monarchs battling the French, King John is preoccupied with his authority from the start of the play, although in the case of King John the doubt of the people is real. Put in the context of another history play, *Henry V*, King John's situation is strikingly different. The citizens of Angers will open their doors to the king of England, but are not convinced by Arthur's claim of primogeniture or John's possession of the crown. No one in *Henry V* questions Henry's legitimacy as king (even if the Archbishop's lengthy expostulation is hardly beyond reproach), and his French invasion serves only to reinforce the beliefs already there. King John, however, lacks public support for his reign (or at the very least *he* perceives an absence of public support), and so his French expeditions take on a serious dubiousness that can only be alleviated through territorial victories.

King John's situation requires that he enter France and demand obedience and fealty from his French subjects. King Philip of France has taken Arthur's (John's nephew and Geoffrey's son) cause as his own and has aligned his armies with Arthur's right to the English throne, challenging King John's legitimacy through the use of arms. In the first scene of *King John*, the audience is exposed to the conflict between England and France (and also, implicitly, the internal turmoil of England). The French messenger has declared war on King John if he does not surrender the crown; when John retorts with defiance, war between England and France is assured. Once the messenger has left, John argues that "[o]ur strong possession and our right"

⁵⁸ Ian MacAdams, "Masculine Agency and Moral Stance in Shakespeare's *King John*," *Philological Quarterly* 86 (Winter 2007), 67-95.

(1.1.38) will suffice to prove his legitimacy. His mother comments, “your strong possession much more than your right” (1.1.39-40), leaving it unambiguous that John’s possession of the crown means more than King Richard’s final wish, thus foregrounding the political arena of France and England over the hereditary privilege. The tangible reality of the possession of the crown is reinforced throughout the play both in France and again in England.

Shakespeare makes most of John’s claims to the throne rest largely on his current possession of the crown. When speaking with the citizens of Angers he argues, “Doth not the crown of England prove the king?” (2.1.273), using the reality of his soldiers as second evidence of his legitimacy. When Richard’s will is raised in the scene, it is through the lips of Elinor and quickly is dismissed by Constance. King John rests his argument on the tangible, moveable pieces associated with kingship (the crown, his armies, etc.), rather than on the intangible *right* of kingship. John argues that he is king through the physical realities he has created; Arthur’s (or rather Philip and Constance’s) argument relies on the intangible authority of precedent. Lacking even a presence in England, Arthur has little power and even less authority to claim the throne through the practical means John has assumed. Instead, Arthur must allow someone else to speak on his behalf, raise an army for him, and defend his right. Both King Philip and King John rely on the same basic components for their legitimacy: their crowns and their armies; therefore, nothing fundamentally changes for John when he enters into France. The language of legitimacy for John is the same as it is for Philip.

The citizens of Angers speak a different language from either of the kings providing the conflict at the opening of the play. Instead of acknowledging the tangible evidence brought by John and Philip, the citizens of Angers require to see “whose right is worthiest” (2.1.281). In response, both kings resolve to fight each other as proof to the citizens of Angers who has a better claim to their fealty. This battle on French soil also determines the legitimacy of the English king. However, this battle fails to award legitimacy to John or Arthur. As the battle ends in a draw,

the citizens resolve to remain in their city waiting for adequate proof of the English king. The situation is only resolved once Philip has betrayed his alliance with Arthur in favor of making an advantageous match for his son and a more immediate alliance with England.

Angers represents a middle space between England and France; as an English territory within France Angers is neither strictly French nor strictly English. The situation they find themselves placed in at the beginning of the play is untenable: they are unable to conciliate with either of the monarchs seeking entrance, where the admission of one monarch would certainly lead to an attack by the other. Likewise, the citizens of Angers are unable to adequately declare their loyalty to either monarch. Terms such as “worthiest” lack meaning outside of a tangible reality, and the citizens’ promises of loyalty sound empty to both monarchs. Because of its status as neither French nor English, the space of Angers highlights the similarities between King John and King Philip rather than their differences. King John’s legacy of deception—many believed he manipulated himself into Richard’s will—links him with King Philip, who will leave the widow and her son for the chance of advancement.

King John’s foray into France, although important (particularly in the wake of the Reformation), failed to shape the course of events the way Edward III’s French expeditions ignited the 100 Years’ War. *Edward III* dated to 1590, parts of it at least arguably written by Shakespeare, begins the historical chronology of the alleged cycles of history plays and is the source for this analysis of France.⁵⁹ The legacy of Edward III shaped the motivations and actions of English monarchs in France for hundreds of years, culminating (in the history plays at least) with Henry V. While King Edward III faced no contention over his right to rule, his mother Isabella’s invasion of England had been against her husband the king, Edward II, so Edward III’s claim to the throne of France was the test of his regime’s potential. Politically,

⁵⁹ Harbage, *Annals*, (54-55).

Edward III began the Hundred Years War as a response to the rejection of his claim to the throne and the retroactive imposition of Salic Law. Edward III's claim to the French throne was through the female line, which under Salic Law meant he could not inherit the throne (Henry V faces a similar predicament). Furthermore, through the dowry of Eleanor of Aquitaine (his great-grandmother), the King of England held the Duchy of Aquitaine and was required to pay homage to the French king. Given that Edward III, as King of England, was claiming the French throne, the thought of paying homage to a different French king was unthinkable. In such a political situation, it is no surprise that the French messenger sent to the English court asking for Edward's homage receives a thinly veiled threat:

See how occasion laughs me in the face:
 No sooner minded to prepare for France,
 But straight I am invited,--nay, with threats,
 Upon a penalty enjoined to come:

1.1.67-70

Edward goes on to recount how he would be remiss in his duty if he did not enter into France; however, as he soon makes clear, he is determined to invade France--not to pay homage.

Edward's overwhelming victories over the French in the early part of his invasion (including the Battle of Crecy and the Battle of Poitiers both illustrated in *Edward III*) gave credibility to Edward's status as legitimate king of France. Edward's later military defeats at the end of his reign, culminating with the death of the Black Prince, are overlooked in the English story of the Hundred Years' War. Henry V, most noticeably in Shakespeare's play, seeks to mirror his French campaign with that of Edward III, while Henry VIII sought to liken his reign to that of Henry V. Looking to the past, English kings sought to provide and argue for their legitimacy through their martial prowess in France. At the beginning of that past, Edward III was

fighting not only for his right to France but also for the kings of the next several hundred years. Edward III's claim to France was a simple and relatively straightforward one, unlike the cases to come in the next several hundred years. His mother was the daughter of the king of France and at his death and the death of her two brothers, Edward was the next closest male heir. However, because France was unwilling to annex itself to a king of England he was necessarily ousted from his 'rightful' inheritance and given his justification for invasion while the French were able to justify the efficacy of Salic Law. The actions of the historical King of England are then reflected in *Edward III*, where medieval concerns and actions come to stand for Elizabethan concerns as well.

The symbolism and the reality of Edward III's invasion cannot but have influenced the discourse surrounding it. In *Edward III*, both the English and the French refer to the justice of their cause in God's eyes. Victories and defeats in battle are indicative of a larger claim to the French throne rather than merely the outcome of a moment or the culmination of a series of smaller skirmishes. The characters frequently refer to God's justice as they remark upon the victories and defeats in France. For the French, such a position may not be surprising. The swiftly changing French border forced towns and fortresses to swear conflicting allegiances in a matter of months (or less), so their appeal to a divine force in the wake of exorbitant taxation, starvation, and high death rates becomes a coherent response to the unpredictable realities facing the medieval (and Renaissance) French. The English invaders, however, relied upon God's judgment as a justification of their right and continued presence in France. Victories were indications of God's blessing, while defeats indicated a deep cultural flaw in the English. Often, this flaw was seen as the result of spending too much time in France and becoming tainted with French

characteristics. *Edward III*, however, reflects the victories of the English, their triumphal entry into France and their two decisive early battles. The virtues of the English are brought into the realm of France victorious. While English virtue is formed at home, it is only tested and legitimized in France. France becomes the crucible through which Englishness is refined, thus necessitating movement across the channel.

As a central response not only to continental dismissal but also to the rise in French mythologies of Joan of Arc and Charlemagne, the history plays seek to mythologize medieval kings, the most prominent being Henry V. The depiction of the famous Battle of Agincourt followed by the marriage of the Princess of France to the King of England was a moment of national pride that was nearly unrivaled. Following in the wake of the defeat of the Armada, several victories in the Low Countries, and an ambitious offensive in Ireland, the story of Henry V could easily come to reflect the promise of Elizabethan England. Often seen as the most patriotic and propaganda oriented history play, most recent scholarship has challenged this popularly held notion.⁶⁰ Containing some of the most eloquent and nationalistic speeches in the Shakespearean canon, the effects of *Henry V*, dated from 1599, cannot be denied, but the extent to which this effect is interrogated by the play ought not be ignored.⁶¹ English victory in France was not merely necessary as a statement of English martial superiority, but also as a means of cementing royal stability.

⁶⁰ Jonathan Baldo, "'Into a Thousand Parts': Representing the Nation in *Henry V*," *English Literary Renaissance* 38 (Winter 2008), 55- 82; Clayton G. MacKenzie, "Henry V and the Invasion of France: Rethinking the Moral Justification," *Upstart Crow* 25 (2005), 65-70; John S. Mebane, "'Impious War': Religion and the Ideology of Warfare in *Henry*," *Studies in Philology* 104 (Spring 2007), 250-66; Janet M. Spenser, "Princes, Pirates, and Pigs: Criminalizing Wars of Conquest in *Henry V*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 47 (Summer 1996), 160-77.

⁶¹ Harbage, *Annals*, 70-71.

France stands as a place for English kings to gain or lose legitimacy, where victories and defeats symbolize the right to wear the crown. Henry's foray into France hints at an attempt to secure his reign in the wake of his father's usurpation. Henry's mission to claim the crown of France signifies his dual attempt to solidify his hold on the crown of England. In using conquest in this way, the Battle of Agincourt becomes not only the battle for France, but the battle for England as well. With a tired and weary army, a loss at Agincourt would have tarnished King Henry's reputation as a King and would have sullied his claim to the throne. While Edward III's claim to the throne rested on his grandfather and two of his uncles being Kings of France and he being the next male heir, with the deposition of Richard II, the direct bloodline has been broken. While John of Gaunt (Henry V's grandfather) was Edward III's son, the direct link of eldest son was dissipated with Henry IV's kingship. While King Henry V relies upon contradictions within Salic Law as an original justification for his claim to the French throne, it also becomes his justification to the English one. A victory in France provides the legitimacy required for Henry V's kingship (and in hindsight Henry IV's) through the real presentation of God's blessing by the extension of power and territory. Indeed, Henry IV, on his deathbed, encourages Henry to

Busy giddy minds
 With foreign quarrels, that action hence borne out
 May waste the memory of the former days.

4.3.341-3

Henry IV's deposition of his true king led him to promise a crusade to the Holy Land (both according to early modern chronicles and Shakespeare's play), but the crusade never occurred due to rebellious nobles. Henry IV spent his reign quelling rebels who claimed his reign was that of a usurper and not ordained by God. Similarly, the death of King Richard (and his deposition) led the chronicler, Hall to claim that

For some lamentyng the instabilitee of the English people, judged them to be spotted with perpetuall infamie, and brought to dishonor and loss of their aunciet fame and glory, for comittingyng so heynous a cryme and detestable an office against their king and soveraigne lorde.⁶²

The space of France not only provides the occasion for gaining English glory but also the legitimacy to rule the English people.

1 Henry VI, dated to 1592, stands in contrast to the other plays already investigated; while these plays have been concerned largely with the connection between legitimacy, *1 Henry VI* concerns itself with the character of the French in contrast to the character of the English.⁶³ Therefore, France becomes a place of cowardice, conjurers, and sorcery. The latter ought to remind us of depictions of the space of Wales where superstition and magic are taken as inherent in the land itself. While the magic of Wales imbues its inhabitants with a similar magic and its invaders with confusion; France's sorcery is tinged with the malevolent. In France, furthermore, the attributes are not given to the land, but to the people who inhabit the land. The English are not in any less danger for this, for they may gain these attributes through their extended stay in the land. Talbot becomes the English foil for the French by consistently exuding English virtue on the battlefield with a character diametrically opposed to the French.

French cowardice in *1 Henry VI* is not merely an English projection onto the French, but something Elizabethan playwrights portray the French as seeing within themselves as well. After the battle Alençon rejoices that France will “hear how we have play'd the men” in the wake of their victory over the English (1.8.16). While this victory occurs after the French have been led into battle by a woman (Joan of Arc),

⁶² Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrious Families of Lancaster and Yorke*. (London:1548: 20).

⁶³ Harbage, *Annals*, 56-57.

their own knowledge of their cowardice is striking as the French soldiers define themselves as “playing” rather than “being” men. Joan’s behavior as a “martial maid” compared with the effeminate nature of the French nobles comes as no surprise in an English history play. However, it is the self-reflexive nature of the comments made by the French, who, although caricatured, acknowledge their own cowardice. Alençon’s surprisingly honest comment should also take us by surprise when placed alongside Charles’s earlier declarations about French cowardice and his own bravery. Separating himself from the troops he leads, he seeks to set a proper example by fighting to the end; however, when the retreat is sounded he follows his troops. After his boast of forgiveness to whoever kills him if he retreats, Charles must excuse his behavior. This he does by blaming it on the men around him, “I would ne’er have fled,/But that they left me ’midst my enemies” (1.3.2-3). By placing the blame on his cowardly troops, Charles is able to escape the label of coward that ought to be leveled at him.

The French, however, are not the only cowardly soldiers. We hear the story of Fastolfe, who leaves Talbot in the field when he is in need of reinforcements causing him to be captured by the French. Talbot’s anger against Fastolfe is based upon the lives that were lost due to Fastolfe’s cowardice and, even more, on the fact that Fastolfe is a Knight of the Garter. Talbot links the title of Knight with particular behaviors Fastolfe fails to embody, and his desertion drives Talbot to vengeance. When Talbot removes the garter from Fastolfe in front of King Henry VI, Henry responds to Talbot’s contempt by banishing Fastolfe for not being a proper English knight. While Henry never participates in battle (largely due to his age) his understanding of bravery and cowardice places him in contrast to Charles who, while espousing ideas of bravery, continually behaves in a cowardly manner.

Duplicity appears to pervade the space of France, particularly in *1 Henry VI* where no one is exactly who they claim to be. Although all the characters are capable of betrayal and deception (as occurs with Fastolf's desertion [1.1.131], Burgundy's treason [3.7.58-59], and the death of Talbot [4.3-4.5]), the duplicity of women becomes central to French identity. Joan of Arc and the Countess of Auvergne seek to use deception as a means of gaining the advantage over the English, while the French men of the play willingly acquiesce. The Countess, behaving seemingly independently of external forces, seeks to capture Talbot for her own use and reward. Talbot, as the quintessential Englishman, anticipates the Countess's ploy and brings some of his troops secretly with him to the Countess's house, thereby proving not only the superiority of the English but also the communal nature of their bravery and fame. Like the Countess, Joan la Pucelle recognizes her duplicity as distinctly French saying, "Done like a Frenchman: turn, and turn again," as she links Burgundy's treason with her character (3.7.85). While the men accompanying Joan appear astonished at her suggestion of turning the Duke of Burgundy against the English, Joan has no such reservations about Burgundy's supposedly intransigent loyalty. Interestingly, the absence of integrity marking Charles and the other becomes increasingly apparent once Burgundy has joined the French. Although the English tend to actively refrain from dramatizing the French embodying any strong sense of bravery, the flagrance of French cowardice is foregrounded in the Dauphin. Charles once again betrays his propensity for cowardice and deception claiming to disdain what he will later condone (5.6).

Linked to this idea of French cowardice is also the idea of French sorcery. While such behaviors made the peoples of Ireland and Wales more fearsome, in France it serves to make them more cowardly. Rather than facing the unknown, as the

English would do in Wales and Ireland, the French reliance on sorcery is indicative of their inability to match the English in combat. Talbot refers to the French reliance on Joan as indicative of their conversing and practicing with spirits (2.1.25), and Exeter aligns French sorcery with a wish to see Henry V dead (1.1.25-27). In both cases sorcery becomes a means through which a seemingly invincible enemy may be defeated. Exeter's comment is necessarily sarcastic, he does not actually believe the French have killed Henry V through magic, but it indicates the French need to remove the powerful king and their impotency at doing so.

France does not figure prominently in the action of *Edward II* (1592), unlike the other plays discussed in this section.⁶⁴ In *Edward II* France is not a place of conquest, legitimacy, paganism, or deception; instead, it is a place of political limbo. Isabella and Prince Edward are sent to France as a means of removing them from the English court, while Mortimer escapes the Tower and flees to France. Lacking political maneuverability in England, those out of favor hope to pursue favor in a different court. Isabella's supplications in France mirror those of Margaret of Anjou in *3 Henry VI*, dated 1591, when she likewise appeals for an army on her son's behalf.⁶⁵ Necessarily, France also becomes a place of political impotency where the estranged English nobles are unable to gain support for their cause due to the depth of the French purse. The English must remove themselves from France in order to reenter the political realm of England once more; such reentering is not simply metaphorical but a physical entry and conquest of the land.

As the daughter to one of the most powerful Christian monarchs, Isabella relied on her father's power during the early years of her marriage to Edward when her rights as queen were not met. King Philip's threats were met by Edward with

⁶⁴ Harbage, *Annals*, 56-57.

⁶⁵ Harbage, *Annals*, 56-57.

changes to Isabella's living conditions (for the better) and a small amount of restraint by the young king. The death of King Philip ended most of Isabella's influence in her station as England's young queen, and while her brothers often promised aid, it was rarely fulfilled. Edward's decision to send his wife and oldest son to France seeking aid in the struggle against his nobles is simultaneously relying on the power of France that has been aligned against him and the impotency of France that has failed his wife in the past. Rather than address this past history directly, Marlowe's play uses English money as the source of rejection at the French court. Likewise, the strength which once stood against Edward in France has been replaced by a court more concerned with financial gain than governance or familial bonds. Not only is Isabella blockaded in her attempts at securing help from the French, but the French court is forced into inaction as well. The political impotency infects not only those who enter the French court from elsewhere, but compromises an inherent characteristic of the court itself.

Once Isabella is removed from the French court, through the influence of the Flemish Count of Hainault, she and the other English nobles are able to take action against Edward II. Similar to Shakespeare's invasions and depositions, threats from England (even from the English) come from outside the boundaries of England. *King John* and *1 Henry IV* both offer parallels to the invasion and deposition in *Edward II*. France is an embarkation point the dissenters use to gain a foothold in England. While Henry Bolingbroke does not enlist an army in France, he quickly gains support along the coast. Like the other uprisings, Mortimer and Isabella's army is largely that of Englishmen despite being supplemented by foreign soldiers. The foreignness of the army, then, does not appear to dictate success nor is it the focal point of the invasion. The mere presence of movement from the foreign (France) to the domestic (England) is enough to challenge the legitimacy of the rebellion, even when that rebellion is

purportedly for the betterment of the state. If France is a land for the politically dispossessed it serves a place to bolster their power and support for a return to England. France's long and varied history with England could not but have influenced the space of France on the early modern stage. England's simultaneous desire both to emulate France and to discredit its superiority blended into a unique national consciousness that cannot be found when discussing the spaces of Wales or Ireland.

The space of France acts as the location of English legitimacy in both *King John* and *Henry V*. King John's attempts to reason with the citizens of Angers about his legitimacy are futile as he is forced into battle and eventually to negotiate with the King of France. Henry's decisive action in invading France does lead to his legitimacy, not simply as heir to the usurper Henry IV, but as a King of England in his own right. The overwhelming victory of the Battle of Agincourt becomes the indication that is needed to cement Henry as king in the minds of the English. Henry's only defeat comes during his attempt to woo the Princess Katherine after the battle, and he only manages victory through acting without first asking (such as when he steals a kiss from her). France does not passively provide English monarchs with victory, as seen in King John's many attempts (or Henry VI's many defeats), but requires purposeful action where the English must assert their native right (and superiority). This action not only provides monarchs with legitimacy, but it also identifies those who are English (and sometimes British).

Henry V must travel to France to invade because only France can provide the legitimacy he craves. He must battle those with whom England is consistently locked in a struggle for superiority—to invade Ireland or Wales would be merely to admit civil turmoil. If France is an inherently different and separate space, then those who enter such a space must also be marked as inherently different from the space as well.

We are exposed to this time and again throughout all of the plays: the English are demonstrably different from the French. However, we also see those who are marked as inherently English. Henry's "band of brothers" speech is evidence of this blood tie between all who are in France, and likewise the presence of the famous four captains is an example of an essential Britishness. But *Henry V* is not the only play in which a national identity is conferred, and indeed, all the plays speak to an identity that is primarily "not French" when in the space of France.

One of the ways this national identity is determined is through English virtue and English bravery. Talbot, from *1 Henry VI*, becomes the quintessential English soldier through his actions on the battlefield. His ability to win battles and his refusal to surrender hearken back to the days of Edward III and the Black Prince. The Black Prince's repulsion of the escape routes offered by the "haughty French" in battle against overwhelming odds was paralleled by the dramatization of Talbot and his son. Edward III's march through France and his subsequent claims to its territory became a historical symbol utilized by Henry V, Henry VIII, and lastly Elizabeth I. While not all these monarchs marched their armies through France, each relied on the history laid out by the other. Henry V decided on his journey through France based on Edward III's march through France. France is the space through which English virtue is put into contrast. Against the backdrop of paganism and magic in a distinctly separate (sovereign and civilized) sphere, the English are able to see both who they are and who they are not. Superiority competes against inferiority, action against inaction, and words against the sword to refine English character both in victory and defeat.

Although disparate, each of these three proximal spaces examines a facet of English identity through the physical geographic space accorded them within the

drama. Furthermore, each space represents characteristics of the peoples who inhabit it conflating location with attributes with English anxieties. Ireland, an unmapped and unknowable space, becomes a power vacuum in which the wealth and resources of England are either lost (as happened to Richard II) or twisted into antagonistic advantage (as in the case of York). Ireland not only consumes English resources, but also transforms those resources into weapons to use against the English state. Anxieties over the English ability to rule and contain Ireland (and the Irish) become an issue of national security, as the unknowable lands and peoples continually threaten to break into the civilized space of England. Where Ireland presents the unknown, Wales depicts the land of myth, legend, and origin the English desperately needed to resolve their own history. As an island fraught with invasion, the English were no longer the indigenous peoples, which is why Wales became necessary for a national narrative. The construction of such a narrative required Wales to become part of England, and the space of Wales becomes the locus of this transition. If Ireland must be controlled, then Wales must be assimilated; however, depictions of Wales resist such a move and become their own destabilizing elements. As I will show with relation to Glendower in Chapter Four, the project of assimilating the Welsh has potentially unforeseen consequences as represented by the rebel who was educated in the English court but still retains his essential Welshness. Like Ireland, Wales mirrors the characteristics of the people who reside within it. Lastly, France provides the means through which English kings are able to establish their legitimacy. Unlike Ireland in which resources are consumed, France becomes the testing-ground of England's sovereignty. The long history of France and England necessarily impacts France's appearance on stage as does France's position within early modern European

politics. The only proximal space treated as a legitimate location on its own, France becomes England's test of self.

Chapter Two
Foreign Fellows and English Damsels: Normative Gender Performance

To be a man or a woman was to hold a social rank, a place in society, to assume a cultural role, not to be organically one or the other of two incommensurable sexes.
 - Thomas Laqueur¹

This chapter seeks to introduce the normative definitions of gender in Elizabethan England. As Laqueur's important work, *Making Sex*, argues, a two-sex/two-gender model of the human was only created after the Enlightenment. This ought to be contrasted with the one-sex model Laqueur posits existed during the Renaissance. What this argument emphasises is the social nature of sex (and gender) as the important facet to understanding how men and women were expected to behave, as well as their relationships to each other. Where this chapter seeks to identify normative standards of behavior, it is not concerned with definitions of foreignness, (in fact, it is the only chapter that is not so concerned), but with definitions of what it means to be English. While the majority of this thesis works to inform a definition of Englishness based upon what it is *not*, normative gender roles are decisively informed by what *is*. Normative gender roles are tied to what is ineluctably English, just as those who stray from these gender norms are labeled as implicitly foreign. Neither masculinity nor femininity are defined by an absence of characteristics, they are defined instead by positive characteristics indicated through a constructed social identity. Masculinity, illustrated by the characters of Talbot, Young Mortimer, and Richard III, is primarily defined through martial valor within the scope of the history plays. Likewise, this martial valor must be achieved through dangerous exploits usually against insurmountable odds. As the history plays demonstrate, the establishment of a positive description of masculinity is essential to

¹ Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990), 8.

the stability of the realm; however, this thesis cannot be completed without a solid understanding of normative masculinity and femininity.

Femininity, like masculinity, is also a constructed social practice, and one that has seen much more extensive critical attention. Understood in opposition to masculinity, the ideal woman is obedient and kept within the domestic sphere. Naturally, such women do not make history, so they are mostly excluded from history's record and absent from the history play. According to Kurtz, "Shakespeare seems to go out of his way to emphasize the plight of these helpless women: confined to, but not sheltered by, their domestic existence, they emblemize the suffering that public action often inflicts on private lives."² As Kurtz argues, Shakespeare's history plays depict the domestic sphere of women as symbolic of the larger consequences enacted by the public, masculine contests. This is most notable in Shakespeare's *Richard III* and Heywood's *1 and 2 Edward IV* where Brown contests, "Complaint becomes an index of feminine political incapacity, a rhetorical signpost which simultaneously heightens the power of the text and identifies the speaker as politically impotent."³ The presence of women in the history plays emphasizes their inability to participate in history making because they are feminine women. Those women who demonstrably evince feminine characteristics are either absent from the play (as Henry V's wife, Katherine, is from the first tetralogy), or sidelined and made victims of masculine action (Edward IV's wife, Elizabeth, is among the most notable examples). This exclusion from participation in the action also determines

² Martha A. Kurtz, "Rethinking Gender and Genre in the History Play," *Studies in English Literature* (Spring 1996), 270.

³ Richard Danson Brown, "A Talkative Wench (Whose words a world hath delighted in): Mistress Shore and Elizabethan Complaint," *Review of English Studies* 49, no. 196 (1998), 405.

foreignness: those women who fail to make history are English, while those who act are demonstrably foreign.⁴

Masculine Men

As much as the Earl of Essex and his faction may have desired the quintessential man to be one full of martial prowess, the Renaissance, in particular Elizabethan England, sought to expand masculinity to include the more “civilized” pursuits of courtiership and learning. Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* elaborates on these pursuits in listing not only the manners of the perfect courtier, but also the attitudes and topics upon which conversation ought to dwell. Headlam Wells articulates the effects of these competing ideologies in Elizabethan England and their evolution through Elizabethan theatre in general, and Shakespeare in particular. “The spectacle of men of great courage or exceptional idealism destroying their own and others’ lives may not be unique to Shakespeare. But the conflicting feelings generated by this paradox are arguably more intense in his tragedies than in any other body of drama.”⁵ Although Wells sees the tragedies as the means through which masculinity is most thoroughly considered, the histories will still provide a lens through which we can recognize how Elizabethans historically viewed masculine (or feminine) men. Wells augments his argument in observing that “Insofar as most of [the history plays] portray nations and cities either actively prosecuting foreign wars or defending themselves against incursions from abroad, Shakespeare’s tragedies and histories inevitably reflect the kind of problems that were debated in Elizabeth’s and James’

⁴ Take for example the women of Shakespeare’s first tetralogy: Joan of Arc and Margaret of Anjou, who are repeatedly referred to as French and are labeled as foreign. On the other hand, in Heywood’s *1 and 2 Edward IV*, those Englishmen (and women) who behave as proper subjects are effectively silenced by the actions of the nobility.

⁵ Robin Headlam Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 3.

Privy Councils.”⁶ In the histories, those men most attributed with masculine virtue are also the ones who are most warlike and who have won the most honors in battle (Talbot and Henry V come to mind most easily). Studious and educated kings, like Henry VI, are portrayed as lacking sufficient masculine values, making them a liability to the stability of the realm.

While Wells sees an evolution in English masculinity that attempted to blend scholarly learning with martial prowess to create a more “civilized” courtier, Bruce Smith defines masculinity somewhat differently: “In every culture men are expected to propagate, provide, and defend, but the ways in which they are expected to do those things vary from one culture to another. What remains constant across these differences, however, is the fact that masculinity must be *achieved*.”⁷ Masculinity is a construct of the self, articulated poignantly by Talbot’s son as he refuses to leave the field in *1 Henry VI*.

Then let me stay and, father, do you fly.
 Your loss is great; so your regard should be.
 My worth unknown, no loss is known in me.
 Upon my death the French can little boast;
 In yours they will: in you all hopes are lost.
 Flight cannot stain the honour you have won,
 But mine it will, that no exploit have done.
 You fled for vantage, everyone will swear,
 But if I bow, they’ll say it was for fear.
 There is no hope that ever I will stay
 In the first hour I shrink and run away.
 Here on my knee I beg mortality
 Rather than life preserved with infamy.⁸

4.5.21-33

John, Talbot’s son, argues that he, as the less distinguished soldier, should defend the field so his father can flee rather than obey Talbot’s command. Unlike his father, John

⁶ Wells, 23.

⁷ Bruce R. Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000). 2.

⁸ As in the previous chapter all Shakespeare quotations are taken from the Norton Shakespeare unless otherwise noted.

has yet to prove himself on the field of battle, and therefore, has not yet achieved his masculinity. According to Smith's line of argument, John's flight would appear cowardly since he has accomplished no valiant actions to set against that appearance. John, stating that his worth is unknown, encapsulates the constructed and experiential nature of masculinity. As Smith argues, masculinity is something that must be achieved, so each man must participate in particular actions leading to an endorsement of their masculinity. Such an achievement, however, is not built on inherent characteristics, but instead on a shifting set of socially determined values; what separates masculinity from femininity is the active participation socially prescribed in definitions of masculinity. Arthur Ferguson details the set of constructed masculine ideals that were commonplace during the Renaissance: "Elizabethans were still too close to their medieval past to have lost touch with the forms and values of chivalry...to them, chivalry remained a living memory, and they were able to give it expression in circumstances still not entirely unfavorable to it."⁹ If we accept this presupposition that masculinity relies on action for its validation, then John Talbot has yet to execute sufficient actions to complete his transition to manhood. John's rejection of his father's order ought to be read less as insubordination, then as a rejection of any action which would preclude attained masculinity. Coppelia Kahn's reading of the exchange between Talbot and his son includes a similarly constructed masculinity, "Shakespeare uses history to test the lineal principle of patriarchy—that

⁹ Arthur Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*, (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1986), 12. Elsewhere, Ferguson comments, "The ideal of the knight as a man of prowess came, however, to involve a cluster of virtues related to it by the very fact that it still encompassed for medieval minds the significant portion of the knightly life. As a result, the term 'chivalry' came close at ties to its more familiar modern meaning as a broadly inclusive ethos—closer in fact than it did for the Elizabethans who had to supplement it with reference to the more diversified roles then being assumed by the aristocracy in order to achieve a similarly extended meaning" (30).

the son inherits his identity (the name and role by which he is known in society and his inner sense of self) from his father.”¹⁰

A similar sentiment can be found in *Edward III* when the Black Prince is surrounded by enemies. The English nobles want to relieve the Black Prince so he may survive but his father, Edward III, refuses arguing

Tut, let him fight: we gave him arms today,
And he is laboring for a knighthood, man.
3.5.17-18

The Black Prince’s mere possession of arms is not sufficient proof of his masculinity; he must also prove it on the battlefield. Edward III goes on to argue that the Black Prince will secure his honor on the field if he wins, but if he dies, Edward III says of himself that he has “more sons/Than one to comfort our declining age.” (ref.) The apparent callousness of Edward III’s statement amends itself when placed in the context of achieved masculinity. The Black Prince must attain masculinity as a requisite for a stable and successful reign, but also as a loyal and effective nobleman. Rather than minimizing any sentiments for his son, Edward III is acknowledging the necessary masculine potential within each of his sons (and, indeed, all noblemen) and the mandatory fulfillment for a secure England. A son who cannot fight on the battlefield is, taking Edward’s comment literally, a son that is of no use to him—a son that would be better off dead.

Likewise, Henry IV’s sentiments towards Prince Hal in the two *Henry IV* plays also attest to this concept of attained masculinity. Although Henry IV desires his son to be more active in ruling the realm (in addition to valorous deeds in battle), this is necessarily a more specialized masculinity (Hal is not just a man he is also a prince). Hal’s definition of masculinity does not exclusively pertain to martial valor,

¹⁰ Coppèlia Kahn, *Man’s Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare*, (University of California Press, 1981), 48.

but entails the proper maintenance of the realm. Similarly, Hal argues for a transfer of valor and masculinity when following the defeat of his counterpart, Hotspur, he assumes all of Hotspur's past glories.

All the budding honours on thy crest
I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.
5.4.71-72

Because masculinity is an attained, experiential achievement, Hal is able to appropriate Hotspur's victories and masculine reputation as his own, even if he is the only one who knows, when he allows Falstaff to be credited with Hotspur's death. Henry IV's early lament ruing the birth of his son Hal and desiring a son more like Hotspur in character (1.1.86-87) bolsters the experiential rather than the inherited qualities of masculinity. Understandably Hal pledges, instead, to become "more myself," eschewing those behaviors characterizing his actions in Cheapside and fashioning for himself a masculine identity befitting a Prince (3.2.93). According to the second tetralogy, not only must masculinity be attained through action (Percy's valor as sharply contrasted with Hal's libertinism), but masculinity may ostensibly be transferred from one man to another.¹¹ Hal attains his masculinity through the defeat of Hotspur, and it is Hotspur's actions which become his own. Hal is not reliant on external knowledge of his accomplishments, so although masculinity must be achieved, the achievement need not be public. The figurative transference of Hotspur's reputation to Hal will occur regardless of external preoccupations, just as masculinity is achieved through Hal's participation in the battle. This is, arguably, a simplification of the very complex ideals of Renaissance masculinity, and, in some ways, reduces the ideal of masculinity solely to action on the battlefield; however,

¹¹ Ian McAdam, "Masculine Agency and Moral Stance in Shakespeare's *King John*," *Philological Quarterly* 86, no. 1/2 (Winter 2007), 85.

throughout the history plays it is primarily those men who are exemplary soldiers who are identified as archetypal men worthy of emulation.

Taking a clear and notable example, King Henry VI stands in sharp contrast to both the Black Prince and Talbot's son, who are willing to die for victory. Although the heir to Henry V's English national crusade and a potential European empire, Henry VI is described as studious and intelligent with little taste for either war or politics. The rose scene (4.1) of *1 Henry VI* is emblematic of Henry VI's willful dissociation from the political realities of England in favor of the ascetic Christian lifestyle: Henry's "downfall results as much from his adherence in political life to traditional Christian virtues as it does to those shortcomings."¹² Despite Henry VI's discernible disdain for the partisan politics of the realm he does, however, possess other qualities necessary for masculinity such as those Wells argues are included in definitions of Elizabethan masculinity--intelligence, scholarship, and a devotion to the church.¹³ While competing in tournaments or fighting the religious wars in the Netherlands were no longer the only proofs of a masculine man in Elizabethan England, neither were they conclusively archaic. Masculinity, as represented in the history plays, favors martial valor over any other advantage. While not preferred exclusively, the ability to command on the field becomes the dominant sign through which normative masculinity is identified.

To further the course of this discussion, we will begin with Talbot, the most steadfast and unquestionably English and masculine man in this chapter, as he

¹² Michael Manheim, *The Weak King Dilemma in the Shakespeare History Play* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1973), 77.

¹³ Christian devotion is generally a positive attribute for a king. Consider Henry V who was noted for his piety (and the portraits we have of him show his resemblance to a monk). However, where Henry's piety enabled him to lead an army into battle trusting on God's favor, his son, Henry VI, would rather evade battle and meditate on Christian life. Henry V's piety was focused continuously beyond himself to his people, while Henry VI's piety was introspective and focused on the self.

provides a crucial definition of what constitutes masculinity and its experiential consequences as the quintessential English soldier. Although not a king, Talbot leads the English armies after the death of King Henry V in the dearth of leadership caused by Henry VI's revulsion for combat. Talbot values his courage in battle above all else, fighting for his king and country even in the face of betrayal. On the other hand, Mortimer, from *Edward II*, occupies a much more ambiguous position within the history play because, although he is dedicated to chivalric ideals (particularly when they regulate the rules of engagement), he also invades England and pursues a relationship with the Queen of England. I will conclude with an investigation of Richard III, the most controversial of any of the characters in this section. Undoubtedly the villain of the play bearing his name, Richard embodies a number of masculine qualities and, in the opinion of some, is masculinity unchecked—the generational consequence of the Wars of the Roses.

Talbot's essential English masculinity as bound to his martial prowess is doubly tied to his epithet, "the terror of the French" (*1 Henry VI* 1.6.20), and the responses he receives from the various French citizens he encounters. Talbot's Englishness is necessarily connected with his masculinity and vice versa—he is masculine because he is English and he is English because he is masculine. This tautological concept is intrinsic to Talbot's identity. More specifically, Talbot's English masculinity is grounded in the tradition of medieval knights, in particular the Knights of the Garter. According to James N. Ortego,

Shakespeare's references to knightly behavior remind medieval critics that the Garter has always been an honorable institution, but also a very public one, and while societies are continuously evolving, the motto of the Garter—"Honi soit qui mal y pense" ("Evil be to him who thinks evil")—remains a fixed constant, forcing every member

and observer to confront this fraternity's esteemed reputation and past accolades, but from an ever-changing perspective.¹⁴

The public nature of the Order of the Garter was further intensified by its exclusive number (only 24 knights were admitted), and its rank as the highest order of knighthood in England. The constancy of the duties across time periods (the focus on God and country) and the near standard of perfection expected from those admitted to the ranks led to almost perpetual criticism of any knight who belonged to this order as few were able to attain the order's high principles.¹⁵ While Talbot makes no claims about the ability to meet the expectations set forth by the Order, the public nature of the Order and the public nature of Fastolf's cowardice (fleeing the battlefield) is at the heart of Talbot's complaint.

The first account we have of Talbot's imprisonment is from a messenger bringing the most recent news from France. In the wake of the loss of all the major cities in France, and the coronation of the Dauphin, the defeat and capture of Talbot seems almost superfluous evidence of the state of the war in France. The messenger, however, makes it clear that Fastolf abandoned Talbot on the field; "If Sir John Fastolf had not played the coward," making the assumption that Talbot would still be free if he had not been so betrayed (1.1.131). Talbot's account of his imprisonment also includes Fastolf, who "wounds [Talbot's] heart" and provokes Talbot to claim "with my bare fists I would execute/ If I now had him brought into my power" (1.6.13-5). Talbot also refers to Fastolf as "treacherous", "base", "craven", "dastard" and a "coward"¹⁶. The depth of Fastolf's betrayal is not merely that Talbot was left to

¹⁴ James N. Ortego II, "Seeking the Medieval in Shakespeare: The Order of the Garter and the Topos of Derisive Chivalry," *Fifteenth Century Studies* 35 (2010), 80-104. 80-81.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 81

¹⁶ "Treacherous Fastolf" (1.6.13); "base knight" (4.1.14); "thy craven's leg" (4.1.15); "dastard" (4.1.19); "Such cowards" (4.1.28).

be taken prisoner by the French, but that Fastolf is a Knight of the Garter, and leaving the field as a Knight of the Garter is a most grievous dishonor.

The play continues for three acts between the first accounts of Talbot's imprisonment and Talbot's outburst in front of the King when he tears the Garter off Fastolf. Talbot's bravery has been well-established in the intervening three acts, and, even if the audience was not familiar with the myth of Talbot, the play depicts Talbot's valor as immaculate. Talbot has faced Joan of Arc several times, outwitted the Countess of Auvergne, taken cities back from the French, and, in the scene immediately preceding, he has been created Earl of Shrewsbury by King Henry VI for his deeds in battle (3.8). Still, Talbot's outburst in 4.1 comes unexpectedly when it follows the re-coronation of King Henry in France. Both Talbot's outburst and Henry VI's re-coronation attest to a systematic failure of masculinity. In a temporary move to stem the tide of English defeats, Henry VI has a second coronation within the geographic boundaries of France in an attempt to bolster the morale of the military. Talbot's outburst, though irreverent, potentially does more to incite his followers to battle than the pomp surrounding this coronation. Further, Talbot's anger testifies to dissonant realities between the war in France and the English court; England, relying on the display of ornate formality and grandeur of the royal ceremony, is ignorant of the facts on the ground. Talbot duly apologizes for his behavior by discussing the values of knighthood, in general, and the failings of Fastolf, in particular:

Knights of the Garter were of noble birth,
 Valiant and virtuous, full of haughty courage,
 Such as were grown to credit by the wars;
 Not fearing death nor shrinking for distress,
 But always resolute in most extremes.
 He then that is not furnished in this sort
 Doth but usurp the sacred name of knight
 Profaning this most honourable order,
 And should—if I were worthy to be judge—
 Be quite degraded, like a hedge-born swain

That doth presume to boast of gentle blood.
4.1.33-44

Fastolf's cowardice is not only a dereliction of the requirements of knighthood, but degrades Talbot's courage and knighthood through association. Talbot is quick to recognize that his reputation is not reliant on his own deeds, but also the deeds of those who label themselves with the same attributes Talbot does, namely "English", "knight", "man", and "soldier." Fastolf's cowardice not only links Talbot's knighthood with cowardice, but it also links all Englishmen with cowardice. The virtues Talbot lists not only elevate those men who behave honorably in battle, but it signifies a distinct class difference. If Edward III is cavalier regarding the Black Prince's danger, it is because masculine virtue is essential in any nobleman. Talbot's argument, here, is the same. Likewise his argument is not new to the play, and, in fact, finds precedence earlier in the play with Talbot's insistence on the community of soldiers as a means of bravery and virtue during his encounter with the Countess of Auvergne.

Thinking to entrap Talbot, the Countess invites him to her home where she hopes to take him prisoner and hold him to ransom. In so doing, she seeks to show the might of the French by virtue of a French *woman* subduing the mighty *Englishman*. Talbot, however, has several of his soldiers accompany him secretly to the Countess' home, where they hide waiting for Talbot's summons. The Countess, expressing surprise at the figure of Talbot, is initially unsure if the correct man has come to her door: expecting a Hercules and a Hector to be the scourge of France rather than a "seely dwarf," the Countess amplifies the disparities between the fiction and the man (2.3.21). The Countess' description, although necessarily hyperbolic, provides an interesting glimpse of manliness in chronicle history through the two descriptors she uses, "Hercules" and "Hector," a hyper-masculinity much like

Alencon's earlier "Roland" (1.3.9). Early in the play, the French rely on hyperbolic descriptions of their English foes invoking not only an epic past (based in Homeric and Greek mythology), but also French national mythology (Roland was a famous knight of Charlamagne's). The Countess, however, does not recognize Talbot as the inheritor of a mythic legacy (Homeric or otherwise); indeed, she does not even see Talbot as bearing the outward resemblance of a warrior. The Countess' demeaning jests regarding Talbot's physical appearance corroborate a recurring issue, "Shakespeare's Talbot seems to be victimized and ridiculed by, and sometimes at the mercy of, women."¹⁷

Despite the obvious affront to his honor, Talbot does little to dissuade the Countess that his appearance is anything other than she observes. The banter between Talbot and the Countess hastily resolves itself on the heels of her own admission that he has walked into a trap, to which Talbot concedes:

Talbot: To think that you have aught but Talbot's shadow
Whereon to practise your severity.

Countess: Why? Art not thou the man?

Talbot: I am indeed.

Countess: Then have I substance too.

Talbot: No, no, I am but shadow of myself.

You are deceived; my substance is not here.

For what you see is but the smallest part

And least proportion of humanity.

I tell you, madam, were the whole frame here,

It is of such spacious lofty pitch

Your roof were not sufficient to contain 't.

2.3.45-56

In a similar thematic strain to Henry V's "band of brothers," Talbot's "shadow of himself" attributes masculinity and martial success to a communal activity, implying that the actions of one man are insufficient to prove the worth of all others. Talbot's point is not so much to disseminate the glory amongst all his soldiers (which it serves

¹⁷ Catherine Grace Canino, *Shakespeare and the Nobility* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 139.

to do), but to show the inadequacy of striking down Talbot—until his army is struck down “Talbot” will still fight. According to Harrawood, Talbot’s “ability to seize upon and draw into his body the willing and submissive egos of his men relies upon their mutual sense of shared likeness—as Englishmen, as Talbot’s men, as the executors of Hal’s legacy in France—that eventually erodes and leaves them to die unprovisioned in the field.”¹⁸ Talbot’s reliance on his men is not only indicative of their superior fighting skills, but also their communal bravery. If Talbot’s men fled the battlefield, like Fastolf, there would be little to Talbot’s reputation, since it is based on the actions of the whole rather than just on one man. Talbot’s anger with Fastolf centers itself not only as dishonoring his knighthood, but also damaging the unity that is integral to Talbot’s status as English soldier.

Just as Talbot’s chivalric principles make him unable to accept Fastolf’s cowardice, it also makes him unable to contemplate retreat despite overwhelming odds. When Talbot’s son John suggests, as a last resort, that the two of them flee the battle together, Talbot’s quick retort is

And leave my followers here to fight and die?
My age was never tainted with such shame.
4.5.45-6

Talbot’s honor forces him to remain in battle; as Talbot has relied on the skill and honor of the community in victory, he now must also share with that same community in defeat. To abandon his troops now, when all seems lost, would be to violate the principles of masculine identity around which Talbot’s legitimacy as a commander depends. Talbot recognizes the importance of his reputation: “A fiercely valiant warrior fiercely loyal to his sovereign, he rests his identity on his reputation for

¹⁸ Michael Harrawood, “High-Stomached Lords: Imagination, Force, and the Body in Shakespeare’s *Henry VI* Plays,” *The Journal for Early Modern Studies* Vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2007), 78-95. 86.

courage, but it is not his personally so much as it is a family possession and national asset.”¹⁹ Just as Talbot the soldier was merely the sum of the parts of his army and not a single knight, so Talbot’s valiance is not his alone but belongs to the whole nation. The nobles charged with relieving Talbot’s men fail in their masculine obligation to perform on the battlefield, succumbing to internal divisions fostered by the lack of masculine leadership within the monarchy. Placed in stark contrast to the sacrificial Talbot, 4.3 and 4.4 depict the feuding nobles sent to aid Talbot and secure England’s hold in France. In 4.3, York is unwilling to aid Talbot until the promised horsemen from Somerset arrive, yet Somerset is unwilling to commit his troops to York until the battle is decisively won. Placing their own reputations ahead of England’s, both Somerset and York abandon the definition of masculinity cultivated so thoroughly by Talbot throughout the play. Sir William Lucy makes the stakes abundantly clear as he speaks to York,

To Bordeaux, warlike Duke; to Bordeaux, York,
Else farewell Talbot, France, and England’s honour.
4.3.22-23

and also with Somerset

Let not your private discord keep away
The levied succours that should lend him aid
4.4.22-23

The physical city of Bordeaux is not exclusively at stake, nor are even the lives of the men of highest importance, it is England’s honor that will suffer for York and Somerset’s default. By raising the stakes, Lucy signals that the death of Talbot is also the death of England’s famed honor and renown as immortalized by Henry V. Lucy concludes his conference with Somerset with a dire premonition regarding the state of England and those who seek to rule her:

¹⁹ Kahn, 52.

Thus while the vulture of sedition
 Feeds in the bosom of such great commanders,
 Sleeping neglection doth betray to loss
 The conquest of our scarce-cold conqueror,
 That ever-living man of memory
 Henry the Fifth. Whiles they each other cross,
 Lives, honours, lands, and all hurry to loss.

4.3.47-53

Through their betrayal of the communal identity fostered first by Henry V and, later, by Talbot, York and Somerset betray an essential English masculinity. The death of the tautologically defined Talbot becomes the death of an English future promising continental glory, and it ushers in the internecine Wars of the Roses, which will only be resolved by the introduction of the Tudor regime.

The play goes further than merely associating the death of Talbot with the death of English honor. Talbot's words to his son indicate Talbot's belief that in his son, English honor can still live even after Talbot is dead

In thee thy mother dies, our household's name,
 My death's revenge, thy youth, and *England's fame*.

4.6.38-9 (italics mine)

If his son, John is willing to flee the field and fight another day, Talbot argues there is still hope for England to reclaim honor in France. John, like Talbot, is not simply one man. As Talbot relies on all his men for his victories (as he showed the Countess of Auvergne) so, too, does John become all young English warriors. The death of John and Talbot paints a far bleaker picture than would at first appear: "By making the slain young Talbot his father's only son...Shakespeare rewrites history so that Talbot's line dies out, thus stressing the self-destructive tendencies within a patriarchal ethic that prizes the preservation of family honor above the lives of individual family members."²⁰ The deaths of John and Talbot typify a powerful type

²⁰ Ian Frederick Moulton, "A Monster Great Deformed: The Unruly Masculinity of Richard III," *Shakespeare Quarterly* vol. 47, no. 3 (Autumn 1996), 257-8.

of masculinity found on battlefields of Agincourt but that has passed with the death of King Henry V. Not only do they prelude the War of the Roses and the end of English occupation in France, the deaths of John and Talbot mark the end of a particular kind of *man* in English history. Talbot's chivalric values not only die with him (as Lucy emphatically states), but the hope of chivalric values in the future of England dies with Talbot's son, John. After 4.6, we are left with squabbling nobles about to become embroiled in a civil war; nobles who are no nearer to embracing Talbot's masculine code of honor than to each other.

Talbot's commitment to the English cause is fueled by his devotion to the medieval chivalric principles of honor, and his distance from the English court. Talbot can remember fondly the campaigns of Henry V, but, at least in Shakespeare's play, Talbot has little intimate knowledge of Henry VI. Unlike York and Somerset who see the ineptitude of their monarch to lead troops in battle, Talbot is fighting for an idealized cause. In contrast, Marlowe's disillusioned young noble, Mortimer Junior is a well regarded soldier at the center of English court life, and provides an alternative future to Talbot's—a life not spent on the fields of France away from politics, but a life spent in the midst of court. Mortimer's transition from honorable young noble to ruling tyrant follows the arc of the story and mirrors Edward II's own downfall and deposition.

Our first introduction to Mortimer Jr. shows him offering an ultimatum to King Edward II to either banish Gaveston or Mortimer will no longer fight on his behalf:

Mine uncle here, this earl, and I myself
 Were sworn to your father at his death,
 That he should ne'er return into the realm;
 And know, my lord, ere I will break my oath,
 This sword of mine that should offend your foes,
 Shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need,

And underneath thy banners march who will,
 For Mortimer will hang his armor up.
 1.81-88

Although Mortimer argues his emphasis on denying Gaveston entry to England is based on an oath sworn to the late King Edward I barring Gaveston's return from exile, Edward II's illicit sexual behavior with his favorite, Gaveston, runs contrary to the values of masculinity espoused by the nobles. Edward II's desire to repeal Gaveston's banishment forces Mortimer into an untenable position in which Mortimer must either disobey his king or break his oath. Like Talbot, Mortimer values his honor and his word highly, but he also values his loyalty to the English crown. Rather than betray either his oath or his current monarch, Mortimer resolves (like Achilles) to no longer fight on Edward II's behalf. While the nobles' later grievances against Edward II and Gaveston amount to more than contradicting loyalties, the core of their aversion to Gaveston rests primarily on their loyalty to Longshanks, and secondly, on their aversion to Edward's homosexuality. Mortimer's allegiance to Longshanks, at the expense of his allegiance to Edward II, ought to stand in grim contrast to Talbot's loyalty to the *present* king. Talbot's masculinity and honor were based less on the political realities of England, and more on the ideological necessity of supporting the monarch regardless of the monarch's own suitability to rule. Shakespeare and Marlowe are representing presumably contradictory facets to the problem of supporting a deficient monarch while still declaring loyalty to the state. Ronald Knowles describes an important reflection in *Edward II*, "To Marlowe's contemporaries this dramatization of Edward's reign would not have been merely the tragic reworking of chronicle history, but a direct reflection on the most seditious

political issues of the day—deposition and election of the monarch—which conflicted absolutely with Tudor orthodoxy.”²¹

Similarly, Shakespeare’s first tetralogy undertakes a catalogue of the consequences of deposition and election (with far more disastrous consequences in the first tetralogy than the second). Both Mortimer and Talbot believe they are engaged in sustaining the realm through their various actions, and although both ideal warriors concern themselves with the state of the realm as a whole, the outcome of their various projects is vastly different. Talbot never leads his army against the King of England (in fact, he actively fights to defend an incompetent king’s reign), nor does Talbot have an affair with the English queen. Talbot displays the characteristics of quintessential, loyal Englishman and his loyalty becomes indicative of his Englishness. Although Talbot dominates the action, the course of *1 Henry VI* ultimately leads to England’s defeat in France. Conversely, Marlowe’s *Edward II* is far more ambiguous in its treatment of masculinity. The deposition of Edward II is vividly dramatized, the King’s rule is shown to be impotent, and Mortimer (along with Isabella) launch a successful invasion. Despite representing opposing perspectives, both Mortimer and Talbot are eventually defeated. However, the defeat of Mortimer permits the continuation of a strong and stable English state, while the defeat of Talbot signifies the conclusion of English supremacy in France.

Reflections of Mortimer’s challenged honor continue through Mortimer’s language; when his father encourages him to “bridle” his anger, Mortimer responds that he “cannot” and “will not” (1.120-1). In many ways, Mortimer should be directly compared with his Shakespearean counterpart, Hotspur. In Robert Reid’s list of

²¹ Ronald Knowles, “The Political Contexts of Deposition and Election in *Edward II*,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*. (14), 105-121. 105.

Hotspur's linguistic characteristics, many of them can be identified in Marlowe's Mortimer as well:

Hotspur's choleric motives engender his linguistic habits. Ambitious hope breeds tropes of exaggeration, especially self-preening hyperbole ('the mailed Mars shall on his altar sit [IV.i.116]) and surging, loquacious fantasies ('it were an easy leap/To pluck bright honor...' [I.iii.201-02]). Impatient anger provokes broken syntax, interjected exclamations, indecorous comparisons, and subversion of others' hyperbole (Glendower's boasts, Vernon's praise of Hal: III.i, IV.i, V.ii).²²

Compromise is not an option for Mortimer. Not only can his identity as chivalric knight not assimilate Edward's conflation of the public and private, but Mortimer *will not* act on something he does not believe in. Like Talbot, Mortimer is unwilling to sacrifice his individual honor and reputation. Interestingly, Mortimer is less concerned with Edward's illicit behavior with Gaveston than he is with Edward's desire to lavish titles and honors upon someone who has done little to earn them. Charles R. Forker sees Young Mortimer's objections to Edward's relationship with Gaveston as motivated by larger national concerns—the relationship between Edward and a favorite “invert[s] the time-honored hierarchy of respect and authority, rendering the feudal source of national honor and prestige passive, manipulable, and capable of being exploited for private advantage.”²³ Young Mortimer is not upset that these titles have not fallen to him (although that is, understandably, the source of some of his complaints), he is, instead, upset at the loss of “national honor.” Likewise, Talbot's confrontation with Fastolf is not merely about Talbot's resulting imprisonment, but the implications to national honor when a knight abandons the field.

²² Robert Reid, “Humoral Psychology in Shakespeare's *Henriad*,” *Comparative Drama* vol. 30, no. 4 (Winter 1996-1997), 471-502. 479.

²³ Charles R. Forker, “Royal Carnality and Illicit Desire in the English History Plays of the 1590s,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England: An Annual Gathering of Research, Criticism and Reviews*, vol. 17 (2005), 99-131. 103.

Young Mortimer is established early in the play as a chivalric knight concerned with the honor and greatness of England. He is adamant in his desire not to bear arms against the king, and he believes Gaveston is a threat to English national autonomy. Young Mortimer and Lancaster confront their young king in an attempt to not only illustrate the many ways in which Edward II has neglected his realm, but also the ways such neglect can be rectified.

The idle triumphs, masques, lascivious shows,
 And prodigal gifts bestowed on Gaveston
 Have drawn thy treasure dry and made thee weak;
 The murmuring commons overstretched hath.

6.154-7

Although the illicit nature of Edward and Gaveston's relationship is pivotal to the qualms and later rebellion of the nobles, the consequences of the relationship challenge the preservation of the realm. Gaveston has displaced the state as the center of the king's world, and therefore he constitutes a threat to the inherent stability of the realm. Where Forker points to "national honor" as the source of the nobles' complaint, I would argue that Gaveston's threat goes far deeper. It is not only that Gaveston is simply upsetting the hierarchy by claiming titles meant for nobles, rather it is Edward's failure to acknowledge his duties as sovereign that drives Young Mortimer to defend England's honor. Scene 6, however, proves to be the highpoint for Mortimer's ideals as the rest of the play shows an increasingly treasonous and self-centered noble.

Making a claim that *Edward II* traces early modern resistance theory, Ronald Knowles simplifies the arc of the story thus: "Edward's tyranny is emphasized, Young Mortimer is turned into a Machiavellian villain, and most importantly, the metaphysics of providentialist tragedy are invoked."²⁴ As Knowles notes, Young

²⁴ Knowles, 116.

Mortimer is turned from idealistic, chivalric knight to Machiavellian villain. Unlike Talbot who is never presented as anything more than an ideal English knight, Young Mortimer is transformed into the villain of the play. At the invasion in scene 17, Mortimer maintains he is acting in Prince Edward's defense, so the Queen may regain "her dignities and honours" (17.24). It is only after King Edward has been defeated that Young Mortimer nominates himself as the Prince's protector and solidifies his place as the Queen's lover. Young Mortimer intends to rule the realm through his relationship with Isabella much as Gaveston sought to rule the realm through his relationship with Edward. Mortimer encourages Isabella to "be ruled by me, and we will rule the realm," going on to advocate his appointment as Protector (21.5). The conclusion of the play portrays a Mortimer who, apart from sexual proclivities, is not distinguishable from the Gaveston he sought to exile. As Mortimer pursued his own ambitions and, in so doing, failed to defend the realm, he was transformed into the very thing he nominally claimed to defend the realm against—Mortimer has become Isabella's Gaveston. David Stymeist's observation of the representation of Gaveston and Edward's relationship is apt, "Gaveston is represented as actively and maliciously manipulating the king with his sexuality."²⁵ While this statement describes Gaveston's behavior towards Edward, it can just as easily describe Young Mortimer's behavior towards Isabella at this moment in the play. Followed by Young Mortimer's later actions (the torture and death of the king), the Machiavellian villainy of Young Mortimer is difficult to doubt.

Where Talbot stood as uncorrupted masculinity, confined to the fields of France and far from politics, Mortimer presents a picture of a soldier forced to partake in corrupted politics. Needing honor and action, Young Mortimer responds to

²⁵ David Stymeist, "Status, Sodomy, and the Theater in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* vol. 44, no. 2 (Spring, 2004), 233-253. 240.

Edward's excesses by violently galvanizing the other nobles to rise with him. However, in the process of defending his nation's honor, Mortimer becomes as corrupted as the king he is fighting to depose. In becoming an agent, Young Mortimer embraces an unadulterated masculinity that leads him to become the Machiavellian villain that would rather be feared than loved (23.46). Power becomes a byproduct of masculine agency and action. While Edward II wished to cede power and failed to act in a masculine way, Young Mortimer embraced the agency required of him. *Edward II* thus provides two contrasting male attitudes: in Edward, we have a man led astray by the stereotyped, homosexual "Frenchman", who refuses his role as king desiring only the personal and the private, and in Young Mortimer, we have male aggression kept from pursuing a state sanctioned role. Talbot has shown us the masculine ideal—a chivalric knight sacrificing everything for England, while Young Mortimer has shown us the more ambiguous character of a chivalric knight with no one and nothing to fight for leading to unrestrained masculine agency. Now, Richard III will show us monstrous masculinity.

There is little ambiguity in the Tudor representation of King Richard III. Richard was seen to be physically handicapped with a shriveled arm and a limp as well as a Machiavellian bent, marking him as a scourge of England. Of course, Richard III's death at Bosworth Field paved the way for Henry VII and the Tudor monarchy, so Richard III's unhistorical character becomes a vehicle for Tudor propaganda.²⁶ Despite the overwhelmingly negative portrayal of him in most Elizabethan literature, Shakespeare portrays a remarkably charismatic Richard III in

²⁶ David Hipshon, *Richard III* (London: Routledge Historical Biography, 2010). Interestingly, despite the assertions of Elizabethan biographers that Richard III was the deformed scourge of God, none of them doubt that he was anything less than a valiant and valuable warrior.

the concluding play to the first tetralogy, *Richard III* dated for 1593.²⁷ Where Edward II was unable to separate his public and private spheres, willing his private lover Gaveston into the public realm, Richard III participates only in the public sphere. Unlike Hamlet's famous "to be or not to be" soliloquy that is dominated by introspective monologue typical of most Shakespearean soliloquies, Richard's soliloquies are usually less driven by introspection and predominantly present an omniscient point of view (typical of most early Shakespearean soliloquies). Wolfgang Clemen reinforces the uniqueness of Richard's soliloquies, "Never again did Shakespeare choose to open a play in so direct a manner—with a soliloquy in which the hero introduces himself and provides the audience with necessary information."²⁸

Richard's status as pure public figure is tied into his identity as masculine, monster, and scourge. In Galenic physiology, the four humors that comprised all humans also determined the gender of the individual. Depending on the concentration and interaction of the humors within the body, an individual was prone to various physiological and emotional tendencies (melancholy, ruddiness, anger). Women were marked by the dominance of phlegm, giving them "bodies that are colder and moister than men's are."²⁹ Men, however, were governed by blood; a humor identified with rage and sexual libido. As Smith puts it, "Blood is the humor that makes men *men*."³⁰ Richard III consists of an excess of blood—quick to anger, deformed, and, surprisingly, he will eventually be shown to be sexually dominant. When tied to Richard's already considerable martial prowess (he serves valiantly on the battlefield

²⁷ Harbage, *Annals*, 58-59.

²⁸ Wolfgang Clemen, *Shakespeare's Soliloquies* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 1987), 19.

²⁹ Smith, 36.

³⁰ Smith, 20. Smith goes to great lengths to articulate the influence of Galenic physiology to masculinity. Although Smith links only deformity to Richard III (he links rage to Coriolanus), I think the argument can be made that Richard encapsulates all of these anxieties about rampant masculinity.

in *2 and 3 Henry VI*), the consequences of Richard's overwhelming masculinity are performed in the final play of Shakespeare's first tetralogy.

Richard's transformation from idealized soldier to deformed tyrant is a consequence of Richard's devastatingly rampant masculinity. As Richard is necessarily public and performative, his deformity, read simply, is the physical location of his monstrosity; therefore, it is also something Richard must perform. Mark Thornton Burnett's work on early modern monsters sees monstrosity as a construction based on audience perception. As Burnett discusses some of the more famous "freak show monsters" rising in popularity, he notes that what is common amongst them is not necessarily their alterity, but it is their performativity. "Whether a differently formed human or animal, an exotic specimen or a manufactured marvel, all 'monsters' benefited from performative conditions that steered theatres and 'monstrous' display sites towards comparable ideological arenas"³¹ The similarities between the freak show and the theater as sites of ideological discourse and identity formation intensify on the constructed nature and performance of each. The differently formed human is not on display merely for the visual spectacle of difference, but for the performance of exclusion that necessitated an audience in order to be satisfied. The early modern "monsters" are put on display not because of their inherent difference, but so they may be perceived as bizarre other: "The 'monstrous' designation, it seems, has less to do with what the 'monster' actually possesses and more to do with the manner in which it is perceived."³² If "monsters" were simply random acts of chance, their difference would have no signification. However, since they were perceived as God's intervention in the world they carried the weight of

³¹ Mark Thornton Burnett, *Constructing Monsters in Shakespeare's Drama and Early Modern Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 12.

³² Burnett, 3

cosmic consequences. “Monsters” were largely seen as products of sexual immorality (or promiscuity) and can easily be connected with the idea of “sins of the father.” Richard III is the product of the Wars of the Roses and embodies the sins of generations of English nobles. Therefore, his physical deformity becomes not only the tangible sign of God’s displeasure, but also of Richard’s ordained role to cleanse England. Richard accepts the role his deformity has consigned him to, acknowledging it with the audience, and using it as the means through which he will achieve his goal.

This is not to say that Richard accepts his role as the scourge of God; it simply means that we take fairly literally Richard’s opening soliloquy, where he places himself in direct contrast to King Edward IV by claiming that unlike Edward, who “capers nimbly in a lady’s chamber,” Richard is not “shaped for sportive tricks” (1.1.12;14). He then goes on to list the particulars of his deformity arguing he is not made to “court an amorous looking glass” or to “strut before a wanton ambling nymph” (1.1.15;17). Richard’s sentiments, while they reflect the actuality of his deformity (being “scarce half made up,” “deformed,” “unfinished,”) also reflect the more feminine sentiments in which he is unable to participate. Unlike Edward IV, who removes himself from the public sphere to satiate his private needs, Richard cannot do these things because he is physically constrained from doing them, and so always participates in the public (and masculine) realm. Edward IV’s promiscuity is not inherently feminine, nor is his lustfulness; however, like Edward II and Gaveston, Edward’s participation in the private rather than the public provides a balance that Richard is denied. Richard further differentiates himself from Edward by linking Edward to “this weak piping time of peace” in which Richard takes “no delight” (1.1.24;25). An unquestioned superlative warrior, Richard makes it clear that he has

no place in a kingdom at peace. He is associated with war; therefore, making peace is a painful compression of his nature.

If Richard has no place in a kingdom at peace, then Richard must become villainous and cause violence. If we accept the view of Moulton,, in which Richard III is “rampant masculinity,” we can argue that it is not Richard’s deformity that marks him as a villain; instead, his deformity is simply one sign of this rampant masculinity. Richard is not shaped for times of peace because his overwhelming masculinity has *nothing to do*. Moulton notes that Richard’s

ambition, his prowess as a warrior, his viciousness, his cruel intelligence—the same masculine qualities that made him an asset to the Yorkists as a group—become monstrous when cut loose from the structure of bonds between male warriors which constitutes English-rule class society. The alienation of Richard’s masculinity from the patriarchal order that ought to channel its energies gives his physical deformity significance.³³

In essence the same tools that were used by the Yorkists to claim the throne become the most dangerous weapon against them. Although Richard fights for his father in 2 and 3 *Henry VI*, the dissolving homosocial bonds distinguishing Shakespeare’s depiction of the Wars of the Roses figure differently in the character of Richard. “The striking thing that sets Richard apart from all the others who break bonds in this play is that he alone seems never to need to replace them, nor does he mourn their loss.”³⁴ Richard’s failure to replace the altering and eventually dissolved bonds finds expression in his opening soliloquy. With nothing in this new realm of peace, the warrior Richard *must* resort to violence, *must* think of himself as still on the battlefield, and *must* confront an enemy. Talbot’s chivalric masculinity was kept constantly at war in France occupied with defending England’s honor; Richard, following the Battle of Tewkesbury, is no longer at war (for the less honorable motive

³³ Moulton, 262

³⁴ Howard and Rackin, 96.

of his family's honor) and is unable to adapt to peace. We can understand Richard's reign less as an active reign of terror by a simply blood-thirsty man and more as the consequence of a lifetime spent as a soldier with no means of expression. Richard's villainy and his deformity become manifestations of his overwhelming masculinity. According to Moulton, "Over the course of the three *Henry VI* plays, effeminate rulers and mannish women destabilize the traditional patriarchal power structure and gender hierarchy of England, leaving the realm in chaos."³⁵ The consequence of these imbalances is the deformed and hyper-masculine Richard. Rather than their scourge, he is the progeny of Joan of Arc and Margaret of Anjou, King Henry VI and Edward IV.

Richard, then, is a warrior without ethics. He is constantly seeking not only an enemy but a battle. Friend and foe change in an instant (as Buckingham discovers to his dismay), and he cannot maintain the crown because gaining the kingship he has no one left to fight. Donna Oestreich-Hart takes up this vein as she discusses what is arguably the most dramatically difficult scene in the play, Richard's wooing of Anne. Coming early in the play, and just following Richard's opening soliloquy, the difficulty of portraying a man claiming the inability to "prove a lover" winning over the wife and daughter-in-law of two men he has just killed is singularly impressive. Dramatically daring, this scene is one of the most perplexing scenes of the play. Oestreich-Hart traces Richard's strategy back to the Italian courtly love tradition where women were the enemy in the battle of love. Richard, she argues, must become a soldier of love, "the very skills he needs to be a successful lover are the same confrontatiousness and brilliant use of stratagems or ruses which have served him

³⁵ Moulton, 254.

well in the past...as soldier.”³⁶ Richard is not a lover—he *cannot* “caper nimbly in a lady’s chamber”; neither does Richard become a lover, instead he remains in the role he *can* perform: a soldier. Throughout *Richard III*, Richard’s character is primarily identified as performative in nature; if Richard cannot *perform* it, he does not do it. This, necessarily, calls any self-identified portrayal into question (is Richard a soldier, lover, brother, or uncle—or does he merely act the part?), and although soldier is the role Richard finds most comfortable, he still remains an actor.

Oestreich-Hart argues for Richard’s use of a darker courtly love tradition in which women were the enemies to be laid siege to and conquered: “The whole point for the soldier of love is to tear down all the lady’s defenses, to invade her territory, to conquer her bodily.”³⁷ As Oestreich-Hart lays out the various stratagems Richard employs from denying that he killed her relatives to only paying her compliments, a more insidious tactic emerges. Richard eventually claims everything he did was for Anne, both the good and the bad. Anne is responsible not only for the Yorkists on the throne but the deaths of Prince Edward and Henry VI. Oestreich-Hart takes the sympathetic view that Anne had been taught women “were responsible if a man lusted after them, cheated for them, killed for them,” and so Anne never really has a chance to reject Richard.³⁸ Anne cannot remain a good woman without accepting the responsibility Richard lays at her feet, and in accepting this responsibility Anne must ensure that no further wrongdoing is done in her name—she must marry Richard. Given what the audience later learns of Richard’s political expediency (he has married Anne to secure the stability of her family name), Anne’s acquiescence to

³⁶ Donna Oestreich-Hart, “Therefore Since I Cannot Prove a Lover,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* vol. 40, no. 2 (Spring 2004), 241-260. 243.

³⁷ Oestreich-Hart, 246-7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 252.

Richard over the corpse of her father-in-law is remarkable, problematic, and essential to understanding the scene.

Any explanation of Richard's appeal to us must account for the constant visibility of his evil. Richard's murderous acts surround and interpenetrate the wooing scene, which leaves no space for a sustained expression of an aesthetic unstained by evil. Anne's seduction takes place over Henry's coffin, Richard continually refers to his slaying of Henry and Edward in his wooing speeches, and soliloquies in which Richard states his malevolent intentions bracket the scene.³⁹

Richard's appeal must be based on his villainy and his performativity; Slotkin goes further in his argument, "Richard's claim that he seems a saint when most he *plays* the sinner is telling in this regard."⁴⁰ Richard, however, is unbounded masculinity—his martial prowess has no purpose in a time of peace. He is the deformed consequence of internecine strife and aggressive frustrations, and he is the epitome of the public, performative ruler. Richard's success is required based on the role he must fulfill for a satisfactory resolution to the Wars of the Roses.

Elizabethan masculinity was certainly not just confined to values of chivalry, knighthood, and aggression. Many Elizabethan men believed a scholarly life was the best following in the humanist tradition of Erasmus and Thomas More, still others saw themselves as courtly gentlemen (as in Castiglione), and some saw themselves as honorable merchants. However, the history plays abound with exemplars of chivalric manhood, and so in discussing gender in the history plays, we must consider this as the foremost definition of masculinity. As this brief section has shown, using chivalry as the means through which men prove themselves generates a fine line between serving the state and rebellion. With Talbot, we were able to see a knight kept out of the realm of politics, and who eventually died due to those same politicians. Talbot's

³⁹ Joel Eliot Slotkin, "Honeyed Toads: Sinister Aesthetics in Shakespeare's *Richard III*," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7 no. 1 (Spring – Summer 2007), 5-32. 13.

⁴⁰ Slotkin, 14. Emphasis mine.

chivalry and his masculinity are unquestioned. His fame and his honor attest to the nobility of Talbot's portrayal. Young Mortimer deeply aspired to the same chivalric ideal Talbot's life served; a noted warrior, the young noble is concerned with the effects of Edward II's behavior on national honor. His reasons for rebellion are communal rather than personal (although his father's capture provides the catalyst for the other wrongs). Lastly, Richard III is the most ambiguous of the men we have investigated. Richard III is masculinity unchecked; the ultimate cautionary tale of the attributes of knighthood without the ethic of chivalry or the homosocial bonds of government. "A phallic 'monster great deformed,' perpetually engaged in erecting himself, he is, as many commentators have noted, utterly barren, able to destroy and corrupt but not to create. Thus, detached from patriarchal economies of reproduction, the very phallic power on which patriarchal order depends becomes monstrously destructive."⁴¹ As rampant masculinity, Richard must be infertile; childless. Thus without the ties of kinship, Richard III is unable to partake in peace, and as only warrior, he is only destruction.

Feminine Women

Passive women are rare to find in Shakespeare's histories. Rackin and Howard see the problem as one of genre, "History-making seems to be an exclusively male project."⁴² If history-making is a male project, then we ought not to be surprised that women play few roles (or that those who take an active part in history-making are maligned). Perhaps the best description of the altered roles for women in Renaissance England comes from *Engendering a Nation*:

In many ways, the position of English women was deteriorating during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is not to say that

⁴¹ Moulton, 265.

⁴² Rackin and Howard, 76.

women's status and opportunities had been equal to those of men during the Middle Ages, but a multitude of factors, religious, economic, and political, were now producing a widening division between public and private life and an increasing domestication of women and circumscription of their economic scope. Women's work was increasingly distinguished from men's as women were excluded from crafts and trades in which their predecessors had been active. The household was redefined as a private, feminized space, separated from the public arenas of economics and political activity, and women were increasingly confined within the rising barriers that marked its separation.⁴³

The increasing relegation of women to the private sphere was the result of numerous social and religious developments over the course of the Renaissance; likewise, women were now defined through their obedience to the household. This obedience, understood to be fundamental to conceptions of early modern womanhood, is complicated by an understanding of the intention behind such obedience. As Murphy argues, "Early modern women were *not* taught to be unquestioningly obedient, but rather that they had a responsibility to be virtuous, which requires performing submission so that they could reform others."⁴⁴ A good wife is notable for being a good wife rather than her particular place in national history (for instance, a good queen might be notable for her alms-giving and the children she bore). Like masculinity, femininity is also a constructed and performed identity: "Although it can be internalized, and a wife can presumably be always thinking obedient thoughts, she must always perform her duty—publicly or domestically—for her obedience to be clear and acknowledged."⁴⁵ The performed obedience of the idealized woman precludes their inclusion within the action of making history. Although these obedient

⁴³ Rackin and Howard, 39. See also, Lisa Jardine, "Cultural Confusion and Shakespeare's Learned Heroines: 'There are old Paradoxes'," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (Spring 1987), 1-18. "Reformed Christianity further burdened Renaissance women by making them responsible for the well-being of the domestic unit, within which they were explicitly *not* given any power" (3).

⁴⁴ Murphy, 260.

⁴⁵ Murphy, 261.

women appear, they are largely foils to the masculine women who rebel and dominate their husbands. These women are not history makers, but understanding their necessary submission and obedience permits an insight into the normative qualities and aberrations that shape the course of English history.

The idealized woman stands diametrically opposed to the martial, masculine man. The history plays demonstrate the definitions and consequences of gender when performed on the national stage, and each role is indicative of the culture in which they are constructed rather than indicative of a universal truth. While Kurtz does acknowledge the difficulty for the portrayal of the idealized feminine in a play about making history, she denies that the history play genre can be unquestionably defined as male. The newness and novelty of the history genre in Elizabethan England, she argues, made it free of the preconceived generic conventions that constrained tragedy and comedy, so playwrights were not confined to certain outcomes or portrayals. This, she maintains, is a serious reason for reconsidering the proposition that history plays are necessarily masculine. She goes on to argue for a reconsideration of the gender for the history play genre, not only because of powerful female characters like Joan of Arc or Margaret of Anjou, but because of the importance of the domestic in some of the history plays. “At the core of these histories is an ethos, not of masculine ‘military adventure’ or ‘aggression’ and ‘conquest,’ but of a private and domestic life which belongs to both sexes and which is seen as opposed to, and threatened by, the hostile and destructive power of the crown.”⁴⁶ The very submission that is necessary to the stability of the family and, therefore, the state becomes written is opposed directly against the power of the crown. Female submission and female relegation to

⁴⁶ Kurtz, 284.

the private sphere are set in stark contrast to the power of the crown through the desire to know the unknowable.

The women of *Richard III*, perhaps in response to Richard's rampant masculinity, offer a prolonged study of private femininity in the early history play. *Richard III* offers several depictions of different women: widows, warriors, the disenfranchised, mothers, queens, and shadows of the opposition. Not all of these women behave as expected (in fact, at some point, nearly all of them fail to do so), but within this play all of the women at least acknowledge their roles within Richard's court. Lady Anne provides the closest picture of uncomplicated femininity. Her wooing by Richard and her response to his summons shows a type of obedience modern readers find profoundly disturbing. Returning once more to Lady Anne's wooing by Richard III over the corpse of her father-in-law, I would like to examine this scene from the perspective of the female rather than the male (as I did in the previous section) and place it in context with the other wooing scene of *Richard III*, Queen Elizabeth's. Like Margaret of Anjou, Lady Anne has lost her power with the deaths of Henry VI and his son Edward V. Approached by Richard of Gloucester, a prominent member of the new faction and the hand behind the deaths of her family, Lady Anne is given an opportunity.

Richard's appeal to Queen Elizabeth for the hand of her daughter parallels the earlier wooing scene between Lady Anne and Richard, in that the corpse of Lady Anne's father-in-law was visible on stage and Queen Elizabeth recounts the murders and the wrongs Richard has done to her family. Queen Elizabeth's initial response to Richard is that she has "no more sons of the royal blood/For [him] to slaughter" (4.4.200-1). Her repetitive insistence that Richard acknowledge their deaths at his

hands becomes the focal point for their discussion; a focal point that is unmatched even by the body of Henry VI in Richard's earlier encounter with Lady Anne.

Any explanation of Richard's appeal to us must account for the constant visibility of his evil. Richard's murderous acts surround and interpenetrate the wooing scene, which leaves no space for a sustained expression of an aesthetic untainted by evil. Anne's seduction takes place over Henry's coffin, Richard continually refers to his slaying of Henry and Edward in his wooing speeches and soliloquies in which Richard states his malevolent intentions bracket the scene.⁴⁷

Richard's visible evil manifests itself through the display of Henry VI's coffin over the course of the wooing scene. Lady Anne's earlier insistence on Richard's evil fades as Richard's suit becomes more compelling. Compared with Elizabeth's wooing scene, throughout the nearly two hundred lines of dialogue Elizabeth continuously refers to Richard's hand in the deaths of her sons.⁴⁸ Where Anne's accusations of Richard gradually desist as he presses his suit, Queen Elizabeth never ceases to remind him of what he has done to her family. Anne releases Richard from responsibility once he has admitted to killing Prince Edward and King Henry VI—once Richard has broached the subject of “the bedchamber” Anne fails to return to Richard's actions during the War of the Roses. Queen Elizabeth, however, never allows the absent presence of her sons to fade from the conversation despite their physical absence from the stage.

Richard attempts to use the same tactics in his conversation with Queen Elizabeth as he used with Lady Anne. As with Lady Anne, Richard lays the responsibility of his actions at the feet of Queen Elizabeth's daughter, “Say that I did

⁴⁷ Slotkin, 13.

⁴⁸ She refers to her sons at lines 200, 220, 223, 260, 271, 277, 290, 339, 383, and 422. I am using the *Riverside Shakespeare* for consistent line numbers in this scene. The *Norton Shakespeare* makes a distinction between those lines that appear only in the folio while the *Riverside* does not. For ease of reference, I have opted to use the *Riverside* in this note.

all this for love of her” (4.4.288 *Riverside Shakespeare*⁴⁹). This strain of argument seems to work less well than it did with Lady Anne; Richard’s insistence on Lady Anne’s beauty as the ultimate cause for his actions leaves her with little agency (“though I wish thy death,/I will not be thy executioner” 1.2.184-5). “Anne feels she really has no choices at all, for all the choices seem to make her equally responsible for what happens to Richard—as she seemed responsible for what happened to the other men.”⁵⁰ While Anne does not admit to loving Richard, she is sufficiently wary of his claim to kill others for her hand that she *must* marry Richard to protect those around her. As David Mann further argues, “His manner is aggressive and manipulative and at the appropriate moment he does offer to let *her* commit violence on him. This is itself a kind of violence, in forcing on her a male definition of sexual polarities and humbling her by making her acknowledge the vulnerable inadequacy of her own gender.”⁵¹ When Richard attempts the same logic with Queen Elizabeth, she will have none of it, retorting that her daughter “cannot choose but hate thee,/Having bought love with such a bloody spoil” (4.4.289-90). Where Anne accepted her complicity in Richard’s action, Queen Elizabeth refuses to acknowledge her daughter’s. Although Elizabeth eventually decides to give her daughter to Richmond (the Tudor hero), Shakespeare fails to depict this significant resolution:

This strategy appears most clearly in the play’s failure to depict Elizabeth’s eventual decision to give her daughter to Richmond instead of Richard. Her change of heart is essential to any redemptive narrative

⁴⁹ The use of *The Riverside Shakespeare* for the quotations which follow occurs due to editorial choices. *The Norton Shakespeare* indents, and sets aside, much of the exchange that is located only in the Folio text of *Richard III*. *The Riverside Shakespeare*, on the other hand, integrates the lines located only in the Folio alongside the rest of the section; because of this, the citation of quotes occurs more consistently within *The Riverside* edition of Shakespeare’s works. The quotations which follow will be from *The Riverside Shakespeare* until noted otherwise.

⁵⁰ Oestreich-Hart, 255.

⁵¹ David Mann, *Shakespeare’s Women: Performance and Conception* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), 198.

that the play might establish, because it structurally counterbalances Anne's failure to resist Richard and politically enables Richmond's successful reign.⁵²

Anne's failure establishes not only the magnetic appeal of Richard's masculinity, but establishes the schema of the disenfranchised woman characterizing this play (as opposed to the active and powerful women of the *Henry VI* plays). As noted earlier, Oestreich-Hart explains, "Women from classical times to the Middle Ages to the Renaissance were taught that *they* were responsible if a man lusted after them, cheated for them, killed for them—in fact, beat or killed *them*."⁵³ What we did not note earlier was that most women were not taken in by their complicity. Many continental writers portrayed women in a similar vein to Queen Elizabeth—by refusing complicity with the heinous acts committed nominally on their behalf, the women deny masculine moral control. Further, "Anne's love for Richard invites the condemnation of the audience because he has murdered her family, and his marriage to her empowers him to commit further murders."⁵⁴ Where Anne submits to her responsibility as an ingrained cultural response, Queen Elizabeth follows Richard's argument to its logical conclusion—no woman can love a man who would commit such deeds. We may also momentarily return to Murphy's earlier statement that performing submission was done in order to reform others. Anne's submission and supposed moral fortitude become potential means through which Richard may be reformed. In accepting responsibility, Anne is also attempting to separate the public and the private—Richard's actions have made the private (his love for her) public, and only in marrying Richard can she keep the private and the public in their respective places. Queen Elizabeth accepts the conflation of the public and the private

⁵² Slotkin, 24.

⁵³ Oestreich-Hart, 252.

⁵⁴ Slotkin, 22.

in Richard's argument and uses it as the logic for her daughter's presumed refusal; in conflating the public with the private, he has behaved so that no woman could conceive of marrying him because the submission required for obedient virtue would have no reforming effects.

Richard's frustration is almost palpable as he begins his first of two speeches in this exchange, "Look what is done cannot be now amended" (4.4.291). Queen Elizabeth has just rejected complicity in Richard's actions (the point where Anne began to give in), and he must use a new tactic. Richard will separate the public and the private himself—making Queen Elizabeth's daughter queen will enhance the private life of everyone. Richard cannot undo his conflation of the public and the private, but his amends will be private—he will give Queen Elizabeth's daughter a family.

If I did take the kingdom from your sons,
 To make amends I'll give it to your daughter;
 If I have kill'd the issue of your womb,
 To quicken your increase, I will beget
 Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter.
 4.4.294-298

Richard will attempt to right both the private and public wrongs he has caused using Queen Elizabeth's daughter but in two separate ways. He will make Queen Elizabeth's daughter queen to account for disinheriting Queen Elizabeth's sons (the public wrong), and he will give Queen Elizabeth grandchildren as recompense for killing her own children (the private wrong). Rather than rely on complicity for Queen's Elizabeth's acquiescence, Richard changes his tactics to right both the public and the private wrongs he has committed.

Going on to list the benefits Queen Elizabeth will presumably receive when her daughter is queen (children without the pain of childbirth, mother to a king, exiled children called home), he finishes with the familiar chorus of Elizabeth's daughter's

primacy in Richard's heart "Caesar's Caesar" (4.4.366). Queen Elizabeth still refrains from being taken in and forces Richard to give a name through which she is to woo her daughter for him:

Queen Elizabeth: Under what title shall I woo for thee,
 That God, the law, my honour and her love
 Can make seem pleasing to her tender years?
 King Richard: Infer fair England's peace by this alliance
 Queen Elizabeth: Which she shall purchase with still lasting war.
 King Richard: Tell her the King, that may command, entreats.
 Queen Elizabeth: That at her hands, which the King's King forbids.
 King Richard: Say she shall be a high and mighty queen.
 Queen Elizabeth: To vail the title, as her mother doth.
 King Richard: Say I will love her everlastingly.
 Queen Elizabeth: But how long shall that title 'ever' last?
 4.4.340-350

Queen Elizabeth's appeal to "the King's King" provides an argument for feminine obedience still based on submission, but a submission to a higher authority. Richard's attempts to win Queen Elizabeth to his cause mirror those given to Lady Anne early in the play. However, where Lady Anne was unable to withstand Richard's suits, Queen Elizabeth stands firm harping on the same string—the death of her children. "Elizabeth can and will duplicate Anne's surrender, but she cannot acknowledge it or incorporate it into a theory of human action."⁵⁵

Richard's last trick is to claim repentance for the death of the two princes. We are immediately informed by Richard that his presumed repentance is insincere as he calls the Queen a "Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman!" (4.4.431). Richard also claimed repentance when wooing Lady Anne in 1.2, but this is largely a claim made by Anne: "Must it joys me too,/To see you are become so penitent" (1.2.219-20). The question of Queen Elizabeth's gullibility hangs on her response and belief in Richard's repentance, we are not given another glimpse of Queen Elizabeth so we do

⁵⁵ Slotkin, 22

not know if she brought Richard's suit before her daughter. The amount of ink spilled over Lady Anne's wooing (rather than Queen Elizabeth's) is notable in that it seems as though we find Queen Elizabeth a more stalwart woman than Lady Anne. However, the Arden Shakespeare's note to Queen Elizabeth's "I go, write me very shortly,/And you shall understand from me her mind" (4.4.425), makes it clear that Queen Elizabeth is at least willing to give the pretense of acquiescence.⁵⁶ "Despite Richard's repeated, sometimes rapid, alternations between 'you' and 'thee' in addressing Queen Elizabeth (e.g. 316-17, 325-6), this is her first use of the more respectful 'you' form, as if to assure him of her acquiescence."⁵⁷ Her long refusal and debate with Richard are striking because she unquestionably knows the character of Richard, and knowing his character ought to be both more terrified of his response to her rejection and more adamant in her refusal to give her daughter's hand. Strikingly, contrary to Lady Anne who succumbs to Richard's courting, Elizabeth's decision to give her daughter's hand to the unifying figure of Richmond provides the resolution both the play and English history require.

Both Lady Anne and Queen Elizabeth exemplify female inconstancy as they are faced with Richard's supplications, even though one surrenders and the other only appears to. Both widows, their resignation to King Richard becomes symptomatic of their status as widows. Widows were a powerful symbol of political instability, and the presence of four widows in *Richard III* indicates the depth of the instability the War of the Roses and the Yorkist rule have brought.⁵⁸ Lady Anne may then find

⁵⁶ William Shakespeare, *King Richard III*, ed. James R. Siemon, *The Arden Shakespeare 3rd series* (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁵⁷ Brown, 113. (*Arden Shakespeare* 4.4.425 note). Brown here refers to Susan Brown "Queen Elizabeth in Richard III", in Robert Smallwood (ed.), *Players of Shakespeare 4* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 101-13.

⁵⁸ Dorothea Kehler, *Shakespeare's Widows* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 100.

herself responsible not only for Richard's behavior but also for the political instability she symbolizes through her widowhood. Similarly, following the belief that women were the opposites of men (from their bodies to their mental capacities), the widowhood of the women in *Richard III* proves their "emptiness." Lady Anne and Queen Elizabeth consent to Richard's demands because they are empty and following social convention *must* give in. They are inconstant not only because they are women but also because they are widows.

Queen Elizabeth further proves her inconstancy by looking to her once enemy Margaret of Anjou for support. In a prophetic twist foretold by Margaret, Queen Elizabeth has outlived her usefulness at court and desires Margaret to teach her how to curse:

Fool, fool, thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.
The day will come that thou shalt wish for me
To help thee curse this poisonous bunch-back'd toad.
1.3.243-45

Queen Elizabeth proves Margaret's words true three acts later when the women meet for the last time to wail their woes and seek instruction from Margaret in how best to curse the man who has left them bereft. Margaret is not through cursing the women who have lost everything, but she does provide the impetus for a good curse "Compare dead happiness with living woe;/Think that thy babes were sweeter than they were,/And he that slew them fouler than he is" (4.4.119-21). Margaret's transformation is thorough, "She is an avenger, able in the earlier plays to translate vengeance into violence, where, by the time of *Richard III*, she can only haunt her enemies with curses and her friends with ghoulish injunctions."⁵⁹ Although I will discuss the character of Margaret in greater detail later in the next chapter, it is worth

⁵⁹ Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 300.

noting that Margaret stands in contrast with many of the characteristics attributable not only to women but also to widows.

If feminine women are inconstant and powerless in the history plays (ignoring for the moment those history plays which seem to favor domesticity such as *Thomas of Woodstock* from 1592), and act as the opposite of the active masculine man in the history play (a man full of agency and martial valor—a man who *does* things), then the appearance of feminine women ought to break the action of the play.⁶⁰ However, particularly in *Richard III* when these women are most featured, the action is propelled forward and the horror of what King Richard is doing is made more profound. These women are confined to expostulating their grief, “Complaint [is] specific to the disempowered: political outcasts, humble suitors, condemned prisoners, cuckolded husbands, neglected queens, and seduced mistresses.”⁶¹ However, unlike Richmond who is able to challenge King Richard in the field (and so eventually defeat him), the women of *Richard III* are able only to speak of the injustices committed against them.

Within *Richard III*, Queen Elizabeth did have a voice in the government of her husband King Edward IV, but it was a voice that was heard in the private bedchamber not the public court. It was this voice that secured preferment for her relatives and that caused Richard grief albeit feigned. Richard blames the queen for Clarence’s imprisonment, a comment to which Clarence readily agrees, “By heaven, I think there

⁶⁰ Harbage, *Annals*, 56-57.

⁶¹ Richard Danson Brown, “A Talkative Wench (Whose words a world Hath Delighted in): Mistress Shore and Elizabethan Complaint,” 410. Also, “Politically disenfranchised, lamenting women become ‘queens’ of grief, rather than heads of state or authorities in a sanctioned political role, yet their grieving voices and actions are purposeful and express a degree of agency, potency, and political determination.” Marguerite A. Tassi, *Women and Revenge in Shakespeare: Gender, Genre and Ethics* (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 2011), 66.

is no man secure/But the Queen's kindred" (1.1.71-2 *Norton*⁶²). Richard goes on to say he will "keep in favour with the King,/To be *her* men and wear *her* livery" (1.1.79-80 *Norton* emphasis mine). And, in reference to Jane Shore, the two men also locate the place for such a powerful voice—the bedchamber with the "night walking heralds" (1.1.72). Indeed, "women make men into monsters, the Elizabethan euphemism for cuckolds, because they deceive."⁶³ Once King Edward IV has died, however, Queen Elizabeth loses her voice and her place within the government. She is unable to speak in court with authority, and she lacks her private access. The women in Shakespeare's *Richard III* lack the private means through which they are permitted to govern: "Through their performance of submission women are shown to have *influence*—an influence that is at once both wide and narrow."⁶⁴ Without such access these women are relegated to the sidelines from which they curse and prophesy with alarming aim and accuracy.

There is one final woman to note in our brief discussion of what a feminine woman is in the Elizabethan history play: Jane Shore. She was the wife of a London merchant and famous in her own right, who happened to spark the fancy of King Edward IV. His long (and eventually) successful attempts at wooing Jane, her magnanimity once she became the king's mistress, and her downfall (and public shaming) provided the fuel for ballads, the stuff of plays, and even an account in the *Mirroure for Magistrates*.

It is instructive that the popular culture manifestations of Jane Shore began to appear in England at precisely the same time that the social

⁶² The rest of the thesis will utilize *The Norton Shakespeare* for all quotes from Shakespeare's works.

⁶³ Valerie Traub, "Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare's Plays," *Shakespeare Studies* vol. 20 (1988), 215. Traub also argues, "women, through their erotic power, adjudicate life and death" (91).

⁶⁴ Jessica C. Murphy, "Feminine Virtue's Network of Influence in Early Modern England," *Studies in Philology* 109, no. 3 (Spring 2012), 258-278. 259.

structure was confining the parameters of love to marriage and the nuclear family...Shore constitutes a violation of the norm, but also articulates the problematic nature of it when treated as an institution upon which the entire social order depends...When the desiring subject is a monarch, and when the marriage vow he violates is in a way representative of marriage as a state institution (ensuring orderly succession and inheritance of property), the consequences of such a violation may become immense.⁶⁵

Jane Shore was a well-known woman, and her absence from Shakespeare's account of the War of the Roses is notable and significant. However, she does occupy space in two other accounts of Edward IV's reign: *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (1591) and Heywood's *1 and 2 Edward IV* (1599).⁶⁶ In both these accounts, Jane Shore's place mirrors that of Queen Elizabeth's (or the proper female courtier) in that she has private access to the king and she makes use of that access to help those who ask her for it. The more complete account of Jane's story found within *1 and 2 Edward IV* make it a more compelling dramatization of Jane's transgression, humiliation, and eventual reconciliation than *The True Tragedy*.

The necessity of the female to remain in the domestic sphere is clearly articulated by both Wendy Wall and Jesse Lander as they argue Jane's transgression is largely through her movement away from the domestic and into the political.⁶⁷ In Heywood's *1 and 2 Edward IV*, prior to Jane's elopement in Edward's carriage, she is seen watching over the family business and standing in for the Mayor's wife while the Mayor is entertaining King Edward. Lander argues for the necessity of the domestic

⁶⁵ Maria Scott, *Re-presenting Jane Shore: Harlot and Heroine* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 3.

⁶⁶ Harbage dates *The True Tragedy of Richard III* to 1591 and both *1 and 2 Edward IV* to 1599. See, Harbage, *Annals*, 56-57; 70-71.

⁶⁷ See Jesse M. Lander, "'Faith in me unto this commonwealth': *Edward IV* and the Civic Nation," *Renaissance Drama* 27 (1998), 47-78. Also, Wendy Wall, "Forgetting and Keeping: Jane Shore and the English Domestication of History," *Renaissance Drama* 27 (1998): 123-156.

wife on the basis of the Mayor's use of Jane as entertainer.⁶⁸ Jane is allowed into the public sphere only in so far as it remains a necessity for domestic stability. Thus, Jane may watch the shop only when she is continuing work for the house (shown in the stage directions by her needlepoint). It is in her movement into this border space between both spheres that she is assailed by King Edward—had Jane not been petitioned by the Mayor to receive the King, and if she had not been working in the shop so often, she would have gone unnoticed by the monarch. Just as Jane has transgressed the boundaries of the domestic into the political, so too has King Edward transgressed borders in the opposite direction of the political into the domestic. As Wall argues, “The productive household could function as a cornerstone on which urban and rural citizens assert their value to the national economy in opposition to the profligate aristocratic ethos of conspicuous consumption.”⁶⁹ King Edward intrudes onto the domestic space of the stable Shore household in order to woo Jane away from her domestic sphere. Jane's acquiescence, though expected, is no less destabilizing and, once she has lost her preferred place at court, she is no less condemned for abandoning her husband and wifely duties.

The ballad tradition surrounding Jane Shore would have been known to nearly every member of an early modern audience. Numerous scholars have discussed the ways in which Heywood's plays have broken with the ballad tradition in order to complicate the relationship between Jane Shore, her husband, and King Edward.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Lander, 54.

⁶⁹ Wall, 126. See also, “For Heywood, Jane Shore will be an agent with her own consequences in the male world. By expanding his stage this way, Heywood can think about temporary kinds of social organization in an entirely different light.” See also Daryl W. Palmer, “*Edward IV's* Secret Familiarities and the Politics of Proximity in Elizabethan History Plays,” *ELH* 60, no. 2 (Summer 1994), 279-315. 300.

⁷⁰ Nora L. Corrigan, “The Merry Tanner, the Mayor's Fears, and the King's Mistress: Thomas Heywood's *1 Edward IV* and the Ballad Tradition,” *Medieval and*

Jane is shown as a perfectly obedient and loving wife frequently claiming that nothing will draw her away from her husband.

Were I by thousand storms of fortune tossed,
And should endure the poorest wretched life,
Yet Jane will be thy honest, loyal wife.
The greatest prince the sun did every see
Shall never make me prove untrue to thee.
1.8.23-8⁷¹

What is notable here is Jane's allegiance to her husband in the face of anything—including rape—and her willingness to die before she breaks her marriage vows. Jane's language of devotion to her husband (and therefore her status as domestic) frames our ability to interpret Jane later in the play. Although she gives in to Edward's petitions, she claims to "repent them before they have begun" and spends the second part of the two-play sequence seeking to demonstrably repent her actions: "Ere the time begin./ Learn how to be repentant for my sin" (1.20.115-6). Jane's early repentance is unique to Heywood who created "adulteresses who are also sensitive moral creatures who obtain no satisfaction from their crimes and suffer instead constantly from their lapse."⁷² This repentance is at the heart of Jane's redemptive narrative and the reason she is rehabilitated as a feminine woman. Unlike the sexually promiscuous foreign queens discussed in the following chapter, Jane is neither marked nor labeled as foreign despite her technically transgressive behavior.

Likewise, once Jane has left the realm of the domestic, she is never seen occupying the same physical space within the city of London, a point which Wall

Renaissance Drama in England 22 (2009), 27-41 is an excellent example of such a scholarly work.

⁷¹ Thomas Heywood, *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV*, ed. Richard Roland (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005). All quotations from *1 and 2 Edward IV* will be from this edition.

⁷² Mann, 144.

clearly articulates in the scope of movement from the domestic to the political.⁷³ While Jane is with her husband, she is seen consistently either in the home or in the shop (the one exception coming when she serves as the Mayor's wife, a role that tests the boundaries of the political and invites the unwelcome advances of the monarch). However, once Jane has left the safety of her home, she is unable to remain in the same place. With the exception of Mistress Blarge's inn, Jane does not remain in the same location for more than one scene: she is seen at the harbor, the Marshalsea prison, in the queen's chambers, the gallows, Mistress Blarge's inn, the streets of London, and lastly Shore's ditch. Wall's discussion of Jane's movement is an illustration of movement between spheres, but I believe it is also movement towards foreignness. Jane is kept physically from any sense of a home because she no longer has one—she neither belongs properly to the king nor to her husband, and as a result, she becomes an alien within the boundaries of London: “Outsiders who seek access to these spaces symbolically assume the full freight of being alien: unpatriotic, un-English, idle, or wanton.”⁷⁴ Jane Shore's transgression also manifests itself in the absence of the king following his conquest of her chastity. While we are told Jane is the king's favorite, we are only invited to see their interaction in one brief scene in which the king denies Jane her suit for the sailors in front of his wife, the queen. Jane's sexual proximity to the king is counteracted by her physical distance from the king. Daryl W. Palmer's discussion of Jane Shore and sexual politics is particularly revealing for discussing Jane's status as Edward's mistress: “For Heywood, Jane Shore will be an agent with her own consequences in the male world. By expanding his stage this way, Heywood can think about impermanent kinds of social

⁷³ Wall, “Forgetting and Keeping,” 126.

⁷⁴ Wall, 135.

organization in an entirely different light.”⁷⁵ Palmer goes on to say that “every alliance, every hierarchy, may be superseded by the smooth constitution of familiarity.”⁷⁶ This sexual proximity (or familiarity) proves to be sufficient, however, for the consequences of her transgressive behavior to be displaced onto others, most notably her servant, Jockie, and her husband, Matthew Shore.

Throughout the entirety of her fall from favor, Jane Shore is marked as shameful not only to her husband and family, but also to her country and her nation. Her failure to remain chaste and within the private family (and her role as public source of private power) crossed gender boundaries in ways the legitimate Queen Elizabeth, wife of Edward IV, did not. “In a world whose order and prosperity depend in complex ways upon taming and categorizing women, Shore’s ignominious end illustrates the irony that women like her who break the code of marriage in effect nevertheless endorse its premises, which include—metaphorically, at least—the stoning of harlots.”⁷⁷ While both Jane and Elizabeth lost their power and voice in the government through the death of the male King Edward IV and both had access to a private avenue of power, one was the shame to her country while the other was ensconced in a dire struggle for the future of a nation. Traditional gender structures provide a lens through which the proper roles and identities of historical figures may be understood. Talbot’s masculinity becomes indicative of the strength of the English army in the wake of Henry V’s legacy, while Richard III’s unruly and disruptive masculinity is the inheritance from the Wars of the Roses. Likewise, the rival understanding of femininity as submission and obedience becomes symptomatic of its

⁷⁵ Palmer, 300.

⁷⁶ Palmer, 291.

⁷⁷ Alan Clarke Shepard, “‘Female Perversity’, Male Entitlement: The Agency of Gender in More’s *The History of Richard III*,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1995), 311-328. 315.

own struggles. Lastly, Jane Shore's promiscuous relationship with King Edward IV dramatizes the imbalance of power between the king and commoner, while still allowing her to retain her essential femininity which she demonstrates through her obedience to king and state (and eventually, husband). "The citizen's wife turned royal paramour was an unlikely heroine in a culture that valued female chastity and regarded history making as the province and prerogative of aristocratic males. Nevertheless, Mistress Shore's story captured the popular imagination throughout the sixteenth century."⁷⁸ Although it is the unruly women of the history plays who dominate most critical attention, traditionally understood gender roles provide their own problematic interpretations.

⁷⁸ Corrigan, "The Merry Tanner," 37.

Chapter Three

Foreign Queens and English Kings: The Consequences of Aberrant Gender Roles

The very notion of “patriarchy” has threatened to become a universalizing concept that overrides or reduces distinct articulations of gender asymmetry in different cultural contexts.

- Judith Butler¹

The preceding chapter detailed the complex and dynamic definitions of gender in Elizabethan England. However, the shifting religio-political landscape of Western Europe provided avenues for new and refined interpretations of gender roles not only in England, but in Europe as a whole. Within the scope of the history plays, normative gender roles defined men as the active participants on the battlefield while women were confined to the domestic sphere. Those women who do appear in normative positions are kept at home and must utilize language (cursing, lamenting, and complaint) in order to exercise any agency or power within the creation of history. This presumed exclusion of women finds articulation in *Engendering a Nation*, “Antagonists and consorts, queens and queans, witches and saints: women play almost every conceivable role in Shakespeare’s history plays. But there is one role that is always reserved for a man—that of the protagonist.”² None of the women from the previous chapter may become protagonists due to limitations of their sex, and, arguably, none of the women discussed in this chapter will be allowed that freedom either.

In the previous chapter, those characters that conformed to the accepted gender definitions were definitively English: Talbot was the inheritor of Henry V’s French glory and Elizabeth uses feminine complaint to emphasize Richard’s inherent

¹ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 35.

² Phyllis Rackin and Jean E. Howard, *Engendering a Nation: A Feminist Account of Shakespeare’s English Histories* (Routledge, 1997). 49.

monstrosity. If, however, those who uphold normative gender definitions are essentially English, then those who deviate must be foreign. That these women who are indelibly masculine are also indelibly foreign ought not surprise the reader. In *1 Henry VI*, for instance, Rackin and Howard note, “All of the women are French, and none of the English are women. The manhood of the French men, moreover, is always compromised by their dependence upon Joan’s military leadership.”³ The historically inaccurate simultaneous existence of Joan’s execution and Talbot’s demise attests to the importance of nationality and identity within the history plays. That the history plays articulate local, proximal differences between England and its closest neighbors is hardly debatable; however, the extent to which foreignness is linked with gender is a necessary component in understanding how foreignness operates within the history plays. Furthermore, “many of the female characters in Shakespeare’s English history plays are distinguished by foreign nationality or low social origin.”⁴ Women, in the history plays, are defined primarily by their outsider status: beyond their exclusion from the political sphere, women are likewise labeled foreign or of low class. Eleanor of Gloucester from *2 Henry VI* stands as a notable exception to this definition; however, despite her exceptional status, this chapter will not be discussing her unruly English presence (despite its overt depictions of destabilizing witchcraft) as it seeks to focus on what is overtly identified as foreign. The double exclusion of women combined with historical inaccuracies, reinforces the structures of the dichotomies defined in the preceding chapter.

Femininity, however, is not the only gender role to be challenged within the Elizabethan history plays; masculinity is interrogated with a similar thoroughness ultimately revealing the importance of the traditional roles highlighted in the previous

³ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 59.

⁴ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 105

chapter. The chivalric values of Talbot, Young Mortimer, and Richard III are similarly challenged by the weak kings that populate much of the first tetralogy. “The Hundred Years’ War had raised questions about the applicability of the highly personal values of knight-errantry to a kind of warfare that had to serve the personal ends of policy.”⁵ Elizabethan England was also undergoing a drastic revision of what chivalry meant to English forces on both the Continent and in Ireland. The history plays depict a symbiotic relationship between masculinity and femininity; in order for a coherent sense of nation to materialize normative masculinity and femininity must prevail. To act in a way beyond the prescribed gender norms is to define the self and the nation as foreign and, more importantly, not-English.

Feminine Men

Following our earlier dichotomy in which men are expected to be active participants in history, full of aggression and pursuing honor, while women are expected to be passive participants in history, lamenting, wailing, and cursing the course of events, it should come as no surprise that there are many men and women who fail to fall into this strict schema. In particular, there are many men who fail to display the qualities required of a masculine man (Fastolf is one example I have already discussed), just as there are several women who fail to accept the passive roles ordained for them. The feminine man and the masculine woman are both destabilizing elements to the state; although the consequences of their gender aberrations are similar, the means through which those consequences unfold are not. In the preceding chapter, we restricted our investigation largely to early history plays (Marlowe’s *Edward II*, Shakespeare’s First Tetralogy, and Heywood’s *1 and 2 Edward IV*), and we will continue to do so here. In this particular section, we will

⁵ Arthur Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England* (Washington DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1986), 38.

begin by discussing the boy king Henry VI, then move to a discussion of Edward IV, Edward II, and, lastly, we will discuss the implications of a feminine king on foreign soil through the French aristocracy, primarily in *1 Henry VI*.

Unlike the other kings we will discuss in this section, Henry VI's tale spans the course of three plays and, according to Elizabethans, includes one of the most shameful periods in their history: the Wars of the Roses. As *1 Henry VI* makes clear to us, King Henry VI ascended to the throne when he was only nine months old. In an effort to assert the supremacy initiated by his father and keep the French in awe, Henry VI was crowned both in Paris and London making him the first English king to be crowned King of England and France (1.1.89-90). Similarly, Henry VI's heritage as the son of Henry V remains with Henry VI throughout the course of his reign. Following the chivalric ideal personified in the late king Henry V, the nobility of England desires little else other than to pursue glory in France. However, *1 Henry VI* opens not only with the death of Henry V, but with the proclamation of French lands lost.

My honourable lords, health to you all.
 Sad tidings bring I to you out of France,
 Of loss, of slaughter, and discomfiture.
 Guyenne, Compiegne, Rouen, Rheims, Orleans,
 Paris, Gisors, Poitiers are all quite lost.

1.1.57-61

In case the audience was not sufficiently aware of the ill omens marking the reign of Henry VI, Gloucester accuses the Bishop of Winchester of praying for the death of Henry V so the Bishop might "overawe" an "effeminate prince" (1.1.35-6). Lisa Dickson notes, "that the King is dead is loudly proclaimed. That a new king has taken his place is barely whispered," adding to the significance of the news found at

the outset of *1 Henry VI*.⁶ The loss of French land purposefully corresponds to the late King's funeral procession: "implicated in the principle of succession is the idea of virility, the loss of French territory indicating the loss of virility, for the English are not men if they cannot hold on to what their fathers have won."⁷ The simultaneous announcement of the death of the personification of all Christian kings and the radical loss of French land disrupts the trajectory of the English imperial project in France. Likewise, the absence of any mention of the new English King, Henry VI, signifies a foundational rupture between the glorious past and the dubious present.

The absence initiated in the first scene through the nobles' failure to announce the accession of a new king to the throne continues as Henry VI, although the title character of the play, does not appear until the third act of *1 Henry VI*. He appears in the midst of settling a dispute between the Bishop of Winchester and the Duke of Gloucester, and entreats them with "prayers" to cease their quarrel arguing

...My tender years can tell
Civil dissension is a viperous worm
That gnaws the bowels of the commonwealth.
3.1.72-4

Although Henry VI knows in theory the consequences of civil dissension he is continually unable to navigate the politics of court to frustrate the ambitions of the House of York and prevent the Wars of the Roses. Henry VI's apparent ineptitude is placed within the context of his piety. We can see Henry VI's demeanor is meant to illustrate a civilizing humanist influence: "Shakespeare's plays give imaginative expression to one of the great controlling narratives of Renaissance culture, namely the power of the arts of civilization to restrain and order the barbarous passions of our

⁶ Lisa Dickson, "No Rainbow Without the Sun: Visibility and Embodiment in *1 Henry VI*," *Modern Language Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2000), 137-156. 138.

⁷ Coppelia Kahn, *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 56.

fallen nature.”⁸ Henry’s ineptitude may, then, have less to do with his ignorance navigating the Scylla and Charybdis of court life, than with his willful disregard for the structures of that political schema in favor of being an example of a civilized Christian king. In addition to failing to adequately stymie the ambition of the House of York, later in this same scene, 3.1, Henry VI reinstates the Duke of York (the duke who will challenge Henry VI’s legitimacy in the coming action) to all his lands and titles at the urging of Gloucester. Henry VI works to strengthen the House of York while failing to discern adequate, true counsel from those who wish to only further their own ends. Furthermore, at Gloucester’s behest, Henry VI crosses the channel to France to be crowned in Paris to strengthen the loyalty of his French nobles. Henry VI acknowledges “when Gloucester says the word, King Henry goes” (3.1.188). Although Gloucester’s advice embodies the disinterested counsel Henry is unable to discern on his own, his over reliance on Gloucester becomes an illustration of Henry’s weak will running counter to his devotion to being a Christian king, and a recurrent issue throughout the course of the plays.

Henry’s reliance on others to act follows him through the rest of *1 Henry VI*: he banishes Fastolf on the word of Talbot (4.1.45-49), relies on Talbot to chastise Burgundy for defecting (4.1.68-70), allows Gloucester to find him a suitable wife (5.1.20), and then allows Suffolk to persuade him otherwise (5.7.79-91). When forced to make a choice, Henry deliberately attempts to define his choice as essentially arbitrary, or at least not categorically different from any other man’s decision. This insistence indicates an essential incapacity and ignorance regarding what it means to be a monarch. Despite Henry’s persevering beliefs that his decisions are not

⁸ Robin Headlam Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 87.

inherently meaningful, Henry's grasp of political theory is sound as he chastises his nobles

And you, my lords, remember where we are--
 In France, amongst a fickle wavering nation...
 Beside, what infamy will there arise
 When foreign princes shall be certified
 That for a toy, a thing of no regard,
 King Henry's peers and chief nobility
 Destroyed themselves and lost the realm of France.
 4.1.137-138; 143-47

However, he lacks the knowledge and the aptitude to understand how that theory relates to his nobles, and, in particular, to his reign. Henry VI has learned the essentials of kingship, but he lacks the will and the ability to implement them. *I Henry VI* dramatizes what should have been Henry's maturation, yet "[i]n crucial ways Henry VI's developmental transformation from effeminate boy to masculine adult is never made, and this masculine weakness provides a domestic corollary to the external feminine threat posed to the English patriarchy by the Amazonian foreigners Joan and Margaret."⁹ Unlike the masculine identity inherited from his father, Henry VI fails to emulate the narrative of conquest left by Henry V. Henry VI's naiveté is further illustrated when he chooses the red rose of Lancaster without regard for its political consequence, yet he is still unable to escape imparting political meaning on the act. The red rose, *because* it was picked by Henry VI, becomes the symbol of his house; simply because Henry VI desires to eschew the consequences of being king does not preclude their existence.

Without a dominant leader, the nobles plot to defame and overthrow each other leading to Talbot's tragic death, as well as the end of significant military operations in France for the remainder of Henry VI's reign. The consequence of

⁹ Ian Frederick Moulton, "'A Monster Great Deformed': The Unruly Masculinity of Richard III," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (Autumn 1996), 251-268. 256.

Henry VI's failure to unequivocally assert his authority is compounded in *2 Henry VI*, where we immediately discover nearly all the English lands in France have been lost or are given as dowry to Margaret of Anjou. Just as the forfeiture of French lands at the beginning of *1 Henry VI* signified a defect of English virility, so too, does the surrender of French lands here. Henry's abdication of French lands "[is] felt not as sorrows but as trauma," through the nobles' response to Margaret's dowry and the purposeful paralleling of Joan of Arc's narrative and Margaret's.¹⁰ Henry VI earnestly agrees to provide Margaret with a dowry, while the nobles of his court are outraged by the insult. If the loss of French lands in battle was an embarrassment, then sacrificing the same lands for a marriage impugns English virility further. York is not simply insulted that Margaret would bring no dowry with her, but that Henry VI would subvert gender roles to the extent that he will provide one for her

I never read but England's kings have had
 Large sums of gold and dowries with their wives--
 And our King Henry gives away his own,
 To match with her that brings no vantages.

1.1.124-127

Henry's weakness is exemplified in his willingness to sacrifice *England's* lands to provide the dowry for a powerless foreign princess. According to York, England is losing her prestige through this particular marriage negotiation, and Gloucester goes further, linking Margaret's dowry with the nobles and the explicit state of the realm:

Shall Henry's conquest, Bedford's vigilance,
 Your deeds of war, and all our counsel die?
 O peers of England, shameful is this league,
 Fatal this marriage, canceling your fame,
 Blotting your names from books of memory,
 Razing the characters of your renown,
 Defacing monuments of conquered France,
 Undoing all, as all had never been!

1.1.92-99

¹⁰ Chris Fitter, "Emergent Shakespeare and the Politics of Protest: *2 Henry VI* in Historical Context," *ELH* 47, no. 1 (Spring 2006), 136.

Not only is Henry giving away the public lands of England, but he is also giving away something the nobles (and not Henry) won. Similarly, the Henry Gloucester references is not Henry VI, but his father Henry V, whose famous victory at Agincourt was intended to be Henry VI's birthright and legacy. The essential insult is that Henry VI gives away his inheritance to a foreigner. Although Henry rules England, the land is not his possession—it is not his private property. The land of England is, therefore, necessarily public, meaning every Englishman has a stake in it. The king is trusted to be a custodian of the land England possesses and use it for the well being of everyone. In giving away land in France, King Henry is not only using commonly won land for private gain, but he is lessening the glory of England. The consequences for Henry's action are clear: the nobles who died and their victories will no longer be remembered since England no longer has the land—it will be “as all had never been.”

What is perhaps most telling is Henry's utter reliance on Suffolk's judgment (Suffolk did marry Margaret as Henry's proxy), and his inability to discern the cause of his own infatuation with Margaret:

Whether it be through force of your report,
 My noble lord of Suffolk, or for that
 My tender youth was never yet attain't
 With any passion of inflaming love,
 I cannot tell.

1 Henry VI 5.7.79-83

Although Henry does profess his own desire for Margaret (*2 Henry VI* 1.1.30-33), his complete dependence upon Suffolk's description of his future wife becomes indicative of a fundamental flaw in his reign. Henry VI relies on the advice of those around him to the exclusion of relying on himself for his political judgments, and he is unable to discern who is offering good counsel. He acquiesces to the demands

made by the King of Naples because of Suffolk's description of Margaret. Furthermore, he cannot understand the other lords' displeasure because they do not tell him; instead, the lords wait until after he has left the court before denouncing the new treaty. Henry VI becomes the personification of the feminine attribute of inconstancy as he is swayed by anyone offering counsel. He is swayed by Talbot's account of Fastolf, Gloucester's desire to have him recrowned in France, and Suffolk's description of Margaret. Henry VI's inability to distinguish between proper and harmful counsel may be attributed to his aversion to political maneuvering, his religious asceticism, or his early accession to the English throne. Ultimately, however, this inability indicates a failure as a man and a failure as a monarch. Henry's failings "as king are thus presented in part as failings of masculinity," and as the first tetralogy continues, Henry VI's failed masculinity becomes increasingly problematic.¹¹

Most tellingly, Henry is swayed and ruled by his wife, Margaret. Beginning in *2 Henry VI* when Margaret desires to act like a queen, she pressures Henry VI to remove himself from Gloucester's protectorship and rule on his own. Beginning in 1.3 Margaret pressures Gloucester to step down willingly, while Gloucester defers to Henry VI and "his pleasure" before resigning (1.3.125). Margaret's jabs at Gloucester continue in every scene in which they appear together, until Henry VI asks Gloucester to hand over his staff. This is an interesting moment as all three characters appear to be speaking to themselves rather than to each other. Henry VI demands Gloucester's staff of office and "will to himself/ Protector be" relying on God to be "My stay, my guide, and lantern to my feet" (2.3.23-5). One of the few times we hear Henry speak without relying on someone else's counsel, Henry defers his authority to God.

¹¹ Howard and Rackin, *Engendering a Nation*, 71.

Margaret is the next to weigh in on her new status as ruling Queen, and urges Gloucester once more to hand over his staff. While Henry VI vows to rely on God for the decisions of his reign, Margaret combines Henry's long minority with Henry VI's appeal to God in her advocacy for Henry's right to rule:

I see no reason why a king of years
Should be to be protected like a child.
God and King Henry govern England's helm!
2.3.28-30

Lastly, Gloucester partakes in the exchange following Margaret's second demand that he hand over the staff, and willingly complies, discharging himself from the responsibility of Henry VI's rule and offering an overlooked warning as to who will take control in his absence (2.3.32-38). In this scene, Henry finally sees himself as a king able to rule as a Christian prince ought to, Margaret sees the fulfillment of her ambitions, and Gloucester sees a last opportunity to show his loyalty to the legacy of Henry V: none of these things will happen.

Committed to the Tower for treason, Gloucester dies at the hands of Suffolk's lackeys before he can be properly tried. Henry VI has sent Gloucester to the Tower based on the counsel of Somerset, Suffolk, and Margaret, displaying his continual dependence on others—despite claiming to be his “own protector” Henry is still following the orders of those around him. When Henry is acquainted with the death of Gloucester his response is an immediate swoon; a particularly feminine reaction to death and bloodshed. Henry's response indicates an integral failing, “in terms of masculinity that prevail in his world, he never reaches full manhood; he remains effeminate and typically weeps, prays, or entreats rather than commands.”¹² The death of Gloucester, perpetrated without the king's knowledge, also signifies the increasing factionalism in the English court. Unable to control his nobles to ensure Gloucester

¹² Kahn, *Man's Estate*, 51.

receives a fair trial for his alleged crimes, Henry VI cannot even offer protection to Gloucester while he awaits trial. Furthermore, that the murder was carried out by the Queen's lover Suffolk, and with her knowledge, only deepens the audience awareness that Henry VI is out of touch with the politics and the people of his court.

Henry VI's reliance on others, and consequently his inconstancy, is not the only measure of his femininity. Henry VI's abhorrence of armed conflict and the way in which others view him (and not merely those of the Yorkist faction) also attest to the femininity of this weak English king. The perceptions Henry VI's nobles and his wife hold of him reflect his reluctance to partake in armed conflict and his desire to always seek peace with words. Henry VI furthermore fails to exact revenge on those who have threatened his crown or harmed his family. While Henry VI praises the English at times for their warlike spirit (note his praise of Talbot in *1 Henry VI*), he has no desire to lead his troops into battle, instead leaving that to his French wife.

The most crushing blow to Henry VI's masculinity comes at the hands of his wife, Margaret of Anjou, who engages in an affair with Suffolk, leads Henry's troops into battle, and consistently refers to him in emasculating terms. Margaret's dissatisfaction with her new husband becomes clear early in *2 Henry VI* as she compares Suffolk with Henry VI:

I thought King Henry had resembled thee
 In courage, courtship, and proportion.
 But all his mind is bent to holiness,
 To number Ave-Maries on his beads.
 His champions are the prophets and apostles,
 His weapons holy saws of sacred writ,
 His study is his tilt-yard, and his loves
 Are brazen images of canonized saints.
 I would the college of the cardinals
 Would choose him Pope, and carry him to Rome,
 And set the triple crown upon his head—
 That were a state fit for his holiness.

1.3.57-68

While Margaret argues that Henry VI does not resemble Suffolk in “courage, courtship, and proportion,” she goes on to expostulate on Henry’s character which is consumed with holiness. Unlike Suffolk who prizes military honor (he takes Margaret as a prisoner while he is fighting the French), Margaret likens Henry VI’s military pursuits to his study. Margaret feels understandably deceived by the person of Henry VI, believing whoever controlled the warlike Suffolk would necessarily exceed Suffolk’s honor. Margaret’s appraisal of Henry VI goes beyond his failure to partake in military pursuits, as the rest of his nobles crave, to his inability to sexually satisfy Margaret and govern the realm. She argues that he has turned all his thoughts to “Ave-Maries” and to prayer rather than to the government of the realm, and her comparison to the Pope attests to the frigidity of their marriage. While Margaret does not argue that Henry VI is not governing the realm, she implies that through his excessive devotion he is neglecting good governance. Margaret’s characterization of Henry VI, although necessarily hyperbolic, epitomizes the concerns of Elizabethan England; “at stake here is not just Henry’s psyche, nor even the stability of the English body politic, but the play’s success and the Christian underpinnings of early modern monarchy in general.”¹³ Furthermore, through his devotion, he is also neglecting his wife. She claims he only loves the images of the saints (as opposed to his flesh and blood wife). It is this dereliction of duty that appalls Margaret because their relationship not only has private implications, but public ones as well. Henry’s private failures as a husband lead to potentially problematic sexual frustration which Margaret sees translated into Henry VI’s ability to govern the realm.

Margaret raises this question again to Henry’s peers after he has exited the scene; where her complaint to Suffolk was done in private, her words to the nobility

¹³ Thomas J. Moretti, “Misthinking the King: The Theatrics of Christian Rule in *Henry VI, Part 3*,” *Renascence* 60, no. 4 (Summer 2008), 275-294. 285.

are made public. Not only does Margaret offer herself as an alternative to the King, but she offers herself as a better alternative. According to Margaret, Henry VI “is cold in great affairs/ Too full of foolish pity” to ably partake in the necessities of government (3.1.224-5). Margaret balances the deficiencies of Henry with the abilities of herself: “Yet herein I judge mine own wit good—” (3.1.232). Margaret will continue to substitute herself in Henry’s affairs, eventually replacing the king as the leader of the English army. After the accession of Edward IV to the crown of England (and the deposition of Henry VI), Margaret encourages Henry to fly for self-preservation; when he does not, she fundamentally questions his character:

What are you made of? You’ll nor fight nor fly.
 Now is it manhood, wisdom, and defence,
 To give the enemy way, and to secure us
 By what we can, which can no more but fly.

5.4.3-6

Margaret’s question moves from the simply emasculating to questioning his very being. While Henry VI would linger and accept his fate, Margaret would have him fight not only for his crown but for his family as well. Henry’s refusal to do so calls into question his very humanity, in the eyes of Margaret and the play making “the young King Harry responsible for much of the disorder in his kingdom, and it insistently connects his failures as monarch to his failures of masculinity.”¹⁴ Henry VI’s myriad failings are a complaint Margaret will raise again as *3 Henry VI* opens.

York’s perception of Henry VI ought to come as no surprise since it is York who leads the rebellion against Lancaster and instigates the Wars of the Roses. However, York’s sentiments are reflected by others over the course of the tetralogy. York frequently refers to Henry VI as “bookish,” a fact which will haunt Henry’s lines as he comes closer and closer to deposition (1.1.258). In Wells’ book,

¹⁴ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 67,

Shakespeare and Masculinity, much of the discussion centers around different types of warrior kings as personified in the men the preceding chapter; however, there is one masculine ideal, the Orphic Man, which does not. Although Wells sees this definition typified in Shakespeare's late play, *The Tempest*, this definition of masculinity provides a useful lens through which to understand Henry VI's character.¹⁵ The other previous types of masculinity focus upon the chivalric revival and rules of combat typified by the strong, warrior kings of the history plays. The Orphic man, however, is intrinsically linked with colonialism. According to Wells, "Since Orpheus' music was responsible, symbolically, for taming the savage heart of fallen man, it is inevitable that images of music and musical harmony should find their way into political debate in Renaissance Europe."¹⁶ Furthermore, Wells labels the Orphic man as feminine: "His club abandoned, the feminized hero now devotes himself to the task of learning the arts of civilization."¹⁷

Henry VI endeavors to "civilize" his nobles by consistently entreating them to use diplomacy rather than war and private combat to resolve differences, a move that resonates not only as civilizing but also as Christian. If *Part II* concerned itself with Henry VI's failed manhood, then *Part III* is concerned with how a self-identified Christian ruler maintains the realm: "By reconstructing the troublesome reign of a pious Christian king, this play rehearses the early modern attempt to triangulate Christianity, sovereignty, and manhood."¹⁸ However, in the English medieval cultural economy in which the heroic masculine ideal stands embodied in the legacy of his father Henry V (who is termed "blest of the King of kings" [*1 Henry VI 1.1.28*]), Henry VI's attempts to dissuade his nobles from pursuing war against each other

¹⁵ Wells, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, 177

¹⁶ Wells, 182.

¹⁷ Wells, 196.

¹⁸ Moretti, "Misthinking the King," 276.

becomes a sign of (feminine) weakness rather than a sign of “civility.” Culturally relevant, England’s interference in the Wars of Religion on the Continent was fiercely contested across all strata of society and all forms of religion. As Moretti expounds, “by engaging with religio-humanist discourse, *Part 3* ponders the Christian virtues demanded of royalty, the sort of royalty entailed by such virtues, and noticeably, the gendering, not just of piety, but of sovereignty. The very proving grounds of manliness—the battlefield and the court—were potential sites of evil.”¹⁹ The battle over Christian virtue and Christian rule becomes a battle over normative gender roles which the play explores. As seen in Chapter One, England’s vacillating relationship (from feelings of inferiority to superiority) with France comes into play again here where location shapes action. English kings entered France in an attempt to conquer the land and gain legitimacy in England by proving English superiority. In conquering France, English masculinity became superior to the over-civilized foppery of the French, and English values were reestablished as normative. Henry VI, rejecting heroic masculinity by sacrificing his lands in France (twice) and refusing to lead men into battle (and allowing a French *woman* to do so), rejects not only his father’s legacy but rejects English cultural norms. Henry VI’s weakness becomes a means through which he is distanced from Englishness and becomes a symbolic outsider.

One of the best portraits of French masculinity can be found in *1 Henry VI* where Joan of Arc secures command of the French army. As Henry VI will later be dependent on his wife Margaret, the French military is dependent on the skills of a woman to succeed, providing an apt parallel for discussion. René implores Joan, “Woman, do what thou canst to save our honours” (*1 Henry VI* 1.3.126), much as the

¹⁹ Moretti, “Misthinking the King,” 275.

English do to Margaret in *3 Henry VI*. In *1 Henry VI*, Charles, like Henry VI (and the Lancastrians in general), relies on a woman to lead his troops into battle—successes and defeats are both placed on Joan’s shoulders: “Tis Joan, not we, by whom the day is won” (2.1.17). Unlike Henry VI, Charles relishes battle. While he shows little aptitude for military strategy, Charles has none of the qualms of his English counterpart about engaging in battle. What is striking is Charles’s failure to live up to the words he speaks. At the siege of Orleans, Charles gives a stirring battle cry

Now for the honor of the forlorn French!
Him I forgive my death that killeth me,
When he sees me go back one foot or fly.
1.2.19-21

However his words are empty when beaten back by the English, Charles lays the responsibility for the retreat, and his flight, on the soldiers he fights with

Who ever saw the like? What men have I!
Dogs! Cowards! Dastards! I would ne’er had fled,
But that they left me midst my enemies.
1.2.22-24

When the French fail to prevent the English from retaking Orleans, Charles accuses Joan of being remiss in her duty (2.1.51), a charge she promptly denies. While she has promised to drive the English from France, she has not promised she will be undefeated. Despite Joan’s failure to secure Orleans following their first siege, Charles does not cease relying on Joan for what course the war should follow. When Joan proposes enticing the Duke of Burgundy to join the French cause, Charles places the responsibility with Joan rather than command Burgundy as his sovereign. Charles tells Joan to “enchant him with thy words” (3.7.40). Like Henry VI, Charles relies on the advice and the actions of others to secure the throne for him. While this tactic does not work for Henry VI (it leads to the Wars of the Roses), Charles’s reliance on Joan leads to the restoration of his kingdom.

Not only is Charles reliant on Joan to reclaim France in his name, but he is also unable to utilize any language but the sexual when talking with Joan. While I talk about the impact this has on Joan in the next section, here I will discuss how Charles's inability to relate with Joan beyond sexual terms marks Charles as effeminate. Rackin and Howard note, "In early modern sexual discourses, an effeminate man was typically one who, like an inferior being, woman, let passion control his reason. To love a woman too much marked a man as effeminate, at the mercy of his emotions and his desire."²⁰ Charles's effusive praise of Joan relegates her to merely a sexual object, but it also indicates Charles's essential inability to adequately rule. Like Henry VI's devoted (and unreciprocated) love for Margaret, Charles's petitions to Joan lack restraint. René notes Charles's lack of moderation: "Shall we disturb him, since he keeps no mean?" (1.2.121). Not only is Charles's inability to control himself disconcerting to René, but he also desires to intervene. In begging for Joan's favor, Charles diminishes himself and his crown:

Impatiently I burn with thy desire.
 My heart and hands thou hast at once subdued.
 Excellent Pucelle if thy name be so,
 Let me thy servant, and not sovereign be.
 1.2.108-111

Shakespeare is here, and throughout *1 Henry VI*, punning on Pucelle as maid and whore—Charles is wishing Joan to be both a virtuous and a loose woman. More seriously and in the tradition of courtly love, Charles is willing to relinquish his position of power to Joan, desiring to be her servant rather than her sovereign. As with all things regarding a monarch, Charles's amorous proclamations are not for Joan's ears only but reflect on his ability to govern the realm. The "fact that [the king's] public responsibilities took precedence over his private interests as a knight

²⁰ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 67.

distinguishes the king himself from the chivalric model to which he instinctively adhered, both in the play and in history.”²¹ Although Charles can hardly be considered the epitome of chivalric virtue (by English or French standards), Charles’s inclination towards the private over the public demonstrates his character as a monarch. In failing to govern himself and putting himself at the mercy of another, Charles fails to maintain the necessary commitment to governing France. René’s larger concern regarding Charles’s infatuation with Joan is not simply Charles’s lack of moderation, but the failure to govern that such a lack represents.

Charles is not the only monarch to suffer from an inability to control his own instinctive desires, and many of the history plays depict English monarchs failing to govern themselves. Henry VI’s reliance on his advisors to govern the realm for him is indicative of a masculine deficiency only rectified through his deposition. While his successor, Edward IV relies on himself to govern the realm, he is also unable to govern his passions displaying a similar frailty to his French counterpart, Charles. Both Shakespeare and Heywood depict an Edward IV that is unable to control his libido to the extent that it threatens state stability. Edward’s hasty marriage to the widow Elizabeth Grey is the source for further internal conflict. As Shakespeare depicts in *3 Henry VI*, it is Edward’s marriage to Elizabeth Grey at the same time that Warwick is suing for the French Lady Bona on his behalf that drives Warwick to favor the Lancastrians. Warwick sees Edward’s marriage to an English commoner while he is wooing a foreign noble woman on Edward’s behalf as a direct affront to his honor. Edward, by making Warwick’s task appear a mockery of the French, has impugned Warwick’s credibility and international reputation, implicating Warwick in Edward’s offence. Edward’s decision to marry the widow Elizabeth Grey, parallels

²¹ Ferguson, *Chivalric Tradition*, 99.

the trajectory of the other feminine men discussed in this chapter; Edward IV is unable to differentiate between his private desires and the good of the commonwealth. The only way Warwick sees himself able to clear this blemish on his manhood is to denounce Edward:

King Louis, I here protest in sight of heaven
 And by the hope I have of heavenly bliss,
 That I am clear from this misdeed of Edwards,
 No more my king, for he dishonours me.
 3.3.181-4

Edward's hasty marriage has the effect of not only causing those closest to him to question his leadership, but to defect. Warwick goes on to declare that Clarence, Edward's brother, is also willing to join the Lancastrian cause as a direct result of Edward's potentially destabilizing lust.

Unlike Henry VI and Charles, Edward does not suffer from allowing others to rule him. Despite the advice of those closest to him urging him to refrain from marrying Lady Grey while Warwick is in France, Edward ignores their recommendations and pursues the widow. Gloucester alludes to the gossip that will ensue once Edward has married Lady Grey calling it a "ten days' wonder" (3.2.113). Edward's ill-advised marriage to Lady Grey while Warwick is in France (wooing another on Edward's behalf) has led to both Warwick and King Louis of France aligning themselves with the Lancastrians. Clarence's premonition that both King Louis and Warwick will ally themselves with Queen Margaret is met by Edward IV's insistence on his authority as king:

Suppose they take offence without a cause:
 They are but Lewis and Warwick; I am Edward,
 Your King and Warwick's and must have my will.
 3 *Henry VI* 4.1.14-16

Edward IV's insistence on his inherent influence as king, regardless of the political consequences for himself and for the realm, resembles similar preoccupations that

mark the other feminine men despite their vastly different flaws. Unlike Talbot, whose self-sacrifice in France for the glory of England stamps him as unequivocally masculine, the men discussed as feminine continually fail to subordinate their personal private desires to the good of the commonwealth. The nobles surrounding Edward view his marriage in terms of the international implications and the consequences for the Yorkists in their war with the Lancastrians. Clarence, in particular, is concerned over the new enemies Edward has made, accusing Edward of mocking the French king. Montague's appraisal of Edward's marriage likewise stems from concerns over foreign policy:

To have joined with France in such alliance
 Would more have strengthened this our commonwealth
 'Gainst foreign storms than any home-bred marriage.
 4.1.35-7

Edward's fault in marrying Lady Grey is the primacy he has placed on his self rather than his state. In seeking to marry for love (or lust), Edward has failed to expand the security and alliances of the state. His English marriage has served to weaken England (a claim Edward will attempt to refute).

Shakespeare's treatment of Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Grey becomes symptomatic of Edward's propensity to seek peace in the wake of his victories over the Lancastrians, eventually, though hardly directly, leading to Richard III's assumption of the English throne. In Heywood's history play, *1 Edward IV* from 1599, he opens with the problematic marriage of Edward and Lady Grey, but with an opposing conclusion. The Duchess of York is chastising Edward IV for marrying within England rather than seeking a politically advantageous marriage on the continent. The Duchess's argument is, like that of Montague and Clarence in Shakespeare's play, that not only has Edward betrayed the trust of a strong ally (Warwick), he is also insulting the king of France. Where Montague argues for a loss

of honor in pursuing two women simultaneously, the Duchess takes issue with the social status of Edward's new bride. Edward has not only slighted Lady Bona's honor in marrying another while bringing a marriage suit to her, but he has married a commoner and not a woman of noble blood. Shakespeare privileges Edward's marriage to the widow Grey as the source of his ultimate failure as king in his value of the private (his marriage) over the public (the state). Heywood, however, uses Edward's marriage to the widow Grey to prefigure the larger failings of Edward's reign: "Edward ruled by crossing traditional boundaries of rank and acquaintance; even adversaries could draw near."²² The Duchess links Edward's behavior with that of his new wife in saying Edward "basely" took "a subject of your own" (1.26). By linking himself to someone he ought to rule, Edward has denigrated not only himself but the entire state of England. Edward's retort to his mother's argument is that English blood is stronger than any other nation's, therefore, his children and the nation will inherit the full measure of English blood and be stronger. In a xenophobic rant, Edward argues for the "pure blood" of the English nobility rather than the adulterated blood that has degraded England for centuries. Reversing the typical argument in which marriage to a foreigner was seen as increasing the power of the state through alliance, Edward argues for the physical purity rather than the political gain. Though the Duchess considers Edward's marriage to be politically inbred (because Edward is marrying from within the state of England), Edward argues it will ultimately strengthen the state even though, at the moment, it is potentially destabilizing.

Just as Edward IV's marriage in Shakespeare threatened the external stability of England (ultimately resulting in Margaret's invasion of England with Warwick),

²² Daryl W. Palmer, "Edward IV's Secret Familiarities and the Politics of Proximity in Elizabethan History plays," *ELH* 61, no. 2 (Summer 1994), 283.

his pursuit of Jane Shore in Heywood is indicative of the internal instability Edward's inconstant proximity represents. While in Shakespeare *Warwick and the King of France* become enemies of England in response to Edward's marriage, in *Edward IV* Shore becomes impotent when Edward pursues his wife. Heywood's play demonstrates that Shore equates the loss of his wife with royal power:

When kings themselves so narrowly do pry
 Into the world, men fear; and why not I?
1 Edward IV 20.54-55

The attention the King showers on Shore's wife complicates and destabilizes the domestic relationship between Shore and his wife. Edward's intrusion into the domestic sphere is seen as a "fatal confusion of territories."²³ Shore must now contend with the monarch, whose ontological nature is categorically different from his own, forcing him to refuse any marital affection or right to his wife:

Thou go with me Jane? oh God forbid
 That I should be a traitor to my King.
 Shall I become a felon to his pleasures,
 And fly away as guilty of the theft?
 No, my dear Jane, I say it may not be.
 O, what have subjects that is not their king's?
1 Edward IV 22.107-112

Shore expresses the double bind in which Edward IV's dalliances with his wife have placed him. If Shore pursues his own wife in the way Edward IV is pursuing her, Shore is in danger of treason, therefore Shore finds himself unable to defend his family because in protecting his family he is betraying the state. Not only does Shore refuse to be a traitor to the king, the king who has betrayed his own duty in taking another's wife, but he claims that Jane is already the king's: "What have subjects that

²³ Jesse M. Lander, "'Faith in me unto this commonwealth': *Edward IV* and the Civic Nation," *Renaissance Drama* 27 (1998), 47-78. 57. Richard Danson Brown echoes this complaint, "A man wronged by kings has no legal means of gaining redress: he must either rebel or complain" ("A Talkative Wench (Whose Words a World hath Delighted In): Mistress Shore and Elizabethan Complaint," *The Review of English Studies* 49, no. 196 (Nov 1998), 413.

is not their kings?" Edward IV has abused his authority in such a way that there is no hope of recourse for Shore—he must simply accept that the king has taken his wife from him.

Edward IV's choice of mistress is also indicative of his conflation of the public and private; Heywood goes to great lengths early in *1 Edward IV* to portray the Shores as the ideal marriage. Shore, himself, boldly defends London against the rebels and is offered a knighthood by the King in response; Jane, for her part, consistently reinforces her devotion to her husband reiterating her refusal to abandon him under any circumstances. The domestic stability represented by the Shores' marriage "ultimately leads to the City's displacement of the king: the king as embodiment of the realm is replaced by the City as embodiment of the nation, while simultaneously the domestic shifts from its position as microcosm of the political world to become a privatized enclave, an alternative civil society."²⁴ As Lander goes on to demonstrate, the idealized (and later destroyed) Shore marriage acts as a symbol through which the entire body politic may be understood. Edward IV's inability to discern proper proximity "engenders a desire that transgresses the bounds of rank and ultimately determines the very shape of English rule."²⁵ Furthermore, Edward's "failure to 'requite' generosity in kind will become the defining feature of his relationship with Matthew Shore; an ideal citizen who loses his wife to a less than

²⁴ Lander, "Faith in Me," 53.

²⁵ Palmer, "*Edward IV's* Secret Familiarities," 295. Also, Lander, "Faith in Me," 57: "Jane's seduction is particularly problematic because the king not only blurs the boundary between monarch and subject but intrudes himself into the sanctified space of the household and the protected liberty of the City."

ideal king” dramatizes the extent to which Edward’s intrusion into the local, domestic sphere undermines his integrity as monarch.²⁶

Edward IV, meanwhile, appears to acknowledge that what he feels towards Jane is inappropriate. Not only does Edward IV recognize that she is the wife of a man to whom he owes a debt, but Edward IV is also recently married (to an ill-chosen bride according to most). Edward’s internal struggle to refrain from pursuing Jane is ultimately defeated as he gives in to his passions, pursuing and stealing Jane from her husband. Edward IV even goes so far as to refer to his own heart as “traitor” in his attempts to remain faithful to his new wife (*I Edward IV* 16.123.) Edward IV’s final attempt to constrain his desires comes as an imperative to “keep home, keep home, for fear of further ill” (16.147). This refrain, “keep home,” parallels the conflict revolving around Edward IV’s familiarity; although he is internally conflicted, his external decision “is particularly problematic because the king not only blurs the boundary between monarch and subject but intrudes himself into the sanctified space of the household and the protected liberty of the city.”²⁷ Edward IV’s inability to keep home (both the domestic and the state) leads to the final battles of the Wars of the Roses and the defection of his brother George Duke of Clarence. Despite Edward’s inability to remain true and constant to his wife (and therefore, symbolically his state), Edward IV still actively engages in the government of the realm. Unlike Henry VI’s reliance on his protector and advisers to rule, Edward IV makes decisions independent of others, acknowledging his royal status. However, his royal decrees become a liability as Edward is unable to privately govern himself—a flaw infecting the domestic health of the state.

²⁶ Nora L. Corrigan, “The Merry Tanner, The Mayor’s Fears, and the King’s Mistress: Thomas Heywood’s *I Edward IV* and the Ballad Tradition,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 22 (2009), 27-41. 34.

²⁷ Lander, “Faith in Me,” 57.

Edward IV is not plagued by a foreign queen, in fact, his problem is diametrically opposed to foreignness. In *1 Edward IV*, his repeated refusal to expand beyond the bounds of England directly leads to the strife within his rule. By contrast, in Shakespeare, the marriage between Edward and Lady Grey, instead of the French princess, directly causes the invasion of French forces led by Margaret. While in Shakespeare Henry VI is led astray by his foreign wife, Margaret, it is Edward's refusal to participate in what is foreign in Heywood that leads to the conflict within the play. Particularly in the case of Shakespeare, Edward's English marriage indicates an inability to adequately rule. Heywood, rather than focusing on Edward's marriage, centers on Edward's dalliances with the Londoner, Jane Shore. Although in *1 Edward IV* Heywood does not articulate foreign problems, and confines himself to the politically domestic, he actively challenges the coding of desire. Lorna Hutson argues, "It becomes very clear that what counts, in distinguishing those who may desire and ask, and those who must be passive, is not gender but social status."²⁸ Although Edward's desire is essentially emasculating, he is untouched by any potential connection to foreignness and his royal deficiency is established on his wife's inferior social status instead of his desire.

Our last feminine English king is perhaps the most notorious, Marlowe's Edward II. Edward II is not solely consumed by his passions, but he is consumed to the point that he resents ruling the realm. While Henry VI desired a pastoral life in which concerns were easier and he was able to serve God more effectively, Edward II desires a life in which his only responsibility is his favorite, Gaveston. In Marlowe's *Edward II* we see the fatal flaws of Henry VI (his reluctance to be king) combined

²⁸ Lorna Hutson, "On Not Being Deceived: Rhetoric and the Body in *Twelfth Night*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 38, no. 2 (Summer 1996), 140-174. 160. In this context, Hutson compares Heywood's *Edward IV* plays with Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

with the flaws of Edward IV (inconstancy) in a monarch that is not only given over to passion at the expense of the realm, but who is also seduced by an Englishman appropriating French flattery. While it is nearly impossible to discuss *Edward II* without discussing Edward's homosexuality, the extent to which Edward's homosexuality contributes to his deposition is a matter for debate. Mortimer Sr. implores his son to ignore Edward's preference for Gaveston (as opposed to his wife):

Thou seest by nature he is mild and calm,
 And seeing his mind so dotes on Gaveston,
 Let him without controlment have his will.
 The mightiest kings have had their minions.
 4.389-92²⁹

And David Stymeist argues, "If Edward had maintained his male lover solely in a sexual capacity, then the nobles could simply categorize and dismiss Gaveston as catamite, whore, or ingle (male prostitute); what menaces them is Edward's demand that Gaveston be politically recognized and given official status as royal consort."³⁰ The nobles' issue with Edward's treatment of Gaveston is not their private, sexual relationship; instead, it is Edward II's insistence that the private relationship is accepted as a public one. Where Edward IV made commoners his companions he maintained a private relationship with them. Jane, for instance, used the private space of the bedchamber to bring suits before the king and give alms to those in need. Edward II, however, desires to allocate power outside of the bedchamber to Gaveston by giving him official (public) positions in the kingdom based only on their intimate (private) relationship. Therefore, Edward II destabilizes the male alliances of power

²⁹ Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, ed. Martin Wiggins and Robert Lindsey (New York: WW Norton, 1997). All citations from *Edward II* will be from this edition. In addition, this edition does not use act divisions; it only uses scene divisions.

³⁰ David Symeist, "Status, Sodomy, and the Theater in Marlowe's *Edward II*," *SEL* 44, no. 2 (Spring 2004), 233-253. 238

through conflating his public and private bodies in an attempt to bring his private lover to public legitimacy.

In forcing the nobles to recognize the new status(es) conferred on Gaveston, Edward is also rejecting his public relationship with Isabella. Edward is displacing his queen through his attempts to make Gaveston an accepted and legitimate member of court. Isabella repeatedly claims that Edward loves her not (to herself, to Edward, and to the nobles), and the nobles use Isabella's flight from England because of Edward's treatment of her as their first instance of Edward's poor governance due to Gaveston. Isabella states, "the king regards me not" (2.49); he has "abandoned" her (4.177); "he loves men" (4.194); "he turns away" (8.30). Edward uses his marital relationship with Isabella to force her to parley with the dissatisfied nobles on his behalf, forcing her to repeal Gaveston's banishment. Furthermore, Edward easily banishes her from court when Gaveston has been exiled, using his public relationship with Isabella as a tool for elevating Gaveston's status and providing leverage with the disaffected nobles. With the continual tension expressed throughout the play, "Marlowe delineates and focuses on a private realm, which he sets up in opposition to the public as a volatile source of decisions affecting the state."³¹ Beyond the problematic foreign relations Edward exhibits in failing to adequately provide for his French queen, Edward is rejecting the future of his reign as he figuratively refuses to provide heirs for the future of England. Edward's desire for Gaveston overwhelms his political, marital, and military responsibilities as king of England, of which his neglect of Isabella is only the first sign. The heteronormative marriage between Isabella and Edward II comes into direct opposition with his homosexual relationship with

³¹ Joan Parks, "History, Tragedy, and Truth in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*," *SEL* 39 no. 2 (Spring 1999), 275-290. 276.

Gaveston; “suffice it to say, the conflict between male bonds and love for women admits of no easy solution.”³²

Not only does Edward reject his wife, Isabella, in favor of Gaveston, but he also rejects his responsibilities as king desiring to live a reclusive life with Gaveston. The nobles (and Isabella) refer to Edward’s “frolicking” with Gaveston as politically problematic. Despite the siege the nobles have laid to the castle at Tynemouth, Edward says,

Do what they can, we’ll live in Tynemouth here,
And, so I walk with him about the walls,
What care I though the earls begirt us round?
6.218-20

Edward’s rejection of his political responsibilities in the face of his ardor for Gaveston heralds the loss of Edward’s kingly image. Not only is Edward solely fixated on Gaveston’s favor (as a good wife is expected to do), but Edward shows submission to Gaveston, another feminine trait. When this is added to Edward’s visions of domestic bliss in which he and Gaveston will be left in peace, Edward’s passions have thoroughly emasculated him.

Edward II does, however, seek to fight for Gaveston’s honor, banishing those nobles who express their displeasure by threatening war. While the chronicles do not hesitate to depict Edward’s ineptitude when it comes to waging war, his willingness to continue the campaigns begun by his father is a mark of his masculinity. What ought to strike the audience as particularly notable (beyond the fact that Edward’s military campaigns fail) is the changeability of Edward’s emotions. Rather than remaining constant, Edward becomes plagued with inconstancy, oscillating between overwhelming joy and despondent mourning. Edward’s inconstant moods can be seen through the stage directions, particularly “Enter King Edward in mourning”

³² Bruce R. Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, 62.

immediately after Gaveston has been banished (4.299.*sd*), and conversely the opening to scene 6:

Edward: The wind is good, I wonder why he stays.
 I fear me he is wrecked upon the sea.
 Lancaster: Look, Lancaster, how passionate he is,
 And still his mind runs on his minion.
 6.1-4

Edward's previous despondency has been replaced with distracted anticipation once Gaveston's exile has been reversed; all the same, Edward's mental state is demonstrably dependent on the state of Gaveston. Edward's apparent helplessness when stripped of Gaveston (or, as we discover later, any minion) becomes a mark of his femininity in his utter failure to act independently. Edward's dependence on Gaveston becomes a failure of kingship not because of his aberrant sexual preferences, but "his failure to fulfill his God-given obligations to his subjects."³³

Perhaps the most damaging of all in Edward and Gaveston's relationship is Gaveston's position as a Frenchman. Gaveston refers to himself as French, going so far as to plan to woo the king with popular continental entertainment. Within the space of fifty lines, the nobles refer to him as a "peevish Frenchman" (2.7) and a "sly inveigling Frenchman" (2.57). Gaveston himself reminds us three times in his first scene that he has come from France: "swum from France" (1.7); "You know that I came lately out of France" (1.43); and lastly speaking in French, "Mort dieu" (1.89). Mortimer also questions whether the king has been "bewitched" (a female and French stereotype) by Gaveston. In Marlowe's play as well, Gaveston is portrayed as French, therefore, in addition to the anxieties that accompany a weak ruler, the nobles are also contending with undue foreign influence. Compounded with Gaveston's explicitly described foreignness is the implied sexual relationship between himself and the king,

³³ Michael Manheim, *The Weak King Dilemma in the Shakespearean History Play* (Syracuse, Syracuse UP, 1973), 44.

this relationship likewise attests to Gaveston's foreignness. "In fact, it is arguable that the form of difference English Renaissance culture most frequently associated with back door sex was not gender (women, after all, have anuses too) but ethnicity."³⁴ As Edward is unwilling to take the counsel of the English barons, relying instead on the French Gaveston, the English nobles understandably become concerned that their interests will not be served while Gaveston remains. Similarly, while Isabella is a French queen, her accepted sphere of influence is constrained to the private bedchamber and becomes controllable. When Edward insists on making his private relationship a public affair, he threatens the sphere of accepted foreign influence in allowing his lover unrestrained access to the court and policy. Gaveston is dangerous not only for the lewdness he presents to the king (or the wantonness the king employs with him), but also for the foreign influence he represents. The issue with Edward's relationship with Gaveston is not simply that it is foreign and homosexual, "backwardness does not indicate a lack of desire—quite the opposite—but rather the failure of a natural or socially-sanctioned response."³⁵ Daileader's argument and the term "backwardness" carry a double meaning both in terms of its sexualized connotations (Edward and Gaveston do participate in "backdoor" sex) and also its connotations of ethnic/civil backwardness. Both of these meanings work together to emphasize the destabilizing effect Gaveston and Edward's relationship has on the governance of England.

Feminine men may manifest themselves in a number of different ways: from Henry VI's reluctance to commit his troops to battle, to Edward IV who was unable to remain constant or faithful to any woman, to Edward II who made himself dependent

³⁴ Celia R. Daileader, "Back Door Sex: Renaissance gynosodomy, Aretino, and the Exotic," *ELH* 69, no 2 (Summer 2002), 303-334. 304.

³⁵ Daileader, "Back Door Sex," 316.

on another man. Not only do feminine men mirror their continental counterparts, the French, but they also allow space for foreign influence to prosper at the expense of the English state. Feminine men are dangerous as English kings because of the power they are unwilling to wield on behalf of the state. Their desire to conflate the public and the private (or simply enter into the private) destabilizes the political structure of the realm. Both Henry VI and Edward IV went to war as a consequence of their inability to maintain control over others and themselves, while Edward II was eventually deposed by his wife and murdered. A weak king foreshadows the political instability, decrease of prestige, and foreign influence that is to follow.

Masculine Women

Although the feminine man threatened to destabilize the state through his ineptitude governing himself, the realm, or both, the masculine woman likewise threatened state stability, but potentially excluded from the process of power, she must do so clandestinely. By rejecting the principles of femininity and embracing masculine action and agency, these masculine women jeopardize the state through their aggressive policies that transgress from the private. Further, “in the gender economy of early modern England, there is room for only one master: if women are mannish, men will necessarily become effeminate, and vice versa.”³⁶ In this final section, we will contrast Isabella from *Edward II*, Margaret of Anjou, and Joan of Arc. Of the three women, Isabella is the most characteristically feminine, at least at the outset of Marlowe’s play. However, like the other two women she participates in battles and indulges in sexual promiscuity. Isabella offers an interesting portrait of an apparently good wife transformed into an invader of England. As noted earlier,

³⁶ Moulton, “A Monster Great Deformed,” 255.

Margaret of Anjou is the only character to appear in all four of the plays in Shakespeare's first tetralogy. This alone would make her noteworthy, but her affair with Suffolk, combined with her military ability, and her disconcerting prophecies make her one of the most interesting figures in Shakespeare's work and a prime illustration of the masculine woman. No thorough discussion of gender in the first tetralogy could ignore the character (or caricature) of Joan from *1 Henry VI*. Through the unequivocally French Joan, the play is free to portray a masculine woman at her most deadly: a conspirator with spirits, sexually promiscuous, and a liar. Notably, all the women in this section are French—a fact their English counterparts make clear throughout the course of the drama. While French men are necessarily feminine, their women take on their masculine qualities. Many of the women who become masculine do so after they have become English queens, denoting a further anxiety:

There was nothing new, to be sure, in the association between domineering women and male fears of emasculation; the motif is commonplace in centuries of misogynistic literature. What was new was the way in which this association had become politically volatile in sixteenth-century England with the accession of women to the throne.³⁷

Not only do these women embody the essentially destabilizing threat of a foreign ruler, they also threaten to undermine the stability of the nationally born female monarch.

In Marlowe's *Queen Isabella*, we witness an apparently devoted wife and English queen transform into a "French strumpet" and a foreign invader (*Edward II* 4.145). "The early attention paid to Isabel, for instance, is meager but positive...but, after she invades England, she is presented as ruled by her passions, seeking revenge rather than justice."³⁸ Like Mortimer, Isabella appears compelled into a particular

³⁷ Nina Levine, *Women's Matters*, (London: Associated University Press, 1998), 36.

³⁸ Parks, "History, Tragedy, and Truth," 279.

course of action through circumstances beyond her control. As Edward neglects his wife in favor of his minion Gaveston, Isabella is pushed to the sidelines of the court and domestic life. When we are first introduced to the Queen, she is preparing for a life of exile. While we looked at this passage when discussing Edward's behavior, I would like to note a small portion once more. When asked where she is going Isabella replies,

Unto the forest, gentle Mortimer,
To live in grief and baleful discontent
2.47-8

Isabella links her exile from Edward's company (both in public and private) as banishment from court. Barred from assuming her rightful duties as England's queen, Isabella is unable to understand what her place at court could be. Edward's forced exile of Isabella from the bedroom, in favor of Gaveston, has led Isabella to desire a permanent and physical exile from the English court. In choosing Gaveston over his wife, Edward has shamed Isabella, keeping her from the rights, money, and duties she is entitled to pursue.

When the nobles attempt to fight on her behalf for her matrimonial rights, Isabella would rather be exiled from her husband's bed than that he should have to fight a rebellion. While Isabella's lines turn on her husband, she shows an exceptional grasp of the good of the commonwealth—for a historically young queen and a stage foreigner; Isabella appears to put the good of the realm before the good of her marriage.

Then let him stay; for rather than my lord
Shall be oppressed by civil mutinies,
I will endure a melancholy life,
And let him frolic with his minion.
3.64-7

Unlike Edward II who is dallying with his minion at the expense of the commonwealth, Isabella is behaving as expected of a queen; however, in so doing we also see the first hints that Isabella may not be as devoted to her lord as would first appear. In Isabella's farewell to Mortimer she refers to him as "sweet Mortimer" (2.81) and makes her request for peace a personal one for "my sake" (3.81). While Isabella is appealing to Mortimer's feelings for her (as she will do again later), she does hint at potentially deeper feelings (something she will also do again later).

However, it is Gaveston who makes the first insinuation regarding the state of the queen's honor, even if the fact that Gaveston is making the accusation ought to call its veracity into question. Isabella's insistence on calling Edward "Lord" and her statements when she is alone, should also make us question Gaveston's assertions. Gaveston's status as French (both by his own proclamation and the barons') ought to make us question everything Gaveston says. However, Isabella is also a French woman, a fact her husband does not let us forget. His first address to her is as "French strumpet" bidding her to "fawn not on me" (4.145) and promptly directing her to Mortimer (a direction she rejects). The charges leveled against Isabella are quite serious. Not only do the charges threaten Isabella's political legitimacy and have the potential for disinheriting her children, but they challenge her personal legitimacy as well. Gaveston and Edward's accusations against Isabella, "Ay, and 'tis likewise thought you favour him" (6.223), become indicative not just of her subversive relationship with Mortimer since "political and familial defiance easily stood in for one another in this period, but of a habit of thought which hastened the identification of female political authority with female domestic tyranny."³⁹ Edward's affair with Gaveston becomes a means through which Edward may subvert what he views as

³⁹ Jacqueline Vanhoutte "Elizabeth I as Stepmother," *ELR: English Literary Renaissance* 39, no 2. (Spring 2009), 315-335. 324.

Isabella's tyrannical relationship at home. Furthermore, if Isabella is involved in a liaison with Mortimer, then that excuses Edward's relationship with Gaveston—he is, after all, only responding as a jilted lover. Historically, little to no mention is made of Mortimer in the chronicles until Isabella's invasion, and even then his role continues as a relatively minor one. Marlowe's invention in *Edward II* is Mortimer's inclusion as the instigator in the Barons' early revolt and his familiarity with the Queen prior to the invasion of England. While Marlowe does focus on the issue of a homosexual king, he also foregrounds Isabella and Mortimer's relationship. Our reading of Isabella and Mortimer's relationship is the key to understanding Marlowe's Isabella: is she a good wife turned bad or is she a French dissembler?

Despite Edward and Gaveston's claims to the contrary little evidence exists in the text of *Edward II* that Isabella and Mortimer are intimate. Isabella does appear to be aware of Mortimer's affections for her: she gives him orders for her sake, makes her case to him in private, and beseeches him on the grounds of his love for her. Isabella also claims to love Edward "more/ Than he can Gaveston"; a "kiss revives" her; she vows "to love none but" Edward (4.303-4; 4.334; 8.15). Most tellingly, as regards her relationship with Mortimer, Isabella tells him that she loves Edward but that her love is unrequited (4.197). Isabella portrays herself largely as the dutiful wife obeying her husband's requests, particularly notable when she sues for the restoration of his favorite, Gaveston, to the court. Isabella's suits on Gaveston's behalf are evidence of how she and the play view marriage, "marital union implies a domestic hierarchy; marital harmony is predicated upon the wife's obedience to her husband."⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Louis Adrian Montrose, "'Shaping Fantasies': Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture," in *Shakespeare and Gender* ed. Stephen Orgel. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 19. Compare also Jessica Murphy's argument, "The feminine virtue of obedience that is so prominent in marriage manuals is always performative. What makes a woman good is the repeated performance of her virtue,"

Despite her familiar language with Mortimer, the most persuasive argument for Isabella's fidelity to Edward, until she leaves for France, are her declarations of love when she is alone. She makes three such statements: two in scene four and one in scene eight. Isabella's first soliloquy regarding Edward (and matrimonial bliss) is an expression of her desire to be dead rather than to be abandoned by her lord (4.170-86). Despite her mistreatment at the hands of Edward, she still uses "The King my lord" when referring to her husband (4.177). Isabella's vitriol is directed towards Gaveston, who she agrees to call home solely to please her husband. Like a good wife, Isabella is concerned with pleasing her husband (despite the disruption to the state).

Isabella's second aside is spoken to herself while Edward is entering the stage in mourning for his Gaveston:

But see, in happy time, my lord the King,
 Having brought the Earl of Cornwall on his way,
 Is new returned. This news will glad him much,
 Yet not so much as me; *I love him more*
Than he can Gaveston. Would he loved me
 But half so much, then were I treble blessed.
 4.300-5 (emphasis mine)

With the backdrop of King Edward in mourning, Isabella's speech becomes particularly pathetic. The "news" to which Isabella refers is the return of Gaveston, the Earl of Cornwall. The entirety of these lines constitutes the aside, since it is Edward's entrance at the end, mourning the loss of Gaveston that prompts Isabella's encounter with Edward. Her aside, full of hyperboles, express the depth of Isabella's devotion to her lord. With Edward dressed in mourning, it seems there is little that would make him happier than to hear news that Gaveston is to return home; however, Isabella is certain she will be happier than Edward when it happens. Isabella must

"Feminine Virtue's Network of Influence in Early Modern England," *Studies in Philology* 109, no. 3 (Spring 2012), 258-278. 261.

know her place at court will not change with the restoration of Gaveston to Edward's side; despite being reunited to Edward's presence, Isabella will still not regain the privileges she, as queen and wife, is entitled to receive. She goes on to declare she loves Edward more than he can love Gaveston, a presumed hyperbole since Edward's overwhelming love for Gaveston is all consuming. She follows her hyperbolic declaration of love with a desire to be loved in return only half so much as she loves him. Rather than desiring a reciprocal relationship, Isabella desires only to be loved half as much as she herself loves Edward. The sympathetic figure Isabella makes as an oppressed, rejected queen is enough to make Edward's claims regarding her infidelity fall on deaf ears. Isabella's deposition at the hands of her husband exemplifies the plight of nearly every queen in the history plays: "Married to wielders of power, these women find weakness, greed, and incompetence and they wonder at the validity of the system."⁴¹ Her continued declarations of love to Edward (and about Edward) only increase the sympathy of the audience, especially when viewed in light of Edward II's unequivocally illustrated weakness and femininity.

Isabella's final soliloquy occurs when she is completely alone and follows her bitter dismissal by Edward: "for Mortimer, your lover's sake" (8.14). Speaking between the exit of the King and the entrance of the Barons, Isabella's final soliloquy takes on a hint of desperation.

Heavens can witness, I love none but you.
 From my embracements thus he breaks away;
 O that mine arms could close this isle about,
 That I might pull him to me where I would,
 Or that these tears that drizzle from mine eyes
 Had power to mollify his stony heart
 That when I had him we might never part.

8.15-21

⁴¹ Irene G. Dash, *Wooing, Wedding, and Power: Women in Shakespeare's Plays* (New York: Columbia UP, 1981), 156.

This defense of her fidelity to Edward comes when she is alone, and combined with her desperation attests to its veracity. Isabella's desire for Edward leads to her desire for the entirety of England simply so she could possess her husband. Isabella has spent the first half of the play chasing the favors of her husband, but being denied them all, she has no other alternative besides closing "this isle about" so she can finally hold her husband. Isabella's further reference of Edward's "stony heart" attests to the cruelty she has felt bereft of his company. Banished repeatedly from his presence, Isabella rightly understands her husband as callous and stony, so that not even her tears have the "power to mollify" it. These three statements of Isabella's attest to the true love she bears for Edward despite his harsh treatment of her. According to Isabella, it is only when she has been banished from Edward's presence, sought the restoration of his favorite, and continually sought the favors of her husband that she finds solace in Mortimer.

Although we have contemporary historical evidence to the contrary, Marlowe depicts Isabella as aiding the rebel barons in their war against Gaveston.⁴² Given Isabella's very real desperation at the hands of an Edward enthralled with his Gaveston, her dramatic separation from her husband and allegiance to the barons is consistent with her transformation from good wife to French strumpet. Only after Isabella has given Gaveston's location away to his enemies does she hint at any feelings of disloyalty.

So well hast thou deserved, sweet Mortimer,
As Isabel could live with thee forever.
In vain I look for love at Edward's hand,
Whose eyes are fixed on none but Gaveston.
Yet once more I'll importune him with prayers;

⁴² See Allison Weir, *Isabella: She-Wolf of France, Queen of England*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2005 and Paul *Isabella and the Strange Death of Edward II*. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2003.

If he be strange and not regard my words,
 My son and I will over into France,
 And to the King, my brother, there complain
 How Gaveston hath robbed me of his love.

9.60-8

Isabella resolves to go to her husband one last time before exiling herself from England and taking refuge with her family. Consistently unable to secure Edward's affection through providing him what he desires or, conversely, through removing his favorite, Isabella becomes a woman for whom all options have been exhausted.

Interestingly, Edward becomes the catalyst for his own destruction in sending Isabella and her son to France to argue on his behalf (11.70). For Marlowe and his contemporary historical sources, Isabella's entrance into France is the turning point in her behavior from dutiful wife to rebellious Frenchwoman. It is in France that her affair with Mortimer explicitly begins, and it is in France that she is able to organize an army to invade England. Marlowe's departure from his original sources (namely Holinshed and Fabian) takes a drastic turn here. Marlowe's decision to dramatize Isabella's time in France becomes "the most important vehicle for Marlowe's delineation of the private [in] the figure of Isabel...she continues to evoke a secretive and destructive private realm throughout the play."⁴³ While Holinshed consistently refers to the invading army as the Queen's, Marlowe makes it clear Mortimer is in charge. Isabella may have escaped the cruel neglect of Edward, but she is still unable to take action. The decision to befriend John of Hainault is her son's and Mortimer's; Mortimer suggests they invade England flying Prince Edward's standard; Mortimer leads the Queen's army into battle; Mortimer organizes the king's deposition; Mortimer gives the order to kill the King; and it is finally Prince Edward who revenges his father by killing Mortimer and imprisoning his mother (15.30; 15.40;

⁴³ Parks, "History, Tragedy, and Truth," 283.

scene 17; 18.45; 21.44; 25.69). Isabella, according to Marlowe (and Mortimer), does find difficulty in leading her army, her attempted speech is cut short by Mortimer who instructs her to spend less time in speeches and more time in action (scene 17). Mortimer also encourages Isabella to be “ruled by me, and we will rule the realm” to which she readily assents (21.5). In Mortimer, Isabella has what a good queen ought to want—a king to rule her and the realm. Isabella stands in contrast to the two other women we will look at since neither Joan nor Margaret seek to be ruled by any man (husband or otherwise) and neither of them have any difficulty leading an army. Little is shown of the battle in *Edward II* and presumably, unlike the other two women, Isabella does not partake in the action.

Once Isabella has agreed to be ruled by Mortimer her actions take a surprising turn. While during the first half of the play the audience was given relative certainty as to her true feelings for her husband and his favorites, she is now characterized as a dissembler. Mortimer praises Isabella’s message to Edward, following his deposition and just preceding his grisly death, for being “finely dissembled” (21.73). Only a few lines later, Kent also refers to Mortimer and Isabella as dissembling when they discuss Edward’s recent deposition (21.85). However, it is Isabella’s journey to France and back that becomes the catalyst for her transformation; the space of France is a place where legitimacy must be proved, but within the early history plays it is also a place of gender inversion. Upon her return, she becomes the feared foreign monarch and the lying French woman; she also shows “an increasing lack of concern for her son’s safety and a desire for Edward’s death that gradually alienate her from the audience’s sympathy.”⁴⁴ Kent becomes so frightened of Mortimer and Isabella that he resolves the deposed Edward II would be a better monarch than these

⁴⁴ Stymeist, “Status, Sodomy, and the Theater,” 247.

protectors of the young Prince. Likewise, Isabella's earlier concerns for the commonwealth disappear as she follows Mortimer's consolidation of power.

Isabella is unique as a masculine woman since she behaves as both an ideal wife and as the "French she-wolf." She is desperate for her husband's love and desirous of a man to love and rule her, which is not the character of either Margaret or Joan of Arc (both, of course, for different reasons). Isabella's desperation leads her to beg for the restoration of her husband's favorite further threatening the realm and estranging her from her spouse. While in England, she behaves as the devoted spouse and queen, concerned about the health of the commonwealth and condemning civil wars against a monarch (11.86). However, once she has entered into France she becomes a different woman, forming an army and taking a lover. Yet, despite these uncharacteristically masculine actions, Isabella is still largely ruled by men, first Mortimer and later her son. Unlike the other women in this chapter, Isabella is unable to command others. However, like the other women, Isabella proves to be sexually unfaithful taking Mortimer as her lover while Edward is still alive. While this act is the impetus for her invasion of England and the deposition of a tyrant king, it also plunges the realm into instability. Her reliance on Mortimer leads to the deaths of Edward II and the Earl of Kent, the death of Mortimer, and her own imprisonment. While her infidelity is not necessarily the direct cause of her disappearing femininity, it is certainly a sign since it signifies an aggressiveness not often linked with the feminine. Isabella only undertakes masculine action once she has committed herself to Mortimer at the expense of her matrimonial obligations; in rejecting her status as wife, Isabella also appears to reject her status as normative woman. Her transgression with Mortimer becomes an indication of her later incursions against England. Although Isabella is marked as a masculine woman she does not lose all traits of her

femininity; relying on her Mortimer for much of her rule (at least, according to Marlowe) Isabella is both the devoted, feminine wife and the ravenous, masculine woman.

Margaret of Anjou inhabits no such distinction; unquestionably a virago, she successfully leads her husband's army into battle, sanctions the murder of children, actively participates in her husband's government, and finally curses the Yorkist regime. Although Margaret does not bear arms against her husband as Isabella does, she does not take up arms of any kind until the third play in the first tetralogy (3 *Henry VI*). Margaret's slow rise to power in the wake of her husband's increasing reclusiveness proves the impetus for extending her voice in the English court. Margaret's shift from speaker to agent occurs between 2 and 3 *Henry VI*, and will be the focus of her masculinity. While Isabella is portrayed as the product of circumstance, Margaret compels her husband into acquiring more authority at the expense of sound council. Despite Margaret's tight hold on her husband, she is unable to fundamentally change Henry's character, but proceeds without his guidance.

When we are first introduced to Margaret at the closing of *1 Henry VI* and the exit of Joan la Pucelle:

This scene (*IHVI* 5.2) is strategically positioned between the capture of Joan la Pucelle and Joan's curse upon England before she is offered offstage to be burnt at the stake. Joan's function as a scourge to the English is taken over by another foreign female, but this Frenchwoman will ascend the English throne and come into her own as a female monarch and dramatic character in her own right.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Marguerite A. Tassi, *Women and Revenge in Shakespeare: Gender, Genre, and Ethics* (Danvers: Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp, 2011), 125-126. Dominique Goy-Blanquet, "Shakespeare, Burgundy, and the Design of the Arras" in *Representing France and the French in early modern drama* ed. Mayer, Jean-Christophe. (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 49. Kathryn Schwarz, "Fearful simile: Stealing the Breech in Shakespeare's Chronicle plays," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (Summer 1998), 140-167. 140.

Textually, neither Riverside, Arden, nor the Folio split 5.2 into different scenes, although the Norton edition does. Margaret's entrance corresponding with Joan's exit transfers the threat of foreignness (and French femininity) from the removed space of France to the familiar realm of England. Margaret's entrance into England is a penetration of England's impermeable borders and a danger to the sovereignty of the nation.

However, at her entrance in *1 Henry VI*, Margaret is far from the virago she will become by *Richard III*. Suffolk and Margaret's exchange as he leaves to return for England is worth quoting as it portrays the French coquette wooed by the virile Englishman:

Suffolk: Farewell, sweet madam; but hark you, Margaret—
No princely commendation to my king?

Margaret: Such commendations as becomes a maid,
A virgin, and his servant, say to him.

Suffolk: Words sweetly placed, and modestly directed. *[She is going]*
But madam, I must trouble you again—
No loving token to his majesty?

Margaret: Yes, my good lord: a pure unspotted heart,
Never yet taint with love, I send the King.

Suffolk: And this withal. *[He] kiss[es] her*

Margaret: That for thyself; I will not so presume
To send such peevish tokens to a king.

5.5.131-142

Although Margaret is claiming the innocence of courtly tradition, she is holding her own admirably against Suffolk's advances. The kiss Suffolk has been searching for since the beginning of the exchange, he is forced to take for himself without Margaret's permission, and with her chiding.⁴⁶ Her comment, "I will not so presume/ To send such peevish tokens to a king" is particularly fascinating. Margaret instructs

⁴⁶ For a similar wooing scene, see *Henry V* 5.1.

Suffolk to keep the kiss he has taken because it is too “peevish.”⁴⁷ In so doing, Margaret has simultaneously insulted Suffolk by calling his kiss “peevish,” but she has also succeeded in giving him a kiss of his own. Such ambiguity calls into question Margaret’s self-proclaimed innocence (already doubtful because of her French heritage). Likewise, in giving Suffolk the kiss, she has separated the two men: Henry will receive “a maid” with “a pure unspotted heart” while Suffolk retains the stolen kiss. Furthermore, Margaret’s equivocation as she lists the gifts Suffolk is to bring to Henry calls into question Margaret’s chastity. She wants Suffolk to say “what becomes a maid” implying that the maid is her, but without making it clear. She then instructs him to bring the gift of *a* “pure unspotted heart” not *her* “pure unspotted heart.” In so doing, Margaret is giving the appropriate response without committing herself to being any of those things. Margaret’s dubious domesticity “fails to reassure; there is no space, literal or mythological, between Margaret and England.”⁴⁸ Where Isabella’s declarations of love were sincere, we are already alerted to Margaret’s duplicity.

Margaret continues her performance through the course of *2 Henry VI* despite her obvious affair with Suffolk. Margaret becomes Joan’s replacement as the stock French character continually deceiving those around her, Machiavellian and ambitious. Hillman’s comment on anti-French discourse is particularly fitting as we examine the character of Margaret:

The negative stereotypes of conventional anti-French discourse represent distortions of cultural sophistication: political shrewdness, courtliness, chivalry (witness the French knights before Agincourt). Largely absent are the barbarity, irrationality, and ‘natural’

⁴⁷ Glossed variously as “trifling” in the Norton Shakespeare, “silly” in the Riverside Shakespeare, and defined as “silly, childish, thoughtless” in Schmidt’s *Shakespeare Lexicon*.

⁴⁸ Schwarz, “Fearful Simile,” 157.

disposition to evil that the English so commonly detected/projected behind the veneer of Italian civilization.⁴⁹

We have already begun to examine Margaret's courtliness, which she continues on her first meeting with King Henry VI. Part of Margaret's infatuated performance relies on her inherent political shrewdness and is the next feature of Hillman's analysis of stereotypical Frenchmen. Her political abilities mark the rest of *2 Henry VI* as she slowly ingratiates herself into the English parliament to the point that at the opening of *3 Henry VI*, York sarcastically refers to the "Queen's parliament" (1.1.35). Margaret points Henry VI towards taking up the mantle of his kingship instead of relying on Gloucester's protectorship, but in so doing, Margaret is on her way towards her "spectacular rise...to fill the vacuum created by Henry's ineffective performance as king."⁵⁰ Margaret's initial foray into the political sphere of Henry's court is met with Gloucester's derision that "[t]hese are no women's matters," a clear demarcation of Margaret's place in her husband's government: the private sphere (1.3.121). Gloucester's derisive comment is an "attempt to relegate women to their place within masculinist hierarchies through the simple fact of recognizing them as *women*."⁵¹ Gloucester's dismissal of Margaret based on her sex appears, for the moment, effective; despite speaking freely with Suffolk moments earlier in the scene, Margaret remains quiet for most of the rest of the scene, only speaking to provide an *ad hominem* argument against Gloucester (regarding the suspected sale of offices in France) and to box his wife's ear. Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, gives Henry a timely warning about the power his wife is attempting to wield:

Good King, look to't in time!
She'll pamper thee and dandle thee like a baby.

⁴⁹ Richard Hillman, *Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Politics of France* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 15.

⁵⁰ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 72.

⁵¹ Schwarz, "Fearful Simile," 144.

Though in this place most master wear no breeches.
1.3.148-50

While Eleanor is certainly no demure wife, her warning to Henry VI is accurate—Margaret will eventually rule the kingdom in her husband's stead.

Although Margaret is far from quiet, following Henry VI's acceptance of his sovereign authority, her demeanor towards those at court drastically changes; she speaks freely and, generally, in long diatribes. In 3.1, the stage directions indicate the court has come to a parliament with Buckingham, Suffolk, York, Beaufort, Henry VI, Margaret, Salisbury, and Warwick; yet Margaret opens the scene with a long speech indicting Gloucester on treasonous charges. While Gloucester may have rebuked her initial speech in front of the court as "not woman's matters," now that she is queen she is empowered to speak as she likes. She initially speaks for almost 40 lines on issues ranging from Gloucester's behavior towards the royal family to maintaining good governance of the realm (as a garden). She does offer Henry an easy route to dismiss her in claiming it might be simply "a woman's fear," but she also requires "better reasons" to "supplant" her argument (3.1.36; 37). Margaret relies on her conventional status as queen to provide an avenue through which her speech acts are allowed. Moreover, "Margaret, in short, is dangerous in this play *because* she is conventional, because desire for her makes her husband an effeminate cuckold and because her own feminine vanity makes her a formidable political conspirator."⁵² The eventual entrance of Gloucester promptly leads to accusations being brought against him and his arrest on the charge of treason. While Margaret is largely silent after Gloucester's initial argument, she still appears to be the ringleader of the faction

⁵² Schwarz, "Fearful Simile," 156. Schwarz's preceding statement further reinforces the dangerous nature of the foreign queen, "Identified as mother, queen, and wife, Margaret embodies a range of conventionally feminine obligations and transgressions that locate her in the midst of English national negotiations, not despite but because of their aggressively domestic terms" (154).

rising against him, speaking first and inviting the other lords to follow suit. Margaret is speaking in a public forum against Gloucester's provision that the public forum of politics is not for women. Unlike her French counterpart, Joan, Margaret's "transgressions take place from *within*, she is more dangerous, bringing her French externality into the interiority of English politics."⁵³ Margaret's assertion that she does belong within the Parliament alongside (and governing?) her king is seen to a greater extent once Henry excuses himself from the court.

Following Gloucester's arrest, Henry is so overcome with grief he is unable to continue in the Parliament he, presumably, has called. Margaret quickly and easily steps into the void left by her husband's absence; however, she does not do so without making her disdain known. She refers to Henry as "cold in great affairs" and "too full of foolish pity" (3.1.224; 225), as well as referring to his foolishness in trusting Gloucester as "the mournful crocodile [who]/ With sorrow snares relenting passengers" (3.1.226-7). Her thoughts on Henry's abilities are made public knowledge, and while she claims little intelligence in affairs of state she has no qualms about making her plan known.

Believe me, lords, were none more wise than I—
 And yet herein I judge mine own wit good—
 This Gloucester should be quickly rid the world
 To rid us from the fear we have of him.
 3.1.231-234

None of the nobles question either her intelligence or her right to speak at the Parliament (she is, after all, the only woman), and all are eventually convinced Gloucester ought to be murdered. Margaret's governance and her opposition to Gloucester are an invitation "to evaluate Margaret much as we do others in the play—

⁵³ Kristin Smith "Martial Maids and murdering mothers: Women, Witchcraft and Motherly Transgression in *Henry VI* and *Richard III*," *Shakespeare* 3, no 2 (2007), 143-160. 149.

ambitious noblemen and aspiring artisans alike—according to national interests, interests that are represented most fully in Gloucester.”⁵⁴ Gloucester has repeatedly been shown over the course of the plays to represent good governance and proper counsel, so Margaret’s opposition to Gloucester becomes indicative of her inability to govern well. Margaret settles quarrels amongst the nobles, decides upon a plan, and delegates who will fill what roles. In so doing, Margaret has assumed command of disparate nobles, something her husband could not do. “In the Henry VI plays, there is always the anxiety that women, whether lovingly submissive or aggressively independent, will undo the patriarchal edifice and, with it, an always engendered masculinity.”⁵⁵

While Margaret’s augmented political position is a result of both Henry’s ineffectual government and her position as English queen, the sign of Margaret’s future instability comes at the hands of Suffolk, her lover. Margaret’s dissatisfaction with her husband has led her into Suffolk’s arms,

I thought King Henry had resembled thee
In courage, courtship, and proportion.
1.3.57-8

She goes on to comment that Henry VI clearly does not resemble Suffolk—he would make a better Pope than king (1.3.65). While Margaret’s kiss in *1 Henry VI* was a coy flirtation with an English warrior, her utter distaste for Henry VI leads her to find her fulfillment elsewhere. By the time of 1.3, Margaret and Suffolk’s liaison is thinly veiled even if it is not overtly political. As Canino argues, “The use of women for political purposes is certainly a common enough device, but it is interesting that Shakespeare establishes a love relationship first. Suffolk does not court Margaret to

⁵⁴ Levine, *Women’s Matters*, 85.

⁵⁵ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 91. Vanhoutte, “Elizabeth I as Stepmother,” 328. Schwarz, “Fearful Simile,” 142.

gain power. He falls in love, then realizes the favorable consequences of the relationship.”⁵⁶ Unlike Mortimer whose use of Isabella in Marlowe’s *Edward II* can be seen from the outset of the play (Isabella does become the rallying cry for the nobles preceding Edward’s deposition), the political gains Suffolk receives become the means through which he is able to satisfy his desire for Margaret rather than the reason he pursues them.

The death of Gloucester changes everything for both the young King Henry VI and his wife Margaret. Upon the death of Gloucester, Henry spontaneously spurs himself into action as we have yet to see him do. He banishes Suffolk, accused of Gloucester’s death, and nothing will incite him to change his mind. On Margaret’s side, she pleads for “gentle Suffolk,” but to no avail—the King will have none of it (3.2.291). Henry VI also seeks private council from Warwick, something he had yet to do with any noble, leaving Margaret alone with her lover. Although Warwick hints at her presumed infidelity,

Madam, be still, with reverence may I say,
For every word you speak in his behalf
Is slander to your royal dignity
3.2.207-9

no one is able to prove it. Indeed, the audience can only guess at their intimacy, until they are left alone preceding Suffolk’s banishment. Margaret reverts into a desperately feminine state of cursing her husband and those around him for Suffolk’s banishment. According to Mary Steible, “the subversive speech act of cursing is voiced by politically weak figures, ‘historical’ women who are little more than

⁵⁶ Catherine Grace Canino, *Shakespeare and the Nobility* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 77.

disaffected players in the pre-Tudor court.”⁵⁷ Few would cite Margaret as politically weak—particularly in the midst of *2 Henry VI* as she is rising to power—but in this instance, all of Margaret’s political gains are for naught; her husband, the King, has spoken and there is nothing that can overturn his word (unless he himself is overturned). Margaret is politically powerless, and, therefore, opts for the only action available to her: cursing.

Interestingly, Margaret sees herself participating in a masculine action, calling Suffolk a “coward woman” when he does not join her (3.2.309). Suffolk, acknowledging that curses do nothing, attempts to perform curses with such passion that Margaret is apparently concerned for his health. Margaret sends “mischance and sorrow,” “heart’s discontent and sour affliction,” and “threefold vengeance” to the King’s company (3.2.302; 303; 306). Once Suffolk begins his curse he calls for “poison,” “gall,” “murd’ring basilisks,” “lizards’ stings,” and “all the foul terrors in dark-seated hell” (3.2.323; 324; 326; 327; 330). Suffolk’s curse is startlingly tangible, and is unsettling in its proposed reality. Steible goes on to say, “Curses or words petitioning harm against others became meaningful in their feared ability to destroy or foresee the destruction of the monarch’s body natural, not just in their sinfulness.”⁵⁸ The tangibility of Suffolk’s curse attests to its frightening reality. While Margaret’s curse side-stepped the suspicion of witchcraft in their abstractions, Suffolk’s does not. The laments and cursing of Margaret and her lover recall earlier statements about “politically disenfranchised, lamenting women” who “become ‘queens’ of grief, rather than heads of state or authorities in a sanctioned political role.”⁵⁹ Like the cursing of the women in *Richard III*, Margaret and Suffolk are momentarily

⁵⁷ Mary Steible, “Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing,” *SEL* 43, no. 1 (Winter 2003), 1-17. 14.

⁵⁸ Steible, “Politics of Cursing,” 3.

⁵⁹ Tassi, *Women and Revenge*, 66.

politically impotent; Henry VI's moment of authority has enabled him to banish Suffolk. And for once, Margaret is unable to stop him. Margaret, however, still sees action through her words since she was able to argue for the destruction of Gloucester and the sovereignty of her husband, so she can now curse him. Suffolk, however, sees little power in yelling abstractions and calls for tangible actions as the consequence to his curse. Ironically, the impotency facing both Suffolk and Margaret finds clearer expression in Suffolk's concrete curses delineating specific consequences for his banishment—Suffolk's inability to physically act is emphasized through his reliance on words.

As the kingdom is crumbling at the hands of the Cade rebellion, Margaret is uncharacteristically unconcerned with the political turmoil around her; instead, she is focused on Suffolk's untimely death. Suffolk has been decapitated and his head has been sent back to the English court; "the display of the head serves as a striking, unmistakable image signifying not only the defeat and demise of the victim, but, more crucially, the loss or transfer of political power which is consolidated through this act of violence."⁶⁰ Suffolk's decapitation becomes not only symbolic of the end of Margaret and Suffolk's affair, but further indicates the momentary collapse of Margaret's political power. Suffolk's decapitation also challenges Margaret's sexual prowess. Henry VI and Suffolk are both captivated by the Frenchwoman, and "this sexuality is in part what makes her a powerful stage presence in the play, but it is clearly represented as dangerous to men and to the good order of the kingdom."⁶¹ Carrying Suffolk's head with her as she follows her husband, the King, Margaret is inconsolable and the King takes charge of a response to the Cade rebellion—a role

⁶⁰ Margaret E. Owens, "The Many-Headed Monster in *Henry VI, Part 2*," *Criticism* 38, no. 2 (Summer 1996), 367-382. 367.

⁶¹ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, 73.

reversal rarely seen within this marriage. 4.4 functions as two separate scenes: Margaret's mourning and Henry's attempts at governing his kingdom. Margaret's opening words signify her utter instability in the wake of Suffolk's death:

Oft have I heard that grief softens the mind,
 And makes it fearful and degenerate;
 Think, therefore, on revenge, and cease to weep.
 4.4.1-3

Margaret is willing herself to harden her heart by thinking on revenge—traditionally a chivalric, masculine pursuit. As Arthur B. Ferguson lays out in his book *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*, the code of chivalry narrowed in scope under Elizabeth to become nearly synonymous with martial prowess, and so expressions of discontent manifested themselves through the duel (or private revenge).⁶² Margaret will eventually bear arms for her king in the traditional manifestation of medieval chivalry.

As Margaret continues to mourn her dead lover in the presence of her sovereign, her husband, we learn she desires someone to rule over her much like Isabella does. However, where Isabella submitted to the will of her lover to the ultimate detriment of her kingdom, it has been clear that Margaret rules over Suffolk and Henry. In Margaret and Suffolk's farewell, it is Margaret who eventually sends Suffolk away, and it is Margaret who instructs Henry's rather misguided policies. Margaret, in the midst of her mourning, has forgotten the power relationship she held over Suffolk, desiring him once more. Henry, pursuing his newfound authority, finally questions Margaret on her continued mourning of Suffolk:

How now, madam? Still lamenting and mourning
 Suffolk's death?
 I fear me, love, if that I had been dead,

⁶² Arthur B. Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*. Ferguson discusses this at length in Chapter 5.

Thou wouldst not have mourned so much for me.
4.4.20-3

Margaret's excessive mourning (she is still carrying Suffolk's head) has provoked a response from her long silent husband. However, this is the only time he mentions it, seeming to accept her answer. As Charles Forker notes, "Suffolk's errant love affair with the queen assists the effect of King Henry's weakness and ineffectuality (he accepts his cuckoldom with minimal protest) just as its violent end contributes to the sense of a whole kingdom reduced to bloodshed and anarchy."⁶³ Not only does Henry accept his cuckoldom, he appears ignorant as to its political and domestic ramifications; in *3 Henry VI* he goes so far as to claim Margaret acts because of her love for him (1.1.265). Margaret's affair does add to the sense of Henry's utter ineptitude as he attempts to govern his realm, but it also foregrounds Margaret's deficiencies as a woman. She is not a devoted wife to her husband, but instead seeks out another, rejecting the private and domestic realm in favor of pursuing public governance.

Margaret's role is the inverse of Isabella's. Isabella was excluded from public life because her husband sought to provide legitimacy for his illicit favorite, Gaveston. In so doing, Edward II barred Isabella from the rights due to her: originally her marriage bed and later her official position with her husband. While Isabella was not expected to actively and publicly participate in state affairs (at least not in chronicle history), she was expected to appear beside her husband at state functions. Margaret, on the other hand, was unable to govern as strongly as she desired not because her husband sought solace in another, but because Henry refused to participate in government himself. Unlike Isabella, Margaret's complaints to her

⁶³ Charles F. Forker, "Royal Carnality and Illicit Desire in the History Plays of the 1590s," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 17 (Jan 2005), 118.

husband did not fall on deaf ears and he steadily increased his involvement in governing the realm. However, both women's frustrations in their husbands ultimately led them to unfaithfulness and domestic instability. Forker sums up the effects of sexual promiscuity on the state: "The exercise of sexual power in the history plays may take on the dimensions of a microcosm, mirroring in little the dominance and submission or strength and weakness of the social, military and dynastic conflicts that comprise the larger action."⁶⁴ What separates these women from the promiscuity of King Edward IV (with Lady Grey and Jane Shore) is not simply their gender, but also their status as foreign.

Both Isabella and Margaret recount their voyages into England from France with the same wish: Isabella wishes she had died rather than be barred the love of her husband (*Edward II* 4.170-186), and Margaret wishes she had been shipwrecked rather than be ignored for the sake of Gloucester (*2 Henry VI* 3.1.73-121). Acknowledging their foreignness despite their status as English Queens, both queens are expressing a desire to be English that cannot be fulfilled while their husbands fail to provide for them. The tribulations both queens argue they have faced are meant to augment their argument for their Englishness. Although not born in England, Margaret and Isabella have suffered greatly in an attempt to become English. Margaret's and Isabella's Frenchness enables them to engage on mostly equal footing with the English (unlike the Welsh, Scottish, or Irish would have been able to); however, despite their attempts to the contrary, both are still marked by "inherently" French characteristics. Margaret has already been shown to embody the characteristics of the stock Frenchmen: political shrewdness, courtliness, and chivalry. And while Hillman notes characteristics that are predominantly Italian, and

⁶⁴ Forker, "Royal Carnality," 124.

so excluded from the French, as daughter to the King of Naples, Margaret, in *3 Henry VI*, will identify herself with them as well. The death of Suffolk was a breaking point for the ambitious queen, and Margaret takes to the battlefield vowing vengeance. Margaret's desire for revenge prefigures the conclusion of the tetralogy and the necessary conclusion to the Wars of the Roses:

Revenge in such cases cannot redress wrongs, heal psychic wounds, or provide satisfaction; bloody retaliation would signify meeting one senseless atrocity with another. A greater form of retribution is needed to 'satisfy' grieving families and to cleanse the kingdom. Margaret represents the necessity for such large-scale retribution to heal the multitude of wrongs that plague the kingdom.⁶⁵

Although Margaret is not the only Frenchwoman to bear arms in the first tetralogy (Joan of Arc leads the French army into battle), Margaret's cruelty surpasses Joan's. Martha A. Kurtz does not dismiss the often made claim that men not women are the makers of history.⁶⁶ However, she does attempt to rehabilitate certain women in a few history plays (namely *Woodstock*) in which martial prowess does not figure significantly. She argues that female violence in the history plays is still a critique of war: "Margaret can be seen as a different kind of critique of the values of the masculine world of war: what is horrifying in men is more vividly horrifying in her because it is unexpected."⁶⁷ Kurtz's claim here is two-fold: 1) Margaret's violence is unexpected and 2) her violence is more horrifying. Looking at Clifford's murder of Rutland, Margaret's treatment of York, and the Yorkists' final treatment of her, we can see that Margaret's violence is neither unexpected nor more horrifying for her gender.

⁶⁵ Tassi, *Women and Revenge*, 133.

⁶⁶ Rackin and Howard, *Engendering a Nation*, "History-making seems to be an exclusively a male project" (76).

⁶⁷ Kurtz, 268. Also, "Ferocity is bestial in Shakespeare's plays both in men and women, but ferocity in women challenges the stability of the civilized world." Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 299.

The bitter battlefield feud resulting in young Prince Edward's onstage death originates in *2 Henry VI* when Young Clifford finds the body of his father dead at the hands of York. Young Clifford, following the rules of masculinity—in the tradition of Senecan revenge—vows revenge and sides with the Lancastrians. Clifford's vow of revenge is among the more bloodthirsty passages:

My heart is turned to stone, and while 'tis mine
 It shall be stony. York not our old men spares;
 No more will I their babes. Tears virginal
 Shall be to me even as the dew to the fire,
 And beauty that the tyrant oft reclaims
 Shall to my flaming wrath be oil and flax.
 Henceforth I will not have to do with pity.
 Meet I an infant of the house of York,
 Into as many gobbets will I cut it
 As wild Medea young Absyrtus did.
 In cruelty will I seek out my fame.
2 Henry VI 5.3.50-60

Although not the most eloquent passage to be found in Shakespeare, the message is abundantly clear: Clifford will take no prisoners. Not only will Clifford kill every Yorkist he comes across, he will mutilate their bodies worse than Medea, a female whose cruelty was well established. In drawing on a female comparison, Clifford is blurring the boundary between genders. Cruelty, at least in Clifford's speech, is no different wielded by a male or female. Clifford's opportunity for revenge presents itself early in *3 Henry VI* as Clifford comes upon young Rutland and his tutor. Rutland and his tutor are unprotected, and the scene makes no effort to portray Clifford's murder of Rutland as anything short of cold-blooded murder. Rutland, likewise, argues he has done nothing to Clifford, but to Clifford his heritage is enough. Rutland is son of York, and so, simply, he must die. In this, Clifford provides the prop for Margaret's exhibition at York's execution. Margaret, however, is also reeling from an attack by the Yorkists: her husband has disinherited her son and promised to make York King of England upon Henry VI's death. Margaret promptly

takes to the field to defend her son's (and her husband's) honor. Interestingly, this movement by Margaret becomes the disgrace of the first tetralogy; "the scandal of *Henry VI, Part III* is not that a woman is a general, but that a man, and an anointed king to boot, can perform none of the actions expected of a father and king."⁶⁸ The capture of York is thus a reaction both to Clifford's desire to revenge his father and Margaret's need to restore her family's honor.

Still, regardless of the causes the scene is full of unnecessary cruelty. Margaret's hatred of York boils over as she accuses him of a litany of sins from sitting in Henry's throne to breaking his oath not to rebel while Henry was still in power. York's actions are certainly treasonous, but once Margaret bids York grieve with the "napkin" stained with Rutland's blood, any pity felt for Margaret and her plight slips away. Margaret herself claims "but that I hate thee deadly/ I should lament thy miserable state" (1.4.85-6). While Margaret's wrongs are justified they pale in comparison to her treatment of York. York, for his part, proves to be a pitiable character as he chastises the Queen for her unwomanly actions. Calling her an "Amazonian trull" and "She-wolf of France," York's rebuke targets Margaret's unwomanly behavior (1.4.115; 112). York immediately calls Margaret's fidelity into question, and by likening her to an "Amazonian trull,"⁶⁹ York is conflating her military prowess with her sexual promiscuity. York follows his name-calling with a list of feminine adjectives, all of which, he argues, Margaret lacks. From beauty to virtue to government, Margaret, according to York, is "opposite to every good" (1.4.129-135). Lastly, most telling is York's accusation that Margaret's deed of giving York the blood-soaked handkerchief is more abominable because she is a

⁶⁸ Howard and Rackin, 85.

⁶⁹ Schmidt in his *Shakespeare Lexicon* glosses "trull" as a "lewd and worthless woman"

woman. York's vitriol against Margaret is not only against her person, but against the trajectory of England's political climate

In the first, second, and third parts of *Henry VI*, the consolidation of power is marked by a movement of monstrous female agency from margin to center, a movement that begins with the claim that the enemy is an Amazon and ends in the recognition of something distinctly Amazonian about the woman who is queen, mother, and wife.⁷⁰

Rather than rail against Clifford who *murdered* his son, York rails against Margaret for having the handkerchief soaked in his son's blood to give to him. York is railing against the unnaturalness of the England in which Margaret has become a monster in an attempt to defend her son's right to be heir apparent.

York has, arguably, usurped the throne of England. He has rebelled against a king, albeit a rather inept king who was unable to understand the moving pieces of his government, and a king who was loath to commit lives of any sort to battle (even in the face of Jack Cade, Henry VI still insisted on a parley before calling on his troops). York ought to rank with Mortimer Jr. (of *Edward II*), Hotspur, and Bolingbroke as characters to judge.⁷¹ Margaret's actions are undeniably cruel, but are they more cruel because she is a woman or because she is a foreigner? York appeals to both in his tirade against the "ruthless Queen" (2.1.157). The resolution to Margaret's character may lie in the death of Prince Edward. Captured by the remaining sons of York, Prince Edward and Margaret are taken before them to be either imprisoned or executed. Together Margaret and Prince Edward rail against their captors still cursing

⁷⁰ Kathryn Schwarz, "Fearful Simile: Stealing the Breech in Shakespeare's Chronicle plays," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (Summer 1998), 140-167. 141.

⁷¹ Of the rebellious barons appearing in the history plays, Bolingbroke is the only one who fully realizes the depth of the damage he has done. He encourages his son Henry V to repent of his father's sins and establish his legitimacy. Bolingbroke also desires to go to the Holy Land on pilgrimage (read Crusade) as atonement for deposing a reigning king (of course Henry IV does not go). Omit this footnote: distracting at this point.

them as traitors. King Edward makes the first move, followed by Richard, then George as all three stab the prince in the presence of his mother, Margaret. Levine argues that despite Margaret's warrior aspect, "in this play, the adulterous queen of 2 *Henry VI* has been rehabilitated as a mother: Margaret appears in every scene but one with her son at her side, her aggression now sanctioned by the fact that she fights solely to preserve her son's succession."⁷²

Joan of Arc is the most incontestably foreign woman we have considered in the course of this chapter. Joan is not only a Frenchwoman, but she is also fighting for the French against the English; that she is a caricature should not be surprising (she is the ideal English scapegoat for the loss of French lands); however, she is an important caricature nonetheless.

Readings of her iconography point to anxieties concerning women which range from demonic possession to Catholicism to martial violence to sexual excess to the presence of a queen on the throne; behind each of these readings is the recognition that Joan's conflation of sexual and martial agency, like that represented in stories about Amazons, interrupts the privileged system of homosocial masculinity, rather than being defined by its terms.⁷³

Unlike Margaret and Isabella who are partially reclaimed through their status as English queens and mothers despite their French origins, Joan becomes the emblem of gendered difference. While Isabella and Margaret clung to a modicum of femininity despite their apparent masculine traits, Joan possesses none of their potentially redeeming qualities. For Margaret and Isabella, their extramarital relationships produced feminine qualities (Isabella was finally ruled by a man, and Margaret experienced the stereotypical female passions), but Joan's extramarital affairs exist only through thoroughly suggestive innuendo. Furthermore, Margaret and

⁷² Levine, 87.

⁷³ Schwarz, 147.

Isabella become the trope of the inconstant woman as they turn from their husbands to another. Joan succeeds only in making men inconstant. Perhaps the most problematic element of Joan's character is the fact that "implicit in Joan's performance... is a threat to English historical renown even more dangerous than her military victories: the vivid theatrical presence that makes her the most memorable character in the play."⁷⁴ As we conclude our discussion of masculine women we will continually be placing these women in conversation with one another to understand how Joan becomes the epitome of the foreign, masculine woman.

Joan's inexplicable abilities are explained away through accusations of witchcraft and accusations of sexual promiscuity. Considering her witchcraft first, we know the French are intrinsically linked to sorcery,⁷⁵ and so the explanation for Joan's abilities as sorcerer should not be surprising. Talbot refers to Joan as "Pucelle, that witch, that damned sorceress" in the wake of his defeat at Rouen, and while we know Talbot to be a good Englishman, that does not bar him from exaggerating Joan's presumed vices (3.4.3). Talbot's accusation is more striking in the wake of Joan's perpetual claims that she has been sent *from God* to rid France of the English. Despite the Dauphin's proclamations of love, Joan's words argue for her continued chastity and her sacred mission (*1 Henry VI* 1.3.51-71). Burgundy, France's new-found ally, also alleges that he has been bewitched by Joan as she persuades him to change sides and join the French cause. Although Joan relies on persuasive language about the land and people of France to entreat Burgundy, he believes it is either "nature" or he has been "bewitched" to change sides (3.7.58).

⁷⁴ Howard and Rackin, 5

⁷⁵ As noted earlier Exeter remarks in 1.1.25-27:
 Or shall we think the subtle-witted French
 Conjurers and sorcerers, that, afraid of him,
 By magic verses have contrived his end?

Joan's declarations of piety echo emptily once we have reached the end of *1 Henry VI*. As the final battle approaches in which Joan will be captured, she summons spirits to aid her. Later, in *2 Henry VI*, we catch a glimpse of magic rites with the Duchess of Gloucester, Eleanor. Desperately ambitious, Eleanor risks everything to secure a good fortune for her husband, the Duke of Gloucester and Protector of the realm. Eleanor is caught and severely punished for her secret incantations (although she does rely on the help of another witch). The prophecies she receives are deemed useless due to their ambiguity, and Eleanor appears to be punished more for her ambition than for any witchcraft in which she may have participated. There is no such ambiguity in the case of Joan, as she exhorts the "fiends" to help her, they remain silent and eventually refuse despite Joan's pleas to give them everything (including her "soul—my body, soul, and all—" (5.3.21). Joan has supposedly also offered them a blood sacrifice (as she attests in line 20), a sacrifice particular to witches. Joan is eventually abandoned by her spirits who she deems "familiar" with their "accustomed diligence," and is given as a prisoner to the English (5.3.8-9). The English condemn Joan to a heretic's punishment, and they will burn her at the stake, just as Eleanor's witch is burned in *2 Henry VI*. Joan's repeated appeals to God (and the Virgin Mary) complicate the notion that God is always on the side of the English—as God was at the Battle of Agincourt with Henry V. In claiming a divine calling, Joan is appropriating the mantle worn by Henry V and

becomes, in an English context at least, a usurper, a monster, a conceptual nightmare. Much of the innuendo directed at Joan, like the accusations of witchcraft and whoredom she receives from her English enemies, is intended to alienate her from the identification she claims with the Holy Mother's glory and the king's privileged vision.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Dickson, Lisa. "No Rainbow without the Sun: Visibility and Embodiment in *1 Henry VI*," *Modern Language Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2000), 137-156. 143.

The English must separate Joan from her divine vision, and so reduce her claims of holiness to mere witchcraft making her more worthy to be burned at the stake than to lead an army.

The second way in which Joan is minimized within Shakespeare's text is through the sexual innuendo surrounding her. Both the French and the English can relate to Joan only through terms of sexuality. According to Nancy Gutierrez, "In Shakespeare's version, a bastard introduces a cross-dressing woman: an outsider by birth introduces a sexually ambiguous creature, who by such gender indeterminacy is an outsider as well."⁷⁷ Joan is, according to Gutierrez, marked as an outsider from the beginning both by the bastard who supports her and her appearance. Despite her outsider status, she is at least nominally accepted by the Dauphin and the French army. Even though her position as leader of the army and her apparent military aptitude are welcomed, Joan cannot escape the language of courtly love that is tied to her every action. Once she has bested the Dauphin at their first meeting, he immediately uses language of courtship and love:

Impatiently I burn with thy desire.
My heart and hand thou hast at once subdued.
Excellent Pucelle if thy name be so,
Let me thy servant, and not sovereign be.
1.3.87-90

The Dauphin Charles goes on to beg Joan to "look gracious on thy prostrate thrall," and even his lords question his speech and behavior towards her (1.3.96). Joan resolutely denies him citing her task from heaven as the grounds, but Charles cannot stop from referring to her solely in the terms of courtly love.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Nancy Gutierrez. "Gender and Value in *1 Henry VI*: The Case of Joan la Pucelle." *Theatre Journal* 42, no. 2 (May 1990), 183-193. 186.

⁷⁸ Charles refers to Joan as his "sweeting" at 3.7.21, and his nobles accuse him of having slept with Joan following their expulsion from Orleans in 2.1, an accusation

Even Joan's military victories become the subject of double entendre. Joan will "thrust out a torch from yonder tower" to signal her arrival in the city (3.3.6). Meanwhile, the English have punned on "Pucelle or pucelle" (the latter generally spelled/pronounced "puzzel" to signify maid or whore) and cited her entrance into Orleans in the same breath as "dying" with Suffolk. Given Talbot's recent expostulation that Joan might be a whore, reading sexual innuendo into his later exclamations is certainly not out of character. Despite Joan's continual claims to chastity, the English are proved correct in their appraisal of Joan. Their accusations of witchcraft were eventually shown to be true as well as their implications of whoredom.

The Elizabethans were fond of blaming women, as they make female characters castigate themselves in the plays, for the destructive power of their beauty. Over and above this obvious strategy to transfer male guilt at sexual arousal, and notwithstanding the rhetoric about the 'witchcraft' of beauty, there is a recognition that a well-proportioned woman in motion has such power to draw the eye that it makes mere legal, moral, and financial male power seem insignificant.⁷⁹

As Joan is to be burned at the stake, she claims to be pregnant perhaps by several partners. Joan denies Charles, the Dauphin, as the father, naming Alençon and René in quick succession, an obvious contradiction from her earlier claims to purity while on her holy cause, which the English are quick to note. Schwarz points out that Joan's attempt at claiming pregnancy is simply the result of her determination to fit into a schema. Her suit based on pregnancy does not matter, according to Schwarz, on the grounds of its truthfulness (it is almost farcical in nature), but because, through it,

which is supported by the appearance of Charles and Joan together at 2.1.48 and the Bastard's comment aside at 49.

⁷⁹ David Mann, *Shakespeare's Women: Performance and Conception* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), 179.

Joan is finally attempting to belong under a category.⁸⁰ Joan is not only suing for mercy on the basis of her womanhood, but also on the basis that she has fulfilled her womanly duty: childbearing. Pragmatically, Joan's claims of pregnancy evoke her sense of desperation as a pregnant woman cannot be executed; figuratively, Joan is attempting to conform herself to the standards of a society that cannot accept her. Her earlier behavior has barred her from entrance into the category of female; her desperate claims of pregnancy have the added dramatic (and national) advantage of reducing a French national icon to absurdity.

Unlike Margaret and Isabella, Joan's infidelity is only perceived rather than actual. Shakespeare does not depict Joan as actually participating in any illicit relationship with Charles, Alençon, or René as he does with Margaret and Isabella, and as Marlowe does with Isabella and Mortimer. Regardless that Joan's infidelity is implied, it is as essentially destabilizing as either Isabella's or Margaret's actual unfaithfulness. Because of Joan, the English lost a powerful ally in Burgundy and were eventually driven out of France (with the help of England's own feuding nobles). The results of Margaret and Isabella's promiscuity have already been made clear. Beyond the anxiety of doubtful paternity (their children could all be considered bastards), the instability created by the infidelity of these promiscuous queens' reflects a larger instability at work within the state. While these women's promiscuity may not have contributed directly to the instability felt by England, their extramarital relationships were a sign of the internal problems within England. Their inability to

⁸⁰ Schwarz, 143. Schwarz puts it less mildly arguing that in arguing for her femininity Joan is arguing for herself as commodity: "Her final claim to be pregnant is an attempt to become recognizable as a commodity, a woman defined in terms of specific social value." Schwarz's article compares Margaret and Joan in terms of their ability to conform to their societies and the ways in which they are demonized for failing to do so.

remain faithful, duty-bound queen-wives to their husband-kings became a signal of their masculinity, and therefore a disruption of the gendered social order.

The foreignness that is overwhelming with Joan is tempered in Margaret and Isabella by their families: both Margaret and Isabella have borne children (and both fight for their child's rights). Joan has neglected her familial responsibilities in following her vision from the Virgin Mary, but Margaret and Isabella only undertake war after they have produced the necessary heir. In so doing, both Margaret and Isabella retain an essential femininity that Joan forfeits. Margaret wails after the loss of her son, and Isabella relies on her status as a mother to receive mercy from her son. Margaret and Isabella are tied to England through the children they have borne; Joan has no such tie (nor, we could argue, would she desire one). Joan becomes the quintessential masculine woman through her shirking of her womanly duties and her status as pure Frenchwoman. She remains French through her lack of an English marriage. Interestingly, what Margaret and Isabella spurned becomes the only means through which they are reclaimed into the English national narrative.

Chapter Four: National Languages and Foreign Tongues: The Treatment of Foreign Language in the History Play

“Are those who act and *struggle* mute, as opposed to those who act and *speak*?”
-Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak¹

The proximal foreigner, as we have been discussing, was distinguished through geographic location and gender; however, in addition to these categories, the proximal foreigner was also identified through language. This chapter discusses the alienating effects of foreign language within the nascent English polity both on those who speak the languages and those who do not. Foreign language becomes a site for discontent and rebellion to the English crown throughout the various history plays of the 1590s. French and Welsh act as the main obstruction to English cohesion, and they are the locus of discontent in the plays. Shakespeare’s history plays feature both French and Welsh over the course of several plays spanning both the first and second tetralogies. These depictions of foreign languages function as points of discord featuring particular languages. The choice of French and Welsh is significant for both their familiarity and their difference: the long history of English alongside French and Welsh both as languages of inferiority and superiority make them ideal counterpoints to English hegemony.

French, as the self-proclaimed language of civility, holds the paradoxical position of legitimizing English while still disparaging the French language itself. In both *2 Henry VI* and *Henry V* French is placed in conflict with English; however, the results of this conflict neatly oppose each other. In *2 Henry VI* French becomes the complaint of the Cade Rebellion in an attempt to prove the legitimacy of English. The struggle the Cade Rebels place themselves in *against* French (the language) attests to

¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1999). 257.

the function of French's perceived superiority within the space of the drama as the Cade Rebels argue for the superiority of English. In *Henry V*, French is placed in the midst of the English conquest again to argue for the English language's superiority. Unlike French, Welsh does not occupy a space of cultural superiority, self-proclaimed or otherwise, but still works to complement English. The position of Welsh in relation to English, however, is in many ways far more complicated than that of French. The sole appearance of Welsh in the midst of *1 Henry IV* challenges the easy dominance of English. As Lady Mortimer struggles to make herself understood in the midst of those who do not speak her tongue, her Welsh seeks to juxtapose the presumed civility of English with the magic of Wales. Foreign language in these history plays situates itself amongst a discourse of otherness in which location and gender also speak. Although each of these plays utilizes foreign language differently, they all seek to place the proximal foreigner in a knowable place.

2 Henry VI: The Domestic Use of French

2 Henry VI's placement in a chapter concerned with foreign language is, perhaps, surprising upon initial inspection. Unlike the other two plays discussed in this chapter, no foreign language is explicitly heard on the stage. The Cade Rebellion, does, however, dramatize the importance of making the English language a legitimate national language of power. In so doing, *2 Henry VI* provides the interesting and oft-quoted remark, "kill all the lawyers", while the Cade rebels' litany of abuses by the lawyers resembles that of modern day complaints; their fundamental grievance is an inability to participate and interact with their legal system. The three mock trials Cade and his rebels stage during the march on London in 4.2 all hinge on identifying and prosecuting members of the legal system (first a clerk, then a sergeant, and, lastly, a magistrate). Although only two unambiguously level charges

surrounding the issues of literacy and language, all three are concerned with a fundamental access to justice. Historically, the legal courts of Henry VI were conducted in French, a vestige of the Norman influence on English political life following the Norman Conquest. The appalling brutality of the Cade rebellion necessarily challenges the legitimacy of any of the rebels' claims; although I would argue it is the brutal context of the rebellion which makes the complaint about legitimate language compelling. Cade's rebellion promises many things including the eradication of money, holding property in common, and making it a "felony to drink small beer"; yet, in the midst of these promises is the uneasy realization that English is a marginalized language of power.

Elizabethan England, although recognizing the importance of the English language to a nascent national consciousness, was also undergoing an influx of works marginalizing the English language. According to Jean-Christophe Mayer, the sixteenth century saw a "flurry of French language manuals published in England"²—further reinforcing the perceived hyper-civility of the French and the incipient fear of traveling abroad on the vulnerable English constitution as now the English did not need to leave the boundaries of their isle to encounter foreignness. As discussed briefly in Chapter One, geohumoralism was a determining factor not only in Elizabethan conceptions of Englishness but European conceptions of ethnicity. The schema through which the English were working was therefore understood not solely within the confines of the sceptered isle but across a diverse continent. When the English are labeled according to their extreme northerness they become inextricably tied to the exotic barbarians of Roman myth: the Scythians to the north and the Ethiopians in the south. One of the main projects of the English Renaissance became

² Jean-Christophe Mayer, "The Ironies of Babel in Shakespeare's *Henry V*" in *Representing France and the French in Early Modern Drama*, 127.

a rehabilitation of their geohumoral legacy as something to be desired rather than something to be eschewed. In the process, the English nature became malleable and susceptible to foreign influence; “however troubling their native environment was perceived to be, travel, it was understood, exacerbated the English people’s imperfections.”³ As mentioned above, an uneasy solution to the problems of geohumoral traits was the production of French language manuals that provided the means through which the English could gain the civility inherent in visiting France without sacrificing their essential Englishness. The French language, then, changes its shape from the Norman Conquest’s threatening language of official power to an Elizabethan language of culture.

Historically, the Cade rebellion was not focused on eradicating education (or killing the lawyers); instead, it was the Peasant’s Revolt of 1381 (during the reign of Richard II) that sought to reform education. The Cade Rebellion, likewise, was historically notable for providing *written* copies of its demands, later published in Holinshed’s *Chronicle*, and of which many copies still survive. Shakespeare would have known about the written demands of the Cade rebellion and the different demands of the Peasants Revolt of 1381; however, they are conflated in the Cade Rebellion of *2 Henry VI*.⁴ The conflation of the two rebellions marginalizes the demands of the Cade rebellion challenging the validity of Cade’s superficial attempt at civil speech. The Butcher’s demand to “kill all the lawyers” is not merely a generic anti-judicial sentiment; instead, it attests to an English frustration at their inability to participate in their country. The initial determination to kill the lawyers is worth quoting since it provides the context for the argument to follow:

³ Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern England*, 8

⁴ Chris Fitter, “‘Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation’: Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare’s Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*,” *Shakespeare Studies* 32 (2004), 173-219. 174.

Butcher: The first thing we do let's kill all the lawyers.

Cade: Nay, that I mean to do. Is not this a lamentable thing that of the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? That parchment, being scribbled o'er, should undo a man? Some say the bee stings, but I say 'tis the bee's wax. For I did but seal once to a thing, and I was never mine own man since.

4.2.68-74

The Butcher's declaration comes amidst Cade's manifesto (he will abolish money and there will be food and drink for all), but Cade includes the Butcher's request seamlessly as a means of expostulating further on the new regime Cade will champion. Prior to the Butcher's petition Cade's decrees are no more than an agenda: bread will be cheaper, wine will flow from the fountains, money will no longer exist; now, following the Butcher's interruption, Cade moves from a catalogue of promises to a basic analysis of the legal system.

Cade (like the Butcher) conflates the symbol of the law with the agents of the law with the implementation of the law. Cade's reference to the "innocent lamb" that is made into parchment alludes easily to the Christian reference of Christ while also singling out his plebian followers⁵. The commoners who accompany Cade on his progress through the country likely underwent the same abuse as Cade. When Cade metaphorically alludes to the innocent lamb sacrificed to an iniquitous legal system, he does so knowing his followers have been the same sacrificial lamb. As Cade's metaphor progresses, the parchment, though innocent, becomes the tool through which more sacrificial lambs are undone. Cade's implication, that he is a sacrificial lamb through "seal[ing] once to a thing," further aligns the Cade rebels against the established regime. The conflation of sign and signified evidenced throughout the Cade Rebellion challenges the efficacy of language and the objective of their rebellion. In a perhaps overly literal sense, Cade's insistence on the homogeneity

⁵ Roger Chartier, "Jack Cade, the skin of a dead lamb, and the hatred for writing," *Shakespeare Studies* 34 (2006), 77-89. 77-78.

between the sign and the signified causes the violence he will inflict on the three members of the government. Cade synthesizes the symbols of the law (parchment, ink, and wax) with their meaning (authority and the law) using this to argue for the hollowness of the signs themselves.

In “Jack Cade’s Legal Carnival” Craig Bernthal argues that anti-lawyer sentiment steadily rose towards the end of the sixteenth century, while lawyers’ own opinion of themselves also grew. Bernthal goes on to contend that as lawyers saw themselves the “heroes of justice and the purveyors of a special language most suited for communication of truth” they were increasingly alienating themselves from the people to whom they represented the law.⁶ As lawyers attempted to consolidate their hold over the legal system Cade’s refusal to differentiate the sign from the signified attests to this escalating disparity and challenges the legitimacy of the lawyers and their language leading to one of the central themes of this chapter. As Dermot Cavanaugh has noted, “In Shakespeare’s works, the issue of how language legitimizes and delegitimizes authority is the catalyst for some of his most forceful insights into the political composition of sixteenth-century society.”⁷ The conflation of Cade’s rebellion with the Peasants’ revolt challenges the efficacy of the legal courts; through its refusal to recognize the symbolic signification of the signs of the law (the parchment, pen, and paper) it also rejects the authority those signs impart. Although by the time of Cade’s Rebellion, 1450, English had been established within the Chancery courts, the 1381 Peasants’ Revolt had no such luxury. According to Malcolm Richardson, it was not until the reign of Henry V (c. 1417) that the shift in language use begins: “The pivotal period for the use of English by the government is

⁶ Craig Bernthal, “Jack Cade’s Legal Carnival,” *SEL* 42, no. 2 (Spring 2002), 259-274. 263.

⁷ Dermot Cavanaugh, *Language and Politics in the Sixteenth-Century History Play*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). 13.

the reign of Henry V (1413-1422). Before Henry's reign there are few English documents among the public records; after his death Latin and French are still widely used (and continue to be for the next century), but English increasingly appears after 1422 in numerous types of writs, warrants, inquisitions, and memoranda, and in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, among the most important English official records."⁸ Cade's initial pledge to "kill all the lawyers" and therefore rupture the barrier between the legitimate language of government and the populace becomes the physical resistance to the separation of these signs.

While we know, through the rebels' own assertions, they have been excluded from participation in the legal system, the rebels' attempts at justice are equally misguided and, ultimately, discredited. Their first victim, the Clerk of Chatham, is quickly and summarily sentenced to death.

Weaver: The Clerk of Chatham—he can write and read and cast account.

Cade: O, monstrous!

Weaver: We took him setting of boys' copies.

Cade: Here's a villain.

Weaver: He's a book in his pocket with red letters in't.

Cade: Nay, then he's a conjuror!

Butcher: Nay, he can make obligations and write court hand.

Cade: I am sorry for't. The man is a proper man, of mine honour. Unless I find him guilty, he shall not die. Come hither, sirrah, I must examine thee. What is thy name?

Clerk: Emmanuel.

Bucher: They use to write that on the top of letters—'twill go hard with you.

Cade: Let me alone. [*To the Clerk*] Dost thou use to write thy name? Or has thou a mark to thyself like an honest plain-dealing man?

Clerk: Sir, I thank God I have been so well brought up that I can write my name.

All Cade's Followers: He hath confessed—away with him! He's a villain and a traitor.

Cade: Away with him, I say, hang him with his pen and inkhorn about his neck.

4.2.75-97

⁸ Malcolm Richardson, "Henry V, the English Chancery, and Chancery English," *Speculum* 55, no. 4 (October 1980), 726-750. 727.

The rebels' hastily assembled 'court of law' concentrates around the Clerk's propagation of education. The Clerk's employment and ability to "write court hand" is last in an inventory of crimes centered more on his role as schoolmaster than his role in the courts. The rebels' uncertainty as to the various secondary consequences of the Clerk's education eventually fixates on the primary consequence: the Clerk is perpetuating a cycle of literacy that precludes the participation of workers like Cade and his followers from accessing the legitimate spheres of influence.

In an attempt to spell out their anger with the ruling class, the rebels list several varying repercussions of education: he is a conjuror, a villain, and a traitor. Their first accusation, the Clerk as villain, is at first glance the most spurious claim since it seems only casually linked with the red letter books in his possession. The red letter book in question is a simple young boy's primer and fits well with the preceding lines in which he is found setting the copy for those very same books.⁹ The color of the letters appear to be of secondary importance to the categorical fact of the book; it is the sign of education and, therefore, sorcery.

Although to modern audiences the link between sorcery and education is tenuous at best, to Elizabethans the possession of books and therefore learning was met with significant suspicion. John Dee, the famous Elizabethan intellectual, was branded a wizard largely on the basis of the size of his library. In fact, during one of Dee's many trips abroad his house was raided and his books burned in an attempt to stymie his supposed supernatural powers. Of course, the riot and the book burning did nothing but eradicate the physical signs of Dee's knowledge; however, the inextricable link between books and sorcery remained. The mainly illiterate populace,

⁹ The Norton edition of Shakespeare does also include the option for the book as almanac, but given the context in which the lines are spoken the book as primer seems more likely. 4.2.80 *note*.

unable to understand the contents of books, conflated the inaccessible knowledge contained within them with the supernatural—another realm to which they are denied access. Compounded with the problem of controlled access to knowledge is the way in which foreigners, particularly women, are identified as participating in the occult. In Chapter Three it was Joan of Arc and Margaret of Anjou who were ultimately viewed as the epitome of alterity: Catholic, female, and French they are marked as indelibly Other throughout the entire first tetralogy and also branded with the label of witch. In an attempt to lessen the “sting” of the rebels’ exclusion from the government, the institutions of government and their privileged access become combined, in the minds of the illiterate and therefore untrustworthy masses, with the inaccessible supernatural. The conjuring associated with those who are literate thus becomes a sign of a secret language. As the rebels are illiterate, the actual language within the books is irrelevant, rather it is the complete exclusion from understanding these languages represent. Those who are able to read, regardless of language, are given access to privileged information. The offense of exclusion, though grave, is given a more tangible consequence through its connection to the effeminate French language.

The inability of the institutions of government to change and adapt to their changing populace, perhaps on purpose, becomes the reason behind the Cade rebellion, if we read its motivation generously. Referencing medieval ecclesiastical learning and its corresponding language Janette Dillon remarks:

The very terminology by which the literate establishment continued to identify its own knowledge of Latin as the only literacy, and refused to share the name of literacy with the vernacular equivalent demonstrates the degree to which language is always politically engaged. Such a refusal to realign the uses of

language with the changing pattern of learning expresses a deeper refusal to realign power structures.¹⁰

Much like the Latin of the monasteries and the churches, the French of the court retained its supremacy over the vernacular long after most of the populace had abandoned it. Part of Coke's project in codifying the English language system was to establish the authority and legitimacy of the English language as a viable alternative to French and Latin. As Harold Berman argues, "Pre-Reformation English theological and philosophical writings on law were basically similar to those of French, German, Italian, or other European theologians and philosophers. The jurists and theologians and philosophers of all parts of Western Christendom in those centuries formed a single community, with a common language and a common religious faith."¹¹ Coke was attempting to revise the popular and common rallying cry from its implication of foreignness and treason to a more conventional (if less catchy) version in which lawyers are merely those whom you seek when faced with an unfortunate legal situation.

Cade continues to question the Clerk on his privileged access to court, after ascertaining the Clerk's ability to sign his own name as opposed to making a mark like "an honest plain-dealing man" Cade sentences the Clerk to die with his pen and inkhorn around his neck (4.2.90). Cade's conspicuous bias—the illiterate man is seen as "honest" and "plain-dealing"—sets up the rebels' tenuous dichotomy in which the literate man is necessarily deceitful and untrustworthy. As discussed earlier, the literate man is granted entry to a clandestine society to which the vast majority of the English population was denied access. The links between literacy (and education) and

¹⁰ Janette Dillon, *Language and Stage in Medieval and Renaissance England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 9.

¹¹ Harold J. Berman, "The Origins of Historical Jurisprudence: Coke, Selden, Hale," *The Yale Law Journal* 103, no. 7 (May 1994), 1651-1738. 1657.

sorcery become the manifestations of this exclusion and the negative connotations sorcery bears: effeminacy, treason, and deceit are explicable in this context. Yet, despite Cade's overt preference for illiteracy (and his corresponding disparagement of literacy), the Clerk confesses his ability to write his own name thus condemning himself to death as a "villain" and a "traitor."

The rebels' grievances against the government hinge upon their essential suspicion of all authority and the external manifestations of institutional power. Although the rebels are far from reliable (or dependable), their complaints focus on the nature of language. Through beginning with the Clerk and the education (or indoctrination) of the youth, the rebels move systematically through the institutions to which they lack access. Following the pseudo-trial of the Clerk, Cade proceeds to knight himself before denouncing Lord Saye. Cade's systematic lampooning of the institutions of government becomes the lens through which his social critique can be read (or the lens through which government is endorsed). When Lord Saye is introduced at the close of the scene (4.2) language once more becomes the central feature.

Butcher: And, furthermore, we'll have the Lord Saye's head for selling the dukedom of Maine.

Cade: For thereby is England maimed, and fain to go with a staff, but that my puissance holds it up. Fellow-kings, I tell you that that Lord Saye hath gelded the commonwealth, and made it an eunuch, and, more than that, *he can speak French, and therefore he is a traitor.*

Stafford: O gross and miserable ignorance!

Cade: Nay, answer if you can: the Frenchmen are our enemies; go to, then, I ask but this—*can he that speaks with the tongue of an enemy be a good counselor or no?*

4.2.145-155 (emphasis mine)

Similar to the Clerk, Lord Saye's offenses are not only listed but they are ranked according to their egregiousness: his sale of English land to the French ranks below

the languages he knows how to speak. In addition, Cade's rationale ought to be reminiscent (or prefigure) the opening of *1 Henry VI*:

Sad tidings I bring to you out of France,
Of loss, of slaughter, and discomfiture.
Guyenne, Compiegne, Rouen, Rheims, Orleans,
Paris, Gisors, Poitiers are all quite lost.
1 Henry VI 1.1.58-61

The continuous concern in the history plays with the leasing and losing of English lands in France attests to the cruel reality faced by those in Elizabethan England across different social strata. Despite their claims to the contrary, the English were in possession of the smallest territory since before the Hundred Years War; yet they were still struggling to proclaim and ensconce themselves as a dominant European power in their own right. However, it is not the treason of sacrificing lands to the French that decides Lord Saye's fate, it is Lord Saye's knowledge of the French language.

Cade's difficulty in accepting those who are not monolingual is not simply that their knowledge excludes him from power in England, but rather it is an anxiety about who exactly constitutes the English nation. If Cade, and those like him, who speak English are excluded from participation in the nation because they are unable to speak the language of the law, how are they to know themselves as English? Conversely, if those who speak many languages (including the tongue of the enemy) are able to participate in the English nation, how can one be sure of their being authentically English? That the site of these confrontations is linguistic and institutional should not be surprising particularly as novel ways of understanding the links between the other people who shared the island arose. As discussed in Chapter One, although Saxton's maps provided the means through which space could be quantified and the relational aspect of the nation could be visualized, it did not

provide familiarity with the peoples inhabiting the disparate corners of the realm. Kermode describes the nation as “compris[ing] natives, known and unknown to each other, the unknown imagined as similar to the self in terms of one’s conception of, and loyalty to, a realm.”¹² Thus, although each member of the nation may not know every other member, the imagined similarities are sufficient to qualify each for participation in the nation. The exclusion of the English language from the discourse of power and the inclusion of a foreign language, particularly French, necessarily complicates the ability with which the similarities of the members of the nation can be imagined. For Cade, the problem with speaking French is that it might obscure treacherous intent through its exclusivity, an anxiety expressed more specifically as “the particularly insidious quality of the alien threat...was that aliens might pass for English, thus making their treachery all the more difficult to detect.”¹³ Lord Saye’s ability to speak French is destabilizing precisely because it blurs the boundary between who is English and who is French. Lord Saye is English, and he was acting on behalf of the English in France; however, because he speaks French it is impossible to unequivocally assert his loyalty to the crown.

Cade’s contention over Lord Saye’s bilingualism is not merely that it is *not* English, but also that it is the language of the perceived enemy. In the person of Lord Saye, the enemy (the French) has linguistically colonized the realm of England. The political landscape of *2 Henry VI* at the beginning of the Wars of the Roses increases the instability felt by Cade and his band of brother commoners.

Cracks in the make-up of a country are blamed unequivocally on alien presence; passages, scenes, or the main thrust of a play may therefore concentrate rather simply on attacking alien bodies, fashions, or habits. *At*

¹² Kermode, 12.

¹³ Dillon, *Language and Stage*, 175

*points a clearer recognition that something alien might already reside in the native seems to surface.*¹⁴

In accepting the dominance of French as the language of power what is alien is residing within the native. In Cade's eyes, the lawyers, the Clerk, and Lord Saye are all guilty of allowing the alien to reside within the native. Those English in positions of authority have been adulterated by "the enemy," their position as good counselors has been irreparably compromised, and so they must be traitors to the realm. Likewise, Lord Saye's bilingualism may also serve as a mask through which he can conceal his true allegiance; this is where the "evidence" of Lord Saye's "selling the dukedom of Maine" becomes incontestable proof of his true loyalties (4.2.146). Lord Saye (or the lawyers or the Clerk) might also be secretly French, and Cade's "suspicion of facility in language is linked to the fear that not all those who look and speak English are truly so."¹⁵ Lord Saye must be a traitor precisely because of the ease with which he is able to move between the cultural codes of England and France. Likewise, the inability to prove whether French or English was Lord Saye's first language must not be discounted. Although it is a likely assumption that English was learned first, there is genuine confusion over the authenticity of Lord Saye's nationality because Lord Saye's native tongue remains unknown. Cade's insistence on the "honest, plain-dealing man" who is illiterate is an understandable position given the innumerable anxieties produced by the bilingualism of those in power. When it is impossible to identify the foreigner through external characteristics, there is necessarily a struggle to determine the foreigner through any incongruous trait. While Cade's position is understandable, and potentially supported, it should always

¹⁴ Kermode, 23

¹⁵ Dillon, 183

be tempered by an understanding that Cade's position was not necessarily supported by those attending the play (and certainly not by those who were in power).

As the Cade rebellion attempts to exterminate the injustice they believe to be plaguing the government, Cade proffers a number of reforms ranging from the economic to the linguistic to the political. Our focus in this chapter has been on the causes and consequences of the linguistic reforms, since challenging the appropriateness of French as a language of power allows Cade to also challenge the boundaries and definition of civil speech. In the Cade rebellion, "the categories by which we distinguish civil from uncivil speech are questioned, especially if it is believed that the former reaches its apotheosis in court discourse and declines into coarse vulgarity at the social and geographical margins."¹⁶ Cade's rebellion challenges civil speech not only through its own linguistic abuses but also through the literal geographic march across the English countryside. Cade is emphatically from the social and geographical margins of England. As discussed in Chapter One, York has brought Cade over from Ireland where he has been fighting the Irish on behalf of the English; however, over the course of his campaign in Ireland, Cade has adopted the habits and habiliments of the native Irish.¹⁷ Cade's movement from Ireland to the fringes of England to England's center becomes the ideological invasion of England. Cade's traversal of space challenges the usually Shakespearean stance that those who are part of the mob are necessarily preposterous as Cade's rebellion progresses towards the geographic (and political) centers of England. The validity of the rebels' claims must be taken as dispensable, even if their complaints about the state could

¹⁶ Cavanaugh, 78

¹⁷ As noted in Chapter One, York's description of Cade details how he has "full often like a shag-haired crafty kern/...Conversed with the enemy." (3.1.367-8). According to this description, not only does Cade look like a native Irishman, but he also can speak like one.

become legitimate. Cade's origins entail (and intensify) the derision that ought to be accorded to the violent, unruly mob that comes to surround him.

Through executing those who are not monoglot English speakers, Cade seeks to reevaluate the conditions under which civil speech is determined. The contradiction between Cade's identity as marginalized, monoglot speaker and the very doctrines he professes must be central to understanding the necessarily illegitimate place the rebellion has within the play. Geographically, Cade has forced himself from the margins of English society (as an ethnically ambiguous soldier fighting on the margins of England's territory in Ireland) to the center (he storms London and labels himself a member of the nobility). Cade's physical movement from the margins to the center of geographic England is meant to provide a foundation for the rebellion's legitimacy. The rebels' ability to progress from the margins of society to the center represents their perceived legitimacy of their claims regardless of audience expectations. In many ways the Cade rebels function as Lady Mortimer does in *Henry IV*, despite being the voice of a destabilizing rebellion with quixotic aims, both rebellions at least hint at an alternative society—although with varying degrees of success.

Cade is, nevertheless, continually excluded from the discourse of power. His rebellion is disbanded in the geo-political center of England (London), and it has served only the marginal purpose of helping York in his challenge for the English throne. Despite Cade's attempts to "civilize" his English speech he is ultimately delegitimized, uncivilized, and excluded. Helgerson argues Shakespeare excluded the "common people both from the English nation and from what would come to be

recognized as the canonical literature of that nation.”¹⁸ This allegation of common exclusion is supported by the treatment of Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*.

Conversely, the popular Elizabethan obsession with the French language is also a response to Cade’s rebellion. While Cade desires to eradicate the French language precisely because of England’s lost land in France, Elizabethan England returned to the French language in an attempt to reclaim their French, and victorious, past. Cade’s hatred of France and Elizabethan England’s desire for it are contradictory reactions to the same set of traumatic events. According to Hillman, “Behind such hatred, infallibly, lurks ambivalence: for the English of the period, France was always, in some measure, their own alienated heritage, a nostalgic reminder of shamefully forfeited but theoretically recoverable glory.”¹⁹ This hatred manifested itself as a paradoxical desire for and resentment of France helping to explain why the French must always be worthy adversaries even if they are enduringly effeminate. Perhaps the best example of the polarized relationship the Elizabethan English had with their French peers manifested itself in the numerous French language manuals published: “Far from opening the nation to its closest European neighbor, many of the authors of these manuals remained jealous of their position within the boundaries of the English nation which they themselves helped to define.”²⁰ The language manuals thus advocated a unique bilingual position that was inherently English, but also one necessarily remaining isolated from the majority of the English. The language manuals simultaneously provided the means for Englishmen to better themselves while promoting an outlook which required only a select few to actually depart the safety of England in order to make use of their new

¹⁸ Helgerson, 233.

¹⁹ Mayer, 13.

²⁰ Mayer, “The Ironies of Babel in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*”, 134.

language. In their attempts to reconstruct the English ethno-humoralism, Elizabethan writers emphasized the delicacy of the uniquely “perfect” English constitution that lent itself to an ease in understanding others.²¹

One of the means through which the English constitution was seen as sufficiently refined was through the series of invasions England had undergone throughout the course of its history; “Just as the Romans brought civility to the Britons, or as the English gained civility in the Norman Conquest.”²² These successive invasions became the cleansing presence through which England gained increasingly greater civility. Thus the French language becomes a double-edged sword through which England gains a civilizing influence but also proof that England has yet to civilize itself. Thus, “France, it seems, was still distinctly synonymous with the cultural prestige of the old Norman aristocracy, the former French-speaking elite of medieval England.”²³ The paradoxical nature of Cade’s project of making English a “civil” discourse becomes clear. In rejecting French, England is advocating its place as a civilized nation (with a civil tongue); however, England is unable to completely discard the allure of French as the language of the nobility. Cade’s ultimate failure to make the discourse of power accessible to English is the starting point for viewing foreign language within the history plays. The doubtful ground given to English in Cade’s rebellion must become indistinguishable when England traverses into foreign territories if English (and England) are to endure. Cade’s rebellion, although fraught with the dangers of foreign language and the national identity surround monolingualism, does not allow for an easy resolution. Amidst Cade’s anxieties over those who speak “the language of the enemy” is a leader who promises to abolish

²¹ For more on the project of rehabilitating England’s geohumoral reputation see Mary Floyd-Wilson’s *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern England*.

²² Floyd-Wilson, 51.

²³ Mayer, “Ironies of Babel”, 137.

money and make the fountains spout claret—a leader who is undeniably portrayed as a fool. If Shakespeare’s early plays promise a monoglot leader who is unquestionably ridiculous, plays coming later in the 1590s seem to challenge the notion that such an easy answer to a complex relationship can be found by “killing all the lawyers.” It is this relationship between English and foreign language in foreign land that will be the topic of the remainder of the chapter.

Depictions of the Welsh Language in *The Henriad*

One of the main concerns of the Cade Rebellion was the rebels’ inability to participate in the language of government; put another way, English was not the privileged language of access. Although the Cade rebels are eventually depicted as farcical (“the Pissing Conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign” [4.6.3-4]), their complaint gave satiric expression to the feelings of many commoners throughout Elizabethan England. Helgerson frequently refers to England’s desire to create a “kingdom of our own language” in response to the supremacy of French and Latin as acknowledged legitimate languages of government.²⁴ English could only assert itself as a legitimate language of power through devaluing the other languages with which it had close contact and therefore close competition. The rebels of *I Henry IV* find themselves in a similar position to that of the Cade Rebellion; only it is a position in which English is the language of power and Welsh is the delegitimized language of the margins. Where the Cade Rebellion failed to provide adequate evidence of their exclusion (the lawyers were not monoglot French speakers),

²⁴ Helgerson, 4.

Hotspur's rebellion further illustrates the conflict in which the Cade rebels helplessly flounder.²⁵

In many ways standing as an intermediary between outcasts, the rebels of *I Henry IV* also completely contrast the later unity of *Henry V*'s famous four captains. Hotspur's rebellion is, at its most basic, a paradoxical attempt to unify the disparate groups of Britain through their separation: Glendower is from Wales, Douglas is from Scotland, and Hotspur is from England. Although these three separate groups ally against the supposed tyranny of King Henry IV, they do not adumbrate the promise of a unified Britain. Their alliance is presumably one of convenience as their goal is to split Britain into four distinct pieces along essentially ethnic boundaries. The rebels become tied to the land in an explicit way, "local topographical references construct a map of the realm that is in many ways at variance with the largely symbolic political geography of seats of baronial power, battlefields and territorial conquest that overlays them in the play."²⁶ However, the rebels are not the only ones to idealize the geography of England (or to see it as ethnically essential); in *Richard II* there are John of Gaunt's famous lines: "this sceptered isle/...This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,/...Bound in with the triumphant sea" (2.1.40,50,61). England, in this view, is necessarily a complete and coherent whole—ethnic divisions are irrelevant or, perhaps non-existent. According to O'Neill, "Gaunt's rhetorical manipulations, how his words are positioned to condemn King Richard and, perhaps less obviously, how his 'cartographic lyricism' is predicated on omissions and

²⁵ For the sake of brevity I am referring to the rebels of *I Henry IV* as Hotspur's Rebellion. Despite that all three of the leaders (Glendower, Mortimer, and Hotspur) propose to divide the island equally, it is only Hotspur who fights in the actual battle. Both Glendower and Mortimer remain in Wales.

²⁶ Alison Thorne, "There is History in All Men's Lives: reinventing history in 2 *Henry VI*," *Shakespeare's Histories and Counter-Histories*, Eds. Dermot Cavanagh, Stuart Hampton-Reeves, and Stephen Longstaffe, (Manchester: Manchester UP: 2011), 49-66. 57.

occlusions as the Welsh and Scots are elided in the fashioning of England as an island nation.”²⁷ Gaunt’s words are frequently contrasted with the rebels’ aims—where Gaunt strives for unity, the rebels desire segregation. What is equally notable is that both Gaunt and the rebels advocate homogeneity, albeit in diametrically opposite ways: Gaunt would have the Scots and the Welsh assimilated namelessly under the banner of England while the rebels would have the ethnic groups each under their own banners.

Each of the rebels becomes a representative of their indigenous stereotypes, and their interactions become the lens through which we can read the later four captains scene. As we are introduced to the Englishman, Hotspur, in *1 Henry IV*, he is the quintessential soldier with Henry IV even going so far as to desire Hostpur in place of his own son:

There thou mak’st me sad, and mak’st me sin
 In envy that my lord Northumberland
 Should be the father to so blest a son—
 A son who is the theme of honour’s tongue,
 Amongst a grove the very straightest plant,
 Who is sweet Fortune’s minion and her pride—
 Whilst I by looking on the praise of him
 See riot and dishonor stain the brow
 Of my young Harry. O, that it could be proved
 That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
 In cradle clothes our children where they lay,
 And called mine Percy, his Plantagenet!
 Then would I have his Harry, and he mine.

1.1.77-89

The play frequently comments on the boundlessness of Hotspur’s valor and the endlessness of his martial prowess; so much so, that *1 Henry IV* begins as an encomium of praise. Not only is Hotspur the exemplar of English military strength, but he also embodies the less commendable characteristics associated with English geohumoralism.

²⁷ O’Neill, 104

Hotspur's temper and his pride are prominently displayed throughout the play even providing the nickname, Hotspur, by which he is known. When King Henry IV demands Hotspur surrender his Scottish prisoners, Hotspur refuses unless the prisoners are used to ransom his brother-in-law, Mortimer. What was an easily reparable breach only widens as Hotspur tests King Henry IV's tenuous royal authority. Hotspur's refusal to cede the prisoners to the king and the subsequent rebellion are a direct result of the geohumoral characteristics associated with northerners: they "are defined by the heat and moisture of their complexions: they are voracious, fierce, slow-witted, and given to great bouts of drinking, eating, and fighting."²⁸ Hotspur's pride also becomes transparent in his exchanges with those around him: his inability to listen to others, to wait for his turn to speak, and his insistence on the superiority of his claims.

If Hotspur is the quintessential Englishman, then Glendower is the iconic Welshman. As the long prophesied Prince, Glendower successfully unified Wales against the English long enough to declare himself unequivocal leader of the Welsh. Historically, he led the Welsh into several battles before eventually being driven into the mountains; there he died in ignominy, although a Welsh legend promises his return. Mythically, Glendower is to the Welsh what Joan of Arc is to the French. More than any other figure in the history plays, Glendower embodies not only the people but also the geography of his land. He typifies Thorne's conflation of historical and legendary figures:

Matters of national importance were thus transformed in the process of being refracted through the lens of local concerns. Little care was taken to discriminate between historical and legendary figures; both were liable to be jumbled up in the popular imagination with home-grown heroes and their exploits with particular neighborhood landmarks.²⁹

²⁸ Floyd-Wilson, 36

²⁹ Thorne, 55.

As discussed in Chapter One, Wales was a land of magic, mystery, and forgetting, and Glendower personifies all three attributes associated with the geographic space. Like Glendower, Joan was ultimately tied to the land she personified; branded a witch and a promiscuous woman she was eventually burned at the stake. As mythical figures both Glendower and Joan of Arc suffer the same fate, at least in English cultural consciousness; “*Henry IV* describes the inevitable process by which real events are transmogrified into myth, and hence, national consciousness—or, more accurately, into the prevailing or dominant culture’s idea of national consciousness.”³⁰ The dominant consciousness is, of course, English, not Welsh, and our introduction to Glendower comes at the hands, and mouths, of the English.

Glendower is variously labeled by the English as “irregular and wild” (1.1.40), “that great magician” (1.3.82), “that devil” (2.5.337), and “he of Wales that gave Amamon the bastinado, and made Lucifer cuckold, and swore the devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook” (2.5.307-310). Furthermore, our introduction to the character of Glendower comes in the context of the abominable acts the Welshwomen have committed on their slain enemies.³¹ The play prepares the

³⁰ Derek Cohen, “History and Nation in *Richard II* and *Henry IV*,” *Studies in English Literature: 1500-1900* 42, no. 2 (Spring 2002), 293-315. 301.

³¹ A thousand of [Mortimer’s] people butchered,
 Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,
 Such beastly shameless transformation,
 By those Welshwoman done as may not be
 Without much shame retold or spoken of.

1.1.41-6

Although the text of the play does not specify the abuses of the Welshwoman, Shakespeare’s *Chronicle* sources did. The shameless transformation is glossed by the Norton editors as follows:

Holinshed’s *1587 Chronicles*, one of Shakespeare’s sources, says the Welsh women’s acts on this occasion were too shameful to relate, but Abraham Fleming in the same edition of the *Chronicles* includes an account of another battle in which Welsh women cut off the sexual organs and the noses

audience for the appearance of an uncivilized savage: bloodthirsty with loyalties that are sold to whichever ally provides a fight against the English—an image which should recollect Cade and his grisly rebellion. Yet, when faced with the actual person of Glendower, “the revelation that Glendower is radically different from earlier English descriptions of him both points up cultural astigmatism and invites us to reconsider our sources of information and the uses to which the English, in their own political negotiations, put the Welsh.”³² Glendower attempts to elide the divisions between the Welsh and the English; as both an English-educated leader and an iconic Welshman, he is composed of contradictions. These contradictions become the lens through which Welshness is read and identified. Kermode observes the tenuous balance between England and its most proximate neighbor, “Welshness is the prime example of the alien that is inevitably confused, revealed, and requires excursion, negotiation across the borders, and even alteration of the previously conceived self to achieve a conception and display of a powerful concept of ‘Englishness’.”³³ Glendower is the illustration of Kermode’s statement, as the best-known Welshman he becomes the projection of a confused national identity (both for the English and the Welsh).

Intriguingly, Glendower is not confused about his national identity; despite being educated in the English court, he is unequivocally Welsh. Glendower views himself as the manifestation of the Welsh nation. As discussed in Chapter One, Wales is the site of magical and mythical origins. The home of the original Britons, Wales is simultaneously more native and more foreign to the “sceptered isle” than England,

of conquered enemies and put them, respectively, in the mouths and anuses of these enemies.

³² Allison M. Outland, “‘Eat a Leek’: Welsh Corrections, English Conditions, and British Cultural Communion,” *This England, That Shakespeare*, ed. Willy Maley and Margaret Tudeau-Clayon (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 87-104. 90.

³³ Kermode, 85.

making the Welsh leader, Glendower, the embodiment of this supposed difference.

Glendower responds to his English allies through appealing to his Welsh strengths:

At my nativity
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning crests; and at my birth
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shaked like a coward.

3.1.12-16

The signs surrounding Glendower's birth are necessarily supernatural and extraordinary, and in the context of Welsh cultural consciousness mark Glendower as remarkable. Although Hotspur repeatedly refuses to understand, "Glendower's boasts are not merely arrogant utterings; his repetitions alone stress the mystery surrounding his birth, and they characterize the faith the Welsh have in him. Leader and prophet, Glendower embodies the medieval belief in prophecy which the Tudors themselves held."³⁴ The signs that accompany Glendower's birth are loaded signifiers for the Welsh, while they remain empty signifiers for the English.

Hotspur repeatedly declares the signs bear no special meaning, first attributing them solely to coincidence and then simply referring to them as absurd. Glendower's persistence in making his signs understood forces Hotspur to eventually declare, "No man speaks better Welsh" (3.1.49). Glendower has not been speaking Welsh, and despite being in a scene in which foreign language will be spoken, he is, for the moment, indubitably an English speaker as he continues to reiterate his English education. Glendower's appeal to the supernatural circumstances surrounding his birth is a coherent and understandable claim given his Welsh heritage; yet for the English Hotspur, it is necessarily incomprehensible. Hotspur is seeking English signs, and he refuses to *decipher* the Welsh ones. Despite Glendower's erudite and well-spoken verse, Glendower continues to insist on legitimacy using his Welsh legacy.

³⁴ Lloyd, 6.

Hotspur, as an Englishman, cannot translate and the two fail to linguistically reconcile.

Hotspur's inability to incorporate Glendower's assertions may also be a consequence of his geohumoral inheritance

Hotspur's choleric motives engender his linguistic habits. Ambitious hope breeds tropes of exaggeration, especially self-preening hyperbole ("the mailed Mars shall on his altar sit [IV.i.116]) and surging, loquacious fantasies ("it were an easy leap/To pluck bright honor..." [I.iii.201-02]). Impatient anger provokes broken syntax, interjected exclamations, indecorous comparisons, and subversion of others' hyperbole (Glendower's boasts, Vernon's praise of Hal: III.i, IV.i, V.ii).³⁵

Hotspur is bound within his identity as Englishman, and, stereotypical though he may be, to admit signification of Glendower's signs would be to discount some of his Englishness. Moreover, it would admit the proximity of English and Welsh heritage on Welsh terms. As discussed in Chapter One, Wales proved to be a difficult arena for the English to occupy. As the indigenous Britons, the Welsh were the original inheritors to the island; the English, the heirs of the Norman invasion, both required Welsh support and assimilation to establish themselves as legitimate natives of the isle. In order to accept Welsh support (and potentially assimilation), it must be encountered on English terms, and the terms Glendower provides through his insistence on authority using Welsh signs are simply unacceptable for the English Hotspur.

Hotspur's failure is more than a mere semiotic disconnection between two peoples. His failure to acknowledge Glendower carries the beginnings of his cultural critique: the unheard and misunderstood Welsh stand in stark contrast to the heard and understood English. As Edward I's Conquest in 1282 proved, at least to the English, Wales was under the control of the English and under the influence of their

³⁵ Robert L. Reid, "Humoral Psychology in Shakespeare's *Henriad*." 479.

crown. The Acts of Union systematically attempted to silence the Welsh language and Welsh culture placing Hotspur in the decided position of colonialist—speech is only understood when spoken on his terms. Similarly, Hotspur’s position is one of power, his privileged language of access enables him to deny access and comprehension to Glendower’s English. Glendower’s failed attempts at boasting for legitimacy go unnoticed because Hotspur does not need to understand Glendower; it is Glendower who must understand him. Hotspur’s eventual declaration, “no man speaks better Welsh” suggests the inability of the two peoples to communicate and Glendower’s need to alter his communications in order to appeal to Hotspur (3.1.48).

The diametrically opposed languages continue throughout the scene: ignoring Hotspur’s persistent and derisive commentary, Glendower pursues his supernatural narrative insisting upon his mystical abilities while Hotspur continues to deny their existence. As the rebels are meeting to discuss the division of England following their victorious rebellion the importance of setting is again important, “Walls were commonly imagined in Shakespeare and elsewhere as physical, psychological, and magical markers, enclosures, and protectors of personal, racial, and national identity as much as they were constructions of mud, brick, or stone.”³⁶ The walls, though literal, encompass each area Kermode touches in this quotation. Hotspur has constructed linguistic walls between himself and Glendower, even as they are discussing the physical boundaries that will divide the realm once they each become sovereigns in their own right. Read within the context of the oft discussed “sceptered isle” speech, the rebels are attempting the unthinkable through dividing the realm into three pieces. What is supposed to be a unified whole will, under the rebels, become three distinct and presumably weaker units. That the divisions will fall along the same

³⁶ Kermode, 98.

boundaries as the elided members of Gaunt's sceptered isle (remember Gaunt includes neither Scotland nor Wales) is frequently seen as incidental rather than the overt manifestation of underlying English belief. Still, the rebels go further in erecting their metaphorical walls as the inherent divisions among them conspicuously appear during arguments about how the physical divisions of the land may be changed, by whom, and by how much.

Hotspur's inability to accept Glendower as an equal, linguistically or otherwise, becomes apparent over a heated argument surrounding the movement of the River Trent. As Hotspur encourages Glendower to voice his objections in Welsh ("Speak it in Welsh" 3.1.116), the Welshman finally asserts his ability to "speak English...as well as you" (3.1.118). Once again, Hotspur is able to understand what Glendower is saying, but he refuses to understand; instead, he would prefer the wall of language between them. When Glendower attests to his linguistic proficiency in English he is not merely reinforcing his lexical dexterity:

I can speak English, lord, as well as you,
 For I was trained up in the English court,
 Where, being but young, I framed to the harp
 Many an English ditty lovely well
 And gave the tongue a helpful ornament—
 A virtue that was never seen in you.

3.1.118-123

Glendower uses his bilingualism to emphasize his education, not only speaking English but having been raised at the English court. Glendower's education challenges the definition of the civilized. As Kermode says, "Glendower sees bilingual prowess as essential for him to be part of English society, and that was the threat, that he *could* speak English as well as an Englishman—he could masquerade as an English native."³⁷ Glendower's education and subsequent rebellion combined

³⁷ Kermode, 10-11.

with his status as indigenous Briton radically challenge and alter English identity. If Glendower can be as English (or potentially more English) than Hotspur, the epitome of English masculinity, then what remains for the supposedly legitimate English King Henry IV?

When Glendower includes English songs in his argument for his acceptability as Hotspur's equal he does so again on Welsh terms. As discussed in Chapter One, the Welsh prided themselves on their bardic tradition and memorial origins, a history they deemed superior to the English insistence on written history. Glendower is not only affirming that he is capable of participating in English court life, but that he can improve it. In so doing, Glendower awakes English anxieties regarding the foreigner; in speaking both English and Welsh Glendower is challenging the nascent English empire. "Empires, of course, traditionally need to keep the barbarians and their languages at bay, but the problem for England...was defining the barbarian."³⁸ In this context, Hotspur's immediate response to Glendower's declaration about his poetic skills becomes the logical statement of his socio-cultural identity:

Marry, and I am glad of it, with all my heart.
 I had rather be a kitten and cry 'mew'
 Than one of those same metre ballad-mongers.
 I had rather hear a brazen can'stick turned
 Or a dry wheel grate on the axle-tree,
 And that would set my teeth nothing on edge,
 Nothing so much as mincing poetry.
 'Tis like the forced gait of a shuffling nag.

3.1.124-131

Glendower's charge that Hotspur has failed to give "the tongue a helpful ornament" faces the same dilemma as his earlier insistence on the supernatural signs surrounding his birth. Within the schema of English masculinity Hotspur cannot claim proficiency in ballads without the threat of emasculation. Hotspur's masculinity and martial

³⁸ Dillon, 141.

prowess are predicated on his inability to assimilate and his difference from the Welsh; therefore, accepting Glendower's boasts becomes untenable.

For Hotspur poetry and music lack beauty regardless of whether they have English or Welsh origins, but Hotspur also argues both poetry and music are incapable of finding any. Hotspur's objection is not simply that poetry is not beautiful; it is that poetry is the wrong type of beautiful. Through rejecting the songs Glendower values, Hotspur is attempting to reassert the dominance of the English over that of the Welsh; while the Welsh are writing poems, the English are fighting wars. Hotspur's response to Glendower's ability to speak English is therefore not merely a repudiation of Glendower's ability to be understood but also of Glendower's essential Welshness. Hotspur's remark censures Glendower's Welshness and his manhood; despite Glendower's claims of equality (and potentially even superiority) Hotspur repeatedly frustrates and denies these assertions. Yet, it is in the person of Glendower that the play complicates the archetypal notions of masculinity, "Shakespeare's plays give imaginative expression to one of the great controlling narratives of Renaissance culture, namely, the power of the arts of civilization to restrain and order the barbarous passions of our fallen nature."³⁹ In so doing, Glendower makes a compelling argument for being more English and more civilized than Hotspur.

The boundary between the Welsh and the English illustrated so visibly in the characters of Glendower and Hotspur finds no easy solution. "Although Hotspur and Glyndwr bury their differences for the sake of political expediency, their acrimonious encounter suggest no easy possibility of *rapprochement* between English and Welsh

³⁹ Wells, 87.

ways of understanding truth, nation, and history.”⁴⁰ While we know the tenuous alliance between the rebels falls apart at the critical moment of battle, their relationship speaks to the larger issues confronted by Schwyzer; despite the ends for which they work, the characters are unable to reconcile their competing perspectives. The tension between the ill-defined barbarous Welsh and civilized English comes to fruition in the character of Mortimer. As the tentatively identified legitimate heir to the English throne, he has also married the daughter of the Welsh Prince, Glendower; in so doing he is the personification of the liminal boundaries between the two peoples. In stark contrast to the supposedly hyper-masculine Hotspur, Mortimer relishes the Welsh language that Hotspur finds so repugnant. While Hotspur has labeled Welsh effeminate and inferior, Mortimer sees Welsh as his future. Mortimer, the noble with, arguably, the strongest claim to the English throne who has conveniently married into the leadership of the Welsh resistance, is the rebels’ alternative heir to the throne. Mortimer should take the place of Hotspur as the defender of English values and history; yet his inability and unwillingness to do so only serve to reinforce the futility of the rebel cause.

The disparity between Hotspur and Mortimer evidences itself in their approaches to the Welsh language. Where Hotspur resolutely refuses to understand even English words spoken as Welsh signifiers, Mortimer laments his inability to understand the language of his new bride

This is the deadly spite that angers me:
My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh.

3.1.88-9

Historically, the marriage between the English and their proximate neighbors, though not encouraged, was not uncommon. Mortimer’s marriage to Glendower’s daughter is

⁴⁰ Schwyzer, 47.

politically expedient especially since King Henry IV repeatedly refuses to pay the ransom demanded by Glendower. The play establishes in Act 1 that not only has Mortimer been taken captive by Glendower's Welshmen (in the same lines as the English soldiers were posthumously castrated), but also that Mortimer has abandoned his English pedigree in favor of the Welsh rebels. Mortimer has, so far as King Henry IV is concerned, gone irretrievably native. Mortimer's desire to understand his wife's language is symptomatic of his place in the rebellion; "Linguistic and sartorial conformity becomes an outward sign of obedience and, crucially, a visible indication of a successful conquest."⁴¹ Mortimer's hunger for Welsh is not only a denial of Englishness but it is an affirmation of the uncivilized Welsh. As the legitimate heir to the English throne Mortimer's preference for Wales speaks to an inherent blemish on Mortimer's character, "Through association with Wales, and specifically through contact with the Welsh language, Mortimer in *1 Henry IV* becomes barbarian."⁴² In the juxtaposition between English and Welsh, civilized and uncivilized, Mortimer is unable to elide the rupture between the two proximal spaces and is placed in direct contrast with the Northern Hotspur.

The play, however, complicates the dichotomy between the Welsh and the English. As previously discussed, in the character of Glendower the audience is confronted with a person who is radically different from the person the audience expects. But it is also through the character of his daughter that the play challenges any preconceived notions of Wales and the Welsh. Lady Mortimer occupies a unique place in the canon of early modern drama as a character unable to speak but also unable to be silenced. The text of *1 Henry IV* contains merely the shadows and stage directions of the Welsh words Lady Mortimer speaks, since none of her lines appear

⁴¹ O'Neill, 34.

⁴² Lloyd, 13.

in print. Lady Mortimer is dependent upon Glendower to provide a translation of her words, just as Mortimer and the audience are dependent upon Glendower for their meaning. Lady Mortimer's speech acts are inherently unsatisfactory; Glendower only provides a translation of Lady Mortimer's words once despite her four separate attempts to speak with her husband. As Lloyd argues, "The loquacious Lady Mortimer either repeats herself for emphasis or tries desperately to make herself understood without much success judging by the many times she speaks without her father's direct translation."⁴³ The translations Glendower does provide prove inadequate to the substance of Lady Mortimer's speech. Glendower warns that Lady Mortimer is "desperate," unable to be persuaded, and will "run mad" (3.1.194, 195, 207). Furthermore, Glendower imputes signification to the unknown words spoken by Lady Mortimer. Glendower fails to give a just translation of his daughter's words, rather he assigns them meaning and signification, dictating the ways in which Lord Mortimer understands his wife.

The serious impediments standing between Mortimer and Lady Mortimer become the focal point of this central scene between rebels. Not only do the Mortimers serve as a framework to examine the English Percies, but they also become a microcosm of the English project in Wales. The Mortimers' relationship over the course of the scene is transformed: "As the scene progresses language differences, rather than being a barrier between them, become the focal point of the courtship."⁴⁴ Despite being unable to speak Welsh, Mortimer still claims to be able to understand Lady Mortimer: "I understand thy looks" and similarly, "I understand thy kisses, and thou mine" (3.1.196, 200). Regardless of their ability to communicate via the spoken

⁴³ Lloyd, 28.

⁴⁴ Gillian E. Brennan, "The Cheese and the Welsh: foreigners in Elizabethan Literature," *Renaissance Studies* 8, no. 1 (March 1994), 40-64. 55.

word, Mortimer argues for a type of communication that transcends the legitimate *lingua franca* of Wales or England. In order to determine whether Mortimer or Lady Mortimer are effectively able to eclipse the cultural boundaries in which they are inscribed we must look at one of Foucault's central questions within the scope of this project, "For can I, in fact, say that I am this language that I speak."⁴⁵ Although this question is most radically illustrated in the marriage of the Mortimers, it finds expression in all of the characters inscribed within the rebel cause.

Lady Mortimer, more than any other character in Shakespeare's dramas, embodies the essential problem behind the conflation of language and identity. This was made physically evident in *2 Henry VI* as the Cade Rebellion made its progress from the margins of the English isle (and even beyond its liminal borders) to the heart of London, all the while advocating the legitimacy of the English language. Although more indirect, the Welsh rebels of *1 Henry IV* stage a similar protest; the language of the rebellion situates itself on the peripheries of the isle but still champions its own linguistic superiority. Lady Mortimer's inability to speak English therefore marks her as unquestionably foreign and unquestionably Welsh.

But I will never be a truant, love,
 Till I have learnt thy language, for thy tongue
 Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly panned,
 Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower
 With ravishing division, to her lute
 3.1.202-206

Mortimer's desire to learn Welsh aligns him unequivocally with Welshness and the Welsh cause (including its feminizing "ditties highly panned"). Mortimer has variously been understood as an emasculated Englishman similar to those who fell in

⁴⁵ Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things*. 324.

the battle during which he was captured,⁴⁶ or the hidden Tudor ancestor kept immaculate from the civil discord the reign of Bolingbroke presaged:

Associating Glendower's realm and his daughter's Anglo-Welsh marriage with that hugely significant Tudor match constructs Wales in somewhat different terms: Mortimer remains enchanted and removed from the fray, but rather than a trap, Wales functions as a repository for the honorable British heritage that the Tudor dynasty came to invoke.⁴⁷

As will be discussed in the following chapter, Henry V claims a Welsh heritage that was neither historical nor accurate; but it was one that corresponded with Tudor claims to ancestry, origins, and legitimacy. With this unhistorical claim, the history plays emphatically recall a Welsh heritage, and while it may find victorious connotations in the person of Henry V, in the person of Mortimer *1 Henry IV* challenges the audience to reevaluate the placement of Wales and Tudor legitimacy.

Mortimer's desire for Welsh, in all its forms, is potentially understandable when placed within the magical context of Wales. Mortimer has been enchanted, enticed, and finally entrapped by the Welsh marches, where he is enmeshed in the stereotypes and projections surrounding Glendower. "It seems that the playgoers would have easily believed in the Welsh wizard's power to seduce English victims, a power frequently associated with feminine seduction of nationally defined Wales."⁴⁸ According to this explanation, Mortimer's defection from England (and his legitimate claim to the throne) is placed in a framework of Welshness where Englishness naturally assimilates to the foreign. Mortimer's linguistic emasculation, noticeable through his repeated promises to learn Welsh, becomes a political emasculation as well. In aligning himself with Welsh, Mortimer is discounting the all-consuming project of legitimizing English so prevalent in Renaissance England. The

⁴⁶ Lloyd, 13.

⁴⁷ Outland, 91.

⁴⁸ Kermode, 105.

Acts of Union, aimed at eradicating the Welsh language and installing English as the language of privilege and access, are rejected by Mortimer in his amorous declarations to his new wife. Similarly Mortimer's paeans of praise about the Welsh language in general and his wife's voice in particular only serve as means through which English is delegitimized: "At a time when the English language itself was looking for ways to make it a viable language for literature, Mortimer's description is significant. In it he aligns *Welsh* not English with Latin and Greek."⁴⁹ In labeling Welsh as "sweet as ditties highly penned," Mortimer's infatuation with his wife challenges the English project of establishing their language as a recognizable and cogent language of the nation through his seemingly laughable amorous exaggerations. The play thus dramatizes the opposite effect of the Cade Rebellion; when the Cade rebels executed those who spoke French for failing to be sufficiently English, Glendower's rebels eschew monoglot English in favor of bilingualism. For both rebellions, language becomes a site and source from which to demonstrate dissatisfaction with the crown.

Ultimately, Welsh fails to become a comprehensive power on the English stage. Lady Mortimer's song briefly tames Hotspur's headstrong heart, but he remains the martial Englishman who must reject the denigrating and effeminizing effects of Lady Mortimer's song. Lady Mortimer is necessarily relegated to the forbidden margins of the English project: "Shakespeare's dramas are deemed to indulge unruly speakers only to silence them in the interests of elaborating an obsessive, if sometimes equivocal, fascination with monarchic power."⁵⁰ Lady Mortimer's speech is quite literally silenced on the stage, although she continues to speak with a compulsive need to be understood. Lady Mortimer is the definitive embodiment of

⁴⁹ Lloyd, 40.

⁵⁰ Cavanagh, 7.

the unruly speaker through her monolingual Welsh status and her linguistic “enchantment” of Mortimer. Despite the interference of Glendower, who seeks to translate her unknowable words, Lady Mortimer suffers the same fate as the anonymous Welsh women who desecrate the bodies of the fallen English soldiers at the opening of *1 Henry IV* (1.1.45-46).

The interlude with the rebels attests to their liminal foreignness accentuated by the foreign language of the scene. Despite Hotspur’s oft proclaimed masculinity and Glendower’s perplexing English education, the rebels must convene at the boundaries of England with the expectation of penetrating to the center and defining themselves as belonging to the isle. From the outset the scene is “concerned with the translation of borders, with defining and distinguishing what is foreign, and with integrating what may have been alienated (aristocratic factions, other monarchical candidates, and the ‘rebellious’ Welsh) into a secure English polity.”⁵¹ The rebels’ decision to split England and the subsequent collapse of devising adequate borders, Lady Mortimer’s song, Mortimer’s renunciation of English, and Hotspur’s refusal to participate all support this reading. Lady Mortimer’s foreign language becomes the focal point in this discussion because it is the most conspicuous moment of difference. Lady Mortimer stands in direct opposition to English Hotspur, as Lloyd argues: “For Hotspur...foreign language can be ignored, and with it, foreign speakers and their culture as a whole.”⁵² Although Hotspur is enchanted for as long as Lady Mortimer continues to sing, once she has finished the song is both literally and figuratively broken. Hotspur will go to battle alone, the Welsh will remain forgotten behind the memories the English relentlessly wanted to destroy and control. Lady Mortimer is only understood through the language of the conquerors, she is as excised from the

⁵¹ Outland, 91.

⁵² Lloyd, 60.

play as the earlier Welsh women and so provides little resolution to Spivak's key question: "Are those who act and *struggle* mute, as opposed to those who act and *speak*?"⁵³

French and *Henry V*

Henry IV engages with foreign language briefly during the rebels' scene, and it serves in many ways as the framework through which the rest of the plays in the Henriad examine the interplay between legitimacy and language. *Henry V* challenges the boundaries of acceptable speech in a myriad of ways from the French words that populate various scenes to the dialects of the four captains. The most notable instance of foreign language in *Henry V* is the tutoring session between Princess Katherine and her maid Alice. The stand-alone scene develops many of the themes begun in Wales, but necessarily addresses its anxieties differently. However, this is not the only time French appears in *Henry V*: the French nobles curse before and during the Battle of Agincourt, and one rather unlucky French soldier appeals to Pistol's mercy, and offers his purse, using French. Like Katherine and Alice's bawdy translation scene, these lines carry comic effect, but they also serve to unite the characteristics of the French linking Alice with the Dauphin with the English Boy.

Pistol's brief exchange with the bewildered French soldier amidst the chaos of Agincourt linguistically mirrors the martial commotion on the battlefield. Both Pistol and the nameless French soldier are monoglot speakers incapable of independently reconciling their encounter. As thoroughly established throughout the final two plays of the second tetralogy, Pistol, despite his brash bravado, is an unrepentant coward. Meanwhile, the unknowing French soldier must appeal to Pistol's mercy. As both

⁵³ Spivak, 257.

combatants confront each other they are necessarily powerless to be understood, their meaning obscured by their own languages. The opening exchange between Pistol and the French soldier illustrates this point

Pistol: Yield, cur!

French Soldier: Je sense que vous êtes le gentilhomme de bonne qualité.

Pistol: Qualité? 'Caleno custore me'!

Art thou a gentleman? What is thy name? Discuss.

French Soldier: O Seigneur Dieu!

4.4.1-6

Pistol, unable to understand what the soldier is saying, assumes the placement of the soldier's words have deliberate meaning rather than seeing the meaning of the words themselves. Pistol's repetition of "qualité" and his erroneous understanding of "Seigneur Dieu" are issues of grammar not simply signification. Pistol's erroneous interpretation conflates the French Soldier's exclamation with an actual name placing the French soldier in dire danger, and it is only the summons of the Boy that alters the situation.

The Boy occupies a similar position to Glendower: both inhabit the margins of the play and social legitimacy, both offer a critique of the English nationalist project, and both must stand as translators between two disparate and conflicting languages. The three characters in this scene exemplify each of the issues aligned with foreign language in the history plays and the problem of translation, the danger of assimilation, and the indelible mark of difference. Unlike Lady Mortimer whose loquacious speeches are only summarily translated by her father, Glendower, the Boy rapidly translates the full exchange between the two combatants. The pace of each scene corresponds with their location: Glendower's relatively detached approach to interpretation resembles his rival Welsh court, and the Boy's hasty translation corresponds with the

chaotic field of battle surrounding the momentarily paused opponents. The background of the battle alongside the halting, hasty pace of the scene emphasizes the disjunction between the two armies; however, the presence of French text in *Henry V* provides a platform for determining the accuracy of the Boy's translation. The veracity of the Boy's translation attests to the knowable and legitimate qualities of French as opposed to the unknowable and illegitimate Welsh. While Wales was the unquestionable location of English origin and dominance, the paradoxical site of France was tied to English concerns over their past and their future.

Although the unquestionably nationalistic jingoism of *Henry V* has suffered critique, *Henry V* is genuinely concerned with national and ethnic ideas, as well as England's place within the larger European conversation. Pistol, the Boy, and the French soldier demonstrate the obstacles facing any English and foreign reconciliation of the transforming international social and political spectrum. Both Pistol and the French soldier evince the ignorance of two antagonists and the antiquated program of monolingualism; meanwhile, the Boy's more progressive knowledge of both languages offers a harbinger of the prospective future. The Boy's bilingualism offers a less overtly subjugating representation of an English/French conquest in which both languages are reconciled and brought into mutual exchange. The hatred evinced by the Cade rebellion is moderated despite the chaos of the battlefield. The Boy's physical and symbolic location, on the victorious side of the Battle of Agincourt, provides a locus in the geographical complexity surrounding English discussions of nation and language. The Boy dramatizes the theoretical ability of the English to regain their French past, while making it uniquely their own.

Pistol, on the other hand, is unable to participate in the dual-tongued dialogue of the scene, and his ensuing malapropisms, though amusing, lead to troubling conclusions. Pistol immediately occupies the position of power: as the armed and triumphant combatant, the English language dominates the scene as it will ultimately dominate the play. As quoted above, Pistol mimics and misunderstands the French soldier's early attempts at communication, and the result of his initial imitation is to combine French with the refrain of a popular Irish ballad.⁵⁴ The conflation of the French and Irish languages fulfills the unresolved linguistic conquest which has been the project of the second tetralogy; though the superiority of English was undermined throughout *Richard II* particularly in Richard's radically unsuccessful Irish campaign, Pistol's synthesis of French and Irish resolves the defeats enacted at the outset of the second tetralogy.

It ought to come as no surprise that the nearly obsessive concern throughout the history plays with conquests (both domestic and foreign) parallels the obsessive concern of Elizabethan England. That England was defining its place within the European community, and also as an international influence, is merely repetition at this point, but it is still worth recalling as we continue. Much of England's apprehensions surrounding conquest dealt with their own long and relatively ignominious history, "Having been conquered so entirely by the Romans and then reconquered by the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans, English writers betray a fear (*pace* Boece) that the only thing they have inherited from their earliest ancestors is the tendency to degenerate from their nature and kind."⁵⁵ Floyd-Wilson discusses the consequences of conquest within the context of geohumoralism and the subsequent threat to a particular racial identity. A further threat to English national identity is the

⁵⁴ "*Qualite? 'Caleno custore me'!*" (4.4.4)

⁵⁵ Floyd-Wilson, 57.

successive deterioration of an authentic national identity with each consecutive invasion. As the English were adulterated by the varying peoples possessing their land the indigenous (and not so indigenous) peoples were obliged to postulate a cohesive narrative of their history. It is within this framework that the necessary origin myth, simultaneously including and excluding the Welsh, assembles itself. The history plays themselves become the final iteration of a historical narrative begun hundreds of years before, “In a sense, Britain’s Trojan lineage and the emergent myth of Anglo-Saxon purity satisfied the same desire—the longing for a narrative that sustained and fixed English identity over time.”⁵⁶

Richard II begins the second tetralogy as a failed conquest: King Richard loses the English army in Ireland, returning defeated to discover he has also lost his own kingdom. *Henry V* becomes the resolution of the promise begun in *Richard II*; *Henry V* illustrates the viable and valuable conquest of France by the English, retaking the Norman Conquest and rewriting it as an English myth. The second tetralogy distinguishes itself as the conclusion of this long and arduous history, but from a notably English perspective. These “English representations of France are thus traversed by a fundamental ambivalence nourished by a nostalgia for England’s French past and a rejection of the French conquest of England.”⁵⁷ As is frequently noted, *Henry V* is the culmination of the English national project. Not only is *Henry V* the realization of victorious French conquests (*Henry V* is the only Shakespearean history to dramatize a victory abroad: the first tetralogy is plagued by defeats in France and internecine wars, while the second tetralogy features similar rebellions and an even more damaging defeat in Ireland), but it is the apotheosis of England’s past. Staged in the midst of civil and international turmoil in which England governed

⁵⁶ Floyd-Wilson, 48.

⁵⁷ Mayer, *Representing France*. 25.

less territory than any time since the Norman Conquest, the uncertainty of France and England in the international sphere necessarily complicated the relatively simple encounter between Pistol and the French soldier. Mayer argues, “It should now be obvious that England’s political withdrawal from France was certainly not the end of the story. On the contrary, I argue that it is precisely this story of loss which may account for England’s paradoxical relationship with France.”⁵⁸ Both the Boy and Pistol depict this paradoxical relationship; the Boy in his attempts to reconcile the warring languages, and Pistol in his attempts to dominate and conquer the opposing language.

As the scene progresses, Pistol’s hostility is mollified by the Boy’s expeditious translation and the promise of a significant ransom. However, Pistol never fully abandons the antagonistic persona he has cultivated during the course of the two plays in which he appears. Pistol goes on to threaten the French soldier with death several times as well as other various ill-defined threats (“I’ll fer him, and fir him, and ferret him” 4.4.28-29). Strikingly, the sole moment in which Pistol appears to accurately discern the meaning of the French soldier is the phrase “cut your throat,” (*couper votre gorge*). Given Pistol’s dramatic history as the most volatile of the Eastcheap companions, his subsequent knowledge of violent French phrases should scarcely be surprising (even if Pistol’s rancor is largely superficial). Pistol’s comprehension of the solitary French phrase offers a potential route for a broad reconciliation of the two languages; albeit, a reconciliation centered on violence, conquest, and subjugation rather than a mutual exchange. The abbreviated translations scene in the midst of the Battle of Agincourt offer an abridged reading of the more complex translation scenes between Katherine, Alice, and, eventually, King Henry.

⁵⁸ Mayer, *Ironies of Babel*. 127.

The language lesson between the French Princess Katherine and her servant, Alice, is the only scene in Shakespeare's works to occur solely in a foreign language. Although foreign languages and dialects feature in the second tetralogy, even Lady Mortimer's famous Welsh song is simply an addition to an already symbolically laden encounter. Likewise, while the necessity of the scene in which the Welsh song appears is unquestionable, the necessity of the French language lesson is less pronounced. Coming on the heels of the successful siege of Harfleur, most notably after King Henry's threats of rape and pillage if the town refused to yield, the language lesson becomes emblematic of the, potentially willing, subjugation of the French. This subjugation is a two-part process in which the language lesson is the first step and the later courtship scene is the second. However, what the first step accomplishes is more than simply constructing the foundation for the final scene of a national epic, it also serves to alienate the audience. As Kermode argues, "History plays emphasize the empathetic journey, one that moves beyond touching up against and thereby contrasting the self with the alien and instead has the English subject put himself or herself *in the place of* the alien to assess similarity and difference."⁵⁹ According to Kermode, history plays are concerned with defining others (and English), but the moments of identification *with* the other are less clear especially since the literal moments, as seen during the language lesson and the song in Welsh, are relatively few.

The paradoxical identification through alienation at work in the language lesson also serves to reinforce English superiority. Katherine's language lesson is a simple recitation of body parts: the hand, fingers, nails, and arm. As Mayer argues, "Interestingly, in *Henry V*, Shakespeare confronts his audiences directly with this

⁵⁹ Kermode, 86.

sense of loss and allows them to experience for themselves what it means to be a stranger in a strange land.”⁶⁰ Where Lady Mortimer’s song enabled the audience to participate in the magic and exotic Welsh language within the sheltered confines of the theatre, the Princess’s language lesson immerses the audience within a world of difference that nevertheless remains accessible. While the point of the Welsh song is to highlight the inextricable and irreconcilable otherness of the Welsh people, that is not the goal of language lesson, where both the content and the placement of the scene denies either of the speakers a legitimate place within the context of the play. As Prince Katherine reconciles herself to her probable future in a foreign land as the English queen, she does so through an attempt at learning English. Calling her servant, Alice, who has spent time in England (3.4.1), Princess Katherine says, “il faut que j’apprenne à parler” (3.4.4-5). Despite the necessity Katherine finds herself placed under to learn the English language, the entirety of her lesson is in French, forcing the English audience into the position of outside observer.

While it is likely that most of the original audience would at least have been familiar with French, the unease any audience would feel at being placed deliberately outside the established language of the play is assuaged by the content of the lesson. As Katherine proceeds to label various body parts in both English and French, the scene quickly degenerates into physical, bawdy humor. The relatively simple humor of the scene serves to include the audience in what would otherwise be a radically alienating experience. Yet, the scene goes even further: “the fact, furthermore, that the scene gets its laughs by outraging the modesty of a foreign princess, by seeming to compromise her in forcing her to utter English words that sound unspeakable to her

⁶⁰ Mayers, “Babel,” 130.

ears, positions her as unwillingly overcome, even violated by English.”⁶¹ Katherine’s motivation behind beginning her language lesson is the literal conquest of France by England as dramatized only a scene earlier, but her language lesson becomes another mode through which England is able to dominate its neighbor. Dillon goes on to argue, “The English ‘obscurity’ of this scene is not just a dirty joke extraneous to the main business of the play but part of a project to emphasize English as masculine, robust, direct, plain-dealing, while Frenchness becomes correspondingly (and humiliatingly) feminized.”⁶² Like the Welsh song in *1 Henry IV*, Katherine’s language lesson appears to be an incidental joke that is simply a plot addendum; it also serves to delineate the differences between the English and the peoples around them. As the French language is shown to match those who speak it, so too does Welsh, and even more English; “If the spirit of each nation lives in its native tongue, the language itself will not merely represent but must partake of the national character.”⁶³ The effeminizing effects of France (and the French language) are repeatedly portrayed, and will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter.

The French men who inhabit *Henry V* rarely use dialect, and only the occasional French phrase escapes their lips; regardless, the male French soldiers suffer the same fate as the female Katherine and her maid. Unlike the other French women this work has investigated, Katherine must eventually be assimilated into the English national narrative. Where Joan of Arc, Queen Isabella, and Margaret of Anjou were ultimately branded villains, Katherine’s destiny is to become the emblem of English expansion and conquest. She is both radically other, but she also must

⁶¹ Dillon, 179.

⁶² *Ibid.* 180.

⁶³ David Steinsaltz, “The Politics of French Language in Shakespeare’s History Plays,” *Studies in English Literature: 1500-1900* 42, no. 2 (Spring 2002), 317-334. 324.

become intrinsically English. Like the other French women who were fundamentally vilified, Katherine is essentially non-man and therefore outside the legitimate arena of politics and warfare. However, it is precisely this illegitimate space, the space of the language lesson, which briefly threatens to destabilize the grandiose project which will culminate in the Battle of Agincourt.

Still, what is perhaps most striking is Katherine's reclassification of her body in distinctly English terms. In Katherine's attempts to redefine herself, her body, and her language; the audience is once again confronted with Foucault's necessary question: "For can I, in fact, say that I am this language that I speak?"⁶⁴ Although Katherine is speaking solely French, she does so with a recognition that she can no longer be exclusively French. Katherine's final scene, her courtship with King Henry, consummates Katherine's linguistic identification as she struggles with her future as England's queen and her future as an English speaker. As has happened repeatedly in the second tetralogy, foreign speakers are denied access or legitimacy, and they are ultimately silenced in favour of an enterprise of nation building that must confine their difference. Although Katherine is voiced on stage, and we have a record of the words she spoke—not merely stage directions, she is still effectively confined and silenced in the narrative of the play. Her scene is arguably extraneous, her language obscure, her meaning known only through bawdy gestures; Katherine is kept from conveying any necessary information. Hillman records the repeated occurrences of this silencing throughout *Henry V*, "The French principals pervasively suffer from a virtual inability to speak—from their initial recourse to tennis balls, to their degrading chatter before the battle, to their broken English."⁶⁵ Although not all of the French fit within this schema, the French Princess, interestingly enough, does not suffer from a

⁶⁴ Foucault, 324

⁶⁵ Hillman, 16.

literal inability to speak, but rather, she suffers from an inability to be understood. Like Lady Mortimer, who was relegated to stage directions and a song, Princess Katherine is relegated to an incidental scene between two of the most captivating scenes, and the only battles, within the play.

The placement of Katherine's scene, its content, and the ability of the audience to understand their immersion in the foreign language allow the audience a space through which to conquer France on their own. The chorus has already encouraged the audience to

Grapple your minds to sternage of this navy,
 And leave your England as dead midnight still,
 Guarded with grandsires, babies and old women,
 Either past or not arrived to pith and puissance.
 For who is he, whose chin is but enriched
 With one appearing hair, that will not follow
 These culled and choice-drawn cavaliers to France?

3.0.18-24

Despite the audience's inability to directly participate in King Henry's military progress through France, they are still invited to conquer France through the linguistic conquest of Katherine's language lesson. The audience is capable of interpreting the words Katherine is speaking and, more importantly, the audience is capable of laughing at their interpretations. Katherine's bawdy puns and feminine sensibilities permit the audience a patronizing moment in which their purported indolence is rewarded. Instead of feeling remiss for not participating in the various English campaigns of the moment (of which the Irish Wars figured significantly), the Elizabethan audience was able to conquer at least one Frenchwoman from within the confines of the wooden O. Mayer laments the treatment of Katherine (and, indeed, the treatment of all non-English), "it is typical of this play that the so-called proper way

of speaking a language is denied.”⁶⁶ However, in order for the project of the reverse conquest to manifest itself hundreds of years later and without any peril, the non-English must be silenced. They must be kept from speaking. They must be kept from being understood. They must only be understood to partake in a homogeneous English polity of which the English speaking Glendower (but not his Welsh speaking daughter) is a part.

Even though the appearance of foreign language within the text of any play challenges the audience with a direct confrontation of the other, *Henry V*, ultimately, does not rehabilitate the foreign princess with her English audience. Likewise, Lady Mortimer’s song does not permit her access to the wider world, even within the rebels’ own scheme; and the lawyers of *2 Henry VI* are not reconciled to the growing dissatisfaction of the commoners. Foreign language is an intrinsically destabilizing element to the plays and the societies they seek to represent, and although they appear with remarkable frequency in the second tetralogy, they are closely controlled within the boundaries of the play. However, “instead of asking whether an inability to make semantic sense of a foreign language was a barrier to response, one might equally well ask whether a capacity to do so blocked other potential modes of response to an alien language.”⁶⁷ The control exerted by the play over the means through which each of the languages is understood (for Welsh it was within the definite context of magic through spirit flutes, and for French it is within the bawdy, feminine context of conquest), and it is this guidance that must challenge any reading of the foreign languages as a legitimate attempt to place the audience in the position of foreigner. The audience is protected from any true feeling of estrangement through the channels by which the play guides and guarantees understanding, eventually leading the

⁶⁶ Mayer, “Babel” 131.

⁶⁷ Dillon, 154.

audience to the conclusion that English is superior. Although the plays each present English as the undisputed champion, the dilemma of how to incorporate the conquered peoples is undertaken in the various dialects populating Renaissance historical drama.

Chapter Five

Foreign Phrases and English Words: The Use of Non-standard English as a Means of Identifying Belonging

The ‘foreignness’ of language is the nucleus of the untranslatable that goes beyond the transparency of subject matter.

- Homi K. Bhabha¹

Those who speak a foreign language are unquestionably understood as foreign, as was seen in Chapter Four; oftentimes such foreignness was compounded by geographic location (examined in Chapter One) and gender differences (as seen in Chapters Two and Three). The presumed expansion of England to encompass all the land contained within the island, and the immigration of foreigners into England, challenged the visible foreignness speaking a foreign language implied. That knowing a foreign language was a sign of potential subversion was demonstrated in the Cade Rebellion, and those who understood a foreign language were necessarily scrutinized. Chapter Five, however, turns to the problem of non-standard English. Those who speak neither the “King’s English” nor the actual foreign language of another country, are only partially assimilated into the English country. Those who reside in England, or in their appropriated territories must surrender their mother tongue in favor of that of the conquerors. Those who fail to sacrifice their native language, or those who are unable to do so are necessarily barred from participation in the English nation. However, these individuals were already members of either the English state or embryonic territories and England’s tenuous hold and understanding of both was dramatized in several of these plays. It is these anxieties that both *Henry V* and *James IV* examine, although their conclusions are drastically different. Shakespeare’s work focuses on the effects of non-standard English within the English nation, while

¹ Homi K. Bhabha, “DessemiNation” in *Nation and Narration* ed. Homi Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), 291-322. 318.

Greene's Scottish history examines the civilizing effects of standard English amongst those outside the traditional English polity. Both of these playwrights examine the consequences of non-standard English on the construction of the English nation though both do so from differing perspectives.

James IV and the Inclusivity of Empire

Greene's Scottish history *James IV* (1590) diverges from the strict definition of chronicle history play, aligning itself most closely with the pseudo-romance *Edward IV*.² Greene's departure from the typical chronicle history form (found most evidently in Shakespeare's histories) provides a certain amount of freedom otherwise denied by following chronicle sources. Cavanaugh defines *James IV* outside the scope of a chronicle history arguing, "The romance form of *James IV* distinguishes the expression of its political interests not their abandonment: the play refuses to allow chronicle material to contain its utopian imagining or to dilute its critique of kingship or myths of patriotic destiny."³ What Greene's formal move does, however, is to complicate the Elizabethan historiographic project through the introduction of a frame narrative and several imaginary characters. Intriguingly, it is within this imagined space that nation and inclusion are most thoroughly challenged by the play through the characters of Bohan (who appears exclusively in the frame narrative), and the tool villain, Jacques. Both Bohan and Jacques are separated from the other characters of the play both sartorially and linguistically, and both fulfill roles within the play that

² *James IV*, beyond its generic frustrations also offers a problem of coherence. The frame narrative between Bohan and Oberon appears to disintegrate as the play progresses, and many of the issues surrounding foreignness appear to fade into the background as well. However, despite the apparent lack of coherence throughout the text, *James IV* is unique amongst the history plays of the 1590s in its focus on a foreign monarch and its inclusion (at least at the beginning) of non-standard English. Harbage's *Annals* date *James IV* from 1590 (54-55).

³ Cavanaugh, 61.

lead to an innate instability. Unlike the foreignness depicted throughout Shakespeare's second tetralogy where difference is not unequivocally prohibited from acceptance, the liminal characters of Greene's work are allowed no such latitude. Bohan and Jacques are distinguished as necessarily different because reconciliation within the Scottish realm cannot be permitted.

As the first character who speaks on stage, Bohan is differentiated through the stage direction describing his appearance, "Bohan a Scot, attired like a ridstall man," and his language, "What wot I, or reck I that, whay guid man, I reck no friend, nor ay reck no foe..." (1.1.3).⁴ Billed as a Scottish history, the audience is primed for Bohan's conspicuous difference, but less so for the absence of difference characterizing the remainder of the Scottish principals. Bohan's unique place within *James IV* is only understood when placed in the context of the other Scots who inhabit James IV's court. Act One opens with a conference between the French and English kings concerning the marriage of the King of England's daughter, Ida, with James IV. Interestingly, neither King is differentiated linguistically or sartorially and it is telling that both speak English perfectly. Although Bohan is represented positively as a Scotsman, the titular head of the Scottish nation is not. Dialect, in this play, must then serve to differentiate characters along different boundaries than national identity. As Anderson puts it, "It is always a mistake to treat languages in the way that certain nationalist ideologues treat them—as *emblems* of nation-ness, like flags, customs, folk-dances, and the rest. The most important thing about language is its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect *particular*

⁴ Robert Greene, *The Scottish History of James IV, slaine at Flodden (1598)* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1994). EEBO. This version will be used for all following citations. The difficulty procuring a modernized, critical edition of Greene's *James IV* necessitated the use of the electronic original.

solidarities.”⁵ Anderson’s highly influential *Imagined Communities* largely restricts the scope of nationalist discussion to the eighteenth century and afterwards; however, as mentioned in the Introduction, many of Anderson’s points may be applied to England in the late sixteenth century. Anderson’s work specifically deals with the problems of foreign language rather than the issues associated with any non-standard language; however, the principle of language as an identifying marker applies to both non-standard language and foreign languages. *James IV* utilizes dialect to identify those who are not allied with the state, and the absence of dialect from the principals of the play positions the play externally to any geographic region. In other words, although *James IV* is nominally a play in Scotland and about the Scottish court, the reality of the play is radically altered so the substantial location matters less than the themes discussed.

Although, in this context, Bohan’s marginal status within the frame narrative, peripheral to the main narrative, may appear to subvert his own role within the play, the actuality of his place within the frame narrative allows “Bohan to mediate everything we see. It is not that Greene has confused the categories of fiction and history, but that the history we see is a kind of fiction motivated by a strong authorial intention.”⁶ Compounded with the contorted genre conventions, Bohan’s intervention throughout the course of the play may provide a lens through which to see his linguistic difference. The lack of differentiation between the nobility inhabiting the Scottish court and the visiting English nobility when compared with Bohan’s definitive alterity permit a reading of presumed Scottish identity. Floyd-Wilson complicates this reading: “Intriguingly, the early modern practice of characterizing

⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 133.

⁶ Cavanaugh, 77.

the English as self-alienated corresponds with the Scottish geopolitical view of England as Britain's decadent 'southern' region, corrupted by its long history of subjugation and foreign corruption."⁷ The conflicts of the play thus arise not from an intrinsic Scottishness, but from an Englishness as viewed from the outside. Cavanaugh identifies the conflict of the play as stemming from monarchic intemperance, a value Floyd-Wilson argues the English identified as their own, but "the threat from monarchic intemperance in *James IV* does not observe national boundaries and it is depicted, in different ways, in the monarchies of both England and Scotland."⁸

Beyond Bohan's marginal position within the frame narrative, Bohan appears at the geographic margins of Scotland, emerging from a tomb at the play's outset, and at the liminal boundaries of Scotland's social structure. Bohan's repeated explanation over his frustrated hopes in court are meant to be sufficient for his self-imposed exile from Scotland:

Bohan: I was borne a gentleman of the best bloud in all *Scotland*, except the king, when time brought me to age, and death tooke my parents, I became a Courtier, where though ay list not praise my selfe, ay engraved the memory of *Boughton* on the skin-coate of some of them, and reveld with the proudest.

Oberon: But why living in such reputation, didst thou leave to be a Courtier?

Bohan: Because my pride was vanities, my expence losse, my reward faire words and large promises, & my hopes spilt, for that after many yeares service, one outran me, and what the deelee should I then do there. No no, flattering knaves that can cog and prate fastest, speede best in the court.

1.1.26-33

Bohan's intemperance is understood to be the very reason he abandoned the court, and it also becomes the central source of strife for the duration of the play. The English and Scottish nobles require no further differentiation because it is their common vice Bohan rails against. David Baker explains this lack of differentiation:

⁷ Floyd-Wilson, 56.

⁸ Cavanaugh, 71.

“colonial authority imposes a schema of essentialist categories on an apparently undifferentiated populace, and insists that the differences thus created inhere in the natives themselves.”⁹ Bohan and the Scots can scarcely be considered a “colonial authority”; yet, it is not the Scots themselves who must be responsible for the authority of the play. As an English history/romance play, Bohan, a stock figure, may represent the intemperance associated with Scotland while the indistinguishable Scottish and English nobles may embody the consequences associated with such intemperance.

The conflation of the Scottish and English nobles within the text of *James IV* permits the “fetishization of the Other lead[ing] to the application of certain predetermined traits to a people or a culture.”¹⁰ In failing to adequately distinguish the ethnic Scottish Other beyond the malcontent, Bohan, the play allows a similarity encompassing both Scottish and English in which the predetermined traits of the Other may be applied to people within any culture. The vice of intemperance that threatens the stability of the Scottish court and the autonomy of the Scottish government can be seen in characters who look and sound no different than their English counterparts—the predetermined traits of the Scottish (traits that were feared in the English¹¹) become identifiers of the Other that can be seen within the self. Baker argues, “the very attempt to seal the border against the Other reveals that the Other is already within.”¹² This allows a conflation of the the notions that the Other is within the self and within the nation; sealing the self from foreign traits becomes aligned with the sealing of the national border against the foreigner. The threat of the

⁹ David J. Baker, “‘Wilde harrissheman’: Colonialist Representation in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*” *English Literary Renaissance* 22, no. 1 (December 1992), 37-61. 39.

¹⁰ Mayer, Introduction, 24.

¹¹ See Floyd-Wilson’s early chapters for a discussion of English and Scythian and the fear that the English were no different from their Scythian epithet.

¹² Baker, 59.

Other already within the confines of England is further intensified as Bohan's linguistic identifiers dissolve throughout the course of the play.¹³ The final appearance of Bohan at the conclusion of Act Four is conspicuously different from the audience's first encounter with the Scottish malcontent. Where Bohan originally spoke a heavily accented prose, at the conclusion of Act Four Bohan speaks nearly perfect verse:

Else says that *Bohan* hath a barren skull,
 If better motions yet then any past,
 Do not more glee to make the fairie greet,
 But my small son made prittie handsome shift,
 To save the Queene his Mistresses by his speed.
 4.1.352-356

Bohan's linguistic evolution from scarcely understood malcontent to eloquent courtier ought not only to signal the development of Bohan's character and the transformation of Otherness. Cavanaugh's discussion of language within the larger context of early modern drama becomes useful here as Bohan's geographic location at the margins of Scottish society is indicated by his entrance from the tomb at the beginning of the play providing further evidence of the difficulty in knowing the boundaries of civil and uncivil speech.¹⁴ If the conflated courtiers suffer from intemperance and an inability to participate in civilized speech, then Bohan's elevated elocution at the conclusion of the play challenges the capacity of language to be a sign of civilizing speech.

While Bohan's liminal placement within the frame narrative and his relative authority as dictator of events permit a discussion of civil and uncivil speech in a novel environment, the conventional use of the tool villain, Jacques, provides a more

¹³ The apparently haphazard construction of *James IV* causes me to pause before attributing any intention on the text. However, it is at least striking that the play ceases to be aware of Bohan's difference

¹⁴ Cavanaugh, 78.

established discourse for both a discussion of the Other within and of England's own views on France. *James IV* does not dramatize the conquest of language, instead, it permits Jacques the freedom to move about the play as a stereotyped Frenchman. "Indeed, the mirror is one in which the English see their own reflection and become aware of their affinity with the French, and yet it is equally a mirror that reflects the confusion of France—an image that England fears and thus rejects."¹⁵ England's awareness of its own growing importance on the international stage combined with its recent interventions on the continent for the cause of the Protestant Reformation forced an appreciation of its own similarities with France.¹⁶ The nascent international awareness along with England and France's shared ancestry provided a lens through which the English frequently saw themselves. Although, nominally, *James IV* is set in Scotland, the conflation of the nobles' identities and their absence of identifying features permits *James IV* to be read as a potential extension of English geographic space. Since Jacques' presence in Scotland is overtly nationalized, his integration into the Scottish court is occluded and he must remain a French outsider.

Similarly Jacques' standing as tool villain and a necessary outsider to the Scottish court does little to encourage a reading in which Jacques would *choose* to remain in Scotland. Unlike Jamy, Macmorris, and Fluellen who all, to varying degrees, seek accommodation within England (or at least acceptance of their identities), Jacques proffers no such aspiration. Jacques' appointment in the play is made clear through his own heavily accented English:

Stabba the woman, per ma foy, monsigneur, me thrusta my weapon into her
belle, so me may be gard per le roy
Mee do your service.

¹⁵ Mayer, Introduction, 26.

¹⁶ As O'Neill says, "The increasing importance of Catholicism to the confederate cause, presented as a crusade with the tacit support of the papacy, burdened the war into a contest between Protestant England and Catholic Europe." (144).

But me no be hanged pur my labor.
3.1.185-88

Jacques oscillates between prose and verse, and his accented speech is clearly comical. Brennan argues this comic element situated within an essential understanding of dialect was the sole purpose of such language use, “but on the whole Elizabethan dramatists were fascinated with language as a source of humour and a facet of communication rather than as a badge of nationality.”¹⁷ I would contend that while language differences served a necessary comedic function (Fluellen would not be nearly as memorable if he was not unnecessarily verbose), they also operate to delineate the boundaries of the accepted and the acceptable. As the monarchs (both English and Scottish) confront each other, Bohan and Jacques become the means through which such confrontation can be dissolved. The history plays, “reveal the mythological nature of state ideology and simultaneously encourage us to share to some degree the moral and spiritual conflicts of Machiavellian rulers as they experience guilt over the crimes that they must commit in order to maintain the state.”¹⁸ The machinations of each of the rulers (James IV to murder Dorothea, and Henry VII to take revenge on James IV) are Machiavellian (particularly James IV who enlists a literal Frenchman for assistance), and so the appearance of the French Machiavel allows the audience to displace their sentiments on the tool villain as James IV transfers his guilt though enlisting the service of an assassin.

Although England and Scotland are largely conflated throughout the play, the final moralizing moments in which Dorothea quells her father’s evidently superior military are definitely English. However, the appearance of the French tool villain also serves to define Scotland as separate from England. Although the English would

¹⁷ Brennan, 56.

¹⁸ Mebane, 255.

be expected to recognize the ignorance of the Scottish by incorporating Jacques into their midst, there “was no ontology of the stranger, no essence of the alien Frenchman in England. There were only social strategies and government policies or attitudes at work at different moments in time.”¹⁹ Furthermore, Jacques’ own liminal position as comic figure in the less important Scottish court enhances England’s own position despite its nearly perpetual absence from the dramatic action. “Once again England is so idealized that she seems to lessen the merits of France, which is put on the list of European nations characterized by their Machiavellianism, like Spain and Italy.”²⁰ Jacques’ dialect identifies him as French and Machiavellian, and places him in direct opposition to the Anglicized Scottish court; however, James IV’s sordid attempt to assassinate his wife permits the English audience distance through which to enhance their own position in competition with both their northern and southern neighbors.

James IV can easily be read as a xenophobic tract warning of the intractability of the Scottish and the machinations of the French. Likewise, *James IV* is one of the few historical dramas to actively utilize Scotland as a focus for monarchic rule and Scottish identity. Cavanaugh claims “Tudor historical writing can certainly be mined for a rich seam of xenophobia in relation to Scotland understood as England’s barbarous and untrustworthy neighbor.”²¹ When coupled with Floyd-Wilson’s work on geohumoral theory and the projection of English ethnology on their northern neighbors, and the socio-cultural trauma associated with Mary, Queen of Scots’ execution, the anxieties apparent throughout *James IV* can be understood within their historical context. The conflation of the linguistic nuances of both the English and the

¹⁹ Mayer, Introduction, 28.

²⁰ Gilles Bertheau, “George Chapman’s French Tragedies, or Machiavelli Beyond the Mirror” in *Representing France and the French in Early Modern Drama*, ed. Jean-Christophe Mayer (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2008), 110-124.

118.

²¹ Cavanaugh, 72.

Scottish courts, and the subsequent pronounced markers of those outside either court, presume self-referentiality. Although the English king is victorious, and the English Princess acts as heroine, the non-existent differences between the two courts elide an easy reconciliation of the other v. nation trope that would otherwise be easily identifiable in Greene's play. Furthermore, Greene's work appears to imply that dialect is only suitable for a particular purpose (tool villain and malcontent), and when such a purpose is no longer required for the action of the play, the character may be rehabilitated into the action of the play without further interrogation. Although Greene's work challenges strict national boundaries and exaggerates national identifiers to hyperbole, the play also defies an easy dialectical reading in which the included and excluded are adequately labeled.

Shakespeare's work in *Henry V* is, perhaps, the most comprehensive investigation into linguistic foreignness found in any history play (and potentially any Elizabethan drama). The courtship scene enacts a verbal conquest and consummates the project of the much of the second tetralogy and certainly the final play, *Henry V*. The four captains, although each has his own motivations for participating in Harry's army, enact the various consequences of the English imperial project. *Henry V* does not provide an uncomplicated dramatization of the process or consequences of empire, and the very language through which it is enacted supports this claim. The captains, like the French soldiers, are reduced to the absurd on several occasions, but even the final scene in which Fluellen forces Pistol to eat the leek, a Welsh national symbol, does not leave the audience with the sensation that England has been unequivocally victorious. *Henry V* challenges the ability of any non-English individual to adequately assimilate regardless of outward appearance and outward action—although Fluellen is the most emphatically patriotic of any of Henry's

soldiers, he is still excluded from complete participation in England. Despite the inability of the Other to fully engage with England, *Henry V* encourages a sympathetic understanding and reading of these partially assimilated others. The play seems to favor such a sympathetic reading understanding that the reality of an expanded English nation will necessarily include those who will never be able to fully identify as English. *James IV*, however, caricatures those who are excluded from recognition in empire. Through excluding and denying their participation the play encourages acceptance of those who are the same while advocating for the ability to readily ascertain and exclude those who are not. The Scottish malcontent is identifiable through his distinct dress and his laughable dialect, while the French tool villain is likewise understandable through his humorous dialect. The ease with which the Other can be identified is a comforting notion meant to ease anxieties over the influx of foreigners in London. While Shakespeare encourages his audience to reconcile themselves to England's new reality, Greene reinforces the identifiable difference in an attempt to discount the possibility that all those who look English may not be so.

The Consummation of Conquest in *Henry V*

The last chapter ended with the language lesson between Princess Katherine and Alice, a scene prefiguring the courtship scene at the conclusion of the play. Princess Katherine is decidedly one of the most linguistically complex characters within the history plays, traversing the space between exotic foreigner and culturally assimilated alien. Likewise, as discussed in the previous chapter, Katherine must become at least nominally English in order for her to succeed as England's queen (wife of the English king and, hopefully, mother of England's prince). Still, while the

courtship scene begins with the promise of a unified France and England, it ends with the troubling knowledge that this union will not last. Even at the apogee of King Henry's victory, the audience is reminded that King Henry's promised union and peace will not outlast his successor; King Henry's verbal conquest of Princess Katherine consolidates his victory while still undermining it. The linguistic appropriations King Henry must use in his attempts to not only convince the French Princess Katherine to marry him but also to change her national identity challenge the simplicity and transparency of any linguistic identity. According to Floyd-Wilson, Katherine's difficulties in speaking English "express more than language difficulties; they embody a reaction toward English nationalism. An inability to 'speak your England' suggests a failure or unwillingness to accept, acknowledge, or understand England's national identity."²² Although many critics seek to place the courtship scene within the context of competition with a clear "winner" and "loser" (as does Lloyd), what is at stake in this scene is not Katherine's ability to retain her linguistic identity (or even her national one). Katherine has already been awarded to Henry following the Battle of Agincourt, Henry makes it clear that she is the "capital demand," and it is understood that no peace will occur without their union (5.2.96). The issue of the courtship scene, for both participants, is whether linguistic identity is coterminous with national identity and the consequences of eliding such a boundary.

Katherine's first words to Henry are, "I cannot speak your England," and much has been made of this relatively straight-forward line (5.1.102-3). Katherine's declaration becomes emblematic of the problems surrounding the issue of white foreignness—for those foreigners who cannot be segregated solely on appearance, linguistic distinctions become the most reliable identifier through which inclusion and

²² Lloyd, 47.

exclusion are decided. Katherine's amateur mistake, 'England' instead of 'English', compounds her linguistic barriers to the union between the two countries, while also providing an avenue through which King Henry may appropriate both languages and peoples. King Henry divides Katherine into two distinct parts: a "French heart" and an "English tongue" where both are designed to eventually declare their love for (English) king and country (5.2.105-6). This distinction should cause us to recall the "dismemberment" featured so prominently in the language lesson: Katherine is divided into parts in much the same way as her country has been divided by the English incursion. Although King Henry promises to unify both countries, at the moment there is an ineluctable division between them that is only exacerbated by Henry's forced dichotomy. The dichotomy points to a more profound anxiety: the inability of a foreign monarch to change the hearts of his alien subjects. We are challenged once again with Foucault's question: "For can I, in fact, say that I am this language that I speak?"²³ Regardless of the language Katherine speaks with her tongue, be it broken English or fluent French, her heart will remain unknowable—she will permanently retain the mark of Frenchness of which her accent will be the most discernible sign. When Katherine's simple statement, "I cannot speak your England," is given this interpretation, we are confronted with an impossible situation: no one who speaks broken English can speak "England," and in failing to speak England there is a failure to *be* England.

The conflation of language with the nations they represent is not difficult to assume as Henry's lines throughout the courtship scene appear obsessed with Katherine's linguistic purity. Steinsaltz argues

The laws of chivalric manhood demand that he win her heart with words; the romantic project is a linguistic project. Katherine *is* the French language, as

²³ Foucault, 324.

Henry reminds us when he says that his French ‘will hang upon my tongue like a new married wife about her husband’s neck’ (V.ii.179-80); and the French language is France, as Henry remarks, ‘It is as easy for me, Kate, to conquer the kingdom as to speak so much more French’(V.ii.184.6).²⁴

Further, in the previous chapter, we have already established that because France and England are at war, their respective languages must also be at war, with the necessary linguistic conquest of Katherine a parallel battle to the martial battle at Agincourt. However, where the soldiers at Agincourt were clearly delineated by their armor, Katherine’s difference is more obfuscated. Within the person of Katherine, Bhabha’s discussion of language as a representation of what is foreign becomes an effective theoretical structure, “the ‘foreignness’ of language is the nucleus of the untranslatable that goes beyond the transparency of subject matter.”²⁵ Katherine’s responses to Henry’s repeated questions do little to illuminate the opacity of foreign language; her lines are short, and she is more apt to utter, “I do not know dat,” or “I cannot tell vat is dat,” than to give any affirmative answer to any of the King’s inquiries. When pressed for an answer she is likely to lapse into French (5.2.187), just as she will when startled or surprised (5.2.250; 256). Similarly, she continually claims an inability to understand English, and she relies on Alice to translate Henry’s English into French on several occasions (5.2.113). As Katherine repeatedly states her ignorance throughout the exchange, the audience can never be exactly certain as to what portion of Henry’s speeches are giving her pause, which particular portion of Henry’s statements makes her uncertain:

No, it is not possible you should love the enemy of France, Kate: but in loving me you should love the friend of France; for I love France so well that I will not part with a village of it; I will have it all mine: and Kate, when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France, and you are mine.

5.2.171-6

²⁴ Steinsaltz, 329.

²⁵ Bhabha, 314.

The linguistic acrobatics of King Henry's lines, even within this small segment, make it nearly impossible for the audience to ascertain the occasion of Katherine's, "I cannot tell vat is dat" (5.2.177).

Further, Katherine's protest "I cannot tell vat is 'like me'" plays upon the ambiguity inherent in the English language (5.1.109). Henry's original question, "Do you like me, Kate?" appears straightforward to native ears (5.2.106). However, Katherine's answer unintentionally plays upon the ambiguity of the object placement in Henry's question to subvert the flirtatious humor of the seemingly innocuous question. When Katherine responds with an inability to discern the meaning behind "like me," her foreignness is amplified, along with the more ominous meaning underneath the sportive statement. The audience understands Henry's question is one of affability not of categorical understanding; yet, Katherine's tenuous grasp of English turns the colloquialism back upon itself requiring an answer of the king. Katherine's original question allows Henry to qualify his earlier statement (and use a trite pick-up line), so it becomes an ontological question rather than one of relations. When Katherine questions what it means to be "like me," she is implicitly challenging her own ontological state; she is no longer only defined as a French Princess she has become something else, and it is this something else she questions. In a series of plays infatuated with signs of visible difference and the often-problematic lack thereof, Katherine's question is necessarily experiential. There is no easily identifiable difference between Katherine and Henry, their linguistic barriers are evident, but they do not constitute a visible difference and so despite their difference of place, they are in many ways still interchangeable. Katherine's inability to tell "vat is like me" becomes a refusal and a confusion over what now constitutes difference; and while Henry engages the essential nature of the question he fails to give a sufficient answer.

Despite the scene's concern with the linguistic and, therefore, national identity of Katherine, it is Henry who does most of the speaking. Henry repeatedly insists on Katherine's engagement with the English language while still retaining his own opportunist multilingualism. While Katherine's refrain throughout 5.2 is "I don't know"; Henry's is that he is "plain." He is variously a "plain king" and a "plain soldier" (5.2.125; 150), while at other times he admits that he is "a fellow of plain and uncoined constancy" (5.2.153-4). Henry "modestly contrasts his own plain soldier's speech, which represents constancy, with that of 'these fellows of infinite tongue, that can rhyme themselves into ladies' favor, they do always reason themselves out again'."²⁶ Throughout *Henry V*, Henry has made claims to simplicity, straightforwardness, and plainness; eschewing any claims to pretension and ornamentation he has characterized himself as the people's king, the leader of a band of brothers. Henry appears to take this designation to its logical conclusion as he argues that he is no different than any other soldier who stood beside him at Agincourt.

The very idea of the plain-dealing Englishman began in the reign of Henry V as he was preparing his invasion of France. The use of English in official *written* documents is generally regarded as midway through Henry's reign as he is preparing the nation for war. As Richardson discusses, "[Henry's] motive for using the vernacular was undoubtedly to win support for the war. In the past, the threat that the French were attempting to destroy the English language had been used as a parliamentary argument in justifying the war, and Henry's encouragement of English was only a logical extension of this kind of propaganda."²⁷ The association between

²⁶ Brennan, 55.

²⁷ Malcolm Richardson, "Henry V, the English Chancery, and Chancery English," *Speculum* 55, no. 4 (Oct, 1980), 726-750. 740.

Henry's reign and official English had in many ways reached a mythologized status, if not for the historical facts, then because he was the model for all Christian kings.²⁸ More importantly, however, is the effect Henry V's use of English had on the populace. Those who were most affected by the king's use of English were not those of the nobility who were already bilingual, instead it was the commons where the inclusion of English would provide them further access to the nation.²⁹ Henry V's use of English becomes patriotic to the masses and underscores his claims in *Henry V* to be another soldier with his men.

The one qualification is that he is categorically different; regardless of the other soldiers' birth none of them can claim to be king. Henry's craving to be like his soldiers was introduced early in the tetralogy when Hal frequented the taverns of Eastcheap. Although Hal reassured the audience that his diversions with the commoners were merely a ploy to make his transformation seem as "the sun," his fascination with being viewed as categorically the same as the men around him returns on his campaign across France (*1 Henry IV* 1.2.175). Henry's "band of brothers" speech has been dissected to show that despite his claims to the contrary, none of the men holding a longbow at Agincourt would be remembered; likewise, Henry's determination to become "Henry le Roy" only serves to reveal how thoroughly his difference sets him apart. Henry's desire to be essentially English (and only incidentally King) leads him to a number of rhetorically effective claims (the band of brothers being one amongst many), but it also led to his mythical status as the first English king to not know French: "This is of course the stuff of popular legend, which makes Henry the first English-speaking king since the Norman Conquest; 'the

²⁸ Richardson, 727; P.K. Ayers, "'Fellows of Infinite Tongue': Henry V and the King's English" *SEL* 34, no. 2 (Spring 1994), 253-277. 254.

²⁹ Richardson, 740.

King's English' is the language of Henry himself, acquired in just such seedy urban haunts as the Boar's Head Tavern."³⁰ Historically speaking, "Holinshed, too, reminds his readers that possessing 'books written in English' was considered, under Henry V, strong evidence of treason," despite the transition to English as the official language of the state.³¹ The historical disparity between the Henry V depicted in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and the reality of the English King is indicative of the mythical aspect he is expected to perform within the second tetralogy. Although the *Henriad* dramatizes historical events, the characters populating those events are utilized to reflect contemporary cultural needs. Henry's professions of plain-dealing and monolingualism are necessary characteristics to an essential Englishness that he must personify in his position as the embodiment of the ideal English monarch.

If Henry must act as the quintessential Englishman, then Katherine, as the English princess must be his foil, and it is within this context that the courtship scene should be understood. As has been frequently discussed, Henry's conquest in courtship is the fulfillment of the battle of Agincourt, and as Landreth remarks, "Henry V's attempt to transume himself onto the throne of France is enacted first on the battlefield and then in the courting chamber; in both settings English must be so capaciously virile as to overwhelm, unman, and completely feminize French."³² France and the French have already been established as stereotypically feminine figures throughout English Renaissance drama, and in the symbolic conclusion to the English project of reverse conquest the female, French Princess is linked with the male, English King. As should be evident, the "marriage between Henry and Katherine is not the joining of two countries but the appropriation of the one by the

³⁰ Ayers, 268.

³¹ Steinsaltz, 322.

³² David Landreth, "Once More into the Preech: The Merry Wives' English Pedagogy" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (Winter 2004), 420-449. 447.

other. The apparent suitor is in fact the conqueror imposing his will and his nation on the conquered."³³ Although the ends of Henry's courtship scene are not difficult to discern, the means through which Henry imposes his will and nation on the conquered Katherine are worth investigating further, especially in light of Henry's claims to exemplify English characteristics.

There are several juxtapositions within the courtship scene: true and false, simplicity and complexity, masculine and feminine, English and French; all of which play upon each other challenging the strict dichotomies each of the pairs implies. The first of pairs to occur in the scene, French and English, also carries with it the connotations of masculine and feminine as well as true and false. We have briefly discussed Henry's opening suit, "if you will love me soundly with your *French heart* I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly with your *English tongue*" (5.2.104-6 emphasis mine). Likewise, as previously noted, Henry's figurative dismemberment of Katherine into French and English parts (which are variously knowable and unknowable) mirrors the linguistic dismemberment Katherine performed upon herself several scenes previously. However, the audience ought to also be aware of the truth and falsity behind Henry's statement: French has been regularly tied to falsity, and English linked with truth. Therefore, the falseness in Katherine's French heart can only be reclaimed with the use of the English language. The use of Katherine's English tongue, and its identification serves a further purpose:

The imposition of a foreign language provides a particularly interesting metaphorical extension of the process; the conquered, obliged to use the language of the conqueror, are thereby forced to acquiesce in a kind of ritual humiliation, as they publicly acknowledge their larger weaknesses in terms of their inevitably comic linguistic deficiencies.³⁴

³³ Dillon, 180.

³⁴ Ayers, 254.

Katherine's French heart must not only be rehabilitated through an English tongue, but it must also participate in a public acknowledgement of its own insufficiency and the necessary fulfillment found in the English language. In this way the French language ceases to be "an arbitrary sign for something foreign or feminine," and becomes a loaded sign not only for the foreign and the feminine, but also for the conquered.

King Henry's courtship venture swiftly changes into a language lesson, although of a categorically different nature than is found in Act 3. Where the aim of Katherine and Alice's language lesson was to confront the audience with being a "stranger in a strange land" leading to the foreordained conquest of the French language, Henry's language lesson invites no such participation. Henry's language lesson is one of conquest and domination in which Katherine and Henry are the sole performers of the figurative occupation. As Mayer notes, "Ironically, the man who wanted to be taught how to love, who tried to speak French and then claimed to be able to speak only plain English, is the one who, revealingly, finds himself teaching the Princess his English."³⁵ Henry's self-reported failings are shown to be patently untrue, as the English King speaks French, lobbies for love, and never utters a word of plain English; still King Henry requires English and educates the French Princess in its proper use. Henry's education of the Princess necessarily succeeds where Alice's floundered because Henry is not foreign in the same way Alice is. Despite Alice's time in England (3.2.5), she is aligned incontrovertibly with the Princess and therefore with the Frenchness the Princess represents. When Henry's linguistic domination of Katherine is placed within the previous context of the Mortimers the disparity between the two men is undeniable. Where Mortimer was arguably

³⁵ Mayer, "Babel," 133.

emasculated by his capture and marriage to a Welsh Princess, his basic desire is to give her voice. Mortimer wants to learn his wife's language, rather than participate in the traditional roles. Mortimer becomes the metropolitan anti-imperialist despite his geographical location in the liminal, mythical, and magical margins of the English state. Henry's project, conversely, is to give Katherine speech of a distinctly English kind. He insists on the use of her English tongue at the expense of her French one, demanding that her English tongue make her English. Henry's persistence is diametrically opposed to Mortimer's; where Mortimer values his wife's voice encouraging its propagation in her native tongue, King Henry values his wife's speech—so long as it is controlled, English, and expected.

The most potentially telling aspect of King Henry's linguistic conquest is the changing of Princess Katherine's name to the English diminutive, Kate.³⁶ As Lloyd notes, Henry's "method of English nationalism calls for breaking her another way, breaking her French identity by calling her English."³⁷ Henry will call Katherine an "Englishwoman" but it is his repeated use of Kate that presumes an English identity before she has consented to a marriage. As Lloyd further posits, "Henry successfully erases all outward remnants of national identity and imposes on her a new English one. Ultimately, he institutes the right, true, and appropriate language of government and of kings—English."³⁸ If Lloyd is correct in her hypothesis that Katherine is given a new English identity, it must presuppose the existence of a French identity. But it must further imply the existence of a French identity that was replaced, and the sole evidence for such an identity comes through Katherine's linguistic capacity. Her early

³⁶ Henry V's persistence in calling Princess Katherine, Kate, mimics that of Petruccio in *Taming of the Shrew*. In 2.1.183-192 Petruccio offers commentary on the name Kate despite Katherine's obvious aversion to the nickname.

³⁷ Lloyd, 55.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 55.

scene in French and her later scene in broken English are all that textually bespeak a national identity; Henry is the only character who publicly assigns her a national identity. If Katherine is identified as French it must be exclusively a linguistic identification; compared with Henry, Katherine does not speak in long, confusing paragraphs—she speaks plainly and straightforwardly. The linguistic markers of pervasive Frenchness found most apparently in Katherine’s non-standard English adhere more closely to Henry’s plain spoken Englishness than Henry’s assertions.

Despite Henry’s emphatic declaration that he can speak no French, he shows a remarkable ability to both speak and understand the language. Even when Henry asks Alice for clarification, he echoes what Katherine has already stated

Katherine: *O bon Dieu, les langues des homes sont pleines de tromperies!*

King [to Alice]: What says she, fair one? That the tongues of men are full of deceits?

5.2.116-9

Later, Henry also goes on to speak French himself, albeit poorly, “*la plus belle Katherine du monde, mon très cher et divin déesse?*” The necessity of the English monarch as monoglot as defined through the plays (most explicitly with Henry V) ought to challenge Henry’s ease with French even on a basic language level. However, despite the relative simplicity of the French phrases Henry speaks, his facility with the French language even prompts Katherine to accuse the English King of speaking “false French” in a refrain that is heard throughout the course of many Elizabethan history plays (5.2.204). The stock false Frenchman trope on the Elizabethan stage was not uncommon, and the epithet would have been familiar to Shakespeare’s audience. What is peculiar about this particular iteration of the phrase is that it is found on the lips of a Frenchwoman as women were the most prone to fall under the “false French” designation (Margaret of Anjou, Isabella of *Edward II*, and Joan of Arc are all obvious examples). In *1 Henry*

VI in particular, Joan's recognition of Burgundy's betrayal as specifically French, a point previously commented on in Chapter Three, attests to the pervasive duplicity inherent in the French (3.7.85). Throughout the courtship scene, Katherine is expected to be the deviant manipulator, her language should be questions, and her answers should attempt to deceive; instead, we are faced with an English king who continually insists on his ability to speak only in plain language, the epitome of English virtue. In fact Henry is not the one who is using plain language, just as he is the one who is accused of being false. Lloyd argues that Katherine's accusation of Henry's falsity "allows him to malign the French language and once again draw attention to pure English, declaring in his next line that while French may be false, English is true. In this scene and in the play, French is not the language of love or of life. English is."³⁹

As Henry makes language the focal point of unity, "For the first time the native tongue became a primary banner and cause of national identity."⁴⁰ When Katherine calls him both false and French, Henry must denounce the claim through turning her statement on its head by calling her the "better Englishwoman" (5.2.122). Lloyd argues: "here he shows that her grasp of his clever attempt to flatter comes from her newly-found Englishness. She is the better Englishwoman, fluent enough to understand him and thus English enough to detect falseness and flattery as good as any Englishwoman."⁴¹ Henry re-shapes Katherine's identity to make it English; already he is assembling an identity that is English, but it is an English identity not built around her language but rather the intentions lingering behind each word she speaks. Despite Katherine's

³⁹ Lloyd, 56.

⁴⁰ Steinsaltz, 319.

⁴¹ Lloyd, 60.

primary foreign language, Henry argues that because she understands falseness and flattery she is fundamentally English, and therefore suitable as England's queen. The linguistic gymnastics Henry undertakes in order to fashion Katherine in the shape of an English queen are remarkable only if "the spirit of each nation lives in its native tongue, the language itself will not merely represent but must partake of the national character"⁴² This is why Henry erases the language differences between them in order to reconcile the two disparate languages in a unification of peoples. Katherine's inability to speak pure English must be integrated into the narrative of conquest. As Katherine *is* France, she must become English if her people and her country are to fully assimilate into and participate in the English imperial project.

The courtship scene is not a romantic addendum to the heroic national epic of reverse conquest; Henry's professions of love and Katherine's eventual acquiescence pale in comparison to the motivations behind the scene. Katherine's submission to Henry's suits is the superficial signifier of the consequences of conquest. Ayers likewise argues, "[Henry] is not wooing Katherine, either with the conventional language of love or any other; he is telling her that her submission is required as both a symbolic and literal expression of the larger submission of France."⁴³ Katherine's ability to perform her role as sacrificial captive will indicate the extent to which France will likewise submit to their new English king. This is seen in Henry's linguistically challenging statement:

No, it is not possible you should love the enemy of France, Kate: but in loving me you should love the friend of France; for I love France so well that I will not part with a village of it; I will have it all mine: and Kate, when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France, and you are mine.

5.2.171-6

⁴² Steinsaltz, 324.

⁴³ Ayers, 254.

Because of the Battle of Agincourt and Henry's victorious campaign through France, France and England have been brought together under the same monarch and therefore the same people. Those who were definitively French must become definitively English, but they will be defined through English. Katherine's national (and linguistic) identity will be subsumed under the banner of English. The courtship scene does not provide a silent protest for the now conquered French, nor does it allow Katherine a previously inaccessible voice. The courtship scene simply furnishes an additional means for the English, and Henry, to solidify their authority in their newly acquired French lands; what Henry achieved through violence on the battlefield, he now must accomplish in the court. Katherine's voice is essentially silenced with the final kiss Henry steals, and Henry's frequent identification of the Princess as English works to erase Katherine's previous linguistic identity. Whether or not she is able to retain her essential Frenchness following her marriage to the English monarch is irrelevant, since it has been subsumed under the mythic national narrative of King Henry V.

Bands of Brothers: Martial Identities on the Fields of France

If Princess Katherine is the fulfillment of the English expansionist project demonstrated through the English victories at Harfleur and Agincourt, then the French soldiers must necessarily support the linguistic conquest accomplished in the courtship scene. The French soldiers dot the dramatic landscape of *Henry V* as foils for the English army. The linguistic disparities between the two armies are necessary to fully fathom the comprehensive project of empire enacted at the Battle of Agincourt. According to Baldo, the play emphasizes "the social disparity between the English and French armies, the yeomen of England all but destroying the chivalry of

France.”⁴⁴ Beyond the sartorial identifiers of French nobility, which the French are keen to indicate, there are definite linguistic identifiers of their nobility. The play’s first encounter with the French nobles presages the siege of Harfleur, the English have yet to cross the Channel and the French have suffered no defeats—all is still preparation. The French nobility in Act 2, scene 4 “seem suspiciously English,” as their assembly determines the proper course of action to defend against the promised English invasion.⁴⁵ The French phrases that will come to pepper their discourse in later scenes are absent from this particular scene. The steady inclusion of these linguistic signifiers in later scenes parallels the English campaign through France; as the French encounter each defeat they are further marked by linguistic difference until the completion of conquest in Act 5, scene 2. The inclusion of proper, articulate English following the Battle of Agincourt and amidst the negotiations of peace indicates future unity rather than current separation.

Following their appearance in Act 2, scene 4, the French nobility do not emerge again for roughly an entire act (Act 3, scene 5), following both the fall of Harfleur and the Princess’ language lesson. The Governor of Harfleur made particular note that this defeat is grounded primarily on the failure of the Dauphin:

Our expectation hath this day an end.
The Dauphin, whom of our succours we entreated,
Returns us that his powers are yet not ready
To raise so great a siege.

3.3.44-47

The Dauphin’s impotence, implied by the Governor, presages the failings of the effete French at the hands of the masculine English. As the English begin to engage French forces, the French soldiers they are meant to encounter become ethnically individuated through the gradual use of French phrases. Mayer contends,

⁴⁴ Baldo, 80.

⁴⁵ Baker, 53.

Ironically, while the majority of French nobles speak perfect English (interspersed here and there with a few French words for local color), Henry's own troops have trouble understanding one another—whether they be Welsh, Scottish, Irish, or simply English. The French in the play sound almost as if they could be teaching the English their own language.⁴⁶

The linguistic variety found in the English camp will be discussed at greater length in the following pages; however, I would posit that the French progressively suffer from a similar linguistic fracturing. Mayer, in the above quotation, discloses the disparity between the French and English camps; in an army, meant to embody the unification of the disparate peoples of England, the soldiers encounter linguistic barriers to unity. The French army, on the other hand, appears to use English with an effortlessness that ought to be found in the English camp. The English utilized by the French does indeed sound “as if they could be teaching the English their own language,” but it does not erase the linguistic identifier of French. Those French soldiers who combat the English on the field are differentiated through the use of French phrases.

The French soldiers in act 3, scene 5 utter only three French phrases, “O Dieu vivant!”, “Mort de ma vie,” and “Dieu de batailles” (3.5.5; 11; 15), and even though the French language occurs at greater length and the phrases occur with more frequency later in the play, foreign language is never made the focus as it is for Lady Mortimer and Princess Katherine. Foreign language becomes an expedient theatrical means to mark French difference, rather than a critical appraisal of inclusion and exclusion in the English nation. As the Battle of Agincourt approaches, the Dauphin, the French figurehead who has been characterized by effete Frenchness throughout the play becomes surrounded by French soldiers who are similarly defined. Like Katherine whose Frenchness must be defined, obviated, and, finally, obliterated; the Dauphin must be defined as French in order for the conquest of France to transpire.

⁴⁶ Mayer “Ironies of Babel” 129.

When Baker argues, “in a way, all that is available to the audience of *Henry V* is England or some version of it,” he is including the French soldiers and the proper English they speak.⁴⁷ Yet, if England only is represented throughout *Henry V*, the ultimate national project of conquest fails to be realized. The English conquer themselves, but they also defeat themselves. Instead of seeing only different variations of Englishness (from Henry, who is the paragon of Englishness, to Katherine, who is emphatically French-becoming-English), the complexities and simplifications of the French campaign are lost. Those who are non-English are troped so the project of conquest may continue, and those who have been conquered may be successfully assimilated as English. The Battle of Agincourt and the joining of countries cannot come to fruition if the English army never leaves the boundaries of England, but the project of English imperialism and expansion is realized through the successful appropriation and subjugation of those who are different. If the audience is only presented with various means of understanding and reading England in *Henry V*, it is only because those who are different have been annexed and appropriated as English.

The linguistic differentiation illustrated by the French military is both similar to and categorically different from the linguistic fragmentation in which the English soldiers find themselves. The most famous of the English soldiers are the four captains whose varying dialects represent the four peoples of the British isles, and, more significantly, the four peoples the English hoped to assimilate within a national narrative of England. Captain Jamy of Scotland occupies a uniquely tenuous place within the cadre of the four captains. Scotland, unlike Wales or Ireland, maintained its independence with a separate monarch, parliament, and government. Further, as a

⁴⁷ Baker, 53.

Scotsman, Jamy's appearance seemingly and comically contradicts King Henry's earlier worry:

We must not only arm t'invade the French,
But lay down our proportions to defend
Against the Scot, who will make road upon us
With all advantages.

1.2.136-139

In the midst of the originating war councils, the nobles present propose several solutions to the problem of the likely Scottish invasion during the French campaign. The Scots' potential invasion of northern England is left unquestioned even by Ely and Canterbury who lobby the most vehemently for Henry's French campaign. Historically, Scotland's independence had been established in the time of King Edward III, as had the Auld Alliance between Scotland and France. Scotland's Auld Alliance, and its valuable status in the often volatile political arena are consistent with Baker's argument that "Henry represents the Scots as a counter-hegemony."⁴⁸ Scotland, therefore, is neither colonizer nor colonized, and so occupies a completely individual place within Henry's army and the British Isles. It is, however, a place which must be accommodated into the unifying vision of Henry V's army.

Jamy's inclusion as one of the four captains, and Scotland's association more generally, suggests a historical and cultural assimilation that was accurate neither in Henry's reign nor Elizabeth's and, therefore, more significant. Where linguistic identification has previously been a signifier of alienation, under the banner of Henry V dialect becomes a marker of progressive assimilation. Jamy's presence throughout *Henry V* is brief, and he is confined to four lines within a single scene. We know Jamy through Fluellen's description:

Captain Jamy is a marvelous falorous gentleman, that is certain, and of great expedition and knowledge in th'anchient wars, upon my particular knowledge

⁴⁸ Baker, 43.

of his directions. By Cheshu, he will maintain his argument as well as any military man in the world, in the disciplines of the pristine wars of the Romans.

3.2.77-83

Fluellen's description of the "Scots captain" is opposed to Fluellen's opinion of the Irish captain, Macmorris (3.2.75). Still, despite Fluellen's high praise of the Scots captain, Jamy does little to justify Fluellen's praise. Jamy's longest utterance in the dialogue between the four captains justifies his status in the English army:

By the mess, ere these eyes of mine take themselves to slumber I'll dae guid service, or I'll lig in'th' grund for it. I owe God a death, and I'll pay't as valorously as I may, that sall I surely do, that is the breff and the long.

3.2.115-119

Jamy's self-proclaimed participation in Henry's French campaign is one of reparation ("I owe God a death") not national identification, although Jamy says he will fight valorously, he is fighting for God not country. While the four captains are often brought into mutual understanding through their association as participating in the English army, the motivations behind each captain's cooperation is unique to his own national identity. Jamy, who belongs to an autonomous state within the confines of the "sceptered isle," is not compelled to participate in the French campaign. Jamy promises to fight the good fight, but he is not fighting for King Henry or the English nation, Jamy's allegiance is to what is beyond himself: God. Despite King Henry's constant appeals to national unity, Jamy's allegiance transcends national and geographic borders where the French campaigns are simply a means to a sacred end.

If Jamy is capable of eliding the national boundaries of Scotland and England in order to fight on behalf of a cause larger than either national entity, Macmorris faces a national challenge of a categorically different variety. The loaded signifiers Jamy's nationality was increasingly failing to represent were being relocated onto the location and persons of the Irish. Although Macmorris' presence within Henry's

unified campaign is far from conscripted, his presence displays less a voluntary choice by an autonomous state than a coerced participation by a subjugated people. As discussed in Chapter One, Ireland had not been thoroughly subjugated either in the period of Henry V's reign nor Elizabeth I; and, as such, Macmorris came to represent the liminal boundaries between the colonized and the rebel. As England's relationship with Scotland entered rapprochement, Ireland came to be seen as the enemy against which the English would likely face invasion. Macmorris, then, subsumes the old Scottish identity of potential invader, while Jamy comes to manifest the potential inclusion of the northern brother.

Any argument seeking to wrestle with the status of any of the four captains, much less Macmorris, must undertake a reading of the famous exchange between Fluellen and Macmorris:

Fluellen: Captain Macmorris, I think, look you, under your correction, there is not many of your nation—

Macmorris: Of my nation? What ish my nation? Ish a villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal? What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?

Fluellen: Look you, if you take the matter otherwise than is meant, Captain Macmorris, peradventure I shall think you do not use me with that affability as in discretion you ought to use me, look you, being as good a man as yourself, both in the disciplines of war, and in the derivation of my birth, and in other particularities.

3.2.121-133

The cognitive dissonance between the two liminally proximal figures is discernible throughout the entirety of their exchange. As Edwards paraphrases, “‘What is this separate race you’re implying by using the phrase “your nation”? Who are you, a Welshman, to talk of the Irish as though they were a separate nation from you? I belong in this family as much as you do.’ This is the essence of it—indignation that a Welshman should think of Ireland as a separate nation from the great (British) nation

which the Welshman apparently thought he belonged to.”⁴⁹ While Fluellen is, at least superficially, attempting to compliment the abilities of the Irish captain, Macmorris interprets this as an insult from a Welsh character who retains a definite identity despite Wales’ incorporation into the English polity. As Baker further argues, Fluellen “implies that as an Irishman MacMorris can be named and categorized, that however few there might be of his kind, together they form a recognizable ‘nation’ within the colonizers’ racial scheme.”⁵⁰ Interestingly, like Macmorris Fluellen’s ethnic identity is marginalized and minimized by the English colonizing project; the ethnic Celts occupied a far smaller space with a definitively dwindling population than before English conquest. The similarities between the colonizing experience both peoples experienced is lost at least on Macmorris who challenges Fluellen to name his nation. What may have potentially been an attempt by Fluellen to acknowledge the legitimate validity of the Irish people, nation, and experience is read by Macmorris as a challenge of essential identity by a Welshman who has already been subsumed under English colonial expansion.

In so challenging Fluellen, what Macmorris fails to recognize through his questions is that the Welsh experience has only lately gained space as an assimilated group within the unified sceptered isle, and Fluellen likely understands Macmorris’s existential crisis better than either of the other two captains. As Baker argues, “what does it mean, MacMorris seems to ask, to be ‘of’ a nation when you have no recognized nation, when those who insist that you are ‘Irish’ also deny the existence of something called ‘Ireland’.”⁵¹ Macmorris, like Fluellen, is “both obviously English

⁴⁹ Philip Edwards, *Threshold of a Nation: A Study in English and Irish Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979), 76.

⁵⁰ Baker, 46.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 44.

and, it must have seemed, essentially alien.”⁵² Macmorris’s question not only of whether his nation exists but also his own national identity establishes a fundamental anxiety regarding the impossibilities of adequately classifying those who speak a dialect. Macmorris is neither strictly Irish nor strictly English, and within the boundaries of the “band of brothers” he potentially suffers the stigma of being an outsider which would be “a fate worse than death.”⁵³ As Henry’s frequent battle speeches imply, being associated with his French campaign entitles each of its members to an exclusive brotherhood of which they are the only members. Macmorris’ participation in Henry’s campaign allows him to use the same label as the Englishman from England, despite his clear linguistic difference. Furthermore, “brotherhood is defined as biological, national, and spiritual. These three categories embedded in a single term also highlight three areas of English anxiety when dealing with others—race, nationality, and religion.”⁵⁴ Henry V’s battle speeches, already converge in the person of Macmorris whose claims to brotherhood intensify English anxieties. Ireland’s altered role, in which it was marked as different based upon race, nationality, and religion, replaces it in a symbolic designation with Scotland. Thus, Macmorris challenges Henry V’s claims of brotherhood because of Ireland’s inherent difference and the physical (geographic) space between them.

Still, Macmorris’ unequivocal acceptance within the band of brothers is further complicated by his failure to linguistically conform and his obvious anxieties regarding his national identity. Unable to legitimately classify himself as Irish and retain membership within Henry’s brotherhood, Macmorris is similarly unable to define himself as English since the Irish Wars had not yet been completed and his

⁵² *Ibid*, 41.

⁵³ Christopher Dowd, “Polysemic Brotherhoods in *Henry V*” *Studies in English Literature: 1500-1900* 50, no. 2 (Spring 2010), 337-354. 343.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 341.

language clearly features his incomplete linguistic assimilation. Existing between Ireland and England, “his inability to utter the copula, to say ‘is’ as the English would have said it, becomes a sign of the ambiguity which invades assigned identity when MacMorris speaks their language. In the ontology of MacMorris’ ‘ish,’ there is no distinct presence or absence. When something ‘ish,’ it both ‘is’ and it isn’t.”⁵⁵ The Ireland frequently confronting the English (the unknowable space fraught with the potential for future invasion and a locus of probable political instability) is pacified in the person of Macmorris as his tempered exotic presence denies him his strict identity as a wild Irishman. However, though the tempering of Macmorris allays the fears of rebellion from within, the necessary dichotomy based on the civilizing ambitions of colonization is unmistakably challenged. “It was the Irish ‘wilderness’ that bounded the English garden, Irish ‘barbarity’ that defined English civility, Irish papistry and ‘superstition’ that warranted English religion; it was Irish ‘lawlessness’ that demonstrated the superiority of English law, and Irish ‘wandering’ that defined the settled and centered nature of English society.”⁵⁶ If, as Neill claims, Englishness was defined in direct opposition to what was Irish, then Macmorris’ incomplete assimilation must also challenge English identity even as it attempts to subsume Irish identity within the larger imperial project.

Hybridity, therefore, becomes dangerously destabilizing even while offering the promise of fulfilling Henry’s unifying project. “The hybrid—either the degenerate Englishman or the incompletely assimilated Irishman—could become, for colonial power, a figure of threatening ambiguity, and his language the site of unsettling contradictions.”⁵⁷ While foreign language for Katherine, Alice, and the Dauphin

⁵⁵ Baker, 48.

⁵⁶ O’Neill, 3.

⁵⁷ Baker, 40.

establish them as irreducibly foreign, the dialects of the four captains preclude a strict scheme through which identification may take place. “It is in this scene, structured around the related issues of language, assimilation and hybridity, that the play not only reveals the shaping influence of the wars in Ireland but comes closest to addressing their cultural impact.”⁵⁸ As previously discussed, Cade’s Rebellion in 2 *Henry VI* demonstrated the very tangible threat of invasion from Ireland connecting the dangerously unstable island with its supposedly dangerously unstable inhabitants. What Macmorris exhibits is the potential outcome of the colonizing enterprise; if successfully accommodated under the banner of the English nation, Macmorris is the potentially incorporated subject. Macmorris’s only imperfectly integrated status and his relatively violent outburst against Fluellen challenge any easy synthesis of Irish and English identities. Macmorris’ frustration over his nation and his identity, “What ish my nation? Ish a villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal?” can be well understood in the context of the Elizabethan Irish Wars. The Irish were already precluded from accepting an English identity even if it was voluntarily sought. If Jamy indicates a voluntary participation in Henry’s French campaigns, Macmorris implies a participation that while not involuntary is done in search of a fixed and, ultimately, elusive identity.

Intriguingly, the last of the four captains, Fluellen, occupies the stage for a considerably greater amount of time than the others, and his inclusion within Henry’s army appears to be more legitimate. Where Macmorris challenged Fluellen with the question, “What ish my nation?” it is Fluellen who refuses to answer. Fluellen also beats the English Pistol with a leek, and declares King Henry V to be his own brother (reversing Henry’s rousing band of brothers speech). Fluellen, potentially more than

⁵⁸ O’Neill, 152.

any of the other four captains, figures heavily in the iconic imagery of union, assimilation, and otherness as challenged throughout the course of the second tetralogy. The audience's inaugural encounter with the Welsh captain comes on the heels of the first of Henry V's famous battle speeches. However, where King Henry V encourages his men with the lines, "Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more," Fluellen offers a comic version of the lines in his prose rephrasing of the monarch's speech, "Up to the breach, you dogs! Avaunt, you cullions!" (3.1.1; 3.2.21). Fluellen's iteration of Henry V's more refined speech corresponds more accurately to the realities on the ground at Harfleur; the men Henry V is leading are not his friends (Henry will quickly sentence two of them to death), and the play's depictions of these common soldiers align them most thoroughly with Fluellen's "dogs" and "cullions." For Fluellen is not lambasting Gower, Macmorris, or Jamy; Fluellen is castigating the fellows of Cheapside: Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. The discrepancies between Henry V's and Fluellen's exhortations into battle complement the corresponding disparities between the notions of brotherhood and nation that Fluellen's role within the play most nearly describes.

As discussed in Chapter One, Wales was a place of forgetting, magic, and, most importantly, origins. Therefore, in a play classified as a national epic that is likewise concerned with origins and unification, the status of the Welsh captain and his relationship with the King assume an influential position necessarily complicated by Fluellen's overt Welshness. Fluellen's imitation of Henry's battle cry becomes a sign of his own status as colonized, "Fluellen's enthusiastic embrace of Hal's claim [4.7.96] demonstrates a critical aspect of his own subjection: his willingness both to forget chapters of the past that jar with—and to resurrect episodes that contribute to—the narrative that justifies his status as Welsh subject and Hal's as English

monarch.”⁵⁹ Although both Jamy and Macmorris reject their identity as subsumed under Henry’s English monarchy, Fluellen will expend enormous energies in protecting and linking himself and his ancestry to the English King’s, of which this early moment is simply an early indication. Of all the four captains, Fluellen is the most eager to participate in the English nation and the most impatient to see France likewise contained under Henry V’s crown. Fluellen’s eagerness to participate in the English nation, and his inability to adequately engage in said nation, are at the core of the conflict and cooperation between the four captains.

Henry V repeatedly refers to brotherhood throughout his campaign in France; he calls the men “friends” during the siege of Harfleur, he depicts a “band of brothers” before the Battle of Agincourt, and he seeks to make himself as a common man when he encounters Williams. Henry’s assurances that all are equal as soldiers are a necessary component to martial loyalty: “In order to throw themselves into battle the men must be encouraged to erase differences between themselves, and between themselves and their king, and to imagine themselves metonymic beings: pieces of England.”⁶⁰ This status as a “piece of England” is necessarily complicated by the ethnic four captains who all take part in England while still at least retaining the vestiges of their prior identities (Jamy forfeits the least of his identity through failing to proclaim allegiance to Henry, and Macmorris is necessarily defined by the absence of his nation). Fluellen, who also potentially forfeits very little in his adherence to Henry’s promises of brotherhood, advocates the most strongly for his inclusion. “Shakespeare was faced with a conflicting relationship that could best be described through the semantic web of brotherhood. Brothers are kin despite all strife and whether or not they like each other. So, apparently, are the Celts and the

⁵⁹ Outland, 95.

⁶⁰ Dillon, 178.

English.”⁶¹ Fluellen’s lexical abuse of Bardolph, Pistol, and Nym belie the supposed unified brotherhood, except the play consistently reiterates the presence of the brotherhood despite national, religious, and ethical difference. Ayers utilizes the four captains on one hand, and, on the other, the language lesson of Katherine and Alice, highlighting that “the conquered, obliged to use the language of the conqueror, are thereby force to acquiesce in a kind of ritual humiliation, as they publicly acknowledge their larger weakness in terms of their inevitably comic linguistic deficiencies.”⁶²

The syntax of Fluellen’s speech is nearly as linguistically charged as his uncommon dialect. Fluellen’s convoluted sentence structure and slightly obfuscating language is distinctive for our Welsh captain; unlike many of Shakespeare’s other characters who tend towards malapropisms, Fluellen uses pedantic language aligning him with Polonius rather than Mistress Quickly. While dialect alone was sufficient for the characters of Jamy and Macmorris, Fluellen must be rendered more comic through his inability to be understood. Fluellen’s disorganized language reflects his disorganized status both within the English state and Henry V’s army: “Welshness is a prime example of the alien that is inevitably confused, revealed, and requires excursion, negotiation across borders, and even alteration of the previously conceived self to achieve a conception and display a powerful concept of ‘Englishness’.”⁶³ Unlike Macmorris who understands and identifies himself as an individual without a nation, Fluellen’s complicated status as partially assimilated Welshman is a barrier to recognizing his marginal place both in Wales and in England. Ironically, “Fluellen appears to be the epitome of an Anglicized Welshmen: he has retained elements of the

⁶¹ Dowd, 349.

⁶² Ayers, 254.

⁶³ Kermode, 85.

symbolic capital of his Welsh heritage, but embraces a radical English revision of its context that renders it justly subservient to English interests.”⁶⁴ If Fluellen is the epitome of assimilation under the English colonial project, then the confused product of such a unification offers a problematic prophecy of what may befall the Irish Wars and the French unification.

As the English state came to identify specific needs that arose in large part from its desire to establish its independence from Europe, it repeatedly found the answers to those needs in Welsh culture and its British history, gradually assimilating elements of both into English culture, first under Henry VII as a means of gathering Welsh support in his bid for the English throne, then under Henry VIII as a way of legitimizing the Church of England, and later under Elizabeth I in an attempt to maintain Welsh allegiance and to advance the bounds of the nascent, English-state-sponsored British Empire.⁶⁵

The Welsh allegiance figuring so prominently in *Henry V* is historically unsubstantiated, particularly when placed in the context of Mortimer’s “Welsh,” and potentially stronger, claim to the English throne. Despite the ethnic borderlines at work in *Henry V*, the King does not hesitate to assert his own dubious Welsh heritage; such a declaration although historically inaccurate conforms to the construction of national identity. Bhabha provides a useful structure through which to begin to understand Henry’s insistence on his Welsh heritage and the importance of Welsh origins to the English project of unification; “It is through this syntax of forgetting—or being obliged to forget—that the problematic identification of a national people becomes visible.”⁶⁶ The audience’s participation in the Battle at Agincourt, indeed all of Henry’s French campaign, entails a historical forgetting of the accuracy of historical record with the aim of gaining a unified and cohesive national narrative that bridges the differences of the indigenous population ascribing a consolidated origin to them all. Even while Henry is striving for a national narrative, it does not come

⁶⁴ Outland, 96.

⁶⁵ Outland, 101.

⁶⁶ Bhabha, 310.

without its sacrifice: “The fact that the English king can show the Welsh roots of his crown only when curtailed by the Celtic fringe suggests that Wales is a convenient repository of myths about monarchy and that it is strictly subordinate to England’s needs.”⁶⁷ It is telling that Henry V only insists on his Welsh heritage when he is engaged in a private discourse with Fluellen; for although Henry V insists on a Cornish surname (but a Welsh heritage) during his encounter with Williams (4.1.51-52), the falsity such an encounter entails challenges any legitimacy we might ascribe to such a decision. Fluellen, in his capacity as racialized Other, is content to participate in even this nominal acceptance of Welshness under English colonialism—the memorial rehabilitation required for all involved in the interlocation requires a common purpose and brotherhood at the heart of Henry V’s project.

Subsequent to the English victory at Agincourt Henry participates in this symbiotic forgetting, allying himself with Fluellen and Welsh origins:

Fluellen: Your majesty says very true. If your majesty is remembered of it, the Welshmen did good service in a garden where leeks did grow, wearing leeks in their Monmouth caps, which your majesty know to this hour is an honourable badge of the service; and I do believe your majesty takes no scorn to wear the leek upon Saint Tavy’s day.

King: I wear it for a memorable honour,
For I am Welsh, you know, good countryman.

Fluellen: All the water in Wye cannot wash your majesty’s Welsh plod out of your pody, I can tell you that. God pless it and preserve it, as long as it pleases his grace, and his majesty too!

King: Thanks, good my countryman.

Fluellen: By Jeshu, I am your majesty’s countryman, I care not who know it. I will confess it to all the world: I need not to be ashamed of your majesty, praised be to God, so long as your majesty is an honest man.

King: God keep me so!

4.7.96-114

The Tudor origin myth of Welshness, begun under Henry VII to secure Welsh support for his claim to the throne, had never expanded far enough for a Tudor monarch to

⁶⁷ Willy Maley, “British Ill Done?: Recent Work on Shakespeare and British, English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh Identities,” *Literature Compass* 3, no. 3 (May 2006), 487-512. 498.

admit to an ethnic Welshness which is what makes Henry V's claim unique and extraordinary. Schwyzer points out the discrepancies between Tudor claims to Welshness and actual Tudor Welshness, "Over more than a century, the Tudors had invited memorialization of their Welsh ancestry, had exploited it, had even made it the basis of a new kind of national community. But one step they had never taken. No member of the Tudor dynasty had ever claimed to be Welsh."⁶⁸ Ancestrally, Henry V was no more Welsh than any other Plantagenet, and his claim to Welshness is based on his birthplace (Monmouth). Rhetorically, however, Henry V's statement serves to bolster his support amongst the ethnic soldiers as Henry's brotherhood has now expanded to literally include them. Wells sees this use of identification as a means to further regulate the soldiers in Henry's command, "social control, in other words, is achieved not only by coercion but, as Gramsci argues, by appropriating culture in such a way that people willingly consent to their domination."⁶⁹ Henry's willingness to identify himself as Welsh serves to buttress the support of Fluellen, and a similar position will aid Henry later during the courtship scene. Although Henry never confesses to a French heritage (which would have been far more evident), his conflation of France and England serves a similar purpose as his self-professed Welsh identification.

The project of Henry V, both the play and the king, is not simply one of conquest, but also one of memorial reconstruction and the development of a national narrative incorporating all the disparate pieces of the British Isles. Amidst this project of memorial reconstruction and national unification, Cohen offers an intriguing reading of kingship within the larger context of the second tetralogy:

⁶⁸ Schwyzer, 126.

⁶⁹ Wells, 5.

For all the flaws that modern criticism has found in the person of King Henry V, his play is a celebration of the coherence of the English nation, bound together by civil bonds that are not—as Richard had misunderstood it—the patrimony of the monarch, but rather a commonwealth of many essentially and potentially equal participants. One of the key elements in the formation of the nation was a new regard for its history and a concomitant search for its native roots.⁷⁰

The opening of the second tetralogy featured a monarch who had farmed out the land of England, begun a doomed campaign in Ireland, and, eventually, lost his crown to an exile. The uncompromising gloom with which the second tetralogy began in *Richard II* culminates with the national epic of *Henry V*, and with the resolution of what Cohen posits as the fundamental problem of *Richard II*. Where Richard II sought to conquer the Irish (and Ireland) with brute force, Henry V seeks to incorporate the disparate peoples as his own. The language of brotherhood that is essentially absent from *Richard II* abounds in *Henry V*, and it is this language of brotherhood that ultimately binds the ethnic captains to him. This language of brotherhood transforms into that of love in order to successfully promote a union with the French Princess (although the devastating defeat France suffered at Agincourt made persuasion far less mandatory). Henry V's aspirations for unification are not uncomplicated nor are they exhaustive, even in the character of Fluellen, who appears to be the most thoroughly assimilated, there are tensions as to the efficacy of such a project; Fluellen "provides further instances of how the king's promulgation of a unifying national memory gives way to reminders of those who have been affected by this enterprise."⁷¹ Despite Fluellen's apparent ease with participating in Henry's English government, the marks of non-assimilation are evident in his speech, syntax, and, of course, his actions.

⁷⁰ Cohen, 314.

⁷¹ Dermot Cavanaugh, "History, memory, and mourning in *Henry V*," *Shakespeare's Histories and Counter-Histories* Eds. Dermot Cavanaugh, Stuart Hampton-Reeves, and Stephen Longstaffe. (Manchester: Manchester UP: 2011), 32-48. 44.

If a casual reading of the the courtship scene between Henry and Katherine appears extraneous to the structure of the play, then the final scene between Pistol and Fluellen appears to be irrelevantly superfluous. The Battle of Agincourt has been won, Henry has settled his debt with Williams, and even the Chorus appears to confess all has been accomplished. Pistol and Fluellen have antagonized each other throughout the duration of the play; while Fluellen originally praised Pistol for his martial knowledge, he eventually discovered the heart of Pistol's character. During this anticlimax, Fluellen has worn the leek for the express purpose of challenging Pistol for Pistol's insult the previous day: in urging Fluellen to eat his leek, Pistol challenged Fluellen's principal claim to a Welsh identity and Welsh superiority.

Traditionally, the leek is a symbol of a Welsh victory over the Saxons, but the particulars vary: in some stories it serves as an emblem of Welsh patron of St. David's renowned asceticism or of the willingness of the Welsh soil to sustain the embattled warrior; in others, it serves more prosaically as a badge distinguishing his compatriots from the Saxon enemy.⁷²

The leek was likewise established as an important emblematic symbol for the Welshman when Fluellen inquired about King Henry's wearing the leek on St. Davy's Day. When Fluellen wears the leek he is asserting a symbolic identity that is not perfectly aligned with the proper English one, and it is this identity Pistol seeks to expunge.

Pistol is, unsurprisingly, little match for Fluellen, and he quickly succumbs to Fluellen and his leek. Fluellen's mission, however, is not simply victory over the Englishman, but rather it is to gain a mutual respect:

Fluellen: I pray you, fall to; if you can mock a leek you can eat a leek.

Gower: Enough, Captain, you have astonished him.

Fluellen: I say I will make him eat some part of my leek, or I will peat his pate four days. – Bite, I pray you; it is good for your green wounds and your ploody coxcomb.

Pistol: Must I bite?

⁷² Outland, 99.

Fluellen: Yes, certainly, and out of doubt and out of question too, and ambiguities.

5.1.38-47

Despite Fluellen's inclusion and participation throughout Henry V's campaign he is still marked by linguistic, and now stylistic, difference. Further, Fluellen's victory over Pistol complicates the comic readings of the Welshman; while we are not still easily allowed to accommodate Fluellen within the official narrative of events, his victory challenges any easy dismissal. Fluellen's triumph over the English Pistol likewise disrupts any readings of the ethnic captains as suitably subjugated and therefore no longer threatening to English unity. However, this reading, too, is complicated when the entirety of Act 5 is placed in context. "The anticlimactic final act juxtaposes scenes featuring Pistol being beaten by Fluellen for having flouted Welsh customs and Henry flouting French customs while bartering his martial advantage for a marital one that will seal his claim to the French throne—under the very terms denied by Act I's exposition of the Salic law."⁷³ The often overlooked irony of the courtship scene is that it bestows legitimacy through the very terms it was denied at the beginning of the play. That the two scenes parallel each other combined with the eventual collapse of English rule in France ought to reaffirm English supremacy.

The four captains each participate in Henry V's union differently, but all are required to engage in the national project. "[The four captains] are also part of the discourse of English nation-building, constantly promoting the fantasy of an ideal community (one devoid of aliens) and repeatedly pointing to its own failures to reach that goal."⁷⁴ Although Fluellen is the most assimilated of all the four captains, even he is not able to fully elide the barriers set between Wales and England, and to therefore

⁷³ Spenser, 176.

⁷⁴ Mayer, Introduction, 32.

fully experience the English nation that Henry V espouses. The band of brothers touted so completely throughout the duration of the play is ultimately not for those like Fluellen or Macmorris who have no formal nation to speak of. However, what the band of brothers does provide, and that which is theoretically attainable by Macmorris and Fluellen is a nation comprised of “natives, known and unknown to each other, the unknown imagined as similar to the self in terms of one’s conception of, and loyalty to, a realm.”⁷⁵ After Fluellen has forced Pistol to eat his leek and exited the stage, Gower offers Pistol one last moralizing sentiment: “You thought because he could not speak English in the native garb he could not therefore handle an English cudgel. You find it otherwise, and henceforth let a Welsh correction teach you a good English condition” (5.1.75-79). Gower, the English captain, accepts Fluellen into the English nation despite his linguistic and sartorial difference arguing for an inherent Englishness that transcends outward conformity. The text repeatedly frustrates any benevolent reading of Pistol, supporting Gower’s observations and allowing the audience to appropriate these sentiments safely as their own.

Ultimately, despite Henry V’s bold statements of inclusion and Gower’s didactic considerations, the fractures and ruptures of the sceptered isle are not erased by Henry’s rousing speeches or victories in France or the inclusion of the four captains. Exclusion remains the sole necessary component for a national consciousness, and although Henry seeks to bind all to him, the national narrative requires an Other through which to define itself. This represents the intrinsic failure of the linguistic project of Henry V: “the curse of Babel was such that England as an early modern nation could only fail in her will to embrace other cultures fully.”⁷⁶ Regardless of the sympathetic portrayals of the four captains, comic or otherwise,

⁷⁵ Kermode, 12.

⁷⁶ Mayer, “Babel” 133.

their exclusion must be definite and it must be perpetual; England was only England for those who were demonstrably and outwardly English.

Conclusion

Foreign Religions and English Queens: Foreignness in Jacobean England

The arrival in 1613 of a history play would have been a startling addition to any company's repertoire, as the genre had fallen drastically in popularity since the end of the sixteenth century.¹ Graham Holderness even goes so far as to exclude *Henry VIII* from his seminal work on Shakespeare's history plays: *Shakespeare Recycled*. As Gossett argues, "As a history play *Henry VIII* is diffuse, focused as much on Katherine and Wolsey as on the the title character: it fights over no long wars, and it has no 'happy' ending, the birth of Elizabeth whose bitter sequel all audience members knew."² However, despite both the unpopularity of history plays and the difficulty in classifying *Henry VIII* as a history play, it is still the final play Heminges and Condell include under the heading of "History" in the First Folio. *Henry VIII*'s inclusion as a history play in many ways concludes the saga that began with deposition and war with the promise of "a thousand blessings/Which time shall bring to ripeness" (5.4.18-19). Still despite its potentially problematic classification as history play, *Henry VIII* similarly offers a fitting conclusion to this thesis as it offers a glimpse into history as a Jacobean project.³

Furthermore, nearly a decade into James VI/I's reign, the immediate ramifications of James's accession would have become evident, and the anxieties surrounding his initial entrance into London would have likely subsided. Therefore, *Henry VIII* is less concerned with a Scottish king on the English throne than a play

¹ Clare M. Murphy, "Thomas More in the Subtext of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII*," *Moreana* 42, no. 143 (September 2005), 105-118. 107. For the dating of *Henry VIII* see Harbage's *Annals of English Drama*, 102-103.

² Suzanne Gossett, "The Two Noble Kinsmen and King Henry VIII: Shakespeare's Last Last Plays," in *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Last Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP), 185-202. 190.

³ Ivo Kamps, "Possible Pasts: Historiography and Legitimation in *Henry VIII*," *College English* 58, no. 2 (Feb 1996), 192-213. 194.

such as *Macbeth* which was performed much closer to the transition from Tudor to Stuart monarchies. James's vision of "the Union of Crowns in 1603 initiated a reconsideration of national identity," in which the Band of Brothers from *Henry V* becomes an alarmingly near potentiality.⁴ Alker and Nelson argue

Many English tracts maintained that if there must be complete integration, then Scottish sociopolitical institutions and practices should be united with those of England... Those who held this position constructed histories centered on acts of homage by Scottish kings to England; since Anglo-Scottish history recorded a relationship of suzerainty, English systems and institutions should be dominant throughout Britain.⁵

If *Macbeth*, performed relatively early in James's reign, was more closely related to the problems surrounding the transition between Elizabethan and Stuart regimes, then *Henry VIII* illustrates the anxieties of the established regime.

Additionally, according to Mark Rankin, "Other than *Macbeth*, *Henry VIII* constitutes Shakespeare's only play designed specifically with a Stuart royal audience in mind."⁶ If this play, more than any other written by Shakespeare, expresses the realities of a new Jacobean audience then it will concern the changing concerns of that audience as well. As Elizabethans were constantly reminded of their Queen's ability to choose a foreign consort (and the tragedies of her predecessor, Mary's rule), they were now exposed to just that sort of foreignness in the person of James VI/I. Although by the time *Henry VIII* was performed most had adjusted to King James, the descriptions of foreignness had necessarily changed. Rankin goes on to argue, James's dream of union "between Scotland and England met with xenophobia from

⁴ Sharon Alker and Holly Faith Nelson, "*Macbeth*, The Jacobean Scot, and the Politics of the Union," *SEL* 47, no. 2 (Spring 2007), 379-401. 379.

⁵ Alker and Nelson, 380.

⁶ Mark Rankin, "*Henry VIII*, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court," *SEL* 51, no. 2 (Spring 2011), 349-366. 358.

the moment of its introduction during the Parliament of 1604.”⁷ The date of 1604 is nearly a decade before the performance of *Henry VIII*, but opposition to union was still fierce, and, in response to Parliament’s objections to union King James, “attempted to bypass opposition to this project through his use of royal proclamations, but political compromise often prevailed out of necessity.”⁸ Stuart Kurland even reports a renewed attempt to establish union between the two peoples, “in 1612, having failed to establish by Act of Parliament extradition on the Scottish borders, he sought to do so by prerogative.”⁹ *Henry VIII* represents the antagonism between King James, his Parliament, and the people under the guise of the legendary king of recent memory.

Henry VIII is almost entirely contained within the realm of England, although it opens in the aftermath of Henry’s appearance on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Historically, “Henry VIII made several moves to establish himself as one of the leading sovereigns of Europe, invading France in 1513 in order to reestablish England’s claim on that country. This excursion into France was perceived by the larger European community as largely superfluous.”¹⁰ Those within *Henry VIII* are similarly ambivalent towards the pageantry of the Field of the Cloth of Gold; despite the many pageants *Henry VIII* dramatizes, the one in France is excluded. Norfolk’s description appears to exceed Buckingham’s amazement:

Norfolk: . . . When these suns—
 For so they phrase ‘em—by their heralds challenged
 The noble spirits to arms, they did perform
 Beyond thought’s compass, that former fabulous story
 Being now seen possible enough, got credit

⁷ Rankin, “*Henry VIII*”, 360.

⁸ Rankin, “*Henry VIII*”, 360.

⁹ Stuart M. Kurland, “*Henry VIII* and James I: Shakespeare and Jacobean Politics” *Shakespeare Studies* (Winter 1987), 203-218. 210.

¹⁰ Nancy A. Gutierrez, “King Arthur, Scotland, and the Italianate Englishman: What Does Race Have to do with it?” *Shakespeare Studies* 26 (1998), 37-48. 42.

That *Bevis* was believed.
 Buckingham: O, you go far!
 1.1.33-38

Norfolk's identification of the two monarchs with men from legend contradicts the historical efficacy of Henry's French projects. France, in this play becomes the conflation of several proximal spaces. Its absence from the action of the play should recall the use of Ireland during the 1590s. Where Ireland's absence indicated an unknown space with destabilizing power, France's absence from the stage resembles less of the unknown and more of a power vacuum. In addition, although Norfolk is amazed at the splendors of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, "we are told that the whole grandiose display was a hollow sham; the gilded pomp and pageantry in which Norfolk expressed his vision of early harmony merely draped a temporary political maneuver."¹¹ The vacuum of power becomes palpable on the Field of the Cloth of Gold where it is eventually shown to be a "temporary political maneuver" at the hands of Wolsey.

Although the Cloth of Gold event was built on the premise of unity rather than conquest (as Henry's 1513 excursions were), Norfolk and Buckingham's perception of the Cloth of Gold's influence is tempered by its origin at the hands of Wolsey (1.1.50). Wolsey's instrumental role in organizing the Cloth of Gold becomes illustrative of expansive powers. Wolsey's influence is immediately shown to extend beyond the borders of the English polity and to the fields of France; indeed, it is this expansive influence which ultimately leads to Wolsey's downfall. In *Henry VIII*, the antagonist is not a French tool villain or a rebellious claimant to the throne; instead, it is a definitively Catholic cardinal with ambitions for the Papacy. Villainy, which in Elizabethan history plays had largely implicated proximal foreigners, now, under

¹¹ Lee Bliss, "The Wheel of Fortune and the Maiden Phoenix of Shakespeare's *King Henry VIII*," *ELH* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1975), 1-25. 3.

King James implicates those who are Catholic. Religion rather than ethnicity becomes the defining feature of those who are not “English.” According to Alan MacDonald, James VI/I’s project, extended beyond a unification of land borders to an ecclesiastical one: “In the British churches, James sought to pioneer his European vision. That he could envisage such convergence operating across an ecclesiastically reunified yet politically fragmented Europe is sufficient proof that his Scottish ecclesiastical policies were not dependent upon, or even meaningfully related to, a vision of British political union.”¹² James’s policies were not merely inward, isle-facing goals of unification, but outward, pan-European ambitions of religious unification.

Furthermore, as MacDonald goes on to explain, “Above all, James sought obedience, and any church with a polity and liturgy which made disobedience and individual divergence more difficult was attractive.”¹³ Wolsey’s failure to procure Henry’s desired divorce from Katherine exemplifies this failure of obedience of which the Papal letter is merely another example (3.2.222-228). Although the fall of Wolsey is important, “Wolsey’s demise results from factional plotting, but the dramatic focus almost always returns to the king’s ability to determine the outcome of events, whether they be the conspiracy against Cranmer late in the play or the divorce from Catherine of Aragon midway through.”¹⁴ Wolsey’s fall and Cranmer’s rise serve to enhance the royal prerogative of Henry VIII; topically this played to concerns over James’s reliance on those around him as Henry VIII’s first entrance indicates.¹⁵

¹² Alan R. MacDonald, “James VI and I, the Church of Scotland, and British Ecclesiastical Convergence,” *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 4 (2005), 885-903. 900.

¹³ MacDonald, 887.

¹⁴ Rankin, “*Henry VIII*, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court,” 358.

¹⁵ Kurland, “*Henry VIII* and James I,” 214.

Wolsey's influence at court is emphasized through his arrangement of the Field of Cloth of Gold and through the general distaste the rest of court holds for him.

In terms of foreignness, Katherine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first queen, is the most distinguished representative. She identifies herself as a foreigner numerous times, although the most memorable may be during her appeal to the court during her very public divorce:

Sir, I desire you do me right and justice,
And to bestow your pity on me; for
I am a most poor woman, and a stranger,
Born out of your dominions, having here
No judge indifferent, nor no more assurance
Of equal friendship and proceeding.

2.4.11-16

These lines serve as Katherine's opening exchange with the court in which she is threatened with losing not only her own place within the realm but also that of her daughter, Mary. Katherine's lines reflect a situation many of the women from this dissertation found themselves in: unprotected, alone, and with a king who had found favor in another. Ruth Vanita argues for a more universal appeal in Katherine's opening lines: "Although a queen, Katherine, like most women, is distanced from her natal kin by marriage. This distancing, central to her powerlessness, speaks to the predicament of all women in societies where the wife moves out of her father's and into her husband's home, but was heightened in the context of royalty where brides were usually pawns in the game of European politics, as was that other Katherine, Henry V's French wife."¹⁶ Although in some ways Vanita's argument threatens to undermine the uniqueness of Katherine's argument, the solitude of Katherine's position cannot be over-emphasized. Katherine is placed in a similar situation to both Isabella and Margaret (from *Edward II* and *2 and 3 Henry VI*, respectively); however,

¹⁶ Ruth Vanita, "Mariological Memory in *The Winter's Tale* and *Henry VIII*" *SEL* 40, no. 20 (Spring 2000), 331-337. 326.

Katherine's response is what separates her from her earlier history play counterparts.

Katherine goes on to recount her performance as queen:

Heaven witness
 I have been to you a true and humble wife,
 At all times to your will conformable,
 Ever in fear to kindle your dislike,
 Yes, subject to your countenance, glad or sorry
 As I saw it incline. When was the hour
 I ever contradicted your desire,
 Or made it not my own too? Of which of your friends
 Have I not strove to love, although I knew
 He were mine enemy?
 2.4.20-29

Despite Katherine's increasingly marginalized position within the English court, she maintains her role as faultless English queen and faithful English woman. Likewise, the difference in Katherine's attitude towards her predicament (and her failure to take arms) potentially attests not to her foreignness but the differing concerns surrounding the Jacobean history play. Kim H. Noling hints at the difficulties Shakespeare may have faced portraying a Catholic queen (and heroine) in a Protestant age, particularly when Catholicism becomes the mark of difference (as was borne out with Wosley)¹⁷; however, Katherine is not beset with these markers of difference.

Katherine, despite being a foreign/English queen, is not depicted as one. Unlike Katherine of France (Henry V's bride) who speaks first a foreign language and then a broken English, Katherine of Aragon speaks fluent English. Furthermore, Katherine of Aragon is the only one who calls attention to her foreign and isolated position in England, unlike Margaret of Anjou who is repeatedly called French (York memorably calls her "She-wolf of France" [3 *Henry VI* 1.4.112]) or Isabella "that unnatural Queen, false Isabel" (20.17). Katherine escapes these epithets; indeed as Murphy argues

¹⁷ Kim H. Noling, "Grubbing up the Stock: Dramatizing Queens in *Henry VIII*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (Fall 1988), 291-309. 298.

What is perhaps more remarkable is that the presentation of Katherine throughout the play is supportive of her, even apparently to its Epilogue, probably written by Fletcher. In other words, the playwrights were being politically incorrect, particularly we might note by the praise of Katherine in a play culminating in the baptism of Anne's child, the future queen.¹⁸

Although Clare Murphy discusses the ending of the play, her careful consideration of Katherine's treatment throughout this very late history play is telling. Murphy is not the only one to note Katherine's treatment both preceding and following the divorce.¹⁹ Although Katherine declares, "Would I have never trod this English earth,/Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it", she is both allowed and depicted as retiring to the desolate castle, Kimbolton, and given a moving speech upon her death (3.1.142). Katherine's deathbed vision finalizes her transformation from devoted queen consort and wife to virtuous spiritual figure as she begs

Remember me
In all humility to his highness.
Say his long trouble now is passing
Out of this world. Tell him, in death I blessed him,
For so I will.

4.2.161-165

Katherine's final exhortations illustrate Noling's claim that "far from simply supporting Henry's dynastic strategies by minimizing Katherine's theatrical power, Shakespeare allows her generous stage exposure and a commanding presence as she resists nullification at the king's pleasure."²⁰ Katherine's demeanor as genuine English woman and monarch appear to exempt her from accusations of foreignness. Like the other Katherine discussed in this thesis, Henry V's French Princess, this Katherine is reclaimed into the English narrative as English. Moreover, Katherine is kept from returning to her family in Spain and is instead retired to the English castle

¹⁸ Murphy, 118.

¹⁹ Noling, 293-295; Bliss, 6; and Vanita, 326.

²⁰ Noling, 291-292.

of Kimbolton to spend the remainder of her days. Katherine's confinement in England should be reminiscent of Margaret of Anjou's appearance in *Richard III*, where she is kept as a relic and reminder of the consequences of the Wars of the Roses. Unlike Margaret of Anjou, Katherine does not use her marginalized position to curse those in power; rather, as her final lines indicate she uses this space to reiterate her constancy and loyalty to her king and realm. Katherine, although Spanish, becomes the model for female constancy and identity in a play more concerned with Wolsey's downfall and the promise of Elizabeth than the exclusion of foreigners.

Furthermore, in the previous history plays discussed in this thesis, women tended to offset their husbands or be put into conflict with each other. Anne Boleyn, Katherine's replacement and Queen Elizabeth's mother, is similarly well-regarded. Although Wolsey labels her a "Lutheran" in what is intended as a derogatory comment from a Catholic official, Anne is never portrayed as the "other woman" or even in opposition to Katherine of Aragon (3.2.100). As Suzanne Gossett claims, "Anne's own uncertainty, the way in which she is pushed into her position and yet cannot help seeking it nicely embodies contemporary ideas about the objectification of women and the internalized false consciousness that abets it. Anne appears only three times, the third time a silent icon at her coronation, yet she is sexualized in every appearance."²¹ If the dramatization of Katherine as the foreign, English queen is one perfectly harmonized with her status as queen (and even queen dowager), then the depiction of Anne (who carries her own tenuous history) is equally surprising. Although it may be easy to see Katherine and Anne in opposition to, or as

²¹ Gossett, 200. See also, Noling, 302.

replacements for, each other, the relative absence of Anne from the play, even after Katherine's withdrawal to Kimbolton, argues otherwise.

The first of Anne's three appearances comes following the masque at Wolsey's house and the last at her coronation. During Anne's first appearance at Wolsey's masque in 1.4, she speaks very little, and not at all upon meeting the king.

King Henry: By heaven, [Anne] is a dainty one. [To Anne] Sweetheart,
 I were unmannerly to take you out
 And not to kiss you [*kisses her*]. A health, gentlemen;
 [*He drinks*]
 Let it go round.
 1.4.97-100

The scene concludes with a brief exchange between Henry, Wolsey, and Lovell with Anne uttering not a word. The scene is reminiscent of the end of *Measure for Measure* in which Isabella is silent despite the Duke's declaration of marriage (*Measure for Measure* 5.1.486). Anne, as Gossett claims, is sexualized in this exchange as she is marked by Henry VIII's kiss and her own silence. In this respect, although Anne is not stamped as foreign (indeed, she is as English as Edward IV's Lady Grey) she is represented with the same language applied to women throughout the history plays.

The only other scene in which Anne is given voice is a relatively private moment between Anne and an "Old Lady." Despite the modest number of characters, Anne is not the one who dominates the scene. Noling explains, "Shakespeare deals with the possible embarrassment of Anne's untimely and disgraceful end mostly by making Anne a thing of the past even before the play ends. He does so by skimping on her characterization; by rendering her as a sweet, sympathetic, but forgettable young woman; and then by gradually effacing her altogether as a dramatic character, so that she is not printed off but blotted out by her

infant daughter.”²² The Old Lady’s nearly continual assumptions of Anne’s future elevation to queen are met with ceaseless disavowals; Anne repeatedly swears, “I would not be a queen” (2.3.24; 33; 39; 46). The exchange between Anne and her servant recalls a similar scene in Heywood’s *1 Edward IV* in which Jane Shore repeatedly refuses to leave her husband for the king (despite the urging of Mistress Blage to do otherwise). Just as in Heywood’s play, the conversation between the two women serves to underscore the innate quality of Anne’s innocence. However in so doing, the Old Lady’s demands and Anne’s ineffectual denials create a scene in which the future queen pales in comparison to her servant. Anne’s refusal to accept her elevated status becomes a question of obedience as she acknowledges in her answer to the Lord Chamberlain’s news of her title as Marchioness of Pembroke (2.3.66). Anne’s rejection of Henry’s favor and her claims of obedience are eventually subsumed under the Lord Chamberlain’s appraisal of Anne’s value (again sexualized):

Beauty and honour in her are so mingled
That they have caught the King, and who knows yet
But from this lady may proceed a gem
To lighten all this isle.

2.3.76-79

Anne’s importance, according to the Lord Chamberlain, is both her beauty and the promise that she will bear a laudable heir (an overt allusion to Queen Elizabeth). If Katherine’s stage presences rests on her character, and her feminine virtues, Anne’s relative absence from the stage portrays a gap into which Queen Elizabeth is placed.

Anne’s final appearance is as the silent, newly crowned Queen of England (4.1). Anne’s coronation immediately precedes the death of Katherine, similar to the doubling of *1 Henry VI* (as Joan of Arc dies, Margaret of Anjou takes the stage).

²² Noling, 299.

Although neither Anne nor Katherine threaten the realm in the way Margaret and Joan do, the exit of one accompanying the entrance of the other cannot but reinforce the parallels between the history plays. Anne's silence, however, contrasts sharply with Margaret's overwhelming voice. Anne's silence may be necessary not only for national stability but also for memorializing Queen Elizabeth. The accusations of Anne's adultery, her execution, and Elizabeth's illegitimacy would have been known to most in Shakespeare's audience, and, as Noling suggests, the forgettable nature of Anne may have been key to shaping memories of her in the theatre. According to the detailed stage directions at 4.1 Anne enters towards the end of the procession that is bereft of the king (potentially increasing her erasure from memory after the play concludes). Anne's solitude further distances her from the English court and the center of power (as Katherine has similarly been exiled).

However, if Anne is silent in order to be forgettable, her presence during the coronation procession is far from a plain, unmentionable ceremony. The two gentlemen, whose commentary has infused the play, offer their appraisal of the new queen:

Second Gentleman: [*seeing Anne*] Heaven bless thee!
 Thou hast the sweetest face I ever looked on.
 Sir, as I have a soul, she is an angel.
 Our King has all the Indies in his arms,
 And more, and richer, when he strains that lady.
 I cannot blame his conscience.

First Gentleman: They that bear
 The cloth of honour over her are four barons
 Of the Cinque Ports.

Second Gentleman: Those men are happy,
 And so are all are near her.

4.1.42-51

In their analysis not only does Anne have "the sweetest face," she is also labeled "an angel," and those who are near must be happy. Rather than underscore the scandal of Henry VIII's divorce from Katherine, the two gentlemen necessarily excuse the king

because of Anne's beauty. Although this excuse carries more than just dramatic overtones, Anne is once again merely an object within *Henry VIII*. As Gossett claims, "as a woman she is as much the plaything of larger male forces as is Katherine."²³ Anne's rise to power does little to give her access to power; in fact, the higher she rises the more she is excluded from speaking. Contrasted with many of the women from Elizabethan history plays (Isabella from *Edward II*, Margaret of Anjou, and Joan of Arc), Anne's silence serves to further bolster her image as object rather than individual.

As Katherine and Anne fade into the background, the baby Elizabeth serves as the final reminder of Henry VIII's legacy. Cranmer's praise of Elizabeth at her baptism is articulated:

This royal infant—heaven still move about her—
 Though in her cradle, yet now promises
 Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings
 Which time shall bring to ripeness. She shall be—
 But few now living can behold that goodness—
 A pattern to all princes living with her,
 And all that shall succeed.
 ...
 Her own shall bless her;
 Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,
 And hand their heads with sorrow. Good grows with her
 ...
 From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,
 And by those claims their greatness, not by blood.
 Nor shall this peace sleep with her, but, as when
 The bird of wonder dies—the maiden phoenix—
 Her ashes new create another heir
 As great in admiration as herself,
 So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
 When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness,
 Who from the sacred ashes of her honour
 Shall star-like rise as great in fame as she was,
 And stand so fixed.

5.4.17-23; 30-32; 37-47

²³ Gossett, 200.

Cranmer's commendation of Elizabeth necessarily not only links Henry VIII and Elizabeth but incorporates King James as well. (5.4.37-47). Thus, King James is associated with England's glorious past and the Tudor dynasty while his natural place within the English monarchy is confirmed. James's incorporation as a symbolic continuation of the Tudor dynasty in many ways elides his Scottish heritage with his English sovereignty. Just as the two wives of Henry VIII are effaced to the machinations of male court life, so Elizabeth becomes a transition between two male rulers (Henry VIII and King James). Where the history plays of the 1590s grappled with women's role in government (and warfare), there is little confusion over the roles of men and women as the shifting alliances of courtly intrigue take center stage.

Interestingly, just as gender definitions faded to the background during King James's reign, so did foreign language. Although *Henry VIII* occurred after James's rule had been largely consolidated, he was still a Scottish-born monarch who continually promoted unification between the northern and southern ends of the island.²⁴ The apparent lack of interest in the different speech patterns of those who comprised British dominions in the early seventeenth century (at least within the confines of the few history plays remaining) may be attributed to several factors not least of which is King James's birthplace. However, within *Henry VIII* there is a singular moment of linguistic difference: the masque at which Henry first meets Anne. Although no French is spoken, the rules of Henry's entry dictate that he is unable to speak (or understand) English.

Lord Chamberlain: How now—what is't?

Servant: A noble troop of strangers,

For so they seem. They've left their barge and landed,
And hither make as great ambassadors

²⁴ Kurland, 210.

From foreign princes.

Cardinal Wolsey: Good Lord Chamberlain,
 Go give 'em welcome—you can speak the French tongue.
 And pray receive 'em nobly, and conduct 'em
 Into our presence where this heaven of beauty
 Shall shine at full upon them.

...

What are their pleasures?

Lord Chamberlain: Because they speak no English, thus they prayed
 To tell your grace, that, having heard by fame
 Of this so noble and so fair assembly
 This night to meet here, they could do no less,
 Out of the great respect they bear to beauty,
 But leave their flocks, and, under your fair conduct,
 Crave leave to view these ladies.

1.4.54-61; 65-72

King Henry promptly speaks English to his chosen partner, Anne, and the arbitrary rules from the entrance to the masque are forgotten. However, the existence of the rules is compelling since the rest of the play largely refuses to engage with issues of proximal foreignness. French, throughout the earlier history plays, was an equivocal sign of superiority, government, and English accomplishment. In *Henry VIII*, on the other hand, French is notable through its relative lack of use. Wolsey volunteers the Lord Chamberlain on the grounds that he “can speak the French tongue” implying that there are others in attendance who cannot. However, the appearance of Henry VIII appareled as a shepherd contrasts pointedly with earlier depictions of the French who in *Henry V* comment on the magnificence of their armor and their horses (1.4.64 s.d.). Arguably, and apparently, Henry’s choice of apparel has less to do with Frenchness and more to do with contrasting his “natural” state as king while juxtaposing himself against the finery of the other nobles in attendance.

The transition from Elizabethan England to Jacobean England not only marked the decline in the production of the history play but also a downturn in xenophobia within the history play. Although the English were not more eager to welcome foreigners into their country, there was less dramatization of that

xenophobia. Unlike the history plays of the 1590s, the villain of the Jacobean history play is no longer an ethnic outsider; instead, it is the religious other who is placed beyond the boundaries of the state. Katherine, the Spanish Princess, repeatedly claims her Spanish heritage but is not denounced for her Catholicism. Cardinal Wolsey, however, although ardently English, is also unpardonably Catholic. Those who are outside are less defined by their origin than they are by their religion. The shift in the definition of the proximal foreigner from someone who is not-English to someone who is not-Protestant coincides with the decline of the history play. Although I would not claim the relationship to necessarily be more than coincidental, it is noteworthy that the shift in definitions of the outsider as ethnically bounded coincided with a regime change and the demise of a dramatic genre. This transformation challenged the relatively easy markers of otherness that ethnicity provided, and so the plays which featured the “vast fields of France” proclaimed Englishness with less necessity than other generic forms. The definitions of foreignness discerned in the chronicle history plays of the 1590s become less relevant as England entered the seventeenth century where the establishment of a staunchly Protestant, Scottish king altered conceptions of the foreign from the ethnically driven to the religiously directed.

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